



Forestory

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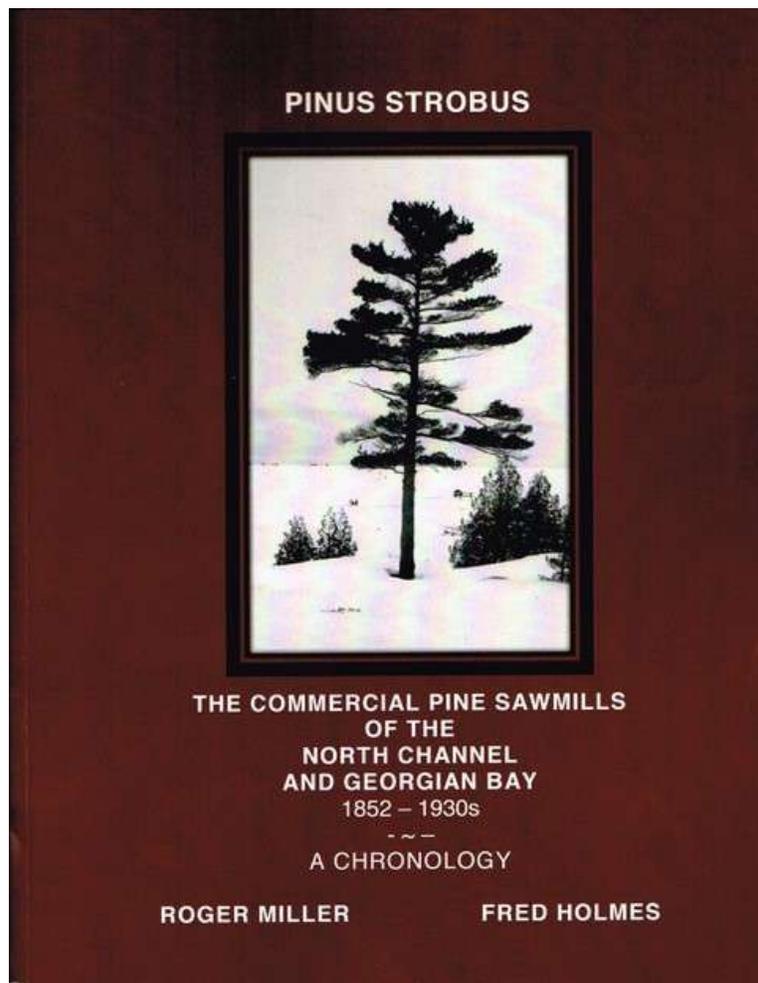
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We want to hear from you!

If you have articles, photographs or images, interesting facts, web links, personal reflections or events that would be suitable for this newsletter, please contact Caroline Mach, R.P.F. at carolinemach@hotmail.com. Deadlines are April 1 and October 1.

New Sawmill Publication



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Request for Content

Do you have an interesting story to tell about some aspect of forest history in Ontario? Or are you prepared to write an article for the newsletter on some aspect of forest history? Do you know of interesting photographs, documents, web sites or other items that would be suitable for inclusion in the newsletter? If so, please contact the editor to discuss the possibility of publishing your information in the newsletter.

Please provide your comments to the editor on items or themes you would like to see in the newsletter.

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Cover Photo:

Chair's Message: We Have Been Busy Indeed!

By: Mark Kuhlberg

Yet again, it is a pleasure to report on some wonderful happenings with the Forest History Society of Ontario (FHSO). The last six months have seen us realize some great achievements, and here is a summary of some of them.

The much anticipated Frank A. MacDougall exhibit has been created at the Canadian Bushplane Heritage Centre in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario. The FHSO contributed roughly \$2,500 to help construct part of this display, and the product is truly outstanding. It includes a partial reconstruction of a cabin that features MacDougall's image on the door. A thank you letter was sent to the Centre on behalf of the FHSO to express our gratitude for all the work that went into pushing this project forward. We expressed our deepest thanks to Todd Fleet, the Centre's curator, who has been committed to the undertaking for several years now.

The FHSO has also made significant strides in preserving archival materials from our province's forest history. The first collection concerns Benjamin F. Avery, a pioneer and iconic forester in the province from the mid-1910s until the early 1960s who spent most of his career working in the Espanola area. He oversaw what was arguably Canada's first sustained yield management program during the 1920s and the rebuilding of the pulp and paper operation in Espanola after the Second World War under the banner of the Kalamazoo Vegetable Parchment Company. The other collection concerns Jim Austin, whose forefathers established and ran the early 20th century lumber firm, Austin Nicholson. It controlled a virtual forest industry fiefdom along the Canadian Pacific Railway line on either side of Chapleau and was responsible for establishing a number of towns to support its operations. Descendants of both Avery and Austin agreed to donate their surviving archival papers, maps and photographs, and these items form two very important contributions to our forest history. We are also working with the folks who are responsible for the virtual mountain of historical materials that the late Bill Towill amassed up in Thunder Bay to help facilitate its transfer to appropriate archives. The collection includes materials from several former timber firms in northwestern Ontario.

The FHSO can also report that it has completed researching and writing the dozen essays that the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (OMNRF) contracted it to write in 2017. The OMNRF was pleased with the product, and most of the essays are now available for reading on the FHSO's website. Scott Miller, Alicia Boston and Aaron St. Pierre, all graduates of Laurentian University's MA History program, did most of the work on these essays, while I assisted with editing and revising them.

Finally, two members of the FHSO's Board of Directors were involved in the Canadian Institute of Forestry's 109th AGM and Conference in Ottawa in September 2017. Dave Lemkay gave a wonderful talk about the work the FHSO has done since its founding in 2009, and I delivered two papers. The first stressed the importance of preserving our country's forest history and urged the conference's attendees to work towards realizing this goal, and the second highlighted a few noteworthy lessons that can be drawn from the aerial dusting projects that Canada carried out during the 1920s. Overall, the session on Canada's forest history was received with enthusiasm by those in attendance, and this reception bodes well for our future as an organization.

As always, we only enjoy these successes because of the efforts of our members, so thanks to everyone who supports the FHSO and had a hand in the aforementioned activities. Here's to an equally productive half-year going forward!

Editor's Message

By: Caroline Mach, R.P.F.

Since this is my first edition of *Forestry*, and I am still trying to figure out exactly what I'm supposed to be doing, my message will be brief.

Many of you will know that I am also the Editor of *The Professional Forester*, the newsletter of the Ontario Professional Foresters Association. In fact, I seem to have made somewhat of an unpaid career of being a copy editor, at some points doing as many as four newsletters, and often asked by my colleagues to run my red pen over their work.

I look forward to working with all of you on making *Forestry* an exceptional publication.

Deadlines for *Forestry* are **April 1 and October 1**; please send submissions to carolinemach@hotmail.com.

Check This Out on www.ontarioforesthistor.ca

A Brief Recent History of the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry

Ontario and Canada are marking the 150th anniversary of Confederation this year (2017). The Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry is taking part in this celebration by highlighting its proud tradition of conserving Ontario's natural resources, and helping to build the province and the country.

As part of this anniversary celebration, the Ministry commissioned Laurentian University to produce a series of articles that describes the scope of the Ministry's work over the past 50 years. Under the direction of Professor Mark Kuhlberg, several post-graduate students have written the articles. The articles were reviewed by both current and former MNRF staff. They provide an interesting and informative overview of the wide range of activities undertaken by the Ministry over the past fifty years.

These articles build on the history of government management of Ontario Crown lands and forests as documented in the centennial of Canada publication commissioned by John Robarts, Premier of Ontario, in 1967, titled *Renewing Nature's Wealth*.

To find the articles, go to Resources—MNRF History at www.ontarioforesthistor.ca.

Coming Events



Plan to Attend the Annual Meeting of the Forest History Society of Ontario

February 8, 2018, 2:00 p.m.

Nottawasaga Inn, Alliston

Guest Speaker: Malcolm Squires R.P.F. (Ret.), author of the recently published book, *The Dynamic Forest*

(more information about *The Dynamic Forest* on page 49)

Forest History Society of Ontario on the Road



The Forest History Society of Ontario had a display table (courtesy of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry) at the Annual Meeting of the Canadian Institute of Forestry-institut forestière du Canada, held in Ottawa, September 27-29. The Society's Secretary-Treasurer, Stephanie Prince is shown with the display which highlighted the Frank A. MacDougall Memorial exhibit now open at the Canadian Bushplane Heritage Centre in Sault Ste. Marie. Both the Society's Chair, Professor Mark Kuhlberg and one of the Directors, Dave Lemkay, participated in a panel discussion on Canada's forest history at the meeting.

The Frank A MacDougall Forest History Fund

By: Ken Armson, O.C., R.P.F. (Ret.)

At the Annual Meeting of the Forest History Society of Ontario in 2014 it was decided to have a memorial to honour Frank A. MacDougall and it would take the form of the Frank. A. MacDougall Forest History Fund. Frank MacDougall was the longest serving Deputy Minister of the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests (1941 – 1966). The Fund is a continuing one for various types of forest history projects. Following discussion with the Canadian Heritage Bushplane Museum in Sault Ste. Marie it was agreed that the first project would be an exhibit about Mr. MacDougall. The museum has one of the airplanes that MacDougall flew when he was Superintendent of Algonquin Park prior to being appointed Deputy Minister, which made it a logical location for the exhibit.



Frank was born in Toronto in 1896, but went to primary and secondary schools in Carleton Place. He enrolled in engineering at Queen's University in 1915, but with World War I going on he left and enlisted in the 45th Battery of the Canadian Field Artillery and shipped overseas in 1916. He was gassed at Vimy Ridge in September 1917 and returned to Canada, where he was demobilized in Montréal in 1918. Instead of engineering he decided upon a career in forestry and enrolled in the Faculty of Forestry, University of Toronto where he graduated in 1923 with a B.Sc.F. Although he expressed interest in working for a forest products company he joined the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests as an Assistant Forester in Pembroke following graduation. Three years later he was transferred to Sault Ste. Marie and became the District Forester there in 1928. It was while he was in Sault Ste. Marie that he obtained his pilot's licence. He was responsible for the early reforestation in Kirkwood and Lefroy Townships, near Thessalon, during this same period. In 1931 he was

appointed the Superintendent of Algonquin Park where he became the "flying superintendent" and was responsible for many innovations in resource management, fish and wildlife management, and recreational use of the forest. Throughout, as a violinist, he also found time to make his own instruments!



In 1941 he was appointed Deputy Minister of Lands and Forests, the Hon. Norman Hipel was the Minister, and the two agreed on some major changes in the department. At that time the department consisted of many staff – foresters, forest rangers, land agents, homestead inspectors, pilots, radio operators and others – often reporting to main office in Toronto separately. The Department of Fish and Game was not absorbed into Lands and Forests until 1946. The

reorganization MacDougall brought about was to have all resource management responsibilities brought under each of 21 Districts with a District Forester in charge. With their responsibility and

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authority each was held responsible for results.

Apart from the university trained foresters, many of the field staff had little to no formal education in resource management. To correct this MacDougall arranged with the Faculty of Forestry to have some of the District Foresters take selected courses. Equally, he recognized that at the ranger or technician level there was an immediate need for a permanent training school and founded the Forest Ranger School (FRS) at Dorset in 1946. The school operated for 20 years until the training of resource management technicians was assumed by some Community Colleges in 1966.

MacDougall saw the need for combined federal and provincial efforts in forest entomology research and insect surveys in the province and was instrumental in the establishment of both, with the province funding the building of the research laboratories in Sault Ste. Marie in 1946 while the staffing and research were undertaken by the feds. Undoubtedly this was largely in response to a major outbreak of spruce budworm at that time.



As the concept of multiple use of forests began to be accepted MacDougall was aware that mid-career foresters and biologists in the department needed to broaden their knowledge about integrated resource management. He arranged with the University of Toronto to provide a one-year Diploma in Resource Management at the Faculty of Forestry. The course also attracted others not employed by the department. The program was available from 1961 to 1970. His concern about education and standards of staff reflect his earlier concern about licensing of foresters when, in 1944, he wrote, "*The production of plans for the second crop are a highly skilled procedure demanding training and experience. Such plans should only be accepted when under the signature of a forester licensed to act by the province in the same way in which land surveyors, lawyers and doctors are licensed*".



