

MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Seventy Years Young

STEVEN ANDERSON

In early September 1945 Judge Kenneth G. Brill, president of the Minnesota Historical Society, visited Frederick E. Weyerhaeuser at his home in St. Paul to discuss the state's upcoming centennial celebration. Two other society members joined them: Theodore C. Blegen, dean of the University of Minnesota's graduate school, and August C. Krey, chairman of the university's history department. Over "a few cigars and a little charged water," conversation turned toward the lack of any research center devoted to the history of forestry and forest products. Blegen told the others that no matter where the industry was centered, "its history can be best served from one systematic collection." Historian Charles Twining later wrote, "From that meeting emerged the notion for what would eventually become the Forest History Society."

F. E. died soon thereafter, so other family members, led by his nephews F. K. and Phillip Weyerhaeuser, niece Peggy Driscoll, and another nephew, Ed Davis, along with Minnesota Historical Society superintendent Arthur Larsen, provided early conceptual support. On June 12, 1946, F. K. made the first of three annual gifts that established the Forest Products History Foundation. He chaired the advisory board during the first years and brought into the fold other lumbermen, such as Paul V. Ames, Archie D. Walker, David J. Winton, Edward Brooks, and Corydon Wagner.

Little did these early visionaries realize they had set the stage for a vibrant organization that continues as the Forest History Society. The initial aim—to preserve and publish without prejudice the history of the forest products industry—remains our core mission today. Over the years, our scope has expanded to the broader fields of forest and conservation history. In addition to our central function as a library and archive, our programs now include publication, awards, education, and outreach.

Since its establishment in 1946, the Forest History Society has been a leader and pacesetter in the history field: initiating oral history interviews with workers and leaders in the forest industry in the 1950s; publishing the longest-running journal of environmental history in the world; being among the first organizations to bring environmental science into K-12 social studies classrooms; winning awards for innovative use of the Internet and social media; and producing award-winning documentary films. Part of the reason for this long history of success is our strict adherence to four fundamental principles: strive for academic excellence, advance scholarship, offer collaborative programs, and grant free public access to information.

Ultimately, though, when it comes to keeping a nonprofit organization strong and vital, it takes talented volunteers who commit their time and resources because they believe in the mission.

The annual report included in this issue lists individuals and organizations that have supported the Society for more than 25 years. They represent a "Who's Who" in the forest and conser-



vation community as well as renowned historians and many others who see the value in what we do. It would take all the pages of this magazine and more to adequately recognize everyone who has given so generously of their creative energies through 70 years, but I do want to call attention to a few.

Susan Flader is Professor Emerita in the Department of History at the University of Missouri. She has been a member and supporter for 44 years, including 14 years on the FHS board of directors. As the first female board member, she advocated for, and was appointed to, our first FHS Long Range Planning Committee. Dr. Flader

helped draft a five-year program plan that more fully and broadly articulated the Society's programs. She actively advanced the Society's publications program, including having her book *The Great Lakes Forest: An Environmental and Social History* published by FHS in 1983. Her generosity of spirit continues with her expert counsel to the Society.

Dwight Harrigan's support for the Society began in 1976, when he assumed control of a company started by his father, William B. Harrigan, and turned it into one of the South's premier sawmills. Soon after, he established Scotch Lumber and Scotch Plywood. Mr. Harrigan lent his considerable business acumen to the FHS board and is responsible, along with his sons Chip and Patrick and colleague Tom O'Melia, for 40 years of support for the Forest History Society.

Together, John R. and Marjory McGuire have provided 46 years of membership support. John was chief of the U.S. Forest Service from 1972 to 1979 and an FHS member. Marjory has continued her husband's support since his passing. The Society holds an archival collection for John McGuire including three photograph albums, and through Marjory's generosity, the Society was able to establish the John R. McGuire Endowment for archival maintenance and oral history.

Starker Forests in Corvallis, Oregon, began its support in 1982. Bond Starker served two terms on the board of directors, graciously hosted numerous meetings, and served as honorary chair of the Society's *Stories of the Forest* campaign. The Starker Endowment supports our oral history program and outreach initiatives that help inform public discourse.

We are thankful for these and all FHS members, past and present, for everyone who has donated archival and library materials, and for all who have provided enthusiasm for our work. Above all we recognize the leadership and vision of Rodney Loehr, Woody Maunder, and Pete Steen, who led the Society from 1946 through 1997, and the dedicated staff throughout 70 years who kept the beacon of forest history shining quietly but strongly all along the way. Because of people like them, and people like you who are reading these words today, the Society is well positioned for success during the next 70 years and beyond. □