Professional Articles/ Articles professionnels

Stand Up and Be Counted!

by

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Introduction

Foresters are generally poor communicators. As one contributor to the Forestry Chronicle said many years ago, "Foresters would much rather talk to trees than to people, trees don't talk back." And yet, a common complaint voiced by both foresters and the forest industry is that the media, if they pay any attention to happenings in the forest at all, dwell only on the negative aspects of forest establishment and harvesting. The many positive achievements of forest management largely go unnoticed and unrecorded.

The irony of all this is that excellent channels do exist and have been in place since the beginning of this century whereby the care and protection of the forest resource can be brought directly to the attention of the public by organizations that pride themselves on being non-aligned either with government or industry. These channels are of course, the various provincial Forestry Associations across the country and their umbrella, the Canadian Forestry Association. These Associations serve both people and forests in public forestry education programs by providing for the exchange of views between forest users, forest owners and forest managers.

Does the forestry profession support these associations in their endeavours by actively participating in them as members? Hardly! A rough estimate of the forester membership in the Ontario Forestry Association is two hundred. Many of these are actively involved in its various programs. Yet related to the number of foresters in the province, again estimated at around 2 000, this is a pitiful 10%. This situation probably prevails across the country.

It is to that other 90% that this article is addressed. It can only hope to suggest the multiplicity of activities undertaken by these Associations. Some activities have fallen by the wayside as attitudes to our forests have changed, others have been adopted by other organizations, still others are just as relevant now as when they were adopted. I hope it will encourage you to join and participate in the activities of your own provincial Association. You will find it worthwhile, for you will meet people whose ideas and beliefs in the uses for which the forest may be employed may be very different to your own. No matter, you will have the opportunity to give your point of view and perhaps learn something in return! For a nominal annual fee, a fraction of what you may pay to your professional group, you can stand up and be counted as one who is proud to present the view of a professional forest manager to the public.

The Canadian Forestry Association

The Canadian Forestry Association is one of the oldest conservation organizations in the country. It was founded in 1900 by a group of prominent citizens concerned about the rapid exploitation of Canada's forests without any long-range planning and the lack of resource managers to carry out any plan if there were one in effect. Very little was known about Canada's hinterland, forest fires burned unchecked over large areas while the pressures of land settlement had led to extensive forest clearing without any regard for the land's suitability for farming. The founding members were well aware of the problems created by unregulated expansion in older European and Asiatic civilizations and were determined to avoid the same problems in Canada. The members also realized that they would only be effective if they were seen not to be aligned with only government or industry but with a wide public base of support. It is to their credit that, then as now, the Association perform its work, while depending on voluntary contributions from both the public and the private sector.

The Canadian Forestry Association throughout the years has promoted better forest management. Originally the emphasis was almost entirely of forest fire control, long before the provincial fire detection and suppression bodies had been set up. Latterly, although the emphasis on wildfire prevention is still strong, it has turned to better forest management as one way to satisfy the increasing and often conflicting demands on Canada's forests, be they for economic, recreational or environmental needs. Branches and affiliates also developed over the years; later as it became more and more evident that grass roots public forest education required regional bases of operation, these were reorganized. In 1959, the CFA was regrouped into a federation of autonomous Provincial Forestry Associations with the CFA becoming the national co-ordinating body. Each provincial Association has a representative on the board of the CFA.

The accomplishments of the CFA are too numerous to list in their entirety. Also some programs initiated by the CFA have been taken over by the provincial Associations and vice versa. Among its highlights, the CFA:

- Was a major force in creating support for Canada's first Faculty of Forestry, established at the University of Toronto in 1907.
- Pioneered conservation education and shelterbelt planting in the Prairie Provinces, and ran Conservation Car #15 201 donated by the CNR bringing conservation programs from coast to coast.

