*New York*

# Forest Owner

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# THE NEW YORK FOREST OWNERS ASSOCIATION

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## *A Message from the Editor*

It is personally very gratifying to be chosen to edit this fine publication. It will take a while but I hope to be able to turn out the kind of quality work that was produced by Al and Nancy Knight. You may be wondering why this issue is rather late in coming out. I beg your indulgence to let me explain a few circumstances which may have been involved. Not long after I assumed editorship of the Forest Owner I had an opportunity to apply for the job as Cooperative Extension Agent in Hamilton County. Well I got the job and we will be moving to Speculator or Lake Pleasant in early December. If you have ever made a move on short notice perhaps you have a concept of the things involved in selling and buying a house, winding down in your present job and gearing up for the new one. This added to the confusion of editing one's first issue of a publication add up to not enough hours in the day. And that's why this issue is late. Hopefully we'll get back on schedule next issue.

I have enjoyed working with your board of directors and will rely heavily on their advice and the contributions of the membership at large and I hope to meet many of our members personally.

—*Jim Briggs*



Association Officers

C. Eugene Farnsworth

# Message from the President

It is gratifying to observe the progress the Forest Owners Association is showing this year. There is a feeling of movement, development and growth in the organization that reflects energy and change.

This issue of the "Forest Owner" will introduce James Briggs - our new editor. We regret very much that Alan Knight resigned as editor to accept a position in Rhode Island, but we are delighted that Jim has agreed to undertake the tasks of preparing future issues of our magazine. Jim has had a great deal of experience with similar publications and he is much interested in our organization and its objectives. We are confident that we will continue to produce an excellent publication under his editorship.

This year, as was the case last year, our membership is increasing. Each month Helen Varian reports an increase, sometimes modest, sometimes substantial. In large part this growth is the result of Ken Eberling's efforts and the efforts of those who work with him. He has arranged for the Association to be visable at county fairs, at the State Fair, and at other meetings during the past several months. His signs attract favorable attention, and he has distributed a quantity of circulars and copies of our magazine to people who express interest. His efforts are taxing of his energy and demanding of his time, but he is getting results.

In August we enjoyed a very successful "Woods Walk", hosted by Emiel Palmer. About 50 people attended and expressed satisfaction in their opportunity to observe Emiel's wood lot, and in the visit to the Onondaga County Forest (Highland Forest). In addition, the Board of Directors authorized sponsoring two meetings in cooperation with several other organizations. Both were described in the September-October "Forest Owner". The September 24 symposium on "Wood: a conservation fuel", at Cornell University was an excellent meeting and Jim Lassoie is to be commended for his efforts in making the arrangements for it. The second meeting, a training session in "Log Scaling and Grading" under the auspices of the "Applied Forestry Research Institute" is scheduled for October 8.

Most striking of all our efforts this year, was the very successful European Forest Owners Tour, promoted and arranged by Alan Knight. The group departed New York City May 8 and returned May 22 after visiting Switzerland, Austria and West Germany. For those who were fortunate enough to go, it was a very rewarding experience.

These are but a few of the changes and developments that we can review with satisfaction. We will report on others in future issues of the "Forest Owner".

—*C. Eugene Farnsworth*

# *Nominations for Heiberg Award*

Nominations for Heiberg Memorial Award presented by the New York Forest Owners Association in memory of Svend O. Heiberg for significant contributions to the fields of forestry and conservation in New York State are invited by N.Y.F.O.A. Nominations must reach David H. Hanaburgh, of the N.Y.F.O.A. Awards Committee, Box 122, Buchanan, New York 10511 by January 2, 1978.

A brief biographical sketch of the nominee is requested. Nominations are open and a nominee does not need to be a member of the N.Y.F.O.A. Selection is made by the Board of Directors and announcement of the award is made at the Annual Meeting in April.

Past Recipients

1966 Hardy L. Shirley
1967 David B. Cook
1968 Floyd F. Carlson
1969 F.A. Demeree
1970 No Award
1971 Fred F. Winch
1972 John Stock
1973 Robert M. Ford
1974 C. Eugene Farnsworth
1975 Alex Dickson
1976 Edward W. Littlefield
1977 Maurice G. Postley

# *NYFOA Sponsors Conference on Woodburning*

*by J. P. Lassoie*
*Cornell University*

On Saturday, September 24 a conference titled "Wood: The Conservation Fuel" was held at Cornell in hopes of providing basic information on the proper use of firewood and woodburning units. About 250 serious woodburners attended the meeting; a tally during the morning indicated that over half those present were currently heating their home with wood, many cut their own firewood supplies. The conference was sponsored by Cooperative Extension and the Department of Natural Resources in cooperation with the New York State Forest Owners Association and District 3 of the State Forest Practice Act Board.

The morning session commenced with welcoming remarks and a general introduction to home heating wth wood from Dr. John Kelley, Associate Professor and Department Extension Leader from the Department of Natural Resources. Kelley, who uses wood as a primary heat source in his new home, shared with the audience some of the problems and frustrations involved in adjusting one's lifestyle in order to burn wood. He pointed out that our great-grandfathers would probably find such problems humorous as woodburning in their day was a common experience. Following his comments, Dr. Wisner Kinne discussed the activities of the New York State Forest Practice Act Board and why this group is involved in the firewood issue. Kinne pointed out that the Forest Practice Act established a citizen's advisory group to the Department of Environmental Conservation in order to help formulate sound forest practices in New York State. Members are owners of forest lands who must confront the day-to-day problems associated with woodlot management. Therefore, many of these people are interested in the commercial aspects of woodlot ownership and production. Others are more interested in the woodlot production of firewood for use in their own homes. In contrast, Dr. Eugene Farnsworth, President of the NYFOA followed Kinne's comments by stating that many of their members are not primarily interested in commercial production from their woodlots but instead are concerned with their management for wildlife and recreational uses. Even so, the recent increased interest in firewood has involved many of the members of the Association.

