



## "CHIPS and SAWDUST"

A Newsletter from the Forest History Association of Wisconsin  
403 McIndoe Street - Wausau, WI 54401

VOLUME III - No. 1

February, 1978

### HELP NEEDED FROM LIBRARIES AND HISTORICAL SOCIETIES

An Association project this year is the compilation of a bibliography of books, pamphlets, manuscripts, etc. dealing with any aspect of logging, lumbering and forestry history of Wisconsin. For an undertaking of this magnitude, we will need help from members, and particularly those who may be members of local historical societies.

Whether it be only one title--or one hundred--we will welcome your contribution to what we believe will be the most extensive bibliography on this subject that has ever been compiled in Wisconsin. Be sure to list the author, the publisher's name and address, and the year of publication, or preparation in the case of unpublished manuscripts or reports.

Send your lists to Secretary Ramon Hernandez, McMillan Memorial Library, 490 East Grand Avenue, Wisconsin Rapids, WI 54494.

### RESPONSES TO NICOLET NATIONAL FOREST HISTORY

Since the Association began the distribution and sale last fall of the "History of the Nicolet National Forest," well over 400 copies have been sold. Almost 50 public and institutional libraries throughout the state have purchased one or more copies. Does your local library have a copy?

One order had a note saying "Do the Chequamegon, too!" We'd like to, of course, but it will be up to some energetic historian to take the initiative in researching and actually writing such a history. The Association's function is to review the manuscript to assure compliance with its publications policy. Subsequently, arrangements are made for sponsoring the printing and distribution. Inquiries regarding the details of our publications policy should be directed to our Secretary.

### TRAVELLER'S GUIDE TO HISTORIC SITES

As the result of a suggestion from one of our newer members, CHARLES STODDARD, the Association has undertaken a project involving the preparation of a map and guide to locations of major historic interest.

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Not only will such a brochure provide a service to our members, but equally important, it should serve as a considerable educational attraction for the thousands of tourists who are usually looking for something different and unique. The suggestions of members will be welcome for the inclusion of specific historic sites. It is anticipated that distribution will be made in 1979, with the cooperation of the state Division of Tourism and local chambers of commerce information booths.

BOOK AWARD WON BY MEMBER OF F.H.H.W.

The national Forest History Society's first annual book award was won by DR. CHARLES E. TWINING of Northland College, Ashland, WI for his "DOWNRIVER: Orrin H. Ingram and the Empire Lumber Company." Dr. Twining received a \$500 check for his literary effort and sent us \$5.00 of it for his membership in our Association with a note modestly saying that "a good story was not totally destroyed by the author."

The book is published by the Wisconsin Historical Society and may be purchased at its office in 816 State Street, Madison, WI 53706.

"SPOONER ADVOCATE'S" STORY LEADS TO LOGGING CAMP MUSEUM

Bill Stewart, editor of the "Spooner Advocate," said recently in his weekly column that "One of the continuing benefits of the observances of our country's Bicentennial. . . has been the on-going interest in local history." He then proceeded to give an example of how history research sometimes leads beyond what the researcher had intended.

It seems that the "Advocate" had printed a story written by a local historian about a local sorghum mill. The mill's owner said he had sold it to "a man from Milwaukee who was buying old logging equipment and other antiques."

Subsequently, a staff member of the Audubon Camp in nearby Sarona read the story and announced that he knew who had bought it and the new location of the sorghum mill. This was none other than JACQUE VALLIER, our 1977 recipient of the Association's first annual distinguished service award.

Jacque was for many years a member of the staff at the Audubon Camp, as was his wife, Dory. The sorghum mill is now housed at the Menominee Logging Camp Museum (just north of Keshena), of which Jacque and Dory are well-known patrons.

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OUR FIRST MEMBER FROM A FOREIGN COUNTRY!

Correspondence last fall has resulted in the addition of a new member who currently is working in Honduras in Central America. CORNELIO GROOTHOUSEN is on a forestry assignment with the Peace Corps, and notes that oxen-logging and hand-sawmilling are still common in rural Honduras. Cornelio's dad was a logger in the Tomahawk area in the early 1900's.

Coincidentally, another member, GARY PASSOW, recently returned from a two-year stint with the Peace Corps in Nigeria, West Africa. Gary served as a staff assistant in the Ministry of Rural Development, Department of Waters and Forests, working on afforestation and reforestation projects.

FOREST FIRE PROTECTION HISTORY SOURCE

As most readers of Wisconsin current events already know, the spring forest fires of 1977, which occurred as an aftermath to the extreme drought conditions of 1976, were among the worst in 40 years. The best estimates are that 1,824 fires occurred on over 48,000 acres and destroyed resources and structures worth 4.5 million dollars.

