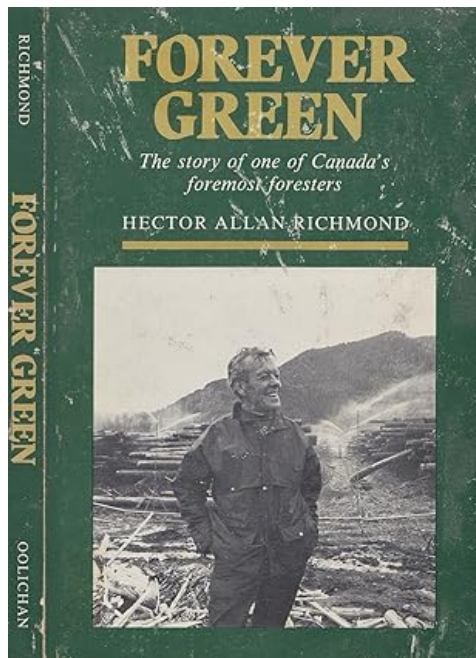




News and Events



Book Club: Join us **June 21st, 2026 from 6:00pm - 7:30pm** for our next book club. We will be reading [Forever Green - the Story of One of Canada's Foremost Foresters](#)

by Hector Allan Richmond

Register here: [Forever Green - the Story of One of Canada's Foremost Foresters by Richmond, Hector Allan](#)

Stanley Park Walking Tour

FHABC will host a historical walking tour of Stanley Park Sunday July 5th, 2026 at 9am to 4pm. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Register here:

https://zoom.us/meeting/register/lcbQty_eRpi2xdfZLBo--w

Issue Index: Museums Map Project, p2; News from UBC, p2; Dease Lake and Cassiar Lodgepole in Collections in 1984, p2; The Partial Origins of Industrial Reforestation in British Columbia, p17; Book Review: What's All This Got To Do With The Price of 2x4's? By Michaw! Apsey. P21; Book Club: H.R.: A Biography of H.R. MacMillan by Ken Drushka. p22.

Museums Map Project

Hello Members,

The FHABC is working on creating a provincial map of museums, archives and locations that have forest history themed or related content. Examples include the [BC Forest Discovery Centre](#), [BC Interior Forestry Museum](#), and [Central BC Railway & Forestry Museum](#), Campbell River Museum, Port Clements Museum portclementsmuseum.ca

Please submit any attractions you feel would be of relevance to info@fhabc.org.

With thanks,
FHABC

News from UBC

[UBC Library welcomes urban forestry students into the archives - About UBC Library](#)

A recent initiative at UBC Library highlights the growing importance of historical records in modern forestry education. By bringing forestry students into the archives, the program connects future practitioners with a wide range of historical materials—from maps and photographs to planning documents and research theses.

Through this hands-on approach, students gain a deeper understanding of how landscapes, ecosystems, and urban forests have evolved over time. Archival resources reveal past land uses, buried waterways, and long-term environmental changes—critical context for making informed decisions about restoration, management, and sustainability today.

This collaboration underscores a key principle shared by both historians and foresters: understanding the past is essential to managing the future. By integrating archival research into forestry education, initiatives like this ensure that the lessons embedded in historical records continue to inform and strengthen stewardship of our forests and urban environments.

Dease Lake and Cassiar Lodgepole Collections in 1984

Author: Don Pigott

1984 was a slow year for cone collections, due to poor crops, unlike the previous year. Our small nursery was doing ok, but Gerhard and I were keen to get out into the field. I had the good fortune to have hired Tina to look after the nursery, and I had no reservations about leaving it in her hands. We had a couple of tree improvement contracts pending, but they were not scheduled to start until November.

We had been approached by folks in Sweden about collecting Lodgepole pine in northern BC, in the general region of Cassiar to Dease Lake. Frank Barnard had a very good network of collectors in several areas of the Yukon, notably Watson Lake, Carmacks and Rusty Creek. Frank was very well known for his ability to make large collections, and produce high quality seed. Lodgepole pine had been planted in Sweden for decades, and grew faster than the native Scots pine. It was believed that the species would be able to augment their perceived timber shortage in 40 years.

Rolf Hellenius and his wife would also go up to the Yukon each year in their motorhome and make collections.



Photo 1: Pine flat near Simmons Lake. Photo Credit: Don Pigott

In Northern BC, Lodgepole pine cones were collected almost entirely from squirrel caches or cuttings in the relatively uniform stands. Usually these pine stands were very easy to wander around in, and there was little if any undergrowth in these pine flats. Squirrels were abundant and it was usual for caches to be less than 50 metres apart in the stands.



