

***Chips***

*and*

***Sawdust***

**A Newsletter**

From

**Forest History**

**Association of Wisconsin, Inc.**

403 McIndoe Street

Wausau, WI 54401

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## 1983-84

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## F.H.A.W.'s "HOME"

Have you ever wondered what 403 McIndoe Street, Wausau, WI. looks like? Well, this is our official "home":



This impressive edifice is actually the Marathon County Historical Society Museum. Originally, it was the home of lumber tycoon Cyrus Carpenter Yawkey, who built it in 1901. He organized the Yawkey Lumber Company, founded the village of Hazelhurst in 1889 and operated logging camps and sawmill operations in various sections of Oneida and Vilas counties. The home has been placed on the National Register of Historic Places, and has been accredited as a museum by the American Association of Museums since 1972.

The exhibits of the museum pertain mostly to the pioneer and lumbering era in Marathon County and include many artifacts actually used by the county's early settlers. Of special importance to F.H.A.W. members is a second-floor room that was remodeled several years ago. Its rough-sawn knotty pine walls are decorated with early-day logging tools and rustic framed photos of logging scenes. The room has been used by the Association's board of directors as a meeting place on a number of occasions, providing an appropriate setting for its deliberations.

## Scholarships Again Awarded By F.H.A.W.

As has been the custom for a number of years, the Forest History Association again awarded two \$100 scholarships to forestry students at the University of Wisconsin's schools of forestry.

This year's recipients were Cole Couvillion at the U. of W.-Stevens Point and Susan Krebs at the U. of W.-Madison.

Couvillion is a senior majoring in forest management, with a grade point average of 3.76. He has personally earned all his college expenses during the past four years in school. His thank-you note said in part: "I am most grateful for the award and wish to extend my appreciation to each and every member of your Association."

Krebs is a junior majoring in Forest Science, with a G.P.A. of 2.8, and is extremely active in extra-curricular affairs of the school's Forestry Club.

Both students exhibited a considerable interest in Wisconsin's forest history. Because Couvillion's little essay proved to be a particularly interesting one (award applicants are required to submit evidence of their interest) it is reproduced here in its entirety:

"One aspect of forestry that I have always found interesting is the early transportation of eastern white pine from the forests to saw-mills in the vicinity of the Menominee River, which separates northeastern Wisconsin from Upper Michigan. Logging first began in this area around 1827, when the land still belonged to the Indians. Since railroads did not arrive in northeastern Wisconsin until 1872 and roads were not proposed until 1856, the only means of transporting the cut timber was by the waters of the Menominee. The stands of white pine adjacent to the Menominee were cut, rolled into the river, and floated to the mouth, where the saw mills were usually located. This means of transportation worked nicely while the lumber industry was in its infancy. However, when competition increased, mill owners then began to stake out portions of the river and claim them as their own. As a result, the Menominee River Boom Company was organized around 1868 and had the task of transporting logs to the 21 different mills located at the mouth of the Menominee. Upon arrival at the mill, the logs were sorted into gaps, which each mill possessed. These gaps served as a storage area for logs until they were ready to be sawed into lumber. Enormous quantities of timber worked their way through the 21 saw mills. For example, in the year 1892, it was documented that from April 11 to November 24, the Menominee River Boom Co. sorted 4,416,767 logs and scaled 560,938,637 board feet. For 45 consecutive days 30,000 logs passed daily through the scaling gaps,

were marked with an axe, measured, and sent through the various channels to the sawmills. Six scalers measured over 6,000 logs each day, 600 logs per hour, or 10 logs per minute. Add to this one hour off for dinner and lulls caused by jams etc. To this day, old cant hooks, scaler sticks, and dead heads are occasionally recovered from the mucky bottom of the Menominee and serve as a reminder of the magnificent operation that once existed about a century ago."

## How Times Do Change!!

The Vilas County News-Review of Eagle River, WI, features a column called "Backward Glances" which capsulizes news items of that date for each decade over the past 80 years. One such item of 70 years ago concerned the alleged taking of pictures of abandoned logging camps by a state forestry department photographer "in order to convince people this area was non-agricultural and fit only for reforestration".

Permission was granted "Chips & Sawdust" to reprint the original article of July 30, 1913 in it entirety, which was provided us by the News-Reviews" staff member, Elaine Voeltner.

