

'FRIENDS OF THE PARK' — PRINCE ALBERT NATIONAL PARK

After several years of talking about the idea of a 'co-operating association' at Prince Albert National Park, 'Friends of the Park' has become a reality. An official Memorandum of Agreement was signed by the group and Parks Canada on 24 January 1984.

Co-operating associations are relatively new in Canada, although they have operated in United States parks for a number of years. The *raison d'être* of a co-op association is, as the name implies, to give interested citizens a chance to work with Parks Canada to provide extra services to the public who visit national parks and historic sites. Parks Canada gives new associations a start-up grant, but each association operates as an independent non-profit organization.

Just what kind of 'extras' a co-op association offers varies from place to place. At Fortress of Louisbourg, for example, co-op members run an historic bakery, offer 'candlelight tours', and put on drumming demonstrations in period costume. At Point Pelee, volunteers have organized an Octo-birdfest, a cross-country ski workshop, and a camping weekend for the handicapped. Several co-ops also operate small sales outlets where they sell books on natural and human history as well as park-related souvenir items.

Friends of the Park will follow the lead of established co-ops and open a sales outlet at the Park this summer. In addition to a good inventory of books on natural and human history, we will offer a special publication on the life of Grey Owl, as well as a series of post-cards, and a set of hasti-notes featuring pen and ink sketches of the Park. A long-term goal of the group is to produce a series of publications including

a children's activity book; a pictorial history of the park, and a trail guide to Prince Albert National Park.

Although Friends of the Park is quite new, our numbers are quickly growing. Since our first public event last summer (an historic day at the park), we have signed up 90 members. The success of a co-operating association depends on the support of its members, and as the group becomes better known, we hope to involve many more people in proposed projects. Anyone who would like to become a member (for a nominal \$1.00/year fee) or volunteer time, or who has suggestions for future projects and events is encouraged to contact *Suzanne Henry*, Secretary, Friends of the Park, P.O. Box 11, Waskesiu Lake, Saskatchewan. S0J 2Y0 or call 663-5646.



*Kingsmere Lake,
P.A.N.P.*

Blake Maybank