

OUR FOREST Woodlander

WINTER 2024

A COLLABORATIVE ISSUE OF OUR FOREST AND THE ONTARIO WOODLANDER

FOREST HISTORY

125 Years of Federal Forestry... A Short History • Ken Armson — A Life Dedicated to Forests • Forests Ontario Is Now Forests Canada • Ontario Private Land Forestry • Lavern Heideman and Sons Ltd.



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CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

- 4 A Message from Forests Canada and Ontario Woodlot Association
- 5 About Us
- 6 Forest History Photo Contest
- 8 Woodland Bingo

4



FOREST HISTORY ONTARIO

- 10 125 Years of Federal Forestry... A Short History
- 14 The Canadian Forestry Association 1900 – 2016
- 16 100 Years of Developing the Ontario Provincial Air Service
- 18 Ken Armson – A Life Dedicated to Forests
- 20 The Larose Forest – From Desert to a Managed, Productive and Multi Use Recreational Oasis of Nature
- 22 Some Great Reading for Forest History Buffs
- 24 Fire, Genetics, and Silviculture

9



FORESTS CANADA

- 28 75 Years of Advocacy for Forests
- 32 Tree Bee: 60+ Years of Connecting Students with Nature
- 34 From Spongy Moth to Oak Wilt
- 36 If It's a Bumper Crop, We Should Get Everything that We Can
- 40 Stewards of the Land
- 42 Remembering the Travelling Forester: Colin McInnis (1876-1967)
- 44 To Save and Protect the Forest: The Story of MFTIP

27



ONTARIO WOODLOT ASSOCIATION

- 46 Ontario Private Land Forestry: A History of World Class Programs
- 50 Lavern Heideman and Sons Limited
- 52 Our Woodlots: Part of the Rupnow Lumber Company Legacy
- 55 Featured Recipe: Wild Plum Compote
- 56 A Drury Family History
- 58 The Park Family Heritage Woodlot
- 60 The Eastern Ontario Model Forest: A Strong Legacy and a Bright Future
- 63 Birds Canada Featured Bird: Red-bellied Woodpecker
- 64 Meet the Artisan: The Salvage Life – Art with History and Meaning

45



A RICH AND LIVING LEGACY... OUR FORESTS AND WOODLANDS



A Message from Forests Canada and Ontario Woodlot Association

Jess Kaknevicius, CEO, Forests Canada and
John Pineau, Executive Director, Ontario Woodlot Association

We are pleased and proud to introduce this unique, collaborative joint winter issue of our respective magazines, *Our Forest* and *The Ontario Woodlander*. The theme of this effort is near and dear to our hearts... forest history. Both of our organizations are dedicated supporters of Forest History Ontario, a volunteer-based non-profit association dedicated to celebrating Ontario's rich forest history and making it available for enjoyment and use by all. This issue features several articles on this fascinating topic and includes contributions by Forest History Ontario, the Ontario Woodlot Association and Forests Canada (formerly Forests Ontario).

While celebrating forest history and rich cultural heritage is certainly important in its own right, it is also important to understand how the practice of forestry and our use of forests have evolved over time. Our forest history tells a story of continuous improvement and a collective desire to do things better, but also to mitigate and correct past mistakes, including unsustainable practices and sometimes excessively exploitive uses. Our reflection on historical practices is not intended to disparage in any way people from the past - we have come a long way, and it is a positive narrative that we have tried to capture in this issue. As individuals and societies, we grow, change, and hopefully get better, always

learning and building from both failures and successes. It is part of being human.

Our collective focus is on sustainability, good stewardship, and best management practices informed by sound science, Indigenous Knowledge and research. We have learned a great deal from forestry trailblazers who came before us, as the articles in this joint edition document. Today, we build on that legacy as we work to integrate vitally important values into how we manage and use our forests, striving to maintain healthy ecosystem processes, respect Indigenous rights and knowledge, ensure varied wildlife habitat availability, enhance biodiversity, bolster carbon storage capacity, and emulate natural disturbance.

In closing, we offer our sincere thanks to the staff and volunteers of Forest History Ontario, the Ontario Woodlot Association and Forests Canada, for making this joint venture happen. It has resulted in a wonderful showcase of our rich and living forest history legacy. And we are confident that this successful and enjoyable venture will foster and encourage continued collaboration and cooperation within the forest community.

Happy reading!

Jess Kaknevicius
CEO, Forests Canada

John Pineau
Executive Director, Ontario Woodlot Association

SURVEY QUESTION:

Our Forest History theme issue provides an overview of how government agencies, industry, organizations, First Nations, associations, communities, and families managed forests and woodlots in Ontario over the past few hundred years. We want to know who taught you about natural resource management?

There are three ways to respond:

1. Use a tablet or smartphone camera to scan the QR code.
2. Answer online with this link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TOW117>
3. Mail your response to Ontario Woodlot Association, 10-4 Campus Dr., Kemptville, ON, K0G 1J0





FOREST HISTORY ONTARIO

Forest History Ontario believes that Ontario's Forest history is an important story; it is the foundation of Ontario's story. It is a story of people—leaders and pioneers, workers and entrepreneurs. It is a story of exploration and development, of research and education, of fables and facts. Each story has insights to reveal and lessons to share. We do our best to ensure these stories are not lost; rather that they're captured, collected, and made accessible, so future Ontarians continue to benefit from the value of the learning and richness of the lore.

As such, we strive to preserve natural and human forest history, support research and studies of forest history, support the discovery and preservation of forest history records and materials, and share knowledge and information of forest history. See: <https://www.ontarioforesthstory.ca/> for more information.

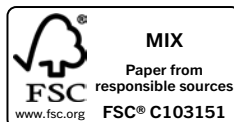


FORESTS ONTARIO IS NOW FORESTS CANADA!

From the annual collection of viable tree seeds ensuring a reliable future supply, to supporting local jobs and inspiring the next generation of forest stewards, Forests Canada works with a trusted network of partners to ensure the long-term health and resiliency of our forests today, and for future generations.

Visit www.ForestsCanada.ca to learn more about our tree planting, community outreach and education programs. You can also find us @ForestsCanada on Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, Bluesky, LinkedIn, and YouTube to stay up to date on the latest Forests Canada news.

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ONTARIO WOODLOT ASSOCIATION

The Ontario Woodlot Association (OWA) is a nonprofit grassroots organization with a vision of ensuring the sustainability of Ontario's privately owned forests now and in the future.

The OWA defines a 'woodlot' as any private or community-owned treed property, including all woodlands, wetlands, and forest-forming habitats. Those who are fortunate enough to steward a woodlot or forest may do so to ensure it is sustainable and productive, ecologically healthy and diverse, and/or because it is spiritually and physically renewing.

The common thread linking us is our shared commitment to managing our woodlots to the best of our abilities and to ensuring their viability for generations to come.

Learn more about the OWA on our website: www.ontariowoodlot.com/about

Follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#) and [X](#) at @ontariowoodlot and [LinkedIn](#) at Ontario Woodlot Association.

FRONT COVER PHOTO:

Winner of the Forest History Photo Contest. Taken on April 27, 2022 by Lorraine Jeansonne, of Ottawa, at her 90-hectare woodlot near Gracefield in the Vallée de la Haute Gatineau, Quebec, about 100 kilometres north of Ottawa.

POP QUIZ

1

In what year was the first permanent sample plot (PSP 1) established at the Petawawa Research Forest?

2

Who is the inspirational Ontario Forester named to the Order of Canada in 2016?

3

In what year was the Ontario Provincial Air Service hanger built in Sault Ste. Marie?

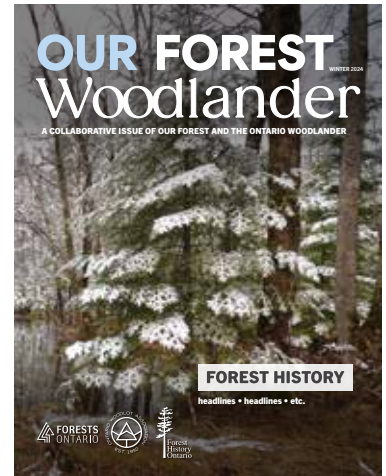
ANSWERS:

1. 1918 2. Ken Armson 3. 1924

FOREST HISTORY PHOTO CONTEST

WINNER: Lorraine Jeansonne

Caption: This cover photo, was taken on April 27, 2022 by Lorraine Jeansonne, at her 90-hectare woodlot near Gracefield in the Vallée de la Haute Gatineau, Quebec, about 100 kilometres north of Ottawa. Jeansonne writes: "I have seen so many animals in and around this pond: otters, an ermine, beavers, ducks, blue herons, hawks and golden eagles, frogs, bullfrogs, salamanders, multiple birds and insect pests. And I have heard the coyotes howling right behind the mound, etc. So many beautiful experiences for me, the author-storyteller, to transcribe and share." Jeansonne adds, "My role is to let the forest and its biodiversity develop on their own. On my trails, I guide my guests by teaching them the ecosystem function of the natural world. The beauty of forest diversity and the vitality of terrestrial and aquatic animals inspire me to write tales to offer to families and children in the greater Outaouais region of Ontario and Quebec."



RUNNERS-UP: Tom, Bob and Jane Graham

The Graham family took these photos over a more than 50-year period on their FSC-certified property near Bishop's Mills, about eighty kilometres south of Ottawa.



Photo No. 1 (1971)

In 1969, the Graham family bought a 100-acre farm property near Bishop's Mills, about eighty kilometres south of Ottawa. Bob Graham, in 1971, took this photo of workers with the Ontario government's Woodland Improvement Act program, planting Jack Pine trees on the property.



Photo No. 2 (1974)

From left to right: James Graham and his elder brother Tom Graham, sons of Bob Graham, stretch out string on the site of a planned cabin in an area on their farm infilled with Red Pine in 1971. The pine saplings barely reach their knee. The brothers transplanted some pines to make room for the project.



SECOND RUNNER-UP: Nicole Vankooten



Vankooten took this August 2023 photo near White River, Ontario, about 1,000 kilometres northwest of Toronto, in a commercial logging operations block seven years post-reforestation. The photo highlights the ongoing silviculture practices, such as brushing a few years after tree planting, to eliminate competing species of woodland plants and undergrowth.

Vankooten writes: "The grey, decomposing slash among the emerging green trees reflects the changing forest composition after commercial logging activities. This photo provides its viewers with a sense of hope for the future of the forest after a destructive past of clearcutting. In this manner, the photo captures the forest in a transitional period between a clear-cut block and a new-growth forest. On the other hand, this photo represents social and cultural change within the forest industry. The subject of the photo is participating in the OYEP (Outland Youth Employment Program) for Indigenous Youth in Northern Ontario to gain workplace experience with natural resource management. The subject, as a young Indigenous woman, breaks gender and racial barriers that continue to exist in the forest industry. Her presence and proud stance represent the increasing visibility of Indigenous people in forestry and the valuable knowledge their teachings bring to conversations about sustainability.

↑ Photo No. 3 (2024)

Near the same spot as in the 1974 photo, Tom Graham leans against a Red Pine, now more than 50 years old. The Grahams built a passive solar house on the site in the 1980s; by the 2010s, they cut some pines to let the sun hit their house. The logger sent the trees to the Lavern Heideman & Sons mill in Eganville. The removal of the pines gave light to self-seeded sugar maple saplings that now thrive here.

WOODLAND BINGO

By Melany Burant, Kawartha Chapter

Winter is a wonderful time for exploring forest history, deepening your knowledge, and enjoying nature's beauty! Try these nine activities to enrich your woodlot adventures with a historical twist. Can you complete them all? Share your winter discoveries and forest history finds with us by emailing your photos and stories to: info@ontariowoodlot.com.



Write a forest themed poem or story



Research historical logging tools



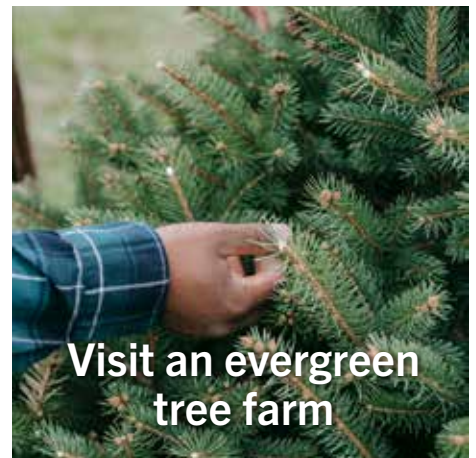
Collect fallen pinecones for crafts



Visit an old growth forest



FREE



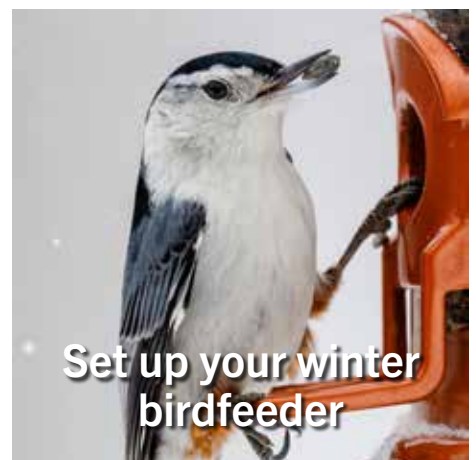
Visit an evergreen tree farm



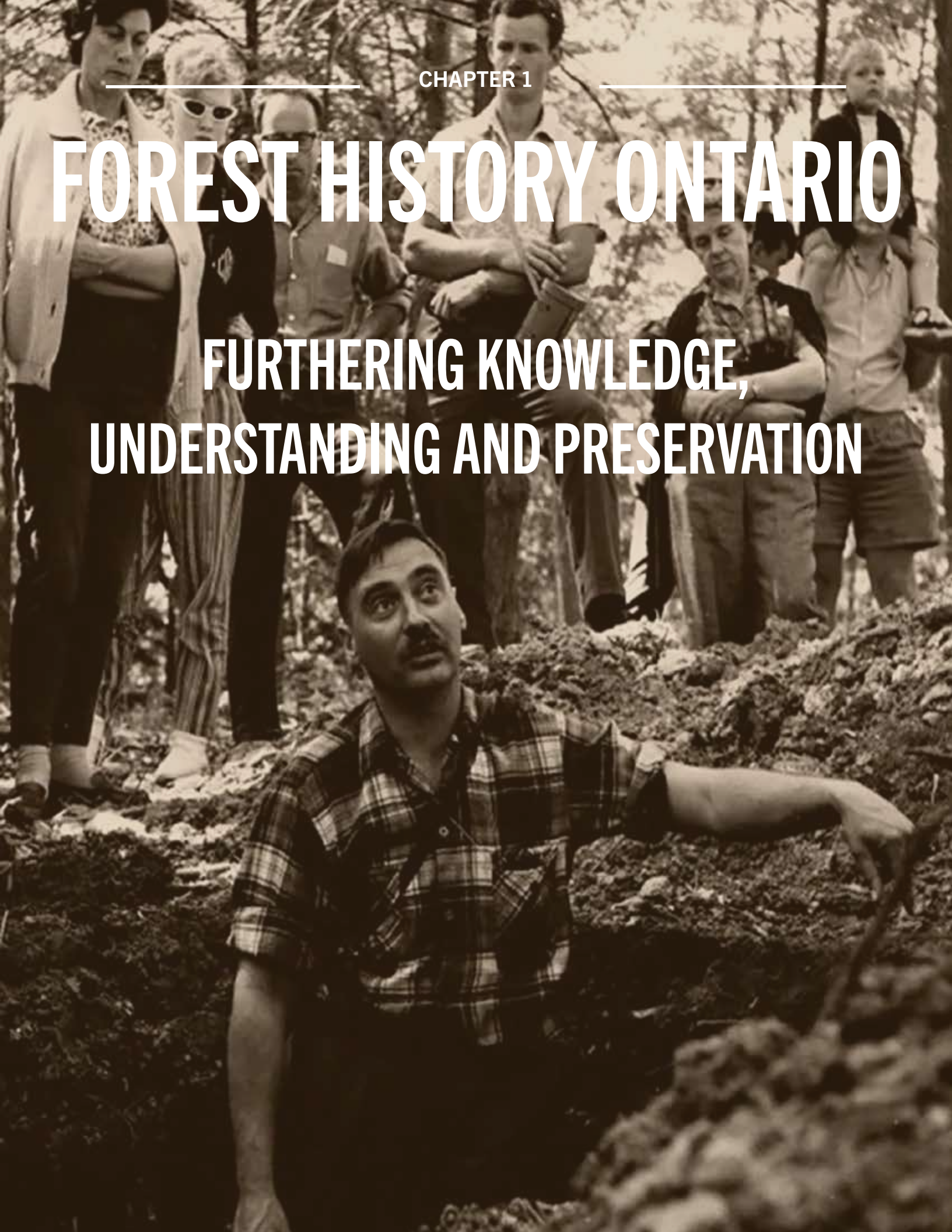
Look for winter wildlife habitats



Investigate history at your local library



Set up your winter birdfeeder

A black and white photograph of a group of people in a forest. In the foreground, a man with a mustache, wearing a plaid shirt, is crouching and looking upwards. Behind him, a group of people, including men, women, and children, are standing and watching. The background is filled with trees and foliage.

CHAPTER 1

FOREST HISTORY ONTARIO

**FURTHERING KNOWLEDGE,
UNDERSTANDING AND PRESERVATION**

125 YEARS OF FEDERAL FORESTRY... A SHORT HISTORY

By Jim Farrell, Chair, Forest History Ontario, Lower Ottawa Valley Chapter

Canada's federal forestry service, the Canadian Forest Service (CFS), currently part of the Natural Resources department, got its start 125 years ago this year and has witnessed many changes over that time, from surveying great expanses of forest by horseback to observing forests from remote satellites.

In 1899, Canada's confederation was young and still growing, with Manitoba having just signed on in 1870 and Saskatchewan and Alberta joining in 1905. Prime Minister John A. MacDonald, having finally delivered on his promise to British Columbia (BC) of a transcontinental railway in 1885, was mindful of the need for a federal forestry service, but was consumed with the railway, its politics and scandals. His successor, Wilfred Laurier, despite strong cabinet opposition, established a federal forestry service and named Elihu Stewart as the first Superintendent of Forestry with a mighty annual budget of \$1,000. A short 10 years later this budget had grown to an impressive \$100,000/year. The original mandate was to essentially protect forests on Dominion lands, which interestingly were at more risk with the arrival of the railways spewing fiery embers from woodfired locomotives. Mr. Stewart was a land surveyor and accomplished much in his eight-year tenure including the creation of the Canadian Forestry Association (which was a very high powered and influential group) and was a trusted advisor and confidant who was consulted regularly by then Prime Minister, Wilfred Laurier. An interesting Ontario connection is that Mr. Stewart was also a successful entrepreneur and an original owner of the Spruce Falls Power and Paper

Company in Kapuskasing. The Forestry Branch also recruited H.R. MacMillan in the early 1900s after his graduation from Yale, who subsequently moved to BC and went on to establish the global forestry giant, MacMillan Bloedel.

Forest protection responsibilities continued to grow with 127 fire rangers patrolling the vast area between Hudson Bay and the Rockies by 1927. At the time, the combined population of Saskatchewan and Alberta was less than 165,000 souls. The mandate soon expanded to include tree planting in the prairies, more so for windbreaks than reforestation, distributing over five million trees in the first five years of the program. These early tree planting efforts laid the foundation for the establishment of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration in 1935 in response to a severe and protracted drought across the prairies. With this new demand for forestry skills, in the first decade of 1900, with a commitment by the federal Forestry Branch to hire graduates, forestry schools were established at the University of Toronto and the University of New Brunswick. In the decade that followed, the Federal Forest Reserves Act protected almost 50,000 km² of forest lands unsuitable for agriculture across the prairies under the responsibility of the Forestry Branch. Much of this was turned over to provinces years later when control over forests was delegated and a number of the forest reserves were retained as national parks.

The mandate expanded again in 1913 with the establishment of the Forest Products Laboratories of Canada (first laboratory on the McGill Campus in Montreal) marking the first foray (and

far from the last) into research. It included a spectrum of work on wood physics, timber testing, preservation and pulp and paper. Interestingly, midway through World War One (WW I), in 1916, a laboratory was established in Vancouver originally to test the suitability of Sitka Spruce in aircraft design and manufacture. Research efforts expanded into forest management and silviculture after WW I with the establishment of the Petawawa Forest Experiment Station on military lands adjacent to the Petawawa military base in the Ottawa Valley. The Petawawa Station hosts the oldest forest research permanent sample plot in Canada, established in 1918. Unrelated to the Forestry Branch, but a valuable contribution to the war efforts (1916-20 and 1940-45), was the creation of the Canadian Forestry Corps which put men with axes and saws into the forests of the United Kingdom and France to cut wood and timbers for the war effort, affectionately referred to as the 'Sawdust Fusiliers'. Altogether 35,000 Canadians from across the nation served in this Corps.

