

Jean & George Holtom



Volunteer Appreciation – Article – January, 2023

Desert Cove is a melting pot of people who have special gifts, talents and abilities. Many of the people who lived here share those gifts by volunteering to enhance this special community; this article is about **Jean & George Holtom** (807-8thAve) a dear couple who have resided here since 1997 (25 years). During that time, they have contributed by volunteering their gifts and talents in many ways.

From early in its history, Desert Cove has had a newsletter called the “Tattler.” Jean was the editor of that newsletter from 1998 to 2018. The “Tattler” documented the events and happenings of Desert Cove as well as profiling “Covian” groups, such as: retired Mounties, teachers and musicians. If you want some fun reading you can find copies of the “Tattler” in binders in the DC Library. This is a great way to find out about the History of Desert Cove.

Jean is a natural writer and poet, and has written many tributes to individuals, obituaries and feature articles on the “Gardens of Desert Cove,” and “Birds of the Okanagan.”

Jean coordinated, organized and facilitated many events at Desert Cove such as: Happy Hours; Sunday gospel hours; the weight exercise program; and ladies aqua-aerobics; as well as special Bingo nights.

Jean and George have participated in the Cove’s “Galaxy of Stars” usually lip syncing and performing numbers such as “Ahab the Arab;” “Minnie the Moocher,” and “Mockingbird Hill.” Jean is a true showgirl that inspired and entertained us here at the cove. (Have a look in some of the picture albums that are also in the DC library.)

Jean has also volunteered at the O’Keefe Ranch at the General Store every Thursday afternoon for six years. Jean and husband George are also known as the “Jam & Jelly” team who make jams, jellies and crafts to sell at the Christmas craft event with all proceeds donated to charities such as: The North Okanagan Hospice; Vernon Jubilee Hospital; BCSPCA; and the Red Cross.

As a boy, George had a “paper route” delivering over 100 newspapers in his neighbourhood. George still does his “paper route” in Desert Cove, delivering the “Morning Star” to close neighbours every Thursday. George has also volunteered to monitor and document birds for the yearly Okanagan bird count.

Jean and George were both born in England but have called Canada home since 1957. They first settled in Oshawa, Ontario, and 1997 they move to BC. They have one daughter in Langley and another daughter in Irvine California.

They are world travellers and have many journals and photo albums documenting all of their wonderful trips. They have been married for 64 years in July and that is indeed a great accomplishment. George is 92 and Jean is 85. When asked what they liked most about living here in the cove, and why they have stayed here so long they both agreed that this community is where neighbours become like family. It just feels like home.

This article has been written with collaboration and approval of Jean and George Holtom.

Columnist Credit - [Pauline Huth](#)