

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

The Passion of History

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History challenges us to learn its lessons. Sometimes the lessons are evident and other times demand more effort to decipher. During the past two years at the Forest History Society the lessons have been clearly evident as we lost three special friends and supporters; Carl A. Weyerhaeuser, Alvin J. Huss and Lynn Weyerhaeuser Day. Carl, an ardent lover of literature and history, provided early support for our library that bears his name. Alvin was instrumental in securing support for the FHS archives which was named in his honor. Lynn Weyerhaeuser Day played a critical role in helping FHS to be successful in its first endowment campaigns and provided both financial and emotional support for three decades. They each showed leadership in their own ways and showed by example their belief that the lessons of history can be used effectively to inform decision-making and give direction to the future. They exhibited the passion of history. This issue of *Forest History Today* is dedicated to them (pages 52 and 53).

Passion has filled our programs during the past year. To serve a diverse membership we are increasing efforts to provide a mix of publications that meet individual member needs and that help FHS achieve the mission that members believe in. Our journal, *Environmental History*, published jointly with the American Society for Environmental History remains the journal of record in the field, bolsters the scholarly reputation of the Society and provides an opportunity to engage historians in writing about forest and conservation history. Recently, Karie Kirkpatrick joined our staff as the new Managing Editor for the journal. Please take time to welcome her as the opportunity presents itself. A search for a new Editor has begun. The successor will follow Hal Rothman who will be ending his editorship at the end of 2001. Hal has provided excellent leadership to the new journal, infusing it with enthusiasm and quality. While we are confident that the journal will attract an editor of high quality, we will never 'replace' Hal Rothman.

Publications were highlighted this year by *Forest and Wildlife Science in America: A History*, a compendium of 16 original papers that trace the beginnings of disciplinary fields in forestry and of organizational research efforts (see ad page 72). Three new Issues Series booklets are being prepared including titles on sustainable forestry, wetlands and Canadian forests. Also provided this year was the first issue of a new newsletter for the Society entitled the *Forest Timeline*. Results from a membership opinion survey included in the first newsletter showed that overall, members of the Society value the range of publications we now have. Our challenge is to provide more of all of them.

One of the most significant changes at the Durham headquarters was the implementation of a technology upgrade. This was made possible by a generous contribution from Lynn and Stanley Day. The upgrade included the installation of a local area network, a new ADSL line, and several upgraded



workstations. The upgrade has produced numerous workday efficiencies that result in more staff time being available to assist members.

The Alvin J. Huss Archives at FHS have had an active year. Last year, as part of a cooperative agreement with the U.S. Forest Service, we accepted the Forest Service History Collection from the Washington office. The collection is almost 100 percent catalogued and is now fully-searchable on-line on the FHS web page. The archives also accepted the papers of the late economist, Dr. Marion Clawson, one of the most prolific scholars in the

natural resource field. We helped numerous other collections in the U.S. and Canada to reach safe repositories. The Carl A. Weyerhaeuser Library accepted a collection of over 400 novels donated by former FHS president Pete Steen. The books document many of the changes in public attitudes towards forests and forestry during the last century.

Oral histories were completed during the past year of Dale Robertson, former chief of the U.S. Forest Service, and George Leonard, his associate chief. These are now being transcribed. Grant monies have also been received to initiate oral histories of women and minorities in the Forest Service.

We continue to develop our K-12 educational program. Focusing on middle school students and teachers, several activities will be available soon on our web site. Recently we signed a memorandum of understanding with Project Learning Tree that identifies our common goal of bringing more forest and conservation history into the classroom. The Forest History Society has a rich collection of primary materials that will be the focus of these collaborative efforts.

Another priority for many FHS members is increased sponsorship of conferences and symposia. In April of this year, FHS with Duke University sponsored the first Distinguished Lectureship in Forest and Conservation History. It was a great success as noted environmental historian Bill Cronon presented "Human Environmentalism: A Manifesto." In 2001, the FHS will be co-sponsoring a conference on "Landscape Legacies: Managing Landscapes in the Context of Human History and Ecosystem Change" with Duke University and the U.S. Forest Service. In March of 2001 FHS will co-sponsor an annual conference with the ASEH where the newest research in forest and conservation history will be presented.

With the Board of Directors, we have been tending to our long-range outlook. In addition to the internal membership survey we have revisited the long-range plan; reaffirming the core values of the Society and articulating a heightened role in applied history. With membership increasing we have a strong core on which make these plans successful. If the number of requests for historical presentations is any indicator, the passion of history is alive and well across the country. I invite you to join us in the journey.