What does this code mean?
By David Brownstein, FHABC Webmaster
The Museum of Vancouver recently received donated the pictured 5" x 13" Douglas fir beam-end. The block was cut off the end of a 20’ beam, one of 64 timbers salvaged from an historic building near the Toronto waterfront that was demolished in 2018. While the end with the code went to the MOV, the rest of the beam and associated timber was repurposed as part of a grand staircase at the first U.S. Roots store (Boston, MA), and for the large table bases at the Roots Cabin store in Toronto.

While the end with the code went to the MOV, the rest of the beam and associated timber was repurposed as part of a grand staircase at the North Vancouver Museum & Archives Community History Centre, Photographs, maps, video and museum objects that explore our relationship with the North Shore forests.

2020
Jan 16-18 Annual TLA Convention & Trade show Vancouver BC

Next Issue: Dec 2019
- About H.R. Robertson – inventor of the log raft. By E Andersen
- Experiences of a young forestry student in the Okanagan in the 1950s. By M. Meagher
- An International Forester story, edited by David Morgan, and ……
- Your Story? Contact us at newsletter.editor@fhabc.org

Upcoming Events

2019
Sep 22-28: BC National Forest Week (many local events)
Sep 27-29 FHABC Annual General Meeting
to be held in Kamloops. details at the bottom of the page
Sep 30-Oct 2 BC Museums Association Convention: Prince George.
Oct 6-9: Canadian Institute of Forestry: National Conference and AGM; Pembroke, Ontario.

Ongoing: THE FOREST An exhibition at the North Vancouver Museum & Archives Community History Centre, Photographs, maps, video and museum objects that explore our relationship with the North Shore forests.

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Issue #103 Sept 2019
look for #104 Dec 2019
Ideas deadline Oct 1
AGM Sep 27-29 at Kamloops Details Page 8

Fall Issue

From the President
By Richard Dominy

Come to the woods, for here is rest.
(John Muir)

Welcome to the Fall issue of the newsletter. There was so much great material to put together! Congratulations to the newsletter team listed on page 8. Some of the highlights:

- Lots to look forward to in the future, there are many articles starting in this edition but will be continued in future editions.
- There are links in the newsletter to articles too long for the newsletter, so these items are located on the website (International Foresters of BC, Eric Robinson family history);
- Part 2 of Settlement and Logging at Quatsino, BC;
- Book reviews – Burke and Wieden, A History, From Flunky to Faller (thanks to David Morgan and Dave Florence);

Membership – there is a new membership form posted on the website; you will be notified via email regarding your membership if you have had an oversight and it is expired for close to expiry.

Membership payments can now be accepted electronically; this is explained on the website.

AGM: PM: Field Tour Leader/speaker: Trevor Jeanes, who has 65 years experience in the area, including the Kamloops BCFS fire sector, industry activities, multiple responsibilities and resulting insights.

Sunday September 29th
- Group activity if wanted.

Friday September 27th
2:00-4:30pm Tour Kamloops Fire Centre, 4000 Airport Rd
7 pm Dinner, Brownstone Restaurant, 118 Victoria St
Speaker: TBA

Saturday September 28th
10 AM: AGM @ Thompson Rivers University Executive Centre, 805 TRU Way
- PM: Field Tour Leader/speaker: Trevor Jeanes, who has 65 years experience in the area, including the Kamloops BCFS fire sector, industry activities, multiple responsibilities and resulting insights.

September 27th - 29th, 2019
Kamloops AGM Details

Accommodation: Best Western Plus
660 Columbia St W, Kamloops, BC
(250) 374-7878
Group Name: Forest History Association of BC

Log for a canoe in Sitka ……..Pg 6
Eric Robinson Memoir ……..Pg 7
Book Review-Flunky to Faller…Pg7
Mystery log code………….Pg 8
Kamloops AGM details……..Pg 8
Upcoming Events…………….Pg 8

Upcoming Newsletter articles
By Dave Florence, newsletter.editor@fhabc.org

Hiding in plain sight in our newsletter files have been two sets of articles that we’re looking forward to publishing in this and upcoming issues.

One is a set of four articles by Gerry Burch, a founding member of FHABC and well known retiree with a distinguished career as a BC forester.

“An Ode To Bill—An Unsung Hero of BC Forestry!” is a tribute to Bill Moore, his friend and contemporary.

“Forest Management and Silvicultural Planning” provides some of Gerry’s views on forest management from the 1950s through to this century.

“BCFP Resource Planning Group and why it formed” offers fascinating insights of logging decisions in the pre-Chilcoyot Sound era.

“A Dogout Canoe at Sitka, Alaska” shares an interesting story about how a BC log became an Alaskan Tlinget canoe in 1967.

