

A Newsletter
From
Forest History
Association of Wisconsin, Inc.
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November 1991

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Editor's Notes

Despite the inclement weather, our 16th annual meeting at Medford, October 5-6, proved highly successful. Those in attendance heard a number of very interesting papers, most of which were illustrated with slides. Thanks to the speakers, the planning committee, the Medford VFW staff and everyone else who helped ensure another successful annual meeting.

At the banquet Saturday night, the association presented its annual distinguished service award to an individual to Milt Reinke and its distinguished service award to a group to the Price County Historical Society. Despite a limited number of auction items compared to previous years, our fourth annual auction brought in over \$450.00. Thanks to all of those who donated items. Much of the credit for the success of this year's auction must go to Mike Sohasky who did an excellent job as a first-time auctioneer. It's not too early to start planning for next year's auction. Please be on the lookout for books, relics, photos, and other logging and lumbering memorabilia. Other antiques would be welcome as well. We definitely need to increase the quantity and quality of auction items if we hope to continue to have successful auctions.

Please consider giving a FHAW membership as a Christmas gift to a relative, co-worker, or friend or to your local historical society or library. Send requests for gift memberships to Frank Fixmer.

Randall Rohe, Editor

In Memoria

EG. Wilson, 1887-1991

A nationally renowned pioneer of Wisconsin forestry passed away when Frederick G. Wilson died on August 26, 1991 in Madison at the age of 103 years.

Wilson was the first forest ranger hired by the State Board of Forestry in 1911. He then became the guiding force behind the state's early programs of reforesting the cutover of the North and of protecting that region from further devastation by fire.

He established the first state-operated tree nursery in 1913 at Trout Lake. Now after seven periodic thinnings, it's a showcase plantation. Wilson also supervised the building of the first system of fire lookout towers and organized improved fire protection forces.

When the state's forestry program was declared unconstitutional in 1915, Wilson left for British Columbia but returned to Wisconsin in 1922 to become the University of Wisconsin's first extension forester. In that capacity he crusaded for land use zoning throughout northern Wisconsin, resulting in the first rural zoning ordinances in the United States.

Wilson's report to the 1929 Legislature resulted in the establishment of the county forest reserve program. He always considered that to be his crowning achievement but he also was instrumental in getting legislation passed which gave the state its first forest tax laws, thereby encouraging many

private landowners and forest products industries to practice forestry. Both of these innovative programs still exist over 60 years later.

Wilson's many contributions to the advancement of forestry in Wisconsin were recognized by numerous awards. Among them were his election as a Fellow of the Society of American Foresters, his induction into the Wisconsin Forestry Hall of Fame and the naming of the state tree nursery at Boscobel as the F.G. Wilson Nursery.

Of special interest to members of the Forest History Association of Wisconsin is the fact that Fred Wilson was a charter member as well as a Life Member of the Association and had received its Distinguished Service Award in 1982. His obituary in the *Wisconsin State Journal* in Madison the day after his death specifically stated that memorials could be donated to the Association, which he had generously supported financially. The Board of Directors will decide at its May meeting how the memorial fund's investment income may best be used to commemorate Wilson's achievements and contributions to the state's forest heritage.

J.N. (Bud) Fisher

Former Appleton resident, FHAW member, and well known lumber man died in early July in Phoenix after suffering a massive heart attack. Fisher was born June 10, 1898 in Kewick, England to John and Margaret (Fightfoot) Fisher. In 1914 Fisher was working for an auditing firm in Chicago which took over the affairs of the semi-defunct Jones Lumber Co. Fisher moved to Appleton as treasurer of the firm and became President in 1932. He purchased the company soon after and renamed it the J.N. Fisher Lumber Co. with a mill in