Licensing of foresters in Ontario didn't occur until 2001, although the province required a management plan for Crown Land forests to be signed by a Registered Professional Forester in 1964. (The Ontario Professional Foresters Association was established by legislation in 1957).

In 1950 there were only a few provincial parks, such as Algonquin and Rondeau, and MacDougall saw that with the increasing development of family camping and outdoor

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recreation in the 1950s there was a need for a comprehensive provincial park system. He created a Parks Branch in the Department to plan for and develop such parks province-wide. As a pilot he was aware of the important ways in which aircraft could assist in resource management, particularly in forest fire fighting and forest and wildlife inventories. His involvement in assisting with the development of the Beaver and Otter aircrafts was recognized when he was awarded Canada's highest aviation award, the McKee Trophy, in 1964, and when he was inducted into the Aviation Hall of Fame in 1973.

Finally, with the celebration of Canada's centennial in 1967, MacDougall, with eminent foresight, set in place the preparation of a history of the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests, *Renewing Nature's Wealth*; a volume of academic thoroughness and information that has been a standing record for decades since.

Frank MacDougall, throughout his career, as both an individual and through his accomplishments professionally as a forester and as an administrator, is a role model of which the forest sector can be proud.



Balaclava Water-Powered Sawmill

By: Dave Lemkay

It's believed that the sawmill at Balaclava, Ontario, in the southeast quarter of Renfrew County, was the oldest operating water-powered mill in the country in its day. Still in business in 1967 and standing yet as we celebrate Canada's 150th year, the Balaclava mill has a colourful history. Colourful too in the sense that the iconic mill, straddling Constant Creek, has been photographed and painted by many, many photographers and artists. Evidence of this is easily found online with a simple Google search.

Constant Creek flows out of Constant Lake, a shallow body of water that is now some of Renfrew County's cottage country real estate. In 1854 partners Duncan Ferguson and Donald Cameron built a dam to create a twelve-foot head of water for power with the prospect of erecting a sawmill. However their plan didn't come to fruition and the site and water rights were sold to William Richards shortly after. Richards completed the construction of the mill with the installation of a sixty-horsepower water wheel in the sluice to run the main saw. A second forty-horsepower turbine was installed to power the edger and some years later a smaller one was installed that operated a generator for electrical power to the mill and area homes and stores. It wasn't until 1949 that Ontario Hydro electrified the area. The Richards family operated the mill until 1957.

Within a short time of the building of the mill, Balaclava along with the little hamlet of Dacre, one mile away on the Opeongo Colonization Road, grew as thriving townsites with general stores operated by Richards and Joseph Legris; two hotels, one named the California House owned by Alfred Legris, Joseph's father; a blacksmith forge, and winter ice cutting to fill the ice house.

Another enterprise, at some short distance downstream, was a grist mill established by William Hunter. In 1903 he sued William Richards for damages caused by his errant dumping of sawdust into the creek. The buildup of this residue was hampering the efficiency of Hunter's water-powered

mill. This lawsuit is reported to be the first anti-pollution court case in Ontario.

Hunter was successful in bringing to an end the dumping of the sawdust. Richards paid damages and was forced to mitigate the problem by erecting a sawdust burner, also reported to be the first in Ontario. Richards appealed the judgement in 1913 by virtue of the original grant from the Crown, common law and such things. The appeal was lost and once again Richards was forced to pay costs.



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As fate would have it, a fire destroyed the sawmill only two years later in 1915. It was rebuilt immediately and production continued. In 1927 the aging log dam was replaced with a concrete structure and for the following thirty years the Richards family enterprise was the hub of the area. In 1957 they sold to David Dick, a local family scion from the Scotch Bush area near Douglas, who operated for the next 11 years, ending a century of milling.

In 1984, when the Ottawa Valley was designated Forest Capital of Canada by the Canadian Forestry Association, Joan Reed-Olsen of TV Ontario filmed five television shows in the area. One segment included mill owner David Dick demonstrating the variable pitch water wheels, still housed in the sluice beneath the mill floor. This writer had the privilege of knowing David Dick and his wife Beulah. Dave loved to talk at length about the business and forestry and Beulah told of her delight in earlier years at being able to swim in the stream next to the mill.

A pleasing ending to this saga includes much of the machinery being acquired by the National Museum of Science and Technology in the 1970s. In 1983 the Ministry of Government Services Ontario purchased the water rights at the Balaclava dam and by 2012 a state of the art dam was constructed to safely manage the levels of Constant Lake and the flow of Constant Creek.

The Sawmilling and Lumbering Industry of Norfolk County

By: Wesley B. Wilson

Pine, oak, and chestnut once dominated the lands of Norfolk County. However, these did not stand for long after the European settlers arrived on the shores of Lake Erie over 200 years ago.



The settlers clearing the landscape of the vast trees covering the land. Photo courtesy of Eva Brook Donly Museum and Archives.

The first white settlers to arrive in the Long Point region were the United Empire Loyalists. These individuals were fleeing the American Colonies following the War of Independence. Most travelled to New Brunswick or Nova Scotia prior to making their way to Upper Canada, present day Ontario, in the late 18th century. They had known life in well-established communities, like New York and Boston, before coming into the forested wilderness awaiting them.

The land which greeted them in the Long Point settlement was covered in old growth forest and oak savannah, with massive pine towering into the sky. These did not last long, however, tree cutting being an immediate task undertaken to establish settlement. Hastening the clearing of the land was a mandate set forth by the British Crown, stating a set amount of land must be cleared from the settlers' property, this being five acres, to establish a foothold of settlement in the forested wilderness of Upper Canada, present day Ontario.

Much of the hardwood cut by the first settlers was wasted by simply burning the wood in massive piles. The reason for this was the ample amounts of timber covering the land, coupled with the limited uses for hardwoods during initial settlement. On the other hand, softer woods, like pine, were easier to manipulate and served as better building material, saving them from the burn pile. Small sawmills began to quickly appear across Norfolk County to produce rough cut lumber only, with more intricate cuttings coming much later. These mills at first used a pit saw, where a pit is dug into the ground and a log is laid over top of the pit. Two men, one in the pit and one on the log, push and pull on the saw cutting a maximum number of 12 logs each day. The forest provided them with all the resources needed to create the houses, barns, fences, tools, and furniture they needed to make it through the first few crucial years and establish settlements.

As demand for lumber grew with increased settlement, the industry experienced rapid growth in the early 19th century. Society's needs were becoming more complex. The needs were no longer simply sawn boards or squared off timber, but such items as barrel staves, furniture, lathe, and planed lumber. Soon lumber dealers and shipping barons became involved in the business and markets opened in the United States and Britain.

Sawmills began to utilize saws known as mule saws. This saw allowed for increased automation of the industry, which reduced the amount of labour required in the production of lumber. However, this saw only cut on the downward stroke, requiring the log to move forward on the upward stroke of the saw to perform the next cut. Distinctive straight lines were left on boards cut by the mule saw.

Forces beyond the borders of Norfolk County helped the industry. Projects like the Erie Canal (1825), and Welland and Rideau Canals (1830), opened new passageways for the lumber to travel to Buffalo, Montreal and as far as the East Coast. Meanwhile, the railway system was growing

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across North America and in 1857, the railway became active, reducing the cost of transporting timber.

In the early 1820s Upper Canada imposed an import tax on American lumber to protect the industry. Fluctuations in timber prices and production led to the *Timber Act* (1849), requiring a year-long license to harvest timber. In 1854, the Reciprocity Treaty was enacted with the US lifting the American tariff on Canadian lumber, securing free exchange of all types of lumber, and decreasing trade with Britain. Within Norfolk County there were many forces driving the lumber and sawmilling industry. The local population was steadily increasing due to immigrants coming from Europe. In addition, the infrastructure in Norfolk was expanding which created a large demand for timber. During this time, the number of mills went from only 16 in 1817 to 55 in 1845.

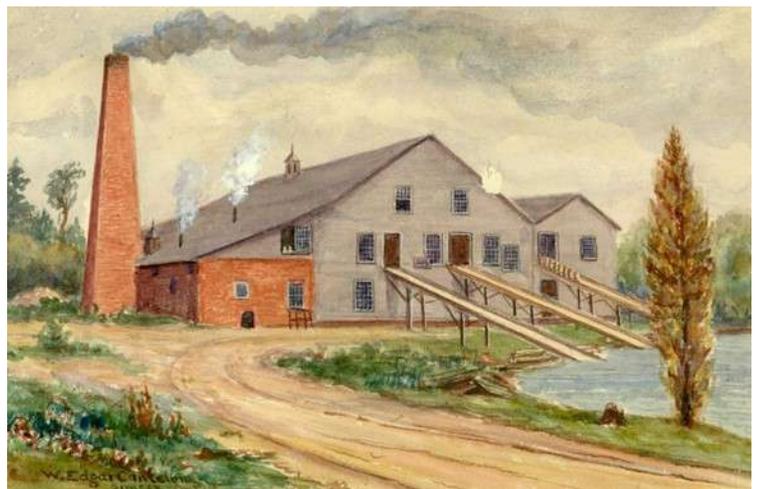
Throughout Norfolk County, towns were expanding and this also used local lumber. The plank road connecting Hamilton and Port Dover was built from 1842 to 1844, providing a market for sawn lumber. Changes in technology helped the industry, as efficiency in sawing caused less waste and greater production. Aiding this was the steam sawmill, introduced to Norfolk County in 1845. They were built larger for greater production, helped by the circular saw that became common in many mills by the 1850s.

By 1848 the number of mills increased to 86 allowing Port Dover to become a lumbering hub exporting 6,534,000 board feet in 1849. Harbours were expanding and developing across Norfolk County to accommodate the influx of timber being transported by schooner. Harbours like Port Royal and Port Rowan were beginning to grow at rapid rates from the increased revenue from the industry and fueling the growth of the county.

By 1850 there were 93 sawmills in Norfolk County, with another 19 being established just two years later, bringing the total to 112 sawmills. To put this into perspective, this number of mills is three times that of any other municipality in Ontario during this time period. Over 600 men were employed making lumbering the largest industry in Norfolk County. In 1851 these mills produced 48,250,000 feet of lumber in the western townships alone. Walsingham Township was noted to be a lumberman's paradise, proven true in 1851 by producing 18,510,000 feet of lumber.

One of the many, leaders in the sawmilling industry of Norfolk was the Farmer and DeBlaquierre Mills. Farmer and DeBlaquierre came to Norfolk in 1847, purchasing 20,000 acres of dense forested land in Walsingham. A year later, they built a steam sawmill on Lot 7, Conc. 1 of South Walsingham. The mill was massive for the time, sawing six million board feet annually. The Laycock Railway, as it was known, was built exclusively for the mill to haul logs, running from Rowan Mills to Cultus. The mill operated for nine years, until it was sold to Arnold Burrowe. Today there is no evidence of the town or where the mill once stood.

In 1857, shipments of lumber, logs, and staves totaled 39,000,000 feet and many communities were prospering from the industry. Most notable was Port Dover, considered by 1864, to be the principle lumber market. By 1865, lumber exports from Dover were valued at £246,000, equivalent to over \$50 million dollars



The Farmer and DeBlaquierre Mills located in the former town of Rowan Mills. Photo courtesy of Eva Brook Donly Museum and Archives.

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A massive white pine log being transported by horse down Main Street in the town of Port Dover. Photo courtesy of Eva Brook Donly Museum and Archives.

today. In 1869, logging and sawmilling in Norfolk County were booming and forest products generated more than half of Ontario's exports.

High quality sawn-logs were required by the lumberman before 1877, making cutting very selective. What would now be considered remarkable logs were rejected as too small or not likely to produce clean lumber. After 1880, a change in the demand for lumber and the use of portable steam sawmills brought in the practice of clear cutting and a demand for smaller timber and shingles.

Without concern for sustainability the forests declined. By 1860 it is recorded that timber used for lumber was depleted to about 60%, leaving only 10 years until the supply of "good pine" was gone. This is reflected through the number of mills in Norfolk County declining from 77 in 1861, to 62

in 1871. The number of mills was further reduced in 1881, to 59.

Peak production was reached in 1880, sawing 528,000 cubic feet of lumber. Aiding the decline were improvements in sawmilling technology, ease of shipping, broader markets, and population growth. By the mid 1880s Norfolk County was completely denuded of saleable logs, and the industry collapsed. By 1910, only 10% of the original forests remained.

