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**2007 AGM REPORT**

The 2007 annual general meeting of the FHABC took place on September 22<sup>nd</sup> at the Kamloops Museum, 207 Seymour Street. After the welcome and introductions, reports were given by the Newsletter Editor (John Parminter), Treasurer (Art Walker), and President (Stan Chester). The following directors are all serving the second year of their two-year terms: Mike Apsey of Victoria, George Brandak of Richmond, Hubert Bunce and Stan Chester of West Vancouver, Michael Meagher of Victoria, Edo Nyland of Sidney, John Parminter and Art Walker of Victoria.

Updates were given on the Forest History Society, Canada; preparations to mark the Centennial of the B.C. Forest Service in 2012; a Canadian Science and Technology Museum display "Beyond the Trees"; and a display to be opened at the Ike Barber Learning Centre at UBC in May 2008. Much discussion followed regarding how to increase our presence and activities in the Interior of the province and how to liaise with the historical association and museum communities.

A reception and dinner followed and speaker Randy Chan provided an excellent perspective on the forest history of the Kamloops area based on his personal experiences there.



Recycled paper

## **ALEZA LAKE RESEARCH FOREST ARCHIVAL RECORDS**

by Tara R. Rogers

In the spring of 2007 I was hired as a Student Assistant in the Northern BC Archives to work on the Aleza Lake Research Forest Archival Records. My background is in Political Science and English, but I have a familial connection to the Aleza Lake community – my grandfather and grandmother lived and worked there in the late 1950s. As well, I thought it would be interesting to peek into public policy in the forest industry from that era. After reading correspondence I definitely got the impression that the Aleza Lake Experiment Station was an experiment in itself, though a relatively successful one, which now holds a significant history for the forest industry.

In 1924, the Aleza Lake Experiment Station opened east of Prince George, B.C., where different research projects began, focusing on soil types and trees. The objectives of the experiment station were related to forest management (particularly growth and mortality of white spruce and true fir), soils, and spatial planning. However, after 38 years of operation the Aleza Lake Experiment Station was formally closed in 1963 due to budget restrictions. Though it lay dormant for a number of years, permanent sample plots were re-measured during the 1980s.

In 1992, the forest was officially re-opened with a new name – the Aleza Lake Research Forest. The Ministry of Forests and Range agreed to a long-term loan of records from the Aleza Lake Experiment Station and the Aleza Lake Research Forest to the Northern BC Archives. These records include over 12 bankers boxes of materials, including > 35 cartographic items, > 220 photographic items, electronic files, and textual records (including original field survey notebooks for the ALES permanent sample plots) as well as the original management and working plans created by Percy Barr, the head of the Research Division of the B.C. Forest Branch. Other records of note include a guestbook of those who visited the site from 1929 to 1992 and historical weather data from the region dating back to 1927.

My project consisted of creating a database for the records, repairing and encapsulating cartography, digitizing many photographs and slides, and cleaning the textual records (this consisted of a HEPA vacuum cleaner, a blue lab coat, a fume hood, a surgical mask, an iPod, and a lot of patience!). Throughout this project, I was under the supervision of Ramona Rose and Erica Hernandez, who expounded upon me their experiences and insights into the wide world of archival work. Their help was invaluable throughout my work term as I re-housed photographs and slides, cartographic records, and textual records into acid-free folders and the like.

Though I did have an entertaining and educational field trip to the Aleza Lake Research Forest with Melanie Karjala, Project Coordinator for the Aleza Lake Research Forest Society, the other interesting part of my project was sorting through historical photographs, which were scanned into the database for online viewing. Perhaps the most interesting was a photograph of two men pulling a fake moose up a hill! There were also numerous maps that are quite fragile, or torn and creased. I was shown how to apply document repair tape to tears, and after several practice runs, this tape was applied successfully to fix the Aleza Lake maps.

The Aleza Lake Research Forest records, including photographs and slides, will be available to the public and online in the near future, and a presentation to promote the historical records took place on October 11, 2007 in the Bentley Centre. In addition to Melanie, Erica, and Ramona, I'd like to thank Harry Coates, Dr. Kathy Lewis (UNBC), Lynn Parent of the Ministry of Forests and Range, Mike Jull (Manager of the ALRF), and the Aleza Lake Research Forest Society. As well, the Northern BC Archives and the Aleza Lake Research Forest Society would like to extend a large thank you to the Young Canada Works in Heritage Organizations Program, the Department of Canadian Heritage, and the Canadian Council of Archives for their generous funding assistance towards this project.



