



Published by the Forest History Association of British Columbia

No. 90

Victoria, British Columbia

February 2011

Website: <http://fhabc.org/>

EDITOR'S COMMENTS

In celebration of the UN's International Year of the Forests, the FHABC presents Issue 90, the "Poetry" issue of the newsletter. Being both a forester and a poet, I enthusiastically agreed with Stan Chester's suggestion to include some forestry-related poetry in #90. But first, we start off with a synopsis of our AGM, followed by tributes to both George Dashwood and one billion trees.



FHABC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING by Stan Chester

The 2010 Annual meeting of the Forest History Association of British Columbia was held in Mission, BC at the Leisure Centre on Saturday, October 2, 2010. The meeting started at 10:50 AM with 15 members and guests present.

After welcoming remarks, introductions, and confirmation of a quorum, reports were given by the Newsletter Editor (Barbara Coupé), Treasurer (Art Walker), and the President (Stan Chester). In summary, Barb hopes to broaden the content to include more photographs, poems, and other forest related topics; the FHABC is in satisfactory financial condition; and the Association managed to complete most of its scheduled programs.

All of the existing Directors with the exception of George Brandak agreed to stand for re-election. George has just retired from UBC. David Brownstein who teaches at UBC was nominated from the floor and agreed to allow his name to stand as a Director. After three calls, there were no further nominations, and the President declared the following elected to serve as Directors for the period 2010-2012.

Stan Chester
Art Walker
Barbara Coupé
Mike Apsey
John Parminter

David Brownstein
Edo Nyland
Hubert Bunce
Mike Meagher

There was much discussion as to how we can establish forest history groups in the Interior. Suggestions included:

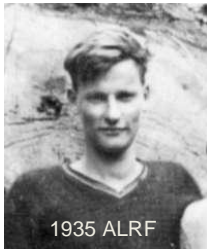
- the establishment of specific history projects in areas such as Prince George,

- continuing to rotate our Annual Meetings between the Coast and Interior,
- recruitment of retiring RPF members,
- attempting to obtain funding for at least one project in the Interior.

After lunch, Kim Allen, Director of Forest Management, District of Mission gave a presentation on the history of the Mission Tree Farm, its growth and changes since it was awarded in 1958, and the District's hopes and plans for the future. He then conducted a tour of the western part of the Tree Farm to showcase some of the harvesting and management practices used over the years. He pointed to the public's keen awareness and interest in all aspects of forest management on the tree farm. He also provided insight into the unique land use challenges arising from the area's intensive recreational use.

Many of those on the tour thought Kim had a "dream job"—being able to drive to work in a few minutes, living in a vibrant community, and being part of a thriving municipal government.

Please contact Stan Chester (stanchester@shaw.ca) with specific comments, concerns, and/or questions re the AGM.



GEORGE DASHWOOD, 1912 – 2010

"[He] experienced gaslight to lasers, hand falling trees on springboards to helicopter logging."

(Obituary, *PG Citizen*, Nov. 5, 2010)



During the 2009 Forest History Conference on the fieldtrip to the Upper Fraser communities (northeast of Prince George), George Dashwood provided the participants with a taste of real-time history. As Mike Jull described a men's work/youth camp located in the Aleza Lake Research Forest during the Depression, George's voice piped up, "Yeah, I know; I was there!" For many, this comment was a highlight of the conference. Sadly, George passed away on October 31, 2010. His full obituary may be viewed online at:

<http://legacy.princegeorgecitizen.com/obituaries/princegeorgecitizen/obituary.aspx?n=george-dashwood&pid=146416264>.

The following account is based on an article submitted to the BCFS Forest Centenary website (<http://www.bcfs100.ca/docs/pdf/2/292.pdf>) by George's children—Pearl Dashwood, Alice Holm, Stephanie Clifford, and George Dashwood (Jr.). Thanks to Mike Apsey for bringing this item to the Newsletter's attention (photos courtesy of the BCFS Centennial Website).

An Early BCFS Pioneer

George Dashwood recalled what was for him, the lowest point of the Depression. It was the moment when sitting on a stump, certain he was a good person and capable of hard work, he agonized, "Why won't anyone give me a job?"

George's luck changed in the spring of 1935. The B.C. Forest Service was a boon to him and many young men during the Dirty Thirties. When he was 23, he was hired to go the Interior of B.C. with a group of about 10 young men aged 16-25. They were to work at various projects the government felt needed doing in the forest. Having spent seven previous years learning to plant trees, cut and clear land, and fight fires in the Fraser Valley, George welcomed the opportunity to work near Prince George. He recalled that although fighting fires was risky, the whole thing was an adventure for all the young men.

Those experiences were over seven decades ago.