**The article was headlined "1,310,000 Acres, and 80 Percent Agricultural Lands, Is What Forestry Board Wants For Its Forest Reserve. Five Vitally Affected Counties Are Fighting Against Its Seizure. Would Wipe Out Vilas County."**

The article goes on to say: "If it isn't one scheme it's another that the forest reserve works upon the uninformed public to further reforestration of Vilas and portions of four other northern Wisconsin continues to the tune of about a million and a half acres."

"The latest stunt Mr. Griffith is said to be pulling off to 'convince' the people of the state of Wisconsin that this northern section is non-agricultural land and only fit for reforestration, is to send out a photographer through Vilas county who is taking views of old abandoned clearings around logging camps and calling them 'farms which settlers have abandoned on account of inability to grow anything.' "

"For the edification of the reader it can be said that when lumbering was in its prime in this region twenty or twenty-five years ago, a tract of several acres was broken up by the logging company at their summer camps and seeded to timothy or clover. This furnished forage for the oxen and horses during the summer months, or while logging operations were suspended."

"For the past fifteen or twenty years, or since logging operations have been discontinued these woods pastures have "run out" on

account of re-seeding. These old camp meadows are still to be seen as far south as Merrill and to the agriculturalist are convincing enough to show the richness of the soil in general."

"Every old tote road, long since disused (and new highways, too) are verdant with clover and timothy, furnishing mute evidence of the productiveness of the soil in general."

"If we err in stating who is behind the photographer's work, we apologize to Mr. Griffith, otherwise it is to be regretted that the forestry department would stoop to such despicable methods which contain not the least bit of honesty in them."

"Vilas county's crops are excellent and every taxpayer hopes that legislative investigation will soon be made into soil and crop conditions."

"It is authentically understood that two state experts are making analysis of Vilas county soil in the Black Oak and Cisco lake regions."

## **M.N. Taylor and Wife Victims of Fire**

The shocking deaths of M. N. "Mully" Taylor, 79, and his wife, Billie, 80, last February 20th as the result of a fire in their Merrill home is probably known to most Association members as that tragic event made state-wide news headlines at the time. Because the February issue of "Chips & Sawdust" had then already gone to press, Taylor's obituary is recorded at this time so that there is formal note of that deplorable occurrence in the Association's official periodical.

"Mully" Taylor was a co-founder and executive director of Trees-for-Tomorrow for 31 years before his retirement in 1975. He was a 1983 recipient of the Association's Distinguished Service Award, primarily for his pioneering efforts in outdoor conservation education. The many achievements of Trees-for-Tomorrow in the fields of resource management were to a considerable degree the result of his foresight, planning and leadership. As a former newspaperman, Taylor was also directly responsible for the establishment of a unique demonstration forest which was purchased and managed for the past 26 years by the Wisconsin Press Association and its editor-members.

Following retirement, Taylor became a co-founder and first president of the Merrill Historical Society and authored a monograph on the history of a cutover region of Lincoln County titled "The Saga of New Wood Country" which was published by the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts & Letters.

A memorial fund in Taylor's name has been established at Trees-for-Tomorrow which will be used to bring more teaching and students to that institution's conservation education workshops. Contributions (tax deductible) can be sent to the "Mully" Taylor Scholarship Fund, % Trees-for-Tomorrow, Box 609, Eagle River, WI 54521

## **Camp Five Museum To Re-open June 27th**

Information has been received that the nationally-known Camp Five Logging Museum at Laona, WI will re-open for the summer on June 27th. Operation of the Laona & Northern Railway will also be resumed, involving the "Lumberjack Special" steam train trip to and from Camp Five.

Other attractions include a forest tour by surrey, a county store circa 1900, hayrack ride and pontoon boat trip.

An information sheet, price list and brochure may be obtained by writing to Mrs. Gordon R. Connor at 1011 - 8th Street, Wausau, WI 54401, or after June 27th, to Camp Five, RFD #1, Laona, WI 54541

## **Water-Powered Sawmills**

Are there any water-powered sawmills — or relics of them — left in the state of Wisconsin?

That thought occurred to your editor after reading about one that has been restored to its original operating condition in Antioch, Illinois. The restoration was accomplished by the local Lions Club with the help of other civic organizations, the city council and many interested citizens.

The sawmill was built originally in 1839 on the banks of the Sequoit River. It provided the area's earliest settlers with the lumber needed to build their homes, farms, wagons, furniture and many other articles commonly used in those days. Harnessing of the free water that powered the mill obviously helped to hold down the ultimate cost of those products. Lumber, however, was not always paid for in cash; in the age-old system of bartering, farm produce and even labor was traded for the quantity desired.

