

Previous Recipients of the ASA Distinguished Service Award

2018 – George Chalut

George Chalut started as president of the Strathcona (Edmonton) Centre in 1992 during a time of transition from friends society supporting the Strathcona Site to a charitable organization. George was instrumental in keeping the Strathcona archaeological society (SAS) active and legal after the interpretive centre at the Strathcona site was shut down and after the Edmonton Centre of the Archaeological Society of Alberta (at that time a separate entity) shut down. During this time, George was working with minimal members but managed to keep and grow the centre. He regularly worked with the ASA provincial executive and kept the SAS involved. His continuous work kept archaeology in Edmonton during a turbulent time for the Edmonton Centre and SAS.

George served as president of the Strathcona Archaeological Society (SAS) for many years, and continued in that role until 2013 (except for one year). One of his many of his significant achievements was in 2005 when George was involved in the Plains Anthropological Conference held at West Edmonton Mall. During the conference an “Alberta Archaeology Week” was organized and George was instrumental in setting up displays and information tables at the Centre Fountain of West Edmonton Mall for the week of October 17-22, 2005. He represented and embodied the passion and spirit of the ASA. He also organized lecture series at the University of Alberta, spearheaded the organization of the Archaeological Society of Alberta (ASA) AGM and conference in 2011, and helped with the organization of the conference in 2004. He stayed on after his presidency for a year to help ease the transition to a new president.

George continues to support the society when and where he can. He is currently working compiling a history of the SAS, which as its longest and most dedicated member, should be an exceptional resource! For his many years of unyielding passion and commitment to the SAS and the ASA George Chalut was presented with the ASA Distinguished Service Award at the ASA Annual Meeting in Edmonton on April 28, 2018.

2016 - Joanne Braaten

Since joining the Archaeological Society of Alberta fifteen years ago Joanne Braaten has been an integral part of the Society both on a provincial level and locally, within the Calgary Centre. She served two terms as Provincial President for 2010 and 2011, and within the Calgary Centre Joanne has served in every capacity possible; as the Centre's Secretary from 2002-2004, as a Director from 2004 -2005, as Vice-President from 2005-2008, as President from 2008-2010, and since 2010 has served as Past President. During this time Joanne has participated as a lead committee member in organizing three provincial level Conferences and Annual General Meetings.

The contributions Joanne has made to the Archaeological Society of Alberta that are outstanding. During her two-year tenure as Provincial President one of Joanne's stated goals was to attend at least one meeting of each of the ASA Centres. This she manage to do, often travelling in some very wintery weather. Another goal achieved under her guidance was the establishing of a Provincial Coordinator

position. The duties and responsibilities for this position were defined and the first Provincial Coordinator was hired in February 2010. During her tenure as president she also assisted the Red Deer Centre to become reinstated, after their status as an Incorporated Non-profit Organization had lapsed. They continue to operate and hosted the AGM in 2015.

Beyond fulfilling these duties in her capacity on the ASA Prov. Executive, it is Joanne's role as Co-Editor of the Occasional Paper Series that stands as a truly outstanding contribution to the Archaeological Society. Beginning in 2003, the Occasional Papers were published to fill a gap in disseminating archaeological studies no longer being printed by the government. Working closely with the authors, Joanne took on the job of layout and design of the publications. The initial documents were often in so many different formats Joanne was forced to learn many new processing skills and computing techniques to complete a manuscript. Countless volunteer hours were spent scanning images, formatting text and revising manuscripts. In subsequent years the Occasional Paper series has been widely lauded by professional archaeologists as a great achievement of the Archaeological Society of Alberta. To date fourteen volumes have been printed in the Occasional Paper Series that has now become widely known as the Gold Books. Joanne continues to be active in the marketing and sales of these publications in addition to assisting with marketing of the Millennium book. In this capacity Joanne has continued to pack these published volumes off to the various conferences and meetings in Alberta and further afield to CAA conferences and even the Plains conference when it was held in Saskatchewan and Edmonton.

Joanne's contributions toward the Archaeological Society reach beyond the Gold Books, for she has also been influential in marketing the many goods the Calgary Centre has produced, including specially designed T-shirts with an archaeological theme, as well as vests, tote bags, bandanas and even chocolates with a custom made design of the 'Alberta Point' logo. Over the years Joanne has been instrumental in both coming up with innovative ideas and assisting in actually marketing the society at the Annual Provincial AGM, the Annual Chacmool Conference, and Plains Conferences. At these same conference events she has often taken on the task of organizing Silent Auctions. Other fund raising initiatives Joanne has taken on include Garage sales and Book sales. For these events she not only collects the donations but provides greater leadership in organizing the displays and the other volunteers assisting with each event, and often looks after disposition of the goods after each event. At all these public events Joanne has always been diligent in pointing out that we represent the Archaeological Society of Alberta, passing out membership pamphlets and inviting people to join.

We can cite other examples where Joanne's interest in the Archaeological Society includes more than organizing funding raising initiatives. This includes her spearheading the task of organizing and cataloging the extensive 20,000 shell collection Doris Humphreys had collected from all over the world. Joanne and the volunteers she organized worked tirelessly for over year to make the shell collection a valuable resource for the University's Archaeology Department. In a similar manner, when Past-President Marshall Dzurko passed away Joanne was instrumental, with the co-operation of his family, in getting his vast and well documented collection of projectile points and other artifacts donated and moved to the Archaeological Survey in Edmonton.

Joanne continues to be an invaluable member to the Calgary Centre and active contributor to the Provincial Society. Her sunny disposition and infectious laugh make her a joy to work with. In summary, she has been tireless in her devotion to, and assistance in, pursuits that support the Archaeological

Society. Joanne Braaten was presented with the Distinguished Service Award at the ASA Annual Meeting in High River on April 30, 2016.

2009 - Jim McMurchy

Jim McMurchy has been a member of the Archaeological Society of Alberta, Lethbridge Centre since 1990. He is currently their President and financial auditor. Over the years he organized countless speaker series, field trips and workshops. Jim is also our Provincial Secretary / Treasurer, a job he has been doing for more than 10 years.

Though these are the official positions he holds, Jim is better described as the backbone of the Archaeological Society of Alberta. He ensures that the ASA continues to run smoothly. He knows who to contact, where to find information, forms and documents, and what is going on in the Society. Jim is who everyone calls for help, and he goes out of his way to assist in any way he can.



Jim is the epitome of the ASA mandate: He is committed to preserving Alberta heritage (Canada for that matter) and sharing our past with the community. He embodies all the traits that make up the very best member of an avocation community: most especially the trait of selflessness. Jim has given tirelessly of his time, on an entirely volunteer basis, to a society for the sole reason that he believes strongly and cares deeply for what the ASA stands for: that being an appreciation and respect for the past.

For his many years of dedicated service to the Archaeological Society of Alberta, and to the archaeological community generally, it was our great honour and pleasure to award Jim McMurchy with the Distinguished Service Award at the ASA Annual Meeting in Bodo on May 2, 2009.