Photo 2: Clean, squirrel picked pine cones. Photo Credit: Don Pigott

The cache size and type varied dramatically. Sometimes the cones were picked very cleanly with no needles attached, (see above), other times they left “tufts” of needles which had to be removed with some difficulty. (We referred to the squirrels that accumulated these piles as “cone pigs”.) The size of the caches varied from 15-20 liters to sometimes 100 liters or more. There was no advantage time-wise to collect cones from felled trees or trees in burns.



Photo 3: Squirrel picked cones with tufts of needles still attached. Photo Credit: Don Pigott

When Frank heard from his Swedish buyers that we were planning to make collections in Northern BC, he phoned me immediately. He was concerned about us infringing on his turf! We had a long chat and he offered to buy all the cones we picked, transport them to his extraction facilities at Blind Bay, process the seed, and ship it to Sweden. He made a generous financial offer, and made a compelling case in that we had no seed extractor at that time or means to transport the cones south. So we came to an agreement. The previous year Gerhard and I had made some large helicopter collections of Grand fir, all of which we sold to Frank. He was most impressed with the quality, and the price! He paid very quickly so we were quite comfortable going into a business arrangement with him.

Dease Lake had one small motel, and Cassiar also only had one, so we decided to take Gerhard's truck and rent a camper from Tina's mother. This gave us the flexibility to collect in more remote areas without having to run back a couple of hundred kilometers to a motel each night.

On September 1 we left Nanaimo and headed north. We were not really in a hurry, so we took our time and eventually pulled over south of Prince George at a rest stop to sleep. In the morning we continued our journey, stopping once for gas at Smithers. We didn't realize until much later that Gerhard had left his wallet on a shelf at the gas station. By that time we were 400 miles north. When we got to a phone we contacted

the gas station and arranged to have it shipped to Gerhard's home. We stopped along the road near the second crossing of the Bell Irving on Highway 37 (The Stewart Cassiar Highway). We tried a little fishing in a small lake without success, and I left my fly case there!

The following day we stopped at 40 Mile Flats for lunch, where there seemed to be a fair amount of pine. We asked the waitress if there were any squirrels around, and she said "yes". The squirrels would fill her mason jars in a shed out back with pine cones! We told her we were interested in buying pine cones from people and would stop back later.

We continued on to Dease Lake and went directly to the government office to see one of the local Forest Service Officers, Karl Simmons. Technically we needed a permit to collect cones, but he was unconcerned. He gave us some good advice on locals that might be interested in collecting cones. Who was trustworthy and who was not! Another piece of advice he gave us was that people would want to be paid in cash. This was a bit of a shock. We had planned to write cheques, but apparently there had been many companies pass through the area, write cheques and then the cheques bounced. There was no bank in Dease Lake, but fortunately there was a CIBC in Cassiar. After we had checked out the crops for a couple of days around Dease Lake, we went to Cassiar and withdrew a large amount of cash. We set up a deal between my bank in Ladysmith (also CIBC) and the Cassiar branch, basically letting them know that we would be withdrawing large amounts regularly. While we were in the bank, the teller told us to visit Gary, the Recreations Facility Manager, because he knew everyone in town. He was a very pleasant fellow, and was keenly interested in what we were doing. He assured us that he would get the word out and he certainly did! We also put a notice up in the Rec building. Eventually he also allowed us to store cones in a garage there.

Cassiar had an enormous asbestos mine. It opened in 1952, and by the 70's had a population of 1500. There were two schools, two churches, a hotel, and well-developed recreation facilities. However, by 1992 the mine had shut down for a variety of reasons. There was really no other industry there. There were large deposits of jade but very little mining had taken place and Jade City had not yet started. Most people worked for Cassiar Mines. There was an enormous slag pile right on the edge of town. I am sure the effect on people's health was enormous.



Photo 4: The Cassiar slag pine. Photo Credit: Don Pigott



Photo 5: Downtown Cassiar. Photo Credit: Don Pigott

Our next stop was to visit John Neuyens, who was the local Social Services representative and knew which people living on the edge might be interested in earning cash. John said that both he and his wife would be interested in collecting as well!

Our last stop was at the small Indian Reservation on Highway 37 at Good Hope Lake. Gary at the Rec Centre had suggested that we stop there. This was a very poor reserve. They had a small school and a limited budget. As we arrived, two school board representatives from “down south “were leaving. They had come north by bus. School District budget.