In the early 1930s the Forestry Branch was renamed the Dominion Forest Service and had focused forest product research at two laboratories, Vancouver (on the University of British Columbia campus) and Ottawa and a partnership with the Pulp and Paper Research Institute (Paprican) in Montreal. The two wood product labs were privatized in 1979 and renamed Forintek, and the Ottawa lab was re-located to Quebec City. Almost 30 years later in 2007 Forintek, Paprican and FERIC (dedicated to forest engineering research) were merged to create FPInnovations.



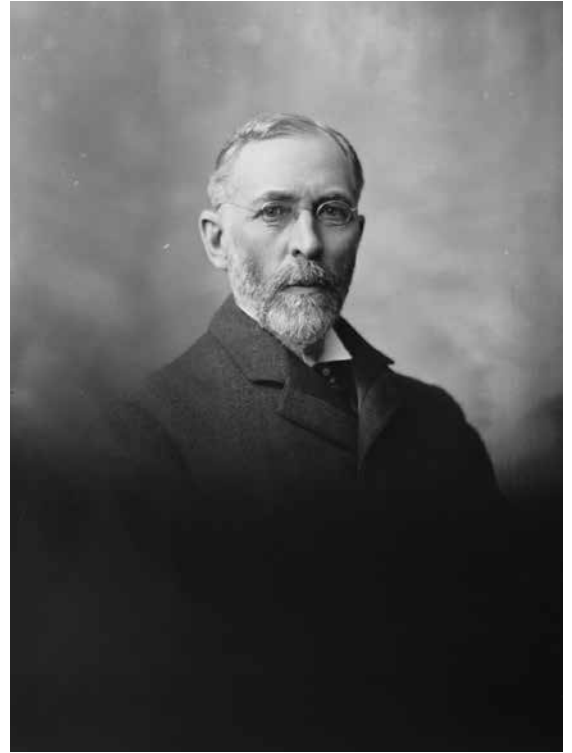


British Columbia forest rangers' camp in the early 1900s. Pacific Forestry Centre.



Aerial mapping of a Saskatchewan forest circa 1952. Library and Archives Canada.

In the post-World War Two (WW II) years, the Dominion Forest Service would see many name changes, growth, consolidations and budget cuts and a narrowing of the mandate to primarily one of biological research. At the same time, as the Canadian Forestry Service (CFS) established a world-renowned reputation of excellence in research, mainly around forest pest and fire protection. The CFS became recognized for its pioneering work on a biological control (*Baccillus thuringiensis*) for



Elihu Stewart, Superintendent of Forestry for the Dominion of Canada. Library and Archives Canada.



Canadian Forest Service Fire Research Scientist Ellen Whitman, Edmonton, AB. Photo Credit: Kira Hoffman.

“WILFRED LAURIER, DESPITE STRONG CABINET OPPOSITION, ESTABLISHED A FEDERAL FORESTRY SERVICE AND NAMED ELIHU STEWART AS THE FIRST SUPERINTENDENT OF FORESTRY WITH A MIGHTY ANNUAL BUDGET OF \$1,000”





The “street” sign at the Budworm City camp in New Brunswick in 1952. Photo Credit: D.C. Anderson.

budworm, variations of which is the standard treatment today and on treatment of Dutch Elm Disease and Emerald Ash Borer. CFS researchers and colleagues developed the Canadian Forest Fire Danger Rating System that is the national standard for determining wildfire risk... a system that has been adopted by several other countries worldwide. A major change in the CFS came in the form of being assigned a new mandate in 1982, regional economic development in forestry and from then until 1995 delivered federal provincial forestry agreements in every province in the country with eye-watering budgets. The positive residual impact of this national program remains today with a broader skill set, more focus on policy and analytics as well as competitiveness and industrial innovation. In the 1980s, the CFS had offices in every province in the country (briefly in the Yukon) and in some cases more than one office.

The Great Lakes Forestry Centre in Sault Ste Marie is one of five CFS research laboratories (plus two research forests and a lab in Corner Brook, Newfoundland and Labrador) across the country and can thank the budworm infestation of the late 1930s for its establishment. The Insect Pathology Research Institute was established in 1941 and a new building on Church Street was built in 1945 to respond to the massive Spruce Budworm epidemic that ravaged Ontario’s northern forests. Interestingly, the first Officer-in-Charge was Dr. Carl E. Atwood who was not only an accomplished scientist in his own right, but also fathered famous author Margaret Atwood

and globally respected neuroscientist Dr. Harold Atwood. This lab was expanded over the years and eventually named the Forest Pest Management Institute, although generally known as the ‘bug lab’. In the mid-1960s it was decided to consolidate federal forestry programs and moved from southern Ontario to the Soo (Sault Ste. Marie) and called the Great Lakes Forest Research Centre. In 1997 these labs were merged and in 2011 this CFS campus expanded again to include the new Invasive Species Centre.

While much more could have been included in this history, this is a short, selected collection of historical observations over a long and impressive history. Much has happened and changed over the first 125 years, but it is not hard to imagine that the current head of the federal forestry service is also consulted regularly by the Prime Minister.

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- Natural Resources Canada-Canadian Forest Service; 2024; *“Canadian Forest Service-125 years in the making”*





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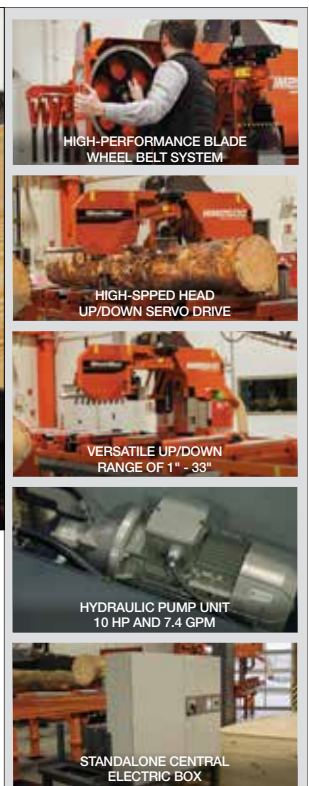
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THE CANADIAN FORESTRY ASSOCIATION 1900 – 2016

By Dave Lemkay, Renfrew County Chapter

This brief history cannot do justice to the enormous legacy built from the 116 years of work undertaken by the Canadian Forestry Association (CFA). But first, a little background: German influencers in America such as Dr. Bernard Fernow, Gifford Pinchot and Dr. C. A. Schenck brought forest conservation matters to the forefront in Canada. It was their influence that provided the genesis of the formation of the Canadian Forestry Association in 1900.

Until the association was sadly dissolved in 2016, the CFA had been the oldest continuously operated conservation organization in Canada, advocating for and supporting the protection and wise use of forest, water and wildlife resources. From its beginnings, the CFA's slate of officers included influential individuals from constituencies across Canada. Sir Henri Joly de Lotbinière, the inaugural president, became the Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia from 1900 to 1906.

The first national forest convention was convened in 1906 in the Railway Committee Room of the House of Commons. The honorary president was The Right Honourable Prime Minister Sir Wilfrid Laurier joined by His Excellency The Governor General Lord Earl Grey. For the next century, the Governors General of Canada continued to be the association's official patrons.

The Prime Minister had said "we must consider, and before it is too late, address questions of the highest importance to the future wellbeing of this Dominion and its forests and water resources." Throughout the decades to follow, conservation messaging waxed and waned with the two world wars creating gaps. Fast forward to the 1950s, when the association was

prolific in its influence. The affiliated provincial forestry associations such as the CFA of British Columbia, the CFA of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, and the Prairie Provinces Forest Association were soon to become autonomous. The Ontario Forestry Association had become its own entity in 1954. Soon each province had its own association, and the CFA took on the legal status as a Federation of Provincial Forestry Associations.

From the 1920s onward, the conservation message was delivered by dedicated CFA representatives travelling by car and making stops at small communities. These were exciting events at a time when even motion pictures were a rarity. In larger fashion, the message was delivered by the Conservation and Tree Planting railway cars that were shunted from town to town gratis on the CN and CP lines throughout the Prairies, Ontario and the Atlantic provinces. From 1920 to 1973, Alan Beaven, assisted by Paul Pageau for many of those years, was the mastermind behind this extensive operation. Explaining the tenets of planting trees for windbreaks on prairie farms to promote soil conservation after the dustbowl 1930s was an important undertaking. Continued tree planting in every province was managed cooperatively with provincial partners with sponsorship from Batesville Casket Company and Melita Coffee.

More than an interesting anecdote, there is the story of a British man, Archie Belaney, who in 1930 contributed an article to the *Canadian Forest and Outdoors* magazine entitled "The Vanishing Life of the Wild" under the name Grey Owl. At the annual convention of the CFA in Montreal in 1931, Grey Owl was a keynote presenter, and his Canadian Parks Branch

film, *The Beaver People*, was shown in public for the first time. This event set the stage for Belaney's "Grey Owl" persona to flourish. Appearing as Grey Owl and dressed in Indigenous regalia, Belaney made numerous speeches throughout Canada, the United States and England.

In the years following the first conference in 1906, the CFA was engaged in joint conferences with several organizations: the Society of American Foresters in 1952, a Resources Conference in 1954, a National Forestry Conference in 1956, and the British Commonwealth Conference in 1967. In more recent times, the 1986 National Forestry Congress in Ottawa was jointly organized with Canadian Pulp and Paper Association. The year 2000 marked the centenary of the CFA. With the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources, a joint National Forestry Conference was convened in Thunder Bay. This event coincided with the designation of Ontario's northwest as Forest Capital of Canada that year.

Now managed by the Canadian Institute of Forestry, the Forest Capital of Canada Program began under the aegis of the CFA in 1979 and continues to this day. Forest Capital designations have spanned the country from Corner Book to Vancouver and many places in between. (This and other records can be found with a search on the Canadian Institute of Forestry website: www.cif-ifc.org.)

The ninth National Forest Congress was jointly convened with the National Forest Strategy Coalition in Ottawa in 2003; it was followed by the 10th congress in 2006 in Gatineau, Québec. It is important to note that in 2003, the CFA was granted the opportunity to award twenty worthy



forest leaders with the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal.

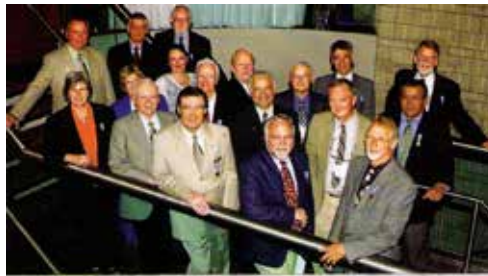
From its inception, the CFA fulfilled its mandate by playing a vital role in educating Canadians, young and old, about the country's forests and waterways. It published the *Canadian Forest Journal*, *The Canadian Forestry Magazine* and the *Illustrated Forest and Outdoors Magazine* that later morphed into *Field and Stream*. *The Children's Book of Trees* and program-related material on forest fires, tree planting and certified Canadian Tree Farms were distributed to Canadians. Widely accepted participatory campaigns included the establishment of National Forest Week and popular regional and national poster contests. The Canadian Smokey Bear trademark was officially licensed by the USDA Forest Service to the CFA in 1958, and the forest fire prevention message was aggressively promoted. The Canada's Forest Teaching Kit series spanned ten years with informative booklets being supplied to elementary school teachers across the country. Sponsorship for this outreach was generously provided by many forestry corporations and provincial ministries. The Envirothon Program was incorporated in Canada by the CFA on behalf of the provincial associations with sponsorship by Canon Canada. The program continues now under the auspices of the provincial associations.

Another CFA contribution was the supplying of the ceremonial Christmas tree to Rideau Hall, the home of the Governor General, and the Honourary Patron of the CFA. This annual tradition was an offshoot of the Forest Capital of Canada designations that recognized the significance of forests and forestry in municipalities and regions across the country.

Just before Christmas, a special tree was sent to Ottawa. In some cases, a given Forest Capital was not able to offer a handsome enough conifer. To compensate, the CFA would call on Doug Drysdale of Drysdale Christmas Tree Farms, who would do the honours, de-



CFA Tree Planting Campaign Rail Car.



Golden Jubilee Medal recipients in 2003 included Mary Van den Heuvel, Nova Scotia; Ken Armson, Toronto; Jim Ferguson, Renfrew; Dr. Bruce Dancik, Edmonton; Marie Rauter, Toronto; Dr. John Naismith, Thunder Bay; Barry Waito, Minnetonka, Manitoba; Tony Rotherham, Bolton, QC; Dr. Fred Pollett, Ottawa; Dr. Peggy Smith, Thunder Bay; Dr. Gilbert Paillé, Montreal; Jim Cayford, Guelph; Ed Lawrence, Ottawa; Dr. Hamish Kimmins, Denman Island, BC; and in absentia, Ike Barber, Vancouver; Diane Beaven, Winnipeg; Dr. Don Fowler, Fredericton; and Debra Wortley, Whitehorse. Medal Presenters: Dave Lemkay and Dr. Yvan Hardy.

livering a groomed, twelve-foot Fraser Fir. For many years the Rideau Hall Christmas tree unveiling was adopted as an official event. Apart from the plethora of local community celebrations, one special nicety was a visit to Rideau Hall that the annual Christmas tree event provided. Their Excellencies would graciously receive delegates from the CFA, including committee members of the respective Forest Capital. But when in 2005, the "Christmas Tree" was inadvertently described as "Holiday Tree" by Her Excellency Michaëlle Jean, the public controversy over that faux pas ended the tradition.

When the CFA was disbanded in 2016, a formal agreement was negotiated with the Canadian Institute of Forestry to inherit the CFA assets. A cash infusion was

FOREST HISTORY ONTARIO



CFA Conservation Officer vehicle.



CFA delegation with the 26th Governor General of Canada Adrienne Clarkson at Rideau Hall in Ottawa. Left to right: Barry Waito, Governor General Adrienne Clarkson, Doug Drysdale and Dave Lemkay.

augmented with supplies of teaching kits, full sets of the various CFA publications and access to sponsored tree-planting contributions. The extensive records from the Canadian Forestry Association, dating back a century, are officially archived with Library and Archives Canada.

During its long history, many Canadians made contributions to the Canadian Forestry Association. To name just a few: general managers Wm McMahan, E.G. Shorten, Robson Black, J.L. Van Camp, Dr. T. S. McKnight, A.D. "Dal" Hall, Glen Blouin, Dan Colligan and Dave Lemkay. The following individuals should also be noted for their contributions to the CFA: Gordon Gallyn, Roxanne Comeau, and presidents W. T. Bill Foster, Ken Armson, Bill Fullerton, Dr. Doug Redmond, Ivan Balenovic, Susan Gesner and Barry Waito.



100 YEARS OF DEVELOPING THE ONTARIO PROVINCIAL AIR SERVICE

By Fraser Dunn, Forest History Ontario, Algoma Chapter

This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Ontario Provincial Air Service (OPAS). The air service was born in 1924, a mere 15 years after J.E.D. McCurdy became the first Canadian to achieve flight in his Silver Dart, taking off from the frozen surface of Baddeck Lake, Nova Scotia in February 1909.

Based on early contract surveying experience and an increasing number of damaging forest fires, particularly one in Haileybury Ontario in 1922 where 44 lives were lost, the government, seeing growing potential for aviation services, considered whether Ontario should operate its own air service. In January 1924, James W. Lyons, Minister of Lands and Forests, approved the purchase of 13 surplus U.S Navy Curtiss HS-2L “H-Boats” and established a provincial organization for the purposes of “forest fire patrolling and timber surveying”. Sault Ste. Marie, located by the fast-flowing St. Mary’s River, where ice is late to form and leaves early in the spring, was selected as the new headquarters because of its central location proximate to the forest lands of interest.

In the winter and spring of 1924, the original waterfront hangar was constructed. It was the first aircraft hangar in Canada to be made of steel and brick. The new service quickly grew to include air bases at Sudbury and Sioux Lookout, and eventually several smaller bases across Northern Ontario.

Roy Maxwell was the first Director and Chief Pilot of the Air Service (1924-1934). He is an intriguing figure who has been described as charismatic; flamboyantly dressed in the latest styles

and known for his impeccably shiny, high leather boots. He oversaw the developing air service, hiring pilots and acquiring several different aircraft types to develop and adapt the program over the time he was in charge.

The Air Service acquired and operated, in its first 10 years, a variety of 11 different aircraft types, many which were not specifically designed for the work OPAS had been assigned. As it grew, the OPAS in many ways helped pioneer the development of the bushplane, working with new Canadian companies like Noorduyn, Fairchild, de Havilland and later Bombardier.

Air Service engineers and pilots in the 1940s began to experiment with various ways to drop water and thereby make better use of valuable time while fire fighters were transported. Techniques including water filled bags and other schemes were evaluated. Early tests were not really very effective but eventually succeeded when Tom Cooke, another OPAS pilot, working with Air Service engineers, revived the effort in the early 1950s. They designed roll tanks that rested on airplane floats which filled by skimming the water surface, enabling many water drops in a short period. Flying a piston Otter so equipped, in 1957, he attacked and held a mile long fire front in Sudbury District, giving fire crews on the ground a chance to put the fire out. Modern forest fire suppression thus began.

Tom Cooke’s was one of many distinguished careers with the OPAS. While in the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF), assigned to Iceland on anti-submarine patrol in 1944, flying a Canso, he spotted

and sank U Boat #342 and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. Still with the RCAF, later in 1944, he became the first to conduct aerial spraying operations of spruce budworm infestations in an Ontario Government test program. He joined the OPAS in 1946 and became director of the Air Service in 1965, retiring in 1977 with over 13,000 flying hours. He was inducted into the Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame in 2004. His citation reads: “His contributions during wartime and his development of equipment and procedures to improve forest management and fire control making Canada a leader in this field, have been a major benefit to aviation in Canada.”

Another distinguished contributor to the impressive OPAS legacy, one known to many familiar with forest management in Ontario, is Frank A. MacDougall. He was a World War One (WW I) veteran who fought at Vimy Ridge and Passchendaele. He obtained a degree in Forestry in 1923 and early work surveying the James Bay Region gave him the opportunity to observe firsthand the 1922 Haileybury fire. In 1926 he became District Forester in Sault Ste Marie and began a strong relationship with the Air Service. In 1931 he became Superintendent of Algonquin Park where he, as a licensed commercial pilot, made use of an open-air cockpit Fairchild KR-34 biplane for patrols during all four seasons.

In 1941 he became Deputy Minister of Lands and Forests, where he championed the use of aircraft for fire detection and suppression and other resource management programs. He played an important role in the design and development of the world-famous aircraft,



the de Havilland Beaver, the best plane ever built for bushplane operations. He was inducted into the Canadian Aviation Hall of Fame in 1973. His citation reads: “His practical development of aircraft modifications, in the protection and preservation of forested areas and wilderness parks, has been of outstanding benefit to Canadian Aviation”

Initially established to detect and map forest fires, initiatives enabling dropping water in firefighting operations led to Ontario becoming a leader in this suppression technique. The specially designed floats for the Beaver and Twin Otters eventually evolved to the modern design of scooper aircraft developed by Bombardier – first the CL-215 in the 1980s and then the turbine engine CL-415; nine of which the OPAS flies today.

Over 70 different aircraft types, including helicopters beginning in 1983, have served in the OPAS fleet, conducting a variety of operations over its 100 years. Today the OPAS operates from a modern hangar facility opened in 1991, located at the Sault Ste Marie Airport.

The original hangar remains on the Sault Ste Marie waterfront and today houses the Canadian Bushplane Heritage Centre (CBHC). Thanks to the efforts of passionate employees and retired Air Service staff, the original hangar extension, constructed in 1948, has become a remarkable museum dedicated to connecting people to Canada’s exciting bushplane and forest protection heritage. The museum attracts thousands of visitors and contains vibrant displays of valuable vintage airplanes along with

equipment and artifacts reflecting facets of the OPAS and the people who made it happen. The CBHC is a source of community pride and is prized for collecting, preserving, and interpreting historical information on the bushplane and related programs.