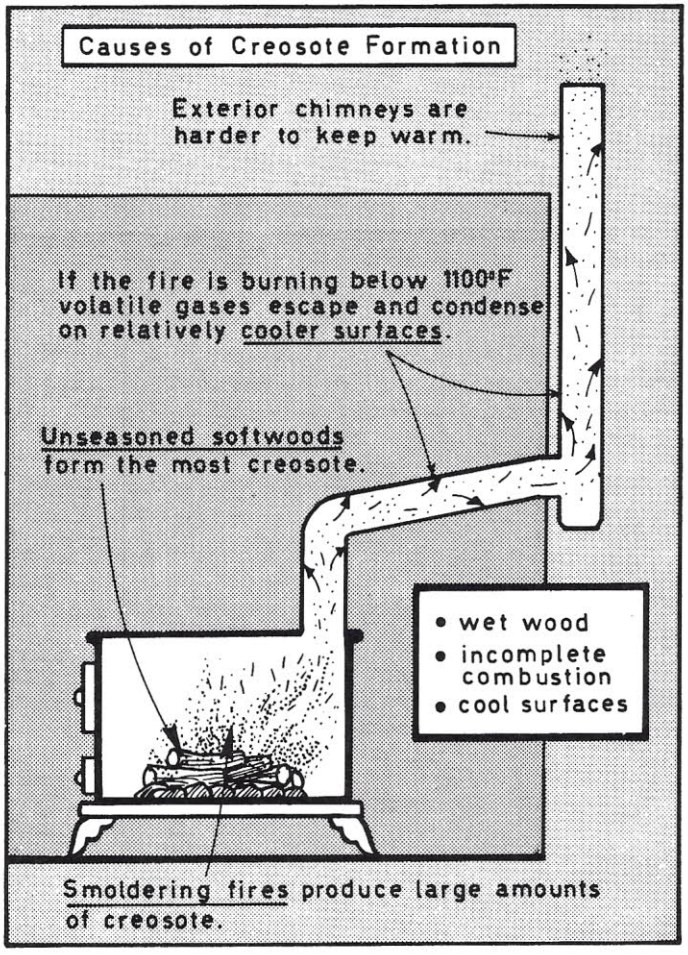
The morning session featured guest speakers Mr. Andrew Shapiro and Dr. Jay Shelton, authors of "The Woodburners Encyclopedia"; a comprehensive book covering the use and abuse of wood as a home heating source. Shapiro, an architect by training, is the President of the Wood Energy Institute in Waitsfield, Vermont. The Institute is presently concerned with promoting the regional use of wood for electric power generation. Shelton is a physics professor at Williams College in Williamstown, Massachusetts. He has investigated wood burning under laboratory conditions and has tested the heating performance of a large number of woodburning stoves. Both speakers heat their homes with wood stoves.

Andrew Shapiro was first, covering general aspects of using wood as a fuel. In a series of slides, Shapiro generally described the fuelwood supply in New York and the Northeast. He stressed the importance of utilizing logging residues which are generally left in the woods following a commercial harvest. The greatest danger of improper use of firewood was illustrated by a series of slides showing the disastrous results of chimmey fires. Proper stove and chimney installation was stressed. Shapiro then discussed general stove quality and those features important in making a sound consumer choice. He finished by discussing the potential for legislative action in the area of tax rebate for those persons utilizing wood as a home heating source.

Having taken wood from the woodlot to the home, Jay Shelton continued the discussion by considering the factors involved in wood stove performance. Shelton's research work on woodburning units formed the base for many of his comments; much of this information may be found in his book. He discussed the various factors related to stove design and operation both of which influence performance and efficiency. Efficiency is a term applied to the amount of heat obtained to heat the house

compared to the amount potentially available in the wood. For example, a traditional fireplace heats at only about 10 per cent efficiency while an air-tight wood-burning stove might reach 60 percent; an efficiency comparable to oil and gas burners. However, many factors are involved and the variability between stoves is great. Shelton stressed the need for an independent agency to test wood stove performances so that unbiased information could be made available to the consumer.

Dr. Shelton went on to discuss the proper installation of woodburning stoves in order to assure their safe use. He stressed the need for help, either from written materials or from professionals, before installing and operating a wood stove. Shelton commented that an unsolved question involves the potential impact of air pollution should a major conversion to burning wood occur. During his concluding remarks, Shelton noted that another problem area involved homeowner insurance policies when wood is used to heat the home. He remarked that some companies will not write policies for homes that heat with wood stoves. Much of this concern seems to be justified, as past history has proven that homes heated with firewood tend to have a greater chance of house fires. Unfortunately, most of these fires result from the improper use of wood and woodburning units.




One recurrent theme in the meeting was the importance of creosote in wood burning. This figure illustrates the main sources of this fire hazard.

After a box lunch, participants visited an exhibition of commercial woodburning equipment. About a dozen retailers were present, exhibiting a selection of woodburning equipment. About a dozen retailers were present, exhibiting a selection of woodburning stoves and furnaces, stovepipes, woodsplitters, and fireplace equipment. Exhibitors found the participants quite informed about the use of wood and woodburning stoves; hopefully an indication of the amount and quality of information which was obtained during the morning session.

