FROM THE CHAIR

By the time you receive this issue of *Forest History Today*, 2014 will be in the rearview mirror. What an exciting year it was!

After an electrical fire in November 2013, the Society’s staff and invaluable historical resources were relocated elsewhere for eight months while remediation efforts took place. During this time the staff worked from several locations, keeping the Society’s work going even under challenging conditions. Thanks to the staff’s diligence, our disaster recovery plan worked flawlessly, and we are proud to say that despite the damage to the building, only a small number of documents and items were harmed. The staff, library, and archive have now been reunited under one rebuilt roof at our existing Society headquarters in Durham.

Filming began on *First in Forestry: Carl Schenck and the Biltmore Forest School*—an FHS-supported documentary film about the introduction of scientific forestry to North America. The film will have public screenings in North Carolina and beyond and will be broadcast by UNC-TV, a 12-station network that provides statewide public television service in North Carolina. UNC-TV will also serve as the sponsoring station for national distribution. The film’s release in 2016 will coincide with the 100th anniversary of the Pisgah National Forest as well as the 70th anniversary of the Forest History Society. FHS expects to create a new education module using the film and the book it is based on, *Cradle of Forestry in America: The Biltmore Forest School, 1898–1913*, by Carl Alwin Schenck, for the “If Trees Could Talk” middle-school curriculum and is working on distributing the film to classrooms across North Carolina.

During 2014 numerous researchers interested in forest and conservation history explored the Society’s extensive holdings, either onsite or online, and provided us feedback on their experiences. Their comments have highlighted many aspects of FHS that I take great pride in as a Society member and board chair: the helpfulness of the staff; the discovery of materials unavailable elsewhere; and the ability to explore new questions and avenues for research by having all the collections, the library, archives, and other materials together in one place.

Finally, the FHS board of directors and staff sustained their efforts to ensure the Society’s facilities will continue to serve the needs of the forest and conservation communities and those who study its history for generations to come. Plans are under way to build a more spacious and technologically advanced facility that will accommodate the Society’s growing library and archives and vastly improve the accessibility of the Society’s treasured resources—both on site and through online technology—by researchers as well as increasing numbers of the public who are interested in forest and conservation history. Barbara Cushing and Valerie Bass joined the Society’s staff in 2014 to assist the board in raising the critical funding for these new facilities and for the ongoing programmatic and operational needs of FHS.

All this is to say that 2014 was a busy and rewarding year for the Society.

As you reflect on your reasons for being a member of FHS, please also consider if you know someone you think might share your appreciation for the Society’s work. Society members provide a vital part of the support needed to continue our work and also provide links to others who may help the Society accomplish its mission.

Finally, if you are part of an organization whose records deserve to be protected and archived, please remember that FHS stands equipped to receive these records and make them available for future scholars and historians. Associations, agencies, professional societies, families connected with resource development and conservation, and forest product companies represent but a partial list of organizations that may benefit from the Society’s expertise and proven track record of preserving historical materials and telling the story of forest and conservation history in the United States and Canada.

As you will see in subsequent pages featuring the “Honor Roll of Donors,” gifts to the Society, publications, and awards and fellowships, I am not alone in being proud to serve and support the Forest History Society. I look forward to what 2015 brings for the Society and hope you will join me in continuing to appreciate and support the important work of the Forest History Society for many years to come.

TREASURER’S REPORT

The Forest History Society continues its mission to preserve and help people use the documents of forest and conservation history with professional dedication and effectiveness. The board and staff of the Society have worked hard to maintain the accomplishment of our mission in the midst of significant challenges in donor and financial markets during fiscal year July 1, 2013, through June 30, 2014.

Net assets at June 30, 2014, increased to $8,544,271 from $7,735,418 for the previous year’s end. This is an increase of $808,853, generally attributable to an increase in the value of investments which have been affected by general market increases during this period. During the fiscal year, the board’s investment strategy was continued at 70 percent equities and 30 percent fixed...