Waubeno, Wisconsin. He operated the mill for ten years until forced to close it for lack of timber. In 1926 Fisher met an Appleton kindergarten teacher, Margaret Kramer. They were married September 3, 1927 in Waukesha, Wisconsin. They had two children, Margaret Ann (Peggy) and John William (Skip). In 1947 Fisher bought the Wyoming Tie & Timber Co. in Dubois, Wyoming. He renamed the company the J.N. Fisher Tie & Lumber Co. Fisher built a beautiful log home on the Wind River in Dubois and moved his family from Appleton in 1949. In 1964 Fisher sold the lumber mill and their home in Dubois. He retired, and he and his wife moved to Phoenix, Arizona where they enjoyed their retirement. Fisher is survived by his wife, Mildred; a daughter, Peggy (Fisher) Steward, Redwood City, California; and five grandchildren. Fisher was preceded in death by his son, Major John William Fisher, who was killed in action in July 1970 while serving his second tour of duty in Vietnam. Private cremation services were held in Phoenix at the time of Fisher's death. A memorial service will be held at the Sunset/Camelback Mortuary in Phoenix.

(The Post-Crescent, October 2, 1991)

Members in the News

At its annual meeting in Eau Claire, the State Historical Society of Wisconsin presented Book Awards of Merit to a number of state writers for books published in the preceding year. They included the works of two FHAW members:

Patricia Schroeder, Park Falls, and the Committee for Research on Rural Schools in Price County, "Country School

Recollections II," second volume in a project about the county's rural and village schools.

Michael Goc, Friendship, "Many a Fine Harvest: Sauk County 1840-1990."

John Saemann, Marinette, received the prestigious John Macon Award at the September meeting of the Wisconsin Society of American Foresters, for his contributions to the advancement of forest management during his tenure as county forest administrator for Marinette County from 1946 to 1973.

Christy Hauge, Stevens Point, was recipient of the Distinguished Service Award from the Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association, for his dedicated efforts on behalf of that association, the Maple Syrup Producers Council, the Langlade County Forest and the Society of American Foresters.

Pat Crawford, Shawano, was featured in "Loggers World," a Pacific Northwest forest industries publication, as an inventor and manufacturer of his feller-buncher sold under the name of "Timbco Hydraulics, Inc." The lengthy illustrated article details Crawford's innovative machine and its operational advantages.

Robert Engelhard, Stevens Point, was appointed as executive director of the Wisconsin Woodland Owners Association at its annual meeting in Madison. The new office of that association is now located in the College of Natural Resources, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, P. O. Box 285, Stevens Point, WI. 54481; Phone (715) 346-4798.

Lloyd Godell, Green Bay, as chairman of the Wisconsin Tree Farm Committee, presented that organization's annual

tree-farmer-of-the-year award to Jack and Jane Edson of rural Strum, WI. in Eau Claire County.

Largest Log Load

A Minnesota Logging Company Claim[s] to Have Beat the Record in One of Their Camps

A Unique Logging Road

Champion Load Contained 43,210 Feet and was Hauled 14 Miles by Six Horse Team.

The A.J. Irvine logging camps at Pine Island, Minn., claim several distinctions that are unique and interesting as well in the history of northern logging industry.

The Irvine company claims the distinction of having built and maintained for four months one of the most remarkable logging roads ever constructed. Fourteen miles in length as level as a prairie road and staked and ridged with evergreens along its entire length it cost a very great deal of money.

Over this road the largest load of logs ever hauled in America was recently hauled by a six-horse team and landed at the Little Tamarac river. The load was loaded by Bronk Mcbanimim, an old-time logger, was scaled by Rod McLeggen, and the state's figures on the load show a total of 43,210 feet. The logs averaged about twenty-one to the thousand feet and the first sleigh carried a load of 18,160, the first trailer 15,040, and the second 10,010. (*Weekly Eagle-Star*, April 5, 1904)

Lumber Rafting in the Chippewa

In 1916 the *Eau Claire Leader* carried a series of articles by former lumbermen and loggers. One of them, by Patrick Gunn, in the April 12 issue, concerned the making of lumber rafts.

Another veteran has consented to furnish reminiscences of early lumbering days on the Chippewa river. Patrick Gunn is eighty-three years of age. For a full half century he worked on the keel boats and lumber rafts of the Red Cedar and Chippewa rivers. Although hardly in physical condition now to pole a keel boat or pull an oar on a lumber raft his mind is still keen and his memory clear concerning those early days and we are certain our readers will be interested in his story.

