

Volume 35

Number 3



A quarterly newsletter from the

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

P.O. Box 424
Two Rivers, WI 54241-0424

Summer 2010

Officers and Directors 2009—2010

Sara Witter Connor
President

P.O. Box 366
Laona, WI 54541

Don Schnitzler
301 S. Cedar Avenue
Marshfield, WI 54449
Schnitzler.donald@charter.net

Dr. John Kotar
Vice President
2662 W. Princeton Avenue
Eau Claire, WI 54703
jkotar@wisc.edu

Beverly West
35 Ridgeroad Drive
Stevens Point, WI 54481-4377
(715) 344-7818
nain@charter.net

Bob Walkner
Treasurer
3103 Maplewood Road
Two Rivers, WI 54241
(920) 793-4010
anvils@charter.net

Thomas Albrecht
N6031 Opperrman Way
Shawano, WI 54166
(715) 526-6728
albrechts@frontiernet.net

Dudley D. Pierce
Secretary
Watersmeet, MI
dudleypierce@charter.net

Dan Giese
976 Coppens Road
Green Bay, WI 54303-3865
(920) 497-8236
dgiese8028@aol.com

Ray Noffke
1434 E. College Avenue
Appleton, WI 54915-2749
(920) 739-1997

David Peschau
W5733 Sherwood St.
LaCrosse, WI 54601
dpeschau@compuserve.com

Forest History Association of Wisconsin members are encouraged to submit items of interest for this newsletter to the editor:

Don Schnitzler
Editor
301 S. Cedar Avenue
Marshfield, WI 54449
(715) 897-7260
Schnitzler.donald@charter.net

Chips and Sawdust

Volume 35. Number 3

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Please Join Us . . .

35th Annual
Forest History Association
of Wisconsin Conference

**St. Brendan's Inn and Hotel Sierra,
Green Bay, Wisconsin**

September 23, 24, & 25, 2010



From The President's Chair

Dear Friends,

Not only is the Green Bay Conference a joint meeting with the Forest History Society Board of Directors, but it is the FHW 35th Anniversary!! Come and celebrate this occasion with us!! We have terrific speakers, activities, food, and fun!!

Speakers include Paul DeLong - WDNR State Forester; Michael Edmonds, author of Paul Bunyan; Bill Mathias, author of Monster Fire at Minong; Fred Bessler, the story of "Mossie"; Frank Hitz, with his incredible database; and Fred Brechler, the story of the Marathon Fire Tower. (Fire seems to be a theme???) The tour includes Heritage Hill and Peshigo.

See the Registration Form and Schedule enclosed! Sign up now! See you in Green Bay!

The summer is rushing past us! Family - a new grandson! Visits from friends and working hard to make this 35th Annual Conference a huge success!

See you soon!

Sincerely,
Sara Connor



Heard from Our Members

Request for Information About Knapp-Stout Lumber Company

Information related to this company has been found scattered in bits and pieces in a host of museums, publications, and even Supreme Court decisions but as of now I cannot find a complete document on the company, its lands or its operations. While there are bios of Mr. Knapp and Mr. Stout along with other company leaders readily available these bios fall well short of a complete description of the company and its activities. Do any readers of the "Chips and Sawdust" know of any book or other document which describes this company (even portions of what could be such a document)?

The company operated from approximately 1846 to 1910 in the Chippewa and Red Cedar River drainages and was based around over 100,000 acres of company owned land.

If a rather complete book or other paper has not been written on this company I may attempt to do so over the next couple of winters. Given the scope of this potential project it would be very time consuming so I do not wish to embark on it if its merely repeating what has already been done. Writing is hard work!

Thanks for any help you can provide.