As a centennial year project, a book entitled “Aircraft of the Ontario Provincial Air Service” has been recently published. It is a detailed compendium authored by John Stephens, a former Ministry of Natural Resources employee, a lifelong aviation buff and stalwart CBHC volunteer. Sadly, he passed away before the book was finished. However, in recognition of John’s efforts, CBHC staff finalized the material that describes details about each aircraft that has flown in the OPAS over its 100-year history. The book should be of great interest to aviation enthusiasts and can be obtained by contacting the Bushplane Centre.

Entering its second century, the OPAS operates in an era of fast-changing technologies and rapidly evolving resource management environments; much as it encountered during its initial years. While roles and missions for the Air Service continue to evolve, commitment to innovation and development remains. It will be fascinating to witness the changes and innovations the future will reveal.

Information in these remarks was drawn from helpful input provided by Bob Thomas, the Stuart Graham papers, material by Dr Robert Galway, Canada’s Aviation Hall of Fame, and information in “Aircraft of the OPAS” by John Stephens.

The Ontario Provincial Air Service



The newly constructed waterfront hanger in Sault Ste. Marie circa 1924.



Scale Model of the "H Boat" inside CBHC, Sault Ste Marie.



The late John Stephens' recently published book.

“AS IT GREW, THE OPAS IN MANY WAYS HELPED PIONEER THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE BUSHPLANE”



KEN ARMSON

A LIFE DEDICATED TO FORESTS

By Jim Farrell, Chair, Forest History Ontario, Lower Ottawa Valley Chapter

Editor's Note: Ken Armson passed away peacefully on Monday, December 9th, 2024, at North York General Hospital. Earlier this fall, on Thursday, September 12th, 2024, during its quarterly meeting, the Board of the Ontario Woodlot Association (OWA) voted unanimously to recognize Ken as its first Honorary Lifetime Member. When informed of this recognition, Ken expressed sincere appreciation, as he did in 2022 when the OWA used his name for the newly minted Ken Armson Professional Award.

Ken Armson is being named as the first Honorary Lifetime member of the Ontario Woodlot Association, for very good reasons. More than any one person, Ken has advanced forestry knowledge, education, policy, practice, and history and is widely recognized and respected in forestry circles, and beyond, throughout Ontario and Canada. While arguably his crowning achievement was receiving the Order of Canada in 2017, but I suggest his legacy of a lifetime enthusiasm for learning, curiosity to discover and passion for forests that he passed to the thousands of students, colleagues, friends and followers over the decades, is truly remarkable and all of his honours and recognition are richly deserved and hard earned. A short summary of his story follows.

While Ken was born in Toronto (Newtonbrook neighbourhood to be more precise) in 1927, his parents were both born in England and had strong attachments to the home country. The family, including Ken and his sister, moved to England in 1938 settling in Worcester, a town just outside of Birmingham. Ken, being a serious and capable student achieved his Oxford University Higher School Certificate at the age of 17 in 1944 and braced to be 'called up' for military service but used that time to start his practical forestry experience by thinning Douglas fir plantations. In the winter of 1945, after being 'called-up' Ken opted to enlist with the Canadian army and received training in driving a tank, which no doubt came in handy, later on, in pushing novel ideas through an obstinate bureaucracy. Ken spent much of his war time service on a motorcycle as a despatch rider, which as you can imagine came with a fair share of spills and close calls. Ken returned to Canada in 1947 determined to succeed and make a difference in forestry starting at the University of Toronto. I do not imagine he realized at the time that a few years after graduation he would return to the faculty for



Ken Armson.

a highly successful career in education and research... but only his first career.

With war time service, a forestry degree, and a number of summers in the field, Ken was ready and started in the research branch of the then Department of Lands and Forests in Maple where he exercised his passion for forest soils. His talents as a researcher and educator caught the eye of the University of Toronto Forestry Dean, Bernie Sisam, and he was offered a faculty position. Ken dove enthusiastically into overhauling and rebuilding the undergraduate forest soils apprenticeship, making it a key building block of the curriculum. Ken instinctively knew that it is the soil that grows the trees that make up the forest ecosystem and successful forest management relied heavily on understanding that relationship. After only a short time on the faculty, Ken was accepted for post-graduate work in forest soils at Oxford University strengthening an already impressive capacity in soils.

After completing his studies at Oxford, Ken returned to the University of Toronto and, all in, spent 26 years successfully delivering on the herculean task of educating young minds and inspiring generations of foresters... myself included. Ken was passionate about getting students out to the bush, listening to foresters' real-world issues and questions, moving Ontario's forest management system from merely harvesting to including the full cycle of management and trying on new ideas. Ken's expertise and laser focus on the importance of understanding soils equipped him to be a leading voice



on the value of managing nursery soils in terms of fertility, health, texture, etc. which was essential as Ontario continued to invest in and grow the tree nursery programs across the province. Poor quality planting stock resulted in poor quality forests. Ken became the trusted go-to expert on forest management, silviculture and soils sought after by government (Department of Lands and Forests, later Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources) and forest companies who were taking an increasing interest in forest management. So much so that in 1975, the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) asked him to prepare a report on forest management in Ontario examining the roles of the landowner (the government) and those of the primary tenant (forest industry) in terms of planning, regenerating, and tending Ontario's forests. This was the catalyst that triggered tectonic changes in how Ontario would manage its forests for the next 50 years. This led to Ken taking on a full-time role with OMNR designing, negotiating, and getting approval for entirely new model of collaboration between government and industry called Forest Management Agreements (FMAs) which were at the forest policy forefront in Canada. In an interview recently posted on the Forest History Ontario website Home (fhso.ca), Ken indicated that the most satisfying period of his career was the year that he spent travelling the province preparing this report and developing, with colleagues, Ontario's new FMA system.

In the early 1980s, with the northern Crown forests being brought into the FMA regime, Ken turned his attention to the private land forests of Ontario. While arguably the most productive in the province (those in the south) they had seen several successful but disparate programs, but no overarching government policy for private forest lands. Tasked by Deputy Minister Bill Foster, Ken led the two-year development of *Private Land Forests: A Public Resource*, a comprehensive and forward-looking report, which unfortunately did not attract the necessary political will to make the significant changes that were suggested.

Unlike most humans, Ken did not stop there... he was just getting started! In 1976 Ken was invited by the Ministry of Forests in British Columbia to help them sort out their fledgling container seedling program. The next year he published a landmark treatise titled *Forest Soils*. Ken was in high demand from major pulp and paper companies seeking his advice on silviculture and seedling production. After leaving the Faculty of Forestry, Ken was recruited by the OMNR and started as Chief Forester for the province, later also taking on the role of Executive Director of the Forest Resources Group, both jobs out of Queen's Park in Toronto. During that period Ken championed professionalism in forestry, evaluation and learning from earlier work (particularly regeneration) and making forest information more readily available and understandable. After leaving the OMNR in 1989, at the age of 62 when many would be planning their retirements and eyeing



Ken Armson, in his element, hosting a public seminar on forest soils in Durham County, north of Pickering.

a new set of golf clubs, Ken launched into another passion, auditing of forest management. Over the next 10 years he authored *Canadian Forests-A Primer* as well as *Ontario Forests- A Historical Perspective*, both widely respected and sought after texts on forests and forest management. Ken went on the author numerous important historical books and articles in the years that followed establishing himself as the pre-eminent forest historian in Ontario and perhaps Canada. In 2009 Ken established the Forest History Society of Ontario (now Forest History Ontario) and was President and Chair until 2014, but is still the valued and respected mentor and patron that guides the organization today. His lifetime of dedication to Canada's forests and educating us all on its values and stewardship was nationally recognized when he was named to the Order of Canada in 2016 (conferred in 2017).

While this is a much-abbreviated selection of life and career events of Ken Armson, I encourage you get a copy of his book *Into the Woods: My Life in Forestry* by Kenneth A. Armson, 2019, Burnstown Publishing House... and settle in for a great read.



THE LAROSE FOREST

FROM DESERT TO A MANAGED, PRODUCTIVE AND MULTI USE RECREATIONAL OASIS OF NATURE

By Jean Saint-Pierre, President, Boisés Est, Lower Ottawa Valley Chapter

Located in Eastern Ontario close to the villages of Bourget and Limoges, the 100 square kilometer Larose forest rests on largely flat land. In geological terms, it was created after the retreat of the Champlain Sea about 9,000 years ago. Over subsequent centuries, this territory became covered with forests and eventually populated by Indigenous peoples. In more recent times, the forest was part of the territory of the Anishinaabe of the Algonquin Nation.

At the beginning of the 19th century, logging by and for Europeans started. They were in search of timber, as their forests were somewhat depleted. This combined with political unrest led to the need to access wood from this side of the Atlantic. The land was covered with much needed majestic large and very tall white pines. The trees were harvested and brought to the nearest river, eventually reaching the large Outaouais River. They were then floated to Quebec City and shipped primarily to England due to the very high demand for wood and, more specifically, masts for their ships. Requirements for white pine logs were very specific: a minimum diameter of one meter and length of 38 meters. Undoubtedly, some of these logs came from what is now the Larose Forest.

Soon after, many lumber mills were built in the area along rivers and creeks. Some of the mills were considered the biggest in the country. As it was elsewhere in the province, the local economy of the region was based on lumber. And although it was often mentioned that forest resources were unlimited, by the mid 1800s, much of the forests had disappeared.

Unique in the Larose Forest are the remnants of a small village called Grant. Set-

tlers of the village arrived in the period of 1820-1850. The remaining forest was cleared in preparation for farming activities. Their village included a schoolhouse, a post office, a church, and a cemetery which is still maintained by local residents. It was not long after that they realized that the soil was not suitable for farming. By 1910, all of the residents had left or abandoned their properties. It became obvious that the erosion of the soil was winning over farming. The “Bourget Desert” was created!

It was a sad state of affairs. In fact, even before the turn of the century, other regions in Ontario were facing the same dilemma of deforested lands cleared and subsequently found unsuitable for agriculture. The Simcoe County Forest near Barrie had a very similar fate with deforestation and overharvesting on sandy soils.

At about the same time, Ferdinand Larose, a local agronomist from Sarsfield representing farmers in Prescott-Russell, initiated with enthusiasm efforts to restore the land to a forest. He was not alone in leading the extensive multiyear project of afforestation. This large endeavour required extensive coordination, from land preparation, species selection, transplantation, and subsequent work to control competing vegetation. The Department of Lands and Forests at the time created programs to support this work.

Most of the help came from the local farming community who are still well-known for their creativity in resolving and facilitating work. Some of the machines created to facilitate transplantations were built on site. One example is a planting machine with a scarifying wheel and pulled by tractor, could have been built by Ernest

Hurtubise, a foreman and proficient welder, who worked at the forest from 1950 to 1965. His grandson, Jean-Denis, long time member of Boisés Est, said of him that he would always think of ways to improve the way work is accomplished.

Year after year, trees were transplanted and cared for to create a well managed forest. Over time, 18 million trees were transplanted. In doing so, they aimed at reaching their initial objectives: control erosion from water and wind, produce an economically viable high-quality lumber while creating employment as well as serving as good example for reforestation.

Today, the forest encompasses more than 11,000 hectares of land, including 200 kilometres of roads and trails for recreational purposes: hiking, mountain biking, snowshoeing, horse-riding, cross-country skiing etc. It is considered the second largest plantation forest in Southern Ontario.

Research activities have also taken place in the forest. Inventories of many forms of life have been completed on a periodical basis, providing a valuable measure of the diversity of plants, mammals, birds, amphibians, butterflies, etc. More recently and with the development and use of clever mobile applications such as iNaturalist, visitors can also share their observations, thereby helping to document species not previously reported. Another example is the recent work by Ben Gwilliam, a Forester with the Ontario Woodlot Association,, who used data collected in the Larose Forest to validate some of his work using Light Detection and Ranging (LiDAR) to produce forest resource inventory.



In 2000, the United Counties of Prescott-Russell started managing the forest with qualified forestry staff who oversee all activities: harvesting, planting, maintenance of roads and trails of the forest, etc. Since 2006, \$2.7 million of harvest revenues have been re-invested in the forest.

In 2006, they registered with the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC®), ensuring compliance to international standards of environmentally, socially beneficial, and economically sustainable forest management. In 2023, they also became certified to the Sustainable Forest Initiative® (SFI®) standards, an additional commitment for forest sustainability of managed forests through collaboration.

It is important to highlight that the forest includes wetlands which are maintained with limited disturbances from human intervention. This supports the protection of habitats important to foster species conservation, and in particular species at risk in Eastern Ontario. This is an important objective in the context of biodiversity loss across the planet.

Recently, they reported nearly 2,400 species of flora, fauna, lichen, and fungi, many of which are endangered or at risk. They are also promoting the use through the iNaturalist application where visitors become “citizen scientists” in documenting their observations.⁽⁵⁾

The Larose Forest we see today is the result of the vision and perseverance of outstanding people who understood and valued the importance of forests for today, and for future generations.

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Larose Forest sign.



Village of Grant cemetery.



The "Bourget Desert". Photo Credit: United County of Prescott and Russell.



An innovative planting machine with a scarifying wheel.



The Larose Forest is ideal for hiking, biking, cross country skiing, snowshoeing, and other recreational activities.



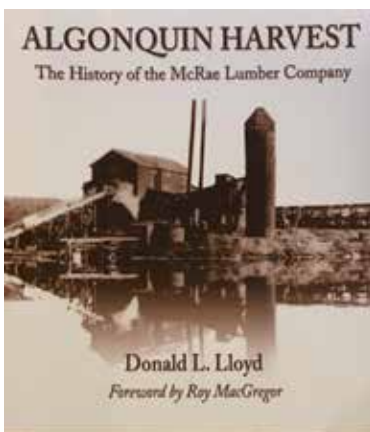
SOME GREAT READING FOR FOREST HISTORY BUFFS... and anyone else for that matter!

SUMMARIES OF FOUR INTERESTING AND ENJOYABLE BOOKS

By Faye Johnson, R.P.F., Vice-Chair, Forest History Ontario, Near North Chapter

ALGONQUIN HARVEST: THE HISTORY OF THE MCRAE LUMBER COMPANY

by Donald L. Lloyd



If you are interested in the history of forestry in Algonquin Park this book is for you. Although the book is centred around the McRae family there is a lot of information about the history of logging in the Park. The stories capture the lives of the people that strived to make a living in the Whitney area going back as far as the late 1800s.

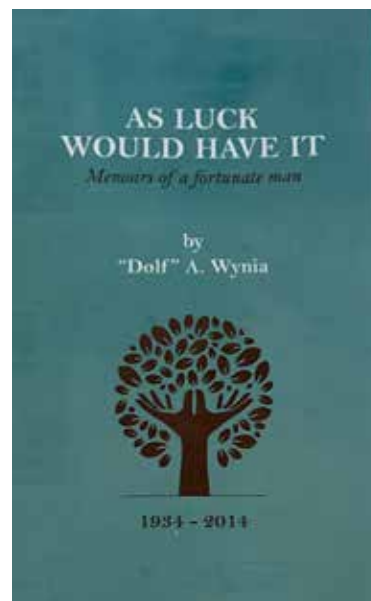
It gives a history of many small lumber companies that have come and gone such as the Munn Lumber Company, Dennis Canadian Lumber Company, Dyment Mickle Lumber Company, and the St. Anthony Lumber Company to name a few. These companies were economic drivers in Ontario at that time. At the turn of the last century, the pine industry harvested approximately one billion board feet of red and white pine compared to 115 million board feet in 2000.

The book discusses the “Battle for Algonquin” getting into some detail on the history of the never-ending conflict between timber harvesting and recreational use. It gives insights into the beginnings of the aerial photography and the inventory of Crown forests, the establishment of Frost Centre in Dorset, ON to respond to a forest technician shortage, as well as how some silvicultural practices, still used today, came to be.

There is some great storytelling by old timers of days gone by! The book is full of photos, diagrams, maps and much more. A good read for anyone who wants to “*fully understand the intricate and tempestuous relationship between logging and Algonquin Park*”. This book is available by contacting a McRae family at: information@mcraelumber.ca.

AS LUCK WOULD HAVE IT: MEMOIRS OF A FORTUNATE MAN

by Dolf A. Wynia



The fortunate man in this book is Dolf Wynia, who immigrated from the Netherlands to southern Ontario in 1954 after being accepted into the forestry program at the University of Toronto. Mixing both his professional and personal lives Dolf gives the reader a deep understanding of the life of those who came to Canada post WWII as well as how working in forestry at that time in Ontario was a family affair.

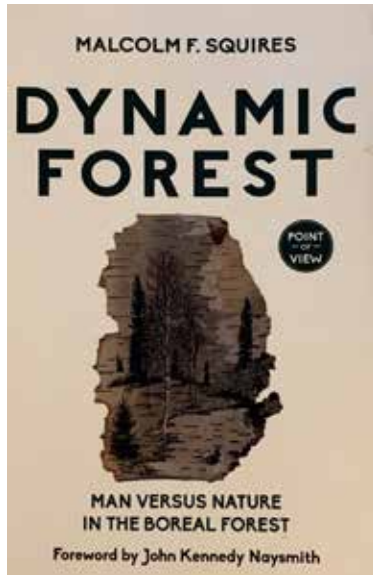
Like most foresters, Dolf tried his hand at several roles in his early career and around 1967 landed a position with the Thunder Bay Forest Station, a government owned tree nursery. At a time when government encouraged independence and innovation, Dolf and his colleagues were able to look to other sectors, like farming, to grow Ontario’s nursery system to a leader in seedling production. An example of this was implementing a two-row potato digger to lift beds of seedlings using a newly developed hydrostatically driven tractor. That and other moves to mechanisation allowed the nursery to grow to an annual production of 20 million seedlings by 1980.

Follow Dolf’s career from southern Ontario to the north and back again and relive a time in government when foresters practiced their trade and understood the value of Crown forests. An easy and interesting read, this book is available by contacting Dolf Wynia at: adwynia@gmail.com.



DYNAMIC FOREST: MAN VERSUS NATURE IN THE BOREAL FOREST

by Malcom Squires



Squires has dedicated his professional life to learning about the dynamic nature of Canada's forests with a focus on the boreal forest. With sixty years of experience, he has a lot to teach us.

Dynamic Forest is an easy-to-understand guide to Canada's forests and our relationship with them. The book outlines his observations of the progression of forests whether it be through natural distur-

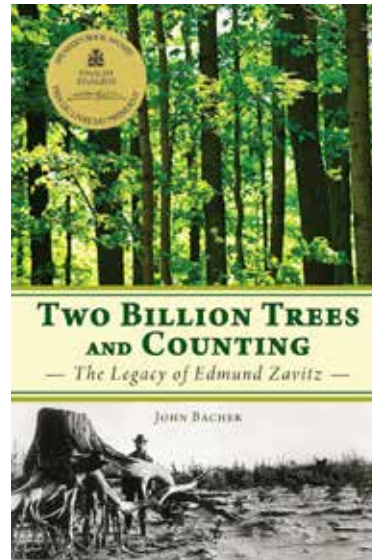
bances or through active management by humans. It helps the reader understand that forests are everchanging rather than static in nature. He examines public policies and their, sometimes, negative impact on forest development.

Starting with the unique features of common tree species, Squires goes on to discuss the relationship with each other. Next a practical lesson on one of Mother Nature's most effective regeneration tools – wildfire – and ending with the impact of wildfire on forest health.

Next, he writes about the forest industry, harvesting and the role of clearcutting as a tool in our forests. He further discusses current forestry practices which are sometimes influenced by public opinion rather than science and a warning to "watch what you ask for; you may not like the consequences". A great read for anyone that wants to learn about the natural history and evolution of Canada's Forests. Dynamic Forest is available on [Amazon.ca](https://www.amazon.ca).

TWO BILLION TREES AND COUNTING: THE LEGACY OF EDMUND ZAVITZ

by John Bacher



Zavitz is known as the Father of Forestry to many. He dedicated his life to educating the public and politicians about the need to protect Ontario forests beginning with his first pilot reforestation project in 1905. A graduate forester, he started his career in that year as a lecturer at the Ontario Agriculture College on forest related topics. This was at a time when forests were seen as a barrier to progress and

where wildfires were welcomed as a way to clear the land quickly to make room for farming. Land clearing was done without consideration of the types of soils present, and in many areas, such as Norfolk County, sand dunes resulting from cleared land threatened to bury barns. It took a lot of effort for environmental advocates like Zavitz to convince governments and residents that it was in their best interests to re-establish forests on marginal farmland. He was key to the establishment of Ontario's first nursery, St. Williams Forest Station in 1908.