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- Sponsored National Forest Week continuously since the 1920's and has also had a National Poster Contest for the public and junior high schools across the country since 1961.
- Published various conservation magazines, notably *Forest and Outdoors* till 1956 when it was taken over by a private publisher. It now acts as spokesman of forest conservation matters through briefs to the federal government and puts out a quarterly publication "What's New in Forestry on the Hill" commenting on forestry matters raised in the House of Commons.
- Sponsored Canada's National Forest Conferences through the years. The first one held in 1906 was opened by Sir Wilfrid Laurier, then Prime Minister. The most recent were the National Forest Regeneration Conference in 1977 which set the ball rolling in Canada for public recognition of the need for more reforestation and better forest management and the National Forest Congress of 1986 opened by Prime Minister Brian Mulroney.
- Carried out a continuing fire prevention program since its inception. Since 1956, this has been concentrated through the International Smokey Bear program.
- Organized periodic special exchanges and seminars on forestry information, outdoor education and forestry youth programs.
- Initiated the Tree Farm Program in 1953. This program has now largely been taken over by provincial governments. Interest has been maintained through annual seminars held each year since 1968. Emphasis has been on encouraging technology and policy transfer through agencies that provide assistance to private woodlot owners.

Some familiar names that have been associated with CFA over the years are Robson Black, an ardent conversationist and longtime editor and publisher of *Forest and Outdoors* to which Grey Owl was a regular contributor; Lloyd Van Camp, onetime manager of CFA and responsible for initiating the Tree Farm movement in Canada; and the present Executive Director, A.D. 'Dal' Hall who has been a tower of strength in providing continuity to an Association with provincial memberships continually changing. The CFA has just recently taken another big forward step in the appointment of Bill Fullerton, as its first fulltime president.

The Ontario Forestry Association

The Ontario Forestry Association, originally designated as the Canadian Forestry Association of Ontario, was founded in 1949 with J.W.B. Sisam as President and W.S. Macdonnell as Secretary Manager. Its principal objective then was fire prevention by education. Smokey Bear, already accepted as an emblem for this purpose in the U.S., was adopted for Ontario (Figure 1). To those ardent nationalists who are ready to take umbrage when anything American is adopted by Canada, the answer is that both Canadians and Americans already recognized the fire prevention symbol and that it would have been unjustified and expensive to create another, particularly in view of the heavy transborder traffic. On a lighter note, it might also be said that there are no international borders for bears or any other wild animals! Fire prevention by education is still one of OFA's objectives but probably now only takes about 10% of its budget; there is some alarm,

Figure 1. 'Smokey Bear is a big hit with the youngsters everywhere as he campaigns against forest wildfires.'

however, over the fact that although the total acreage burned that can be attributed to human error has decreased (owing to better control) the number of such fires has increased. However to keep this in perspective, the number of forest users has increased even faster.

Two programs initiated in the early years of the Ontario Forestry Association were the Resource Rangers and the Tree Farm Movement. The former was started with the objective of resource conservation through a youth program. Bill Fullerton, working on the staff of OFA, got this under way in 1959. It was designed for individual boy's area clubs, with meetings during the winter months and the occasional field trip. Later managers of the program were Milt Stevenson in 1961 and Tim Nelson in 1968 and, at its peak, 17 clubs were in operation across Ontario. The OFA supplied some funding, but most clubs were largely self-supporting through the sale of seedlings and other items. During the seventies, the number of clubs and their memberships declined; what had originally been a purely forestry group had evolved into more of a social service organization with both boy and girl memberships. In 1976, the Board of Directors decided to conclude the program as it was no longer fulfilling its original purpose.

The Tree Farm program was initiated by W.A.E. Pepler when he was Manager of the Woodlands Section of the Canadian Pulp and Paper Association, and was enthusiastically adopted by Lloyd van Camp. Since many of the prospective tree farmers were located in Ontario, OFA took up the program and continued it until 1969. Unfortunately many of the early tree farms were set up more as an expression of their owners' good intent than as evidence that they had practised good forestry. Economics, changes in ownership and other factors often meant that woodlots so designated had changed their character, making a mockery of the Tree Farm sign that might still be present. On balance, however, both this movement and the Resource Rangers were useful when they were created, making many people more aware of the importance of conservation.