Mr. Gunn's Story

I was born in the year 1833, in Fermanagh county, Ireland, near Belfast, and at the age of sixteen emigrated to America, landing at New Orleans in the spring of 1849. From there I went to Galena, Ill., where my first employment was with a farmer. Galena was at that time the center of a lead mining industry. After working for the farmer a short time I commenced working in the mines, and continued to work in the mines and around the furnaces for several years. In the spring of 1856 with a man by the name of McCabe, and another by the name of Call, I started up the Mississippi river toward the pineries of Wisconsin. The term pineries was the only one used in those days, as pine was the only timber considered worth cutting. This man McCabe had been up river before, having worked the year previous for Knapp, Stout & Co. on the Red Cedar, and he

was our guide. We went on foot, following along the bank of the Mississippi river until we reached Reads Landing at the mouth of the Chippewa. We crossed the Chippewa on a ferry just above Read's and from there followed a wagon road, striking the Chippewa again at Dead Lake. From there we went on to Dunnville, crossing the Red Cedar at this point, and then followed the Knapp, Stout & Co. wagon road to their mills at what is now Menomonie. It was not much of a place in those days. The company had been operating a small mill on Wilson Creek and another on Gibert Creek but when we arrived there they had just completed a larger mill on the site of the still later big mill. Of the mill on Wilson creek they used to tell the story that they had a head sawyer named McMahon, a strict sabbath observer, who would not run the mill on that day so when Sunday came around Billy Wilson would take charge and in this way the mill was kept running seven days in the week.

My principal employment was rafting and about the first work I did after reaching the Knapp, Stout & Co. mill was with another man to run the cribs of lumber down from the mill to Dunnville, where they were taken in charge by another crew, and when floated out into the Chippewa were made up into full size rafts. The Red Cedar river below the mill was narrow, with a number of rocky rapids. We could only take down a single "string," four cribs in length, with an oar mounted at the front and rear ends of the string. In one place called "Rappity Cross" there was barely room between the rocks to allow a crib to pass. It required skill and hard work to keep off the rocks, and when this happened the string of cribs would swing around and stick on the bar, [then] there was nothing else to be done but to uncouple the cribs and hand-spike them off as best we could. If we had no mishap we could run the cribs down to Dunnville in about three and one half hours. We would then walk back to the mill, to make another trip.

How Rafts Were Made

I will now describe the making up of lumber cribs and of the completed raft. The rafting shed was built on the river bank, on a lower level than the mill, and the lumber was run down from the mill on a roller track. The standard size of a crib was 16 ft. by 32 ft., and they were built on a tilting platform, so that when the crib was completed the platform could be tipped up and the crib slid down into the water. There were several of these tilting platforms in the rafting shed to allow some grading of the lumber, but about three grades were all there were made at that time. Culls were seldom sent down river in the real early lumbering days.

In building a crib of lumber, three planks, one at each side and one in the middle, running lengthwise of the crib, were first laid down. These were called the "standboards," or "grub planks." In these planks holes were bored about 2 inches in diameter, into which grub pins were placed with the head of the grub pin under the plank and the point sticking up. The holes were enlarged or reamed out on the under side, and the head of the grub pins rounded off so that they would not catch on the river bottom. After setting the standboards cross planks with holes bored to allow them to be dropped down over the grub pins, were next put in place. These two sets of planks formed the bottom framework for the crib. The lumber was then laid down in courses, part lengthwise and part crosswise until the proper number of courses had been laid, depending on the stage of water. On top of those another set of planks corresponding to the bottom framework were dropped down over the grub pins. The grub pins were usually made of small iron woods, turned in a lathe made for the purpose and were from 32 to 38 inches long.