Interestingly enough, it was not the work being done in southern Ontario that finally resulted in forestry gaining a portfolio equal to farming in the minds of Ontario politicians. It was the great Porcupine Fire of 1911, that resulted in many fatalities and the loss of over two million hectares of forest, that caught the attention of the government. Eight people lost their lives, three thousand people were left homeless and the largest gold mine in Canada was incinerated. Ontario quickly looked to Quebec, where they had developed a forest management system led by professional foresters, like that of the British Empire. Zavitz, already well known in southern Ontario, and a professional forester, was appointed the Chief Forester for Ontario. It was 1912. Without giving any more away, this book should be on your list of books to read from a historical and geographic perspective. It is available on [Amazon.ca](https://www.amazon.ca).



FIRE, GENETICS, AND SILVICULTURE

THE LIVING LEGACY OF THE PETAWAWA RESEARCH FOREST

By Steve D'Eon, Renfrew County Chapter

There was not anything special about that 8th day of July in 1918 when Swedish forester Hugo Claughton-Wallin placed his caliper at breast height on tree #1 on the first permanent sample plot established within the Petawawa Research Forest (PRF). Yet this innocuous start was the beginning of a 106-year record of forest research at Petawawa that now encompasses hundreds of lines of enquiry, thousands of experimental plots, and millions of measurements.

Petawawa is also a story about people, dedicated far-sighted researchers working together across disciplines to experiment and share results to make a difference on the way we manage forests in central Ontario and beyond. Forest fire, genetics, and silviculture have been the backbone of the research program at Petawawa since that day: July 8th, 1918.

Forest fire research in Canada starts with Jim Wright, an engineer by trade, observing in the mid 1920s that current and previous weather influenced fuel flammability and thus fire behaviour. Jim proposed this relationship could best be researched by direct empirical measurements complementing theoretical calculations. Needless to say, it took a few years before Jim got permission to start igniting the forest in the name of science. The second boost to Canada's fledgling start to fire research was the fortuitous hiring of Herb Beall as Jim's student in 1928. Herb, being a law student, was not seen as worthy of working in the more prestigious silviculture program so was assigned to the fire program. Fortunate for Jim, Herb was a natural at tech transfer and never missed an opportunity to demonstrate, teach,

and promote Jim's emerging Canadian system of forest fire prediction.

In the summer of 1930, Herb having now switched to forestry from law, was hired to measure various experimental fuel arrays, record daily weather conditions, and undertake two-minute test fires. Two-minute test fires involved igniting the forest floor, letting it burn for 2 minutes, then extinguishing the fire (by the 1960s the Canadian system included data from over 20,000 two-minute test fires!). Herb was stationed alone at an isolated cabin at Racehorse Rapids beside the Petawawa River and Forestry Form 351 Accounts show, apart from Herb's \$100/month salary, the next greatest expense was \$177 for provisions followed by \$55 for horse feed. Herb, being a social entrepreneur, always kept a pot of coffee going on the fire for the rivermen driving logs down the Petawawa River. The records show administrators questioned his constant requisitioning of coffee and sugar.

In 1932 Jim published his Tracer Index, which summed up the fire hazard of a site by a single fire danger number, something Pyne (2007. *Awful Splendour: a fire history of Canada*) described as, "one of the outstanding achievements of the Forest Service and one retained in every future iteration of the system". Alexander (Historical perspectives on forest fire danger rating research in Canada) credited the first three versions (1931, 1938, 1948) of Canada's forest fire system to Wright and Beall. Place (2002. *75 years of research in the woods – 1918 to 1993 a history of Petawawa Forest Experiment Station, and Petawawa National Forestry Institute*) called

the Canadian system of forecasting fire hazard, a system used around the world, as perhaps the greatest accomplishment of the Canadian Forest Service (CFS). Herb Beall was awarded the Canadian Forestry Achievement Award in 1994 and the Order of Canada in 2000.

In 2018 Doug Higgins recalled the day Doug Fraser brought an aging Herb Beall around to visit his old stomping grounds. They headed out to Racehorse Rapids and rooting around in the duff Herb found the stones that had ringed his campfire some 60 years earlier. It is a bit funny to think the fire index we use every day during fire season started with the observations of an engineer and a quirky law student serving free coffee to log drivers.

Forest Genetics has often been one of the quiet successes in forestry. One example is Beachburg white spruce, sometimes known as Ottawa Valley white spruce (OVWS). This landrace of white spruce has proven to be a robust performer in terms of faster growth and better survival in plantings from Newfoundland to Alberta and south to Maryland. OVWS has made its way into many tree breeding programs and probably about 100 million white spruce are growing with some component of Beachburg/OVWS genes.

The story starts in 1956 with a collection of white spruce cones on private land near Beachburg, Ontario. Designated as seedlot S-2444, the collection card records 4.48 kg of seed was extracted and shared for range-wide experiments in Wisconsin, Quebec, France, and Denmark. Range-wide experiments plant multiple seed sources from across the range of a species in a common gar-



P. N. 7

FOREST EXPER

10th day of July 1919

TREE NUMBER	D. B. H.		TREE CLASS	Remarks	TREE NUMBER	D. B.
	CROSS	CROSS				
1	6.9	6.4	3d W.	<i>Pen. Top</i>	32	4.8
2	5.7	6.1	3d B.	<i>damaged by bark</i>	33	4.1
3	7.3	7	3d B.	<i>"isolation belt" which is removed</i>	34	5.2
4					35	4.2

Original paper tally sheet for PSP007 first measured July 10th, 1919.

den approach at multiple locations to compare the genetics x environment interaction. Range-wide experiments were very important contributors to seed zones and other methods we use to ensure seedlings originate from seed sources adapted to local conditions.

As results came in from these range-wide tests Beachburg achieved a 1st or 2nd ranking in experiments in Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Quebec, Ontario, Minnesota, Michigan, and Maryland with most other results in the top 25%.

CFS researchers returned to Beachburg in 1974 but found only two trees remaining at the original site and collected from an additional 12 trees a few kilometres away. This second collection did not exhibit as high growth as the original Beachburg collection, but out-performed many other sources of white spruce. Other collections from nearby locales confirmed the OVWS line of white spruce as a superior population for reforestation and OVWS is used in

nursery programs in N.B, Que., Ont., Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota adding its unique genetic qualities to millions of seedlings each year.

The Beachburg area is now mostly rolling farmland with only pockets of forest left. The original trees collected from in 1956 are long gone, but their genetics live on ready to help with current problems such as sequestering carbon in a changing climate.

The Petawawa story is not complete without mentioning silviculture; in particular the impact research at Petawawa has made on managing white and red pine stands. The work is too broad and the results too impactful to highlight a single project but I would like to mention Ken Logan's (1959) early work establishing 50% partial light as the best option for white pine seedling growth, Will Stiell's spacing and thinning trials in red pine (such as AECL red pine planted in 1952 at seven spacings with four thinning regimes), and Lorne Brace's economic

partial cutting in mixed stands to increase the percentage of valuable white pine (1970 Cartier Lake Silvicultural Area). More modern experimentation utilizing factorial statistical designs such as Dave Brand's Cartier Lake Experimental Plantation (1982) have led to many scientific papers that have worked their way into Ontario's operation management regimes.

The net contribution of knowledge from the 10,000 ha of Petawawa experimentation can be seen in some simple statistics:

- OMNR's 1998 silviculture guide for the Great Lakes forest types had up to 31% of the references with a Petawawa connection.
- Between 1979 and 1995 10% of the thousand papers in The Forestry Chronicle had a Petawawa connection.
- Petawawa's Charlie Van Wagner wrote the 3rd most cited paper in the history of the Canadian Journal of Forest Research, a prominent world forestry science publication.
- Petawawa alumni Margaret Penner is co-author of The Forestry Chronicle's top cited paper.

On October 10th, 2024, I wandered back out to PSP1- 38,880 days after that first measurement was made. The trees are still growing, research is still happening, and the Petawawa Living Legacy is still contributing to what we know about managing forests in Central Ontario and beyond.

Steve D'Eon first started at Petawawa as a student in 1983 embarking on a career with the CFS that spanned until this past March when he finished a part-time stint archiving scientific and management records at Petawawa. He can be reached at stevedeonforestry@gmail.com.



FORESTS CANADA

**CONSERVING, RESTORING AND GROWING
OUR FORESTS FOR 75 YEARS**



75 YEARS OF ADVOCACY FOR FORESTS

THE ROADMAP TO FORESTS CANADA

By Meghan Clout

Forests Canada's history is long and rich, going back 75 years, originally as the Ontario Forestry Association. For all this time, the organization has been a strong advocate for forested landscapes, engaging landowners in forest stewardship, driving large-scale tree-planting operations on private land and empowering community engagement through education and awareness. The history tells the story of an organization whose dedicated staff, members, volunteers, partners and supporters through years of leadership and continual learning, have built a powerful force for the health of forests nationwide.

In the 1900s, a rise in deforestation from farming and other land uses led to devastating impacts on soil health and water supply and quality (among other impacts). By the 1940s, it was clear that forests needed a voice to enact advocacy, education, and stewardship for long-term health.

Thus, in 1949, the OFA (Ontario Forestry Association) was founded as the provincial branch of the Canadian Forestry Association. Founders recognized the unique need in Ontario to provide support to private landowners for forest stewardship and management because most of the land in Southern Ontario was being managed privately and needed significant focus to restore forest cover.

The OFA also brought forestry into the classroom, the community, and onto the agenda. The OFA staff started education programs that are still running today (such as the tree identification competition Tree



Forests Canada planting partner Replant.ca Environmental helps with a 2024 reforestation project in Truro, Nova Scotia. More than 45,000 trees were planted in the area affected by Hurricane Fiona in 2022. Photo by Forests Canada.

Bee), supported landowners in forest stewardship, and OFA members played a significant role in influencing government policy by gaining a seat at the table for forests. The work of the OFA built the public appetite for healthy and thriving forests that exist today. Thanks to the work the OFA started, care and love for forests in Ontario is multigenerational.

In the early 1990s, the Ontario government stepped back from its tree-planting and forest stewardship programs (which had been running for years and were integral to the long-term health of forests in Southern Ontario). The OFA, recognizing the profound impact of the

programs, stepped in and developed a tree-planting operation of its own.

This was the beginning of the Trees Ontario Foundation.

This big undertaking succeeded thanks to the years of advocacy work the OFA had done to create the public appetite for this tree-planting-focused organization to thrive.

Trees Ontario gained important startup support for tree planting thanks to Toronto Hydro, one of whose employees had participated in Tree Bee as a child and developed a lifelong passion for forests.





Anne Koven, then Executive Director of the Ontario Forestry Association, poses at the site of trees planted at the property of Anne and Dolf Wynia in Norfolk County under the federal Forest 2020 program on June 5, 2005. Photo by Dolf Wynia.



Rob Keen, longtime CEO of Forests Ontario, supervised the planting of tens of millions of trees across Canada – and planted a number of those trees himself. Photo by Forests Canada

“The history tells the story of an organization whose dedicated staff, members, volunteers, partners and supporters through years of leadership and continual learning, have built a powerful force for the health of forests nationwide.”

After a few years of ground truthing, securing funding, and creating a network of partners with nurseries, conservation authorities, private consultants, and other forestry experts, Trees Ontario launched planting projects, with a goal to achieve 40 per cent tree cover to best support biodiversity and ecosystem health. This sturdy foundation of tree planting and stewardship became the roots to support the next wave of fast growth thanks to a dedicated small but mighty staff team.

The enthusiasm of landowners clamouring for trees made it clear that Trees Ontario was in demand. The team began to scale operations. In the role of networkers and capacity builders, the team hosted round tables in the forestry sector and worked with partners to expand tree planting capacity in Ontario by securing funding, connecting people, offering training, and setting up long-term planting programs



Red Pine cone collection, Grey County. The lefthand cone has released its seeds; the righthand cone is tight and good to collect for seed extraction. Photo by Forests Canada.

that included growing stock years in advance.

In the 2010s, the OFA and Trees Ontario operated closely together but still as separate entities. It had become clear that their work was deeply intertwined. The organizations decided that together, they would be stronger. They merged in 2014, becoming Forests Ontario.

The organization operated under the name Forests Ontario for 10 years. During this time, staff grew the organization's impact, network, and reach. Planting moved beyond Ontario through Forest Recovery Canada, a division of Forests Ontario. The organization was becoming one of the largest national large-scale tree-planting organizations in the country. Along with the growth of tree planting and stewardship programs, education, awareness, and community initiatives were expanding, and Forests Ontario was becoming a go-to leader with a strong network of partners, supporters, experts, and funders.

In 2019, as the organization continued to grow, it faced a potential major setback when the Ontario Government announced it was cutting funding support of the 50 Million Tree Program. This program, being delivered by Forests Ontario, had a goal to plant 50 Million trees by 2025. At the time of the cut, Forests Ontario had already planted 27 million trees with landowners, stock, and planting partners lined up for the coming planting seasons.

In response, Forests Ontario rallied support from landowners (many of whom had planted with the program or were set up to plant the following season), nurseries (who were growing trees years out thanks to the program's long-term planning), and the public (including an international petition with more than



Jess Kakelevicius worked in several jobs at Forests Ontario before leaving to work for the Sustainable Forestry Initiative. In 2023, she returned to Forests Ontario as CEO. Kakelevicius is now CEO of Forests Canada.

100,000 signatures in support of the program), and it worked. Forests Ontario would keep the program alive with funding from its network of supporters along with the federal government.

Across all planting programs to date, the charity has supported the planting of over 46.5 million trees across 10 provinces and more than 8,000 project sites.

In this changing and evolving landscape of climate crisis and biodiversity loss, now more than ever is the time to ignite nationwide passion and interest in the vital importance of our forest ecosystems. To better reflect its national impact and goals, Forests Ontario became Forests Canada in 2024. It seeks opportunities to grow the success of tree planting, stewardship, education, and more at every turn while continuing to build, prepare, and improve the foundation of knowledge that guides its programs and community engagement.

"Although the organization has grown and evolved over the years, expanding to new reaches, leveraging different tools and partnerships, and diversifying the network of individuals who are a part of the work we do, the fundamentals remain the same: support healthy forests now and for future generations and empower the next generation of forest stewards. With a new name in tow, Forests Canada will continue to write history and have a positive impact on a future of thriving forests," said Jess Kakelevicius, CEO of Forests Canada.

Dr. Anne Koven, former Executive Director of the Ontario Forestry Association and now professor of forestry at the University of Toronto; Rob Keen, former CEO, Forests Ontario, and currently Executive Director at the Canadian Tree Nursery Association; and Jess Kakelevicius, CEO, Forests Canada, provided interviews for this story.





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TREE BEE:

60+ YEARS OF CONNECTING STUDENTS WITH NATURE

By Matthew Brown

Tree Bee is an education tool that encourages students to learn about tree identification. For more than 60 years, teachers have been bringing the Tree Bee experience into their classrooms through activities, presentations, and educational resources.

Tree Bee introduces communities to the trees in their own backyards. Through online resources and activities, schools, families and forest enthusiasts are encouraged to get outside and explore. Through Tree Bee, Forests Canada provides educators with teaching resources, including factsheets and lesson plans, that can be used throughout the year to connect students with nature and foster a meaningful and lasting connection to our forests.

Where there is community support, Tree Bee can also feature a friendly competition during which students work collaboratively to identify tree species using images of prominent features such as leaves, bark, buds and fruit. Additionally, teams are challenged to answer a series of multiple-choice questions related to forests and forest management.

Forests Canada reached out to former Tree Bee participants as well as teachers who still help run the program to find out what they think of most when it comes to memories of Tree Bee:

“I have many wonderful memories of Tree Bee, like the first time my team won first place or when one of my teams, made up of new Canadians who could hardly speak English, memorized not just the trees but their English names and won one of the top four places. However, I think my fondest memory is when I was hosting Tree Bee, a little girl came running up to me and said, ‘You coached my mother in Tree Bee at St. Anslem school.’ I looked at her and she was a young version of her mother. I said you are Barbara (I gave the last name) and she was stunned. Tree Bee is a wonderful program that catches students’ attention and they love it and, by extension, they start a life-long love of nature.” – 1967 to current Tree Bee Coach and Chair of the Tree Bee Organization Committee Larry Noonan.

“I remember what fun our group had – giving up our lunch hours to study trees, and miraculously, how much interesting stuff we learned! I kept my prize, a copy of “Trees of Canada” with great pride on my bookcase. I am thrilled to know that Tree Bee continues to this day!” – 1975 Tree Bee Alumni, Swansea Public School.



1976 Tree Bee Winners.

“My fondest memories of participating in Tree Bee are related to being a witness to the joy experienced by the students when they learn and are successful at identifying a difficult tree. It is such a great feeling when students achieve success and feel pride in their achievements. I am proud to have been able to be a part of their experience.” – 2022 to 2024 Tree Bee Coach Brennan Rudderham, St. Brendan Catholic Elementary School.

“My years in Tree Bee were most definitely great fun, but I also learned a great deal. Besides learning about tree identification and forestry education, I learned what it felt like to be confident. Being a member of the club helped me to grow out of my shy shell and discover a ‘sport’ at which I thrived.” – 2005 Tree Bee Alumni, St. Monica Catholic School.

“Every year at my own school, students who are no longer eligible to participate because they are in grade 7, ask if they can help coach and they come back to help the team prepare for the next competition.” – 2013 Tree Bee Coach, St. Monica Catholic School.

Forests Canada would like to thank all the corporate partners, teachers, and volunteers who have helped make Tree Bee possible for more than 60 years. Learn more at www.treebee.ca





Tree Bee Winners.



1999 Tree Bee Winners.



Larry Noonan circa 1999.

"I loved trees and Tree Bee made me want to continue to educate myself. My favourite memory of Tree Bee was just being involved with my friends and getting to be captain of one of the teams." – 1968 Tree Bee Alumni and active forest advocate Andrew Tremblay, Lescon Public School



1968 Tree Bee Winners.



Andrew Tremblay

All photos by Forests Canada



FROM SPONGY MOTH TO OAK WILT

A BRIEF HISTORY OF INVASIVE SPECIES IN ONTARIO

By Madison Sturba

More invasive species have found a home in Ontario than any other place in Canada. Ontario has over 440 invasive plants, 40 forest insects, and 10 tree diseases. But how did we reach this point? One likely explanation is an increase in human movement over time. As settlers brought crops, livestock, and goods, invasive plants, animals, and pathogens inadvertently followed, marking the start of ongoing ecological changes in Ontario.

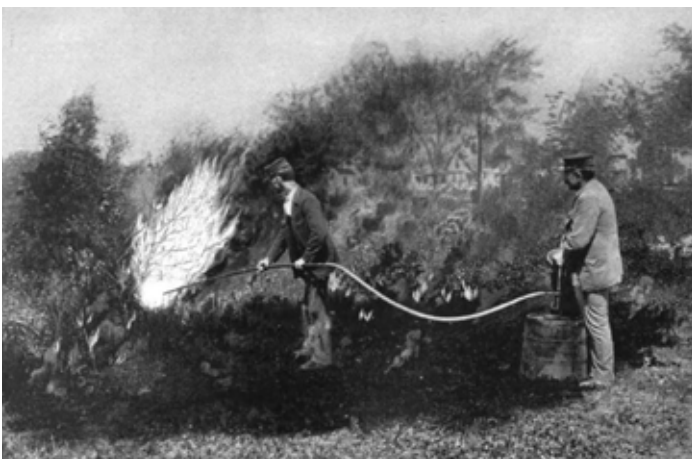
One of the earliest and most significant invasive species introductions was Spongy Moth, released in North America in the late 1800s. While most invasive species origins remain unknown, the invasion of Spongy Moth can be traced back to a single individual. Leopold Trouvelot, a French amateur entomologist interested in silk production, imported Spongy Moth to the United States. Trouvelot tried to crossbreed Spongy Moth with American silkworm at his home in Massachusetts. He failed; Spongy Moth eventually escaped the yard and quickly established in the wild, becoming one of the most serious hardwood defoliators in North America. Early attempts to manage the insect through mechanical control and new insecticides were hopeful, but ultimately didn't work to contain the spread.

Spongy Moth reached Ontario in the 1960s, but didn't produce widespread defoliation on species like oak, birch, maple, and beech until later in 1981. Cyclic outbreaks of

Spongy Moth have been ongoing ever since, threatening forest ecosystem health in Ontario.