People began to rely more on industries like buckwheat gristmills, fishing, and agriculture to generate employment. For more than 100 years lumbering sustained Norfolk's prosperity, but it did not last forever. The foresight of Edmund Zavitz, Walter McCall, and MPP Arthur Pratt recognized the peril of the forests and did something about it. Their story is told in Canada's First Forestry Station Interpretive Centre and in Harry Barrett's book, *They Had a Dream*. Reforestation continues today and has become an understood part of the lumbering industry.

The story of the sawmilling and lumbering industry in Norfolk County is on exhibit at Canada's First Forestry Station Interpretive Centre from June, 2017 until the fall of 2018. The Station can be found at 885 Highway #24, St. Williams, Norfolk County at the corner of Hwy. 24 and Forestry Farm Road (Reg. Rd. #16).



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Lots More ... Parry Sound Stories

The following two columns on sawmills in and around Parry Sound at the turn of the century, have been reprinted with the gracious permission of John Macfie, from his self-published book "Lots more...PARRY SOUND STORIES" (The Hay Press 2005). Prior to 2005 they appeared in a modified form in the Parry Sound North Star under John's byline.

John is widely known as one of Parry Sound's favourite sons...the other being Bobby Orr. Most articles do not "tell it like it really was" but John's do. Lumbering was both a dangerous and a risky business and fire could occur either naturally or by the hand of man. Either way, the destruction was just as complete. A prolific aggregator of local history and documenter of the same, John Macfie is a wealth of knowledge regarding the history of the District of Parry Sound, including the lumber industry. We thank John for sharing these columns.

Up in Smoke

Some people might argue that the robber barons who stripped this country of its primeval forest without regard for the future deserve the attention of an avenging goddess, and indeed not a few lumbermen were severely punished, or even destroyed, by their chief Nemesis, fire.

Forest fires originating in resinous slash left from previous years' cutting constantly threatened to spread into as of yet unlogged parts of their timber limits. One such holocaust contributed to the failure of one of Parry Sound's earliest lumbering enterprises, that of the Dodge Lumber Company of New York which, around 1870, installed a sawmill at Byng Inlet to utilize pine lumber floated down the Magnetawan River. I know of an acre of ground, now lost in the wilderness a dozen or so miles up that stream, that is riddled with burned ironwork, from cooking kettles to sleigh shoeing – all that remained after a forest fire swept the area, destroying a large tract of Dodge's standing pines plus the lumber camp that had been built as the base of operations for harvesting it. Soon thereafter, Dodge's Magnetawan operation was idle and up for sale.

Out of the bush, an even more menacing Sword of Damocles hung over the lumberman's head. Usually powered by wood-fired steam plants, and awash in flammable lumber and mill waste, early-day sawmills went up as regularly and spectacularly as fireworks on the Twenty-fourth of May. On Parry Sound's waterfront, such conflagrations occurred with almost monotonous regularity. Possibly the first was in the summer of 1880, when the Guelph Lumber Company's mill, situated on the Sound's south shore on the site now centered by a huge pile of road salt, experienced a destructive blaze. Four years later, a sawmill identified in a news report as "one of the largest" in Parry Sound, went up in flames. In the summer of 1893, a mill owned by William Beatty was totally destroyed by fire, although the docks, tramways and houses associated with it were saved. At six a.m. on April 10, 1901, the Conger Lumber Company on Bob's Point took fire and was levelled. Two months later, \$90,000 worth of Conger lumber piles spared the first go-around went up in smoke. In 1909, the Hocken Lumber Company's mill at Otter Lake, about five miles south of Parry Sound, was destroyed by fire. Two years later, the Parry Sound Lumber Company's box factory, a little removed from the main mill and "one of the best in the Province," burned down, never to be rebuilt. Not long after that, the Patent Cloth Board facility at the foot of Prospect Street felt fire's sting. Late in 1917, the idled Parry Sound Lumber Company's sawmill went up in flames.

Then, as a flamboyant finale to the town's 60-year run as a major sawmill town, on the night of September 20-21, 1921, the Conger mill on Bob's Point burned down in spectacular fashion. Fanned by an equinoctial gale, the fire made a clean sweep of a quarter-mile of the waterfront. Wiped out

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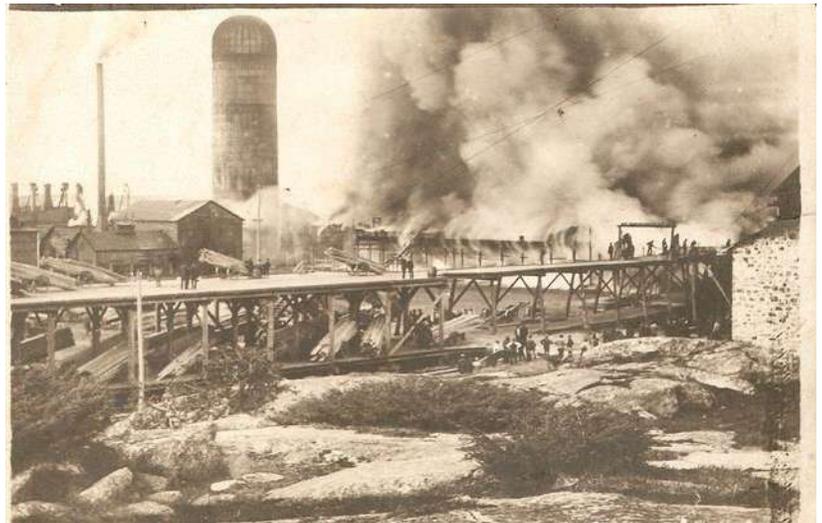
were six million (board) feet of piled lumber (half that season's production), tramways, railway track and boxcars, stables, a boarding house, and a string of private boathouses lining the shore northward along the foot of Belvedere Hill.

Turning now to northwest Parry Sound District, just after the turn of the century the Ontario Lumber Company's mill, situated at the mouth of the French River, lost its lumber yard and tramways to a fire. Byng Inlet closely rivalled Parry Sound as a lumber centre, and endured a comparable plague of sawmill fires. A January 1885 remark in the diary of Duncan F. Macdonald reveals that "Kennedy's mill" at Byng Inlet – perhaps the sawmill belonging to the Georgian Bay Lumber Company – was lost to a rare wintertime fire. Six years later, another mill belonging to that company burned down for a loss of \$85,000 – fully covered by insurance, according to a news report. On a windy late-April day in 1893, the roof of Burton Brother's sawmill on the inlet's north shore caught fire. Before the flames subsided, the mill, worth \$100,000, \$60,000 worth of lumber piles, 20 workmen's cottages, and a general store were levelled. A relief operation had to be launched from Collingwood to care for the families needing food and shelter. The destruction was both total and permanent, for the mill was never rebuilt.

Sawmilling at Byng Inlet peaked around the turn of the 20th century, when the Michigan-based firm of Holland & Emery, anticipating a clampdown by Ontario on the export of raw sawlogs, installed a state-of-the-art wood manufacturing complex there. It included lathe and box factories in addition to a huge sawmill. After operating for 14 seasons, on May 20, 1912, the heart of the operation, the sawmill, was consumed by fire. The event briefly crippled the local economy, for Byng Inlet village, then home to more than a hundred families, was a one-industry community. Within two years, however, Graves Bigwood and Company had a new mill up and running. But this was only a reprieve: a decade later, exhaustion of the pine supply in the Magnetawan watershed marked the end for Byng Inlet as a sawmill town.

With Parry Sound's and Byng Inlet's major pine mills now gone, one of the last big operations in West Parry Sound District was the Schroeder Mills & Timber Company's installation at Lost Channel on Kawigamog Lake, midway up the Pickerel River. Drawing on the last unlogged block of pine, Schroeders operated at a high level through most of the 1920s. They sent their sawn lumber to market via the company-owned Key Valley Railway, which ran 10 miles due west from Lost Channel to join the CPR at Pakesley. Late in the decade, the mill and railway were sold to a consortium calling itself the Pakesley Lumber Company.

Then, demon fire struck again. In the early spring of 1930, as the newly renovated mill was being readied to begin cutting the winter's harvest of 186,000 sawlogs lying on the ice of Kawigamog Lake, fire broke out in the machine shop. It quickly spread to the mill, destroying it. It was concluded that the blaze was started by one of a pair of locomotives parked in the machine shop, probably a small Lima yard engine that was kept fired up to provide steam to the building.



Fire destroys the Graves Bigwood sawmill at Byng inlet in 1912. Postcard photo courtesy of Lyle Jones (Parry Sound).

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Interestingly, while Lost Channel, once an up-to-date community boasting such amenities as electrical service and a school, is now a ghost town, and the railway tracks that served it were long ago torn up, the Key Valley Railway lives on in replica. In the past year or so, two model railroad enthusiasts living thousands of miles apart have contacted me wanting photographs and information to help them construct their scale-model layouts.

Logging contractors, or “jobbers” as they were commonly called, were less likely than sawmill owners to be wiped out by fire, but this did happen to one of Parry Sound’s more notable figures in the field. Dick Robinson ran lumber camps and river drives for the Parry Sound and Peter lumber companies, among others, in the early 20th century. This profession required a considerable investment in equipment and supplies. Disaster struck in the spring of 1918 when, to quote from a letter written by Parry Sound pundit Duncan Macdonald, “Dick Robinson had his lumber and plant burnt out the other day. Hay, Oats, Flour, Bacon, Blankets, Sleighs and Blacksmith outfit. No insurance. Loss 3000 dollars. Three times and out.”

Many lumbermen ended their innings struck out by fire.

A Ghastly Way to Die

In the logging days of a century and more ago, when a man met death on the river drive he was instantly elevated to a pantheon of lumberjack heroes. Whether his demise occurred while executing some gallant feat or happened as a result of his own clumsiness or stupidity, his riverside grave would respectfully tended and his memory revered by the drive gangs who passed that way in succeeding years. A few such men attained legendary status by being immortalized in lumber camp ballads.

But no such aura of romance surrounded the equally frequent fatal sawmill accidents of the day, likely due to their usually grisly nature. Perhaps I can right the imbalance a little by recalling the names of some of those unfortunate and largely forgotten individuals.

The earliest account of a sawmill death around here that I have found dates from August 17, 1877. All I know about it is contained in this terse note in the diary of Duncan Macdonald: “The P. L. Coy. (Parry Sound Lumber Company) had a man killed on the tramway today”. No name and no details as to how a fatal accident could occur on the mini-railways that channelled sawn lumber from the mill to the piling grounds.

Soon after settling at the narrows of Whitestone Lake, now the centre of Dunchurch, George Kelcey brought in a steam boiler and engine and erected a sawmill to supply lumber to the settlers then streaming into the area. One day in 1884, while he was making some narrow flooring material, a sliver of wood was thrown javelin-like off the circular saw, piercing his skull. He died without regaining consciousness, still well short of the age of 40.

Accidents involving direct contact with the big circular saws of the day were particularly gruesome. In 1888, Thomas Bailey was tending the head saw (that is, handling the lumber and slabs that fell from the log being sawed) in the Lambert & Lovell sawmill at Port Sandfield in Muskoka, when the carriage conveying the log dragged him into the saw, “cutting him terribly to pieces”, and “leaving wife and family to mourn his loss”, according to a news report. A couple of years later, Abe Clark, the head sawyer in Clark’s mill at Windermere, also in Muskoka, “had his head cut clean off” when the carriage dragged him into the saw. In 1904, Robert Tuck, an operator of an edger in the Parry Sound Lumber Company mill, suffered a like fate when he was drawn into a saw by conveying

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apparatus.

Byng Inlet millworkers fared no better. In 1892, an unfortunate 13-year-old lad, Patrick McNeil, was canting on the log deck of the Burton Brothers mill when he was sliced in two by the whirling headsaw. Belts, pulleys, gravity and simple human error also demanded their pound of the millworker flesh. A mile or so up river from and a few years after the horrible death of young McNeil, James Riddle was at work high on an elevated tramway at the Holland and Emery mill when he slipped and fell 20 feet into the Magnetawan River, where he struck his head on a floating log and drowned.