After the upper binding planks were dropped in place an implement called a "witch" was used to press them down tightly. The witch consisted of a long lever with a ring at the end to slip down over the grub pin. The ring was slightly larger than the grub pin and was made of square iron. By

placing a block on the binder plank and under the lever, and bearing down on the lever the binder planks were pressed tightly down into the grub pin and preventing it from slipping up as would have been the case if the ring had been made of round iron. With an axe a cut was made in the side of the grub pin just above the binder plank and a wedge driven in to prevent the binder plank slipping up when the pressure from the "witch" was removed. On the completion of the crib the platform was tilted up and the crib slide into the water where they were secured together by short cross planks, to make the completed raft, and were called the "top loading." In the middle of each crib at the ends of the raft an oar was placed. The oar consisted of two parts, the handle or stem, and the blade. The stem was made of a small tree, usually a jack pine, eight or ten inches in diameter at the butt and thirty feet long. The blade was a plank twelve inches wide, two inches thick at one end and tapering to one inch at the other. One side of the butt end of the stem was hewed flat and the blade secured to it by means of wooden pins. I might add that the bark was always peeled from the stem. This was done with a draw knife, before brought to the raft. The oars were secured to blocks fastened to the ends of the cribs and the oars swung freely on pins. A properly made and hung oar would just about balance over the block to which it was secured. A load of sand was placed in the middle of the raft on which the cook built his fire. The crew consisted of a pilot and a cook and one man to each oar. Tents were usually provided for the men.

Compared with some of the Mississippi rafts, the ones on the Chippewa were very small. We give below a description taken from the *Eau Claire Free Press* in the 70's of an extra large raft.

"The largest raft that ever floated on the Mississippi or any other river, left La Crosse last Sunday. The raft contained 3,000,000 feet of lumber, 726,700 lath and 1,208,000 shingles. It contained 270 cribs rafted into eighteen strings and was 500 feet in length and 288 feet wide, the lumber

being rafted 24 feet deep. A person not posted in these matters can fancy the size of this raft from the fact that the average raft of lumber is from twelve to fourteen strings and measures in the neighborhood of 1,500,000 feet. The lumber is from several mills at the mouth of Black River and is consigned to various points down the river, the first delivery to be made at Keokuk."

A Big Jam

The greatest fear during the spring log drive was that something would hang up the drive and cause a log jam that could take days if not weeks to clear. Such jams formed a number of times at the Dells of the St. Croix. The *Mississippi Valley Lumberman* (27 June 1884) described one of them as follows:

The lumbermen of the St. Croix are in some respects the sharpest log men on the continent, but in some others they are the biggest lunk heads in the world. Thirty miles above the booms are the celebrated Dells of the St. Croix. The river here is narrow and its sides percipitous walls of rock, extending some half mile. In the middle of this the river makes a right angle turn, and, of course, creates a great whirlpool, which stops all floating matter. Into this logs will run and unless they are pushed out they continue to run around the circle until they block the river and a bad jam is formed. Three good men will keep the Dells clear all the time, no matter how many logs are running. And a good sheer boom 100 feet long would forever prevent jams of logs forming. Strange to say, time after time have they permitted from 30 to 50 million feet of logs to jam at that point, and be weeks engaged with hundreds of men, pile drivers, horses, steam-boats, dynamite, etc., in breaking it loose. The aggregate of loss from this extra work, if it could be

given, would seem almost incredible since lumbering began on the river.

Another of these jams was formed last Sunday, and it is reported as one of the worst ever made. Large crews of men have been hurried forward to assist in getting the logs out. The river is falling fast and probably a very large amount of labor and expense will be needed before it is clear. Yet, judging by the past, we expect to record just such things about every other year as long as there is logs cut on the St. Croix. This is only an illustration to the old saying "What is everybody's business is nobody's business." The following description of the jam is taken from Wednesday's Globe:

"The jam of logs at the dells of the St. Croix is one of the finest sights that can well be imagined. At the point where the jam has occurred there is a sharp bend in the river, with a small eddy, immediately above the landing at Taylors Falls. Although the water is 40 feet deep, the logs and timber are piled to an immense height in endless confusion. The dark, deep gorge, the towering cliffs, from 200 to 300 feet high, the men swarming like ants on an ant hill, the rushing water and the millions of feet of logs all combine to make this one of the grandest scenes that has ever been seen in this section for many a year. The last jam that was at that point was visited by thousands, but the present one is larger in proportion and more picturesque in appearance. No doubt thousands will visit the scene, which in a remarkable manner shows the power of nature and the impotence of man. The Jennie Hays steams up to the jam, and from her deck an excellent view of the grand sight can be had. A pile driver has gone up from this place to help break the jam up, but it will take several days to do so. Anyone wishing to see a sight that they will not forget in a lifetime should visit the dells whilst the immense jam of logs is still unbroken.