Late in the afternoon, Dr. Robert Morrow, Professor in the Department of Natural Resources, conducted a tour to a local woodlot to discuss how one might manage a woodlot for firewood production. About 25 participants braved a torrential downpour for over two hours to discuss the thinning hardwood forests for firewood production. Morrow pointed out that the increased demand for firewood by the public and by individuals owning woodlots provides a market for thinnings which were usually considered to be worthless. The removal on non-commercial trees in a stand leaves more room for the remaining trees and will improve their growth. Therefore, the potential for greatly improving the quality of New York State woodlots may be enhanced by the increased demand for firewood. Such efforts can also have a positive effect on improving habitats for wildlife. However, Morrow cautioned woodlot owners to cut wisely, as often the indiscrimination use of trees for firewood includes those more valuable for timber or those important to wildlife. If one is unsure, a professional forester should be consulted before cutting firewood in one's woodlot.

As more and more people throughout the State become interested and involved in using wood as a home heating fuel, the need for sound information on this general subject becomes increasingly important. The recent meeting at Cornell brought together experienced, national authorities on this subject in hopes of providing sound information to the homeowner, thus enabling him to make wise consumer choices concerning the use of firewood.

However, equally important was the fact that this conference represented a cooperative effort between different groups interested in forest management in New York State. Hopefully, such cooperation will continue in the future. The possibilities are great and only limited by the imagination and enthusiasm of all those involved.

# Fores in the Southern

*by Howard*

This is not an article on forestry. It is a story about some of the things related to forestry that have happened, and why, from the time of the arrival of the first settlers to the area. It is told in the first person because much of it is from my own observations and the rest of it was told to me by people who were living in the area prior to 1900.

Much of the area which is now Tioga County was granted to James McMaster in 1781 by a grateful young U.S. Gov't. which didn't have the money with which to pay its Army Officers. A historic marker at Candor states: "James McMaster, Pioneer, Revolutionary soldier to whom was granted title 'McMaster's half Township' 1788 lies buried near here." He, in turn, sold parcels to men who had served with General Sullivan, when he passed through this country during the Revolutionary War killing the Indians and burning their villages. The soldiers had been impressed by the wide valleys and the lush stands of virgin pine and determined to come back when the war was over.

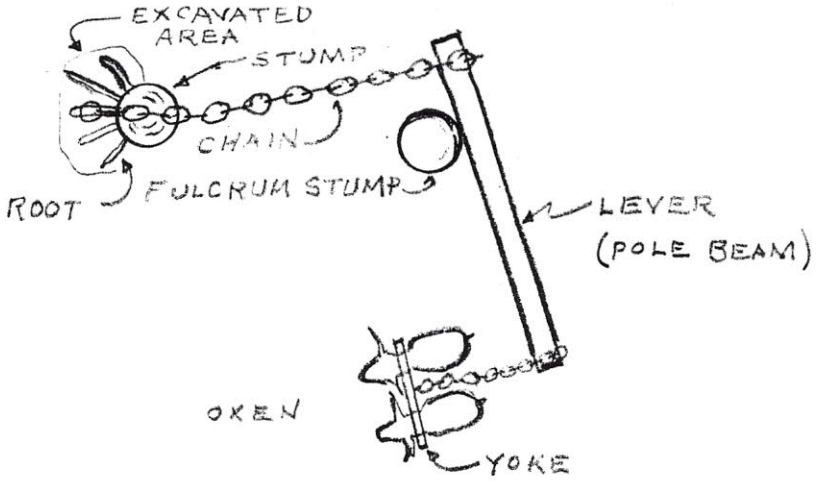
The first settlers were little interested in forestry. It provided the material for their homes and barns, but beyond that, the forests were in the way. They needed cleared land for crops and pasture. So, they felled the virgin timber, sawed what they needed into boards, hewed the framing timbers with broad axes or adzes, and sold what they could. What was left was burned. However, this left a lot of stumps. This was okay in pasture, but they needed cleared fields that they could plow for planting grains and vegetables. How did they get rid of those enormous pine stumps?

Do you remember that Archimedes said that, "Given a long enough lever, a fulcrum, and a place to stand I can move the world?" The early settlers knew this principle. They would free the roots on one side of a stump by digging and chopping. A chain was then attached to an excavated root stub, laid over the top of the stump, and hooked to the end of a lever pole. The lever pole was placed at a firm stump or tree with the chain from the stump on the short end and a team of oxen or horses hitched to the long end. (Perhaps a sketch would help.)

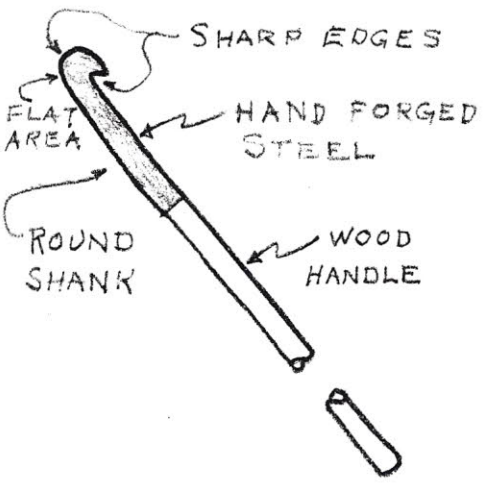
The team pulled on the long end of the lever, the pole beam pivoted around the fulcrum stump, and the mechanical advantage of the lever multiplied the force (at the long end of the lever pulled by the team) sufficiently to tip the stump out of the ground. It was a long and laborious process, but it worked. The removed stumps were often tilted up in a row at the edge of a field to form a stump fence. These remain to this day in many places, having survived more than 150 to 200 years of weathering. (I can show you one on my farm.)