In September 2009, at age 97, he returned to the area as part of the FHABC 's history tour of the Upper Fraser. During the tour of the Aleza Lake area, George saw no evidence that he and his group, including forestry engineer Mike Gregg, had ever worked at McGregor Pass, Purden Lake and Aleza Lake. The bunkhouse the boys had shared at the side of the lake had disappeared, and the land that they cleared and logged had undergone a forest facelift.

He recalled that they often moved out of camp to live in tents closer to their work area, and he said packing and unpacking “those damn heavy” canvas tents was the worst chore of his whole time there. He remembered Mike Gregg as a very good mentor who taught the boys the use of the broad axe, log scaling, calculating tree heights, and tree identification.

They built bridges with huge logs and cables and constructed trails. Supplies were brought in from Sinclair Mills to the camp by canoes and back packs. George said they ate well; wrote and received letters; played cards; and on their day off—Sunday—, they swam and hiked. The job ended in mid-December. That winter George travelled back to the Fraser Valley on the “Please Go Easy” or “PG & E” Railway. He would have liked to have stayed longer. It has been many years since then, and in the piles of photographs in his little apartment today is a small picture of a young man taken at the time. It is George at Aleza Lake, standing tall and strong. His face is without lines, looking to the future.

“Long before the buzz words of ECO and environmentalist, his children and many young people learned from him the importance of education, of the need for respect and care of the environment, and the value of lifelong friendships.”

(Obituary, *PG Citizen*, Nov. 5, 2010).



MILESTONES

One Billion Trees Planted contributed by Stan Chester

The Brinkman Group of companies planted their one billionth tree in 2010. If these billion trees were arranged in a band 400 feet wide (10 by 10 feet spacing), they would circle the earth at the equator almost twice.

The Brinkman Group started about 40 years ago with a small tree planting contract in the Peace River country. That contract was soon followed by another. This company’s impact on reforestation and silviculture has been extensive not only in BC and Canada, but also globally. They pioneered planting with mixed-species plantings, developed concepts of micro-site planting, and created group protocols to optimize work productivity. Through technical and equipment innovations, they established and maintained high planting standards and helped develop policies (such as making the cost of reforestation part of total logging costs).

But the company has gone far beyond just planting of trees. They have contributed to such groups as Earth Systems (involved with the UN’s Clean Development Mechanism project in 2004), worked on urban ecosystem restoration, walked “biopathways,” provided forest resource management services to indigenous peoples, and helped farmers, wetland managers, and foresters with sustainable land use changes. Brinkman Reforestation has led the world in developing and promoting insight into the complex and immense challenges of sustaining and restoring the world’s forests.

Editor’s Note: Check out the company at <http://www.brinkmanforest.com/>. At the bottom of the web page is a link to the *Tree Planter’s Waltz*, a video that will get your head nodding and toes tapping: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jk-jifbpcww&feature=player_embedded. Delightful!



POETRY IN THE WOODS

Gerry Furney

Port McNeill poet, logger, and former town mayor, Gerry Furney's collection of poems, *Popcorn for Breakfast (Poetry for People Who Would Not Normally Read Poetry)*, was published in 2010 and reflects on BC's coastal logging industry in times gone by. Gerry has graciously allowed us to reprint some of his efforts in the newsletter. (Take an online peek at his book on the following *Google Books* website: <http://books.google.ca/books?id=QUbNpMlrp3YC&lpg=PR8&dq=%22popcorn%20for%20breakfast%22%20book&pg=PR8#v=onepage&q=%22popcorn%20for%20breakfast%22%20book&f=false>).

CAULK BOOTS (I) (p. 46)

It's sad that men in fancy suits
 Don't know too much about caulk boots,
 Except for those who used to work
 In logging jobs where dangers lurk.
 Those are the folk who understand
 The challenge working forest land.
 Where slip'ry slopes control your speed,
 You quickly realize you need
 The kind of boots with spiky soles,
 As loggers carry out their roles,
 When falling, bucking, loading out,
 Production's what it's all about.
 When they wear out, replace each spike
 And they will grip, the way you like.
 So take good care of your caulk boots,
 A first-class logger to your roots.
 Please keep them oiled, well polished too
 And they will take good care of you.

DYNAMITE (p. 55)

A down-to-earth old logging camp,
 With cold winter weather so damp.
 A night to be in from the cold,
 With great B.S. stories being told.
 The pot-bellied stove was a treat,
 It gave off such comforting heat.
 And sitting around were the crew,
 The bulk of them pot-bellied too.
 Old Rocky the blaster told tales
 On the years he spent riding the rails.
 And then he described dynamite
 And said that 'twas easy to light.
 Powder sticks burned just like wood,
 For lighting fires, were just as good.

