

The Cradle of Forestry in America

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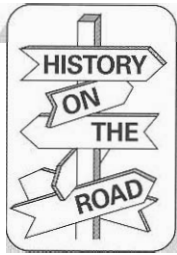
THINGS TO SEE

The Cradle of Forestry in America is a historic site full of scenic beauty, Southern Appalachian culture and fun activities for all ages.

The Forest Discovery Center is a magnificent stone and timber exhibit hall. The entertaining exhibits describe how our nation's view of forest resources has changed drastically from the pure exploitation of the mid 1800s to the sustainable, multiple-use management tradition of today. Many of the exhibits are interactive and designed to appeal to young children, teens, adults and seniors alike. A couple of the more popular attractions are the simulated helicopter ride (for a firefighting flight) and a hands-on activity center that provides opportunities to explore a forest through all of the senses. Collectors will find the accumulations of antique tools and Smokey Bear paraphernalia fascinating. The volunteer personnel are exuberant hosts who help create a pleasant and friendly atmosphere within the center.

The Biltmore Campus Trail is a pleasant stroll through the Appalachian forest as you retrace the manner of study and living in this turn of the century mountain community. Rehabilitated and reconstructed log cabins and clapboard shacks are brought to life by living historians who demonstrate subsistence skills of the men and women of the area at that time. The smell of wood-fired stoves and the clang of a hammer against an anvil will imprint memories of a nearly forgotten standard of living.

The Forest Festival Trail is a tribute to the foresight of pioneers in natural resource conservation and management. Numerous forestry demonstration plots are laid out just as they were in the early 1900s. Experiments by Dr. Schenck and the students in seedling nurseries, tree planting, selective harvesting, timber stand improvement and trout farming are recreated for your inspection. A complete tramline logging train, a steam-powered sawmill, and an ox-drawn road grader are set up for you to climb aboard. Again, all of these outdoor exhibits are backdropped by stands of mixed spruce/pine/hardwood trees, ferns, rhododendrons and scampering chipmunks.



This year marks the 100th anniversary of the first forestry school in America. To celebrate, you may want to visit a place in the Appalachian Mountains of North Carolina called the "Cradle of Forestry." The Cradle of Forestry is, first, a memorial to the beginning of natural resource conservation in America, but the USDA Forest Service has also made sure that a visit to the Cradle will be a fun, beautiful, and very pleasant experience for visitors of all ages and interests.

THE BEGINNINGS OF FORESTRY MEMORIALIZED

In 1895, Gifford Pinchot left the Biltmore Forest to serve as the first chief of the USDA Forest Service. However, before he left, he was instrumental in hiring Dr. Carl Schenck, a German forester, to continue management of Biltmore Forest and promotion of the science of forestry to the public.

Dr. Schenck opened America's first school of forestry, the Biltmore Forest School, on September 1, 1898. The curriculum consisted of 12 months of combined classroom lectures and field work, followed by a six-month internship in the timber industry and a paper written about the experience before a Bachelor of Science degree in Forestry was awarded to graduates. The cost of attaining this degree was a whopping total of \$960, with \$120 of this expense being for the care of the student's horse. The school graduated its last class in 1913. Out of more than 365 attendees, 300 completed the required courses. One graduate be-

came an associate forester of the United States under Gifford Pinchot; 24 became Forest Service regional foresters or forest supervisors; 12 became state foresters; and most of the other students made their contributions to society through

private timber companies, forest surveying, consulting forestry and wood preservation.

George Vanderbilt died in 1914. Mrs. Vanderbilt sold some of the family's land to the U.S. Government, which eventually became part of the Pisgah National Forest. In 1964 the Forest Service dedicated 6,500 acres of the Pisgah Ranger District to the birthplace of American forestry and natural resource conservation. This area, The Cradle of Forestry in America, was established as a historic site by an Act of Congress in 1968.

A DESTINATION WORTH THE TRIP

The Cradle of Forestry is located in the Pisgah National Forest in the western tip of North Carolina. Although it can be reached more directly from Greenville, South Carolina, the drive along the Blue Ridge Parkway from Asheville, North Carolina is much more interesting because of the beautiful views, Catawba rhododendrons and spruce forests. Either way, the drive will involve traveling over and through mountains until you reach the Cradle nestled within the "Pink Beds Valley" on U.S. Highway 276. Visitors are greeted at the entrance to the Cradle by a large brightly colored sign hewn from logs and timbers.

MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE CRADLE

The Cradle is open from 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. Eastern time, April 22 - November

Admission:

\$4 for adults, \$2 for students 6-17 years old, free for children 5 or younger. Special rates are available for Golden Age Passport holders and groups of 15 or more.

For more information contact:

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