If any Association members have knowledge of the existence of any water-powered sawmills anywhere in Wisconsin and can provide pertinent facts, please send that information to us for our reference files.

## WANTED

RECIPE for "Shoe-Pac Pie" (of logging camp fame)

PHOTOS, for temporary loan, or permanent addition to Association files, of any aspect of Wisconsin forest history.

CLIPPINGS from newspaper/magazines/journals for Association reference files.

SHORT ARTICLES (not exceeding 500 words) on events of local, regional or state-wide interest, on any aspect of Wisconsin forest history for Publication in "C & S".

## FOR SALE

BIBLIOGRAPHY of Wisconsin Forest History - \$4.00 postpaid.

PROCEEDINGS of Annual Members Meetings - 1976 thru 1983 - \$1.00 to \$4.00 postpaid.

BARK-PEELING SPUD, circa 1900 or earlier, used to peel hemlock tanbark.

## New Members Department

The latest addition to our Membership rolls is RICHARD LINDBERG of Oregon, WI. Dick is co-author of the special issue of Wisconsin Natural Resources magazine for March-April 1984 titled "A Strategic Plan for Wisconsin Forests".

## Former Association Director Receives Forestry Award

Jay H. Cravens was honored for his outstanding contributions to forestry in Wisconsin when he recently was given the 1984 John Macon Award of Merit by the Wisconsin Section of the Society of American Foresters.

Cravens is a professor of forestry at the College of Natural Resources, University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, where he has taught for the past eight years. His prior experience had been with the U.S. Forest Service for thirty years, during which he attained the rank of Associate Deputy Chief.

Cravens was a director of the Forest History Association from 1978 through 1980. It was a generous donation from him that helped to fund the cost of publishing the Association's Educational Leaflet No. 1 — "Firsts in Wisconsin Forest History".



## 1984 Annual Meeting Dates Changed

Chairman **CHUCK TWINING** of the Annual Meeting Planning Committee informs us that the dates for the Association's annual meeting have been changed from those first announced.

Instead of September 21-22, plans now are for the conclave to be held September 28-29.

The change was necessitated by the discovery that there was a prior reservation for the use of the Sigurd Olson Institute of Northland College, Asland, WI, site of this year's meeting.

## Unusual Forest Product: Ginseng

Most readers are aware that Wisconsin is a major producer of ginseng, a forest plant species the root of which is attributed with medicinal powers. What may not be as well-known are some of the following facts:

Native ginseng, as differentiated from the Asian variety, once grew from Canada to Florida. As it became scarcer in Canada and New England, due to overharvesting, by 1717 it was being brought from as far away as Green Bay, Wisconsin, by the Fox Indians, and shipped to HongKong via France. Cultivation of ginseng eventually became a profitable enterprise and ginseng gardens proliferated between 1889 and 1905, with one such center located at Amberg, WI. Today, Wisconsin leads all states in the production and export of the cultivated variety. Between 90 and 95% of all American cultivated ginseng is produced in Marathon County, WI.

The annual Marathon County crop is worth about 20 million dollars and annual exports of wild ginseng from American sources add another 20 million dollars to the economy. The harvest season for wild ginseng in Wisconsin begins August 15th and ends November 1st, according to DNR regulations, which also licenses all diggers. Licenses are not required for growers and dealers of cultivated ginseng.

The largest market for U.S. ginseng is HongKong; other significant markets include Taiwan, Singapore and West Germany.

Why is ginseng so important? The Chinese value it as a herbal medicine, taken mostly in the form of tea or soup, to promote over-all vigor. American health food enthusiasts use it in the belief that it is a general stimulant and aphrodisiac.

## EDITORIAL

### Something To Think About!

Your Secretary-Treasurer recently read a columnist's item about a small Michigan town that celebrated its bicentennial in 1976. At the conclusion of that event, it had \$1,000 left over in cash. The chairman of the bicentennial committee then invested it as a down payment on the tricentennial celebration it would hold in the year 2076. At 8 percent interest, he figured that \$1,000 would balloon to \$1,723,753.09! The columnist's comment was "That could pay for a heluva party!