Back now in Parry Sound: in 1900, Paul Godin left a boy in charge of levers controlling the jackladder elevating sawlogs into the Peter Limber Company mill when he went below to free a stoppage. The boy pushed the wrong lever, dumping a log down onto Godin's head, killing him. Two years later, 16-year-old Colin McDonald died while oiling machinery in the same mill. A loose article of his clothing seemingly caught in a spinning shaft, throwing him into some machinery. Shifting our attention back across Parry Sound's harbour, a 1906 news item noted that the Parry Sound Lumber Company mill was "the scene of a dreadful accident" when floor foreman J. Johnson attempted to replace a belt that had slipped off a spinning pulley. The shaft caught his arm and "his body made many revolutions before the machinery was stopped." Poor Johnson lived for another hour.

There was no safe place in one of those sawmills. The steam plants that powered big mills had a habit of exploding, and when the boiler of the Ontario Lumber Company mill at the mouth of the French River blew up in 1902, it killed fireman Hugh Campbell. Even the blacksmith shop offered no refuge. In Parry Sound's Peter mill, in 1895, blacksmith Charles Jefferson was at his forge repairing the shaft of a steam piston when, for some reason, the apparatus exploded, killing him.

In those labour-intensive times, a large sawmill might employ a hundred men, and when a worker was mortally injured or killed, the show usually went on with no more interruption than was required to get the remains untangled from the machinery and removed from the scene. Frank Peachey once told me about a time, in the Graves, Bigwood Company mill at Byng Inlet, the biggest mill to ever operate in the Parry Sound District, when this rule was relaxed a little. The circular saws of early mills exacted a gory toll, as already described, but the bandsaw, which came into common usage around the beginning of the 20th century, could be equally vicious. According to Peachey, one day when the teeth of the bandsaw struck a spike embedded in a sawlog the broad blade snapped apart and the flailing ribbon of steel beheaded the machine's operator.

Management, as a gesture of respect for the dead man, closed down the mill for a whole two hours. When restarted, it was run at half speed for a decent interval because, as Peachey phrased it, "They didn't want the men to panic."

Art in the Park

The Pictographs of Fairy Point on Missinaibi Lake

By: Garry Paget

My introduction to pictographs occurred during the summer of 1967 when I ventured into the Chapleau bush as a Junior Ranger (JR). My experiences as a Junior Ranger were published in the Fall 2015 and Spring 2016 editions of *Forestry*. Earlier in life I had become aware of the pictograph form of rock art, having read about it.

One Sunday morning that summer we loaded up “the pointer” with our crew of JRs, Conrad Levesque, our foreman, and Jerry McAuley, a Chapleau Cree and our friend and mentor. When I questioned as to why he was only loading a 50 lb bag of potatoes, two gallons of Mazzola corn oil, five pounds of flour and two large iron cooking pots Conrad quietly smiled and replied...“No fish...no lunch!”

The day at Whitefish Falls ended in a fantastic fish fry on Mary Island, but the highlight was a visit to the pictographs of Fairy Point on Missinaibi Lake. Jerry gave us a running commentary on the pictographs, as we bobbed in a gentle swell. The memories of that day have always remained with me but my interest was piqued again when those memories returned in full as I began to write my first article for this publication.

For many, many years people and cultures around the world have had want of leaving numerous examples of rock art and other artifacts for future generations to see, interpret and enjoy. While the subject matter varied greatly, the reason and the effect have changed little throughout time.

“In archaeology, rock art, a term that first appeared in the published literature as early as the 1940s, is a human-made marking placed on natural stone; it is largely synonymous with parietal art. (*“an archaeological term for artwork done on cave walls or large blocks of stone”*) [1] “A global phenomenon, rock art is found in many culturally diverse regions of the world. It has been produced in many contexts throughout history, although a majority of rock art that has been ethnographically recorded, has been produced as a part of ritual”. [2] (*“Ethnography - the systematic study of peoples and cultures. It is designed to explore cultural phenomena where the researcher observes society from the point of view of the subject of the study.”*) [3] “The oldest scientifically-dated rock art in Africa dates from around 26,000 – 28,000 years ago and is found in Namibia.” [4]

“Such artworks are often divided into three forms: **pictographs**, which are painted onto the surface, **petroglyphs**, which are carved into the rock surface and **earth figures**, which are formed on the ground. Rock art continues to be of importance to indigenous peoples in various parts of the world, who view it as both a sacred item and a significant component of their cultural patrimony”. [2] “Rock art sites have been discovered throughout all of Canada. In fact, pictographs and petroglyphs may constitute Canada’s oldest and most widespread artistic tradition. With pictographs, while a majority of the images were traced with the finger onto the rock face, some could be executed with brushes made of animal or vegetable fibres”. [5] “The purpose of the pictographs was to express artistic or religious meanings, acknowledge special events or they were created as a form of magic or to illustrate mysterious mythical creatures or monsters.” [6]

“Rock art is typically made with mineral earths and other natural compounds found across much of the world. The predominately used colours are red, black and white. Red paint is usually attained through the use of ground ochre, while black paint is typically composed of charcoal, or sometimes from minerals such as manganese. White paint is usually created from natural chalk, kaolinite clay or

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diatomaceous earth. Once the pigments had been obtained, they would be ground and mixed with a liquid, such as water, blood, urine, egg yolk or grease and then applied to the stone as paint using a brush, fingers, or a stamp. Alternately, the pigment could have been applied dry, such as with a stick of charcoal. In some societies, the paint itself has symbolic and religious meaning; for instance, among hunter-gatherer groups in California, paint was only allowed to be traded by the group shamans, while in other parts of North America, the word for "paint" was the same as the word for "supernatural spirit". [2]



Fairy Point pictograph cliff, Missinaibi Lake. Photo courtesy of Panoramio.

“No foolproof method for the precise dating of rock art has been discovered, other than speculative association with stratified, relatively datable archaeological remains. While the tradition of rock art was no doubt brought into Canada by its earliest occupants during the last Ice Age, it is most unlikely that examples of great antiquity will ever be found.

Rock art in much of Canada is linked with the search for helping spirits and with shamanism – a widespread religious tradition in which the shaman’s major tasks are healing and prophesy. [5] As such the “rock art comes from a world of rituals, secret vision quests and interaction with the spiritual realm.” [7] “Several broad regions of rock art *style areas* have been distinguished, including the Maritimes, the Canadian Shield, the Prairies, British Columbia and the Arctic.” [5]

“There are many pictograph sites in Northern Ontario.” [8] The pictographs of Fairy Point, on Missinaibi Lake in the Chapleau District, are but one example of this artwork form. “The Fairy Point collection on Missinaibi Lake is one of the most extensive in Ontario and is named after those mischievous spirits that inhabit the crevices scattered along the sheer rock face. When we hear older legends about fairies, or the “wee folk”, many of us usually create the picture of green pastures in Ireland or maybe the highlands of Scotland. But, how many people actually think of the fairies being residents of Northern Ontario and known as the “little people”. [8]

“As you round Fairy Point, look carefully into the deep crevices of the granite walls and the quartz veins. Can you see those diminutive beings linked to the metaphysical or supernatural of most Native cultures? It is those playful, prankish, tiny beings who emerge from their rocky refuge to steal your camping supplies or rock your canoe for no apparent reason. These tiny folk are the *Memegwaysiwuk* (*the Rock People* or ‘spirits of the river’), the fairies whose stone canoes are painted on the wall looking down at you. The symbolic images of canoes, fish, caribou and mythical figures that cover a 40 metre-wide swath of rock, face the setting sun and are naturally illuminated each day just before nightfall. They have



Photo courtesy of Lester Kovac, Panoramio.

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been rendered in a long-lasting red ochre paint, made of a soft iron oxide (hermatite powder) blended with grease or fish oil, and protected from the elements by the vertical profile of the cliff.” [8] Thor Conway makes a point that over time dissolving minerals from above the pictographs cover them with a natural rock “varnish”. This “varnish” provides protection so the ochre itself is no longer exposed to the elements. This is thought to explain why they last so long – even when modern paints have long faded away. [9] “There are also white coloured symbols – a true rarity in North America.” [8]

“While the age of the Fairy Point pictographs is not known, the name of the river on which some are found indicates that the morphs have existed for more than 200 years. “Missinaibi” is thought to be an English version of the Cree word for “pictured waters”. When European traders first arrived at Missinaibi Lake in 1777, the name was already in use.” [8] Selwyn Dewdney indicates that another possible meaning of Missinaibi is “a painted pictograph” and that originates with an abbreviation of the Ojibwa word “*mu-zi-nu-ay-hi-gun*”. [10]



Mishipizhiw. Photo courtesy of Conor Mihell, Mountain Life Media.

“Pictography was used by the Cree and Ojibwa (now Oji-Cree) for both sacred and secular purposes, and included inscriptions on birch bark scrolls, personal totems carved on the trunks of trees, images placed on grave markers and symbols carved or painted on rocks and boulders. Some rock paintings are thought to have recorded the dreams and visions of shamans.

Among the more than 100 pictographs at Fairy Point, is the rendition of *Mishipizhiw* (also known as *Mishipizheu* or *Gitcheanahmi-bezheu*), an animal manitou associated with the underwater realm and sometimes regarded as an evil spirit of rapids and troubled waters. (This depiction

can also be seen at the Agawa pictograph site within Lake Superior Provincial Park). The *Mishipizhiw Manitou* is a dominant theme in Cree-Ojibway spirituality.” [8]

“Mishipizhiw was both feared and revered as a demi-god of the water. Sometimes taking the form of a menacing, snake-like creature with sharp teeth, horns and “power lines” emanating from its body, *Mishipizhiw* was also pictured as fiercely feline (the “Great Lynx”, “great underwater wildcat”, “underwater panther” or “fabulous night panther”). Like other manitous, *Mishipizhiw* had the power to shape-change into various animal forms.” [8]

“This *spirit of the water* could work for or against humans – he could calm the waters or he could bring wind and storms by thrashing his tail.” [11] People familiar with Missinaibi Lake speak of the treacherous waters that are encountered, at Fairy Point, when a strong, prevailing southwest wind is present. These waves are to be avoided I’m told...perchance *Mishipizhiw*’s thrashing tail?

“There is also a human-like figure, both arms extended skyward and earthward. Interpretations suggest it is a depiction of a medicine man with its meaning...“*I take the sky and I take the earth*”. The Midewin, a secret society of some Native groups, explains religious beliefs or the world view of the Anishinabek (First Peoples). Of significance are quartz veins that frame the bottom of the rock face in a “V” shape. There is a serpent morph actually touching it. It was believed quartz veins were

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left by lightning strikes. Snakes show up in many medicine songs and the pictographs suggest they come in the form of lightning from above and below the earth. There are also white crosses which some think denote the Christian missionary presence. Others believe the cross, like the elaboration of the swastika, indicate the four cardinal directions and the four wind manitous.

These pictographs are best seen from the water in a canoe, or snowmobile in the winter. Access is from Barclay Bay at the Missinaibi Provincial Park entry point, which is approximately 56 miles (90km) from Chapleau. Should one travel upstream on the Little Missinaibi River you will also find kettle

Pictographs including rare white crosses. Photo courtesy of Lester Kovac, Panoramio.

formations decorated with unusual pictographs. Take care while nearby as there are too many legends and beliefs in these “little people” to ignore the possibility of their existence...they are mysterious and unpredictable. And if a fetch comes up on the elongated lake you will then know, the tiny tormentors are thereabouts.” [8]

As you can see, it is easy to become interested in the history of pictographs. Most Native cultures used symbols and images (pictographs and/or other art forms) instead of words to leave evidence of their presence on the land. They were used to send messages and transmit information in order to communicate amongst themselves or to leave their dreams, history and story for those who would follow in their footsteps.

“North American pictographs include thousands of images and symbols, each with individual meanings. Sometimes, multiple tribes used similar images but exact meanings could vary. Some symbols stood for human qualities, like wisdom or cleverness, or abstract ideas like swiftness. In many cultures, as an example, the image of a bear conveyed strength while the image of a vertical lightning bolt meant power or speed. Other symbols conveyed relationships, either between individuals or between tribes. Crossed arrows meant friendship and a broken arrow meant peace.

