



A Newsletter

From

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

403 McIndoe Street

Wausau, WI 54401

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1985-86

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From the Deacon Seat*

As the end of summer draws near, one's thoughts inevitably turn to fall and the advent of two important events: the Forestry Hall of Fame inductions that will take place during the Timber Producers Association's Logging Congress on September 5th, and our own Association's annual members meeting on October 3rd and 4th.

I hope that many of you have been making plans to attend both of these attractions. If you have not already done so, I urge you to get your reservations as soon as possible. Tickets for the Logging Congress banquet, at which our Association's nominee will be inducted, can be obtained (\$14.00 per person) by writing to T.P.A., P. O. Box 39, Tomohawk, WI 54487

While you are at it, send in your advance registration for our conclave, using the appropriate form enclosed with this issue of "C & S". As you will note from the program, there will be something of interest for everyone, and our entertainment following the distinguished service awards will be a special surprise sure to delight all. Keep in mind, too, that the "colorama" season will be in full swing and the view from our meeting rooms at Treehaven will provide a particularly beautiful panorama.

Our treasurer reports that membership renewals have been coming in rather slowly. That doesn't help our cash flow. I would remind those of you who have temporarily overlooked renewing for the 1986-87 fiscal year, to do so, **now**. We need your continued financial support. Our membership should be growing, not shrinking. If each member would make an extra effort to recruit a new member from among his/her friends or relatives, we could enjoy a renewed viability for carrying on the Association's program.

Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources is currently commemorating the 75th anniversary of state forestry, with a series of events, exhibits, posters, publications, etc. F.H.A.W. is cooperating with the Anniversary Committee, headed by Association member JOHN GROSSMAN, by setting up an exhibit on early-day reforestation and forest protection at the Marathon County Historical Museum in Wausau. It will be on view from September, 1986 through April, 1987, so if you have occasion to visit in Wausau, be sure to stop in at that museum and see how we are helping to preserve that aspect of Wisconsin's forest history.

Looking forward to seeing many of you at Treehaven on October 3-4!

Tom Albrecht
President

* The "deacon seat", according to L. G. Sorden's "Lumberjack Lingo", was the one classic piece of camp furniture, built in the outer end of the muzzle-loading bunks. Usually made of half a log, flat side up. The men sat around the fire before turning in, resting, smoking and talking.

A "Found-Again" Logging Dam

One of our newer members, MIKE WECKWERTH of Merrill, recently sent us several photos he had taken of an old logging dam in the Prairie River, north of Merrill, with a rather interesting history. Mike has begun to research this structure more intensively, but we think the facts he has dug up so far are worth reprinting at this time:

". . . this dam, used before the turn of the century, is in fairly good condition. The sluice gates are no longer with the dam, although portions may be found with further investigation, yet most of the basic structure is pretty much intact. After talking with quite a few local foresters, rangers and older loggers, it seems that most of these types of dams are nearly all rotted away, or just small portions are evident. Perhaps a bit of local history will help explain the preservation of this dam.

According to George Gilky's "History of Merrill - From Logging Camp To City", T. B. Scott and Frank Andrews, owners of the Scott & Andrews Lumber Company (forerunner of the T. B. Scott Lumber Company, established one of their first logging camps near the Prairie Dells dam area in order to cut a fine stand of virgin white pine. The Prairie Dells dam, originally built for hydroelectric purposes in 1904-1905, is located about three-eighths of a mile downstream from the logging dam referred to above, and which evidently was built about 1875.

When the Prairie Dells dam was completed in 1905, the water behind the dam deepened and widened the river upstream, thereby submerging the logging dam. It remained that way until 1980, when the Dells dam was breeched and the water upstream lowered. Since 1980 the logging dam and the man-made dikes (on each side) are visible and accessible. Ole Hansen, Lincoln County forest administrator, told me that prior to the breach, one could float over the submerged dam without knowing it So far, besides some pictures I have taken, I have located some sunken logs with hammer stamps on the ends and two 3-foot rods used in building the dam. I will be going up there again next week with local historian Royal Henson; I'm sure his insights will develop the whole story."