[continued on next page]

CAULK BOOTS (II) (p. 47)

Caulk boots
 The proud badge of a logger.
 Indispensable.
 The only safe footwear
 For those who would conquer the forest
 In the battles for wood.
 Climbing the side-hills,
 Clambering over stumps and logs,
 Crushing the salal
 And stomping the devil's club.
 They made it possible for the logger
 To work safely,
 In one of the most demanding,
 Dangerous jobs anywhere.
 The best boots were made in Vancouver
 By the Pierre Paris Company.
 The Sunday routine in Camp
 Was to spend the time
 Oiling and polishing the boots,
 Checking the sharpness of the spikes
 And replacing them if necessary
 In gratitude for keeping us,
 Uninjured and alive.
 The fallers, rigging crews
 And the dancing boom crew
 Balancing on slippery logs in the booming grounds
 Could not survive without them.
 They pronounced caulk as Cork
 But I never questioned it.
 After all, it reminded me of the people of my
 hometown,
 Cork, Ireland
 Tough and reliable.

A young lad we just knew as Pat,
 Said, "I just do not believe that."
 Slipped out the door, said, "I'll be back.
 Gone for sticks from the powder shack."
 Came back with four sticks in his hand
 And close by the stove took a stand.
 Old Rocky with face turning white,
 Said "Careful, that is dynamite.
 Being careless with that stuff is dumb,
 Could blow us all to kingdom come."
 Said Pat, "I'll throw them in the stove
 To see if they will burn, by Jove."
 And as he bent to throw them in,
 Old Rocky made an awful din
 "I stand for this madness no more."
 He was the first man out the door.



(This poem is based on a talk with Pat Brown who was the Pat in this poem. The blaster was bravely telling the crew that they used to use sticks of dynamite to light fires at lunchtime to toast their sandwiches).

Justin Foster

A creative writer, UNBC graduate student, and seasonal forestry worker, Justin has generously given permission for the newsletter to print the following poems. Both "lumberman (9)" and "tracks" reveal Justin's skill at observation and deep sense of place toward the natural world. In 2009, his long poem *from the melt*—which looks at both cityscape and landscape personified through the experiences of birch—won the Barry McKinnon Chapbook prize (<http://pgpod.blogspot.com/2009/05/becoming-birch.html>). Thanks for sharing, Justin.

lumberman (9)

- 1)
 still a day's work
 in the pines
- 2)
 winter down
 some back-road
 just north of Quesnel
 no one for miles
 stopping here
 the heft of fresh snow
 on needles and bare branches
 a land in waiting
- 3)
 with leather gloves
 and steady hands
 a lumberman
 like his father
 fells another tree



[continued on next page]

4)
there is a moment
between sound
and impact

5)
a moment

6)
looking up
knee deep
the wind
on edge
standing there
just waiting

7)
from this wood
he longs to build
a home

shape a cane
for when his back
has weakened
a chair to sit in
a table to work from

carve a birdhouse
from the smooth
heartwood
of these trees

whittle a family
in perfect
proportions

8)
he is careful
not to crush
the saplings
and young pine

9)
a lumberman
thinking of his father
while limbing the wood
by hand

tracks

wearied boots brushing
snow aside, lips tingle
from tobacco smoke

caught in the long wispy threads
of beard. a dense cold and the sound
of wood splitting, crisp, echoed. towering

white spruce, paper birch and lodgepole pine
cloaked in hoarfrost. the weight
of the maul in tempered hands

a juneberry in the snag of a crow.
looking at wood scattered, aware
of the impact, concessions

made, a carefully weighed narrative
he gathers, arms swollen
lungs heaving, full to the chest.

a breath against mountain air
while thin ice forms
on pale hair shrouding lips.

he knows the context of brevity
the worth of so few words.
and the value of this, the pieces

collected, stacked and stored
ready, waiting for the trail to open
budding and bracken unfurled.

only by the sound, the twirl
of smoke and footprints left
lingering in snow.





RENEWAL NOTES

This note from Art Walker, our treasurer: “Our bank is getting very fussy about cheques that are not made out correctly. They must be made out to the holder of that bank account, i.e. **The Forest History Association of B.C.** *NOT* the FHABC, Forest History Association, etc.” Thanks for the update, Art.

For those of you who receive your newsletter by regular mail, your membership expiry date is now on the address label. If this date is incorrect, let us know. And if you want to help reduce the Association’s postal bill, please make sure we have your email address. Thank you.