Pictographs also told stories and narratives that involved the passage of time, while traveling from one place to another or of successful hunting journeys. We see images of animals like bison that were important sources of food, as well as symbols like a drawn arrow and bow to hunting. The schematic figure of a mountain range, rendered as two horizontal zigzag lines one over the other, sometimes signaled a destination. Still other symbols conveyed weather or important geographic landmarks like streams or valleys.” [12]

“One of the problems with regard to rock art is attempting to determine what these symbols mean. Symbols are an important part of culture and when they are taken out of the context of the culture in which they were created, it is difficult, if not impossible, to understand what they meant to the people who created them.

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Certain rock art sites appear to have been associated with the vision quest. Following a vision quest, the supplicants would paint a pictograph to commemorate the experience. Vision quest pictograph sites are usually found in relatively inaccessible, isolated areas. The predominant designs show humans, animals, sun symbols, dots, crosses, and geometric abstracts.

Some rock art sites may have also been associated with hunting magic and ceremonies. Amongst most of the North American tribes, it was felt that animals had spirits controlling their behavior. Therefore, certain rituals would be carried out prior to the hunt in which the animal spirits would be asked to allow that some animals be taken for the good of the human group. Game animal pictographs may often represent 'hunting magic,' and be associated with ceremonies conducted either before the hunt to control the animals or afterward to propitiate their spirits." [13]

As forest historians both the value and the significance of rock art in general and pictographs specifically is evident in a number of areas. These include both the ecological and the social/cultural history of the people. And, while they may be difficult to accurately translate, the images record the life and times of the people(s) who created them. And perhaps most importantly, the forests provided these hunter/gatherers with food and protection from the elements.

The pictographs of Fairy Point show forest historians what animals inhabited the local area prior to the advent of Europeans. They also show that these animals had both cultural and religious significance to the indigenous population.

The author wishes to acknowledge the kind and generous offer, made by "Backroads Bill" (aka Bill Steer), to use what I wished of his piece on the Fairy Point pictographs, in the writing of this article. Bill Steer, a passionate Northern Ontario outdoorsman, is the founder of the Canadian Ecology Centre (CEC), which is located in Samuel de Champlain Provincial Park, just west of Mattawa, Ontario. He remains the General Manager/Head Master of the CEC, one of Canada's leading environmental education centres. Bill's blog <http://www.steerto.com/> is well worth the time it takes to drop by and pay him a visit. You will be impressed!

The author also recognizes a similar gesture made by "Ramblin' Boy" (aka Peter Albinger) to quote, without restriction, from his excellent blog <https://albinger.me/>. The blog, "Ramblin' Boy", is an exciting record of his travels, sometimes by canoe, around this great province and the world. It now includes the details of a recent paddle to Fairy Point in August 2107. It is also well worth a visit! Drop by and say "Hello" and tell him Garry sent you. Peter is a retired history teacher from East York Collegiate Institute and a passionate, world traveling outdoorsman.

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¹¹ Friends of Lake Superior Park <http://www.lakesuperiorpark.ca/index.php/activities/23-pictographs> Accessed 10 September 2017

¹² Przybylek, Stepanie "Native American Petroglyphs & Pictographs: Drawings & Meanings" <http://study.com/academy/lesson/native-american-petroglyphs-pictographs-drawings-meanings.html> Accessed 10 September 2017

¹³ Ojibwa "*Ancient America: Pictographs*" 26 November 2011 <http://nativeamericannetroots.net/diary/1159> Accessed 10 September 2017

Suggested Reading for More Information on Pictographs

Albinger, Peter "*The Anishinaabe Pictograph Sites of Missinaibi Lake*" <https://albinger.me/2017/07/05/the-anishinaabe-pictograph-sites-of-missinaibi-lake/>

Dewdney, Selwyn and Kidd, Kenneth E. "*Indian Rock Paintings of the Great Lakes*" <https://archive.org/details/indianrockpainti00dewd> 1st Edition (University of Toronto Press 1964) see "*The Eastern Hinterland*" pgs 84 - 89

Steer, Bill "*Steer To Northern Ontario.ca Home of Backroads Bill*" <http://www.steerto.com/>

Map of Missinaibi Lake https://www.ontarioparks.com/pdf/maps/missinaibi/park_map.pdf

John Macfie Receives Honorary Diploma from Fleming College, Lindsay, Ontario

By: Garry Paget

John Macfie joined the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests (L&F) in 1949. January 1954 found him, after nearly five years of service spent mostly in Ontario's far north, attending the Ontario Forest Ranger School at Dorset, Ontario for in-service training. John graduated with a diploma, placing at the top of his class of 48 people with a 97% average. The curriculum that year, broken into three semesters, covered a host of both scientific and practical subjects, ranging from biology, forestry, timber cruising, tree identification, surveying, commercial fishing, forest fire fighting, right down to the internal workings of the hand-cranked telephone sets that fire watchers used in their lookout towers.



John accepting his diploma. Photo courtesy of Fleming College.

Some sixty-three years later, on June 2, 2017 John found himself sharing the Sir Sandford Fleming College Convocation stage with his grandson, Stuart Macfie, as he received an Honorary Diploma from the Board of Governors.



John with his wife, Joan, and grandson, Stuart Macfie. Photo courtesy of Fleming College.

The citation reads:

“John Macfie has spent a lifetime dedicated to recording and writing about forestry and logging history in Ontario. His connection to Fleming College and graduates began with John’s work with the Ontario Department of Lands and Forests, now known as the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry.

John was born in Dunchurch, Ontario in 1925 to a family of six siblings. He served in the Royal Canadian Air Force during World War II. John attended Forest Ranger School at Dorset in 1954.

John has spent countless hours interviewing people, collecting photographs, artifacts and recording historical events. He has authored several books and articles on forestry and logging history.

He has contributed articles and photographs to the Fleming College 402 Museum, including a record-setting Black Ash specimen confirmed to be over 340 years of age. He has assisted Fleming College Staff in collecting tree research data and material.

It is, therefore, with great pleasure that the Board of Governors – on behalf of the Fleming College community and the greater community that it serves – award John Macfie this Honorary Diploma from Sir Sandford Fleming College.”

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*Sir Sanford Fleming College
Presented at the Awards Ceremony – School of
Environmental and Natural Resource Sciences
Frost Campus
June 2, 2017*

John indicated that he framed his brief words of acceptance around the fact that the Frost Campus of Fleming College is rich in the DNA of the old Ontario Forest Ranger School at Dorset. When the L&F stopped training there, ca 1967, they handed the job to community colleges, notably Fleming. “This diploma amounts to a re-issue, in fancier form, of the one I received at the Ranger School some 63 years ago.”

The FHSO and its members congratulate John on this achievement!

Remembering Jerry McAuley (July 2, 1936-October 16, 2001)

By: Garry Paget

Author's note: As time and ill health began to lay its burdens on him, Jerry continued to focus on what mattered most to him...his family, his friends and his people. Jerry continues to live on in the lives and memories of all who knew him. The author wishes to thank Murray Cuthbert for his hours of conversation, reminiscing about his, and our friend, Jerry McAuley, and for providing some background information for this memorial article. Thanks is also extended to Edith Larocque of the Chapleau Cree First Nation and to Gord Ross of Moosonee, Ontario.

On October 16, 2001 we lost a good man. The Cree First Nation lost a good man. Canada lost a good man. Let me tell you a little about Jerry.



Jerry McAuley. Photo courtesy of Lark Ritchie (Chapleau).

I first met Jerry (born Gerald Frederick McAuley) on Sunday July 2, 1967 at "The Point" in Chapleau, Ontario. I had just disembarked from Canadian Pacific Railway's "The Canadian", ready to become a Junior Ranger. It was Canada's centennial year...she was 100 years young and I was 17 years old.

As we climbed off the Department of Lands and Forests (L&F) "three-ton taxi" Jerry greeted us all with both that big smile and the quiet organizational skills he was known for. We were soon divided into our groups, loaded onto buses and dispatched to our destinations. As luck would have it Jerry was located at Wrong Lake, just seven miles down the dusty trail from my location at Barclay Bay. I always wondered where Wrong Lake had gotten its name. As summer progressed, it turned out to be the right lake, as far as we were concerned, as our group spent many off-hours there playing

baseball against the Wrong Lake JRs (Jerry was the umpire) and eating at fish-fries.

Having been requested to write an article for the *Forestry* journal, I began to search for, to find and subsequently, to begin reliving those wonderful memories of that summer of '67. And in doing so, I eventually found the obituary of one of my mentors from that summer, Jerry Mc Auley. I'm feeling the same "down" now, as I felt when I first read of his passing...an emptiness.

Jerry was first and foremost a "people person". I don't ever recall him with a frown or a look of concern on his face...deep in thought, yes, but always calm and steady as a rock. And he was a source of both knowledge and comfort for our group of 17 yr olds. As with most of the JRs, this was our first time "in the bush" and, although it was exciting, it was a little



Jerry, about nine years old, in a railway school car ca 1945. These school cars were used in Northern Ontario from the 1920s through the 1960s. His teacher was Mrs. Florence Bell. Photo courtesy of Edith Larocque (Chapleau).

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unnerving for some, I'm sure.

Jerry began his forestry career when he entered Forestry School at Dorset, Ontario in the fall of 1955, having graduated Grade 12 that spring and working on the Admiral Lake Fire during the summer. By 1967, the summer we met, Jerry was the Area Technician at Wrong Lake Camp. As such, amongst other duties, he was in charge of determining the tree planting programs. These were



Wrong Lake cookhouse pizza night with Lawrence Meade and Joe Clifford ca 1970. Photo courtesy of Murray Cuthbert (of Wrong Lake and Toronto).

settled into my campsite it was fun to compare the kaleidoscope of memories playing in my mind to what was now around me. Although the sign said "Lands & Forests Employees Only", I walked past its directions and down to "our dock". It was pretty cool to see the completed masterpiece for the first time! At some point during this visit, Jerry, Laurie (Lawrence George) Simmonds, an OPP officer, and an OPP Sgt from Matheson, Ontario arrived, preparing to depart on a three day fishing trip. I was asked and gratefully joined them.

It was, without a doubt, the best fishing trip I've ever attended. But, sorry, I won't be leaving any clues as to the location of that "glory hole"! It was only eight years prior that I had first journeyed to Chapleau to begin my adventure as a Junior Ranger (JR) and met Jerry for the first

centered at Wrong Lake Camp the summer I returned, in 1968, as a Senior Forest Ranger. By 1975 he had been promoted to Field Services Supervisor for the Moosonee District. After his promotion to Moosonee in the mid-70s, Jerry went on to become mayor of his new hometown, and was heavily involved in church affairs, youth sports teams, the hospital board and other civic organizations. They all benefited from his wisdom and leadership.

While my previous two articles dealt with my summer as a Junior Ranger, my second summer as a Senior Forest Ranger is not so full of distinct visions of what went on. But, what shines bright, from both summers, are my memories of Jerry McAuley. To me he was larger than life...a beautiful person.

I had the pleasure of returning a few times to Chapleau, two of those times being 1975 and 1976, to revisit my memories of those first summers on Missinaibi and Wrong Lakes.

In 1975 I travelled alone, with my canoe strapped to the roof of my VW Beetle, out that dusty logging road into an afternoon sun. As I



Author with his "Beetle/canoe". Photo courtesy of the author.

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(left) Jerry and Gord Perrault fishing at Jenner Bay on Missinaibi Lake (“Big Miss”) in 1969. (right) A fine catch of speckled trout. The tin foil is 18” wide. Photos courtesy of Murray Cuthbert (of Wrong Lake and Toronto).

time. This was icing on that cake. The time was spent listening to Jerry telling stories and lingering around a camp fire at night. And we brought a stringer of nine beautiful speckled trout, 3-4 lbs each, back to the freezer at Wrong Lake. The evidence, which Laurie had captured on film, was destroyed when his camera ended up getting wet and the film was unusable. No problem, though, you’ll just have to believe my story of the ones that didn’t get away!



The Rupert’s House freighter canoe on “Big Miss” (1969). Photo courtesy of Murray Cuthbert (of Wrong Lake and Toronto).

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Jerry's faithful sidekick "Rex"... looking for his share of the pizza? Photo courtesy of Murray Cuthbert (of Wrong Lake and Toronto).

This past June I was contacted "out of the blue" by Murray Cuthbert. It's been 50 years since Murray and I have spoken or seen each other and it was, indeed, a very pleasant surprise! He had been Googling information on his friend, Jerry McAuley, and ran across my name on a JR site. I wrote about Murray in Part 2 of my first article (in the *Forestry* Spring 2016 edition), about my summer as a Junior Forest Ranger at Barclay Bay Camp on Missinaibi Lake.