The principal was a very nice non-native fellow, married to a local First Nation. We explained that we would pay cash for pine cones collected from squirrel caches and cuttings. He was very keen as he said they could not afford sports equipment, particularly hockey gear to play at the Cassiar ice rink. So we explained where to look and left him with cone sacks and tags. Gerhard and I left, drove across the highway by the Lake and proceeded to have lunch. Within a few minutes we saw the old school bus leave, filled with students heading out for cones! It worked out very well for the school. We paid them enough to purchase a lot of equipment. The only wrinkle was that on one occasion they went down to the old gold mining town, Centreville, and the kids found some explosives. The RCMP were called and the explosives were dealt with. We camped just outside the town and in the evening we had dinner at the lone restaurant in town. At 7:00 that evening we went back to the Rec Centre where a couple about our age was waiting by our poster. Gerhard did a masterful job of convincing them to collect cones for us. This couple had little or no money, but seemed really keen and trustworthy. They were clients of John Neuyen and he did not speak highly of them, but we decided to take a gamble on them. We gave them all the information they needed as well as burlap sacks, tags, etc.

We went back to Dease Lake and met up with several locals whom had professed to be interested in collecting cones. There was one group of 4 boys who were living in Dease Lake but had literally escaped from their family farm on the road to Telegraph Creek. We set them up with sacks, and said we would meet them at the local coffee shop the following day. The next day they had several sacks, most of which were good, but quite a few had obviously been picked from dead trees and had significantly lower seed counts. We explained this to them and told them we would pay them anyway. Well, that was a wise decision! Not only did their quality improve but the word got out that we actually paid cash on delivery! We were paying \$35 for a 60 liter sack. The next thing we knew, we had numerous people wanting to collect. Within a few days, every time we rolled into town people were running up to us with sacks of cones. We would often stay at the Northway Motel. It got so bad that we would drive on a back road into town to the motel and enter through the rear door, so we could be able to get a shower and dinner in peace.

We were starting to accumulate a lot of bags of cones and we needed to find a suitable storage location. We had noticed a log cabin down the road from the Northway Motel. The windows were boarded up, as was the door, and this was obviously a work in progress. Next door was a double-wide mobile home with a gravel truck parked outside. We knocked on the door and met Orville Mc Lean and his First Nation's wife. They were a very nice couple. Orville, like the majority of people in Dease Lake, worked as a contractor for the Ministry of Highways. When we told him we were looking for a storage facility for a few weeks, he readily agreed and would only charge a nominal fee.

Dease Lake was a small town of about 400 people, most of who worked for Highways, BC Hydro or some form of government. A certain percentage were guide outfitters or gold miners and prospectors. In 1969, W.A.C. Bennett decided that a railroad should be built from an existing line at Fort St James to Dease Lake (660 km) and then eventually to Cassiar to open up the north for access to the wealth of minerals. It was abandoned in 1977, after using up twice the budget and still being nowhere near completion. However, the sub-grade was highly visible when we were there. They also built a mammoth airport with a 6,000 foot runway. This has proven useful however to fly in workers for some of the large mines that developed in the area later. In the 1870's there was the Cassiar gold rush near Centreville and McDame Creek. In 1877 they found a 72 oz. gold nugget at McDame Creek, the largest ever found up to that time.

There were quite a few smaller ghost towns around Dease Lake and Cassiar, and when Gerhard and I were wandering around in the bush we would find all kinds of artifacts. I brought home part of a butter box and a couple of rusted out porcelain cups.



Photo 6: 66 lb. butter box. Photo Credit: Don Pigott

We moved between Forty Mile Flats and Cassiar, a 200 km distance, picking up cones from our “contractors” and taking them to one of our storage sites. We also spent a good portion of each day picking cones ourselves. The terrain was flat with usually minimal vegetation. As time went on, the squirrels got much busier knocking down cones. After a while we got to recognize their habits, as well as where they would choose to cache their cones. As I mentioned earlier, the caches were normally 50 metres apart or less. They often put their caches in brush piles, between small piles of downed logs or around old stumps. Sometimes they would leave pile of “rough cut” cones in a pile then clean them up before moving them to their final destination! In very mossy locations you could see, and follow their little trails to their caches. Their “haul roads” were easy to follow, and the direction of travel easy to establish because when there was a junction you followed the “V”. They were good loggers; they almost always hauled down hill.

When convenient, we would stay and eat in Dease Lake or Cassiar, and when not we would stay in the camper and cook our own food. When I say “we”, I mean Gerhard. He was a far better cook than I. Normally, however, we would make up our own breakfast and lunch. Gerhard finally overcame his dislike of peanut butter.