In 1958, Jim Coats, who had been with OFA since 1952, took over first as Secretary Manager, later as Executive Vice President. Under his able and energetic management, the Association has expanded both in membership (over 1 400 now) and projects. In 1959, the publication *Ontario Tree Farmer* (later called *Ontario Forests*) was started and ran till

1976 when the more modest Newsletter was substituted. It appears six times a year and is an essential medium for keeping the membership in touch with the actions of the Board and current forestry events in the province. Just a few of the more recent achievements of the Association have been:

- A successful effort to have the white pine designated as Ontario's provincial tree.
- The White Pine Award, consisting of a carving and a cheque, given annually to a student, selected from those nominated by each of the six forestry schools and colleges in the province.
- Participation in forestry outdoor education programs undertaken by several high schools in Northern Ontario, also teachers' workshops aimed at improving both the quantity and quality of forestry education at all schools. A Forestry Manual for Ontario Secondary School teachers was published in 1984, and sales continue across Canada.
- Co-ordination of the course 'Woodlots for Profit and Pleasure' at the University of Toronto over the past 11 years.
- National Forest Week and Arbor Days.
- The Honour Roll of Ontario trees.
- A pamphlet, updated bi-annually giving forest statistics entitled 'Ontario Forests at a Glance'.
- Money raising projects such as an auction at the Annual Meeting, sale of tree wheels (Figure 2) and tree identification slides.
- Special projects under government sponsorship such as 'Environment 2 000', 'Challenge 86' and others. These would include the mounting of two travelling theatre groups, exhibit programs and development of educational pamphlets.

Jim Coats says that there is no shortage of suitable projects, the only limitations are imposed by the availability of funds and the willingness of volunteer members to operate them.

Figure 2. OFA Councillor, Ralph Percy, has manned the OFA Sportsmen's Show exhibit voluntarily for many years. Here he demonstrates OFA's Coniferous Tree Identification Wheel.

Other Provincial Associations

The other provincial Associations (there are none as yet in Prince Edward Island, the Yukon and the Northwest Territories, although both P.E.I. and the Yukon organize National Forest Week and participate in the Smokey Bear program) will be covered more briefly.

Newfoundland is alone in not promoting membership. However, two forest industry companies, the provincial government, and the Newfoundland Forestry Centre of the Canadian Forestry Service comprise the **Newfoundland Forest Protective Association**. This Association's education committee co-ordinates National Forest Week. In 1986, a public education mall, supported by local foresters, was prepared. Speakers were available to address concerned citizens on such matters as silviculture, planning and the use of herbicides in forest management, and was adjudged a great success. In the future, both government and industry plan to expand this program into the school system.

The Nova Scotia Forestry Association was moribund until recently. Now under a new Secretary Manager, Elizabeth Northcott, a UNB forestry graduate, it has sprung into life. She has been travelling the province, visiting schools and discussing programs with teachers. Red spruce has been proposed as the provincial tree and Queens County has been selected as the Forestry Capital of Canada for 1987. This should help boost membership, currently standing at 30.

The Canadian Forestry Association of New Brunswick is very active with a membership of around 300 with a good mix of government, industry and private landowners. Workshops, including Project Learning Tree, have been held in both languages with involvement of both teachers and youth leaders. Dave Folster is the part-time manager with two assistants. Forest field days are held annually and lists of the Great Trees of New Brunswick plus the CFANB newsletter have received an excellent response from the schools. Balsam fir is being promoted as the provincial tree. National Forest Week is actively promoted across the province with a range of public and community activities. The 40th anniversary of the Smokey Bear program was celebrated by a special appearance of Smokey, during the annual Santa Claus parade.

L'Association forestière quebécoise, founded in 1939, will always be associated in my mind with Jules Breton, a longtime manager of AFQ and one of the Forestry Associations' great men. During his 27 years with the Association he built Clubs 4-H into one of the largest conservation youth-oriented programs in the world. Jules campaigned through Forêt et Conservation, of which he was also the editor for fire prevention, tree planting and woodlot management. Jules Breton was still a young man of 53 when he died of cancer, but he will always be remembered through the developments he pioneered in public forestry education.

The Association today, under the management of Jacques Gauvin, has the largest membership of any provincial Association in the country, around 5 000. It has 10 employees, all but two working on a part-time basis. Part of its strength may be due to its emphasis on regional forestry chapters across the province. The three main phases of the AFQ operation are sponsorship of the Clubs 4H, publication of Forêt et Conservation and a public awareness program on forestry. A special program is now being developed for private woodlots. A province wide poll carried out by Forêt et Conservation for an official provincial tree revealed that black spruce was by far the most popular choice.