Notes from August FHAW Board of Directors Meeting

A thank-you letter from Henry Haskell of the Trees-for-Tomorrow Environmental Center was read by the Secretary. This referred to the \$100.00 donation the Association made toward the Landmark Pines project. A dedication of the site will take place in late September or October.

The Round Lake Dam reconstruction project being sponsored by the U. S. Forest Service and the Price County Historical Society was reviewed. By appropriate motion and second, approval was given to the donation of \$100.00 toward this project

The Secretary reported on the recent donation by George "Bud" Houghton of Wausau, of a box of Goodman Lumber Company memorabilia, reports and business correspondence. It was moved, seconded and approved that the Secretary send an appropriate letter of acknowledgment and appreciation to the Houghton family, which had a long association with the Goodman family during the early years of the lumber company's operations.

With regard to the invoicing of a \$5.00 charge for the 1990 Proceedings to libraries and local historical societies, the Secretary reported that only 46, or 20%, of 227 mailings had responded, of which 35, or 15% paid the \$5.00 and 11, or 5% rejected it by written comments. By appropriate motion and second, the Secretary was instructed to revise the billing procedure by sending a notice of intent to charge, along with

an order form and a sample of the contents of the 1992 Proceedings.

The Secretary pointed out that four directors will need to be re-elected or replaced at the annual meeting, namely: Bant, Barden, Fixmer and Roberts. Pres. Bant appointed John Saemann and Mike Sohasky as the Nomination Committee. She also announced that she will not be a candidate for re-election.

The Secretary reported that membership renewals to date were comparable to previous years.

Wisconsin Folk Museum

The Wisconsin Folk Museum is a new and growing museum for the traditional arts of the state and region.

Colorful displays highlight the fascinating diversity, the intricate handwork, the humorous and heartfelt sides of Midwestern folk art.

The exhibits are carefully researched by folklorists active in documenting the folkways of the region. Displays present intriguing new insights into Midwestern and Wisconsin culture.

FHAW members will enjoy seeing Jerry Holter's mechanized logging scene, "Daylight in the Swamp". This amazing contraption sets into motion three simultaneous scenes with dozens of small handcarved men--logging in the "pinery," eating in a camp cookshack, and spending their money at a tavern.

Wisconsin Folk Museum is located at 100 S. Second Street, Mt. Horeb, WI 53572 for more information, call (608) 437-4742. The Museum's hours are:

May 1 through Labor Day

Open 7 Days a Week

10:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Labor Day to December 23

Open Weekends Only

Closed from December 24 to April 30

Historical Society honors Goldsworthys

Walt and Doris Goldsworthy, long-time residents of the Three Lakes area, were recognized with a plaque of appreciation, presented by Tom Bredesen, president of the Three Lakes Historical Society last Thursday evening at the August meeting.

This year, being the 10th anniversary of the founding of the Historical Society and the museum, the Society's board of directors felt that recognition for the loyal and dedicated efforts of the Goldsworthys over the years on behalf of the community at large, was worthy of recognition, according to Bredesen.

The message of the plaque reads as follows:

"Three Lakes Museum Dedicated to Walt and Doris Goldsworthy

For their untiring spirit and labor for the community in establishing a museum to preserve the history of Three Lakes and the surrounding area!

Besides establishing a museum in 1981, the Goldsworthys have been the driving force behind a number of community projects, such as: Thunder Lake Wildlife area, Three Lakes Sportsman Club, Walt's weekly "Lakes and Woods" column in *The Three Lakes News*; Doris' help in organizing the coronary and intensive care unit at Saint Mary's Hospital in Rhinelander, two volumes of "The Pine, The Plow, and The Pioneer" books; Pioneer Cross Memorial; and Sam Campbell Trail.