They needed to clear the land for farming, but fortunately, there was a market for timber in Philadelphia. Some of the more enterprising settlers with large land holdings took advantage of this. The trees were felled in the winter, hauled to the bank of the Susquehanna River at Owego by team and bobsled. In the spring the logs were made into rafts. The loggers rode the rafts down river during spring flood, sold the logs in Philadelphia, then walked back to Tioga County, some 300 miles.

One of the most important by-products of early forestry in this area was hemlock bark. Why? It provided the ingredient, tannin, for tanning leather. As hemlock logs were brought to a mill for sawing, the bark was first




STUMP REMOVAL




BARK SPUD

# try Beginnings Tier of New York State

*D. Ward*

removed by hand with a bark spud (see sketch above). The removed bark was piled up for use by the tannery. To this day, the Village of Candor has a "Bark Street" which once designated where the piles of hemlock bark for tannery use were located.

What kind of timbers were harvested? Much of it was virgin pine of enormous size. This was used locally for houses and barns. You can find two-foot wide floor boards in houses that were built in the early 1800's. The house in which I was born is a plank house with post and beam frame. The original house had a basement of rubble masonry. The flat stones were shale rock picked up along the rills and in the fields on top of the hills. The original main house had two rooms on the ground floor and two on the second floor. Additions were built at various times in later years. Many of the boards in the house are 18" to 24" wide.

My present home was built sometime around 1850 and has been in my family since 1868. When my wife and I bought it from Dad and remodeled it, the carpenter doing the work needed a long straight edge. He took one of the door casings from a doorway we were removing and cut it down to serve his purpose. It is 1¼' thick, 5" wide, approximately 7 ft. long of native white pine without a single knot.

Along a similar vein, the house in Candor, where we lived in the early 1950's, was built sometime in the mid-1800's by a lumber mill operator for himself. He saved the best pieces of maple, cherry, chestnut, and pine from his mill operation for use in building his house. The pine was used for framing, flooring, and lap siding. The cherry was used for all door and window casings, for multi-fold interior shutters for the windows, and for the interior doors. The dining room floor had alernate pieces of cherry, chestnut,and maple laid in reducing rectangles. A wainscot in the room was also of alternate cherry, chestnut, and maple. The cupboards between the dining room and butler's pantry were of maple. some of this was bird's eye maple. (The house is now owned by attorney Ronald Telford.)

Still on the subject of houses built from native timber, my great grandmother fell on hard times financially after the death of her husband and was forced to sell her home and buy a cheaper one, the one in which I now live. The one she sold presently owned by Mr. Robert Wells, is of neo-Grecian style with two-story fluted, round wood columns having column caps and bases in the Doric style. What is most interesting about the house is that it is constructed of two-by-fours laid up in the manner of a log cabin so the walls are solid wood at least four inches thick.

Back to forestry—My grandfather was a lumberman for the first half of his life. In his youth he had gone to Michigan and worked in the virgin forests there. He returned to Candor and began buying and selling timber. In the early 1920's he bought the 150 acre farm, which is now my tree farm, for the timber. The standing timber was sold to a mill in Owego, N. Y. The mill did the logging. They took everything that would make lumber and finished the logging in the mid-1920's, fifty years ago.

Dad and my grandfather, "Pappa," were in the cattle business by this time, so after the timber was harvested, they used the whole place for pasture, fencing out only a small amount of the woodland. This continued from 1927 to 1944 when seven cattle were stolen. This ended Dad's use of the farm and it stood idle until 1954 when Lloyd Strombeck and I, as partners, bought it and began planting Christmas trees. In 1956 we sold standing timber to the value of twice what we paid for the farm. Dad thought we had cheated him, but it was he who set the selling price without thinking that the timber might have some value after nearly 30 years since the last harvest. (I hadn't thought about it either because I didn't know anything about timber at that time.)

About the same time that we sold the timber, Lloyd and I started killing cull and weed trees using a "Cornell tree killing tool." This is a piece of 1"pipe fitted with a blade on one end and a spring loaded valve just above the blade. You filled the pipe with sodium arsenite solution and capped it. Holding the pipe nearly vertical, you stabbed the tree continuously until you had worked your way around the tree making a complete girdle or frill. Each time you stabbed, the spring loaded valve would open briefly and let a small amount of sodium arsenite drain into the cut made by the blade. This worked fairly well except on soft maple. If you missed making the girdle complete by only an inch or so, there would remain a "green streak" and the tree continued to live.

We must have done some good. Most of the area we treated was in the area which had been fenced away from the cattle. Despite the harvest in 1956, there was another harvest in that same area in 1972, though there were not enough marketable sticks in other parts of the timber stand to make harvesting worthwhile.

Immediately following this harvest, I had the state forester go over six acres of the same area and mark trees for thinning to improve stand rate of growth. This time, and ever since, going six to eight acres per year, I've been felling the trees and letting them lie. I've given away most of it as firewood asking only that each scavenger leave enough at the cabin for use there. If I were retired, I could probably have a profitable firewood business from the thinnings. Incidentally, under the Timber Stand Improvement Program administered by the Federal ASCS, 70 per cent (more or less) of the cost of thinning is reimbursed to the land owner by the Federal Government.