The Manitoba Forestry Association was originally part of the Prairie Provinces Forestry Association formed in 1922. Dr. Alan Beaven, at one-time an Algonquin Park ranger, was the guiding spirit behind the operation of a tree planting car, established with the railroad to encourage shelterbelt planting using aspen and carragana obtained from the Indian Head nursery. Another early venture was the showing of movies on fire prevention and conservation to northern settlements making use of a truck powered generator. In the sixties another Beaven, daughter Dianne, took over. Forestry centres, first Sandilands, later others at Duck Mountain and Interlake and now at Clearwater were established to give a one-day forestry experience to school children. An observation fire tower, tree seedlings, a forestry museum and woodland trails all provide a learning experience. Another project, still under development, is the setting up of small forestry centres around rural schools. Project Learning Tree has just recently been launched. This is being supplemented by school classes on conservation, Smokey Bear, reading clubs, poster competitions, and Manitoba Trees of Renown. It appears that white birch is the most likely candidate for selection as a provincial tree.

The Saskatchewan Forestry Association had Prince Albert and district as the Forestry Capital of Canada in 1985. At present it has a part-time manager, Marie Grono. There are a number of active projects: the Saskatchewan Trees and Groves of Renown, school visits to Mouse Meadows Nature Trail and a Provincial Poster Contest which last year had 180 schools participating. National Forest Week was the most successful ever held, and included a large scale logging demonstration, fire control exhibition, open houses at local forest nurseries and nature tours. The SFA newsletter, Tap Root, keeps members informed of current happenings. New projects include a news clipping service and it is hoped initiation of Project Learning Tree in the schools.

The Alberta Forestry Association receives tremendous government support. Marlys Diamond, the manager, reported a 65% increase in membership in April (46 new members). National Forest Week was observed at Whitecourt National Park. During that time a National Forest was initiated there made possible by donations of trees from provincial forestry associations across the country. There was also an unveiling of a new trailer containing a travelling exhibit on Alberta's Managed Forests. The major project of the year was FOREVER A TREE, 12 lessons taught over a four-month period to 100 schools by eight individuals. The program was very successful, but required a tremendous amount of work in presentations and tree distribution to each location, so the decision has been made to limit the program to 100 schools each year until a total of 600 has been attained. Other activities are a Speakers Bureau, aiming to give an overview of Alberta's forests at general meetings and Alberta Trees of Renown. The AFA is working with the Manitoba and Saskatchewan Forestry Associations on a joint proposal to incorporate forestry into the high school curriculum.

The British Columbia Forestry Association has recently changed its name from the Canadian Forestry Association of B.C. Owing to lack of money in late 1985, staff cutbacks had to be made. However, Bill Young, former chief forester of B.C., the first full time president, has been extremely active through the media and meetings in raising BCFA's profile since his appointment. The cutbacks have left the core programs intact; the Junior Forest Wardens continue to make steady progress on both the Coast and in the Interior while the five Association Forestry Centres continue to serve schools, JFWs and community groups. BCFA feels that there is a need to examine Project Learning Tree and 'Canadianize' it, particularly now that three provincial associations are using it and others are thinking of doing so.

National Forest Week was given good publicity; in addition Port Alberni and District was designated Forestry Capital of Canada in 1986. Promotional material was shipped to program organizers in 73 communities. At Port Alberni, it was opened by a 75-piece logging equipment parade through the town. Other events included mall exhibits, loggers' breakfasts, mill visits and the presence of both the federal and provincial Ministers of Forests in town. Community reaction was excellent; the only flaws were lack of sufficient promotional material and too much work falling on too few shoulders. Western red cedar has been proposed as the provincial tree but this is being contested by some of the Interior representatives.

All of the Forestry Associations have an elected slate of officers, various committee chairmen and a wide range of other volunteers who contribute their time and expertise to run the wide-ranging programs of their particular Association. Outside observers have estimated that the public education efforts of the Canadian Forestry Association and its members are phenomenal in relation to the budgets and staff available. Their generation of volunteer activity and publicity provides a major element in the public's understanding of forestry. That these efforts could achieve still greater results with more support is apparent.

This article can do little more than provide an overview of an organization, operating from coast to coast, whose aim is to educate both the youth and adult community on the importance of good forest management. Limiting factors in almost every province are small memberships and lack of funds. Surely there is a message there for all of us; as foresters are we ready to stand up and be counted and lend them our support?