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New York

# Forest Owner

MAY - JUNE 1976



Henry Webster looks over his model woodlot in Cayuga County.

## Forty Years of Woodlot Management Pay Off

by Alex Dickson

In promoting woodlot management over the years, foresters have claimed that a well-managed woods is:

- better than money in the bank
- a hedge against inflation
- more attractive to loggers who will pay higher prices for the products
- like having your cake and eating it too because harvests can be yielded indefinitely.

Now there is living proof that these claims are valid. A timber sale at the Webster Woods, Auburn, in early 1974 brought about a review of the 15-acre woodlot's management history to reveal these gratifying facts.

### HOW IT ALL STARTED

Professor Joshua A. Cope, well-known Cornell University extension forester persuaded the poultry farming father-and-son owners, Henry and Ralph Webster

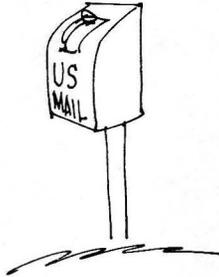
(continued on page 4)

# THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

## THE READERS RESPOND...

"In my opinion, the last issue of the Forest Owner was the best ever. Also enjoyed attending the Syracuse meeting on April 10."

-Mr. and Mrs. Earl Pfarner  
Chafee, N.Y.



IN THE MAILBOX...  
...letters posted, pilfered  
or passed along.

"Hurrah! What a fine issue. Now you are getting down to the nitty gritty. We will now have a readable, well organized house organ. The only way for an organization to survive is by a healthy newsletter of its own."

-Ed Moot  
Schenectedy, N.Y.

Essays, articles, and letters should be addressed to:

Alan R. Knight  
Editor, NY Forest Owner  
526 Anderson Hill Road  
R.D.2, Candor, NY 13743



*Alan R. Knight*

## Editorial

From October 1969 until March 1971 we had the pleasure of living in a small village called Schmidhausen. This little hamlet was located between Munich and Salzburg, on a plateau snug-gled up against the German Alps.

My memories of that time are filled with images of forests, hunting, and Alpine scenes. Maybe this is the reason for my excitement at the idea of taking a group of New York Forest Owners to Europe. It would be a chance to go back to a place that was once home. But more than that, it will be a chance to share with you the different attitudes towards forests

and communities (and indeed, toward life) that the people of Central Europe have. Germany is often called the birthplace of forestry.

I'm excited about making arrangements for you to meet forest owners of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. We could learn so much, maybe even gain some ideas for our forest management and association.

The only problem is that we need to decide when to go, and how many of you would go, and how much it would cost, and other such trivial matters.

Please look for the coupon further on in this issue of The Forest Owner. By sending it to me, we can best decide how to make plans.

We're on our way!

# THE FOREST OWNERS FORUM

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Forest Owner readers seem to have some opinions about the New York Forest Tax Law. Such as....

● "Want some grist for your news mill? Ha, there is endless material which should be discussed by members, out in the open and with no bias toward anyone.

"The special tax for forest owners! I have done my stint on that and gotten a couple of nasty letters and some social ostracism from sources which have no forests, have no special interests in timber or lumber but want political clout. I will not express my opinions here but will be interested in reading suggestions from others in the next issue.

"Those behind tax gathering in the state want only to up the tax base so more money can be raised for more waste on more services more people want, most of whom have no relation to the growing of trees to cover the millions of acres more or less in abandonment in this state. That land, much of which is in hands of realty speculators, is now growing up to plain brush. Of course this makes fine hunting, snow mobiling and recreation of the type which is more or less of a highly refuse-throwing type.

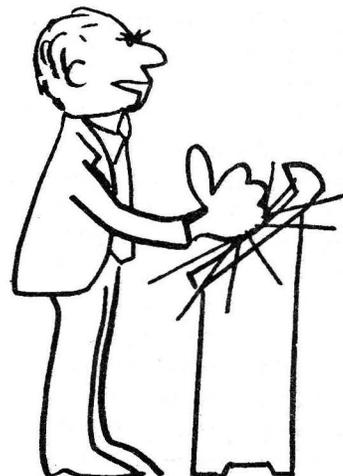
"We are still laughing at the aerial photos which are now the right hand of the tax assessor folks. I have been asked many times, by some of their staff, where certain properties are which they cannot identify from the aerial photos. One very poor county paid \$250,000 to get that job done. What a waste of taxpayer money."

-Ed Moot  
Schenectedy, N.Y.