# Fuelwood and Woodland Management

by Robert Morrow
and
Thomas Gage

*PRINCIPLES OF WOODLAND MANAGEMENT.* In most forested regions of the U.S., designated professional state or federal foresters are available for advising land owners on forest management, harvesting, and marketing. These service foresters, usually one per forested county, are often employed by state conservation departments and can be contacted through local county extension offices. They are authorized to visit private woodland owners and help develop management plans. With so many private owners eligible to receive service, there are delays and limitations on the number of visits. But eventually a forester will respond to a request and, among other things, can show an owner how to mark trees to be cut for fuelwood.

Because service foresters are usually available and because woodland management is better demonstrated in the woods than on a printed page, only some of the important principles of management are emphasized here.

1. Sustained yield management is based on harvesting only the "growth" from forests. The mean annual growth is determined principally by solar energy, but it is limited by climatic factors, soil deficiencies, topography and other aspects of landform, and biotic factors including excessive browsing by animals.

2. Forest management has little influence on biological growth once a tree cover is established to absorb the solar energy. Growth is nearly the same whether spread over 1000 small trees or a hundred large trees. Young forests have far more trees than can ever grow to maturity. Thinning is necessary, either by cutting out some of the crowded trees or letting them die.

3. The average annual net timber growth in U.S. forests is only a half cord per acre. This is because most young trees are left to die and only the best logs are taken from others. Thinning and harvesting crowded trees has little effect on total growth, but could double the net growth - with half of it going for fuelwood.

4. Where fuelwood is wanted, it should first be sought from thinnings that remove primarily poor trees to increase the growth of others into valuable sawlogs or veneer. To continually cut the best trees for fuelwood could degrade forest quality for decades or even centuries, as well as make us more dependent on non-renewable, energy-intensive raw materials.

5. There is room for only about 100 of the best trees per acre to grow to maturity. Periodic thinning can convert much of the early forest growth into fuelwood, while channeling most of the later growth into high value trees.

6. A typical northeastern forest is unmanaged, contains some 20 to 40 cords per acre, and grows only a half to a full cord yearly on each acre. The better land produces at least a cord per acre yearly - with suitable thinning about half of the growth can be used for fuelwood. On the poorer land, the growth may be only a half cord yearly. Most of this is available for fuelwood, however, as timber growing is a marginal business on such land. Consequently landowners can expect to obtain an average of about a half cord of fuelwood per acre per year on most forest land. If 10 cords are needed annually, a 20-acre woodlot should usually supply it.

Sugar bushes that produce a cord per acre per year supply enough wood fuel to evaporate all the sap normally obtained from the same area.

7. Although forest volume is often unrelated to growth or yield, Table 1 can be used to estimate the volume available for cutting or the number of trees of different sizes needed to yield a cord. Since the table was made up for a "merchantable" height that does not include all the usable top wood or branches, it will underestimate the number of cords of fuelwood by some 30 percent.

Table 1. Composite Table: Gross Volume in Rough Cords to a Variable Top Diameter Inside Bark of Not Less Than 3.0 Inches, by Total Height

| Diameter breast high (inches) | 20 feet | 30 feet | 40 feet | 50 feet | 60 feet | 70 feet | 80 feet | 90 feet | 100 feet | Percent of total height utilized |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | cords | cords | cords | cords | cords | cords | cords | cords | cords | |
| 4 ------ | 0.00 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.01 | 0.02 | ---- | ---- | ---- | ---- | 33 |
| 5 ------ | .01 | .01 | .02 | .02 | .03 | 0.03 | ---- | ---- | ---- | 44 |
| 6 ------ | .02 | .02 | .03 | .04 | .05 | .05 | ---- | ---- | ---- | 50 |
| 7 ------ | .02 | .03 | .04 | .06 | .07 | .08 | 0.09 | ---- | ---- | 55 |
| 8 ------ | | .04 | .06 | .08 | .09 | .11 | .12 | 0.14 | ---- | 59 |
| 9 ------ | | .06 | .08 | .10 | .12 | .14 | .16 | .18 | ---- | 61 |
| 10 ------ | | .07 | .10 | .12 | .15 | .17 | .20 | .22 | 0.25 | 62 |
| 11 ------ | | | .12 | .15 | .18 | .21 | .24 | .27 | .30 | 63 |
| 12 ------ | | | .14 | .18 | .21 | .25 | .29 | .32 | .36 | 65 |
| 13 ------ | | | .16 | .21 | .25 | .30 | .34 | .38 | .43 | 66 |
| 14 ------ | | | .19 | .24 | .30 | .35 | .40 | .45 | .50 | 68 |
| 15 ------ | | | .23 | .29 | .35 | .40 | .46 | .52 | .58 | 69 |
| 16 ------ | | | .26 | .33 | .40 | .46 | .53 | .60 | .67 | 70 |
| 17 ------ | | | .29 | .37 | .45 | .53 | .60 | .68 | .76 | 72 |
| 18 ------ | | | .33 | .42 | 50 | .59 | .68 | .77 | .86 | 73 |
| 19 ------ | | | .37 | .47 | .56 | .66 | .76 | .86 | .96 | 74 |
| 20 ------ | | | .41 | .52 | .63 | .74 | .85 | .96 | 1.07 | 75 |
| 25 ------ | ---- | ---- | ---- | .83 | 1.01 | 1.18 | 1.37 | 1.54 | 1.72 | 79 |

*Adapted from Gevorkiantz, S.R. and L.P. Olsen. 1955. Composite volume tables for timber and their application in the Lake States. U.S.D.A. Tech. Bull. 1104.*

# *State Commission on Tug Hill Is No Laughing Matter*

*By Woody Fritchette*
*reprinted from Binghamton Evening Press, Oct. 7, 1977*

ALBANY—When critics of New York zing the state legislature for real or imagined extravagances, they often mention the Temporary State Commission on Tug Hill as a horrible example of a political boondoggle.