Weckwerth offers to provide any interested members of the Association with copies of his photos and a more complete story of this dam's history. Write to him at 110 S. Prospect St., Merrill. WI 54452.

C.C.C.-Built Facility Dedicated as Historic Site

The Mondeaux Dam Recreation Area on the Chequamegon National Forest northwest of Medford, WI was dedicated at

a special ceremony in mid-July, with several F.H.A.W. members featured as speakers on the program. The occasion was sponsored by the U. S. Forest Service and officially placed the area on the National Register of Historic Places.

It also observed the 50th anniversary of the initial construction of the dam and its adjacent recreational facilities by crews of the Civilian Conservation Corps from the nearby Camp Mondeaux (Company 1603).

Participants in the ceremonies included JACK WOLTER, forest supervisor of the Chequamegon National Forest, BILL EMERSON, superintendent of Camp Mondeaux 1935-37 and now retired from the U.S. Forest Service, and BILL WOLFF, current president of Wisconsin Chapter 23 of the National Association of Civilian Conservation Corps Alumni.

The Mondeaux Dam Recreational Area is said to be the most heavily used of all recreational facilities in the Chequamegon National Forest and has had over one million dollars worth of improvements added to it in recent years.

Of special interest to logging history buffs is the fact that the dam was built on the site of a former logging dam on the Mondeaux River and the access road constructed on the bed of a former logging railroad.

Big Tree Society Holds Workshop

Some 35 enthusiastic big tree hunters from most parts of the state recently gathered at the Wausau High School Forest for training in the measurement, identification and nomination of big trees with championship potential. Led by Jerry Lapadakis, DNR private forestry specialist, Association member CHRISTY HAUGE, U.W.-Stevens Point extension forester, Jeff Martin, U.W.-Madison extension forester, and Chad McGrath, writer and amateur tree hunter, the workshop taught the group the basics needed to qualify as Big Tree Inspectors.

The session served the important secondary purpose of providing a forum for exchange between people who simply like trees, their heritage, their legacy and their future. The Big Tree Society plans to hold regular meetings in various locations that offer opportunities to measure some of the current state champions or their potential successors.

Saving Washburn County's Last Timber Stands

Charles H. Stoddard

Northern Wisconsin's greatest attraction to early landlookers and pioneer explorers who followed them was its magnificent stands of timber. Mile after mile of huge white pines — some in solid stands, some overtopping the hardwood and hemlock

forests below them. Washburn County held its share and was in fact entirely covered with heavy timber growth.

"Green gold" it was called by the enterprising pioneer lumbermen who came out from New England to seek and make their fortunes. During the period from the close of the Civil War to about 1910 an estimated 85 billion board feet of lumber was sawed out of Wisconsin white and Norway pine forests. Much of Washburn County's timber lay within sleigh hauling distance of the Namekagon, Totogatic and their tributaries where it was decked for spring log drives down to Stillwater and other river towns. Later, hardwoods — mostly sugar maple, yellow birch, basswood, oaks and some ash — were logged along with hemlock where it occurred.

It is constantly amazing to me what a thorough cutting job the early loggers were able to accomplish with hand and horse labor without benefit of chain saws, skidders and clam hoists. They spared nothing that would convert trees into dollars. The great fortunes of the Weyerhaeusers and other empire builders testify to that modest fact. An American without a titled nobility created its own corporate lords out of pine forests belonging to all the people.

Unchecked fires followed logging — often started by settlers to clear cropland for farming — and swept thousands of acres of cutover land, destroying seed sources for a new forest. Fortunately aspen (popple) seeds which travelled great distances reclothed much of the burned over stump land. Evidence of the once great pine forests may be found in huge old stumps scattered through the second growth and in two patches of old growth timber preserved by the Wisconsin D.N.R. as Scientific-Natural Areas.