Other invaders have hit Ontario hard over the years. Chestnut Blight reached Ontario in the 1920s. Dutch Elm Disease was another early forest invader in Ontario, first recorded on the landscape in the 1940s. Dutch Elm Disease is caused by invasive fungi that spread in the xylem of elm trees, blocking water and nutrient uptake. Host trees struggle to survive without these resources, and often die within one to three years. The disease spread rapidly through Southern Ontario, devastating native elm tree populations and dramatically altering urban and natural forests.

These early introductions signaled the beginning of forest invasions in Ontario, where species like Chestnut Blight and Emerald Ash Borer would later follow. Unfortunately, there continues to be new forest invasives sighted and confirmed even in recent years. In 2023, an invasive fungal disease called Oak Wilt was confirmed for the very first time in Canada on a residential property in Niagara Falls, Ontario. Like Dutch Elm Disease, Oak Wilt spreads in the vascular tissue to limit the upward flow of water and nutrients. Species in the Red Oak group tend to succumb to Oak Wilt much more quickly than those in the White Oak group, often dying within a single season or as early as a few weeks after infection. The disease has killed millions of oak trees throughout the



Photos: (Left) Burning an infestation of young larvae using a cyclone burner. (Right) Spraying infestations of Spongy Moth. Photos from "The Gypsy Moth," by E.H. Forbush and C.H. Fernald, 1896.





Defoliation caused by the first ever spongy moth outbreak on Myrtle Street in 1895. Photos from "The Gypsy Moth," by E.H. Forbush and C.H. Fernald, 1896.

Eastern and Southern United States, resulting in serious economic, ecological, and social impacts. While Oak Wilt can be truly destructive, there seems to be some hope for forests in Ontario. Oak Wilt was found at three sites in the province but was thankfully caught early enough to make eradication possible. All infected and suspicious trees were removed, and there is extensive ongoing surveillance to monitor the status of Oak Wilt.

Prevention and early detection will be key in limiting the spread of invasive species in the future.

Interested in learning more about how you can make a difference? Check out www.invasivespeciescentre.ca

Madison Sturba is Program Development Coordinator with the Ontario Invasive Species Centre



Photos: First Oak Wilt detection and removal of a dead red oak. Photos from the Canadian Food Inspection Agency and City of Niagara Falls.

IF IT'S A BUMPER CROP, WE SHOULD GET EVERYTHING THAT WE CAN

THE HISTORY OF TREE SEED IN ONTARIO

By Peter Kuitenbrouwer

Trees make seed. Oak trees produce acorns; maples grow keys; each cone that hangs from an evergreen tree could contain several seeds. Most seeds have the potential to grow into a tree.

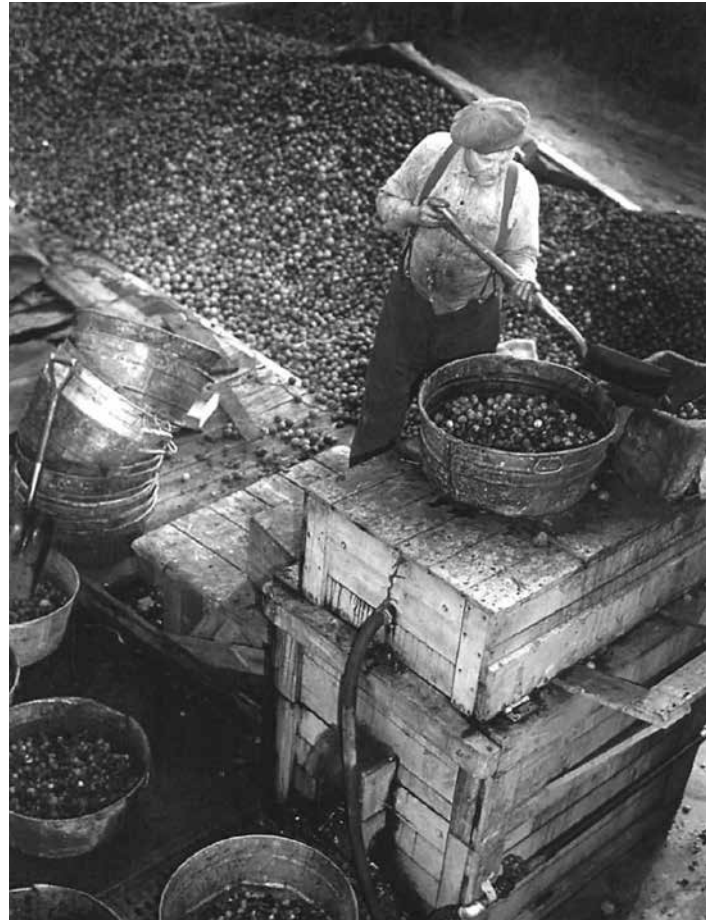
Trees produce seed on cycles. A White Spruce tree, for example, typically produces cones every two to three years.

Prior to arrival of Europeans in the New World, trees did a fine job regenerating themselves: the trees produced seed, which fell, caught the wind or got eaten by a bird, or sometimes stashed or buried by a mammal, and thus the seed spread to grow the next generation of trees. But settlers changed the pattern. The pioneers cleared and burned the forests in many parts of Southern Ontario for farms. Problems arose when some soil, too thin and unproductive for agriculture, were abandoned and eroded. Blow-sand deserts spread across the province and sawmills began to run out of wood. Southern Ontario had a tree shortage and large tracts of marginal lands. Something had to be done.

Visionaries had an idea: plant trees. Ontario's first tree planters, in Norfolk County in the southwest, imported pine seedlings from nurseries in Germany. But some of those seedlings did not thrive. The solution was obvious: collect seeds from existing, local trees in Ontario, and grow our own seedlings.

About a century ago in 1923, the province opened the Ontario Tree Seed Plant in Angus, 100 kilometres north of Toronto, to cure, extract, clean, test, and store billions of tree seeds. Cats, their vet bills paid by the province, patrolled the plant to control rodents. Ontario's department of Lands & Forests hired and trained an army of tree seed collectors, to gather cones, acorns, keys and nuts and send them to the plant in burlap bags or sometimes transported in bulk by the truck load. Ontario paid the collectors on a volume basis. (by the hectolitre (100L)).

Extracting seed from a pine, spruce, fir or larch cone is a bit of a process. After curing the cones for several weeks in open air sheds, the workers put the cones first in a heated kiln followed by a rotating drum. The heat of the kiln prompts the cones to open and the action of the spinning drum encourages the seed to fall out. Other machines called the Scalper, Dewinger and Aspirator then separated the seeds from wings, needles and other debris.



Walnut dehulling. The walnuts were placed in a maserator and rotated in water causing the hulls to be removed. The juice was collected in a storage tank and sold to Taneries to darken leather.

The seed was stored in huge -20 Celcius freezing units and each seedlot and container identified. The staff recorded the collection details for each seed lot – identifying locally-adapted tree seed that was made available to the government nurseries to grow the next generation of forests.

Brian Swaile served 20 years as Superintendent of the tree seed plant from 1979 to 1999. He recalled that each district office of the Ministry of Natural Resources had a senior technician in charge of seed. "He knew the people, he knew who did the best collections, and he knew who not to get collecting," Swaile said.



In the north, loggers' spouses would join them in the forest and bring a trailer. "The wives ended up picking cones while the husbands were on the harvest," Swaile said.

Some seed years are better than others. The philosophy, Swaile said, was, "if it's a bumper crop we should be getting everything we can, because ideally and biologically everything was set to produce good seed." Sometimes the plant would get literally buried in seed.

"In 1974 when the White Spruce in Northern Ontario hit, the northern region turned it on," Swaile recalled. "Normally it ran to about 1,000 hectolitres [one hectolitre is 100 litres]. It was so heavy everywhere, people found out what they were paying, and in the next two weeks we ended up with 7,000 hectolitres. Property owners went to bed in the village of Cochrane, they woke up in the morning and the top third of their spruce trees were gone. People came in the night and cut them off and took them home."

One challenge was transporting cones across Ontario to the seed plant. Swaile approached Home Hardware, whose trucks supplied hardware stores across the province, often returning empty. In seed season, Swaile arranged for Home Hardware trucks to return from Sioux Lookout, for example, laden with pallets of pine and spruce cones for the seed plant.

"They got their gas money coming back," he recalled. "So that worked out well."

Collectors, especially in Southern Ontario, often take cones from caches made by squirrels, who stockpile cones to eat in winter. Some seasoned collectors would build a brush pile as a spot for squirrels to hide cones, or leave an old boat in the forest; industrious squirrels would climb a pine tree, cut its cones, and—one cone at a time—fill the spaces between the seats in the bow with cones. A collector would then take the cones and leave a percentage behind or in their place leave sunflower seeds or peanuts, so their furry workforce would not go hungry.

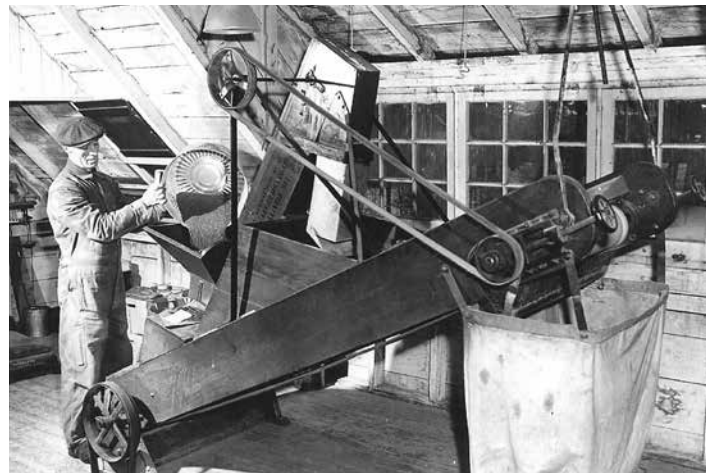
It was vital, Swaile said, to agree on a seed price province-wide. One year, the seed plant paid \$25 per hectolitre for Black Walnut; a seed technician in Eastern Ontario paid \$50 per hectolitre. "That year there was lots of Black Walnut coming from Eastern Ontario," Swaile recalled.

At the height of provincial investment in the tree seed business, Ontario in the 1970s began tree improvement programs. Ministry staff scoured the province to find "plus trees," i.e., superlative-quality trees that would produce genetically superior offspring versus general collections. Other staff then shot branches off the tops of "plus" trees to get a small branch called a scion, graft it to rootstock and plant it in what's called a clonal tree seed orchard.

"It was a huge program, heavily funded," says Kerry McLaven, CEO of the Forest Gene Conservation Association (FGCA).



Debrusher - Used to separate seed from stems and seed pods. There was a rotating paddle wheel with brushes fastened to adjustable arms on the wheel and abrasive screen on the sides of the box. Photos courtesy Brian Swaile.



Needler - Used to separate seed from dirt and debris by dropping the material onto a canvas rotating belt that was set on an incline so the seed rolled back down and the irregular shape debris stuck to the belt and was brushed off the belt as it rotated.



Preparing seed for storage and or shipping.



Mark McDermid and Brian Swaile.

“And there were multiple installations of multiple species across Ontario. And that was ahead of the B.C. program.”

In the early 1990s, tree seed collection in Ontario, was supporting the production of seedlings peaking at a whopping 120-million trees per year. Later that same decade, the Ontario government began to withdraw financial and infrastructural support from tree seed, tree improvement and the tree growing business. A significant and impactful decision was the closure of the Ontario tree seed plant in 2018. From this point on, organizations requiring seed services looked to the private sector, mostly nurseries, to take over these functions.

When the province left the tree seed business, the genetic associations and the forest industry picked up and stewarded what tree seed orchards they could. The FGCA today manages or supports management of eight White Pine seed orchards. These trees produce excellent seed, McLaven said.

“I would argue you will never find a collection of this high-quality White Pine in Ontario, anywhere,” McLaven said.

Swaile guessed that across Ontario they had 300 to 400 tree seed collectors in the heyday; Mark McDermid, Seed and Stock Specialist at Forests Canada, estimates that he has 30 to 40 collectors across Southern Ontario today, often the same people, or children of people with whom Swaile worked with years ago.

“The scale of tree seed collection and processing has diminished substantially since the ‘hey days’ when the provincial government was involved,” McDermid says, “but the overall processes of how we get seed have not changed that much.”

After Swaile left the seed plant, he worked as a consultant on seed related functions - one such undertaking was helping to develop a seed collector course. It was recognized that training on tree identification, forecasting, collection, handling and other best management practices would be beneficial to both existing and new collectors.



Seed Testing Preparing/counting out seed samples for germination test and also for moisture testing.

Today, it’s the FGCA that trains tree seed collectors; this year the association trained its 1,000th collector.

“Not everyone collects,” McLaven said. “I would say the percentage of collectors is pretty low. But they are trained on the foundation of things.” Canada seeks to ramp up tree planting, with a federal target to plant 2 billion trees by 2030. It’s imperative to increase the number of tree seed collectors nationwide, McDermid said. He suggests a mentorship program where experienced seed collectors can help train the next generation would go a long way in supporting the Certified Seed Collector course and get more folks collecting good quality seed.

McLaven is confident that, working together, gatherers can collect the cones and keys and acorns we need to reach tree planting goals.

“We don’t know the implications of our decisions in forestry for many many years,” McLaven said. “We have to focus on the best bets. Best bets no regrets. So the best bet we know right now is collecting from healthy trees and from healthy populations. That is giving us the most options for the future.”



Kerry McLaven, CEO, Forest Gene Conservation Association.





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STEWARDS OF THE LAND

THE IMPORTANCE OF INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE IN FOREST MANAGEMENT

By Sandra Iacobelli and Carole Smith

Forests are critical ecosystems that provide essential resources and innumerable benefits to support biodiversity. In recent years, there has been a greater effort to learn more about, and benefit from, the integration of traditional and western knowledge in forest restoration and natural resource management.

Indigenous Knowledge and mainstream world-views encourage modern forest management to take a more holistic and inclusive approach in learning, relationship building and adaptation, ensuring the resiliency and integrity of ecosystems can adapt to changes and stresses. The Indigenous practice of Two-Eyed Seeing joins Indigenous Knowledge systems and western science to see our natural world from both perspectives. This integration of Indigenous Knowledge and perspectives prioritizes long-term ecosystem health to ensure healthy, resilient forests today, and for generations to come. It is also the same adaptive management approach practiced by Kayanase Greenhouse located on the Six Nations of the Grand River territory.

Kayanase's mission is to work closely with clients to create ecologically sustainable landscapes and to foster environmental awareness. Their experienced staff utilizes scientific and traditional methods to support and strive for long-term ecological sustainability. Above all is the belief the work they do will benefit Mother Earth as a whole, enriching the lives of the people, plants and animals that depend on Her.

Sandra Iacobelli with Forests Canada (formerly Forests Ontario), talked with Carole Smith, Administrative Team Lead with Kayanase, to better understand the importance of bringing the strengths of Indigenous Knowledge and western ways together into formal practice for the long-term health and resiliency of forested landscapes.

Q&A

Sandra Iacobelli (S): Kayanase's Mission speaks to restoring the health and beauty of Mother Earth using



Potted trees, including Burr Oak, grow in Kayanase Greenhouse.

science-based approaches and Indigenous Knowledge. Can you explain how this practice is integrated into the work you do and your commitment to long-term sustainability and stewardship?

Carole Smith (C): It all starts with our passionate staff. Each staff member brings with them a love of the outdoors, a desire to protect Mother Earth, and a love of plants and/or wildlife. Our staff is also multi-disciplinary, so we have a healthy mix of “here’s the science and let Mother Nature do what she will.” This also means we practice having a “good mind” when working with plants, in our greenhouse, and on our projects. We believe having patience and a positive mindset when working with plants will help nurture healthy plant growth. It also helps us to build relationships with the plants and with Mother Earth as a whole.

We also continually work with industry partners to provide staff with learning opportunities to build their technical skills that help support our greenhouse and restoration initiatives, while being ever mindful of our duty to be good stewards.



S: At Forests Canada, we have often written about why seed sources matter in a changing climate. This is especially important to ensure a reliable and consistent supply of source-identified native plant material to plant healthy and resilient future forests. What are some of Kayanase's practices in this area – such as seed forecasting, collection and growing the stock – that have benefited from years of historical knowledge and experience?

C: We believe in planting the right plant in the right place and matching local species and genotypes to restoration sites. With that in mind, our seed collection is always done sustainably, never taking more than 30% of the seed, leaving plenty for nature. We also do not collect from the first plant we find as a standard practice.

We work with clients - who may also be working on development projects - to collect seed from their work sites in the early stages. We use these seeds to propagate plants and integrate them into landscaping and restoration plans following construction, essentially preserving the genotype of the plants that existed on site before the development project began.

We keep detailed records of where we collect seeds, and document species and population characteristics, so that we can match these seeds and/or plants to suitable sites. We also listen to the knowledge and experiences of our community when they come to us looking for plants. They share their knowledge with us about why species need to be preserved within our landscapes, and this gives purpose and meaning to our seed collection efforts.

S: For landowners managing their forests and woodlands, invasive species are a crucial consideration. Can you provide an overview of Kayanase's work in this area and what landowners can do to help steward their forests for long-term health and resiliency?

C: An important aspect of our work is educating landowners about invasive species and their impact. At Kayanase, we specialize in managing invasive plant species and restoring natural habitats, offering comprehensive assessment and management plans tailored to the specific needs of the affected area. Our team is highly qualified, with staff holding certifications in Ontario Pesticide Operation, Forestry Extermination, and Industrial Extermination. We are also proud members of the Ontario Invasive Plant Council.

When we tackle an invasive species problem, we start with a thorough assessment. This involves identifying the invasive species present, understanding the extent of the infestation, and evaluating the surrounding ecosystem. Based on this assessment, we develop an integrated pest management plan that outlines the most effective methods for controlling



American Beech seeds collected in 2024. Photos by Kayanase Greenhouse.

and eliminating the target invasive species, while minimizing the risks to human health and the environment.

In tackling invasive species, landowner commitment to the eradication plan is essential to success as it may involve multi-year treatments. We provide resources and guidance to help people in the community identify and manage invasive species on their own properties. By raising awareness and promoting proactive management, we help build a community-wide response and a commitment to stewarding the land for generations to come.

At Forests Canada, we strive to find new ways to meaningfully bring together Indigenous Knowledge with science-driven research to better understand the dynamic nature of our forested and grassland landscapes. Stewarding the land will reveal what the land needs, and this will help us ensure the best possible outcomes for Canada's forests from coast to coast. We thank Carole Smith, and our long-term planting partner Kayanase Greenhouse, for their contribution to this article and continued collaboration to conserve, restore and grow diverse and resilient forests to sustain life and communities.

Carole Smith is the Administrative Team Lead with Kayanase Greenhouse, a division of Grand River Employment and Training Inc. From ecological restoration programs to the collection and management of native plants and seeds, learn more about Kayanase at [Kayanase.ca](https://kayanase.ca).

Sandra Iacobelli is the Director, Marketing and Communications with Forests Canada. From seed to survival to sustainability, learn more about Forests Canada's restoration, education and community-driven programs at ForestsCanada.ca.



COLIN MCINNIS (1876-1967)

FORESTER TRAVELLED FAR AND WIDE, BUT STAYED ON THE STRAIGHT AND NARROW

The Ontario Department of Lands and Forests published for many years a journal called "Sylva." The journal highlighted changes in policy, individual stories and the comings and goings of staff. The second issue of Sylva highlighted a colourful forester, Colin McInnis. John Kearns, Colin's grandson and a Forests Canada Member, sent in this story and photos. The original article has been edited for this publication.

Colin McInnis, one of the oldest and ablest of Ontario's forest rangers is a far cry from the tobacco-spitting, hard-drinking, loud, cussing ranger, of our more imaginative novelist and script writers, who have never seen a Jack Pine. Not once in the 70 years of his existence has Colin smoked tobacco or "touched, tasted or handled" liquor. Not that Colin McInnis isn't a true example of the rough-and-ready older rangers who opened up our northern limits; he had the vigour and stamina to become a popular Parry Sound character. Small in stature, slim, and blue-eyed, Colin McInnis covered his territory through the winter and summer, good weather and bad, with rarely an exception. His record is one almost without equal in the history of the Department.

