



## AMA Lt. Governor's Award 2008

### Dr. Hugh Dempsey



Hugh Dempsey has made significant contributions to the cultural community in Alberta through his work in both museums and archives. Alberta born, Dempsey started his working career as a writer for the Edmonton Bulletin and for the Alberta Government. In 1956, he became the first archivist at the Glenbow-Alberta Institute. He was promoted to the position of Curator/Director in 1967. In 1991, Dempsey retired and was granted the title Chief Curator Emeritus.

Throughout his career, Dempsey wrote extensively, authoring and editing dozens of books and articles featuring the aboriginal and non-native history of Alberta. Through the research for his writing, Dempsey was always on the look out for unknown documents and photographs. Thousands of 'new' items now enhance the public holdings of the Glenbow Archives because of his dedication to compiling good resources belonging to the rich stories of Alberta's past.

From 1968 to 1970 Dempsey served as member of Council of the Canadian Museums Association and was chairman of its Publications Committee. He was a member of the accreditation committee of the American Association of Museums, 1980-91, and received an Award of Merit from the Alberta Museums Association in 1991.

His initial work in directing an archaeological investigation resulted in the discovery of the site of Fort Calgary and the ultimate preservation and development of this important historic site. He also served on the Alberta Historic Sites Board, 1980-86, and helped prepare legislation for historical preservation.

For a short while in 1958, Dempsey was President of the Historical Society of Alberta but relinquished that position to become the founding editor of the Society's journal *Alberta History*. Fifty years later, he is still its editor, working with authors, writing articles, and doing book reviews that provide a valuable venue for sharing Alberta's past.

In 1967, Dempsey was made an honorary chief of the Blood tribe and inducted into the Kainai Chieftainship, a group recognized for its dedication and assistance to First Nations people. Dempsey received the Order of Canada in 1975 and holds a honorary doctorate from the University of Calgary. He was given a honorary membership in the Archives Society of Alberta

in 2000 for the significant contribution of archival materials he has made over his career. In 2005, Dempsey was recognized with a one time centenary award by Canada's National History Society for his life achievements.

Throughout his life time, Hugh Dempsey has been most generous with his time, his knowledge and his sense of humour whether with a museum or archives project, a major historical film production, an author doing research for her or his next book, or a University student working on an assignment.

He and Pauline (Gladstone), his wife of more than 55 years, have five children.