



**A Newsletter**  
From  
**Forest History**  
**Association of Wisconsin, Inc.**  
403 McIndoe Street                      Wausau, WI 54401

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### LUMBERJILLS BEFORE CHAIN SAWS

*The bow saw — better known as a “Swede-saw” — was the most commonly used saw on Wisconsin pulpwood cutting operations before the advent of chain saws. The scene above was typical during World War II when many women contributed to the war efforts by working in the woods. Lilas (left) and Angelina Weber of Tomahawk worked with Charles Running during the winter of 1943-'44 and '44-'45 and produced a total of 519 cords of pine pulpwood.*



# **“Earliest” Logging Railroad Still A Mystery**

The November/1983 issue of "Chips & Sawdust" quoted at length some historical background on tramways versus logging railroads and the log-transporting facility built by Wakefield, Trow & Co. in 1878 on the outskirts of present-day Merrillan, WI. The possibility that this may have pre-dated the generally accepted Crescent Springs Railroad of the Shell Lake Lumber Company as the first steam-powered logging railroad in Wisconsin seems to have excited the interest of quite a few of our Association members. Several of them made a special trip to Merrillan last November to inspect the site of the Wakefield & Trow sawmill and the grade which may have been the base for a narrow gauge railroad track.

We are indebted to BILL O'GARA of Wisconsin Rapids for his detailed account (for Association files) of the observations made by the group, which also included LAIRD ROSS of Cochrane and Mrs. Jean Anderson, local newspaper correspondent and writer.

The "Case of the Earliest Logging Railroad" still has not been decided on the basis of the available evidence. However, readers may be assured that expert witnesses will eventually provide the jury with enough substantiated facts to arrive at a fair verdict!

Adding further "grist to the mill" is the following excerpt from an article in the OSHKOSH TIMES of June 22, 1878. With obvious tongue-in-cheek, the reporter described the trial run of a steam locomotive built by J. F. Morse of Oshkosh for the Trow & Wakefield sawmill:

"An event of considerable interest in this community was the opening of the new Short Line Railroad on Monday last. The event was looked to with much interest by mechanics, lumbermen and citizens. Though the line of road was not so long under construction as to induce much curiosity, the appliances had been watched with interest for several weeks. Hope and fear alternately took possession of many interested parties — hope that the enterprise would be a fine success, fear that it might be a flat failure. The opening of the road and running of the first train was witnessed by a large crowd of deeply interested citizens. They watched that powerful engine standing there seemingly impatient for the start. At last Conductor

Sam Nell mounted the platform and gave the signal to start. Engineer Billy Dixon drew the throttle and every hand went to the hat brim for a swing and a yell, but the hands all dropped without a swing and the yell was postponed. She didn't move. Just then it was discovered that it was all owing to the fact that the conductor did not have his badge in the right place and there was not steam enough, but mainly the former. The crowd present looked "stern" when they saw the badge trick, but it was adjusted and the steam indicating 60 pounds, Billy drew the throttle and at 4:57 P.M. away she went. After this the train made a number of successful trips over the line during the afternoon.

The road is not as long as some. The terminal are fronts of Morse's iron works and Brand's shop, a distance of about 140 feet. (We express the distance in feet instead of miles because it sounds more respectable). The locomotive was one built in Morse's shop for Trow & Wakefield's lumber road at Merrillan, but was used upon the Short Line on this occasion, and performed very well. The machinery was new and stiff, but 70 pounds of steam, the highest used, ran her back and forth upon the trail road very nicely. Some were fearful that the endless chainconnections would not be efficient for the work, but the trial proved otherwise. On Tuesday it was painted up in good shape and the cab put on preparatory to shipment to its destination, where it will be used on a tram railway, 4½ miles long, to haul cars loaded with logs. The engine is not particularly handsome but we predict that it will fill the bill for log hauling."

## **Planning Underway For 1984 Annual Meeting**

Progress in the planning for the next annual meeting of Association members has been reported by planning Committee Chairman CHARLES TWINING of Ashland.

The initial meeting of the committee resulted in a consensus that the annual convention will be held September 21-22, 1984. Preliminary consideration was also given, according to Twining, to a proposal that a dual site be used for the two-day program, with Northland College at Ashland for the first day's session and Historyland at Hayward for the second day. A detailed agenda is still in the planning stage. Twining's



committee includes GORDON SORENSON, Drummond, WILLIAM JOHNSON, SR., Hayward and ELDON MARPLE, Hayward. The late HOWARD PEDDLE, Iron River, whose death is reported elsewhere in this issue, was initially also a member of the committee. A replacement has not yet been named at press-time.

## Member Commentaries

WILLIAM EMERSON, Milwaukee, sent his check for his membership renewal with the comment "No argument for a cause, and a bargain, as good as this! In case I am paid up, consider it a donation." (Ed. note: Yes, Bill, you **were** paid up, and yes, we do appreciate the donation; thank you!)

WALT GOLDSWORTHY, our venerable member from Three Lakes, had heart surgery last fall. In renewing his membership, he declared that he was "feeling in top shape . . . experienced no after-effects . . . should be back in the canoe come "open water" in 1984!"

## State Record Red Oak in Shawano

Not many Association members are aware that one of our directors, TOM ALBRECHT, D N R forester, is also an outdoor columnist for the Shawano Evening Leader. Recently one of his columns was devoted to an account of a Northern Red Oak in the city of Shawano which currently holds the state record as the largest oak of that species, being 86 feet tall, 4 feet 10 inches in diameter and with a crown spread of 80 feet.