Those severe losses are now history, but they do revive an interest in how they compare with those sustained when forest fire protection in Wisconsin was still in its infancy. A fascinating account of the development of early day fire control efforts can be found in a 1952 publication of the old Wisconsin Conservation Department, which was published in cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service. The title is "Forest Fires and Forest Fire Control in Wisconsin--A Historical Record of Forest Protection Activities in Wisconsin" Co-author of the 75-page booklet was NEIL LEMAY, who was chief forest ranger from December, 1942 until his retirement in 1969. Neil is an Association member who contributed considerably of his time and experience during the formative stages of the Association.

NEW FEATURE FOR "C & S"

Most members of the Association probably do not know the officers and directors personally. A new feature of "Chips & Sawdust," therefore, will be a brief biographical sketch, or personality profile, of each of them, starting with the president, NED REVIE.

Your editor was saved the time and effort of interviewing Ned for such a feature when the city editor of the Wausau "Daily Herald" chose him as the subject for her "People" column. Her story is reproduced on page four.



By GERI NIKOLAI  
City Editor

# People

You didn't have to have a sense of humor to survive the hungry days of the Depression, but it sure must have helped.

Maybe that's why Ned Revie did so well.

Revie, 1408 E. Wausau Ave., Wausau, left his rural Marathon County farm home in 1928 to seek, not fame and fortune, but room and board.

His lumberjack father had died two years earlier and Revie, one of 14 children, chose to follow in his footsteps. He hitched a "side door Pullman" ride up north and spent most of the next eight years logging in northern Wisconsin and upper Michigan.

At first, he only earned survival — room and

board. Revie looked around for a way to earn some cash and found one.

"There were fabulous houses being built in Wausau, and most of them used stone and mortar for the foundation," he said. "So I took a sledge hammer and crowbar and went out into farmers' fields to dig up stones.

"The farmers were happy to have them dug out and the city folks were glad to buy them. I made \$1.25 a cord."

That's a pile of rocks, or wood, eight feet long, four feet high and four feet wide.

Revie did work his way onto the payroll in logging camps. By the time he was in his late

teens, he was managing a crew of 125 lumberjacks.

He was called "the kid" but he had earned their respect. They looked to him to save some of their checks so they'd have \$20 left after a weekend in town, and Revie took upon himself the task of returning the overimbibers to camp.

Revie loved the woods and lumberjacking despite the long, cold days and small paychecks. He spent most of one February with a crew building a two-and-a-quarter-mile road into a new lumber camp. That not only meant chopping a lot of trees by hand, but, at that time of year, shoveling the snow first.

"We built a camp right on the Michigan-Wisconsin line," he recalls. "They were all log buildings.

"I remember that Wisconsin had a tax on gas, so we put the gas pumps on the Michigan side. Michigan taxed meals so we put the cook's shanty in Wisconsin."

Revie still remembers the jubilation in the logging camp when news of the National Recovery Act was announced. The lumberjacks had been making 65 cents a day. The law set minimum wage at 27 cents an hour, or \$2.70 for a 10-hour day.

When the firm he was working for went bankrupt, Revie left lumberjacking and returned to Wausau. Then in his early 30s, he delivered milk with a horse and wagon for a while, and later worked as a wholesale salesman for a hardware company.

He was bound to get back to the woods, however. He signed on with Wausau Paper Mills Co. as a yardman, became known as a man who knew his way around woodlands and producers, and became Wausau Paper's woodlands manager. He held that job until retirement last year.

Living and raising a family in Wausau, Revie found an outlet for his sense of humor that has made him famous in the city.

He became a part of the Stunt Night - Al Kiefer Fun Band crowd and starred as a clown.

The pantomiming group went all over Wisconsin in those days, performing for any non-profit group that was raising money for a good cause. Revie loved clowning.

"It's the spirit of comedy and friendliness," he says.

The big lumberjack says he doesn't feel funny putting on makeup and a clown suit.

"I love to make people laugh. When I'm clowning, I'm always a happy clown."

Revie carries on some of the Fun Band tradition as a clown. He dons his suit — he's on his third one — about six times a year for non-profit events in the Wausau area.

Retirement didn't end his working with wood, either. He owns 240 acres and has plans to log some of it. He's become a licensed nurseryman and planted a 30-acre tree farm.

But most of Revie's days are spent in his shop where he turns out an assortment of decorative and practical items made of wood. His favorite tool is an old lathe he rescued from a woodyard.

"Working with wood has a lot of disappointments," he says. "You can cut most of a decorative column, only to discover when you're about done that it has a rotted spot or crack inside and isn't useable."

That's the way it is with wood, says Revie. He doesn't complain.

After a lifetime of working with wood, he understands that it has both beauty and blemishes.



Herald photo  
by Bob Radunz

## Logger-clown