On September 8th we got a message at the Northway Hotel in Dease Lake that Frank Barnard would be arriving in Dease Lake the next day, after arranging some collections in the Yukon. I phoned back to his hotel in Whitehorse, and said to keep his eye out for a truck and camper parked just north of Dease Lake where we planned to collect some cones. The following day, at mid-afternoon, he found us in the bush. He looked at the cones, and seemed happy. That evening, he insisted on buying us dinner and a few beer. After a while, the 'Grey Fox' started to waiver about the price he quoted us originally! I was having none of that! I said, " Well then, we will get Reid Collins to process the seed for us and sell the seed directly to a Swedish buyer". He quickly changed his mind and agreed to the original price!

A couple of days later, there was a message at the hotel to phone Bob Sedeyco at CBC in Whitehorse. I phoned from the phone booth outside the restaurant. He explained that he interviewed people in the north doing different things, and Gary from the Cassiar Rec Centre thought it would be interesting for folks. So he gave me a list of questions he would ask and suggested I review them first, and he would call back in an hour. Gerhard and I reviewed the questions and an hour later we had a nice conversation to explain what species we collected, where they were collected from, where the seed would be processed, and where the final destination would be.

We didn't really think much more about it until a few days later when Frank Portlock, from Forestry Canada, showed up to certify the cone collection. Many countries in Europe require that seed be Certified under OECD. The OECD Seed Scheme facilitates international seed trade by providing a framework for certifying the varietal identity and purity of agricultural seeds and tree seeds. Frank Portlock's job was to verify the location that seed was collected from. We had agreed to meet at the T&M Hotel in Cassiar. Frank Portlock and his wife, Marnie, had just come down from Whitehorse where he had certified another of Frank Barnard's collections. Actually, I had put our collection in our name in case things went sideways with Frank Barnard. Frank Portlock relayed that he had had a very animated phone call from Frank Barnard about my CBS interview . Apparently I had really upset a fellow named Bud Whimp in Watson Lake. Bud was a well known buffoon who owned a large portion of businesses in the area, and was well-known as a loud mouth bully. As far as he was concerned cone collection throughout the region was part of his kingdom and he didn't want any interlopers on his turf. I guess he phoned Frank Barnard in a rage, and said my interview was filled with inaccurate information. After that call, Frank Barnard phoned Frank Portlock. Frank P just happened to be in Whitehorse still so he went to the CBC studio and listened to the interview. Frank P told us that what I had said was 100% accurate and should cause no concern. That ended it. Frank Barnard occasionally mentioned it afterwards, grumbled, but did not make an issue of it. Frank P, Marnie,

Gerhard and I had a great dinner and conversation. We all stayed at the hotel and met for breakfast. After breakfast Frank and Marnie headed south, and we continued cone collecting. In the Cassiar area, our best pickers surprisingly were John Neuyens, from Social Services, and his wife. It was likely because these were people who loved the outdoors, and it gave them a chance to make some spare cash. We spent an evening with his family and I remember their young boy showed us how to make "Indian ice cream." The cone pickers were still doing well, and the Dease Lake Lake folk were generally the most productive.

I had previously read a book called "Notes from the Century Before," by Edward Hoagland (1966) about the whole area around the Stikine, and it was interesting to see that many of the families mentioned in that book were the names of many of our pickers. Our ritual of sneaking into town on a backroad and in the rear door of the motel persisted. Once someone saw Gerhard's truck and camper, everyone knew we were in town and people were eager to sell their cones.

Mighty Moe. About 43 Km north of the village of Dease Lake, and 15 km after crossing the Dease River on Hy 37 there was a campsite called Might Moe's. It was situated on Cotton Lake, which was really an expansion of the Dease River. The area was also known as Moose Meadows. A large forest fire had burned much of the surrounding area, and in fact right through his campsite. There were a few cabins scattered around and some campsites, some with covered shelters. We had seen his advertisements on almost every bulletin board from Forty Mile Flats to Cassiar. After having passed it several times we decided to stop in. He invited us in for coffee, which was some very chewy, boiled coffee. Sanitation was not a high priority here, and we declined to have dinner. We made an arrangement to store cones in one of his shelters. He was a short, very affable fellow, and although the ad below mentions a wife and son, I believe they no longer were there in 1984. We would drop cones off occasionally, and have the obligatory cup of coffee. He always tried to sell us on his \$39.95 fishing tour of Cotton Lake and the Dease River, which stupidly we declined.

On our last visit to Moe to pick up cones we arrived around 9:00 in the morning. There was a car there with Alaska licence plates. When we went inside Moe had just cooking breakfast for an American who had stayed overnight. On his plates were the blackest pancakes you could ever imagine! We chatted with Moe and the American for a while, and Moe decided to try to sell the American his "Fishing Tour" package. The American said, "So Moe, what kind of fish would I likely catch?" Moe replied, "Well, there's your grayling, and Bull trout, and cutthroat, and if you were lucky maybe a burbot." The American said, "Oh, Burbot, that's a freshwater cod isn't it? And they get quite large?."