At an estimated age of 200 years, Albrecht says this record Red Oak "was a stout sapling at the time French trappers and voyageurs roamed what was only an outpost on the banks of the Wolf River. Wisconsin was only a territory when traders, trappers and explorers passed by this tree in canoes loaded with pelts . . . In the 1850's the Menominee (Indians) traveled by it on the way to their new reservation on the Upper Wolf . . . By the turn of the century, millions of board feet of pine logs had floated by this oak on the way down the Wolf to sawmill cities."

Albrecht also commented that "its a wonder why this oak didn't end up as kitchen cabinets, or as Aldo Leopold wrote, the source that warms a shack against the gusts of the

blizzard. Maybe becoming a street tree in Shawano kept it from being destroyed, for whatever reason it was spared, I'm quite happy it was."

## **Lake States Logging Congress To Convene**

The Timber Producers Association of Michigan and Wisconsin has announced that its 39th Annual Logging Congress will take place on September 6-8, 1984 at Green Bay. According to CARL THEILER, F.H.A.W. member, and executive secretary of the Timber Producers Association, this year's Logging Congress "is expected to show the largest outside display of forest industry equipment ever held in the United States."

Participants and prospective visitors are being encouraged to make reservations at area motels as soon as possible because several of those most convenient to the Brown County Arena, site of the event, are already fully booked.

F.H.A.W. has sponsored an exhibit at several such logging congresses in the past. Unless budgetary problems become more acute by next fall, the prospects are that the Board of Directors will again approve the modest cost involved in such participation. If past experience is any indication, an appropriate display will bring the existence of the Association and its objectives to the attention of many thousands of visitors to this event.

## **Howard Peddle, 1916 -1984**

Howard Peddle, 68, died on January 11th at his home in Iron River, WI. Well-known as an authority on Wisconsin logging and railroad history, he was a charter member of the Forest History Association of Wisconsin.

Peddle was raised in Superior, WI. and attended high school and the State Teachers College there. He later became a Marine Corps veteran, having served in the Pacific where he received the Purple Heart award. Subsequently he was a mail carrier in the South Range area for many years before he retired about ten years ago.

Peddle was an ardent collector of "camp iron"; in his

retirement years he spent countless days locating former logging camp sites throughout Douglas and Bayfield counties and digging up artifacts of the early logging era. His hobby of collecting log stamping hammers and researching their origins led to the writing and publishing of his book "Wisconsin Log Marks" in 1980.

Memorials may be sent to the Iron River Branch of the Western Bayfield County Historical Society, Iron River, WI 54847.

## **Sanford, J. Fowler, Sr. 1910 - 1983**

The Association lost another of its staunch supporters when Sanford J. Fowler, Sr., 73, of Gresham, died on December 30, 1983 at Shawano, following a lingering illness.

"Sim" Fowler was born on the Stockbridge-Munsee Indian Reservation but lived and worked most of his life on the Menominee Reservation. He was first introduced to logging camps at the age of five by his logger grandfather. As he grew older, his logging experiences ranged from log stamper, to cookie, to roustabout. Later he became an edging-catcher at the Menominee Indian Mills, followed by a couple of years with the Wisconsin Northern, a logging railroad that went through the reservation.

Fowler was then hired in 1937 by Menominee Enterprises as a seasonal fire guard and in 1940 was given a full-time assignment as a timber marker. In due course he became foreman of the marking crew responsible for marking all the timber to be cut on the reservation according to a 15-year cycle management plan. At the time of his retirement in 1981, he was making his third go-around of tribal timberlands.

Fowler's retirement party was attended by a number of professional foresters with the Bureau of Indian Affairs and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources who had worked with him over the years. They recalled with pleasure and appreciation how their "book-learning" had been supplemented by "Sim's" woods "know-how" and experience.

A Shawano news reporter put it so very well when she said: "Even though he no longer tramps the woods himself, his spirit is still out there, and in the memories of the many who did his first tramping with him".



# New Members Department

The following new members have joined our ranks since the last issue of "C & S"; a hearty welcome to them!

**JAMES FRANSON**

Route 2 - Box 110  
Rhineland, WI 54501

**PAUL LYNE**

2532 Van Hise Ave.  
Madison, WI 53705

**HARRY E. PATTERSON**

P. O. Box 14  
Phelps, WI 54554

A reminder to all our members: To continue as a growing and viable organization, we need to continually enroll new members. We cannot allow attrition to decimate our membership rolls; any decrease in financial support will inevitably affect our services and publishing efforts.

Membership promotion should be every member's responsibility, not just that of the current officers!

## Do You Want a "For Sale" or "Wanted" Column?

It has been suggested that "C & S" could serve as a medium of advertising for members wishing to sell their artifacts or to acquire memorabilia of various kinds. If you are interested in such a service, submit your requests and we will judge from the response whether this merits becoming a regular feature. The following items are samples of how those requests might be worded (they are for real!):

### WANTED

**Clippings** from newspapers/magazines on any phase of Wisconsin forest history, for F.H.A.W.'s reference files, or possible rewrites for "C & S".

**Photos**, for temporary loan, or permanent addition to F.H.A.W.'s reference files, of hemlock tanbark operations, including peeling, piling, transporting, and utilization at tanneries.

**Short articles**, not exceeding 500 words, on events of local, regional or state-wide interest, on any aspect of Wisconsin's forest heritage.

### FOR SALE

**PROCEEDINGS** of Annual Members Meetings — 1976 through 1982; \$1.00 to \$4.00 plus postage.



*The above photo, unidentified as to date and place, illustrates one of the earliest types of chain saws introduced to Wisconsin timber producers in the mid-1940's. Can any of our readers identify it? Demonstrating the proper scaling of hardwood logs is Fred Trenk, then State Extension Forester.*







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