

Volume 45

Number 3



A quarterly newsletter from the

**Forest History
Association of Wisconsin, Inc.**

P.O. Box 424
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Fall 2020

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Are you willing to become more involved with the FHAW?

Looking for help with committees and special projects

Interested? Send your name and contact information to:
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Chips and Sawdust

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From The President's Chair

Greetings Folks,

Time for my 'final' offering of the President's message? Reality is that my 3-year term on the 'Board' is up at year end. Among the experiences a guy my age can claim is that of being a Viet Nam Vet. I recall taking in a conversation between a couple young soldiers and a seasoned NCO in early '68. They were talking about their individual DROS ---acronym that stood for 'Date of Rotation Overseas'. Deal was that those who went 'over' were committed to serve a year. People were prone to count the days before planned 'return' ---to the 'world' as they used to say. The Sgt taking in the conversation of these 19- 20 year olds---drew them up short. He had served in WW II ---told them in his day---you got to go home when the job got done. He said 'in the big war'---you were in 'for the duration'. As a Charter Member of FHAW----I will offer that I look forward to completing the roles I've had for the last 3 years, but I'm really also in 'for the duration'. Likely, the job we have with this organization goes on as long as there's a need to tell the story of learning/adaptation/and 'change' in our forests and our reliance on them for the quality of life we enjoy. I think change in staffing and ideas is important to the health of any organization. While I've enjoyed my opportunity to serve on the Board, I think that a healthy organization has a need to respect the prospect of continuing to recruit and engage new talent for the jobs that need to be done. Terms on the Board are set at 3 years. Given a continuing need to respect the time and energy required to do the work that comes in, we want to set a pattern of being able to respect talented folks having a willingness to serve for a set period of time. I think that sets a model for being truthful with folks asked to serve.

At the same time, it has to go with out saying that there's a lot more work that needs to be done. If life goes on in the human population and in the 'sustainable/renewable' forest---(per Chief Seattle, all of life really is connected)--we need to keep drawing in the skilled talent needed to keep the system going????? Can you believe there's more work to do than the nine folks on the board can do?? Just like the trees, we don't live forever. We need a constant resupply of new "workers"!! Given that we claim our mission consists of "Inform, Educate, Archive and Publish", I plan to shuffle off to a role to "Chair" a Committee that will deal with the Archival Process. My plan is to focus on the folks in the "Forestry Hall of Fame". The people who defined Eco-system Management, started the State Forestry Program and our National Forest, set up the County Forests program, set up the School Forest System, enabled "Trees for Tomorrow", set up Ranger Mac on the radio, set down the seeds for the Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association, and made the Industrial Forestry program in Wiscon-

sin a model for others to follow. The folks I am talking about constitute the Forestry Hall of Fame in Wisconsin. I plan to Chair a committee that will explore our current methods of taking in information for the archives, ---to serve who?---at what level of satisfaction? --how do we promote the information resource we have in our current archives to support research and policy development? We'll plan to draw in information from these populations we presume to serve and incorporate their advice to shape who we are and what we do. I have been here since 1976, and plan to be here for my duration. My Woodruff granddaughters go to a school that claims to be a center for Expeditionary Learning---they have a banner at the entrance that says---"We aren't just passengers, we're crew". That is me. I am on the 'crew', for the duration.

Maybe one of you is willing to sit down a pull on an oar? We can always use the help. Check in with us. We can always use whatever time/talent/energy you can offer.

John Grosman

COVID Pandemic Impacts Fall Conference New Appreciation for Technology

It was with some apprehension that the "2020 Fall Forest History Conference," originally set as a traditional gathering for September 17-19 at Trees for Tomorrow in Eagle River, was switched to being provided "virtually" via a Zoom video conferencing platform. It was not "the way it had always been done," but now that it's done, "It wasn't bad." Because everyone involved cooperated, producers, presenters and audience, the "Conference" made the best of the cards the pandemic dealt us, and in the process we gained a new appreciation of available technologies for providing additional educational events.