"Doris and Walt -- we have learned, with your guidance, the importance of preserving our area's heritage. Thanks to your example of respect for God, the natural beauty that surrounds us, and fostering of the creative spirit in others, we feel that we will be able to continue in the work that you have started."

"With our greatest appreciation, the Three Lakes Historical Society."

Jim Frechette Jr., of the Menominee nation, came forth and presented Goldsworthy a railroad spike from the only "Indian-owned" railroad in the United States. Frechette had observed Goldsworthy's personal collection on display at the museum during a visit earlier this month. The spike was wrapped in a \$20 bill, which was donated to the museum. (*Three Lakes News*, August 7, 1991)

Round Lake Logging Dam

The Round Lake Logging Dam, which was built in 1878 on the South Fork of the Flambeau River, has been the scene of many spring log drives. Round Lake served as a reservoir to assure transportation of logs to local and distant markets. Because it was capable of impounding vast quantities of water in its four-lake chain, the Round Lake Dam was a very impor-

tant link in the logging of white pine from the headwaters of the Chippewa River. Winters were spent cutting and hauling pine logs on sleighs to decking areas above dam. Spring breakup of river ice signaled the start of the log drive. As the gates of the dam were cranked open, a ten foot wall of water flushed the logs through the dam and nimble-footed log drivers expertly moved them downstream.

The life of the Round Lake Dam came to a close in 1909 as the last pine logs were sluiced through the dam. Through this dam flowed millions of feet of logs, which became a key ingredient in the development of cities and towns of the Midwest.

Today the Round Lake Logging Dam stands in testimony to an era long past. It serves to remind us of the primitive transportation techniques once employed in Wisconsin's woodlands.

It is said to be in the best condition of any remaining logging dams within the states of Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan.

Nominated to the National Register of Historic Places in 1981, this structure is deteriorating and in need of restoration. It is for this reason that the Friends of the Round Lake Dam was formed--to bring people together that are interested in reclaiming one of the last remaining logging dams of its kind in Wisconsin.

The restoration of the Round Lake Logging Dam is important not only to landowners and merchants in the immediate area, but also to the tourism potential of the State, and specifically northern Wisconsin. The dam's restoration

preserves for the future the historical significance of logging in the development of northern Wisconsin.

The Friends of the Round Lake Dam recently joined with the USDA-Forest Service in a special Challenge Cost Share Program. To qualify for this, the Friends need to secure matching funds of \$200,000 over a three year period or the equivalent of donated supplies and labor. The Friends need the support from concerned citizens like you to make this project a reality. The materials and skills needed for this include:

Materials:

3" planks, various widths lengths to 20' 15 MBF

10" & 12" square timbers lengths to 16' 35 MBF

12" X 18" timbers lengths to 14' 6 MBF

8"-14" diameter logs various logs 30 MBF

Lumber must be treated with preservative CCA.

MBF is thousand board feet.

3-6" rock 150 cu yd

gravel for temporary road 200 cu yd

fill for retaining walls 300 cu yd

etc, etc, etc.

Equipment:

backhoe 3 months

5 yd dumptruck 3 months

10 yd dumptruck 1 month

2 yd front end loader 3 months
bulldozer 3 months
etc, etc, etc.

Skills:

Equipment operators, carpenters, welders, historical research, surveyors, etc, etc, etc.

If you know a group that would be interested in learning more about this project, a speaker from the Forest Service or PCHS or the Friends will be glad to speak to them. Call 762-4571 or write to Price County Historical Society, Fifield, WI 54524. The Forest Service has produced a brochure explaining the program, telling some history of the dam and hopefully, convincing others to see the value of the site and its reconstruction. Brochures can also be obtained from the Pikettes at Pike Lake; call Sandy Plyer, 762-2301 or PCHS.