Moe replied, " Well, put it this way. Last year we got one so big that we propped it's mouth open and used it for an outhouse for a whole year." We all laughed.

We picked up our cones from Moe, paid him his modest fee and took them to our Dease Lake storage area at Orville McLean's. He seemed sad to see us leave. As it got closer to the end of September, the snow was getting much lower on the hills, and on a couple of occasions we had wet snow fall on us at lake level.

We got a call from Frank Barnard a few days later, and he said his trucker would be passing through Dease Lake within the week and to make sure to have all the cones at the Dease location. We talked to Orville and he agreed to take his gravel truck up to Cassiar and pick up the cones from the north, which were stored at the Rec Centre. On a Sunday, we led Orville up to Cassiar and we loaded the cones. Once there were loaded, Orville took off like a shot, and we couldn't catch him on the drive back to Dease! He had the truck partially unloaded by the time we arrived. We picked for a couple of more days, and the snow became more and more abundant. We decided to head home. We settled up with Orville, and he assured us that he would look after the loading.

With somewhat heavy hearts we left Dease Lake.....



Photo 7: Advertisement for Mighty Mo's Place.



Photo 8: Moe's cabin. Photo Credit: Don Pigott



Photo 9: Squirrels often put their caches in patches of Devil's club. Photo Credit: Don Pigott.



*Photo 10: Enormous squirrel cache with the cones still having needles attached.
"Cone pig." Photo Credit: Don Pigott.*



Photo 11: Simmons Lake. About 15 km south of the turn off to Cassiar. We camped here more than a few nights. Photo Credit: Don Pigot.

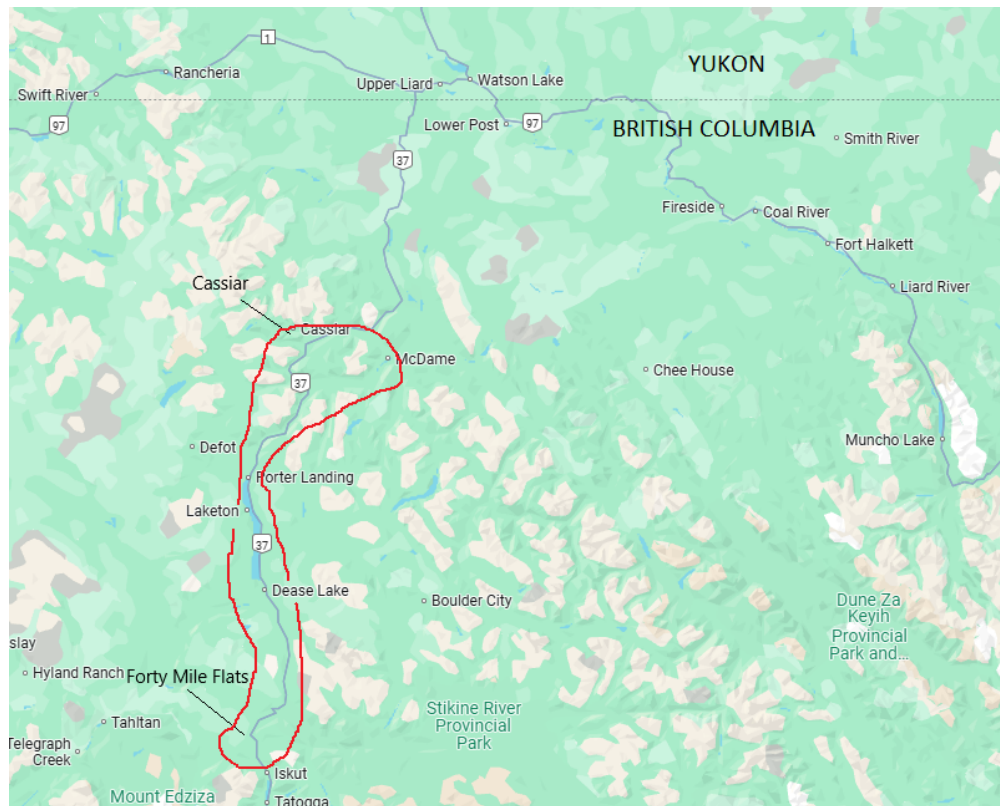


Photo 11: Lodgepole pine collection area in 1984. The area is outlined in red. Forty mile Flats to Cassiar., (approximately 200 km.)

