

# Forest History



Welcome to the first edition of the Forest History e-newsletter, brought to you by the Canadian Institute of Forestry! We aim to share some interesting stories about Canada's forests, keep you updated on the work of the four Provincial Forest History Associations across Canada, and share resources on forest history in Canada and Internationally. For more information and to suggest content for future issues, please contact Rebecca Launchbury at: [rlaunchbury@cif-ifc.org](mailto:rlaunchbury@cif-ifc.org).

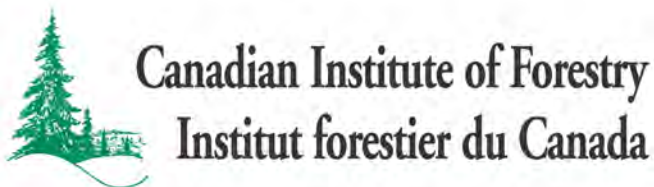
## News

### Forest History at the CIF

The Forest History page on the CIF/IFC website has been totally reinvigorated! We've started to display our many historic artefacts, you can read all the "Old Growth" articles from *The Forestry Chronicle*, and you can download and listen to the electronic lecture series "Looking Back, Looking Forward: The Ongoing History of Canada's Forests." You'll also find links to the four provincial forest history societies as well as other Canadian and international groups and resources.

See our forest history page here:  
[http://cif-ifc.org/site/history\\_lhistoire](http://cif-ifc.org/site/history_lhistoire)

Follow us on Twitter: @ForestHistoryCA



### ***The Forestry Chronicle* "Forest History" Themed Issue – Call for Papers**

The Canadian Institute of Forestry is committed to publishing an edition of *The Forestry Chronicle* in 2014 that is devoted to tales about our country's "forest history". The goal is to ensure that this special publication includes articles that reflect the myriad roles that woodlands have played in shaping our country's past in terms of both time – from the pre-Contact era to the present – and space – across the country. In other words, the objective is to cover subjects ranging from the Aboriginal use of fire in the pre-Contact period to the events that led to the recent signing of the Boreal Forest Accord.

This is a call for papers for this special edition of *The Forestry Chronicle*. Potential contributors should keep in mind that the aim is to make this publication accessible to the broadest possible audience. As a result, the articles are to be rigorous in terms of their scholarship but written in a manner that is accessible to the general reader; authors should strive to present their stories in the tradition of "popular history". Potential contributors are invited to submit condensed versions of previously published works that have made particularly significant contributions to the field of Canadian forest history. Papers should be 1,500 to 3,000 words in length, and include photographs and illustrations. This is a sponsored issue therefore the usual page charges do not apply. The deadline for submissions is 30 June 2013.

Please contact Mark Kuhlberg at [mkuhlberg@laurentian.ca](mailto:mkuhlberg@laurentian.ca) or Rebecca Launchbury at [rlaunchbury@cif-ifc.org](mailto:rlaunchbury@cif-ifc.org)

## Town of Whitecourt and Woodlands County named Forest Capital of Canada

The Town of Whitecourt and Woodlands County in Alberta has been awarded the designation of the 2013 Forest Capital of Canada, by the Canadian Institute of Forestry and Canadian Forestry Association. The tradition of naming a Forest Capital of Canada began in the 1970s as a special designation to celebrate and honour a community or region for its connectivity to the forest. This year's winner was selected to celebrate its rich forest history and its population's continued dedication to sustainable forest management.

Read the full media release:

[http://cif-ifc.org/uploads/Website\\_Assets/CFA\\_CIF\\_FCC\\_NE\\_WS\\_RELEASE\\_2013\\_2.pdf](http://cif-ifc.org/uploads/Website_Assets/CFA_CIF_FCC_NE_WS_RELEASE_2013_2.pdf)

## The Canadian Forest History Preservation Project

The Canadian Forest History Preservation Project is a collaborative effort between the Network in Canadian History and Environment, The Canadian Forest Service, and The Forest History Society. The goal of the project is to help facilitate donations of "at risk" forest history primary sources into official Canadian archives. These primary sources include significant text documents, maps, photographs, films, artwork, or sound and video recordings, and may relate to a wide range of topics such as aboriginal land use, forestry, the forest industry, environmentalism, recreation, hunting, tree planting, or ecology. The project also aims to identify appropriate repositories in which to archive these records. An electronic survey was recently sent out to help determine where current forest history archives are housed and their capacity to incorporate new collections. 208 archives participated; 169 of those self-identified as holding relevant forest history collections, were enthusiastic about donations of new material and wished to be kept informed of future progress.