These two tracts—one of white and Norway pine in the Town of Brooklyn and another of Northern Hardwood-Hemlock timber in the Town of Frog Creek—still stand as lonely reminders of our once great forest. These two tracts were part of a very large grant by the federal government to the state for a School Trust Fund. Probably because of inaccessibility, rigorous forestry requirements and a stiff appraised stumpage price by the State Board of Land Commissioners, these tracts remained uncut—or nearly so—throughout the logging era. I say nearly so because the edges were invaded by earlier loggers whose respect for property lines was often quite "flexible." So flexible that the Brooklyn virgin pine stand occupies only seven acres of the total 120-acre area of State Land Commission land. And many of these big trees were blown down in the July 4, 1977 windstorm. For years the pines supported a large heron rookery—now abandoned.

The Frog Creek timber stand runs heavily to hemlock and yellow birch in one portion, to sugar maple and basswood in another, and on its western side includes a sizeable patch of virgin white cedar. High above the hemlock-hardwoods are

a few huge white pines—typical of the several millions of acres of this forest type. In 1956 the Frog Creek stand was lightly selectively cut—carefully marked by D.N.R. forester Jack Trust—so carefully that the original character of the stand appeared undisturbed except for a few scattered stumps.

During his 1970 campaign for the Governorship, Patrick Lucey committed himself to the preservation of Wisconsin's remnant natural areas for scientific preservation. Shortly after his election, I urged him to follow up on his campaign promise through a memorandum suggesting the acquisition of these two tracts by the D.N.R. Governor Lucey agreed that they deserved full investigation. D.N.R.'s Cliff Germaine, ecologist for the Scientific Areas Preservation Council was assigned to the task of evaluation and determination if their qualifications met the Council's standards. His reports recommended that both be included in the State's system of Natural and Scientific Areas.

The studies by D.N.R.'s Germaine revealed a number of interesting facts about these "islands" of big timber standing far above a surrounding "sea" of second growth. The Washburn County Pines, as the Brooklyn timber stand is now called, contains four distinct features:

-It is the only true remnant of old growth white pine and red pine forest left in upper Washburn County.
-Its trees are of maximum size for these species.
-It provided a safe place for blue herons to nest because of the height of the trees.
-It represents the last undisturbed white and red pine climax ecosystem in the County.

For these reasons it was decided to preserve this tract as No. 103 in the State's Scientific Area System and Governor Lucey approved the purchase in April of 1973.

The Frog Creek hemlock stand was found to have a number of interesting aspects also worthy of inclusion:

-The only virgin hemlock tract on the western edge of the natural range of eastern hemlock.
-One of the last stands of old growth white cedar in the State.
-Contains a variety of small plants found only in undisturbed forests.
-Provides winter deer yard in an area surrounded by deciduous trees.
-Contains some very large specimens of white pine rarely found elsewhere.

This tract of 160 acres was approved by Governor Lucey for inclusion in Scientific Area System on June 23, 1977 as No. 140—just prior to his leaving office.

Although time and natural forces will take their toll of these areas, they will continue to stand as reminders of northern Wisconsin's forest grandeur for many generations to come.

Historic Reference Added to Library

F.H.A.W. has acquired a copy of the Wisconsin edition of "The Northeastern Logger - February, 1957". The lead article was written by Association member F. G. WILSON and is a capsulized history of forestry in Wisconsin up to that time.

A number of other articles, all well illustrated, describe the then current state forestry program, the operations of the Menominee Indian Reservation, the beginnings, aims and accomplishments of the U. S. Forest Products Laboratory, Trees-for-Tomorrow's approach to conservation education, and the development of the numerous wood-using industries along the Wisconsin River until it became "the hardest working river in the nation".

This special edition of "The Northeastern Logger" was donated from the library of the Wausau High School Forest by school forest administrator Hugh Curtis.

Members in the News

KARL BAUMANN, forester and pulpwood buyer at Badger Paper mills in Peshtigo for over 36 years, retired this past spring. He said that his retirement plans include fishing, hunting, traveling and collecting logging artifacts. PAT CRAWFORD, Shawano logging equipment manufacturer, DEAN EINSPAHR, researcher in the field of tree improvement science at the Institute of Paper Chemistry in Appleton, and FRANK FIXMER, secretary of F.H.A.W., were all speakers at the spring meeting of the Wisconsin Section of the Society of American Foresters. Einspahr was presented with an Outstanding Performance Award by the Fox River Valley Chapter of S.A.F.