From the Northern BC Archives catalogue:

Aleza Lake Research Forest Archival Records, Accession Number 2007.1 consisting of 3.71 m of textual records plus 48 slides, 39 maps, 3 blueprints, 176 photographs and 5 computer disks. Start Date 1919, End Date 1998.

Created in 1912, the Ministry of Forests and Range, then known as the Department of Lands, recommended strong research programs towards further development of the forest industry in British Columbia. In 1923, research activities were implemented, and at that time, Assistant Chief Forester Bob St. Clair recommended the development of forest experiment stations. In 1924, the Aleza Lake Experiment Station opened east of Prince George, where different research projects began.

By 1930, the Research Division was the most active throughout Canada. However, due to significant cutbacks during the Depression years, the loss of key figures occurred; many of whom were central to the success of the Research Division, such as Percy M. Barr, who headed the Division. After 38 years of operation, the Aleza Lake Experiment Station was formally closed in 1963 and all remaining buildings were removed or destroyed. However, now re-named as the Aleza Lake Forest Reserve, the Department of Lands and Forests transferred the reserve to the Prince George Forest District for a ten-year period.

After this timeframe expired, no further review was given and the Aleza Lake Forest Reserve was considered abandoned until 1981 when some permanent sample plots were found and re-measured. Through their diligence, John Revel and Harry Coates – both employees of the B.C. Forest Service at the time, re-measured these plots knowing the significance of past experiments conducted at the Research Forest. Coates had also retained the original data from the permanent sample plots. Coates and Revel were both key figures in having the Research Forest re-opened because of their knowledge of previous experiments conducted before the Experiment Station was closed.

In 1984, by Order-In-Council, the Aleza Lake Forest Reserve was amalgamated with the Purden Forest Reserve. In the late 1980s there was a push for the Research Forest to be re-opened because of its potential for forest management research and demonstration. As a result, the Aleza Lake Steering Committee was formed in 1990, consisting of representatives from the Ministry of Forests; Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks; and Northwood Pulp and Timber Limited. In 1992, the Research Forest was reopened with a management and working plan in place and was officially renamed the Aleza Lake Research Forest. In 2001 the forest became the fourth university research forest in British Columbia.

The Aleza Lake Research Forest is now managed by the Aleza Lake Research Forest Society, a partnership between the University of Northern British Columbia, University of British Columbia, one delegated representative from the B.C. Ministry of Forests and Range, Prince George Regional office, and a delegated representative alternating between the B.C. Ministry of Environment, Prince George office. Today, the central mandate of the Research Forest is to provide multidisciplinary programs focusing on partial-cutting harvesting systems, biological diversity, climate change, and environmental monitoring in small forest tenures.

This collection contains significant materials covering a wide range of topics related to forest research and forest management practices in central British Columbia from the 1920s to the 1980s with the bulk of the materials dating from 1924 to 1963. Records include early surveys and descriptions of the Upper Fraser area, some unpublished scientific reports, communications, administrative and technical reports, timber sale records, photographs of the station dating from its inception, photographs of the Young Men's Forestry Training Program situated at Aleza Lake in 1936, early maps and plans of the Research Forest, historical meteorological registers from the area, and general forestry-related reports and publications.

The most significant records include the Experimental Plot files containing the original field notebooks dating from 1928 to 1958 that record research data noting locations of the experimental plots, growth and mortality data of white spruce and true fir from 1928 to 1958, soil types, and sample plots from the surrounding areas of Hutton, Penny, and Foreman. The collection also contains some records related to the re-emergence of the Aleza Lake Research Forest (ALRF) in the 1980s - 1990s.



### **FHABC WEB SITE AND ONLINE NEWSLETTERS**

The FHABC has a modest web site until something more ambitious can be created. The URL is <http://fhabcinfo.googlepages.com/home>  
Some back issues of the FHABC newsletter are online courtesy of the MoFR library, at [http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfd/Library/lib\\_Forest\\_History\\_Newsletter.htm](http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfd/Library/lib_Forest_History_Newsletter.htm)  
That link is also given on our web site.