Ed Forrester
2484 11¼ Street
Cumberland, WI 54829
Edforrester@centurytel.net

Mark Your Calendar

Second World War II Glider Symposium

Marriott Madison West
1313 John Q Hammons Drive
Middleton, WI 53562
September 9-11, 2010

For more information visit—<http://www.2ndwwiiglidersymposium.org/>

Wisconsin Historic Sawmills—A Database Created by Frank Hitz

Introduction

This database is “primarily” a research and study tool. However, when viewed as a “whole”, a large collection of sawmills, it represents “one view” of history of Wisconsin sawmilling, especially from 1875 to 1905. The database includes sawmills from 1809 to 2000, however the bulk of data represents the Pine Period.

It could be a starting point for individual history or genealogy research based on sawmill history. In the pursuit of source material, there is significant information for further research, in the author's reference library, including about ten volumes of copied Lumberman Trade Journal pages.

The data is a “window” of information of what has been “found” to date. For example, the “First Year” column may not necessarily be the first year of a mill's existence. It is just the first year a mill was “found”, and reported by a source, such as a Trade Journal Production report. Many mills have been found in numerous years and it may imply the first and last years of existence and further research is suggested. Some mills have had numerous owner's and their trace-ability is included.

The information tells a story of the historic sawmill business of Wisconsin. It identifies a great many mills, the places and the times they existed. It identifies the courageous pioneers who risked life, limb and fortune in a harsh wilderness to make lumber, sawdust and often little profit. It opened the pristine Wisconsin “Northwoods” to settlement, like in the “wild-wild west”, at first. A few mills lasted into today, but the history of most of the rest did not. Thus it is, a likelihood, this extensive listing, with many “never heard mills of” will be revealed. The database contains a collection of names, with over 100 dating prior to the start of the Civil War, in 1861.

After the Civil War, it was the sawmills that created almost every village and town that exists today, north of a line from Manitowoc to La Crosse. Thus, the towns and places revealed, and the years when the mills existed depicts an interesting chronology of the Northern Wisconsin historical expansion.

Program and Contents

The database contains 34 computer “Fields” (Columns) and 2,588

Records (Rows). Each record includes the Business Name, Owner Name(s), the Location (in numerous Fields) and the Years, First and Last that the Mill was operating, plus Fields of related information.

The data represents what has been found, and may not represent the total years of operation of any mill. The years in the, "First Year" and "Last Year", Fields may not represent the beginning or end of a mill's existence.

Each mill is located by a town or "place", the county, a nearby creek or river, a watershed (or river valley), and an area. Each mill record has two reference fields, one for the initial source and one for all the sources (Ref All). There are other fields used for managing data, for searching and for categorizing data. The (Ref All), "Reference All" Field, also contains all the references and each of the years is separate, using a somewhat tricky process.

There is a total of 2,588 mill records in this version of the database with mills from the years 1809 to 2000. About half of the records, 1,514 mills (about 60%) are from the period of 1874 through 1899, the Pine Harvest Period, although many mills continued to saw pine past 1905.

The database contains mills located in 67 of the 72 Wisconsin counties and 823 towns or places. A few places, may not be towns, but were temporary settlements. There are also 79 mills from places which have not been located to date, identified as "unknown" in the county.

The database contains numerous "successor", owners. The total of 2,588 records contain 2,275 records of "unique" mills and 313 successor mills. Some mills have changed hands or names, as many as seven times. A separate "Successor" field is used to identify them. For example, S002c, is the third successor of a mill S002. About 95%, were lumber sawmills and the rest were shingle mills.

The computer is programmed in two database programs. The MS Access Program and the Lotus Smart Suite, IBM Approach Program.

Please Note: Frank Hitz has graciously agreed to provide further details of his amazing "Wisconsin Historic Sawmills" database during our 35th Annual FHAW Conference in Green Bay on Saturday, September 25th. Please join us there! Frank will gladly answer any questions you might have about this tremendous research tool.



From the Newspaper Archives



The Recorder

• Foster Biography

The following biographical sketch of N.C. Foster, apparently published some years before his death (which occurred March 16, 1923) was made available through the courtesy of one of his two surviving daughters, Mrs. H.H. Thomas of Minneapolis and appeared in the Marshfield News-Herald Column, "The Recorder" on October 18, 1947. It is presented here for your information.