The opening event at Angler's Cove in Manitowish Waters was the only part of the intended program run as originally planned. With that, there was a bit of the one-to-one connecting typical for our annual get-togethers. Even with social-distancing and masks, dinner conversation and lunch were excellent. As was the superb talk provided by Jim Bokern on the beginnings of sustainable forestry and Wisconsin's first forest rangers.

Attendance at the opening event numbered about two dozen individuals, and considering the pandemic, that was a good turn-out. A really good turn-out. But if that was good, then attendance for the remaining webinar presentations was stupendous! The eight presentations delivered as webinars via Zoom were viewed live by 240 individuals. Of those about 40% were FHW members and the remaining 60% non-members. Some, maybe many, of the latter, learned about the webinars through promotions in local news media, social me-

dia and our organizational partners. All of which shared an invitation to the webinars, but also raised awareness of the FHAW itself.

Using Zoom conferencing, besides helping with overall greater attendance, featured the ability to create recordings of each presentation as given. Immediately after a webinar ended, a recorded version of that presentation was uploaded to the growing collection of videos on our FHAW YouTube Channel. Just the eight webinars from the fall conference series have been viewed an additional 132 times since the series ended last month.

Webinar attendees were able to provide feedback during and after the presentations. Those comments were overwhelmingly positive. Here is just a sampling of some of those received.

- *“I found the Sept-Oct webinars with papers originally meant for the 2020 annual meeting to be excellent. The presentations contained lots of historical, very relevant information about the many facets of WI forest history.” Jim*
- *“Recordings of these talks is a good way for FHAW to share the history of the forest. Good Move.” Karen*
- *“Very well done. I enjoyed it and hope you continue similar webinars in the future.” Tyler*

These and other comments concerning the recent fall conference webinar series will be considered when the board meets in December for a wrap-up conversation. For now, it appears that the last-minute change to a virtual format was well received by both FHAW members and non-members alike, and that experience gained from producing this series might well support establishing an on-going webinar effort for the Association.

Canceling the traditional conference format this year was a disappointment. We look forward to the time when we can again gather together safely; and that day will come again.

Whether in a virtual format, or face-to-face, the annual conference is one way the Association fulfills its mission to “Inform, Educate, Archive and Publish” our Wisconsin’s Forest History.

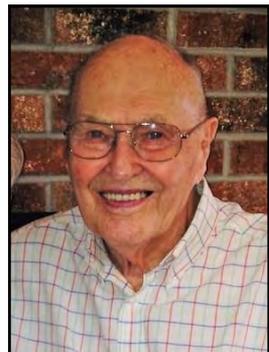
In Memoriam

Ralph G. Swanson
Recent Forest History Hall of Fame Inductee

Ralph G. Swanson, Winchester, Wisconsin, died peacefully on November 3, 2020.

The FHAW and Wisconsin forestry community helped friends and family celebrate Ralph’s 100th birthday on May 24, 2020 and his induction into the Forestry Hall of Fame on August 5, 2020.

Memorial donations may be sent to the Ralph and Harriet Swanson Endowed Scholarship Fund at Michigan Tech Fund, 1400 Townsend Dr., Houghton, Michigan 49931



Six Members of the Board of Directors Elected at Annual Meeting

Three FHAW board members' term of office were set to end this year, Bob Walkner, Don Schnitzler and John Grosman. John, choosing to step down from the board, recommended that Walkner and Schnitzler be re-elected by the membership. He also placed before them the name of Cynthia Stiles to succeed him on the board. Members then elected Walkner, Schnitzler and Stiles as members of the board of directors. Their new three-year term will end at the 2023 annual meeting.

The membership also formerly elected three board members appointed to fill board vacancies created since our 2019 meeting: Tom Jerow was elected to complete a term ending in 2021, and likewise elected Jane Severt and Ricky Kubicek to terms ending in 2022.