The Partial Origins of Industrial Reforestation in British Columbia

Authors: Gerry Burch and David Brownstein

In the early 1950s, only the provincial Forest Service had an interest in forest seed, and even that interest was modest. Industry did not plant trees until after the first Sloan Royal Commission, in 1945. At that time, with the creation of Forest Management Licences (FML), later renamed Tree Farm Licences (TFL), such lands were meant to be surveyed after logging. All not sufficiently restocked lands (NSR), those that were not producing a commercial crop of second growth timber, were required to be restocked with young tree seedlings. Many of these spaces were covered by thick brush, and companies were given a decade to accomplish this task.

At that time, nobody knew how to undertake surveys to see what logged lands were restocking naturally, with “volunteer” growth, and which lands were not. How many seedlings were needed for land to be considered satisfactorily stocked? Senior management of the BC Forest Service mandated that the spacing between plantings be six feet by six feet, resulting in approximately 1000 seedlings per acre. Generally, field foresters working for industry thought that these numbers were too high. The reason being, some of these areas had been logged up to ten years before, so possibly they would have already boasted a certain number of “naturals”, rendering hand-planting unnecessary. However, the field foresters were informed by the Forest Service that this spacing was favoured in Europe, partly because of the death of many seedlings after planting.

At this time, the BC Forest Service was carrying out planting projects during the previous ten years or so, which absorbed most of the two year old stock. Planting had been carried out during the Second World War by conscientious objectors on two huge areas burned in 1938 at Campbell River and the Robertson River valley (Cowichan Lake). Also, small plantations were made at Green Timbers and Knox Bay, and by two small logging companies (Industrial Timber Ltd. and Bloedel Stewart & Welch at Port Alberni). So, there was an interest in planting, but this was hindered by the lack of stock, the cost, and the deep seated perception that nature would restock most logged lands, even by senior officials in government and industry.

If an area was determined to be NSR, the company with the Tree Farm Licence that had logged the lands would have to pay the cost for planting. Companies pushed back against this imposition, because the firms had already paid monies as dictated by a Stumpage Appraisal formula, and the extra burden of planting had never been included in those calculations. This point was an item of debate for some years. Further,

industry did not employ any field foresters, those whose responsibilities were identifying areas to be logged, and who looked after the land post logging.

Between 1955 and 1960, Gerry Burch worked as a BC Forest Products cruiser, and was asked if he had ever done a restocking survey. The previous summer, Burch had worked for the Forest Service doing a resurvey of the E&N lands on the East coast of Vancouver Island, classifying land as old growth, second growth, logged land, regeneration, etc. That work had not had the aim of fulfilling a restocking survey, but the experience was close enough that Burch was asked to pick a colleague to pursue it. Burch chose Trail BC's Harry Dembicki. Dembicki was interested in reforestation and was trusted to work alone. Burch and Dembicki devised a system of survey openings, and authored a report (now sadly lost to us). Burch and Dembicki had appraised the reforestation of logged sites, in FML 22 (now TFL 46), in brush-filled high-volume valley-bottoms in the Cowichan and Port Renfrew drainages.

Further complicating matters, when the BCFP (and the wider industry at large) asked the existing provincial nurseries for seedlings, they were unable to meet the demand. Provincial nurseries were established at Cranbrook, Duncan, Quinsam (Campbell River), and Green Timbers.¹ However, these were limited to supplying the Forest Service with two-year old Douglas fir seedlings, and to be planted only on government operated tenures. The nurseries produced only Douglas fir seedlings because it was simply too difficult to cultivate Sitka Spruce, or other species. Problems facing the cultivation of other species included insects, frost, disease, and poor soils. Each time they opened a new nursery area, nursery staff encountered problems never before experienced.

Given the challenges, the situation was at a bit of a stalemate, as companies asked for five years grace during which possibly the areas might regenerate on their own. However, during this time a great deal of thick brush of non-commercial species would colonize the area. This made subsequent planting challenging, and different approaches were tried using various machines, including an auger to drill a hole for a seedling in the middle of brush pile, to see if the seedling would survive. All came to the conclusion to not wait for the five years allowed by law, but to plant immediately after logging, when it was still "hot" from slash burning. Experience taught that the best method was to plant the area right away.

Circa 1965, the provincial NDP came into power. A committee was established, including Union representatives such as Jack Munro, those from the Truck Loggers Association, various consultants, and large and small companies. This committee

¹ Sloan, 1956, vol 2, p 556.

asked around the province for guidance as to how policy ought to proceed. Burch, on behalf of coastal foresters, was asked to convene a panel of experts to determine the best way to manage the topic of reforestation, including policy, nursery production, and costs. The prime recommendation of the committee was to allow planting costs, if necessary, to be included in the Stumpage Appraisal formula. Suggestions were also made that all lands had to be restocked within five years; to pursue research into the production of seedlings; and research into other methods of restocking logged lands.