● "The reason we have not sent more information to the Forest Owner is because many different influences have steadily brought changes, suggestions, etc. by the score. We are now close, we believe, to introducing an amendment to 480A that should give N.Y. State a really model Forest Tax Law. As we progress, or get beat, we will send you more information.

"Most forested state do have and must have a Forest Tax Law. We are raising a 60 to 100 year crop and if taxes peak up to unbearable levels (maybe \$5 to \$50 per acre per year, and that is what is coming right now) our forest lands will get butchered off, forest lands broken up, sold to tax exempt organizations or once again lots of it revert back to the owner of last resort, the County or State due to delinquent taxes. This must not happen as our private forests must step up, improve and produce the forest products that will be so vital in the future."

-F.A. Demeree  
Bainbridge, N.Y.



(Continued from the cover)

to begin managing their forest property and to keep records of their work for demonstration purposes. This was in 1932. At that time, it was typical of many farm woods in the area. It needed attention if it were to recover from the ravages of earlier indiscriminate cutting. Inferior species such as ironwood, hickory, beech, elm and dogwood were well represented. Most of the hard maple present was only in the poletimber class. The basswood and white and red oak material was well distributed throughout the various size-classes, and negligible amounts of black cherry and white ash were also present.

The six-man team from Cornell University first made a map of the woodlot using plane-table and chain. The woodlot area was trisected from east to west to divide it into three approximately equal portions. The compartments so created were then designated I, II, III from north to south. The interior lines between Compartments I and II and III were plainly marked with paint. The area of the woodlot was found to be 15.1 acres. Compartment I had an area of 5.18 acres; Compartment II, 5.42 acres, and Compartment III, 4.50 acres.

A 100 percent tally by inch diameter classes was made of all trees in Compartment I measuring 4 inches and more at breast height. Each species was recorded separately except for pignut and shagbark hickory which were simply tallied as hickory.

After the completion of the tally, Compartment I was again carefully gone over and all trees marked which were to be cut that winter. The marking consisted of an axe blaze on the south side of each tree.

In order to obtain a check on height, approximately 100 of these marked trees were tagged with consecutively numbered aluminum tags placed in the centers of the

axe blazes. The heights were measured when the trees were felled. A further 188 trees without tags were included in the marking.

Compartment II was tallied and marked in 1933; Compartment III, in 1934; Compartment I, in 1935, and so it went on. Each compartment was visited every three years with but one exception in the late 1940's when storm damage caused operations in one compartment to be extended by an extra year.

According to the original agreement, Cornell University was to provide an accurate map of the area, make a complete record of all standing timber above 4 inches at breast height, and mark the trees to be removed annually. The Webster's responsibility was to include recording the volume of material removed each year, the cost of logging, and financial receipts from sale of harvested material.

As a result of this cooperative agreement, it has been possible to see the changes brought about in the stand by judicious cutting over the years. This article, will only consider what has happened to Compartment II in which management operations were begun in 1933.

#### 1933 vs. 1961

Before cutting began, hickory and other inferior species constituted about one-third of the total volume in the compartment. The bulk of the remainder -- hard maple, white and red oak and basswood -- showed considerable promise for the future.



In 1961, when an earlier review of progress took place, the picture had changed quite dramatically. Despite the removal of some 10,200 cubic feet in periodic cuttings, the volume of growing stock was still greater than that before any cutting took place in 1933. Inferior species had declined to one-fourteenth of the volume on the area and valuable hard maple had more than doubled its volume primarily at the expense of hickory. The basswood and oaks had declined slightly.

In view of the single-tree method of selective cutting employed, this was not too surprising. While the basswood, black cherry and white ash were being fairly well maintained in the younger age classes, the oaks were definitely on the way out.

In 1933, the total growing-stock volume on Compartment II was 15,600 cubic feet. Twenty-eight growing seasons later, in late 1961, it was inventoried at 15,700 cubic feet. Little difference here in volume, but a big difference in stumpage values occurred due to changes in species composition, size-class distribution, and inflation. The 1933 value at 1933 prices was \$860 (\$2600 at 1961 prices) while the 1961 value at 1961 prices was \$3700 -- a significant \$2840 increase. All this in addition to the 1700 dollars worth of lumber and fuelwood (computed at 1961 stumpage prices) removed in the periodic improvement cuttings.

Taking both harvests and growing stock into account, the average growth rate over the 28 years was a satisfying 68 cubic feet or .8 cords per acre per year.