"Nathaniel Cadwell Foster was born in Owego, Tioga County, New York, January 6, 1834 and was descended from prominent New England ancestors, the son of Willard and Lovicea (Pickering) Foster. He attended the common schools of his native county. His father, Willard Foster, owned a sawmill which was part of the house in which he and his family lived. Of Mr. Foster, it might be said that he was born in a sawmill. He gave it the appropriate name of "Thundershower Mill" because it was run by a water wheel and located on a mountain rivulet, which furnished the necessary power only after a rain. The first work that Mr. Foster remembers doing was building fires in the schoolhouse during the winter. He carried live coals from his home in order to save matches.

"Mr. Foster moved west in 1854 and located at Fort Howard, now

Green Bay. He went to Buffalo by way of the Erie road and took the steamer Michigan to Fort Howard. After his arrival there he worked for two years for C.R. Tyler, who owned a water mill on the Oneida Reservation and a steam mill on Duck Creek. In 1850 Mr. Foster bought an interest in both mills, and bought his trees from the Indians. That was in the days of abundance when a great portion of the tree which is now carefully husbanded was left in the woods. The Indians never cut more than two or three logs from a tree, and they delivered these at the mill for from \$2 to \$2.50 a thousand feet. These operations were interrupted by an altercation with the government concerning purchase of logs from the Indians and the government prosecuted the mill men, but N.C. Foster won his case.

"In 1878, he moved to Fairchild, Wisconsin, and purchased large tracts of timber land in Eau Claire and Clark counties, the timber from this land furnishing the supply for his large mills at Fairchild, which were erected in 1877 at an outlay of \$100,000. The plant had a capacity of 125,000 feet of timber daily, besides 14,000,000 shingles and 6,000,000 lath per season; and employed a force of 26 men. In July, 1891, his various interests were incorporated under the name, N.C. Foster Lumber Company, with N.C. Foster, president, and his two sons, E.J. Foster and G.A. Foster, vice-president and secretary-treasurer. They continued

65th Annual Lake States

Logging Congress & Equipment Expo

Green Bay Packers Lambeau Field Parking Lot and Shopko Hall,
Green Bay, Wisconsin

September 9, 10, & 11, 2010

SHOW HOURS

Thursday, September 9 - Noon - 5:00 p.m.

Friday, September 10 - 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, September 11 - 8:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

For more information visit—<http://www.timberpa.com/>

Admission Just \$10 For All Three Days

this business until 1906. The company also carried on a general merchandise business which was later sold to the Farmer's Mutual Trading Company, incorporated in 1903, with N.C. Foster, president. He was also president of the Farmer's Cooperative Supply Company at Greenwood, which began operations in 1898, and founded the First National Bank of Fairchild.

"Mr. Foster is one of few, if not the only man in the United States, who ever built a railroad without mortgaging it for a single dollar. In 1882, he built 45 miles of railroad from Fairchild to Mondovi, which he used for hauling logs and which was the first road devoted to this purpose built in Wisconsin. It was chartered in 1886

and afterwards sold, and is now known as the Mondovi branch of the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Omaha Railroad. His original log railroad, consisting of 22 miles from Fairchild to Owen, where it connects with the Soo Railroad, put in operation in 1903, was built by Mr. Foster for the N.C. Foster Lumber Company. In 1913 he built the Fairchild & Northeastern from Fairchild to Cleghorn, a distance of 28 miles. In addition, Mr. Foster has been largely interested in real estate, selling land to actual settlers, mostly in Clark County."

"Note: After his death, the Town of Foster, created from a portion of the Town of Mentor, was named for him."

Civil War Commission Formed In Wisconsin

The Wisconsin Veterans Museum, under the direction of the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs (WDVA), is pleased to announce the formation of the Wisconsin Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission to honor the legacy, service and sacrifice of Wisconsin's citizen-soldiers.