## PRINCE GEORGE AREA CHRONOLOGY

by R.B. Carter

Presented to a CIF meeting at Prince George, December 3, 1955

- 1910 First sawmill at South Fort George, called Fort George Lumber (George McLaughlin).
- 1913 B.C. Forest Branch office at Tete Jaune Cache.  
Sawmills at Fraser Flats and Peden's Hill (Cook and Peden).
- 1914 Smith Bros. set up a mill at Salmon River which was later taken over by Alexander and moved to Dewey.
- George Hammond operated a small mill at central Fort George (V. Brown was the manager).
- Foley, Welch and Stewart – Grand Trunk Pacific Railway contractors – operated portable mills (McPeak Brothers) and made scow lumber at Tete Jaune Cache and rough lumber for construction.
- 1915 The pioneer Eagle Lake Sawmills started up in 1915 on the Willow River.
- 1919 Martin Cairns and a partner named Blaine supplied ties to the Canadian National Railway.
- McMillan and Chappell were also in the tie business. Later contracts were given to other operators on the line west of Vanderhoof (William Coop and George Ogsten).
- 1920 The Bashaw mill started up at Sinclair Mills. Wally Jaeck set up at Cariboo Station, just west of McBride.
- Roy Spurr, Tom Wall, and Hugh McKenzie had a mill at Penny which later became the Red Mountain Lumber Co. Ltd.
- 1921 - 1931 Some 13 sawmills were active in the Fort George District along the CNR.
- 1945 Activity increased after World War II, with some 350 mills in operation.
- 1955 Now we have 772 sawmills and 100 planer mills working in the area.



## **CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF FORESTRY NEWS**

Scott Scholefield, Planning Forester with BC Timber Sales in Prince George, donated two boxes of CIF Cariboo Section files to the Northern BC Archives last fall. The material dates from the formation of the section and provides many important insights into the state of forest management in central B.C. in the 1950s and early 1960s.

In addition to the section minutes, correspondence, and membership lists are some valuable correspondence to and from people such as provincial minister Ray Williston, federal ministers, and even Prime Minister Lester Pearson. Some of these items are Cariboo Section business, some are national CIF business. The Cariboo Section hosted the national AGM early in its lifetime.

Forestry Chronicle back issues now online and accessible to CIF members, see:

<http://pubs.nrc-cnrc.gc.ca/tfc/TFC.html>

### **RECENT PUBLICATIONS**

Hak, Gordon H. 2007. Capital and labour in the British Columbia forest industry, 1934-74. UBC Press, Vancouver, B.C. ISBN 978-0-7748-1308-2, paperback. \$29.95. 258 p.

Murphy, Peter J., R.W. Udell, R.E. Stevenson, and T.W. Peterson. 2007. A hard road to travel: land, forests and people in the Upper Athabasca Region. Published by the Foothills Model Forest, Hinton, Alberta and the Forest History Society, Durham, North Carolina. ISBN 978-1-896585-10-9, hardcover. \$42.95. ISBN 978-1-896585-11-6, paperback. \$29.95. 306 p.

Sherwood, Jay. 2007. Surveying central British Columbia: a photojournal of Frank Swannell, 1920-1928. UBC Press, Vancouver, B.C. ISBN 978-0-7726-5742-8, paperback. \$39.95. 192 p.

### **OBITUARY**

CHARLES (CHARLIE) MANLIUS JOHNSON; 1936 - 2007

Charlie Johnson died unexpectedly in St. Paul's Hospital, Vancouver on December 29, 2007 surrounded by his family. He was a generous father, friend, and colleague. He left the B.C. Forest Service in 1988 to found Pacific Regeneration Technologies (PRT) a forest nursery company. He is survived by Sue, his wife of 45 years, children Tom of Queen Charlotte City and Karen of Yellowknife, and five grandchildren. Donations may be made to the Vancouver Island Cancer Clinic or UBC Faculty of Forestry (Loon Lake Research Forest). A Celebration of Life will be held in the spring when Charlie's beloved rhododendron garden is in bloom.

## ALAN R. FRASER

by Jack Ker

Fraser and Frazer are surnames of Scotland and Ireland. "The name was originally de Frisselle, de Fresliere, or de Fresel [as if from a place in France] and Frisall or Frisell is still the common pronunciation in Tweeddale - the first Scots home of the family - and in Lothian. The name then became Fraissier or strawberry bearer, probably from the adoption of the flower of the fraisse, strawberry, as part of the armorial bearing (Black, Cottle)." (Sears, E.R., Family names of the island of Newfoundland, p. 177).