### Change for the Better

The Websters' almost three decades of periodic improvement cuttings brought about a remarkable change for the better in both composition and size-class distribution of a "northern hardwoods" woodlot. Moreover, ever since planned cutting was begun, the removed material has been put to good use. To begin with, the so called "junk" provided fuel for domestic heating purposes. Then, what could not be used for lumber was used as fuel for the brooder stoves. The brooders were kept warm with wood in the early part of the season when a continuous, even heat was desirable. Thus, the wood was not only cheaper than gas, oil or coal, it was better suited to the task.

Sometimes the man and equipment hours expended were as few as 45 per annum but much more frequently, 200 to 500 hours were spent each year in the harvesting of woodlot products. From the thirties to the sixties, wages earned ranged from a mere 57 cents to nearly \$4.50 an hour. The latter occurred when cutting was removing higher quality material.

(continued)

"Conservation means the wise use of the earth and its resources"

- Gifford Pinchot -

## The Fourth Decade

The past "decade" - 12 years to be exact - has seen a change in the Websters' philosophy. This, however, still makes the Auburn poultry farm fairly typical of today's agricultural enterprises. Whereas woods work was an integral part of the farm activity in the first three decades, specialization in egg production now relegates "forestry" to a low rank in the order of priorities. Henry Webster, who had a keen interest in the woods, has relinquished ownership in favor of his sons, Ralph and grandson, Neal. He still says with cheerful enthusiasm, "I'd just love to get back in the woods if it weren't for these crippled legs of mine."



As a consequence of this change in managerial priorities, the Websters did no cutting to speak of between 1961 and early 1974, when a timber sale was negotiated with a nearby, reputable logger. Because of the quality of the logs, prices paid ranged from \$10 to \$45 per thousand board feet above average stumpage prices established, by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation for the area in which the woodlot is located.

On the basis of average 1974 prices, Compartment II's sawlog volume had a stumpage value of \$10,750 before the sale was made. This represents an annual compound

interest rate of 9.3 % on the 1961 growing stock (\$3700) considered as an investment. This is certainly better than money in the bank in terms of both return and protection against inflation. Rate of tree growth in the 12-year period was a substantial 109 cubic feet (1.28 cords) per acre per year.

Despite the harvest of 11,840 board feet of white and red oak, basswood, sugar maple, and hickory, a growing stock volume of 20,800 cubic feet are left as a more than adequate "factory" to produce harvests in future years.

The Websters do not only think of their woods as a source of supplementary income; they also regard it as a capital asset which gives them a great deal of satisfaction. Probably nowhere else in the country is there a stand of northern hardwoods that has been subjected to such intensive treatment for so long a period of time. It is a place that warms the hearts of foresters and students of forestry -- a textbook example of the managed woods. If you would like to see it some time, just take U.S. 20 for  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles west of Auburn, New York.

There is urgent need for increased woodlot management in this country if we are not to run out of timber by the second quarter of the twenty-first century. What the Websters have done is well within the capability of you as a woodlot owner if you would but try. Judicious periodic cutting to remove the poorer trees is the key to developing a vigorous, valuable woodlot. Results are not achieved overnight. It takes time, but in the end you will have a stand of trees which will help meet a national need and of which you can be duly proud.



## NEW MEMBERS

We would like to welcome the following new members to the F.O.A.:

Leta Marion Cool  
4 Monroe St.  
St. Johnsville, N.Y. 13452

Mr. Frank B. Fassler  
R.D. #1  
Williamstown, N.Y. 13493

Mr. H.J. Geisler  
Milewood Road  
Verbank, N.Y. 12585

Mr. Clarence N. Resue  
R.D. #2, Box 58  
Woodhull, N.Y. 14898

Mr. Kenneth Spadola  
Indian Springs Camp  
R.D. #2, Box 58  
Pine Bush, N.Y. 12566

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth Williams  
R.D. #3  
Cooperstown, N.Y. 13326

Mrs. Caroline F. Adams  
384 Etna Road  
Ithaca, N.Y. 14850

Mr. and Mrs. Peter A. Ellis  
324 Front Street  
Owego, N.Y. 13827

Mr. Richard H. Regan  
414 Grace Court  
Holbrook, N.Y. 11741

Robert Fouts  
Robert Fouts Farm  
R.D. #4  
Cortland, N.Y. 13045

James D. Andrews  
1900 East Henrietta Rd.  
Rochester, N.Y. 14623

Jay R. Georgi  
132 Star Stanton Hill Rd.  
R.D. #2  
Freeville, N.Y. 13068

Mr. and Mrs. George Hart  
R.D. #1, Box 128A  
Springwater, N.Y. 14560

Mr. and Mrs. Harold Petrie  
R.D. #1, Box 117  
Parish, N.Y. 13131

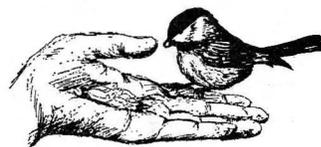
Gordon C. Kahler  
R.D. #1, DeWitt Rd.  
Skaneateles, N.Y. 13152

## Woods Walks

Hardy L. Shirley, former dean of the N.Y.S. College of Forestry at Syracuse, has invited members of the NYFOA to attend a Woods Walk on his property near Elizabethtown in Essex County, N.Y. The final date in August has not been set. Be looking for details in the next issue of the Forest Owner.

