



## HAL SHELTON

*June 20, 1916 to November 2, 2004*

### **CARTOGRAPHER, ARTIST, COMMUNITY ADVOCATE**

*Hal Shelton was born in 1916 in New York State and moved with his family at an early age to Southern California, where he grew up. His cartographic career began in 1938 after he graduated from Pomona College, California, with a degree in scientific illustration. He took a position with a USGS field topography team, starting out as a rod man conducting plane-table surveys. After one year with the USGS, he went back to college and received a Master of Arts degree in education, and took a teaching position with the San Diego school district. Because of his field mapping experience during World War II, Shelton was again employed by USGS, mapping areas considered strategically important in the western United States. However, he found that the map symbology he encountered was specialized and outdated. Being the artist, teacher, and by now a committed US government cartographer, he was determined to find a better way. Becoming a terrain artist, he improved the quantity and quality of shaded relief used on maps, emphasizing topographic form and relative elevation, as well as natural color rendering.*

*Shelton then turned his attention to painting panoramas of ski areas. His work included many of the major resorts in North America, his famous panorama "Colorado Ski Country," and a panorama of Grenoble, France, used by ABC-TV for the 1968 Olympics. The artistic and cartographic careers came full circle when the U.S. Library of Congress commissioned him to paint a landscape using the techniques he learned as a natural-color cartographer. The result was "Canyon Lands," which is now housed in the Library of Congress.*

*Settling in Colorado after the war, Hal and Mary raised four sons on "Studio Ranch" on Lookout Mountain near Golden. He was Captain of the Sheriff's mounted posse in the early 1950s, which helped rescue lost mountain hikers, and an elected member of the Jefferson County Board of Education from 1958 to 1969. He was the primary founder of the Foothills Art Center in 1968. His constant influence, guidance, and contributions for 36 years helped create the community art center we have today.*

*Hal Shelton was elected to the Jefferson County Historical Commission Hall of Fame in 2008.*