Temporary commissions are creatures of the legislators and occasionally have been used as havens for political hacks with high-paid, no-show jobs.

The Tug Hill Commission arouses suspicions because:

- It has a funny name.
- Few New Yorkers have any idea what or where Tug Hill is.
- The commission's nine members are political appointees and have a full-time staff of 22 persons.
- Created by the legislature, the commission's annual appropriation has zoomed from $5,000 in 1972, its first year, to $225,000 this year.
- Even that most political of political creatures, Gov. Hugh L. Carey, has recommended in each of his three budgets that the commission be abolished, only to be ignored by the legislature.

But cynics might be well advised to save their taunts of the Tug Hill agency, which appears likely to win the gratitude of at least conservation-minded New Yorkers, if not the entire state.

Tug Hill is the name of a 1.3 million-acre expanse of unsettled hill country that rises from 250 feet above sea level to 2,100 feet as it stretches 40 miles eastward from Lake Ontario.

Generally, it lies north of Utica, south of Watertown and west of Lowville. Within its borders are parts of Oneida, Oswego, Jefferson and Lewis counties as well as 39 towns, 20 villages and a widely scattered 81,500 residents.

On a map, Tug Hill looks like the place the cartographer forgot.

It is unlined because no roads cross it. A few skirt the edges, but only uncharted trails venture in.

It moved author Harold W. Sampson to write some years ago:

"It is . . . forest solitudes, and wild beasts, and tumbling trout streams that were once sources of unlimited water power. It is lumber camps and back woods farms and high stony pastures. It is desolation in the winter and breathtaking beauty at all times of the year. It is wild flowers and bird song and the music of the winds in the evergreens . . ."

In the late 1960s, a huge development corporation cast an eye on Tug Hill and took an option on 55,000 acres of *the forest wilderness. The idea was to change wetlands to ponds and build "second homes" with lake frontage, develop a golf course nearby and generally convert that part of Tug Hill into a Playground for the well-to-do.*

Pleas to the legislature, principally from Edward F. Crawford, then an assemblyman from Oswego, to create a commission to plan carefully for Tug Hill's future no longer fell on deaf ears. Creation of the commission with the funny name was approved by the legislature in 1972.

Today, the commission, whose members never have been paid more than expenses for the days they work, has a $30,000-a-year executive director, Benjamin Coe of Watertown. He has a $20,000-a-year assistant; the rest of the 22-member staff is paid from $6,000 to $12,000 a year.

Eager to avoid the anger stirred up by the Adirondack Park Agency, the Tug Hill Commission proceeded slowly, and has worked throughout at the grass roots.

Its first job was to point up the merits of land-use planning and stiff enforcement of building codes.

It was no easy task in Tug Hill, where money is scarce and conservatism, independence and suspicion of strangers and big government run strong.

But apparently the commission's message was convincing. Nine towns have joined to form the Cooperative Tug Hill Planning Board and are working together to plan for the area's future development and to set up the apparatus to enforce its regulations. The board's decisions are subject to approval of the boards of supervisors of the counties involved.

Meanwhile, Tug Hill, with its uniquely high elevations and unusual climate, has become important as a scientific testing ground for air pollution studies. It also is under consideration as a range for moose in a controlled experiment to determine whether the animal could be domesticated enough to be raised as a source of meat.

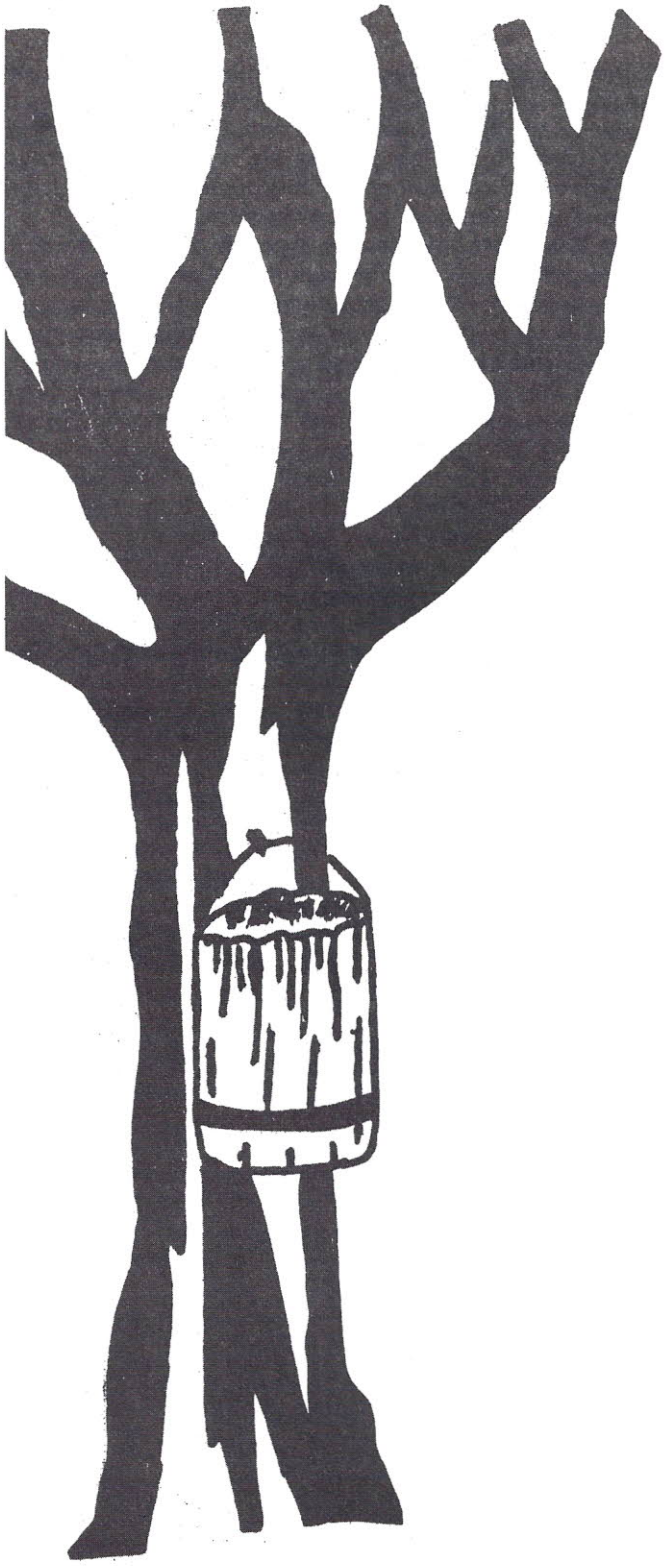
Things are going so well on Tug Hill that Hugh Gilbert of Watertown, the commission's attorney, said that at the next legislative sessions the commission will recommend its own dissolution.