BOOKS, LINKS, and SUCH

1. “Initiative to Preserve Canada's Forest History” (<http://www.niche-canada.org/node/9785>). Congratulations to director David Brownstein on his successful bid to lead this effort.
2. “Forest History Society of Ontario: Publications Database”:
<http://www.ontarioforesthistorv.ca/publications/>.
3. A Life in the Woods - Oral Histories from the West Kootenay Forests:
<http://touchstonesnelson.ca/exhibitions/forest/index.html>.
4. Forest History Association of Alberta Newsletter: <http://albertaforesthistorv.ca/newsletters/index.html>.
5. International Forest Film Festival in Celebration of the International Year of Forests 2011 (<http://www.un.org/en/events/iyof2011/>):
“to raise awareness on the importance of forests, their relationship with people and the planet we share, and consequently, to inspire a sense of personal responsibility/stewardship for a greener, more equitable, sustainable future” (<http://www.jhfestival.org/forestfestival/index.htm>).
6. See the NiCHE site for other tidbits: <http://www.niche-canada.org/foresthistorv>.
7. *Excellence in Cone and Seed Services: The First 50 Years*. British Columbia Forest Service, Tree Seed Centre (http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hti/publications/tsc/TreeSeedReport_web_August.pdf) available at the Ministry of Forests, Mines, and Lands, Tree Improvement Branch: http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hti/publications_main.htm.
8. *Forests, Power and Policy: The Legacy of Ray Williston* (The Caitlin Press, 1997) with the late Eileen Williston. A personal biography of Ray Williston, former MLA for Fort George, B.C. Minister of Education from 1954 to 1956, and Minister of Lands, Forests and Water Resources from 1956 to 1972 (<http://www.quintessentialwriters.com/keller.html#forests>).
9. Check out the National Film Board site for online films about forestry. Here’s the link for results using “forestry” as a keyword: http://www.nfb.ca/explore-by/keyword/?page=13&tag_range=all&lang=en.
10. Also on the NFB site, a short 1953 French Canadian logging folktale: *Ti-Jean Goes Lumbering* by Jean Palady; http://www.nfb.ca/film/ti_jean_goes_lumbering. No chainsaws or feller-bunchers here! “Ten-year-old Ti-Jean's feats dwarf those of even the strongest lumberjack as he fells timber,

cuts, carries and piles heavy logs, and comes out the victor in every contest. This short French-Canadian folk tale portrays typical life and work in a winter logging camp.”

11. Appropriate for this poetic issue, the book *Working the Woods, Working the Sea: An Anthology of Northwest Writing*, edited by Finn Wilcox and Jerry Gorsline (Empty Bowl Press; 2008), may interest some of our members—even though it focuses on American writers. According to the publisher: “*Working the Woods* “is a unique collection of poetry and prose by Gary Snyder, Tom Jay, Holly Hughes, Tim McNulty, Jim Dodge and many more of the North Pacific Coast. Deeply connected to the earth and sea through physical work, these writers speak eloquently of the beauty and power of their environments and of their shared labor and sense of community. With its wit, song and wisdom, this book will take you out to sea and ‘back to the land’” (<http://www.spdbooks.org/Product/9781929355402/working-the-woods-working-the-sea-an-anthology-of-northwest-writing.aspx>).



REQUESTS

The FHABC is always looking for volunteers and new executive members. So if you are interested in participating in promoting and celebrating BC’s forest history, please give us a shout. We would love to hear from you. And don’t forget to check out the BC Forest Service Centenary website: www.bcfs100.ca.

Editor’s Note: *STORIES, STORIES, STORIES* ... please send me your stories (or maybe even poems)! The newsletter is **ALWAYS** thirsty for more forestry-related tales. Everybody loves a good story; everybody has a story to tell. And forestry has great stories. Most importantly, **these stories can be as varied as the profession itself**. Don’t worry about your writing skills—I will help you.

Plus, please send me any suggestions regarding the format of the newsletter. I have tried to “dress up” this issue with a few pictures and graphics. Let me know what you think.



This newsletter is the official publication of the Forest History Association of British Columbia. Please submit newsletter material and send changes of address to the Editor: Barbara Coupé, 1067 Heritage Crescent, Prince George B.C. V2M 6X2; Phone: (250) 562-1051; E-mail: bjcoupe@telus.net.

Membership is \$15 yearly or \$40 for three years. Please send dues to the Treasurer: Art Walker, 564 Oliver Street, Victoria B.C. V8S 4W3; Phone: (250) 598-4455; E-mail: aws564@telus.net. **NOTE:** Cheques **must** be made out to **The Forest History Association of B.C.** NOT the FHABC, Forest History Association, etc.

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Back issues (courtesy of the BC Ministry of Forests, Mines and Lands [MoFML] library): http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/hfd/Library/lib_Forest_History_Newsletter.htm. (Issues 40-84 are available at the MoFML Library website; #21-84 on the FHABC website, <http://fhabc.org/>).

Image Sources

Boot: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-ca/images/results.aspx?qu=boot#ai:MC900440408>

Dynamite: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-ca/images/results.aspx?qu=dynamite#ai:MC900371034>

Logger: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/images/occupations-CM079001962.aspx?qu=loggers#ai:MC900282160|mt:1>

Snow prints: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-ca/images/results.aspx?qu=footprints#ai:MP900407158>