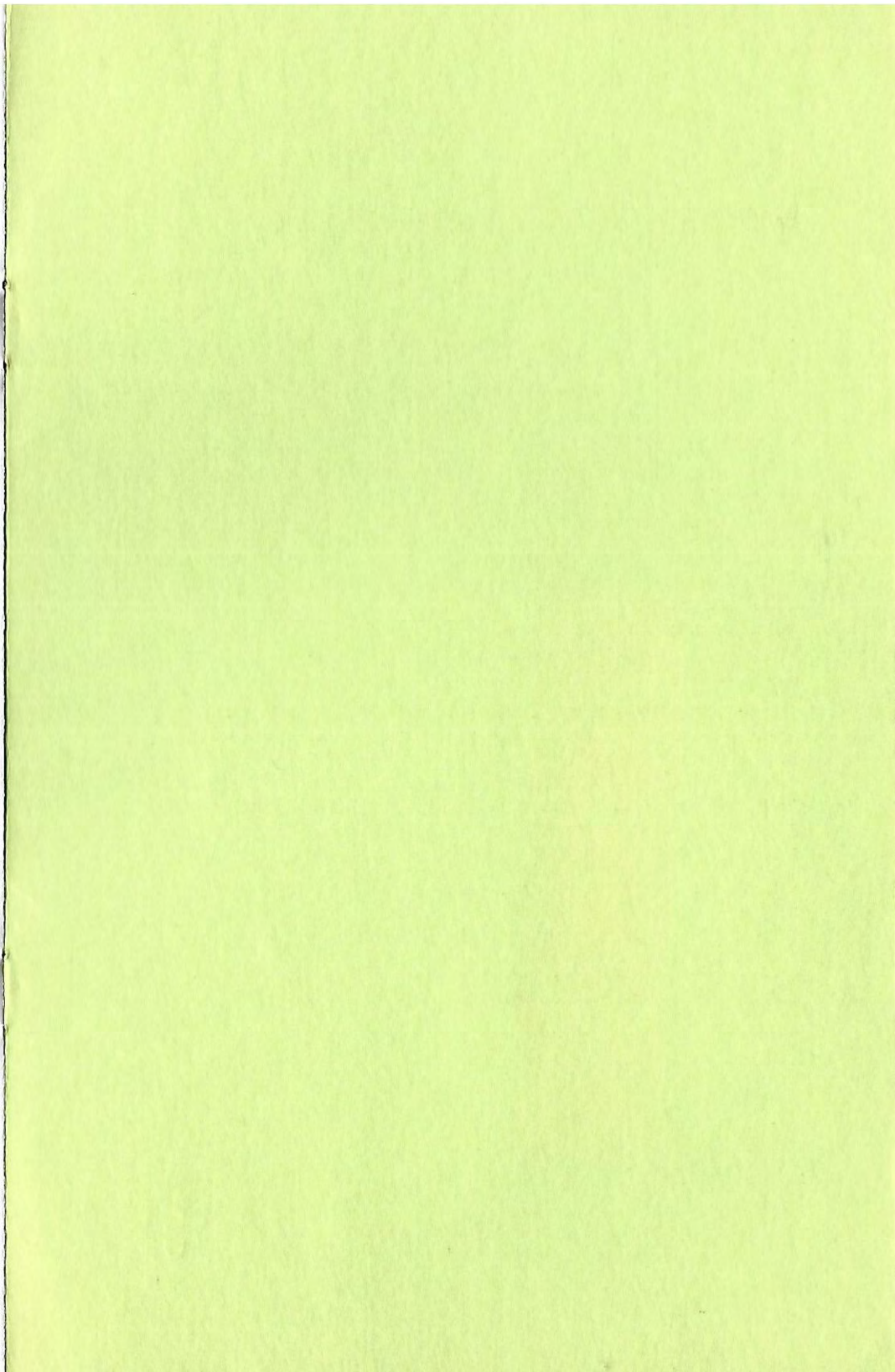
Hopefully, we will survive the next 91 years to celebrate the centennial of our Association's founding. Right now, however, we do have a financial problem which could jeopardize our future.

The Association's capital funds account currently stands at \$8,783.00, drawing 10.45% interest. However, the interest income from that account, plus current membership dues, is insufficient to keep up with operating costs. We urgently need to increase that capital account considerably, if we are to avoid future increases in membership dues.

The alternative, of course, is to reduce or discontinue the services presently provided: free state-wide distribution of the Proceedings of the annual meetings, quarterly issues of "Chips & Sawdust", annual scholarships and distinguished service awards. We doubt that the Association's membership can be sustained with such a curtailment of its program.

We therefore appeal to all concerned members: Please consider making a one-time-only contribution of \$25, \$50, \$100, or more, to help assure that F.H.A.W. continues to have a future, not just a past. All donations are, of course, fully tax deductible.

In the words of a well-known radio farm program commentator: "And that, for to-day, is something to think about!"





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