"We'll probably suggest a three-year phase-out," he said. "We may recommend a permanent, three-member unpaid state commission to keep an eye on things," he said, adding, "but we're hoping the Tug Hill people can take it from here themselves."

*The writer covers state government for Gannett News Service.*

# Interview with a Sugar Maple

In searching for important citizens to contribute to your publication, your editor found one citizen whose importance in our state is unimpeachable. Following is the text of that interview.



*Forest Owner:* "Hello Mr. Maple. Sorry to wake you up in January. I know this is one of your most dormant months."

*Maple:* "That's okay, young fella. In another month those parasites with their brace and bits will be coming through drilling holes in my trunk. Say . . . you aren't one of them guys are you?"

*F.O.:* "No sir. Well, actually I do tap a few trees but I didn't know it hurt you."

*Maple:* "How would you like a hole drilled in you? Actually it only takes a small percentage of the sap that arises in the spring. The main thing is not to put too many taps in each tree."

*F.O.:* "Tell me, Mr. Maple, do your relatives get tapped too?"

*Maple:* "You bet, Uncle Red, Cousin Silver, Aunt Black, even that renegade with compound leaves, Box Elder; they all get tapped. I'm the sweetest, however."

*F.O.:* "How many relatives do you have?"

*Maple:* "Would you believe there are at least 115 species of maples in the genus ACER distributed around the world? Talk about a family tree! There are 13 species of maple in the United States."

*F.O.:* "Wow! What characteristics do you ACERS have in common?"

*Maple:* "We have long-petioled leaves arranged opposite one another on a branch. Our leaves are usually palm shaped and have toothed margins. Look at the Canadian Flag. Remember, I said that renegade the box elder has compound leaves. That means his leaves are composed of small leaflets. He looks like an ash with that arrangement but they still call him a maple."

*F.O.:* "Mr. Maple, if I may ask a personal question, how do you reproduce?"

*Maple:* "I'm glad you asked me that because it gives me an opportunity to correct your male chauvinism.

I am not entirely male. Actually, my sex life is very confusing. I have some flowers which have both male and female parts and I have others which are either male or female. I admit there are generally more male flowers than females. Some estimates are 50 to one. I don't know what this means but in the vicinity of Philadelphia most of the trees only produce male flowers. Philadelphia has had all kinds of trouble lately.

Be careful of insecticides around me because most of my flowers are beepollinated. Flowers are produced early in the spring. Again, Uncle Red is one of the first. He is one of the showiest too."

My fruit consists of a double samara, often called a key. Only one is viable. They are readily eaten by squirrels and birds. In fact, some feel maple seeds are the favorite food of evening grosbeaks. I can spare these seeds though. Some estimates show that my neighbors and I can produce 5 million seeds per acre."

*F.O.*: "So much for your personal life, Mr. Maple. What are your thoughts on the issues?

*Maple*:"Well how about taxes for openers. Do you realize that I am a part of one of the first tax rebates in American history? That's right, beginning back in the 1860's New York State provided that if a taxpayer planted three trees of an approved species along a roadside, he would be remitted one dollar of his local tax bill. There were three approved species of trees, the Black Walnut, American Elm and Sugar Maple. You can still see us sugar maples along the roadside but you see very few elms and walnuts. The elms succumbed to Dutch Elm Disease and walnuts were affected by chain saw blight because they are so valuable."

*F.O.*: "How do you stand on the health issue?"

*Maple*: "Let's get back to those roadside trees. While we maples are the only ones left, we are having a rough time. The foresters call it maple decline. Actually it's a combination of problems. Road widening has invariably left us roadside maples with a half a root system. Add soil compaction from cattle and vehicles plus the fact that the trees planted in the 1800's are getting old. Actually, though it is the salt applied by vote-conscious highway departments that is causing us the most grief. We are very sensitive to salt damage . . . and we can't even vote."

*F.O.*: "How do you stand on the economic issue?"

*Maple*: "Well, with all modesty, I can say that I am the most versatile tree in New York. My wood is hard, close-grained with a fine surface. I am in high demand for flooring, veneer, furniture, shoe lasts and even bowling pins. Have you driven past a bowling alley on Saturday night lately? Bowling is big business and maple makes the best pins.