Murray and I have been reminiscing about the many good memories we both retain from our life-changing experiences in the Chapleau District. During our numerous e-mails, Murray has described his thoughts about Jerry McAuley, his close personal friend, and the effect Jerry has had on his life.

"Finest man I ever knew. Period."

RIP Jerry.

MEEGWETCH



Yearling bear cubs climbing a Wrong Lake Camp flag pole. Photo courtesy of Murray Cuthbert (of Wrong Lake and Toronto).

Museum/Archives Corner

Living Historic Sawmills

By: Sherry Hambly

Early sawmills were powered by hand using a frame or open pit technology. The next advance was water power using either frame or belt and gear technology. Steam power began to replace water power in the early 1800s using wood, coal and fossil fuels. Now, stationary sawmills are powered by electricity.

There are a few living examples of historic sawmills in Ontario. Below is a list of sites where these old sawmill technologies are demonstrated. The reader is directed to the site's web page to learn more about dates and times of operation.

Hope Mill (Est. 1873)

Hope Mill sits on its original location on the Indian River east of Peterborough. Volunteers have restored the original water-powered circular saw technology. Demonstrations of the sawmill are held weekly during the summer. In addition, there is a museum on the upper floor containing wood-working and other mill artifacts and archival records. More information can be found here: <http://hopemill.ca/>

O'Hara Mill (Est. 1850)

The O'Hara Mill and Homestead Conservation Area near Madoc includes a working "frame" sawmill driven by water-power. It is the only example of a working frame technology on its original site in Ontario. The sawmill is active during tourist season. More information can be found here: http://ohara-mill.org/content/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=30&Itemid=42.

Tyrone Mill (Est. 1846)

The Tyrone mill was originally developed as a sawmill in 1846 using water powered belt and gear technology. Shortly after its development a grist and flour mill were added. The current owner continues to run it during the summer months as an active sawmill. More information can be found here: <http://www.tyronemill.net/>

Upper Canada Village – Beach's Sawmill (Est. 1846)

The original Beach sawmill was built near Heckston. It was moved to Upper Canada Village where it was restored using parts of another sawmill. It is a modified "frame" technology saw using "muley saw" technology. <http://www.uppercanadavillage.com/things-to-do/tour-the-village/beach-s-sawmill/>

Sawmill Buildings and Artifacts

There are several other places in Ontario that maintain buildings and/or equipment related to historic sawmilling techniques in Ontario. Here is a list:

Babcock Mill, Odessa

<http://www.loyalisttownship.ca/index.cfm/discover-loyalist/tourism/culture-and-heritage/babcock-mill/>

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Bygone Days Heritage Village, Collingwood

<http://www.bygonedays.ca/maps.html>

Cumberland Heritage Village Museum, Cumberland

<http://ottawa.ca/en/residents/arts-heritage-and-culture/museums-and-historic-sites/cumberland-heritage-village-museum#collections-and-exhibits>

Doon Heritage Crossroads, Waterloo

<http://www.waterlooregionmuseum.ca/en/doon-heritage-village/explore-village-buildings.aspx>

Fanshawe Pioneer Village, London

<http://fanshawepioneervillage.ca/virtual-village/town-fanshawe/harmer-sawmill>

Hearst Heritage Site, Hearst

<http://www.hearst.ca/en/residents/arts-heritage-and-culture/heritage-sawmill/>

Markham Museum and Historic Village, Markham

http://www.markham.ca/wps/portal/Markham/RecreationCulture/MarkhamMuseum/Exhibitions/HeritageBuildings!/ut/p/a1/jc_LDolwFATQT-qUV9mWoqWIBGtAsRvDyjRRdGH8fqthZSJ6dzc5k8wQRwbipvHhT-PdX6fx_PpddtQKgvlaGpt1Cm6YNAUqJjoawCEAIXmVMAOglyUUs0XfNnUMlf2Xx5fj-JXfE7dlaPQJ8tU2gDbuipLrKJgZJK0Uwuxya60MzVXFU9XEECmdwdLIN1hYcbv0A7zyT2loTrg!/dl5/d5/L2dBIS9nQSEh/

Welbeck Sawmill, Durham

<http://www.welbecksawmill.com/story.html>

Westfield Heritage Village, Rockton

<http://westfieldheritage.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/7/2017/02/Westfield-Map.pdf>

Uncle Tom's Cabin Historic Site, Dresden

<http://www.heritagetrust.on.ca/en/index.php/properties/uncle-toms-cabin>

Modern Day Sawmilling

Haliburton Forest, Haliburton

<https://www.haliburtonforest.com/activities/sawmill-tours>

Sylva Recap

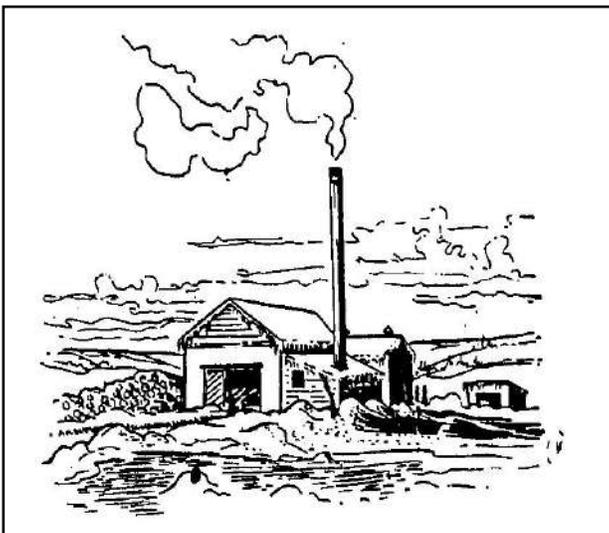
The Ontario Department of Lands and Forests published for many years a journal known as "Sylva". The purpose of this journal was to highlight changes in policy, individuals, and the comings and goings of staff. Sylva contains nuggets for forest history that will be selected for each edition of the journal. The following was provided by Sherry Hambly.

Ontario's Furthest North Sawmill by A.T. Cringan Reprinted from Sylva Volume 8 (2): 37 – 39, 1952

The average person's concept of the Hudson Bay coast naturally leads one to the conclusion that, except possibly at Christmas time, the forest there could contribute nothing more than fine-cut wood to the needs of the coast dwellers. Certainly few people would expect to find a sawmill in operation in that subarctic region.

However, it should be stated that the popular impression of our northern sea-coast is about ninety-nine per cent correct. Although some of the vegetation that extends to the coast, even where the treeline is shown on the maps to be miles inland, must be classed as trees, they are such a discredit to their species that their remoteness is probably justified. The exception to the rule is the immediate margins of the Severn and Winisk rivers where growing conditions are very different from those of the plain above.

From an elevation of about five hundred feet, where the Precambrian Shield emerges, the Hudson Bay lowland descends gradually to sea level. Much of its surface is of level, impervious clay covered by muskeg which supports only a sparse growth of stunted black spruce and tamarack. Toward the coast, the trees become smaller and more forlorn, eventually only appearing windrow-like on the old beaches, sallying forth almost to the salt water along the large banks reaching depths of 50 to 75 feet near the coast. The rivers have changed their courses from time to time so that the valleys are a mile or more in width. On the resultant well-drained, silt-covered beaches and islands occur a forest type in many respects similar to that found on good soil hundreds of miles south. White spruce and black poplar are the predominant species; trembling aspen approaches to within 25 miles of the



coast. Of course, there is neither the quantity of timber nor the market to warrant commercial consideration of the area, but nevertheless, for the record, a sawmill does exist on Ontario's northern coast.

No unpretentious open air outfit is this enterprise of the R.C. Mission at Weenusk. In size it compares with some of the smaller portable mills found throughout the hardwood region of Ontario. Among its accessories is a planer and, to complete the picture of solid respectability, in a lean-to sporting a tall smoke stack and whistle, sits the steam engine.

In this land of canoe and dog power, a considerable feat of engineering was required to put the mill in its present position. It was brought by boat from Moosonee to the mouth of the Winisk river. A sort of barge composed of a few planks laid across two canoes carried it, piece by piece, the remaining seven miles up river, and a home-made capstan was used to winch the heavier parts up the river bank.

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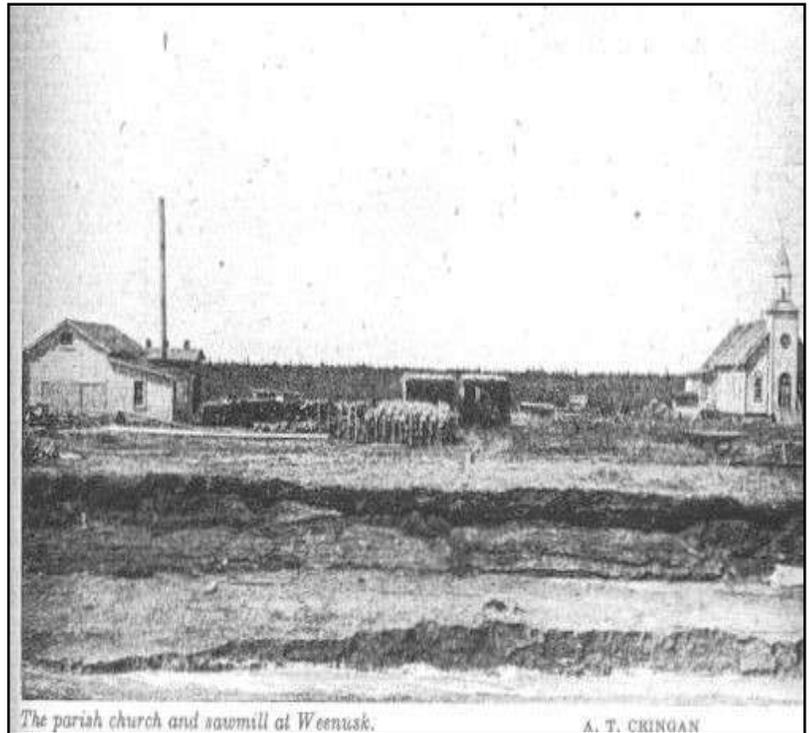
Many years of wood-cutting by coast natives eliminated all but a few of the largest trees from the timbered sites close to the river mouth, so little saw timber still stands nearer than 25 miles up river. Although the average run of logs must be about 75 to the thousand F.B.M. a few of the better white spruce exceed 20" D.B.H. These large stump diameters are misleading, however, because of the rapid taper of the trees; it is the very odd one that will make more than two logs.

The method used in transporting logs to the mill is something between a river drive and a west coast Davis raft. Straight river driving would result in the logs being widely dispersed about Hudson Bay more often than not, so an ingenious development of the native-style wood raft is used. The logs, left in skidways along the river in winter, are dumped into the water shortly after break-up. Two rope-bound 16' by 10' rafts are made from the first 20 or 30 logs, and between these are strung two 100' ropes. Before the two rafts are thus connected, the ropes are threaded through dogs driven into both ends of 100 more logs. Another 75 are then laid on top at a right angle to the foundation and length-wise with the raft as a whole. The outstanding feature of the raft is its flexibility. The 125' string is put more or less at the mercy of the sometimes shallow and rapid Winisk, yet winds its serpentine way along with the current. Men stationed on the fore and aft sections use their skill to discourage any tendency it might have to turn broadside to the stream. An ambitious 500-log effort ended in disaster somewhere along the way, so the shallow draft 200-foot log variety is the standard.

At the mill, a winch, powered by the steam engine, pulls the logs up the steep clay bank. The winch was salvaged and brought by dogteam a hundred miles from a ship wrecked on the coast.

The most striking display of the sawmill's products is the neatly finished and painted building which houses the mill itself. One of the brothers has applied his considerable woodworking ability to finishing the interior of the church with unavoidably, but the less attractive, knotty spruce. The natives have of course benefitted greatly; six or eight families have built frame houses, an impossibility when lumber could only be obtained from Moosonee by boat.

It doesn't require much stretching of the imagination to picture dogs and mudded runner sleds taking the place of horses and machinery in skidding and hauling logs. But the fact that one of the major perils, or at least, distractions, these lumberjacks may encounter is a polar bear making its way up the river to hibernate, just doesn't fit into the usual picture of logging in Ontario.



