

Wilderness Tourism Association



BRITISH COLUMBIA | CANADA

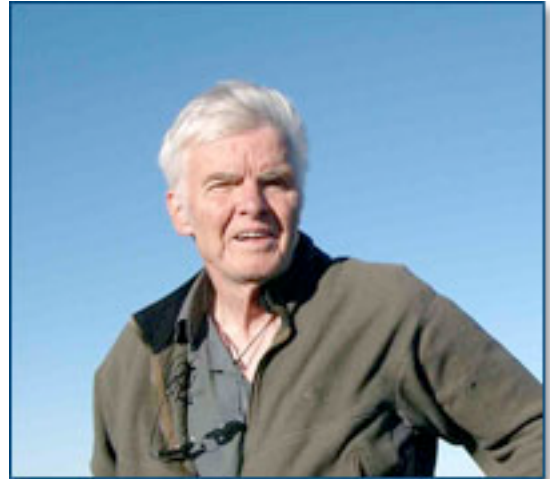
Wilderness Tourism Association, PO Box 423, Cumberland BC, V0R 1S0, 250-336-2862, www.bcwta.ca

The WTA Executive Board of Directors

President: **Brian Gunn**

President of the WTA, Brian Gunn, has always been inspired by the outdoors, mountains and oceans, and has had an interest in social activism since his student days in Vancouver in the late 1950's and early 1960's. Through a career in engineering, spanning the years 1963 to 1991, he travelled widely and gained experience in getting projects completed on time and on budget. In the 1970's, he served as an elected alderman in Burnaby, BC.

In 1989, he realized a long time dream of being a cowboy when he took over an abandoned lodge and turned it into the Big Bar Guest Ranch, situated in Clinton, in the Caribou Chilcotin area of BC. During his years at the ranch, he became acquainted with issues faced by nature based tourism operators, especially with respect to land use issues, and served as president of the Guest Ranchers Association for one year, then as president of the Caribou Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association (CTA) from 1990 to 1998. During this time, he worked to develop and expand marketing programs in cooperation with Tourism BC, worked with COTA (Council of Tourism Associations) and helped reorganize the CTA.



In 1998, he came to live at the home of his partner, Myrna Boulding, at Strathcona Park Lodge and Outdoor Education Centre near Campbell River on Vancouver Island. He has assisted the Lodge with marketing and sales, helped formed the North Central Island Tourism Association in Campbell River and was its first president; and in 1999, helped organize the Tourism Land Use Symposium in Vancouver. Out of this symposium was born the idea for the WTA, and with COTA's assistance, it was formed as an association that year.

As president, Brian devotes his time (voluntarily) to continuing to develop relationships with government and with other resources users of BC, (for example the forestry industry); to promoting stewardship of the environment and to keeping members abreast of ongoing issues and developments that affect the tourism industry. Working with the Ministry of the Tourism, Sport and the Arts, and with the Ministry of the Environment, one of his main goals with the WTA has been to develop user-friendly tenures for tourism operators using Crown Land and Parks. Whenever possible, he continues to travel, loves to go bike riding, horseback riding, hiking, and camping in summer, and in the winter, cross-country skate skiing. Brian has four children; two in Australia, one in Thailand and one in Canada.

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Vice-President: **Kevin Smith**

An adventurer and explorer all his life and a professional mariner since the age of 18, Kevin is also the president of Maple Leaf Adventures.

His experience as a geographer, backcountry park ranger and teacher all contribute to his leadership of one of the premier ecotourism organizations on the coast.

Kevin continues Maple Leaf's tradition of building the framework for ecotourism on the coast, and is an executive member of many respected industry organizations. In addition to educating youth, Kevin developed and taught the Ecotourism for Entrepreneurs course for North Island College in British Columbia. His 5-year tenure as a negotiator on the central coast (Great Bear Rainforest) land use plan brings a rare depth of understanding to the area's history and current situation.



Secretary/Treasurer: **John Howard Caton**



Married 36 years, the Catons left a busy life in Ontario for a simpler one in the wilds of Vancouver Island. After years in business and a high-flying stint as a talent scout and recording artist manager for A&M and Warner Brothers that ended with a major coronary attack, John returned to his family and their farm and started dreaming up his next act, this time in the hospitality business. Following business school for Adele and an internship at a private game preserve in Ontario, they headed west with their boys. Twelve years later they continue to offer wilderness vacations of a lifetime, while conserving the

land and helping British Columbia's tourism industry become a world leader in sustainability. John Caton, Managing Director of Clayoquot Wilderness Resort.