For more information, read this article by David Brownstein on the NiCHE blog:

<http://niche-canada.org/node/10535>

## Ontario Heritage Tree Workshop

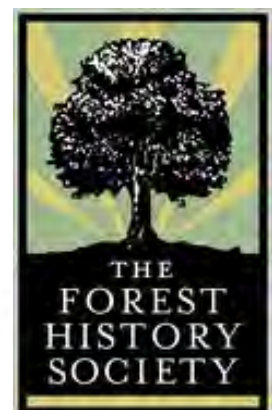
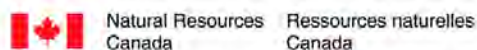


Participants learn about Ontario heritage trees during a workshop at the University of Toronto

On November 9<sup>th</sup> 2012, the Ontario Urban Forest Council and Trees Ontario hosted a workshop on how to celebrate and protect heritage trees in Ontario. Heritage trees are notable due to their age, form, beauty, or other distinctive features and may be associated with a historic person, place, or event. Designation as a heritage tree is a way to recognize and celebrate these unique trees, but they can also be legally protected, for example under municipal bylaws or the Ontario Heritage Act. The workshop was a great success, with over 50 participants who are now armed with the knowledge of how to celebrate, value, and protect heritage trees in Ontario.

For more information on heritage trees go to:

<http://www.oufc.org/ontario-tree-heritage-alliance/>



## NICHE Call for Project Results

The Network in Canadian History and Environment (NiCHE) has announced its support for several projects this year, including:

### Six Moments in the History of an Urban Forest: The Travelling Exhibit.

This project will adapt the museum exhibit, "Six Moments in the History of an Urban Forest," currently on display at the Bytown Museum in Ottawa, for a travelling exhibit. It will be shown at two urban forestry conferences and at other venues.

### "Teaching EH" Unit on *Environmental History* October 2007 Special Issue on Canada.

This project will create a teaching kit to highlight the growth and innovation in the field of Canadian environmental history. It aims to increase engagement with Canada-related content in *Environmental History* and provide an easily accessed resource for teachers around the globe to incorporate Canada's environmental history into their courses.

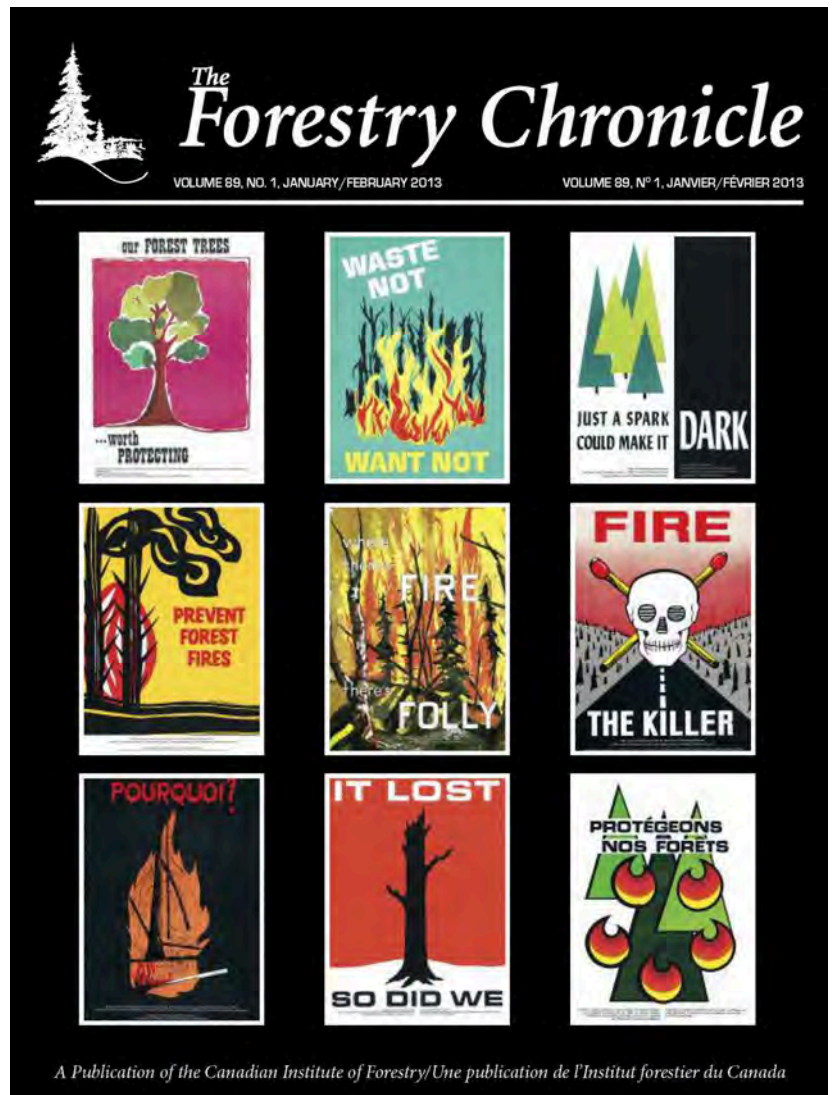
### Of Birds and Timber: Uncovering Trans Atlantic Connections at Musquash, New Brunswick.

