

EDITOR'S NOTE

by James G. Lewis

Aniversaries help us mark the passage of time. They can be times of joyful celebration or of somber reflection. Regardless of why it is being observed, an anniversary often prompts us to examine the legacy of the event it commemorates. Fifty years has passed since President John F. Kennedy dedicated the Pinchot Institute for Conservation Studies. His September 1963 visit to Grey Towers, the ancestral home of Gifford Pinchot, was the first stop on his national conservation tour and commanded national press attention. The tour came as the modern environmental movement was finding its footing and issues, some of which Kennedy's tour stops unwittingly pointed to: hydroelectric power, nuclear facilities, and protected landscapes.

In his new book, *Seeking the Greatest Good: The Conservation Legacy of Gifford Pinchot*, Char Miller helps us understand what happened during the half-century that followed Kennedy's visit. It was published in conjunction with the 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Pinchot Institute and the Pinchot family's donation of Grey Towers to the federal government. During Gifford's life, Grey Towers was the center of much activity and conversation regarding the future of America. His son wanted to ensure that the discussion about conservation continued by offering the estate as the headquarters for the Pinchot Institute and a meeting place for the U.S. Forest Service, which his father had established. Miller's **Making Common Cause for Conservation** is adapted from his book.

Also at the dedication of Grey Towers was "Sam" Mattoon, the wife of John Mattoon, a longtime federal government employee and champion of conservation in his own right. Her husband had a major role in coordinating events for the Forest Service that day. Andy Mason shared with me that John's family had deep roots in forestry and agreed to write about them. If the **Biographical Portrait** seems familiar, you may have seen it first on our blog, *Peeling Back the Bark*.

The centennial of the establishment of the forestry school at Laval University in Quebec prompted the publication of another book, *L'enseignement et la recherche en foresterie à l'Université Laval: De 1910 à nos jours (Teaching and Research in Forestry at Laval University: From 1910 to the Present)*. Its author, Cyrille Gélinas, discusses the first half-century of the school in his summary history, **Forestry Education in Quebec**. Jean-Claude Mercier and Marie Coyea have provided a translation.

It has been 80 years since the creation of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). Established in 1933 to address the record unemployment rates during the Great Depression as well as the unprecedented environmental disasters unfolding across the country, "Roosevelt's Tree Army," as it was sometimes called, transformed the landscape and the men who worked it, doing a

lot of good for the country and its citizens during its brief existence. Initially, however, no minorities could join, and women were never allowed in this army. Sixty years after Franklin Roosevelt established the CCC came the AmeriCorps National Civilian Community Corps, which was modeled on the CCC. This tree army has welcomed men and women of any race. The goals are largely the same: to transform the land while transforming the people who work the land. That is certainly apparent in **From the Mountains to the Prairies**, Christine Amoresano's reflections on her stint in AmeriCorps.

I find anniversaries curious. Why is the 50th more cause for celebration than the 20th or 80th or 90th? Is there more cause? In April 2014 it will be 90 years since Richard Fisher wrote a letter to Robert Marshall in which the director of the Harvard Forest invited the young forestry student to come study an old-growth forest on Pisgah Mountain in New Hampshire. Marshall accepted the invitation to attend Harvard, but he chose to study a different parcel of land, one that later became known as Bob Marshall's Plot. Ninety years after it was written, is this letter less important because of Marshall's decision? Read David Foster's **Lessons from Harvard Forests and Ecologists: Bob Marshall's Plot** and decide for yourself.

How should we mark an anniversary of a natural disaster that initially caused extensive destruction but seems to have brought about positive change in its wake? In May 2014, it will be five years since a major windstorm, called a *derecho*, swept across the Ozarks. Many people in that region are still unaware of the extent of damage done by the storm, as Denise Henderson Vaughn notes in her article, **Derecho! The Windstorm That Changed the Ozarks**. Would public acknowledgment of that event's anniversary help raise awareness of what happened and ease tensions between the local populace and the U.S. Forest Service?

What if there is no clear date by which to mark an event? What if something quietly begins and later quietly ends, with no clear dates to mark either? And what if the land has changed, and how people relate to the land has changed, too? This is essentially what happened to the tung oil industry in the United States, according to Jeffrey B. Robb and Paul D. Travis in **The Rise and Fall of the Gulf Coast Tung Oil Industry**. It is also true of the mining and iron smelting industry in Utah, as Thomas Straka and colleagues convey in the **History on the Road** column.

Next year marks the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Wilderness Act. It also marks the 150th anniversary of the publication of Henry David Thoreau's *The Maine Woods*. Both events will be celebrated, in very different ways. What other forest history-related anniversaries will there be? You'll have to wait for the next issue to find out. □