This may be the last chance to keep the dam from being just a memory. A lot of help and money is needed to assure that the integrity and skills of woodsman who built this impressive structure in 1878 can be enjoyed and appreciated by future generations. The work must go well beyond Price County to succeed and the skills and resources of many are needed. There are various ways you can help. There will be possibilities for clerical work, legislative contacting, fund raising locally and nationally, publicity and more. Anyone interested in committing time or money to the restoration project can send donations to Friends of the Round Lake Logging Dam, P. O. Box 156, Fifield, WI, 54524. Checks should be made payable to the Price County Historical Society.

To get to the Round Lake Logging Dam, take Hwy. 70 East from Fifield, or Hwy. 70 West from Minocqua to Forest Road 144 (Shady Knoll) about halfway between Fifield and Minocqua. Then North about 3 miles on Forest Road 144 to the Round Lake Boat Landing and Logging Dam site.

(See: John N. Vogel, "The Round Lake Logging Dam: A Survivor of Wisconsin's Log-Driving Days," *Wisconsin Magazine of History*, [Spring 1983], pp 171-191.)

Drums of History

(*Three Lakes News*, July 24 and August 14, 1991.)

The drums of history echoed their immortal notes when more than 75 "history buffs" gathered last Thursday at the Three Lakes Community Building to salute the memory of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) of a half century ago.

A dedication ceremony marked the new addition to the Three Lakes Museum complex.

A unique feature of this new structure, according to Walt Goldsworthy, museum administrator, is that both the interior and exterior of the structure is built from lumber sawn from trees planted by the Civilian Conservation Corps men in the 1930s, when the "Great Depression" gripped the world and the CCC works program was one of many such programs in America to assist economic recovery.

"In total," Goldsworthy says, "had not the youths of that past generation given their sweat, blisters and aching muscles, there would be no such structure today to be glorified as part of the locale's historical heritage."

Goldsworthy's personal interest in the historical heritage of the CCC era dates back to the mid-1960s, while

a naturalist with the U.S. Forest Service, lecturing daily during the summer months on the Franklin Lake Nature Trail.

He suddenly became aware that more and more trail walkers would ask, "What was the CCC era?" as he paused to reflect on the log buildings at the Franklin Lake complex which were built by the CCC enrollees.

It was obvious to Goldsworthy that the younger generations were rapidly losing contact with a rich portion of American heritage, consequently he expressed his concern through his weekly newspaper column entitled "Lakes and Woods," which ran for some 22 years, in this publication.

As a result, an attorney in California, who was a CCC veteran and who shared Goldsworthy's concern, called long distance and a committee was formed which included the late Ken Elliott and Bill Wolff, both CCC veterans, which resulted in the founding of the National CCC Alumni Association.

As a result, the National Convention was held in Eagle River several years ago, plus Chapter 23 now holds their spring and fall convention in the North Woods--Rhineland, Eagle River or St. Germain.

The hour long program featured reflections of the past by several CCC veterans, Frank Fixmer and Bill Wolff, both who began their careers in the U.S. Forest Service at Three Lakes Camp 623 (Lake Julia Camp) and Scott Lake Camp.

Fixmer, a forester for the U.S. Forest Service, went on to retire from the Mosinee Paper Co., as their chief forester, while Wolff began his career as a forest technician, to retire some 30 years later as administrative officer of the Blackwell Job Corps Conservation Center at Laona.

Both speakers highly praised the Three Lakes Historical Society for its foresight to create the replica of the original CCC-type structure to stand in remembrance of the thousands of young men, all victims of the great economic depression era of the 1930s, who planted millions

of trees, fought forest fires, built erosion control dams, plus building recreation areas offering stone and log structures throughout America in national and state parks, and Forest Service lands.

Fixmer reminded the group that only two replicas of that era exist, one at the Logging Museum in Rhinelander and the other in Three Lakes. The one in Rhinelander, as Wolff pointed out, was instigated by the late Ken Elliot, a CCC enrollee who worked himself up the ranks to become assistant supervisor on the Chippewa National Forest, one of two men in America to reach that level of U.S. Forest Service authority without a college degree.