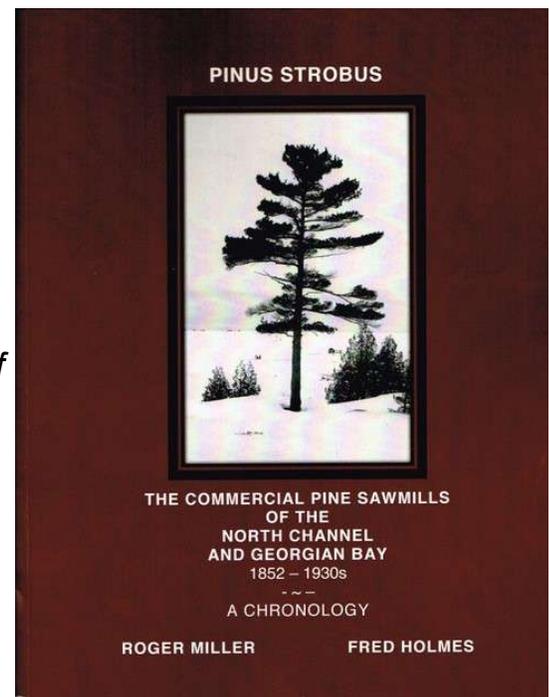
The parish church and sawmill at Weenusuk.

A. T. CRINGAN

Review of *Pinus Strobus*

By: Ken Armson O.C., R.P.F.(Ret.)

Sawmills, and particularly the history of those from the days of pine logging in Ontario during the late 19th and early 20th centuries are guaranteed to evoke feelings of nostalgia. At least in those whose forebears worked either in an early sawmill or in the logging industry. There are a number of detailed accounts of individual lumbermen such as that by Charlotte Whitton in her *A Hundred Years a-Fellin' - Some Passages From the Timber Saga of the Ottawa in the Century in Which the Gillies Have Been Cutting in the Valley, 1842-1942*, J.T. Angus' history of the Georgian Bay Lumber Company at Waubauskene in *A Deo Victoria or The Legacy of John Waldie and Sons*, the history of the Victoria Harbour Lumber Company by K. A. Armson and M.A. McLeod. It is rarely that a comprehensive, historical and chronological account of the sawmills of a specific region becomes available. "Pinus Strobus The Commercial Pine Sawmills of the North Channel and Georgian Bay 1852 – 1930s - A Chronology" by Roger Miller and Fred Holmes is just such a volume.



The authors, after ten years of painstaking research, have produced a motherlode of information that will constitute a major reference source for years to come. This study is of particular importance because of the major economic and associated social contributions that were made as a result of the pine lumber industry during this more than 70-year period. Of interest is the reference to the first, and presumably last, attempt to ship square timber pine from Thessalon to Québec in 1870-71. As already noted, much has been written about the Ottawa Valley pine "barons" and their contributions to the beginnings of major forest activities in Ontario's pine forests, but apart from accounts of some individual mills on the North Channel and Georgian Bay no comprehensive record for that region has been available. Perhaps this is because their activities came a few decades after those of the Ottawa Valley and were generally more associated with the marketplace of the U.S. Great Lakes' states, particularly of Michigan and Wisconsin and the opening up of the American west. Interestingly, it was at the height of the Georgian Bay pine industry that the United States, in 1897, imposed the Dingley Tariff of \$2 per thousand board feet of Canadian lumber – a forerunner of the current softwood lumber travails with the U.S. – that brought the newly-formed Lumbermen's Association of Ontario to life and also accelerated the rate of already existing ownership of sawmills by American interests.

The book chronicles with maps, photographs and references mills in 24 locations in the North Channel and Georgian Bay:

Thessalon, Blind River, Algoma, Spragge, Serpent River, John Island, Cutler Mill, Aird Island Mills, Brennen Harbour Mills, Michael's Bay Mills, Little Current Mills, Collins Inlet Mills, French River Mills, Byng Inlet Mills, Parry Sound Mills, Muskoka Mills, Port Severn Mill, Waubauskene Mills, Sturgeon Bay Mills, Victoria Harbour Mills, Midland Mills, Penetanguishene Mills, Collingwood Mills, Owen Sound Mills.

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The book has been privately printed by the authors and is not for sale. However, the authors have provided copies at the following locations and institutions:

Alice and Jack Wirt Library, Bay City Michigan
Alpena County, George N.Fletcher Library, Alpena, Michigan
Archives of Ontario, York University, Toronto
Barrie Public Library
Blind River Public Library
Bruce County Museum and Cultural Centre, Southampton
Bruce County Public Library Port Elgin, Wiarton, Tobermory
Bruce Mines and Plummer Additional Union Public Library
Centennial Museum and Archives, Penetanguishene
Centennial Museum of Sheguiandah, Manitoulin Island
Cheboygan and Area Public Library, Cheboygan, Michigan
Collingwood Public Library
Community Waterfront Heritage Centre, Owen Sound
Elliott Lake Public Library
Gary French, East Georgian Bay Historical Association
Gore Bay Museum, Gore Bay, Manitoulin Island
Greater Sudbury Public library, Sudbury
Grey Roots Museum and Archives, Owen Sound
Hamilton Public library – Central Library, Hamilton
Huronian Museum, Midland
J.N.Desmarais Library, Laurentian University, Sudbury
J & M Young Library, Port McNicol
Jamie Hunter, Midland
Janice Gamble, Algoma Mills
John Macfie, Parry Sound
John P. Robarts Research Library, University of Toronto, Toronto
L.E. Shore Memorial Library, Thornbury
Little Current Public Library, Little Current, Manitoulin Island
Massey Area Museum, Massey
Massey Township Public Library, Massey
McLaughlin Library, University of Guelph, Guelph
Meaford Public Library, Meaford
Midland Public Library, Midland
MNR Library, Peterborough
National Archives of Canada, Ottawa
Norfolk Public library, Simcoe
North Eastern Public Library, Little Current, Manitoulin Island
Orillia Public Library, Orillia
Owen Sound Union and North Grey Public Library
Parry Sound Public Library
Penetanguishene Public Library
Port Severn Public Library
Public Libraries of Saginaw, Saginaw, Michigan
Robert J. Parks Library, Oscoda, Michigan
Sault Ste. Marie Public Library
Serpent River First Nation Library, Cutler
Severn Township Public Library, Coldwater

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Simcoe County Archives, Midhurst
Thessalon Union Public Library, Thessalon
Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, University of Toronto, Toronto
Timber Village Museum and Archives, Blind River
Tobermory Public Library
Toronto Reference Library, Toronto
Township of Spanish Public Library, Espanola
Township of the North Shore Office, Algoma Mills
Victoria Harbour Branch Library, Victoria Harbour
Waubauskene Public Library, Waubauskene
West Parry Sound Museum, Parry Sound

With this splendid gift to other would-be researchers on sawmills and the lumber industry in this region the authors throw out a series of challenges, such as writing a book or publishing an article about mill owners, the activities of the industry in creating dams which have resulted in many cottage country lakes, and the personal biographies of mill men who served in the Ontario and federal parliaments. The authors are to be congratulated not only for their contribution to basic information about the sawmills in the North Channel and Georgian Bay region but especially for making it available in a large number of public institutions.

Books/Articles/Websites or Other Resources

References Related to Sawmills

By: Sherry Hambly

Sawmills were an integral part of Ontario's settler history and have remained an important part of our history to this day. There are many aspects of sawmills for which reference documents could be discussed – their role in “lumbering” and the economic development of Ontario, their role in the local economy, sawmilling technology changes, social, political and union activities and changes over time, health and safety and their effects on the environment.

In this article I am focussing on the very early component of sawmill history – particularly in understanding where they were located and what it was like to be a new settler and starting up a sawmill, technology changes and environmental effects. The broader role of sawmills in the “lumbering” history of Ontario will be the topic of a future article. By the time sawmills moved into northern Ontario their technology and scope had changed from that of the original mills in southern Ontario. This part of sawmill history will be included in a future article.

The sawmill was one of the first structures/businesses to be established in new settlements. Settlers needed houses and other edifices and the local sawmill was the only place to obtain needed lumber. Thus, every community, large and small, had one to many sawmills, sometimes within shouting distance of each other. Early sawmills were mostly water powered and thus were located along rivers, usually at a falls or a mill pond created by a dam.

The history of almost every Ontario community posted on the internet includes the words sawmill or lumber mill. Much can be learned by typing these two phrases into a search engine: “history sawmill Ontario” or “history lumber mill Ontario” - without the quote marks – or add the name of the community or county or area of interest. Many pages will be listed describing in various detail the role that the sawmill or lumber mill played in a town's creation and development. Often the history of an individual sawmill will be in the results.

Examples include:

“The History of the Old Mill, Toronto”¹ (the location of the first sawmill in Toronto)

“The History of Clayton Ontario”²

County histories provide an excellent source of information on sawmills. “The History of Toronto and the County of York”³ lists dozens of sawmills that were built on local creeks such as the Don, Humber and Etobicoke. There are several such county histories. County maps of early settler days also contain information on sawmills. George Tremaine drew several maps of counties in the mid 1800s.⁴ Annotated atlas maps of 32 Ontario Counties were created in the late 1870s showing, among other things, locations of sawmills.⁵ These atlases are illustrated and contain the occasional picture of a sawmill and many photos of prominent citizens including mill owners. Old maps with sawmill annotations are also available through Historic Map Works.⁶

The *Historical Atlas of Canada: A Land Transformed, 1800 to 1891*, provides an excellent written and visual overview of the placement and role of sawmills in southern Ontario.⁷ The Bloomfields provide details from the 1871 census on the largest sawmills in southern Ontario.⁸ Four of them were steam powered, eight were water powered.

Accounts of individual histories can describe the trials and tribulations of developing or buying, and

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then managing, a sawmill in pioneer times. One such account, titled *The Life and Times of Joseph Gould*, is an excellent example of this genre of book.⁹ It is online and can be searched for with the word “sawmill”.

Many people are interested in the location, condition and history of old mill sites. Two books have been written on old mills of Ontario (*Ontario's Historic Mills*¹⁰ and *Historic Mills of Ontario*¹¹). A group dedicated to the preservation of old mills (Society for the Preservation of Old Mills or SPOOM) has a web site that lists old mills and their locations.¹² “Nature Notes” is a website managed by Harold Stiver, a photographer, that contains photographs of many old mills.¹³ The book, *From Queenston to Kingston*, contains information on mill sites along the shores of Lake Ontario.¹⁴

Many of the first towns settled are now abandoned, some with remnants of old mills. Several books have been written describing these towns and their histories. These books include:

- *Ontario's Ghost Town Heritage*¹⁵
- *Ghost Towns of Ontario*¹⁶
- *Ontario's Vanished Villages*¹⁷
- *Ghost Towns of Muskoka*¹⁸
- *Ghost Town Stories*¹⁹
- *Ghost Towns*²⁰
- *Ontario Ghost Road*²¹

In addition, there are several websites that describe ghost towns in Ontario. The best place to start is with this website: Ontario Ghost Towns.²²

The Ontario Heritage Trust maintains a database of historical plaques that have been placed at significant sites to highlight aspects of our province's history. Several sawmills and sawmill companies are included in the program.²³

The *Canadian Lumberman* (1887-1904) was a journal devoted to all things sawmilling. It is available online and searchable.²⁴

Sawmilling power and technology have changed tremendously over time. Power sources have changed from human power to water to steam to electricity. As a child I used to wander over to the local sawmill when it was running. It was an outdoor affair. The sawyer did everything and was a jack of all trades. Being a sawyer in those days was an art – knowing how to place the log then move it around to get the most lumber out of the log. There was a lot of waste in the form of slabs and sawdust. Nowadays the most sophisticated sawmills are huge and can be completely computerized, and there is virtually no waste.

The following websites provide short overviews of the history of sawmilling:

- Stockroom website provides a short overview of the history of sawmilling²⁵
- Wikipedia²⁶
- The Industrial Workers of the World²⁷
- The Sandpoint Magazine has an article detailing the more recent changes in technology and the reasons why.²⁸
- Barbara Robertson has written a well-regarded book, titled *Saw Power*, that provides great detail on the changes in sawmill technology over time, based on research in Nova Scotia.²⁹

We tend to have romantic views of the old sawmills, but they caused significant human and environmental issues. Early sawmills were dangerous places to work with frequent accidents and deaths. Considerable legislation has been created to protect workers.³⁰ Sawmill workers joined with

(Continued on page 42)

loggers to develop a union in the early part of the 20th century to improve wages and working conditions.³¹

Sawmill dust, noise and bioaerosols have been significant issues in this industry until more recent times when sawmilling methods were developed to provide healthier working conditions.³² Dust was a cause of explosions and fires.