This project aims to establish new connections between the United Kingdom and Canada, fostering collaborations with geographers, historians, and museum curators from both sides of the Atlantic. It will focus on the environmental history of the Musquash Estuary, in New Brunswick, to reveal the colonial legacies of British entrepreneurs from 1840-1870.

Congratulations to the grant winners! Read more at: <http://niche-canada.org/node/10545>

## National Forest Fire Prevention Poster Contest

By Emily Gray, Canadian Institute of Forestry



Gracing the cover of the 2013 January/February issue of the Chronicle was a unique display of artwork from talented young Canadians from the 1960s and 70s. The artwork was a selection of posters designed by grade 7-9 students as part of a National Forest Fire Prevention Poster contest. The contest was initiated in 1960 by the Canadian Forestry Association (CFA) as a creative campaign to bring awareness to forest fire prevention. The



contest was widely embraced, inspiring more than a million students to participate throughout the years. Each of the provincial associations of the CFA was tasked with judging the best submission for the year's theme and the provincial winner's artwork was presented for the national contest. The top three winners were awarded cash prizes and their posters were printed and distributed to post offices across Canada and to the association's provincial offices for educational use. To honour the first place winner, the student and a chaperone were flown, expenses paid, to Ottawa for a special ceremony of recognition and a tour of the region.

Interestingly, while researching the poster contest, I stumbled upon a report from the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations regarding a session held in 1967 by the North American Forest Commission (NAFC) that referred to the contest. The report indicated that the NAFC was recommending a campaign "should be started to extend the use of standardized forest fire prevention signs throughout North America". Canada, the United States, and Mexico were all looking at the use of such poster contests and possibly a film festival to bring the language of the forest industry to the mainstream. Perhaps the campaign's legacy remains as there are many fire safety poster contests still held annually in the United States and Canada, including the National Fire Poster Contest held by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada.

## Old Growth

Be sure to read the following Old Growth articles from recent issues of *The Forestry Chronicle*:

### Where Did All the Loggers Go?



By Peter J. Murphy, Forest History Association of Alberta

This article is about the Austin Nicholson Lumber Co. who logged for railway ties in Jasper National Park during the early 1920s. Surprisingly few records remain of the company or its employees.

Read the full article at:

[http://cif-ifc.org/uploads/Website\\_Assets/Where\\_did\\_all\\_the\\_loggers\\_go\\_January:February\\_2013.pdf](http://cif-ifc.org/uploads/Website_Assets/Where_did_all_the_loggers_go_January:February_2013.pdf)

### The Great Fire of 1922

#### (The Haileybury Fire)

by Rob Galloway, RPF

Director, Forest History Society of Ontario

An article about the devastating Haileybury fire of 1922, one of Canada's worst natural disasters which killed 43 people and caused \$8 million damage.

Read the full article at:

[http://cif-ifc.org/uploads/Website\\_Assets/The\\_Great\\_Fire\\_of\\_1922\\_Nov:Dec\\_2012.pdf](http://cif-ifc.org/uploads/Website_Assets/The_Great_Fire_of_1922_Nov:Dec_2012.pdf)

## THE GREAT FIRE OF 1922

On October 4, 1922, scattered bush fires which had been burning for some days north of Haileybury were united by strong winds into a holocaust which spread over most of 18 townships and took an estimated 43 lives. Burning out of control between the Englehart and Cobalt areas, it destroyed the communities of North Cobalt, Charlton, Thornloe and Heaslip, while Englehart and New Liskeard were partly consumed. The thriving town of Haileybury was razed except for a few buildings on the shore of Lake Timiskaming. On the night of October 5 the wind dropped and snow and rain helped extinguish the fire. A massive emergency relief programme helped to restore the economy of the area.