Cynthia (Cindi) Stiles Joins Board of Directors

Our newest elected board member, Cindi Stiles, has been a professional archaeologist for over 45 years, mostly in the Upper Midwest, and has worked extensively with the Native American tribes in Northern Wisconsin. She is a member of the board of directors for the Wisconsin Archaeological Society

Welcome to the FHAW Board of Directors.

Fixmer Award Announced

Don Schnitzler, a member of the Board of Directors since 2009, current newsletter editor and secretary, past president and vice president named 2020 Fixmer award recipient.

Approval of Expanded FHAW Board Membership

Members of the Association considered an amendment to the by-laws to increase the number of board positions from nine (9) to twelve (12) members.

The board of directors recommended the change as a means to expand representation of organizations with who we share some common purpose and to broaden our outreach with them. The additional directors will also allow for more sharing of the board's work.

With approval of the expanded board size, current officers and directors are recruiting individuals to fill these additional board positions. To maintain the orderly sequence of director elections, terms for the new directors will be staggered; with terms ending in 2021, 2022, and then 2023.

James Kerkman to Fill First of the New Board Positions

Longtime FHAW member, Jim Kerkman agrees to join Board of Directors.

Jim retired at the end of April 2020 after working 35 years as the Fort McCoy forester. He has been a member of the Governor's Council on Forestry since 2011 representing the interests of persons who are members of the Society of American Foresters.

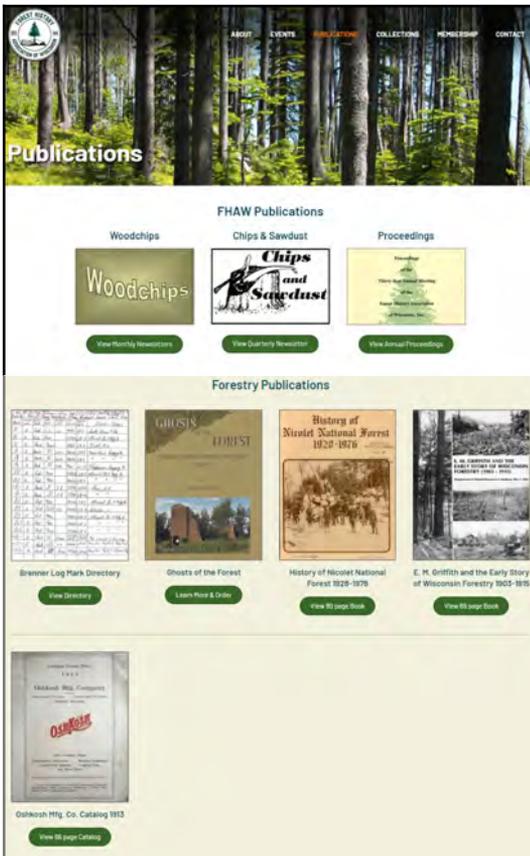
Welcome to the FHAW Board of Directors.

Archives Committee Meets

The new nine member Archives Committee met October 15th to discuss developing plans related to archiving nomination materials on Hall of Fame Inductees, FHAW historical records and more.

Additional Content Added to FHAW Website

<https://www.foresthistoryassociationwi.com/>



Forest History Association of Wisconsin website "Publications" page. At the top, links to the electronic Woodchips, Chips and Sawdust, and the Proceedings of Annual Meetings.

Oshkosh Mfg. Company Tool Catalog 1913 provided by Dan Giese. Within just the last month, under the same heading we were able to add Paul Brenner's Log Marks Directory, a 424-page listing of lumber inspector log marks for Wisconsin Lumber District #6. Because of its size it is divided into sections to make viewing faster and easier.