From 1861 to 1865, Wisconsin sent over 91,000 men to fight, and suffered over 12,000 casualties. Known for their tenacity, leadership and skill on the battlefield, Wisconsin regiments were some of the most highly decorated and regarded of the war.

The Wisconsin Veterans Museum has long been the state's interpreter of the Civil War. Its award-winning galleries highlight the service and sacrifice of Wisconsin soldiers at Antietam, Gettysburg, and other epic battles, while its diverse educational programs showcase important Civil War topics. WDVA and its Museum are uniquely positioned to play a leading role in the Wisconsin Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission.

The Wisconsin Civil War Sesquicentennial Commission will bring together Wisconsin's museums, libraries, historical societies and veterans' organizations to develop educational programming, encourage exploration of Wisconsin's role in the war, and make resources available to the public.

"As the state's official military history museum and archives, it is a privilege to work with other Wisconsin historical institutions to bring this rich history to life," says Michael Telzrow, Director of the Wisconsin Veterans Museum. "It is an honor to take a leading role in forming this Commission."

Lance Herdegen, noted Civil War historian and former Director of the Institute for Civil War Studies at Carroll College in Waukesha, has been appointed as the Commission's Provisional Chairman. A highly regarded Civil War scholar, Herdegen authored the book *Those Damned Black Hats: The Iron Brigade in the Gettysburg Campaign*. He has worked closely with both the Wisconsin Veterans Museum and the Kenosha Civil War Museum in developing programs and exhibits.

WDVA anticipates working with other state agencies, including the Department of Tourism, to promote this unique commemoration. The sesquicentennial will be commemorated between 2011 and 2015.



35th Annual Conference and Meeting

Forest History Association of Wisconsin

September 23 - 25, 2010

Green Bay, Wisconsin

Tour Historical Sites!

Great Lectures!

Silent and Live Auctions!

Hotel Accommodations — *Reserve Your Rooms Early!*

Hotel Sierra

333 Main Street
Green Bay, Wisconsin 54301

(920) 432-4555

Double Queen Suite \$99.00
King Suite \$109.00

*Mention rooms being held for the
FHAW and ask about
this special room rate when calling to
reserve your room.*

Rooms blocked for the FHAW until
September 3, 2010

St. Brendan's Inn

234 South Washington Street
Green Bay, WI 54301

(866) 604-7474

Standard Room \$89.50
Snug \$79.50 Suite \$99.50

Each room has a Queen-sized bed and
whirlpool bath

*Mention rooms being held for the
FHAW and ask about
this special room rate, when calling to
reserve your room.*

Rooms blocked for the FHAW until
August 23, 2010

Schedule-at-a-Glance

35th Annual Conference and Meeting

Forest History Association of Wisconsin — Green Bay, Wisconsin

Thursday, September 23, 2010 (at St. Brendan's Inn)

- 4:00 p.m. Board Meeting at St. Brendan's Inn
- 5:30 p.m. Reception (cash bar) and book signing
- 6:30 p.m. Dinner and Keynote Address by Michael Edmonds

Friday, September 24, 2010

- 8:20 a.m. Bus departs St. Brendan's Inn
- 8:30 a.m. Bus departs Hotel Sierra to Heritage Hill State Park Museum
- 9:00 a.m. Lecture: Paul DeLong, "The State of Wisconsin Forests"
- 9:35 a.m. Lecture: Tom Gaertner, "The Forest Exploration Center — an Update"
- 10:00 a.m. Tour Heritage Hill
- 12:10 p.m. Bus departs Heritage Hill for Peshtigo (rolling auction)
- 1:00 p.m. Lunch
- 1:30 p.m. Lecture: Bill Mathias, "Monster Fire at Minong"
- 2:10 p.m. Tour Peshtigo Fire Museum, Cemetery, and Harbor
- 4:15 p.m. Bus departs Peshtigo for Green Bay (rolling auction)
- 5:30 p.m. Cash Bar and auction preview, Black and Tan Restaurant
- 6:30 p.m. Dinner and auction, Black and Tan Restaurant