Erected by the Archaeological and Historic Sites Board, Archives of Ontario

## History of the McRae Lumber Company

By Rebecca Launchbury

Canadian Institute of Forestry



Jamie McRae gave a fascinating presentation about the history of the McRae Lumber Company at the Forest History Society of Ontario's annual meeting on February 7<sup>th</sup> 2013. The McRae family relocated to Whitney, Ontario, in 1922 and opened up a hardwood mill. At the time, white pine was disappearing from the landscape after years of highgrading, and hardwood lumber markets were starting to open up. During the '20s and '30s, logging was done only in the winter and the company employed up to 300 loggers, who spent up to 6 months of the year living in very rustic logging camps. There were no showers and laundry was done by boiling clothes in a cast iron kettle over a fire outside. These were the days before mechanization, when logs were felled with axes, bucked, skidded on sleds by horses and towed to the mill by alligators\*. Much of the equipment men had was to keep them alive during the cold winter months, rather than used for logging itself. Other interesting equipment at the time included tanker sleds, which were used to release water onto roads, making the surface smoother for easier sledding. Alternately, hot sand was poured on the roads to slow the sleds, in order to prevent them from sliding downhill and killing the horses that pulled them. Mechanization in the '40s and '50s gradually transformed these practices. Tractors and trucks were introduced to transport logs; early tractors

## Events

### Forest History Association of Alberta 9<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting

Thursday, March 21<sup>st</sup> 2013 from 7pm to 10pm.

Coast Edmonton Plaza

10155 – 105 Street

Edmonton, Alberta

### American Society for Environmental History Annual Conference

"Confluences, Crossings, and Power"

April 3<sup>rd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> 2013 in Toronto, Ontario

For information, go to:

<http://aseh.net/conference-workshops/toronto-conference-2013>

### Ontario Professional Foresters Association Annual Conference

"Forest values and valued forest"

Featuring a forest history tour of Ottawa!

April 10<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> 2013

For information and to register, go to:

[http://www.opfa.ca/new/agm-current.php?](http://www.opfa.ca/new/agm-current.php?PHPSESSID=7ac1cdd24e000998bcb2bd7648ee65fc)

[PHPSESSID=7ac1cdd24e000998bcb2bd7648ee65fc](http://www.opfa.ca/new/agm-current.php?PHPSESSID=7ac1cdd24e000998bcb2bd7648ee65fc)

### Forest History Society Breakfast Meeting

During the ASEH conference

April 5<sup>th</sup> 2013 at 7:15am

Royal York Hotel, Toronto, Ontario.

Cost: \$22

To register contact Andrea at 919-682 9319 or

[recluce2@duke.edu](mailto:recluce2@duke.edu).

could pull 4 times the weight that horses could manage. Instead of burning sawdust to power the mill, diesel engines were introduced, and a power jammer replaced the earlier jammer and gin pole, equipment powered by horses used to pile logs. Moving forward into the '60s, the timber jack skidder finally replaced horse skidding and

signaled the end of horses being used in operational forestry. Chainsaws were also introduced around this time. Roads were graveled meaning that logging could be done year-round. Before this time, it was easier to move the mill closer to the wood supply than transport logs long distances to the mill. However, better trucks and roads made transporting logs much easier and in the 1980s the McRae Lumber Company opened a permanent mill, which is still operational today. As mechanization made logging available on a larger scale, it became clear that highgrading was not a sustainable practice and logging operations had to have a longer-term vision. Beginning in the 1950s the company began to think about transitioning to more sustainable practices. This switch in practices resulted in a larger supply of smaller, low quality wood and a smaller supply of large, high quality logs. The company was able to adapt by producing woodchips for pulp and paper, which is still a major product today. "Looking into the future, our greatest strength is our commitment to sustainable forestry and environmentally sound forest management," says Jamie McRae.



Tanking Sleigh of Team of Horses

Mechanization has profoundly changed the McRae Lumber Company as well as forestry operations in general. Technology is constantly evolving and as we move into an era of automation it is interesting to look into the future and wonder what is next for the forest industry!

\*Not real alligators; alligator boats were a type of steam powered amphibious vehicle used to tug

logs across lakes and portage between lakes using a winch system.

## Publications

Read the latest issue of *Forestry*, a publication of the Forest History Society of Ontario:  
<http://www.ontarioforesthistor.ca/index.php/journal>

Read the latest Trails & Tales, a publication of the Forest History Association of Alberta:  
<http://www.albertaforesthistor.ca/newsletters/index.html>

Check out the NiCHE blog:  
<http://niche-canada.org/foresthistor>

Take a look at Forest History Today, a publication of the Forest History Society:  
<http://foresthistor.org/Publications/FHT/index.html>

Read "Peeling back the Bark," the blog of the Forest History Society:  
<http://fhsarchives.wordpress.com/>

## Resources

Société d'histoire forestière du Québec -  
<http://shfq.ca/>

Forest History Association of British Columbia -  
<http://www.fhabc.org/>

Forest History Society of Ontario -  
<http://www.ontarioforesthistor.ca/>

Forest History Association of Alberta -  
<http://www.albertaforesthistor.ca/>

NiCHE Forest History Project -  
<http://niche-canada.org/foresthistor>

Forest History Society -  
<http://www.foresthistor.org/>