Recently, we've also created an area on the website to archive our older print publications, Chips and Sawdust and the existing Proceedings of the Annual Meetings of the Forest History Association of Wisconsin. Scanning these is-

The website is one of the important ways that members and public can interact with us. On its various pages we can explain our mission, offer news about upcoming events and share entertaining or informative content about various aspects of Wisconsin's forest history.

When the new website went live last year content included our recent quarterly newsletter, *Chips and Sawdust*; the monthly electronic newsletter, *Woodchips*; a few historic forestry publications, for example, *History of Nicolet National Forest 1928-1976*; and a collection of logging museum photographs.

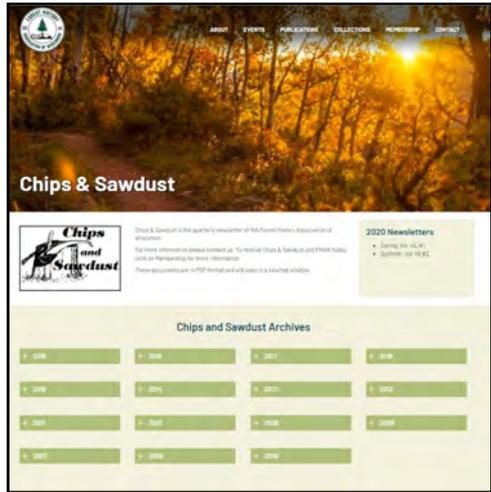
Recognizing that a website filled with valuable information is more likely to attract return visitors, we began adding new content to the site as it became available. Under the heading, "Publications," you may recall the addition last fall of an

sues will take some time, but you can follow our progress by watching this list of archived newsletters and proceedings build on the website.

In addition to the mentioned print materials recent additions include links to video recordings of each of the recently presented 2020 Wisconsin Forest History Conference Webinars. These links can be found on the homepage, as well as under “Collections” and video gallery.

A link to additional FHAW video recordings stored on the Association’s YouTube Channel can be reached by the small arrow icon at the bottom of the webpage.

We want the additional print, visual and video content added to the website to be both relevant and helpful to members and visitors. We believe the new content does add value, but any thoughts or suggestions to further improve its value would be greatly appreciated. Please share these with the association through its email address at thefhaw@gmail.com



“Chips and Sawdust Archives” page. Archived newsletters sorted by calendar year.



Above: Forest History Association of Wisconsin website 2020 Webinar Gallery.



Left: Webpage footer with links to the Association’s Facebook page and YouTube Channel circled.



From the Newspaper Archive



Lumberjack Tales

*(From the Wausau Daily Herald, Wausau, Wisconsin,
Wednesday, 20 Jan 1937, Page 6)*

(H. F. H. In Beloit News)

Here's a Paul Bunyan story that, unlike most of the yarns in this category, is true. Snow shovels are being used to turn the flannel cakes, or flapjacks, at the lumberjack's convention at Bemidji, Minnesota.

Paul Bunyan stories may have originated in the combination kitchens and mess halls of the old logging camps. In the logging camp museum at Rhineland-er is a model kitchen and mess hall which would interest and educate anyone who has not seen something similar. The giant utensils used by the rough and ready cooks as they prepared huge quantities of grub for the husky men of the woods might easily have started imaginations on trials of tall stories that grew taller and taller.

If the stories did originate in the kitchens, they were not told there, "No conversation" was the rule of the old logging camp mess halls, the Rhineland-er guide tells tourists and other visitors. Any woodsman who cast the discordant note of conversation into the sweet music made by stew and coffee suckers and hungry men clattering utensils against plates and bowls was ordered out, no matter how little he had eaten or how great his appetite.

The cook was absolute dictator in the kitchen-mess hall. And the cook still is, as anyone who has had one threaten to quit the afternoon before a big dinner party knows. What he (or rarely, she) said went, and there was no disputing it.