The latter story is on page 6 of this issue, and the other three are planned for the next three newsletter issues.

A second set of articles, entitled “The International Foresters of BC” was provided to FHABC by the late George Nagle with assistance from many colleagues. (Sadly, George passed away in 2014.) This series features one introductory document, too long for this newsletter, that can be read or downloaded from our website.

We have seven (so far) follow-on “international” articles written by other BC foresters with out-of-country experience. I plan to publish these in seven future newsletters beginning with #104 in December.

You can find an extract of the 16-page overview document and more information about the BC International Foresters series on page 2.

Another long document we received (35 pages) is a family history of Eric Robinson, written auto-biographically and completed in 2012 prior to his passing in 2015. It was edited this year by Bruce Devitt, RPF Ret., and Jeanne Haug. We have posted it on our website, it can be read online. An extract appears on page 7.

We have received several other articles that will appear in future newsletters, but more are always welcome so that we can meet our goal of at least three newsletters per year.
Grizzlies are in a class all their own among omnivores, but tigers, lions and leopards are bigger than cougars, and more willing to hunt a man. Even a grizzly would probably yield the trail to a rhino or an elephant. The field “work safe” environment of the tropics presented many challenges, and claimed many victims. Even so, the forest environments held far fewer risks to project success than the political and institutional environments. BC forest sector people have been on site for practically every political upheaval in the world since WWII. Examples include the foundation and separation of India and Pakistan, the stormy birth of Bangladesh, military takeovers in Indonesia and the Philippines, the fall of the Shah of Iran, the Biafran war, the creation and destruction of corrupt “rulers for life” all over Africa, plus revolutions and counter-revolutions across Central and South America. As Gerry Burch often said — “trees don’t have problems, people have problems.” The BC people in international forestry confront very special people problems.

Book Review: From Flunky to Faller

Stories of a West Coast Logger, by Robert Alan Williams, Book 1 Self-Published, 2018

forward to reading Book 2 "From Graves of Loggers Past", 2019, and reviewing it in a future issue.

Robert is a retired west coast logger who set out to write a book about loggers from an insider’s perspective. Book 1 follows a fictional character’s life from living in a float camp with an A-Frame logging family up through working most of the jobs on old-growth cable-logging shows such as whistle punk, chokerman, hook tender, and finally faller. The lead character tells his stories in first person, and he is so convincing, it felt more like reading an auto-biography than fiction. I have read many books about loggers, but none have taught me as much as this book about the lifestyle, terminology, hopes, fears, motivations, strengths, and weaknesses of this rare breed of men who have worked in BC logging camps.

Even the glossary is fun to read; it clarifies many interesting BC Coastal logging terms. I highly recommend this book for anyone wanting to learn more about BC loggers’ work and their lives.
Distinguished career in forestry, Gerry has remained a longtime participant and author for FHABC and many other publications. Read more about Gerry’s publications at the UBC Library.

The Chief Forester of a company receives many odd requests, some troublesome and some interesting. So, in the fall of 1966, a fairly large forester appeared at my office door, requesting a meeting about a very important project for Alaska. He explained that although he was the Chief Forester for the Alaska Pulp and Paper Company, he was representing the Organization Committee for the Alaska Centennial Committee, which was trying to recreate the centennial signing of the sale of Alaska from the Russian government to the United States. Apparently, this signing occurred in 1867 and involved an American destroyer, a Russian gunboat and a native contingent in a war canoe.

Editor’s note by Dave Florence: I contacted the museum in Sitka and the director there told me that Herman Kitka’s son confirmed he was on the boat trip that picked up the log in 1966, and that the original canoe is still on display at the Sitka museum.

The forester’s name was Dick Herring, who eventually immigrated to Canada (B.C.), and was employed by Canfor in Chetwynd and their Head Forestry related records. By learning to carve such a canoe. Upon returning, they split the log in half-long-wise, and proceeded to carve the canoe. However, then the fishing season occurred and the crew abandoned the carving for a few months. A fire occurred while they were away, which damaged the partially carved canoe. So, a second season occurred and the crew went back to work. The canoe was completed in time for the Centennial celebration in Sitka, Alaska. I do not know if it ever made the Centennial Hall (under a canopy), in Sitka, Alaska. I do not know if it ever made the centennial celebration in Sitka, Alaska.

Eventually, after three trees were felled and bucked, a suitable log 55 feet by 5 feet was felled, and transported to the beach. I then informed Dick that BCFP would donate the log to his committee and the Forest Service would forego stumpage and royalty, and export fees, and if they would come and pick up the log.