Alan R. Fraser was a forestry graduate of UBC, a year or two after me, who joined the Canadian Army as an engineer in WWII and fought in the Italian campaign, where he lost a leg. Upon his return to civilian life he was employed as a research forester by the B.C. Forest Service, Economics Division, in Victoria. There our desks were back-to-back. One day he received a letter from Professor A.B. Recknagel, then the acting head of the UBC Department of Forestry, inviting Alan to join the teaching staff there. Alan read this letter, then threw it to me. I read it and said to Alan "If you are not interested, I am!"

Having been through WWII and lost a leg, Alan was more interested in job security than new challenges. He was not interested in the job at UBC so I applied - and got it. Alan was an excellent forest mensurationist and statistician. He remained with the B.C. Forest Service until retirement, when he looked after his ailing wife for a number of years, with the assistance of his family. Both Alan and his wife have since passed away.

Early one summer around 1946 Alan was one of a field party re-measuring forest study plots at Bickley Bay on the north side of East Thurlow Island. One of our field assistants was Nicholas Koerner, a younger son of Walter Koerner of the Alaska Pine Company. Nicholas was a big, awkward lad, with absolutely no interest in practical things, nor in forestry. We were living in a tent camp at Bickley Bay where everyone was expected to do their fair share of the chores.

At first Nicholas assumed that someone else would carry his lunch to the worksite; it was quickly pointed out to him that each person carried his own lunch! As night fell, the gas lamp had to be lit. I am sure that Nicholas had never seen one before, and he was startled by the way it flared up when first lit. But he was encouraged to try his hand at this task, and eventually got around to performing it.

But Nicholas' ineptitude in the woods was unimaginable. To reach the study plots we first walked up an old logging road built around the turn of the century as a skid road for the oxen, then used to haul the logs from the forest. Some of the skid logs, placed so many feet apart, still remained. Our trail to one plot led off at an angle from the skid road. Returning to camp, we followed the trail to where it intersected the skid road. One day Nicholas was standing on a log overlooking the skid road and hallooing to those ahead of him, for he did not recognize the skid road which lay at his feet!

Alan decided he would explore the principle of learning with Nicholas after supper. He said that he understood that Nicholas owned a car (Nicholas owned a Chrysler convertible). Then Alan continued: "Suppose you were out driving one day and had a flat tire; would you be able to change it?" "No," replied Nicholas. "Then what would you do?" asked Alan.

"Oh, I would flag down a passing motorist and ask him to change it for me!" replied Nicholas. "And would you watch to see how he did it?" asked Alan. "Oh, no. I'm not interested in learning anything like that!" replied Nicholas. Yet he could rhyme off the various symphonies and who composed them!

Later that summer I was to take a forest mensuration crew aboard the launch *BC Surveyor* to undertake a project in Smith Inlet, on the north coast of the mainland, while Alan was to undertake another study at the Cowichan Lake Experiment Station of the B.C. Forest Service. We were expected to select two men each from the summer assistants employed at Bickley Bay. Neither of us opted to take Nicholas for the rest of that summer – I needed two rugged fellows for the wet weather and steep hillsides we were to encounter in Smith Inlet, nor did Alan ask Nicholas to help him at Cowichan Lake!

That fall we were kidded by our boss, Finn McKinnon, the head of the Forest Economics Division, that neither of us need apply for work in the future at Alaska Pine, the company headed by Nicholas' father, Walter Koerner.



## **FHABC MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS**

A reminder that the expiration date of your membership is shown above and to the right of your name on the envelope. Renewal forms will be sent out with this issue to those whose memberships expired at the end of 2007.

This newsletter is the official organ of the Forest History Association of British Columbia. Please submit newsletter material and send changes of address to the Editor: John Parminter, # 3 – 130 Niagara Street, Victoria BC V8V 1E9 Phone (250) 384-5642 home or (250) 952-4123 office. E-mail: fhabc\_info@telus.net

Membership in the association is \$10 yearly, or \$45 for five years. Please send dues to the Treasurer: Art Walker, 564 Oliver Street, Victoria BC V8S 4W3 Phone: (250) 598-4455 E-mail: jaws564@telus.net

The President: Stan Chester, can be reached at 5686 Keith Road, West Vancouver BC V7W 2N5 Phone (604) 921-9880. E-mail: stanchester@shaw.ca