Born in Beaverton, on Lake Simcoe, in 1876, Colin's childhood was spent on a small farm. During the daytime, he romped the neighbourhood farms or accompanied his father, who was a shoemaker as well as a farmer, on his repairing expeditions throughout the neighbouring vicinity. Colin was not very strong and when, at the age of six, his family moved to Uxbridge, he was, to his childish delight, relieved of the doubtful pleasure of school-going in order that his weak lungs might have the maximum of fresh air. The years from 6 to 11 were among the happiest he ever spent. He hung about the local tannery, ran small errands for the neighbours and, when they returned from school, played baseball or football with some of his eleven brothers and sisters. Being the youngest, he was, he says, "spoiled by everyone."

At the age of 11, Colin and the McInnis family moved to Gravenhurst, where he attended the local school until he was old enough to work at the local sawmill in the summer and do "bush cooking" during the winter. He picked up the latter talent from his older brother William, and improved it until he was considered one of the best "bush cooks" in the north country.

The fact that Colin wasn't paid for his work did not unduly disturb him. At the age of 18, he became a passionate convert to



McInnis, who loved his canoe, was a guide and advisor on natural history.

the Salvation Army in Parry Sound. He said that going into the Salvation Army changed his life and was his first introduction to the world of Sunday schools. Colin's preoccupation with religion took him to New York in the 1890's. With missionary zeal, this young man would go into the Bowery (Lower Manhattan) at eight at night and stay there until four in the morning, preaching the word of God to unwilling listeners who were even less steady on the "path" than they were on their feet. Night after night, Colin would make the rounds of the Bowery bars and urge the errant customers to adopt the good way of life. The crowning achievement of his preaching



came when he was invited to deliver a sermon at a large New York Presbyterian church, where people stood in line to hear "the young Canadian missionary."

Colin returned to Canada to continue his missionary work, and settled first in the north end of Toronto before moving back to Gravenhurst in 1902.

He went back to work at the local sawmill where he did everything except the actual sawing. Working a minimum of 10 hours a day, he would sometimes "mark" a quarter of a million board feet in that time. This continued until Colin married a local girl named Edna Rosy Parker, after which his life took a somewhat different turn. Within one year after his marriage, he had left Gravenhurst to spend the next four years at Cache Bay, where he continued working in a mill during the summer and did cooking during the winter for the local lumber camps. From Cache Bay, Colin and his wife moved to Brennon Harbor at North Bay, where he spent a further five years working for the Milne Brothers. Here, Edna ran a boarding house to lodge Colin's fellow employees, and she did the same thing when they both moved on to work near Sudbury for the same company. Boarding houses have played a large part in the lives of the McInnis since those early dates and, at times, Edna Rosy McInnis found herself cooking and keeping house for as many as 150 lumberjacks.

Colin finally left the employ of the Milnes in 1920, when he first started working with the Department in the Sudbury district. There, he did cut inspection and was an assistant sealer. During the winter of 1920-1921, he went timber cruising with Peter McEwen, for whose party he served as cook. In the spring of 1922, he went with McEwen to the Parry Sound district as a Deputy Chief Ranger. However, although he has been a Chief Ranger since 1923, it was not until 1927 that Colin was appointed to the permanent staff of the Department.

Looking back over nearly half a century of labouring in Ontario's forests, Colin spoke of these as the highlights of his life, (and not surprisingly, they mostly concern religion, which still, for all his love of forestry, takes first place in his affections): joining the Salvation Army as a boy; taking the "pledge" to abstain toward the end of the last century; preaching to that overflowing congregation in the New York City church on the corner of 142nd Street and Eighth Avenue; and the little church which he built singlehanded in South Porcupine in 1911 – laying its foundations, cutting the trees, dressing the



This pass allowed McInnis to travel the rails for his forest ranger job.



McInnis in 1922 joined the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests as a Deputy Chief Ranger. Photos courtesy McInnis family.

lumber. Such are the incidents which live most vividly in the memory of Colin McInnis.

But in the memories of many others, Colin McInnis lives as more than a pursuer of good purposes. To numberless colleagues and travellers, he is an almost unparalleled cook and baker, to dozens of Parry Sound children he has been guide and adviser on natural history, and, to almost all who have ever known him, he is a very human and shrewd northern guide. For Colin McInnis never imposes his parables where they are not invited, and far from being a grim "good-doer," he tolerates and enjoys more things in life than most of us.

TO SAVE AND PROTECT THE FOREST

RULES FOR FAIR TAX ON WOODLOTS, NOW CALLED MFTIP, CAME AFTER RURAL ONTARIO RAISED ITS VOICE

By Peter Kuitenbrouwer

The first settlers arrived in what is now Ontario to find a land covered by forest. But after pushing First Nations onto reserves, the settler cut down the trees. The endless tall, green forest splendour began to disappear. The government knew it had a problem. More than 150 years ago, the province passed the first law to encourage tree planting.

The 1871 law paid landowners 25¢ per tree to reforest along roadways. Ontario then passed the Counties Reforestation Act of 1911, the Reforestation Act of 1921, the Forestry Act of 1927 and the Conservation Authorities Act of 1946.

“Each contributed to the growth and improvement of private land forestry by enlarging and encouraging the concept and practice of woodlot management,” Arthur Mathewson wrote in the *Forestry Chronicle* in 1994.

But even as Ontario acted to save forests, its tax policy by the 1960s protected only farmland, not forests.

“It is a sad and unpleasant fact,” Mathewson wrote in his article *Ontario’s Woodlots: Going, Going...* “that when it comes to forestry on private land in the Province of Ontario, taxation has put the activity at risk and, in many cases, caused its demise.”

Fifty years ago, the Ontario Forestry Association (OFA), wrote a brief to the Ontario Farm Classification Advisory Committee. Healthy and productive forests, the OFA wrote, provide, “immense value in terms of watershed protection, wildlife habitat, recreation, scenery, climatic influence, wood and syrup production, Christmas trees, employment and tax revenue.”

The OFA private woodland committee added that, “Forested land has been assessed on the value of the property for potential future uses. In a period of rapid growth in recreational properties, forested land has been assessed on the basis of its potential for development. Farms have not.”

A 1969 Royal Commission determined that rural landowners paid an “unfair” proportion of taxes for education and municipal services. In response, Ontario created the Managed Forest Tax Rebate Program in 1973. But the system was cumbersome: landowners had to pay their property tax and get reimbursed.

Twenty years later in 1993, the government cancelled the rebate program.

Enter the OFA. Mathewson, co-chair of the group’s Private Woodlands Committee, wrote in 1994 that, “the prospect of paying significant taxes on property that will yield little if any income for years to come is disturbing to most, devastating to some.”

In 1998, Ontario converted rebate programs into incentive programs. Those who own property could now enroll in the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program.

This program, known as MFTIP, protects Ontario’s green canopy of trees by allowing landowners with at least four hectares of forest to register a managed forest plan, which then reduces municipal property tax by 75 per cent on the forested portion of the land.



Forest management: crews with tractors plant seedlings to fill in gaps in a young pine plantation in Renfrew, 2014. Photo by Forests Canada.



ONTARIO WOODLOT ASSOCIATION



OUR WOODLAND LEGACIES

ONTARIO PRIVATE LAND FORESTRY

A HISTORY OF WORLD CLASS PROGRAMS

By Ken A. Elliott, R.P.F., Kawartha Chapter

Private woodlands are a critical component of the natural ecology of Ontario. The province has 70.4 million hectares of forest, 10% of these (7.0 million ha) are privately owned, First Nation or Federal. The forests of southern Ontario are mostly privately owned, with central Ontario having a split of private and Crown (public) woodlands, while the northern boreal forest is almost entirely Crown owned.

The 19th century was hard on the forests of southern and central Ontario. Timber exploitation and land clearing for agriculture resulted in significant forest cover loss and the general degradation of the remaining woodlands. On private land, most productive soils (and many not so productive) were cleared almost completely for agriculture with only the odd isolated woodlot or swamp forest remaining.

In the late 1800s with the extirpation of many wildlife species, and the creation of “blowsand” deserts and eroded valley lands, conservation movements lobbied politicians to address the devastation to the natural environment with the result being the development of a number of government programs, including (those still in place have been bolded):

1871 – An Act to encourage the planting of trees upon the highways in Ontario – superseded by the Ontario Tree Planting Act (1883) – landowners were paid \$0.25 for each tree transplanted (and healthy after 3 years) from woodland to roadside or along boundary lines.

1886/1887 – surveys of woodland status and fuelwood harvest – 30 Counties – 5.4 million cords of wood cut, and forest cover found to be less than 25% - expressed concerns for over-cutting and grazing in woodlands.

1905 – First provincial nursery (Ontario Agricultural College, Guelph, then moved to St. Williams in 1908) – free seedlings were provided to farmers to afforest eroded lands - by 1919, 3.4 million seedlings had been distributed to private landowners (Coons, 1981) - by 1923: nurseries were established at Midhurst, and Orono and Kemptville in 1946. They were all designed to provide seedlings to the government programs as well as “over-the-counter” sales to landowners with 5 acres or more of land. The provincial nurseries were all either closed or privatized by the early 2000s.

1906 – Act to provide for **exemption of farm woodlots from taxation** – woodlands covering up to 10% of a registered farm were municipal tax-free (up to 200 acres) – today farmers pay 25% of the residential tax rate on these lands

1921 – Reforestation Act - allowed municipalities to enter into afforestation agreements with the province to acquire degraded private lands through non-payment of back taxes – known as the Agreement Forest Program (1921-1998) – it reached nearly 129,000 ha, and 59 municipal/conservation authority owners with lands provincially managed for “forestry purposes”. Approximately 147.5 million trees were planted under this program (See Figure 1.) The program was discontinued, and management responsibility returned to the landowners in the late 1990s and early 2000s.

1923 – 2018 – Ontario Tree Seed Plant – As forest management developed, the Seed Plant became an integral part of the provincial reforestation system for private and Crown land which included: seed demand planning, seed forecasting, collection, processing, storage, distribution, genetics, and tree improvement.

1929 – 1996 Extension Program – began with the hiring of three “farm foresters” - at its height in the late 1980s these free services were being offered by approximately 350 private land forestry staff with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) across the southern and central Ontario forest. Approximately 9,000 site inspections were being made annually, with 400,000 cubic metres of timber being professionally marked and marketed through silvicultural prescriptions.

1933 – 1970s – Demonstration Woodlots – 500 were established as extension aids.

1946 – Municipal Tree Cutting/Conservation Bylaws – initially passed under the Trees Act and later moved to the Municipal Act. The enabling legislation allows municipalities to pass bylaws regulating the harvesting/harming of trees on private land for the purpose of preventing/controlling land clearing and encouraging good forestry. As of 2018, 73% of upper-tier municipalities and 28% of lower-tier municipalities have forest or woodland conservation bylaws (Yung, 2018). This has resulted in various types of bylaws, some strictly aimed at preventing clearing prior to development, while others are more focused on encouraging proper management through good forestry practice. The results have been variable and many municipalities without bylaws still experience extensive clearing of woodlands when market forces make the cleared land more valuable.

1946 – Conservation Authorities Act – Legislation that allowed the province and municipalities to join together to form a Conservation Authority (CA) based on watershed boundaries to undertake natural resource management programs.



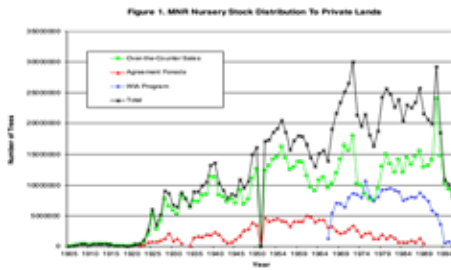


Figure 1. MNR nursery stock distribution to private lands. From OMNR 2001.

There are currently 36 CAs with a primary mandate to undertake watershed-based programs to protect people and property from flooding and other natural hazards and to conserve natural resources for economic, social and environmental benefits. This included tree planting programs that were designed to be compatible with MNR programs (smaller areas than the WIA program), by 2001 the CAs had planted 30 million trees on private land and an additional 9.4 million on their own lands. In addition to their own programs, CAs are one of the main delivery agents for the Forests Canada led planting programs.

1966-1993 – Woodlands Improvement Act (WIA) – allowed for a 15-year agreement between landowner and OMNR to plant and improve woodlands for owners with at least 5 acres of land at subsidized rates (land-owners paid for seedlings). The program accumulated 13,000 agreements covering 180,000 ha.

1975 – Managed Forest Tax Rebate Program – today known as the **Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP)** – designed to incentivize good forestry practice and the retention of forested land by providing a 25% municipal tax rate on lands that are managed through an approved forest management plan. By 2020 the program included almost 19,000 properties covering around 750,000 ha of woodland.

1995-2012 - Ontario Stewardship Program – at a time when the OMNR was reducing staff and programs related to the direct delivery of a private land forestry program, it created a new partnership-based “stewardship program”. Stewardship councils were created to represent 42 communities throughout the province. Each council had an OMNR Stewardship Coordinator who provided a connection to useful services within and outside the Ministry that included professional assistance and leadership. The council programs were funded through grants and other fund-raising mechanisms. The funding model was revolutionary in that it had reached a point where for every MNR



Forest cleared for agriculture in the late 1800s.



Severely degraded land resulting in a “blowsand” desert... a prime candidate for afforestation.

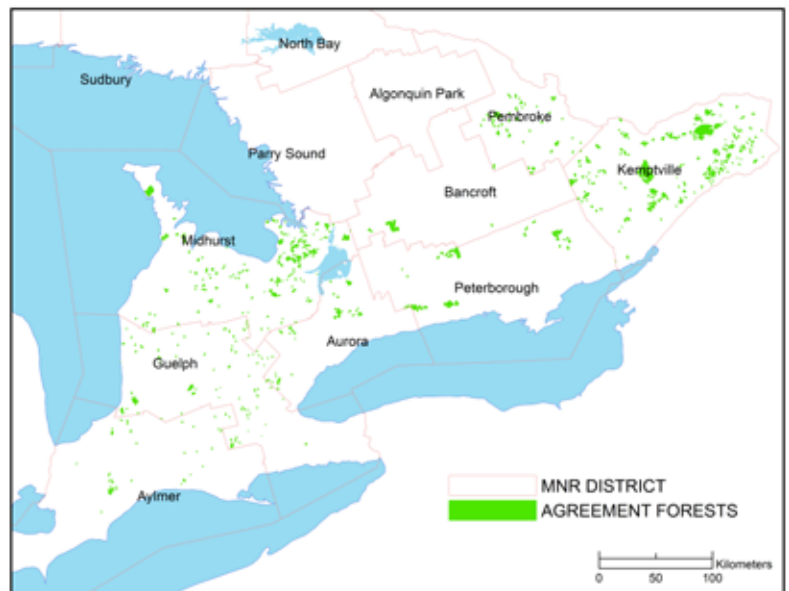


Figure 2: MNR District Agreement Forests.

dollar invested, the council would raise an additional \$7 towards their projects.

2008-2019 – 50 Million Tree Program – an Ontario government program created to establish 50 million trees primarily on private land by 2025. The main driver was a mandate to sequester approximately 6.6 million tonnes of carbon dioxide by 2050. The program was set-up through a direct partnership with Forests Ontario (previously Trees Ontario and now Forests Canada) who were responsible for running the program. It was designed to subsidize landowner's costs, which would encourage more interest in afforestation on private land. In 2019, after having reached over half the goal with 27 million trees in the ground, the government of the day decided to cancel the program as a cost saving measure. Forests Ontario has continued to deliver on this and other tree planting programs with funding from the federal government and other partners.

When you reflect on this list of programs that Ontario has implemented or when you view the land from the air, it is clear that the provincial government made an impact on the private forests of southern Ontario by providing the legislation, trees, expertise and science. Compared to other Canadian jurisdictions with large amounts of private land (i.e. Quebec, Atlantic Canada) I wonder however if the government's retreat from private land services went too far, especially at a time when the private land forest began to face some very significant new challenges created by expanding human populations, climate change, and invasive species.

During my 35 year career, with the Ministry of Natural Resources, primarily in southern and central Ontario, I saw the elimination of many of these programs. I watched the growth of the forestry consultancy as the government sought to "get out of the way" and I now work part-time in that area. I have also seen the healthy development of landowner-based organizations such as the Ontario Woodlot

Association (OWA) and spinoffs from the Stewardship program. Yet, I can't help but wonder what we could have accomplished if we had kept some of those programs, or charged an appropriate fee for the services. In the 1970s and 1980s we had programs that were the envy of the world and forests were getting planted, managed, protected and restored. Other jurisdictions continue to support their private woodlands, such as Quebec with \$70 million in annual government investments and proportionally similar programs are being implemented in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island. On the ground delivery of forest management services by government agencies, while engaging with landowners, develops trained forestry workers and professionals. Mentoring occurs, localized ecological and silvicultural expertise accumulates and environmental problems are solved. The Ontario programs could have been modified to make them more efficient, including more appropriate cost recovery models and yes, some programs needed to be eliminated or changed.

I believe the forest industry and consultants need to work in partnership with a government that recognizes that incentives and support can ensure forest ecosystem management still occurs in areas with weaker economics (e.g. small and young plantations). I also believe that government has a responsibility to provide leadership in scientific research, species-at-risk protection/recovery, forest health, seed management, forest genetics, climate change, etc. The issues in forestry are by definition often long-term. By having publicly-funded forestry programs, conducting research, providing training, monitoring forest health and leading in solving environmental problems, you not only provide a service to the citizens and forests of the province, but you maintain a cadre of experts that can be relied on to help society. Expertise is a valuable commodity that is hard to build without a well thought out system in place. The government needs to en-

sure they have that system, and it meets modern and future needs.

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LAVERN HEIDEMAN AND SONS LIMITED

AN OTTAWA VALLEY SUCCESS STORY 50 YEARS IN THE MAKING

By John Pineau, OWA Executive Director, Near North Chapter

I recently had the pleasure of meeting up with Kris Heideman in Eganville, to learn more about the history of his family's business, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year. Kris is an affable and friendly individual, a member of the OWA, and always seems to have time to chat, despite what is undoubtedly a very demanding schedule.

It was a modest start in March of 1974 when Kris's grandfather, Lavern Heideman, formally established his company, and built a first sawmill on Foymount Road near Eganville, where 50 years later, a modern mill complex that still bears his name, continues to operate. The original mill processed a mix of hardwood and softwood and employed 12 people at the outset.

"It was the standard circular saw technology of that time that was implemented, and went on to run well for many years," says Kris. "My grandfather (Lavern) had acquired the old Consolidated Bathurst timber license in the Mazinaw-Lanark area. Our family had been involved in logging for some time though, dating back to the days of my grandfather. My dad (Lavern's son) Eddie, and three of his brothers (Dale, Ray, and Earl) had kept up that family tradition."

All four of Lavern's sons were involved in the business from day one, however over the decades Eddie took on leadership of the company, and by 1992 he owned all of the shares. Shortly after, he also built an additional sawmill at the site, to handle smaller diameter red pine. Like so many in the forest sector, Eddie claims to be formally retired now, but is still active and is around to help out and support Kris and the company.

In 2005, major upgrades to the original mill were made, to improve recovery and its overall productivity. This included the implementation of new band resaw technology. Another milestone to the company's growth occurred in 2014, when Lavern Heideman and Sons acquired International Lumber in Pembroke. This mill produced finished white pine products ready for market, and the mill's assets and operations were eventually moved to the millsite near Eganville.

The year 2017 brought more significant change and growth to the company, when Lavern Heideman and Sons purchased Commonwealth Plywood's sawmill assets in Pembroke, and secured associated Algonquin Park wood allocations. There was also a major expansion over the next four years at the Eganville millsite with the construction and implementation of a state-of-the-art sawmill line that could accommodate and process larger logs. Two new kilns and a brand-new planing facility were also installed and made operational. This brought production up to about 50 million board feet annually (more than 30 million at the sawmills and over 15 million at the planing mill). The company's markets do not include the United States, and as a result they are not directly impacted by softwood lumber tariffs. Their sales are Canada-wide and also overseas in Europe.

A set-back occurred in 2019, when a fire occurred at the millsite (formerly International Lumber) in Pembroke, however the company quickly recovered and relocated those operations to the Eganville site.

In terms of wood supply, Lavern Heideman and Sons garners its wood from a number of sources including tenders put out by many municipalities, the Mazinaw-Lanark Sustainable Forest License (SFL), the

Ottawa Valley Forest SFL, private forest and woodlot owners, and the Algonquin Forestry Authority, which is its single biggest source of wood fibre. The wood that comes to the millsite from privately owned land is mainly red pine plantation logs. Like all forest products companies, Lavern Heideman and Sons is focused on ensuring a long-term sustainable future fibre supply, from well managed forests.