To everyone’s surprise, a Tlingit chief from Sitka, Alaska, eventually arrived with his fishing boat in Port Renfrew, threw a tow line on the log and after 4 to 5 days, towed it to Sitka. But, the story does not end there! Herman returned to B.C., and after an introduction to the Thunderbird Park in Victoria, learned how to carve such a canoe. Upon returning, they split the log in half-long-wise, and proceeded to carve the canoe. However, then the fishing season occurred and the crew abandoned the carving for a few months. A fire occurred while they were away, which damaged the partially carved canoe. So, a second half of the log eventually became the canoe, which is now in Harrigan Centennial Hall (under a canopy), in Sitka, Alaska. I do not know if it ever made the Centennial celebration in Sitka harbor, but, it is a noble end to a noble tree and log!

Members: New or lapsed member? $15.00 annually, or three years for $40.00. To correspond by mail:
Forest History Association of B.C.
1288 Santa Maria Place
Victoria BC, Canada V8Z 6S5
Email: info@fhabc.org Website: fhabc.org

Please help the FHABC modernize our communications. If you are holding a paper copy of the newsletter, please update your email address.

Even better ... please opt for the online version and permit us to not mail you the black & white print version. Why?
1. Underlined texts link you to extra online information.
2. The online version is in colour. (Costs to produce physical copies and send them out in the post are high. Even if you still want to receive the B&W paper version, having your email address makes it easier to send out important announcements in between issues.)

So, please send us an email at info@fhabc.org, and state your preferences for newsletter delivery:
Online in colour, or paper in B&W by mail.

Those members whose membership expired this year on December 31st will be receiving an update reminder electronically or included in their next newsletter.

Note: The FHABC Board is considering an adjustment to membership fees such that those wishing to receive a mailed version of the newsletter will pay a larger fee than those opting for the email version.

An extract from BCFP magazine Mar Apr 2015. The full obit is in the International BC Foresters piece on our website.

George S. Nagle
BFF #339
1936 - May 17, 2014

George died at age 77 on May 17, 2014 at home. His childhood was spent in Manitoba. He earned his BSc from UBC in 1958 and was awarded the Mary in 1959. They travelled with their young family to Bangladesh where George worked from ‘61-‘63. They lived in Connecticut from ‘63-‘67 while George attended the Yale. He lived in Rome from ’71-’74 when George was working for Ford. George’s work took him to 28 countries over the years which he enjoyed immensely. He was a consultant primarily in tropical forestry, working for World Bank (OSA), U.N. FAO (Rome) and CIU (Ottawa).
In 1958 an A-frame logging show set up shop in the west end of Quatsino Sound. Keith Atwater of Atwater Logging ran the show and it involved a mixture of private (parts of the original Charles Nordstrom title) and Crown timber. Atwater was one of several independent contractors and A-frame loggers in Quatsino Sound in the 1950s. Atwater unfortunately went bankrupt during the show.

One of the neighbours included some of his private timber in this 1958 show and was stuck with a stumpage bill from the Crown, as a result of Atwater’s bankruptcy. A descendant who still resides on site maintains a lifelong distrust of loggers and many others.

A Quatsino neighbour of mine was in his early school years at the time and told me that an older tough guy dropped out of school to be the whistle punk for the logging show. Unfortunately, he wasn’t any good at blowing whistles and didn’t stay on.

The Quatsino Government Road, or Waggon Road from early days, was improved over time. In the 1960s cars and trucks used the road regularly. Section 4 (now Section 956) of the BC Highways Act granted the Ministry of Highways the authority to maintain and improve roads which had been established or improved with government funds. These “Section 4” roads and highways occur throughout BC and are often the subject of disagreements. This would also be the case with the Government Road in Quatsino.

In the 1920s hand crank telephone service came to Quatsino, replaced by dial telephones in 1964. In early 1973 Hydro power also came via submerged cables from Coal Harbour and thence over land. The poles and the often unregistered rights of way followed the Government Road with its mix of legal definitions and interpretations over the properties.

New owners of titles relied on selective interpretation to promote their theories of road-use. This often involved endorsing their rights while attempting to deny the road use rights of others. The Ministry of Highways office in Courtenay did not manage the issue effectively while the road disputes continued to fester. Over the years there were threats (legal and verbal), illegal gates, blockades, firearms drawn and calls to the police. MacMillan Bloedel and Powell River Ltd. owned two Timber licenses immediately behind the settlement of Quatsino. In addition they also started to acquire private lands and private forests in Quatsino as the lands were excellent for growing trees. MB logged their timber licenses and their private lands in 1973 and 1974 and during 1983 to 1987 and then sold the private lands in 1999. MB’s timber licences have reverted and now lie within TFL 6.