Reasons for the 'no conversation' rule were numerous. The Wisconsin woodsmen were an outspoken lot and the cooks seldom came directly from the Waldorf-Astoria hotel kitchens. The food probably was wholesome, filling stuff just the sort of thing needed to enlarge the biceps and make the hair grow on the gentlemen's chest but not any thing to anticipate with enthusiasm several hours before each meal.

The "no talking" idea made it rather difficult for the boys to express their feelings about the flannel cakes, stew and soggy boiled potatoes. With a loud chorus of 'boos' out of the question, there was nothing left to do but throw one's plate of food at the cook or walk away and leave it. This also was out of the question when one had many hours of back-breaking and muscle-straining work behind him.

Conversation among the loggers was not always of the type approved by our self-appointed and self-anointed social leaders. There probably was more truth, honesty and frankness in a logging camp bunkhouse conversation in five minutes than one could scrape together in a careful search through a hundred,

or perhaps even a thousand, drawing room conversations of the so-called elite.

If one ax-wielder thought another was a moth-eaten son-of-a-flea hound, just as like as not he'd bust right up to him and say so in as few and as effective words as possible. Then he'd stick out his chin and wait. He seldom had to wait long before he saw something that looked like a frozen ham with spikes sticking out from it moving at lightning speed in the direction of his chin. If he was fast and good on defense, as he generally was, the blow probably did not reach his chin. But the fight was on, no matter how far the other fellow's fist got.

The conclusion might be drawn from this that the boys would not have discussed Shakespeare, Chaucer, Wagner, Socrates and Plato over their plates. They would not have said, as they looked at Mrs. DePoppensputter's backless evening gown, "Isn't Mrs. Dee's spinal column just too artistic since she took those chiropractic treatments?" Because Mrs. Dee was not there and, if she had been, she would not have worn a backless evening gown in those days.

It is much more likely that one big bruiser would have said to another: "Hey, you overgrown palooka, Whatsa Idea of taking more stew than you're supposed to git?" It would have taken the cook a week to clean up the kitchen after the brawl which would have followed.

Another reason for "no talking" in the logging camp mess halls was that the woodsmen were of many different nationalities. Many of them could speak only a few words of English, so they conversed in their own language. You can see how it would have been for a cook who loved the peace and quiet of the great, white north to have been forced to listen to Norwegian, Swedish, Polish, Danish, German, Hungarian, Russian, liquid-sucking, lip-smacking, plate-clattering, and foot-shuffling all mixed together at one time.

Machines Fail to Replace This Veteran of Old Logging Days

*(From the Green Bay Press-Gazette, Green Bay, Wisconsin
Friday, 22 March 1940, Page 9)*

By James H. Straubel

Back in the days when they were lumbering Wisconsin and the saw mills were going full blast the men who filed the teeth on the saws were recognized craftsmen but prevalent enough to merely blend into the scene in the same manner that miles of timber "merged with the landscape.

Today, with steel and plastics and what have you enjoying the upper hand, saw-filing, country style, is fast becoming a lost art.

Now a saw is part of a machine, is machine made itself and can be machine sharpened with as tricky a gadget as you wish to see, but there's something about a hand sharpened saw, the Oldtimers agree, that is hard to beat. There's evidence that saw-filing by hand may outlast the men on the end of the file. In other words, old-time saw-filers are getting scarce.

Gets Liberal Education

Charles Miller, with heavy gray mustache and large strong frame at 61, is

one of the old-timers. At present he's temporarily confined to a bed at St. Vincent hospital with minor back and neck injuries received in an automobile accident here this week. This reporter went to the hospital to talk about the accident, wound up talking saw-filing, and received a liberal education.

It seems that saw-filers are getting on in years, are gradually dying out. Young men aren't taking up the trade. Miller, who lives outside Elkhart Lake, but for years had his little shop at New Holstein, doesn't like the looks of it.