"We have a great woodlands team led by Mike Johns," says Kris. "Most of our staff and contractors have been around for a while, and that loyalty and consistency makes us very effective at conducting active forest management... and that is key to ensuring stewardship excellence on all forests where we procure wood. Helping to bring-about good private land management is vitally important to us as well, now and in the future."

The company's wood-basket extends up to 300 kilometers in radius from Eganville, with about 80% of the wood that comes to the mill being white and red pine, and about 20% hard maple and red oak. Currently the company's woodland operations bring in about 150,000 m3 annually, with an anticipated increase to 200,000 as markets improve.

"We are very proud that Lavern Heideman and Sons has been recognized on a number of occasions over its 50 years of operations," says Kris. "The company has received awards for our forest management work carried out on National Capital Commission lands in Ottawa, and in 1999 my dad Eddie received a National Forest Stewardship Recognition Award." Continues Kris: "There is great pride for all of us who are part of this company in doing things well and right, in terms of managing forests and social responsibility."





Aerial view of Eganville planer and kilns.

Eddie Heideman was the 1999 recipient of the National Forest Stewardship Recognition Award, acknowledging his efforts to “practice careful logging, with respect for other forest users, and to ensure that the public is aware of what his operations were trying to achieve. The award noted work conducted by Heideman’s to keep nature trails, cross-country ski trails and other forest uses intact. Lavern Heideman and Sons is certified in its forest and mill operations, and is also helping other private landowners achieve Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification of their own lands.

After Kris spent five years away from the Ottawa Valley, playing Junior A hockey and University hockey at St. Francis Xavier in Nova Scotia, he returned home to work for the company. He is currently the Vice President of Lavern Heideman and Sons and is interested and engaged in all facets of the company’s operations, wanting to carry on the business like his grandfather Lavern and father Eddie.

“I really appreciate the forest sector and the lifestyle it allows,” says Kris. “It is always interesting as so much has changed over the years and continues to change. We have a great management team and currently there are 100 direct employees and about 100 contractors who all keep things running well.”

Not a company to rest on its laurels, in the near future Lavern Heideman and Sons is looking at biomass use for its lower-quality pulpwood residue. Working with a company called Harvest Bioindus-

trial Group, there are plans to build and operate a biorefinery on the main millsite. The end product of this biorefinery would be biobutanol. Design and engineering are well underway and look promising. The steady decline in the use of pulpwood and the closure of most pulp mills has necessitated that these types of alternative uses be found and implemented. In the meantime like most other company’s in Canada’ forest sector, Lavern Heideman’s is weathering the current market downturn and generally lower prices for its products... but anticipating a better year in 2025.

On behalf of the members, staff, and Board of the OWA, we congratulate Lavern Heideman and Sons on the milestone of their 50th anniversary, and we are confident that there are many more great years ahead!

For more information about Lavern Heideman and Sons Ltd.: <https://heideman.ca/>



Kris Heideman speaking at a recent Ontario Forest Industries Association Conference.



Eddie Heideman (right) with son Kris at the Hockey Hall of Fame.



The first load of logs arrives at the mill yard in 1974.



Aerial view of Eganville sawmill.



OUR WOODLOTS

PART OF THE RUPNOW LUMBER COMPANY LEGACY

By Clair Rupnow, Quinte Chapter

Philosophically speaking, one might say that all history has a beginning, but some may never have an end.

A good example would be a history of a family or the history of a property. Ours is one of both.

In 2014, my wife Mavis and I, both retired teachers, took possession of two woodlot properties in North Hastings through an inheritance from the landholdings of the former Rupnow Lumber Company and the estates of its joint owners, Frederick and Ewart Rupnow, my grandfather and father.

Both of our woodlots are located about five kilometres apart along Highway 28, east of Bancroft. One has 180 acres; the other, a bit larger, has 225 acres.

Although each of these woodlot properties has a history of its own, they are really only part of a greater story.

Our history begins when my great-great-grandfather, Christian Rupnow, arrived in Canada in 1861 with his wife Charlotte, their twelve-year-old son, August and seven-year-old daughter, Albertina.

Lured by an offer of the British Crown to receive a free land grant in the developing country of Canada, they, like many other Prussian families, left their home near the southern shores of the Baltic and headed across the Atlantic to settle on the newly opened Hastings Colonization Road.

Landing in New York, they worked their way north stopping in Belleville where they found brief work on the Vermilyea farm, just north of the city, which allowed them time to accumulate most essential provisions that they would need for their new destination including a yoke of oxen, one of the first to arrive in the North, and a sturdy four-wheeled buckboard wagon.

Proceeding north to Madoc, they stopped at the newly opened Hastings Road Agency office to register and pick up their legal property deeds (mineral rights included) before proceeding on to their new home about half-way between Ormsby and L'Amable.

Christian was a farmer. He knew all that had to be done and with the help of his young boy, August, they laboured day after day building a good living quarter for themselves and a barn for their animals.

The surrounding forest cover was cleared to establish spaces for a fertile garden, a proper pasture for cattle and fields of sufficient size where crops could be productively planted and harvested.

My grandpa often related pieces of their story that he remembered.

He recalled that his grandfather, Christian, used his team of oxen to skid the stumps and trunks of the trees he felled, largely maples, into huge piles to be burned. To us that would seem a pity, but the bounty of trees had to be sacrificed and only a few would be saved for other uses.

At especially chosen times he would set the heaps ablaze and when evening fell, the clearings would be lit up with the flames of those giant maples as they disintegrated into ash.

Some years later, son August married a local girl, Barbara Henderson, and took over her father's Henderson farm on the Detlor Road, about four miles northeast from home and three farms west of the hamlet of Detlor.

My grandfather Frederick was born there, and he took over the family farm soon after. He, too, married a local girl, Harriet Smith, whose United Empire Loyalist family had settled at Egan Creek a few years before.

Farming was not the most lucrative occupation in those early years of the 1900s. It was subsistence farming at best. Grandpa soon turned to better ventures such as running a general store, a boarding house, and a livery in the village of Detlor.

Perhaps his most profitable undertaking was transporting a number of out-of-town cattle buyers, most often from Toronto, throughout the area with a single horse and buggy, visiting all the farms within a 30-mile radius of home.

To make things even more profitable, he decided he could sell lightning rods at each farm where they stopped. An easy sell to any farmer who had watched his neighbor's barn burn to the ground during a severe summer thunderstorm.

On his travels he also took a mental note of the size and nature of each farmer's property and woodland.

He also quickly learned that the habits of each farmer seemed to be that most raised crops in the summer and cut logs in their bushlands in winter to sustain an annual income.

Suddenly, he came up with a brilliant idea! Would it be possible that he could hire a bush crew of local lads and offer to do a winter cut for a farmer, particularly those who were aging, in return for a share of the profits they would make from the sale of the logs, pulpwood, or cedar posts?

By 1935 and in the middle of the Great Depression, he was off and running. He and my father, Ewart, invested in a new Chevrolet four-ton stake truck, painted their company logo on its doors and Dad, now in his twenties, hit the road hauling their logs to local mills for custom sawing and their cords of pulpwood down the highway to the pulp mills in Trenton.



Their early lumber sales went to local buyers but soon stretched to markets as far away as Ottawa and Toronto.

A vision of owning their own sawmill in Detlor came in the early 1940s. They were turning good money, but the logistics of working with other people's resources were becoming increasingly more complicated.

Throughout that decade they determined they would accumulate a number of farm properties from local farmers, those they knew who owned a substantial amount of timber and who might be interested in selling ahead of retirement or otherwise.

By 1949, their acquisitions had exceeded 2,000 acres. Certainly, in their opinion, that would be timber stock enough to support the operation of a sawmill.

Their sawmill became a reality that year and remained in operation for the next 16 years meaning that the Rupnow Lumber Company could be recognized as a large contributor to the economy of the Detlor community and the livelihood of its families for over 30 years.

It is important to point out that the company's own woodlots, now nearly 2,200 acres, were seldom touched. They had ample logs that they could buy or cut from locally owned properties and farmers each year. More often they could bid on Crown timber lots that regularly came up for sale.

Dad and Grandpa were two of the area's early conservationists and where possible, any of their properties that still had abandoned fields were reforested with plantations of red pine. Those plantations, some now more than 75-years-old, have all been thinned, but none have undergone a clearcut of any sort. Our own plantation, about 15 years younger, measures six acres.

Mavis and I took it upon ourselves to research the property deeds and transfer history for each property as part of our estate planning. At the time, we owned a city property and a cottage property, but when we acquired the 400 acres of our family's business legacy in 2014, the



Enjoying a day in one of their woodlots, Mavis and Clair Rupnow take time to reflect and appreciate that they are adding a piece to their native North Hastings history.



The Rupnow Lumber Company sawmill in Detlor as it sat from 1949 to 1965. The hum of its saws and the powerful roar of its diesel engine could be heard throughout the village.

additional acreage demanded more of our attention.

We spent an afternoon at the County Land Registry Office in Belleville, our home city, doing a manual search of microfiche records and making photocopies of each property's record as well as for all the others within the Rupnow Lumber Company's and our family's holdings.

That mission turned out to be a most rewarding exercise for both of us. We poured over every page as all the data was uncovered. What immediately caught our attention were the vast differences in the purchase prices paid at the time of each transfer. We were amused by how things have changed. Five dollars an acre? What?

The Registry records revealed that our Dungannon Township (now Town of Bancroft) property of 225 acres had changed ownership 23 times since 1809, and at that time its price was \$350.00. My grandfather bought it in 1946 for \$1500.00.

Our Mayo Township (now Carlow/Mayo) property of 180 acres had changed ownership more than 16 times since 1889, and at that time its price was \$300.00. My grandfather bought it in 1947 for \$1000.00.

These are your typical farms. Both began as Crown properties and later became homesteads of pioneer families often handed down to children, in-laws, or neighbours.

Evidence remains of old foundations, dug wells lined with small boulders, root cellars, sap houses and broad stone fences that once bordered pastures and fields.

Their forests consist of a diverse species of hardwoods like oak, maple, birch, beech, and ash interspersed with large stands of softwoods like white pine, red pine, spruce, balsam, poplar, and cedar.

To our good fortune, Dad had registered the properties under the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Plan (MFTIP) and our task was to simply re-work and re-register the plans within a new 10-year agreement. But we later discovered that there were further



This is DeLaney, one of our 10 grandchildren, embracing her mighty Oak Tree with a giant hug. Each one of them share our love for our woodlots, their forests, and their abundance of nature. They are our assurance that this history is going to continue.

advantages to owning a managed forest with a MFTIP beyond that of municipal tax savings.

In doing some research prior to meeting with our lawyer and accountant to discuss land transfers and successions, I discovered that in December 2001, the Chretien Federal Government had recommended a certain provision in the Income Tax Act for the transfer of managed forest properties from one generation to another to have an ability to defer the capital gains tax, similar to family farm properties. That was welcome information!

The government had recognized that when woodland properties were inherited formerly, it had often been the case that the new landowner would have to harvest the standing timber in order to cover the costs of their capital gains.

This meant, of course, that many landowners were forced to make harvesting decisions that were not based on sound forest management practices.

It goes without saying that this discovery saved us a good deal of succession expenses as both of our properties were

being passed down in an intergenerational manner.

Above all, my father was always a strong supporter of provincial forestry initiatives and ultimately, he introduced us to the Ontario Woodlot Association (OWA) and its intentions.

Following in his footsteps, we bought an OWA family membership to include ourselves, our son, Greg and our grandson, Brody. I cannot overstate the value we have found in becoming members of the OWA in these early years of woodlot ownership.

The Ontario Woodlander magazines and a number of OWA's publications have now become part of our professional library and we reference them often.

Becoming members of the Quinte Chapter of the OWA has allowed all of us to enjoy many opportunities to be involved in interesting and well-presented activities that have not only added greatly to our scope of forestry knowledge, skills and values, but, more importantly, have introduced us to a group of woodlot owners whose missions are common to our own.



FEATURED RECIPE: WILD PLUM COMPOTE

By Neil Dunning, Brant Chapter

Ontario has two native plum species, Canada plum and American plum. These plums delighted Ontario pioneer Catherine Parr Strickland Traill. She wrote glowingly about the abundant wild fruit ready for the picking, including plums, in her book of 1836, *The Backwoods of Canada*:

*“Among our wild fruits we have plums, which, in some townships, are very fine and abundant; these make admirable preserves, especially when boiled in maple molasses, as is done by American housewives...”*¹

One is left wondering if the descendants of those very trees seen by Mrs. Traill are still extant in such numbers? Given the abundance and variety of hedgerow fruits available for the taking in her native England, the fruit she found growing here must have been a great encouragement. It is a fortunate person who now has access to one of the two native Ontario plums (a check in iNaturalist shows that they are well scattered around Ontario for the keen of eye to discover).

Mrs. Traill’s reference to a compote of plums boiled in “maple molasses” is intriguing. This sounds like a very dark and sweet maple syrup. After a little experimentation I have come up with a simple recipe for plums boiled in regular maple syrup.

A compote is like a much less sweet and thick form of jam that is excellent on its own or as an accompaniment to scones, cheese, and so on. It uses less sugar and keeps for about two weeks in the refrigerator as opposed to jam which keeps for months and years. While plum jam requires equal amounts of sugar and fruit to make, compote requires far less sugar. And as it turns out maple syrup is a perfect sweetener for plums.

A challenge for Woodlander readers: buy two native plum trees from a native plant nursery such as Ontario Native Plants (two trees are best for pollination) and submit your recipe for wild plum compote in 2034. If you do have access to wild plums, here is a link with suggestions for picking and processing: <https://foragerchef.com/wild-plums/>.



A delicious serving of plum compote on scones.

THE RECIPE:

- Start with the desired number of plums. A compote for four requires ten small plums.
- Remove stones and cut the plums into smallish pieces
- Add a small amount of water to a small saucepan to prevent plums from burning
- Bring the water and plums to a simmer
- Add three tablespoons of maple syrup (less if you have “maple molasses”)
- Optional: a pinch of cinnamon
- Simmer for 45 minutes. Adjust sweetness to taste with maple syrup
- Let cool and serve with your favourite scones

1. Catherine Parr Strickland Traill, *The Backwoods of Canada*, Letter IX, <https://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/13559#:~:text=The%20Backwoods%20of%20Canada%20Parr>

A DRURY FAMILY HISTORY

By Jared Wiles, OWA Field Operations Technician, Renfrew County Chapter

In the early 1800s, many families came to Canada to find success and start a new phase of their family history. Among the families that moved to Penetanguishene Road in Simcoe County, was the Drury family from Kenilworth, Warwickshire in England. Joseph and two of his sons, Thomas and Richard, got to work clearing the land for farming, and they left a portion of the land as a woodlot to supply building materials and fuel for heat.

Not only did the original Drurys of Penetanguishene Road maintain good stewardship of the land, but they also raised their families with good stewardship practices. Charles Drury, grandson of the original settlers, was the first Minister of Agriculture in Ontario. His knowledge and interest in the land was passed on to his son, Ernest Charles (E.C.) Drury. E.C. Drury was well-educated on soil health, farmland conditions prior to afforestation, and the role of soils in tree and crop growth. This knowledge, along with his forward-thinking mindset helped him succeed in lobbying for farmers and early afforestation efforts in Simcoe County.

E.C. Drury was the Premier of Ontario from 1919 to 1923 and was often known as the Farmer Premier, a nod to his farming roots and for what he stood for... During his time as Premier, the Drury government brought in many progressive measures. One of these measures was the government's first major reforestation program.

E.C. Drury alongside Edmund Zavitz, the father of reforestation in Ontario, worked to ensure the reforestation program resulted in the first County Forest at the Hendrie Tract in 1922. This program has since led to the sustainable man-

agement of many county forests and has helped to reverse desertification due to forest clearing. Present day Forester at Simcoe County, Graeme Davis made this clear during his presentation at the 2024 OWA Conference: *"Drury and Zavitz were instrumental in initiating efforts to reverse years of over-cutting from the devastating effects of deforestation"*.

Recent events showcase some of the ways the Drury family has been involved in woodlot management. About 40 to 50 years ago, Ducks Unlimited did a project on the wetlands of the farm and woodlot (something which is becoming a key focus in the modern day and age). This included the installation of a berm with a control to retain water in the wetland and the installation of some culverts to maintain drainage past a laneway in the bush. In 1985, pastured land on the property that was not doing well became the planting site for Scouts Canada's *Trees for Canada* fundraiser; Craig himself was involved in the fundraiser resulting in approximately three acres of planted trees.

Jumping back to the present day, one of the properties is now occupied by Craig Drury and his family, and the other by Bob Drury and his family. Bob and Craig are both descendants of Richard, one of the original settlers of their Penetanguishene property. Craig has been a member of the Ontario Woodlot Association (OWA) since 2022 after finding the OWA through social media and joining before knowing what the OWA was about... A Huronia chapter



E.C. Drury on the Angus Plains in Simcoe County. 1906.

member contacted Craig and invited him to a board meeting which he attended and joined without a second thought. Since then, he has been part of the growth of the Huronia chapter and now sits as their President.

In high school, Craig worked at a sawmill and harvested timber in Anten Mills, one of the first reforestation efforts E.C. Drury was involved in. Reflecting on his time harvesting in Ann Mills, Craig said, "This was one of those full circle moments". Experiences such as these are why he has an interest in learning about woodlots, sustainable revenue, and being a good steward.

Craig's passion for owning a woodlot includes the joy of doing the work to keep the woodlot going, and having and using the equipment (which is extra fun), but also the sense of community that woodlots bring together. He shared a few moments from the 2024 Fall Field Day event in Huronia, such as looking at tree species diversity, having a connection to specific trees, the ties to family, wildlife support, and the people that the chapter events and other gatherings bring into your life.



Today, the farms are occupied by the seventh generation of Drurys in Canada. The woodlot has remained on the property and covers half of the 300-acres owned by the Drury family in Simcoe County, while the other half of the land is maintained as farmland. Over the years, the woodlot has been used to supply lumber for building on the property, firewood, hunting throughout the generations, general recreation, and maple syrup. The Drury family has always maintained a good balance between their farm and forest, and Craig Drury, who presently lives on the farm, credits this balance as one of the reasons the farmland continues to thrive.

The Drury family is proud to be involved with the OWA because of the work they do, and because of the other woodlot owners involved. Woodlots make up a significant portion of the private land owned in Ontario, and Craig recognizes, *"It is important to look after these resources and take care of the lands."* Craig's wife, Sandie, added, *"The OWA helps people get into the forest. There is this term called 'forest bathing' that has been adopted. People experience the joys of being in nature and the relaxing benefits it provides. We need to have forests for general enjoyment and to let people feel the environment."*

Penetanguishene Road is a part of Simcoe County and Ontario history. Craig wants to spread the word about the multiple families and properties on this road with a woodlot management history from the early 1800s, several of which are OWA members.

It was a joy to talk with the Drurys. Craig called woodlot involvement a 'legacy perspective' meaning that we manage the land for our short stint of stewardship, for the future generations, and to honour the past generations before us. The Drury legacy continues in Simcoe County.



Members of the Drury family. Left to right: Craig, Bob, Charles, Nolan, and Ryan. 2019. Photo Credit: Ian McInroy/BarrieToday.



Craig and Sandie with their daughter's dog Tinker Bell (Tink).



Members of the Huronia Chapter of the Ontario Woodlot Association gathered at Craig and Sandie Drury's farm and woodlot for the 2024 Fall Field Tour. Photo Credit: David Hawke.

THE PARK FAMILY HERITAGE WOODLOT

By John Pineau, OWA Executive Director, Near North Chapter

Members of the Park Family have been stalwart members of the South West (formerly Lambton) Chapter of the Ontario Woodlot Association for several decades now. The story of their woodlot and the family's passion for and dedication to its stewardship over six generations is both fascinating and a source of considerable pride, not only for them, but for all of us who want to see the application of best forest management practices and consistent silvicultural restoration on private land.

I recently had the very pleasant opportunity to visit and interview Bertha-Rose Park and her son Tom Park, to learn more about their family's woodlot history, which now spans 86 years near Alvinston, in Southwestern Ontario.