Like the trees of the forest which he loved, his progress of accomplishment was nourished by a deep desire to leave America a more beautiful and richer land for future generations.

Mike Hathaway, supervisor on the Nicolet reported on the present status of the Nicolet lands and how the dreams of the earlier land managers are being developed with the modern tools of professional forestry, since 50 years ago the field of professional forest management was comparatively new to American land managers.

Dave Kapaldo, director of the Blackwell Job Corps center, gave a resume of the objectives of the Blackwell Center which is a modern prototype of the "old" CCC program.

Steve Popkowski, director of works at Blackwell gave a detailed account of how the present-day center continues to help the youth of America and the area communities through training projects under the direction of U.S. Department of Labor Instructors.

Both of the museum buildings at Three Lakes stand as an example where disadvantaged American youth and neighboring communities have benefited.

Both Kapaldo and Popkowski were highly complimentary of the cooperation extended the Blackwell crews while

in Three Lakes. Rev. Ron McDuffie, vice president of the local society gave the invocation, while Tom Bredesen, president, spoke on the history of the Three Lakes society, paying special credit to the foresight of the original founders of the society.

Bredesen reminded them that preservation of local history covers a wide spectrum, from the distant past, to daily happenings, especially among youth. Bredesen was recipient, several years ago, of recognition by the Wisconsin Historical Society (local history division) for his work in developing interest in local history in the fourth grade students at the Three Lakes Elementary School of which he is principal.

Gary White of the society's board of directors read off a list of area businesses which had given discounts on material purchased for the new structure.

In closing, Bredesen reminded that the new structure was dedicated to Walt and Doris Goldsworthy Aug. 1 in appreciation of their dedication to the Three Lakes Historical Society and its growth over the past 10 years.

The old museum was renovated several years ago by Blackwell trainees and given three coats of paint, plus the new addition in 1989.

"Today, we attempt to memorialize the memory of the early CCC contributions throughout this dedicatory Program," Goldsworthy said.

Jean Brewster, an early day resident, whose father, Roy Cunningham, had lived and worked through the early days, summed up the program in these words, "It was a beautiful and impressive program that certainly should help retain the importance of that early era. Both the comments by Mr. Fixmer and Mr. Wolff brought back many beautiful memories for me, personally."

At the height of the CCC era, there were 22 (200-man) camps scattered the length of what is now the Nicolet National Forest, plus other camps on adjoining state-

owned lands. Millions upon millions of pine seedlings were planted during the 10 years of the CCC program's existence. Plus, thousands of acres were protected from forest fires which gave nature a chance at natural reproduction.

The museum structure was constructed according to the original blueprints, found in the files of the U.S. Forest Service, with some modifications to allow for its use as a public museum.

A White Pine Giant.

Up to within two days ago it was not known that California had found a healthy rival in Wisconsin for its mammoth trees. But such proves to be the fact, and Chippewa county claims the laurels. This giant among white pine was cut several days ago on the Yellow river by Jack Willis, who is jobbing for Christ Mueller of Davenport, IA. The trunk of the tree consisted of but one twelve-foot log, which measured at the smaller end five feet seven inches, and consequently sealed over 2,000 feet, all of which will make clear lumber. The tree had a number of large branches, which with the main stem, cut twenty-nine logs. The butt log, which is acknowledged by all the lumbermen to be the largest ever banked on the Chippewa waters, will be floated to some mill on the Chippewa in the spring, where it can be sawed into plank of its entire thickness, which will be exhibited at the World's Fair in '93. Mr. D.L. McKay who has charge of Mr. Mueller's logging here, proposes to have a man accompany the log on its entire journey from the landing to the mill where it is to be sawed. (*The Chippewa Times*, February 17, 1891.)

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Committee Chairmen 1991-1992

Distinguished Service Awards

Frank N. Fixmer

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Student Awards

John Saemann

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Annual Proceedings

Randall Rohe

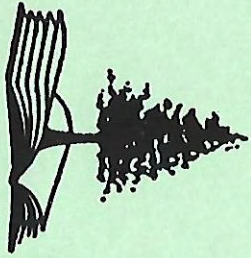
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