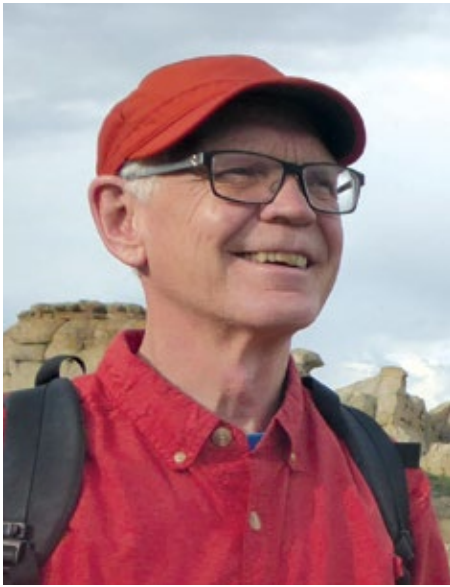


George Campbell



George Campbell was raised in Amherst, Nova Scotia and attended Acadia University in Wolfville before migrating westward first to Edmonton and then to Calgary to work for Dome Petroleum in the heady days of yet another oil and gas “boom.” His work with Dome took him to their exploration work in the Beaufort Sea in Canada’s Arctic reaches; while those efforts ultimately came to naught they nevertheless left an indelible impression on all who experienced the vastness of the Arctic and its remarkable, challenging environment. George became as an independent consultant to industry in 1986 and it is a testament to his competence and character that he has been steadily employed – as much as he wants to be – ever since.

George is certainly no exception to what I see as a rule – music is deeply embedded in the DNA of Maritime folk. George was the founder and first President of the Foothills Acoustic Music Institute (FAMI) where he met his fellow Great Gray Owl recipient, Murray Little. A decade ago he created “Music for the Wild” to generate interest in the AWA and to provide a stage for local musicians to perform and become better known. These events have provided a great synergy for two fine purposes. Since Music for the Wild began he has arranged 38 concerts at AWA’s Hillhurst Cottage School; each concert offers an opportunity for two distinct groups to perform. It is a measure of the concerts appeal that they are virtually all “Sold Out” well in advance. In addition, George plays guitar himself at many AWA events including the annual Climb for Wilderness.

It is not surprising that that George’s first introduction and attraction to the AWA was through his wife, Carolyn Campbell, one of AWA’s highly regarded Conservation Specialists. Beyond that obvious connection George continues to be drawn to the AWA by the contribution he can make through “Music for the Wild” and the people who patronize the events.

Over his time with AWA George has come to more fully realize the vital role the ENGO sector plays in the environmental world. George believes any environmental protection system, as challenged as it is to be relevant, would collapse entirely

without the commitment of the full spectrum of ENGOs. He cites the wonderful example of Dorothy Dickson who conducts tours of the Rumsey Block, a unique unsullied area of Alberta’s Parkland. Dorothy’s personal knowledge of the area and commitment to conservation makes such an enormous difference. From a business perspective, George continues to be impressed by the leveraging ENGOs use to have big impact with remarkable small budgets. With regards to AWA, George says AWA is “expert” at engaging and supporting volunteers as a natural part of their way of working and this vastly improves the organization’s impact as a result.

George sees the biggest challenge facing the conservation movement as our proclivity to “love a place to death.” Fragile wilderness places are particularly susceptible to this because, once damaged beyond a certain point, wilderness may not recover. The physical distance of wilderness from the day to day lives of most people means it is often not a part of most people’s thinking. So for George the importance of good “stewards” who educate people about the importance of wilderness cannot be overstated. His hope for the future rests on the large numbers of people who are willing to take on this role in any number of ways. This group includes many corporate leaders George has met who are driven not just by the search of profits but also by supporting long term views and policies aimed at a healthy world for all. 🌱