Saturday, September 25, 2010 (at Hotel Sierra)

- 9:00 a.m. Coffee and rolls
- 9:00 a.m. Lecture: Fred Brechler, "Marathon Fire Tower"
- 9:35 a.m. Lecture: Fred Beseler, "The De Havilland Mosquito"
- 10:05 a.m. Break
- 10:20 a.m. Lecture: Frank Hitz, "Wisconsin Historic Sawmills"
- 10:45 a.m. FHAW membership meeting
- 11:30 a.m. FHAW lunch, Hotel Sierra

(Forest History Society Board of Directors will meet at St. Brendan's Inn Saturday)



FHAW 35th Annual Meeting Registration Form



Detach along line

Name(s) _____

Address _____

City/State _____ **Zip** _____

Phone (____) _____ Email _____

Registration - \$20 **\$20**

Thursday, September 23, 2010

Reception (Cash Bar) and Book Signing

Dinner & Keynote, Michael Edmonds, WI Historical Society

• St. Brendan's Pub and Inn **\$25** _____

Choose one Entrée for each person:

Pecan Chicken _____ • Pan Seared Orange Roughy _____

Seared Roasted Strip Steak _____ • Vegetarian (\$20) _____

Friday, September 24, 2010

Bus Tour to Heritage Hill State Historical Park & Peshtigo Tour

• Admission to Heritage Hill **\$6** _____

• Admission to the Peshtigo Fire Museum - *Donation Suggested*

• Bus **\$10** _____

• Lunch & Lecture by Bill Mathias - Monster Fire at Minong **\$14** _____

• Cocktails - Cash Bar

• Dinner and Auction at Black and Tan

Choose one Entrée for each person:

Ribeye - \$34 _____ • Salmon - \$30 _____

Pork Tenderloin - \$24 _____ • Vegetarian - \$18 _____

Saturday, September 25, 2010

Coffee and Rolls **\$5** _____

Lunch at the Sierra Hotel **\$12** _____

**All meal prices include tax and gratuity.*

TOTAL: _____

Detach along line



Make checks payable to FHAW & send to:
Bob Walkner
3103 Maplewood Road
Two Rivers, WI 54241



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 (\$5.00)
- Individual Membership (\$15.00)
- Family Membership (\$25.00)
- Non Profit Organization Membership (\$25.00)
- Corporate Membership (\$50.00)
- Individual Life Membership (\$250.00)

Other Contributions:

- \$ Student Awards
- \$ Capital Fund
- \$ Operations



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

Detach along line

Committee Chairs

35th Annual Conference

September 23-25, 2010

Green Bay, Wisconsin

Membership

Bob Walkner

3103 Maplewood Road

Two Rivers, WI 54241

(920) 793-4010

anvils@charter.net

FHAW Website

Dan Giese

976 Coppens Road

Green Bay, WI 54303-3865

(920) 497-8236

Newsletter

Don Schnitzler

301 S. Cedar Avenue

Marshfield, WI 54449

schnitzler.donald@charter.net

Exhibits

Miles Benson

2511 Lovewood Drive

Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494

(715) 423-4203

mkbens@charter.net

Publicity Committee

David Peschau

W5733 Sherwood St.

LaCrosse, WI 54601

dpeschau@compuserve.com

Annual Proceedings Editor

Dr. John Kotar

2662 W. Princeton Avenue

Eau Claire, WI 54703

jkotar@wisc.edu

Forestry Hall of Fame

Representative

Sara Connor

P.O. Box 366

Laona, WI 54541

Scholarship & Distinguished

Service Awards

Michael Sohasky

1435 Neva Road

Antigo, WI 54409

(715) 627-1025

sohasky@verizon.net

Awards Committee

Auction Committee

Archives

The post office will not forward bulk 3rd class mail.
Please inform the membership chair of any change in address.

Bob Walkner

3103 Maplewood Road

Two Rivers, WI 54241

920- 793-4010

anvils@charter.net



Forest History
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