Sawdust was a cause of significant pollution in many areas. Sawdust was dumped into local waters and ruined fish and other habitat, impeded navigation, and made water unpotable.³³ In Ottawa, where there were several mills located on the Ottawa River near Chaudière Falls, the water became extremely polluted from sawdust.³⁴ The situation became so bad it led to the enactment of water laws. *Forestry* has published two articles previously that describe waters polluted by sawdust.³⁶

Many of the early sawmills were associated with dams, which also affected the environment. Dams changed habitat, impeded fish migration and navigation.³⁷ They were often poorly built and posed safety hazards for those living downstream. On the other side, current populations enjoy their “mill ponds” and often react negatively when the dam is removed to naturalize a river system.³⁸ Southern Ontario has over 250 government owned dams and hundreds of locally owned small dams, many of them originating with the development of a sawmill.³⁹

Sawmills have played a very important role in Ontario’s history since settler times. They will continue to play a significant role into the future. Their form and footprint and effects on the environment have changed tremendously from early times.

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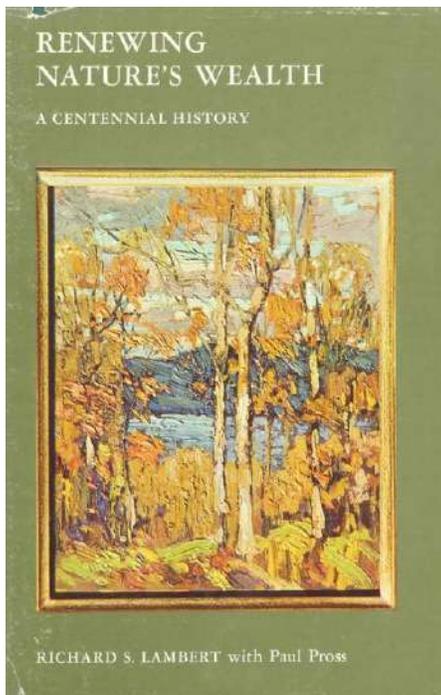
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Renewing Nature's Wealth



(Lambert, Richard S. and Paul Pross. Toronto: The Ontario Department of Lands and Forests. 1967). The book cover describes this book as: “*Renewing Nature's Wealth*, the exciting story of Ontario's natural resources, is described by Premier John Robarts, in his Foreword to the book, as “much more than a history of one of the Departments of the Government of the Province of Ontario: it is a vital component of the history of Ontario”, reaching back nearly 200 years to the days of the first surveyor General of Upper Canada in 1794. The book describes the impact made by a civilized people upon the primitive forest that originally covered the land, and the development of its natural resources under public administration from an early state of confusion and waste down to the modern era of conservation and scientific management.”

We will provide a précis of one chapter of this book in each edition of the journal.

Part III: Wider Responsibilities, 1901 - 1940 - Chapter 15 (Settling New Ontario): Renewing Nature's Wealth

The Ontario Government commissioned a study of the resources of northern Ontario in the late 1800s to assess the potential for settlement and economic activity. The report extolled the potential for agriculture in what was called “New Ontario” and is now known as the Clay Belt. Other areas of settlement included the Thunder Bay area. The report also noted opportunities for forestry and mining.

The government organized several attempts to settle these areas through various grant programs. Several pieces of legislation were developed to support colonization of this area:

- Act of 1901 – free land grants to veterans of the Boer and other wars
- Creation of Homestead Inspectors in 1903 to manage influx of settlers
- Northern Development Act of 1912 resulted in the creation of the Northern Development Branch
- The Free Grant Act of 1913 became Part II of the Provincial Lands Act
- Returning Soldiers and Sailors Settlement Act of 1917
- Provincial Land Tax of 1924 to obtain revenue to pay for services
- In 1926 the Northern Development Branch became its own department
- The Forest Act was amended in 1927 to allow residents of depleted sandy soil areas of southern Ontario to obtain land in the Temiskaming and Clay Belt areas
- Relief Land Settlement Act of 1932 was designed to provide economic opportunities for people in

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depressed southern urban areas

Settlement grants were first focused on returning Boer War veterans, then World War I Veterans, and finally on people looking for better opportunities during the great depression of the 1930s. In addition, the railways received grants of land. The market for timber was good in the 1920s and the Spruce Falls Company purchased timber rights in the area and also bought land to support a pulp and paper mill. The town of Kapuskasing was developed as a company town to house mill employees. Interestingly, the pine timber resources and mining rights on the grant lands were reserved to the landowner.

Unfortunately, various factors were responsible for the failure of the settlement program as originally envisaged. The land and climate were not suitable for arable farming, although dairy farming, especially larger farms, did eventually prosper. There were few local markets for products and larger markets were too far away and too expensive. Chosen settlers were often not suitable for the daunting task of opening up the land for farming, and there was little other work for them. While the government was extolling the benefits of moving to a rural lifestyle, the urbanization of our populace was beginning. In addition, there was a lot of speculative land purchase and less land settlement and clearing.

By the beginning of the Second World War, the attempts at settling northern Ontario for arable farming had mostly fizzled out with many settlers leaving the area. Forestry and mining became increasingly important, and settlement to support these activities continued, especially along the railway corridor from Temiskaming to Hearst.

Dynamic Forest

By: Malcolm F. Squires, R.P. F. (Ret.)

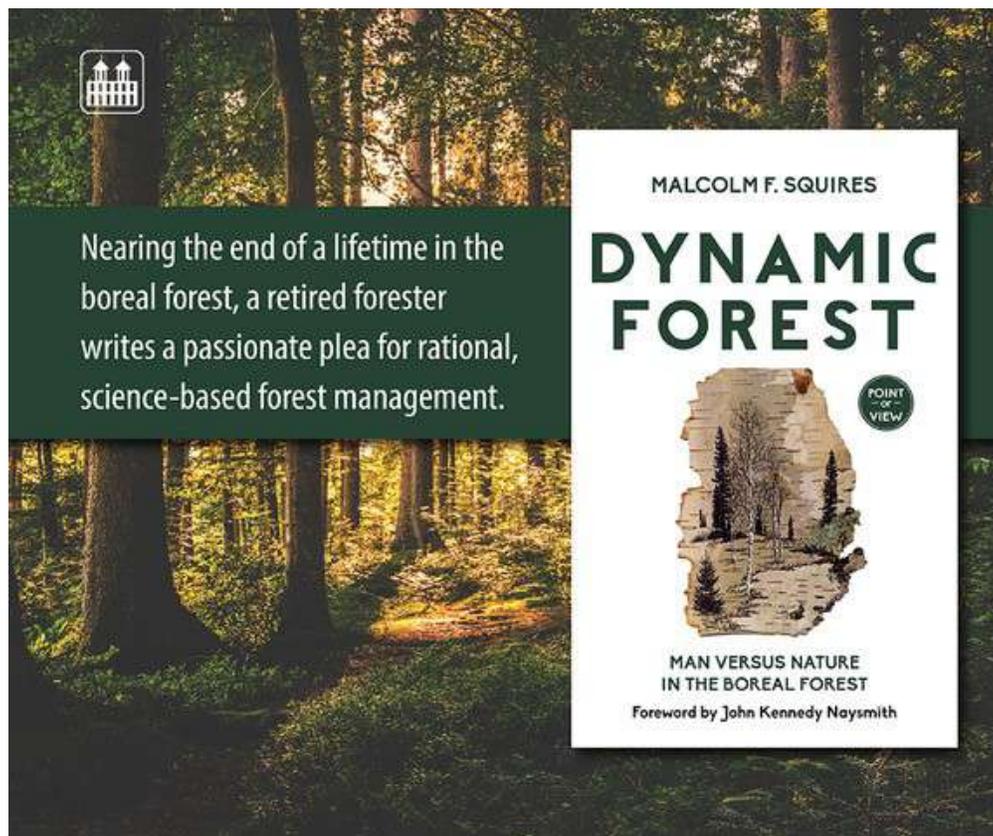
The boreal forest is constantly changing, often dramatically. We like to picture the boreal forest as a stable, balanced system. It is anything but stable. Balanced? Yes, but only temporarily and on limited areas. It is resilient.

Over sixty years progressing through bush worker, forestry student, practising forester, and retired independent thinker I have seen mature forests that were “protected” within National Parks become devastated by insects, moose, wind and wildfire. I have worked in and studied forests that during one hundred and ten years have been twice clearcut and are now mature again on private or public managed land. In all cases the forest has returned to another forest that sometimes is different from the original, and sometimes similar to the original, but never exactly the same as the original.

For decades I have monitored stands that were unaffected by dramatic depletion only to discover that they had almost completely changed in tree and other plant species and wildlife habitat. I have become convinced that a naturally-balanced boreal forest is a human concept that does not exist in nature. The boreal forest is always changing; the boreal forest is dynamic.

If we don't soon collectively recognize and accept that reality and stop making, what I feel, are irrational demands that we tie-up or “protect” forests from change or human management we may be conditioning the boreal forest for future disaster.

My love of that forest compelled me to write the articles on which this book is based. Readers of the articles convinced me I should write this book. In it I discuss the dangers I see if we follow the demands of those who want us to change the boreal forest from its natural even-aged structure to an unnatural uneven-aged structure. I end with a plea that we put aside our selfish wants and work together for the good of the forest, its inhabitants, ourselves and our descendants.



About the Authors

Ken Armson, O.C., R.P.F. (Ret.): Past Chair of the FHSO; former Professor of Forestry at the University of Toronto; former Chief Forester with the Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources; former Forestry Consultant; Author. Appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada in 2016.

Sherry Hambly: After a rewarding career in various capacities in resource management in British Columbia and Ontario, Sherry is enjoying researching Ontario's forest history and helping to make it available for others to enjoy.

Mark Kuhlberg: Chair of the FHSO and Professor of History at Laurentian University.

Dave Lemkay: An Ottawa Valley forest history aficionado, he lives in the hamlet of Douglas and on the shores of Golden Lake. He has family roots dating back to Bytown in the 1820s. Within a colourful 45-year career in communications and media relations, he has been instrumental in the publishing of three forest-related history books: *75 Years of Research in the Woods: A History of Petawawa Forest Experiment Station and Petawawa National Forestry Institute*; *Alligators of the North: The Story of the West & Peachey Steam Warping Tugs*, the story of steam warping tug boats built 1889 to 1930 in Simcoe, Ontario; and *Destination Algonquin Park – Tracks to Cache Lake and the Highland Inn*, a history of J.R. Booth's Ottawa, Arnprior, Parry Sound Railway.

Garry Paget: A retired Air Traffic Controller who currently works as a Safety Instructor for a major Ontario training company and member of the FHSO. He was both a Junior and Senior Forest Ranger with the then Department of Lands & Forests. Garry is currently doing genealogy research and discovering some interesting history of his Paget family's connection to forestry and lumbering in Ontario.

Wesley B. Wilson: A student attending Carleton University for Architectural Conservation and Sustainability Engineering, studying the restoration and retrofitting of historic structures, and very active in the heritage community of Norfolk County.

Forest History Society of Ontario

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Thank You For Your Support!

<p>The mission of the Society is: "To further the knowledge, understanding and preservation of Ontario's forest history" and to accomplish this with the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> To preserve forest and forest conservation history; To encourage and further the development and recognition of forest history; To support research and studies of forest history; To support the archival preservation of records and materials relating to forest history, and To promote the better understanding of forest history through public education. 		<p>The Society has two ongoing projects, both available on our website:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">www.ontarioforesthistor.ca</p> <p>The first is a catalogue of publications dealing with all aspects of Ontario's forest history. Members can submit contributions on our website.</p> <p>The second is the identification and listing of collections and materials relating to Ontario's forest history. The Society works with established archives such as the Archives of Ontario and several university archives to facilitate the preservation of significant collections.</p> <p>The Society publishes a newsletter, Forestory, twice a year – Spring and Fall - containing informative articles on Ontario forest history.</p>
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