



Jim Scales

FOUNDATION FOUNDER

Jim Scales, one of the Shuswap Community Foundation's founders, joined the new Board-of-Directors as treasurer. A few years ago he retired from the board and is now an Honourary director.

Jim, the first of the Scales family to be born in Salmon Arm (1933), has roots going back in our City's early days. Both his grandfather and his father became mayors of Salmon Arm and, later, Jim served as a councilor.

His grandfather came here from Verden, Manitoba to visit the Wilcox family. He liked the town so much he stayed and bought a general store on the corner of Shuswap and Front St. (now Lakeshore Drive) and later became mayor of Salmon Arm. He and his wife raised two children, Harold and Effie.

Jim says his father, Harold, met his mother, Myrtle, in Penticton after he came back from the First World War. They settled first in Revelstoke, where Jim's brother Bob was born, and later in Salmon Arm where Jim was born.

Jim attended school here when the elementary or public school was located in what later became the Municipal Hall (now the site of our present City Hall/Court). He went to high school in what later became J.L. Jackson junior high school.

Jim joined the Bank of Commerce right out of high school in the mid 1950's. "I was called junior. I did everything and started right from the beginning," he recalls. A family background in business accounting probably influenced his decision to join the bank. "I was born an accountant," he states.

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Jim eventually became a bank manager travelling to various places in BC including Dawson City in the Yukon where he met his wife, Sally. Then, it was all over the province to various banks and finally to Vancouver. Jim's heart brought him back to Salmon Arm. He didn't like living in Vancouver so when he heard the Salmon Arm manager, Jack Lyons, was retiring he went to the Regional Manager and said, "I want Jack Lyons' job." He got it! Jim and family moved to Salmon Arm in the late 1960's where he took up position as manager in the new Bank of Commerce that had been built on the site of the old Montebello hotel (on the corner of Alexander and Hudson) that had been destroyed in a fire.

Jim says he was so happy to be back home. The Bank had other ideas and wanted to transfer him again. Jim says he told them he would "rather leave the Bank than be moved again." And that's exactly what he did setting up a private accounting business and becoming involved in community activities. He was on the District of Salmon Arm council for six years, belonged to Rotary including terms as president and secretary and, of course, as treasurer on the newly formed Shuswap Community Foundation.

The Foundation

When he was first heard about the plans for a Foundation says he thought it was a good idea. "When we started we were feeling our way but I thought it was a great idea and I still think it's a great idea." One of the highlights for Jim is that a Foundation "gives us an unbiased approach to giving money...no ties to other organizations." In this way, he feels, the money is given a "broader reach." And, he adds, "We still have the advantage of being small, local, and able to represent the Shuswap. We're not so big that we can't still keep in touch."

Jim notes that, at this time, the board is still made up of volunteers...no paid staff. He feels the board is very hands-on" which is important to our community.

Notes by Marg Shand, Winter, 2009