At this time, planters were unemployed loggers, but they didn't want to do this work (and it showed as they did a bad job of it). The path forward with respect to tree planters was resolved at the level of the local unions. In search of solutions, Burch approached Jack Munro. Those unemployed loggers who were first offered the planting work were often married, older men and they did not want distant, seasonal, exceptionally demanding planting work. Burch desired specially trained crews that could not be thrown out of work by being bumped by unemployed loggers. Monroe's solution, was that the planters had to be union members, but he created a separate seniority list for them (Forestry worker class 1, class 2, etc). A division between the categories of logger and forestry worker, meant that the loggers could not bump the forestry workers in their employment, however the forestry workers could still move from one local district to another. In addition to planting, these workers built trails or campgrounds, fixed log cribs, cleaned out ditches, engaged in fence-building, lighting slash fires, or handling forest fires, as well as other miscellaneous duties.

During these years, B.C. Forest Products pioneered the development of a planting crew, headed by a popular older Polish forester, Rod Panczyszyn. Gerry assigned Rod to reforestation surveys, and to plant all company areas immediately after logging, even though the availability of seedlings was doubtful. The crew was placed doing reforestation, slash burning, preparing recreational sites and fire protection. Rod was a strong proponent of planting, but with insufficient seedlings from government nurseries, the government had to be pressured to increase the budget allocated to nursery operations. This was successful and the BCFP planting crews had sufficient stock and year-round employment.

The work was very hard, but despite this, at least three members planted over one million seedlings. The planters were Uwe Sharnberg (1.775 million, by 1964), Lloyd Kiss (1.385 million) and Svend Clausen (1.295).² By his retirement, in 1983, Sharnberg had planted over 2.5 million trees.

² Seedling marks 25 years. Nov 24, 1971. *Times Colonist*, p 3; BCFP marks anniversary with symbolic planting. Dec 1, 1971. *The Ladysmith-Chemainus Chronicle*, p 3.

Other companies did not form reforestation crews. This encouraged competitive bidding on contracts, which is exactly how it is today.

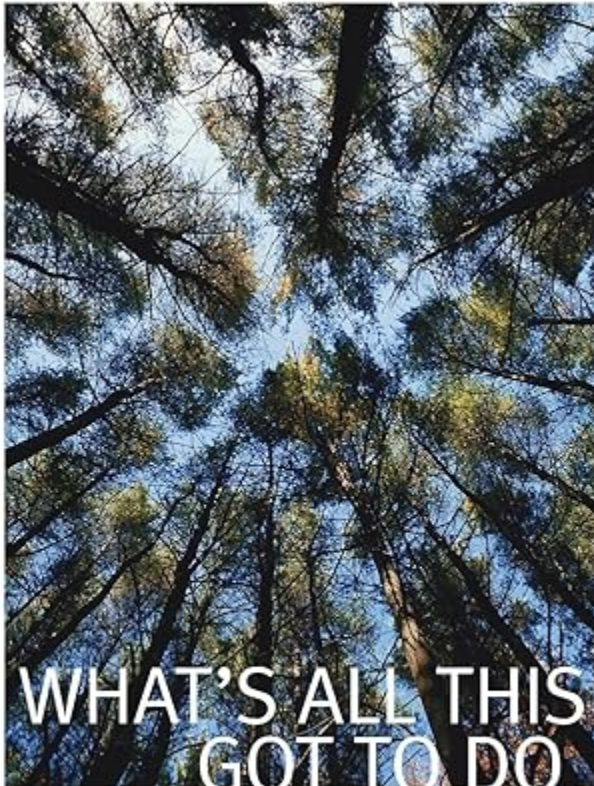
Ultimately, the Royal Commission on Forestry, headed by Peter Pearse, was formed in 1970. One of his many recommendations was to privatize government forest seedling nurseries. Also, at this time, was the evolution of private reforestation companies, mainly to carry out planting contracts on company lands. The main detriment with such crews was the difficulty in providing meaningful forestry work when planting was not feasible.



Photo 1: News clipping, Vancouver Province, May 28, 1965, p 12.

Book Review: What's All This Got To Do With The Price of 2x4's? By Mike Apsey.