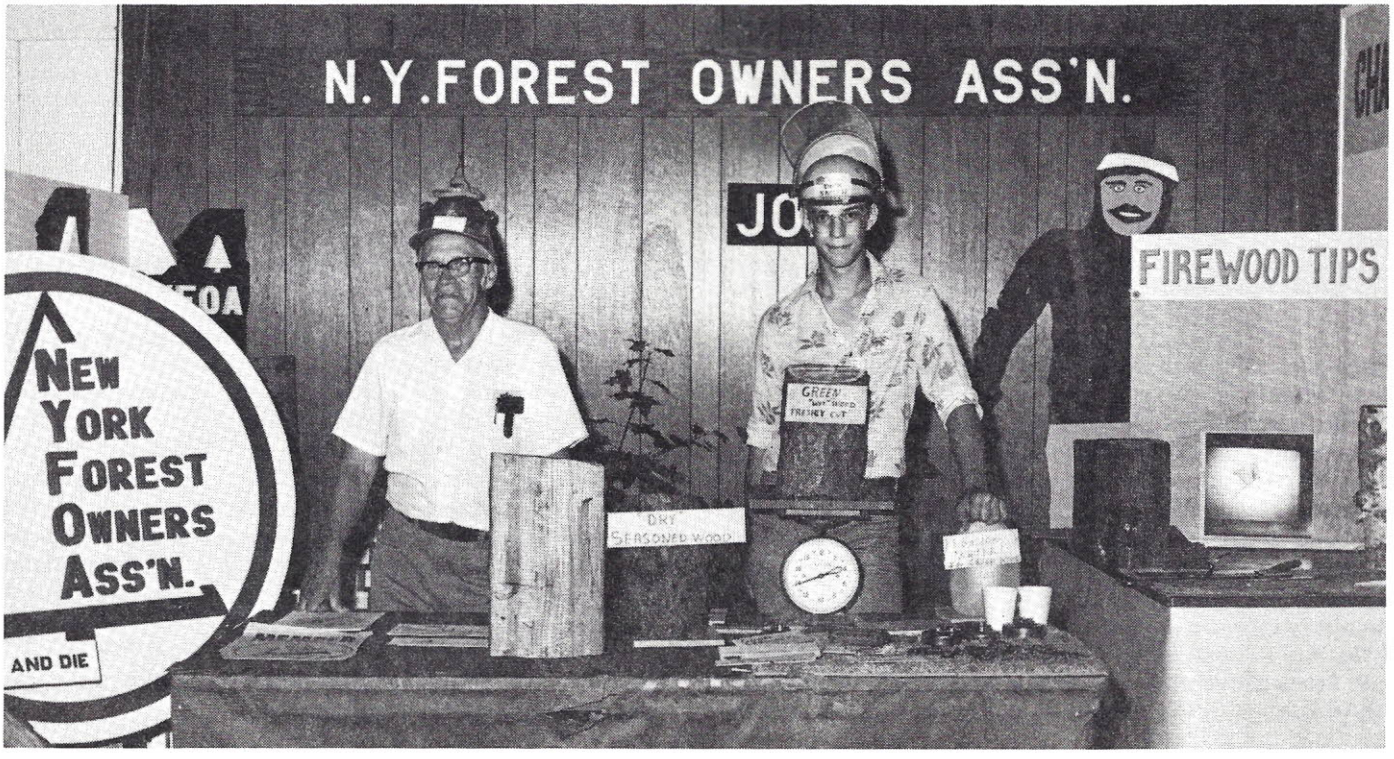
But wood is only part of the story and it is in other products when I outdistance the other trees. Maple syrup! Do you realize that the maple syrup crop, in addition to being the first of the year in New York, is the only crop where New York ranks first in the nation?"

There is more. Sugar maple is one of the prize landscape trees because of its artistic shape, ease of planting, long life and fine fall color. This last characteristic, by the way, is a big attraction to lure tourist dollars to the upstate regions."

*F.O.*: "One last question, Mr. Maple. How do you stand on the energy issue?"

*Maple*: "I am glad you asked that question because I contribute a great deal to the comfort of people in the winter. Do you know that one full cord of seasoned sugar maple is the heat equivalent to 165 to 200 gallons of number 2 fuel oil.

"Yessir, all these guys searching for a way to tap solar energy are rediscovering the wheel. We sugar maples have been harvesting and storing solar energy for centuries."




This is the popular NYFOA exhibit at the New York State Fair this year. Ken Eberly is pictured at left. Sorry your editor can't identify the young man in the center. You name the woodsman on the right.

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# Forest Management Committee Named

Secretary of Agriculture Robert Bergland has appointed seven scientists to a special committee that will advise him on national forest land management procedures. Under requirements of the National Forest Management act of 1976, the committee is designed to provide the secretary with technical and scientific advice on proposed land management planning guidelines and procedures to assure that an effective interdisciplinary approach is used by the Forest Service. The committee members include: Dr. Thadis W. Box, dean of the College of Natural Resources and professor of range science at Utah State University; Dr. Arthur W. Cooper, a botanist and professor in the School of Forest Resources, North Carolina State University; Dr. R. Rodney Foil, dean of the School of Forest Resources at Mississippi State University, and a specialist in forest resource management and use; Dr. Ronald W. Stark, a forest entomologist and coordinator of research for the University of Idaho; Dr. Lucille F. Stickel, a biologist and director of the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Dr. Earl L. Stone, Jr., a soil scientist and professor in the Department of Agronomy, Cornell University; and Dr. Dennis E. Teeguarden, professor of forestry economics, College of Natural Resources, University of California, Berkeley, and a specialist in applying operations research to forest resources allocation problems.