In 1938, Tom Park's Great Grandfather George Annett (then the Reeve of Alvinston) bought the 150-acre property from the McKay family, who had owned it for about 60 years. At that time, half the property was still forested, and half was cleared pasture. George Annett started an afforestation project in 1939 to plant White Pine, Red Pine, Scotch Pine, Larch and a few Hemlock, Cedar, and Norway Spruce over the next three years in the pasture. In 1939, about 25,000 trees were planted, although the total number planted over the three years is not precisely known. This all happened near the end of the Great Depression. Six local men were hired to help. In total, 70 acres were planted during the three-year period. Since that time, all 150 acres have remained fully forested.

The property was bequeathed to Marshall Park when George Annett passed away in 1951. Marshall was George's

grandson (son of George's daughter Edna). Marshall and Bertha-Rose assumed both ownership and management of the woodlot, and their children including Tom Park and his siblings, and their families have been the collective stewards ever since.

For the most part, management of the woodlot was low-key during the 1940s and 1950s, and in the 1960s the Park family started to thin the pine plantations. The pine in the southeast part of the woodlot were used for Christmas Trees in the late 1950s. For the most part, natural regeneration of tolerant hardwoods took place, with no new planting since George's initial efforts.

Since 1960, there have been about a dozen thinnings and selection harvests in the Park woodlot, and this has included both hardwoods and softwoods. Marshall looked after what needed to be done based on sound advice and professional expertise. In 1967, the woodlot was enrolled under the Woodlands Improvement Act (WIA), as an agreement forest program. This ended in 1997 when the program was discontinued, and the Managed Forest Tax Incentive Program (MFTIP) was later introduced. The Park family subscribed to MFTIP in 2002, and adhered to a managed forest plan that they had developed. The most recent logging operation was in 2023. Townsend Lumber was the harvesting contractor with a total of 950 sawlog trees and 75 fuel wood trees removed. This included 400 White Pine, 300 Soft Maple, 100 Black Cherry, 50 Beech, 50 European Larch, 20 Norway Spruce, 20 Hard Maple, and some quantity of Cottonwood, Tulip, Black Walnut and Oak.

The Park Woodlot is renewed and fully up to date with respect to its managed forest plan under MFTIP, and this is all overseen by a Registered Professional Forester, and has been for many years now. The woodlot is considered to be quite healthy and productive. However in 2014 most of the red pine was removed due to Fomes Disease*. Otherwise, the white pine, soft maple, some hard maple, red oak, beech, tulip, and black cherry are all doing well. There is a strong consensus amongst the Parks to keep their woodlot well maintained and in the family. The Parks also adhere to Lambton County bylaws, which allow and promote active management and judicious harvesting.

Presently, the woodlot is owned by Bertha-Rose, but is very much seen as the Park Family Heritage Woodlot, with six generations, including Bertha-Rose's grandchildren and great grandchildren helping with and enjoying all of its many attributes. There is an extensive 15-kilometer trail system that has been developed for both walking and ATV use. General recreation, hiking, celebrations, and birthday parties were all introduced and have become a regular part of the family's woodlot culture over the years. A unique feature for the younger generations is the Fairy Houses that Tom built in the woodlot. The young children think fairies live there and send letters and other offerings to these 'little people'. The family also has been doing some hobby maple syrup production, with 25 taps using pails for collection. The resulting sap is boiled up at the nearby farm residence of Bertha-Rose's granddaughter, Christine McKinlay.





Marshall Park (left) with his grandfather George Annett in 1945.



Bertha-Rose Park with son Tom by a large white pine (36-inch diameter) planted in their woodlot circa 1940.



The woodlot serves as a wonderful setting for many Park family events.

In terms of wildlife, there have been many observations over the years including deer, squirrels, chipmunks, wild turkeys, and red-tailed hawks. One group of individuals from South West Chapter, which includes OWA Executive Committee and Board member Rick Wilkins, has permission to hunt deer on the property, each fall.

The Parks are also proud and happy to host tours. The St. Clair Region Conservation Authority Bus Tour visited the site in 1999, and the South West Chapter held a Woodlot Tour in 2019. Lambton Wildlife also hosted a recent tour with the Park Family's permission. A bird inventory has also been completed by Birds Canada, and a trees, plants and shrubs inventory was also conducted by South West Chapter member Donald Craig.

In 2023, the Park Family was presented with the South West Chapter's Woodlot Management Award, a well-deserved recognition of their six-generations of stewardship excellence! I was fortunate enough to attend the event, witness the presentation of the award, and hear Bertha-Rose's acceptance speech.

I feel that by far the most appropriate way to conclude this article is with a

quote from Bertha-Rose, who is a retired elementary school teacher, and the cherished and respected Matriarch of the Park Family:

Our woodlot has been and still is a very valuable resource. The trees provide shelter, shade, habitat, and food for a variety of wildlife. It cleans our water and refreshes our air. It helps the soil retain water and provides a windbreak for the surrounding open farmlands. The plantation growth of white pine, red pine, and the natural regeneration of hardwoods have been a source of income from timber and firewood sales. Our woodlot has been of great importance to my family and is a source of pride to maintain. These are some of my thoughts of the woodlot over my 90 years. I expect in 90 years from now, future generations will also have discussions and plans to preserve and enjoy the many benefits that the woodlot provides.

Excerpt from Woodlot Management Award acceptance speech by Bertha-Rose Park at OWA South West Chapter 2023 Annual Meeting.

* For more information, please see: <https://bioforest.ca/en/canada/pests-pathogens/heterobasidion-irregulare-hrd/>



The fairy houses constructed by Tom Park are hit with all generations of the family, but especially the youngsters!



Bertha-Rose (centre) receives the South West Chapter Woodlot Management Award from Chapter President Betty Hubbell and OWA Executive Director John Pineau in 2023.

THE EASTERN ONTARIO MODEL FOREST

A STRONG LEGACY AND A BRIGHT FUTURE

OWA Communications Committee

Condensing more than three decades of history into a short article is no easy feat, so we certainly commit to a series of future articles that provide more detail about the Eastern Ontario Model Forest (EOMF). With the recent ‘coming-together’ of the EOMF and the Ontario Woodlot Association (OWA) to formally share administration, program management, and overlapping governance, it is important to understand what made this scenario pragmatic, and a now positively evolving reality.

In 1990, Canada introduced a five-year action plan (Canada’s Green Plan for a Healthy Environment). It included a strategic goal of promoting the sustainable use of renewable resources, which included our forests. In September 1991, Natural Resources Canada announced a competition to establish “working models of sustainable forest management” within the major forest regions of our country. This included a \$100-million Partners in Sustainable Development of Forests Program, with a \$54-million Model Forest Program.

The approach showed exciting potential as people came together to find solutions to the forest and land use challenges that they faced, such as biodiversity conservation, improving practices, and economic stability. Encouraged by the positive reception to the program, the Canadian government announced the development of an International Model Forest Network (IMFN) at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro, with a goal to use the lessons learned from Model Forests in Canada and provide a platform to share experiences with international partners.

The IMFN Secretariat was established in 1995 and continues to be hosted by Natural Resources Canada in Ottawa.

The EOMF, established in 1992, was one of the 10 original members of the Canadian Model Forest Network (CMFN), and continues as a member of the IMFN which includes over 60 members across 30 countries. It had the following strategic goals:

- To work with communities (including industry, government, and Indigenous peoples) and other stakeholders to develop new – and advance existing – forest-based opportunities;
- To work with communities to pilot ideas, conduct research and develop integrated, multi-sector approaches – based on science and innovation – that enable them to respond to a forest sector in transition and to build capacity specific to sustainable forest management;
- To develop and share sustainable forest management knowledge, practices, tools, and experiences with international forest-dependent communities in keeping with Canada’s international forest agenda.

The more than 1.5 million-hectare EOMF is located in a highly populated area of over one million people, covering a wide range of land uses. The majority of the land (88 percent) is privately owned. Productive forest lands comprise 38 percent of the area, and the model forest presented a unique opportunity to develop and demonstrate sustainable forestry programs on both private and public lands in the Great Lakes–St. Lawrence Forest Region.

The EOMF vision, *Forests for Seven Generations*, is a guiding Indigenous philosophy that supports a desire to balance the economic, social, and environmental pillars of sustainability within a mosaic of rural, urban-built, and natural features. The rural and urban areas that comprise the overall landscape are fundamentally linked, and therefore cannot be treated in isolation when responding to issues of forest sustainability and community well-being.

Initially, the main partners of the EOMF were resource management agencies, private landowners, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, and industry interested in an array of forest values, building on the strengths of existing forest programs in Eastern Ontario, to promote sustainable forestry. A strong public education program was emphasized to foster a stewardship land ethic amongst residents of the model forest.

The development of accurate resource information and landscape-based planning was emphasized, along with a technology development and transfer program. The EOMF had a strong GIS program that allowed it to examine issues and programming at a landscape scale, as well as provide some services to landowners and resource management agencies, including tools needed to accelerate the evolution of sustainable forestry from concept to operational practices.

An important project to the EOMF’s Indigenous partner, the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, was the development of a process to preserve existing black ash populations that had been devastated by a blight in the 1970s, and to re-establish





Map of the original Canadian Model Forest Network. Circa 1993.

the species in areas from which it had disappeared. Black ash is important to Indigenous peoples for traditional basket-making. The main forest industry partner, Domtar, which owned the pulp and paper mill in Cornwall and provided a log market for many of the small woodlot members of the EOMF, closed the mill permanently in 2006.

SOME OF MANY EOMF ACHIEVEMENTS:

- The successful use and application of Naturalized Knowledge Systems principles (an extension of Traditional Ecological Knowledge) to all activities, resulting in stronger, more resilient, and more empowered communities;
- Establishment of a program for Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification

of privately owned forests across Ontario in 2003; addition of Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) certification to this program in 2024;

- Building on forest certification, the development of a Carbon Offset Program for our community forests partners to assist them with generating carbon offsets using Improved Forest Management Protocols;
- Helping to develop and produce educational materials and support programs for forest owners impacted by the 1998 Ice Storm in Eastern Ontario.
- The establishment of the Regional Forest Health Network that brings together partners from eastern Ontario

and beyond to share knowledge around forest health issues.

MORE RECENTLY

As one of the more than 60 members of the IMFN, the EOMF continues to work with partners to develop new ways to sustain and manage forest resources.

Through its formal partnership with the OWA, the EOMF is continuing to:

- Expand FSC and SFI certification for diverse groups of woodlot landowners across Ontario.
- Deliver Indigenous Cultural Mindfulness Training Workshops and Forest Climate Resilience Education for landowners.



- Produce enhanced forest resource inventory for the United Counties of Prescott and Russell and South Nation Conservation in Eastern Ontario.
- Co-host knowledge exchange and outreach events including an annual December Seminar, and the Kemptville Winter Woodlot Conference.
- Raise awareness of invasive species and provide information on how to combat these species through leadership in and support of the Regional Forest Health Network.
- Host national and international groups with interest in sustainable forestry (the EOMF-OWA will host the 2025 IMFN Global Forum in Kemptville).

From the beginning, Model Forests have fostered the formation of partnerships under a neutral forum where a range of values and interests could be represented. Each site was intended to be a dynamic “model” from which others could learn, and, together, advance their sustainability goals in forests and the larger landscapes that surround them. The reduction of most federal funding has resulted in many of the original model forests discontinuing operations, however a number of the original members, including the EOMF, continue to operate at various capacities.

The focus of this short article has been on the organizational aspects of the EOMF’s history. Future articles will look at the EOMF’s human history, highlighting the many dedicated volunteers, partners and staff who contributed to making its programs a multi-decade success. People from many communities and organizations remain the essence of the EOMF and guarantee a bright future!

To learn more, please view the following video documentaries:

[Trees, Youth Our Future: Episode 1](#)

[Trees, Youth, Our Future: Episode 2](#)



Henry Lickers of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne, a founding partner of the EOMF.



EOMF tour of Brazilian Model Forest guests during the summer of 2024.

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Early days of the EOMF's Forest Certification Program. Left to right: Jim Gilmour (EOMF Board), Richard Donovan (SmartWood), and EOMF staff Scott Davis and Brian Barkley.



RED-BELLIED WOODPECKER

By: Samreen Munim, Forest Birds at Risk Field Biologist, Birds Canada, Norfolk Chapter



CONSERVATION STATUS:

Red-bellied Woodpeckers are common and have increased significantly over the past couple decades; they are considered of low conservation concern.

Photo Credit: Kerrie Wilcox

IDENTIFICATION

Despite their name, Red-bellied Woodpeckers don't have a particularly red belly! Instead, they can be identified by their black-and-white striped back, light underparts, and red nape. Males and females look similar, but females lack red on their crown.

HABITAT

Red-bellied Woodpeckers are most common in southern Ontario, but are becoming increasingly common in central Ontario. They are highly adaptable and can be found year-round in any wooded habitat, including urban areas.

DIET

These woodpeckers are generalists, meaning they'll eat just about anything!

Their diet includes arthropods, fruits, hard mast, seeds, and even small vertebrates. They occasionally also feed on sap and nectar, and readily come to feeders.

BREEDING BIOLOGY

Red-bellies place their nests in tree cavities, often in dead trees or dead limbs of living trees. They usually excavate new cavities but will occasionally use existing cavities (or even utility poles and fence posts). Both parents incubate the eggs for 12 days, though only males take the night shift. The nestlings stay in the nest for 24-27 days. Upon fledging, they follow the parents for several weeks, until the parents eventually become hostile and chase them away.

DID YOU KNOW:

European Starlings, an introduced bird species, frequently usurp Red-bellied Woodpeckers from their cavities, despite the woodpeckers being larger than starlings.

Red-bellied Woodpeckers seem to have a particular fondness for oranges, and have sometimes been called "orange sapsuckers" or "orange borers".

Red-bellied Woodpeckers were once considered rare in Ontario, and were restricted to extreme southwestern Ontario in the 1980s. Since then, their range has been expanding northwards at a rapid pace.



MEET THE ARTISAN

By Olyvia Foster, OWA Communications Coordinator, Kawartha Chapter

THE SALVAGE LIFE - ART WITH HISTORY AND MEANING

We all have our “why.” Whether we think much about it or not, our “why” drives us forward. For Jocelyn (Joce) Greenwood, the owner and artist behind *The Salvage Life*, her “why” in business is all about community, connection, and creativity. It is the opportunity to connect with others, reimagine something using reclaimed materials, and create something unique for them.

Joce is a self-proclaimed lover of all things salvage. As an artist and DIY (do it yourself) enthusiast, she salvages wood from century-old homes, seeing her purpose as sharing ideas to reimagine salvaged wood to create art with history and meaning. Art with history can carry a sentimental value, often embedded in the well-used pieces of wood Joce reclaims and reimagines for clients. This passion led to the beginning of her business, *The Salvage Life*, where she has since been creating “rustic, one-of-a-kind wall art and decor from salvaged wood.”

Growing up in a creative household – with her father as a woodworker and her mother as an artist – Joce developed a deep appreciation for the art-making process. She loved to paint and even won an art award in high school. However, adulthood, with the demands of a young family and work, left her with less time and fewer outlets for creative pursuits. Joce recognized how she missed the creative outlets she enjoyed as a child. The purchase of a family home built in 1856, which needed remodelling, offered the perfect opportunity to reconnect with her creativity.

Even before purchasing the house, Joce was gathering various salvaged materials, ready to create something new when inspiration would strike. With permission, she salvaged everything from old barn boards, fences, and beams to drawers, table legs, and antique metal fittings. She had ideas for reusing these materials to build tables and cabinets, but she wanted to follow in her father’s footsteps by ‘doing it right’ – focusing on quality and attention to detail. To achieve this, she decided to take a cabinetmaking course.

The course was offered at a local college, with classes held on Tuesdays. Although she had delayed signing up, she was pleasantly surprised when her husband enrolled her in the course set to begin that week. However, to both of their surprises, he had mistakenly signed her up for a carpentry course on Thursdays instead of the cabinetmaking course



Joce Greenwood, owner and artist of *The Salvage Life*. Photo Credit: Melanie Curley, [Mango Photography](#).

on Tuesdays. The carpentry course covered much more than cabinetmaking, including framing, insulation, drywalling, and the safe use of various tools. Joce was immediately interested and ended up loving the course. She had already done some trim work in the house, but the carpentry course expanded her skill set and equipped her with the knowledge she needed to do things right.

A few years after the carpentry course, and now equipped with an arsenal of new tools, Joce put all her skills to the test by completely gutting the kids’ room down to the studs. While gutting the room, she came across lath, the wooden strips used as a backing for plaster. Instead of demolishing everything, she carefully salvaged the lath with her family’s help. Joce envisioned using the reclaimed lath to create a feature wall or shelves, preserving a piece of the original build and reusing the materials.

Those in Joce’s circle know to contact her when they are renovating because, as she proudly admits, she will take anything she thinks she can repurpose. Joce had an opportunity to salvage when her neighbours were demolishing their garage.



Among the piles of wood, she found slats from a crate with the print: “Machine Works, Whitby Ontario.” Unbeknownst to Joce at the time, her grandfather worked in that very building, just around the corner from where her family now lives.

Joce incorporated the old slats with writing in a feature wall for her children’s bunk beds. Now that her kids are teenagers, Joce has separated the bunk beds, and the printed slats are now part of the headboard on one of the beds. She hopes it will become a sentimental piece of decor for her son when he moves out. For Joce’s kids, their neighbour’s demolition resulted in a material connection to their great-grandfather.

Three years after saving the lath from her children’s room, and with her husband’s birthday approaching, Joce decided it was time to get creative. She wanted to make something special for him, and since he is originally from England, she thought a stylized Union Jack would be a meaningful and unique piece of rustic art.

Lath is dark on one side and light on the other, allowing her to alternate the colours to create a distinct pattern. When starting a new piece Joce begins by cleaning and sanding the



Range of colours of salvaged lath.



Headboard made by Joce from salvaged slats from Machine Works, Whitby Ontario.

lath. She then cuts the pieces at an angle using a chop saw, gluing, and pinning the pieces together to complete the design.

Joce's husband loved the stylized Union Jack sign, and friends and family were equally impressed. Their enthusiasm encouraged her to continue experimenting with lath and making decor, which eventually led to the creation of her business, *The Salvage Life*.

When speaking about her business, Joce said: "I just love the process... from searching for the wood, to finding the right pieces and putting the pattern together." She added, "I like reimagining things, but not necessarily starting from scratch because it is all about the challenge of reinventing something. I like that challenge."

While Joce currently has a healthy supply of lath, she has had to source it by searching online ads in the past. One such ad was a couple selling kindling from their home renovation, which Joce suspected was lath. A photo confirmed her hunch, and she soon found herself at a home built in 1894, faced with the biggest pile of lath she had ever seen. It was a win-win for both the homeowners and Joce because they were happy to get rid of the lath, and she was happy to take it off their hands. She returned for more when they renovated the ceiling. Later, Joce gifted the family with a personalized sign made from the lath in their home, which read "Circa 1894."

Joce continues to create wall decor, including wood wreaths, snowflakes, and salvaged trim trees. When working with trim, some pieces are left natural, but if the trim has chippy paint, then she seals it with a good varnish to prevent the paint from chipping further. And sometimes she will paint plain trim with milk paint then seal it with hemp oil. Despite the variety of creations, her favourite projects are always custom pieces because they encompass her values of community, connection, and creativity.

Creating custom pieces requires a lot of communication and trust, and Joce's clients rely on her to bring their vision to life. She emphasized, "I want it to be their piece when I finish, not my piece. I want the client to feel a part of the process and to see their vision reflected."

One client reached out to Joce when her childhood home was being remodelled. She asked Joce to make welcome signs with the seventies-style wood panelling from the walls of their childhood home. Joce made welcome signs and custom trays with mosaics for the client and her family, preserving a piece of their home's history.

While clearing out furniture from their childhood home, the client discovered a special message written by her late brother, who had passed away thirty years earlier at the age of twenty-five. On the back of a wardrobe door, he had written, "Jay was here." The client asked Joce to incorporate the message into a piece of wall art for them. Joce shared how it took her a



Stylized Union Jack wall art made by Joce from salvaged lath in their century home.



Quilted star made by Joce from salvaged wood panelling and trim. The backing says, "Jay was here."

long time to bring herself to cut through the $\frac{3}{4}$ " wardrobe door to make the backing for the piece.

The result was a beautiful star made from lath and turquoise trim with chippy paint. The message is revealed on the back of the star. Now, the entire family has a special memento that not only connects them to their childhood home but also preserves a cherished memory of their late brother.

"This is why I do this work, because of the connection with others," said Joce.

To connect with Joce or to see more of her work visit her website at thesalvagelife.ca where you can find her social media channels and her contact information.



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