HAROLD C. JORDAHL, U.W.-Madison urban and regional planner, was a featured speaker at a Lower Wisconsin River Symposium held recently at the Center for Resources Policy Studies and Programs at the University.

JOHN N. MCGOVERN, professor emeritus at U.W.-Madison, received the 1986 Distinguished Service Award from the Technical Association of the Pulp & Paper Industry at that organization's annual meeting in Atlanta, GA.

ROGER McLAIN, forestry technician on the Florence District of the Nicolet National Forest, retired in June after 20 years of service, primarily on TSI and reforestation projects.

RANDALL ROHE, geography professor at the U.W. Center-Waukesha, authored an article in the "Upper Midwest History" periodical titled "Tramways and Pole Railroads: An Episode in the Technological History of the Great Lakes Lumber Era".

FOREST STEARNS, botany professor at U.W.-Milwaukee, was awarded a special citation by the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts & Letters in recognition of his extensive research

in wildlife ecology. Dr. Stearns is a former president of the Ecological Society of America and since 1975 has chaired the Wisconsin Scientific Areas Preservation Council.

FRED ZIEMANN, director of fiber resources at Wausau Paper Mills, and president of Trees-for-Tomorrow's board of directors, presided at the latter's annual meeting in June.

Local History Museums

Did you know that there are more than 130 local history museums in Wisconsin? They house countless artifacts, photos, journals and other memorabilia that document each locality's past.

F.H.A.W. members probably utilize the resources of many of these museums for researching their own special interests, but how many take the opportunity to acquaint the personnel of those museums with the existence of our Association?

If the museum in your area has a free literature display rack, request permission to include the Association's membership brochure and its Educational Leaflet No. 1, "First's in Wisconsin Forest History". A supply of any quantity desired is available from the Secretary at our official address.

From The Editor

The Volume I-No. 1 edition of "Chips & Sawdust" was issued in November, 1976, the same year that our Association was officially incorporated. That first issue consisted of two 8½x11 pages photocopied on brown kraft paper. The introductory paragraph stated:

"This newsletter is being inaugurated on the premise that our members will want to be kept informed on their Association's growth, its program development, and the actions of its directors in implementing those programs. The regularity of the newsletter will depend on the amount of suitable material that may become available. Responsibility for its format and content will not rest with just one editor, but will be divided among the officers and directors. Hopefully, items of general interest will be submitted by members from time to time. If readers also wish to use "Chips & Sawdust" as a vehicle for editorial comment regarding the Association's activities, we will try to provide space for such discourse also.

In any event, we want "C & S" to be by members, for members, and about members, but still offering tid-bits of news concerning forest history, both past and current."

To some degree, the promises of that first edition have been fulfilled. With the exception of one year, "C & S" has been published four times each year, usually in an 8-page format. Members have been kept informed of all Association activities between its annual members meetings. Goals met or not met have been reported; the

activities or achievements of members have been recounted when noted in other publications; new articles or books on various aspects of forest history have been reviewed. Interspersed with these items have been excerpts of topical interest from historic source materials. Nevertheless, there seems to have been at least one area of failure over the years. As often as we have encouraged it, members just have not responded to calls for contributions of news items or articles. Only rarely have we received an offering that could be used. We also solicited comments for a "people's forum" section; none were received.

So, "C & S" continued to be largely a one-man effort, producing as best he could, a combination of miscellany which he hoped would fulfill the expectations of its readers.

Whether this format is adequate to sustain interest year after year, particularly for new members, is a question for our Board of Directors to answer soon. The time has now come for someone with new ideas, a fresh outlook and a willingness to accept the challenge of putting together our newsletter.

This issue of "C & S" concludes 10 years of my tenure as editor. A new editor will need to be enlisted (drafted?) soon enough to assemble and publish the November issue. Applicants, or those with suggestions, should direct their comments to President Tom Albrecht at 103 Sunset Circle, Shawano, WI 54166, as soon as possible.

Welcome, New Members

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