Author: Katherine Spencer



with the price of 2x4's?
by Mike Apsey
as told to Ken Drushka and Matt Hughes

This book reads less like a conventional history and more like a seasoned forester sitting you down to explain how British Columbia's forests became entangled in global debates. From the perspective of a premier B.C. forestry leader, Apsey's reflections carry the authority of lived experience—he was not just observing change, but actively shaping it. What stands out is how naturally he connects local forest practices to international pressures, showing that decisions made in B.C. were increasingly influenced by global markets, environmental movements, and shifting public expectations. For readers grounded in forest history, this linkage feels especially important, capturing the moment when forestry in the province could no longer operate in isolation.

Apsey's achievements emerge through his role as a bridge-builder. He helped move B.C. forestry beyond a purely production-driven model toward one that

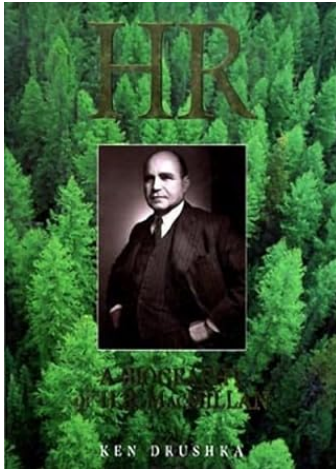
had to engage seriously with sustainability, public scrutiny, and international credibility. His influence in policy discussions and industry leadership reflects a broader transition in forestry—from timber extraction to negotiated resource management. The book highlights how he navigated conflicts between environmental advocates and industry stakeholders, not by choosing sides, but by reframing the conversation. In that sense, his legacy is not tied to a single policy or innovation, but to helping redefine how forestry decisions were made in British Columbia.

What makes this book particularly compelling is its personal tone. Apsey doesn't present himself as a distant authority; instead, he offers candid insights into the pressures, compromises, and occasional missteps that came with leadership. For a forest history audience, this gives the narrative real texture—it shows how large-scale

changes in forestry were driven by individuals grappling with uncertainty in a rapidly globalizing world. Ultimately, the book underscores Apsey's significance as both a provincial leader and an international voice, someone who helped position British Columbia within a broader forestry conversation that continues to evolve today.

Book Club: *H.R.: A Biography of H.R. MacMillan* by Ken Drushka.

Author: Katherine Spencer



The FHABC book club read [H.R.: A Biography of H.R. MacMillan](#) by Ken Drushka in the fall of 2025. This book is particularly valuable for a forest history audience, offering a detailed account of how H. R. MacMillan helped shape the institutional and commercial foundations of modern forestry in British Columbia. Drushka carefully documents MacMillan's early training as a professional forester and his tenure as the province's first Chief Forester, highlighting his role in advancing sustained-yield principles and promoting a more regulated, scientifically informed approach to forest management. For readers interested in the evolution of forestry policy, these sections provide important context on the transition from frontier exploitation to more organized

resource governance.

The book is especially strong in its treatment of MacMillan's entrepreneurial achievements and their long-term impact on the forest industry. His founding of the H.R. MacMillan Export Company is presented not just as a business success, but as a structural turning point that connected British Columbia's timber resources to global markets. Drushka weaves a fascinating account of MacMillan's vision to scale up production, modernize operations, and integrate forestry into international trade networks—developments that remain central to the province's economic identity. These contributions will resonate with readers focused on industry development, export economics, and the globalization of forest products.

Overall, *H.R.* is an informative and engaging biography that succeeds in capturing the complexity of a powerful and driven figure. It offers meaningful insight into both the man and the era he helped shape, even if it stops short of fully interrogating his legacy.

STORIES: The Newsletter needs your reminiscences/anecdotes and is always thirsty for more forestry-related tales. Whether they are prose or poetry, all contributions are welcome. Most importantly, these stories can be as varied as the profession itself. Note that there is one requirement. Please ensure that your submissions are typed, not hand-written. This will save us much time and frustration in trying to decipher an author's handwriting. Thanks.

If you have an idea for Issue #124, please reach out to us at info@fhabc.org



Forest History Association of British Columbia

This issue was guest edited by Peter Marshall and Eric Andersen.

Page layout by Liza.

Tell others to become members of FHABC!

You are invited to join the Forest History Association of British Columbia. Formed in 1982, the association's interests cover a wide spectrum – from the history of people and machines to the evolution of forest resources management and the associated social and political aspects. Members represent a variety of professions and come from all corners of the province and elsewhere in North America.

Membership is \$20.00 annually, or three years for \$50.00. Memberships are on a calendar year basis – January to December. Membership includes a subscription to our electronic newsletter** as well as the opportunity to attend virtual talks and the association's annual general meeting. This usually involves a field trip in addition to the conduct of the association's business.

<https://fhabc.org/membership/>