"Saw-filing takes time and patience," says Miller from his hospital bed. "Quite often I spend a full day, sometimes more than that, on one saw. (He speaks of large circular saws now.) Young men seem to want to get into something they can speed up, seem to lack the patience for the work. You can't work fast and do a good job on a saw. It can't be done."

Miller started when he was 17, learned from an old master at the trade. "That was back when each mill had its separate saw room, its head-filer, with men under him. Today Miller "free lances," going from one mill or plant to the other, on order. He's proud of the fact that they used to bring saws to him at New Holstein from as far as 100 miles away. He didn't like the hospital stay, was scheduled to report at a Sheboygan plant yesterday, where the saws needed sharpening.

More Than Trade

Filing teeth on saws, setting them and hammering saws to give them greater tension—that's Miller's actual job—but it's all more than a trade to him. The precision in touch, the ability to know steel and what it is capable of, to have each saw-tooth in "tune," filing just the right edge, gauging the saw to the wood it will be used on it's hard to describe all that, and Miller couldn't do it, but he left an impression.

Perhaps it is overdoing it to say that Miller's file is a violinist's bow and the filing something of a symphony. Then again, maybe it's not. That sounds romantic. But saw-filing by hand is an art, and when you're talking art, trying to imagine what another's skill means to him without being able to appreciate it yourself, because you can't, without being able to feel it through actual work, you get to sound romantic.

A Thrilling: Incident in the Pineries of Northern Michigan

*(From the Lancaster Teller, Lancaster, Wisconsin
Thursday, 12 Mar 1885, Page 7)*

"For a young man I have done some pretty tough scrapping in the Rockies and mining regions of New Mexico and Arizona, but a few days ago I had the worst scare of my life in the lumber districts of Northern Michigan." The speaker was a young man of some twenty-seven years, dressed in rough-and-ready style and wearing a frizzy tow beard. He shifted the position of his broad shoulders as he lounged back in an easy chair in the Sherman House office, puffed his cigar vigorously, and, then continued: "It was one of those bitter cold days we've just been having, and I had got up at three o'clock to rouse the men

and get their sprinkler out. The air seemed full of blue steel and cut to my marrow like a razor. One of the teamsters got scared out and played off sick. So I had to take his place. When we had got a good, big load I took the reins and sat down on the butts of the logs, leaving the two loggers on behind. Of course about twenty feet of the load hung off the last bob. The road was a sheet of ice, for the sprinkler ran over it every morning, and the horses were sharp-shod, so we slid along smoothly until we got to the slide—a pretty steep incline ending in a turn which was mighty sharp for a road sixty feet wide. As soon as we started down my hair began to stand on end, for the horses galloped like fury to keep ahead of the bobs which were slewing all over the road. I got so paralyzed and nervous that when we approached the turn I reined in too suddenly. I felt the front bobs jump one way and the back bobs the other. The hind ends of the logs whistled through the air like willow switches, and I heard the loggers yell: For God's sake, ____ ____.' The next thing was snap! snap! like three tremendous paper-crackers — as the big log-chains broke, like so many cotton threads. Did you ever use a switch sling? Whirl it round and round your head, you know, till a sudden twist sends the apple on the end and spinning into the air? Well that is the way I felt and that is just what I thought of as I was shot off into the air, over and over and over, till I struck in a snow drift some hundred or more feet from the road. When I had struggled back through the snow I found the horses trying to kick loose from the few bits of harness that dangled about them, the bobs tangled around the trunk of a small pine tree, and the logs scattered to the four winds. One logger crawled back to the road with a fractured leg, and the other soon followed with a dislocated shoulder. One had struck a tree and the second had landed against a stump. They afterward told me, in camp that those things were not at all unusual, and, as I had some pretty heavy bruises myself, I concluded that I was not made to boss a lumber camp. So I was driven to town next day to telegraph the management that the head teamster was filling my place, and that I was on my way to Chicago: and you bet your life I am glad I did it. If you have never passed a winter in the Michigan lumber districts you don't know what trouble is. In the first place a man has to work from three in the morning till eight and sometimes eleven at night. My daily life, while I was fool enough to stay there, was something like tins: I kept store for twenty teamsters and bossed them at their work. I slept and ate in the only approximately clean place in the whole ranch—a little box built out into the big room and all lined with strong tobacco, curry-combs, socks, pins, buttons, buckwheat, kerosene and bad molasses. The box had no cover, so as I lay on the only quilt between me and the floor I could see the stars through the frosty cracks in the roof. The onions, beans, cabbages and a small keg of sauerkraut were stored just outside my door in the big room, which was heated red-hot by an immense open fireplace. At night the men would take off their soaking-wet rubber boots and stand them up by fire.