Stops on the tour will include: a lot on which a third cutting has been completed since 1956, a nearby current logging operation, a pine plantation and a pine lot marked for partial cutting.

After the morning tour the group will meet at the Shirley residence for lunch followed by a tour of the 35 acre old-growth timber near the house. Coffee or soft drinks will be supplied. Details and directions will be in the next issue.



# highlights

## from the annual meeting

About 75-80 people (editor's guess) turned out for the Annual Meeting on April 10th at Marshall Hall, College of Environmental Science and Forestry, Syracuse. The day's program proved to be entertaining, informative, and just plain fun.

Introductions, elections, presentation of the Heiberg Award, and a parade of colorful slide presentations made the day.

Mike Demeree of Bainbridge, N.Y. was early on the program with an update on the status of the Forest Tax Law. His admonition in closing was noteworthy, as he urged forest owners to write letters to their state legislators to urge some action on this important matter.

Several forest owners were presented their certification as Tree Farmers by Bob Sand, member of the New York State Tree Farm Committee.



Mike Demeree addresses the group about forest taxation.

The magic of the Adirondacks was brought into the auditorium through the skillful photography of Edwin Ketchledge, Director of the Cranberry Lake Biological Station. His pre-lunch presentation was matched after lunch by presentations on birds, wildlife, insects, and fungi. True to the theme, there truly is "more than trees in your forest".

In a ceremony following lunch, Edward W. Littlefield was awarded the Heiberg Award for his contributions to conservation.



The luncheon was worth the trip by itself.



Many forest owners were certified as Tree Farmers.

# Results of Association ELECTIONS

New directors of the New York Forest Owners Association were announced at the annual meeting on April 10th.

In ballots returned by the members, the following people were elected to fill terms which expire in 1979:

Ronald Baldwin, logger  
Oneonta, N.Y.

Robert M. Bramhall, Wood-  
land Manager, J.P. Lewis Co.  
Beaver Falls, N.Y.

Gordon Conklin, Editor  
American Agriculturist  
Ithaca, N.Y.

Richard C. Fasset, owner  
of 250 acre tree farm  
Horseheads, N.Y.

Robert Morrow, professor  
of forestry, Cornell U.  
Ithaca, N.Y.

Evelyn Stock, Office of  
Community Relations, SUNY  
College of Environmental  
Science  
Syracuse, N.Y.

Raymond Walker, member,  
State Forest Practice Brd.  
Gasport, N.Y.

Officers for the 1976-77  
year, elected by the directors,  
were:

President - Lloyd G. Strombeck  
57 Main Street  
Owego, N.Y.

1st Vice President -  
C. Eugene Farnsworth  
1219 Lancaster Ave.  
Syracuse, N.Y. 13210

2nd Vice President -  
Robert M. Sand  
Odessa, N.Y.

3rd Vice President -  
William Craig  
R.D. 1  
Sherburne, N.Y. 13460

Membership Secretary -  
Mrs. Helen Varian  
204 Varian Rd.  
Peekskill, N.Y. 10566

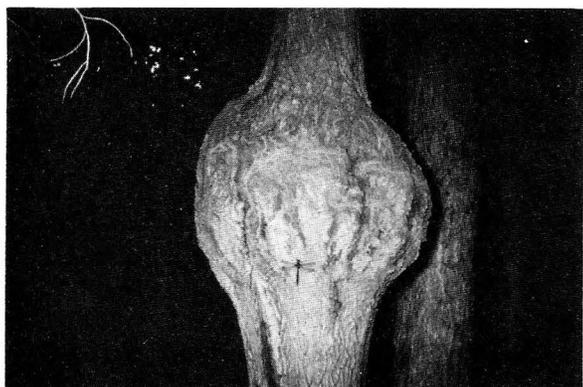
Secretary -  
J. Lewis Dumond  
9 Grand Street  
Cobleskill, N.Y. 12043

Treasurer -  
Emiel D. Palmer  
5822 S. Salina St.  
Syracuse, N.Y. 13205

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A New Jersey Forestry Association has been formed to help support forestry conservation programs and forest management activities in New Jersey. Anyone interested in obtaining more information or desiring more information in this association should write:  
Mr. James A. Hasford, RD 1, Box 179, Claremont Road, Bernardsville, NJ 07924

## Photo Contest Entry



"I can't believe I ate the whole thing"

Sugar maple in woodlot of Earl Pfarner, Chafee, N.Y. 14030. Truck diameter is about 12". Bulge is over 24" in diameter. Note dragon fly.