In 2002, a new owner (the author) logged a patch of remaining 1908 blowdown at the site of the former A-frame show on the original Charles Nordstrom title. The timbers consisted of hemlock, balsam, spruce, Douglas Fir, cedar and alder at 1500m3/ha. This volume was sold to Weyerhaeuser in Port McNeill. Roughly 100 loads were hauled on the Quatsino Government road to a local log dump.

The road dispute was much discussed during this logging operation. Oversized logging equipment was barged to the site as it was too wide and too tall to get past narrow bridges, fences, gardens, trees, shrubs, boulder walls, low wires and other assorted homemade and natural obstacles. Finally, landowners who disputed the road accepted private assurances of maintenance and did not attempt to stop log hauling. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Highways stayed hidden in their Courtenay office.

In 2007, more timber was logged and 1500 loads were hauled from the area which had been logged in 1958 on the Nordstrom title. This 50 year old hemlock and alder was thick at 800 m3/ha. The hemlock was sold to Northwest Hardwoods. Once again log hauling was not obstructed by the locals.

The resurrection of the Port Alice Pulp mill by MB in 2002 during a rare peak in pulp prices. Western Forest Products had shut the mill in the early 2000s and then entered bankruptcy protection. WFP kept the timber and the mill was sold by receiver to LaPointe Partners who operated for little more than a year. LaPointe cleaned out the inventory, deplanted the asset and flogged it. Neacel Specialty Cellulose took over in 2007 and today, over 10 years old, the mill is entering the third year of a temporary shutdown. A skeleton crew was kept working and the hope was that the mill had not been completely abandoned. However, in early March of 2019 a permanent closure was announced.

The three titles the author purchased from MB all original Charles Nordstrom lands—have been sold to neighbours. The sale proceeds were invested in lands elsewhere where there were fewer road disputes and neighbours. However, disputes and disagreements over these Quatsino Government roads continue.

The forests on the titles are unplanted, unmanaged and completely ignored. A recent visit showed healthy, dense hemlock and alder forest racing for the sky, waiting for the next time the forest has some value and the challenge of getting the logs to market is met. The author continues to own 320 acres of managed forest, mostly 30 to 35 year old hemlock and alder in Quatsino.

There have been a couple of articles in the FHABC newsletter about Quatsino Sound. “Born for the Job” and “A Chronological History of Rayonier.” Quatsino has a small museum run by volunteers. The publications “History of the Quatsino Colony” by George Nordstrom and “Quatsino Chronicle” 1895-2005 by Gwen Hansen are available at the museum. There are also small museums in Port Hardy, Coal Harbour, Port Alice and Port McNeill, all of which contain interesting forest history of northern Vancouver Islands.

We are pleased to report that Claire Williams plans to attend our AGM in Kamloops Sep 27-29. We asked Claire about herself and her work.

FHABC: What’s your connection to BC Forest History?

I currently work as a Forestry Archivist at the University of British Columbia’s Rare Books and Special Collections Library, Vancouver campus, located on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territory of the Musqueam people. However, I grew up in the countryside in California’s Sonoma County, surrounded by Manzanitas, Madrones, Oaks and other trees. We had a woodstove for heating in our home and I guess my very first connection to forestry was taking a dump truck with my dad into the hills and watching him operate a chain saw while I threw what seemed like very heavy logs on the truck to take to the woodshed back home!

FHABC: What have you been working on lately?

My primary task as a Forestry archivist has been focused on increasing the discovery of and access to the historic materials of industry giant, MacMillan Bloedel. I have been updating a 600 + page finding aid to digital format, enhancing archival descriptions of historic materials of industry giant, MacMillan Bloedel, and completely ignored. A recent visit showed healthy, dense hemlock and alder forest racing for the sky, waiting for the next time the forest has some value and the challenge of getting the logs to market is met. The author continues to own 320 acres of managed forest, mostly 30 to 35 year old hemlock and alder in Quatsino.

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Columbia. The people who worked in and for these industries; the technology that brought about shifts in labour practices; the political parties and government policies that shaped how and where communities and individuals could harvest raw materials; the roads, railways, and boats that were built to transport wood and metals and water; the processing plants which helped fuel and build the cities and towns we live in today—all of this is fascinating to me! Now I’m trying to learn a bit more about each of the processes involved in forestry, from the timber harvesting to the pulp mill to a piece of paper I could hold in my hand.

FHABC: What have you been working on lately?

My primary task as a Forestry archivist has been focused on increasing the discovery of and access to the historic materials of industry giant, MacMillan Bloedel. I have been updating a 600 + page finding aid to digital format, enhancing archival descriptions of historic materials, and assessing preservation issues in the over 500 boxes of archival records.

FHABC: What will you be doing next?

When this project is complete I will continue to work with our other forestry related collections. I am also interested in building ongoing relationships with Indigenous peoples, forestry professionals, researchers, historians, union groups, and...