“Those were awful old days for me. I had almost sleepless nights, and then had to get up before daybreak, with the thermometer twenty or thirty degrees below zero, and, go about my work with a splitting headache, contracted in the foul air in which I had to pass the night. I am glad I am out of it. It is an unhealthy, dirty, dangerous business, and unless a man is in with the management there is no money in it. — *Chicago Tribune*.

One Mill Gang Wore Derbies

It May Have Been the Only Mill Crew in America
Which was Attired in Derby Hats

When Justin Hayes took over the Nieman, Pipkorn & Roehl Store in Hermansville in the 1920's he went over the stock and put slow moving items up for sale at reduced prices.

Among the items thus posted for bargain clearance was the store's large stock of derby

hats. They had been a very popular headpiece but about 1920 were in a lapse of mode, at least in Hermansville.

The derby hat, its felt stiffened with shell ac, had been around for a long time, bobbing up and down in fashion. For Sunday best wearing in Hermansville, where most men didn't dress up much, the derbies had sold fairly well and then fallen from favor and the store had scores of them on hand.

They were styled to suit all tastes in hardhats, some with low crowns, some with high, and the color range ran from buff through the browns to black-black.

The men working in both of the Wisconsin Land & Lumber Company's sawmills at Hermansville and also in its flooring factory there bought derbies when Justin Hayes put them on sale in his Hayes Mercantile Company Store for 50 cents each.

The accompanying picture from 1923 shows some of the members of the No. 2 (Hardwood) Mill in their bowlers.

One of the Hanson boys shortened the life of his derby when he doffed it while playing baseball to catch a fly ball. He scooped it expertly but it went right through the top of the derby, ventilating it permanently.

Probably nowhere else in the history of derbies and of America did a stock of them accumulate so much sawdust in their brims as the Nieman, Pipkorn & Roehl derbies of Hermansville. — Thanks to Randall Rohe for sharing this article from the IXL Historical Museum, Hermansville, Michigan.

Did you know ... The IXL Historical Museum is a historic office building, residence, and museum complex. The main building was constructed as the headquarters for the Wisconsin Land & Lumber Company during the early 1880s.



The hardwood mill gang sporting the derby hats they bought on sale for 50 cents at the Hayes Mercantile Company store, 1923.

46th Annual Conference

Committee

Bob Walkner
Jerry Theide

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Brad Casselberry
Neil Prendergast

Forest History Association of Wisconsin, Inc.

Membership Application

Please enroll me as a member and participant in the Association's program of developing the educational and historical aspects of Wisconsin's forestry and logging industry. Attached is payment for:

_____ Student Membership (\$10.00)	Other Contributions:
_____ Individual Membership (\$20.00)	
_____ Family Membership (\$30.00)	\$ _____ Student Awards
_____ Non Profit Membership (\$30.00)	\$ _____ Capital Fund
_____ Corporate Membership (\$55.00)	\$ _____ Operations
_____ Individual Life Membership (\$250.00)	

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone Number _____

E-mail Address _____

Detach and mail this application with payment to:

**Forest History Association of Wisconsin, Inc.
P.O. Box 424, Two Rivers, WI 54241-0424**





Forest History
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