Sugar maple alongside a driveway on McKinstry Road, Delevan, N.Y. Sent in by Earl Pfarner, Chafee, N.Y. 14030

# European Forestry Adventure!

Germany! Austria! Switzerland! The Alps!

Wouldn't you love to join a group of New York Forest Owners travelling to the forests of Europe? Well, you can!

The objectives are simple. Travel to these lovely European countries, meet forest owners from other countries, learn how they are organized, how they manage their lands. And have the time of your life!

How do you get more information? First, by giving us some information.

Fill out this coupon and mail to: Alan R. Knight  
Editor, NY Forest Owner  
526 Anderson Hill Rd.  
R.D.2, Candor, NY  
13743

(This does not obligate you in any way. This is only to see if we have anybody interested.)

Yes! Count us in!

\_\_\_\_\_  
(your name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(your address)

- Preferred length of trip:  
(circle one)  
1. two weeks    2. three weeks
- Amount you would spend per person:  
1. \$750    2. \$1000    3. \$1500
- Preferred date:  
1. Late Sept. 1976  
2. May 1977.



# A Logger Tells a Tale

by Ronald Baldwin

The first log job Dad bought, once he'd decided to venture into logging, holds some distinct memories for me. It was a big step for Dad to buy that old John Deere 40 crawler but a natural one for him, as after many jobs and an aborted business venture or two, he still had the nerve to try once more. As events have shown, it was his best choice, he's been cutting timber ever since. Of course Charlie (you met Charlie in an earlier tale) had a great deal of influence on Dad's decision.

As a boy of 16 or so when this occurred, my recollections are flavored by my youth. Take that old 40 crawler, a "poppin john" as they were affectionately known. On the Saturday's and days off from school that I helped out on the job, my presence was welcome as I fit better in between the blade and front end where the crank had to be turned. It was winter-time, the glow plug had to be heated and the battery wasn't always up to the task by itself. Lord, how that engine could kick!

There was little snow that year but plenty of cold and the ground froze deep back in the woods. To the old crawler it was just like ice and whenever the opportunity afforded itself, I and machine would go skating off sideways. Most slides would stop with a bone farring thud against a tree. Occasionally with disastrous results to the carrier roller.

Many people brag of having logged with horses and cross-cut saws but harvesting timber

was no easier with that tractor. There was no winch just tons of chains for a young boy to wrestle with and a certain knack for getting logs caught against small trees and roots.

A gear-drive McCulloch served as our cutting power and by today's standards was just barely adequate. My first experience at cutting standing timber was nearly my last because of that old slow saw and my inexperience. One Saturday, (everything important happens on a Saturday to a schoolboy)

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"Everything important happens on a Saturday to a schoolboy."

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Dad handed me the saw, said I was ready to start cutting and headed for the log landing to get more gasoline. Well I looked around and picked out as nice a white birch as you've ever seen to be my first victim. A couple minutes later with a too shallow undercut and slow cutting saw, I created my first "barber chair". A shocking experience that has served to keep me on my toes ever since.

I relate all this to you not because it is unique but because it serves to illustrate how hard it is to get started in the timber harvesting business and how quickly a mistake can cancel all your efforts.

Streams and lakes can be protected from sedimentation (having soil deposited in water) by buffer strips between waterway and skid trails. Runoff from trails will be absorbed by undisturbed areas. Protecting streams and lakes from sedimentation is required for classified streams, but I'm sure you want to keep trout waters at top quality by not lowering water quality with dirt. It's killing the fish.

It's easy to reduce erosion on steep hillsides. Erosion potentials on primary haul roads can be minimized by installing water bars on the roads before rain storms while logging and after using roads. Just kicking up a pile of earth to divert running water from avalanching down a road will help stop erosion, deep gullies, and sedimentation of waterways. Maybe a log can be slid across the hillside road to divert running water.

## LOGGING ROADS AND SKID TRAILS



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