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## The Forest Timeline



### President's Message

Greetings from the Forest History Society!

As we noted in our last newsletter, this year marks important anniversaries in forest and conservation history. This month, it is my pleasure to wish American Forests (AF) a happy 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary! Founded in 1875 as the American Forestry Association, AF is the oldest forest conservation organization in the United States. FHS is especially pleased to serve as its historical repository. You can explore that collection [here](#).

Last June, I was delighted to speak with AF's President and CEO, Jad Daley, as part of our *Forest Optimism* webinar series. You can listen to [Jad's presentation](#) on the history of AF (including a brief appearance by [Spunky Squirrel!](#)) and the inspiring work the organization is doing today on tree equity.

Revisiting Jad's description of AF's work on tree equity was especially poignant as we celebrated Black History Month in February. Both at the local and national levels, urban forestry programs work to promote canopy cover in our cities to ensure urban health in the face of rising temperatures. This work offers us powerful examples of how the effects of history are inscribed in our cities today--aerial photographs of urban spaces

show that African American neighborhoods that were subject to historic redlining and underinvestment after World War II now have fewer trees and canopy cover than neighborhoods that did not suffer such restrictions. We are reminded once again that the reach of history is long, especially when it comes to planting, managing and tending trees and forests.

So happy birthday, American Forests! We wish you much success over the next 150 years and look forward to preserving your past and present-day history now and into the future.

All my best,  
Tania



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## **Yale Forestry Forum**

### **A History of People, Forests, and Forestry**

**Thursdays, Jan. 23 - Apr. 24, 2025**

The Forest History Society is excited to announce a new weekly webinar series co-hosted with [The Forest School at the Yale School of the Environment!](#)

Humans have interacted with forests since time immemorial. The evolution of humanity's connections to forests illuminates how we interact with nature in a changing climate today. By understanding our past, we can contextualize our present situation and inform current and future decision-making.

The spring 2025 Yale Forest Forum speaker series examines pre-industrial and indigenous forest management practices. Attendees will gain an understanding of the origins of pre-industrial forest practices worldwide and how those practices are connected to people and place.

Available now: [Watch the latest webinar](#)

Join us every Thursday from March 6 to April 24 from 12:00-1:00pm U.S. ET. (Note that there will not be webinars on March 13 and 20.)

[Learn More](#)

**Meet with FHS at ASEH**



FHS will be exhibiting at this year's American Society for Environmental History conference from April 9-12 in Pittsburgh, PA. The conference theme is "Forging Environments: Confluence, Resilience, Intersectionality." On Friday morning, FHS President Taniz Munz is presenting and chairing a roundtable discussion "Burned-Over Country: Histories of American Fire," which considers recent research on the fire history of the United States with a particular eye toward the social effects of fire.

On Saturday afternoon, FHS Historian Jamie Lewis is chairing a roundtable session "New Directions in Forest History." Comprised entirely of PhD candidates, this roundtable will be a discussion of the major problems, themes, and innovations driving current scholarly inquiry into the subfield of forest history. Be sure to drop by the FHS exhibit table to meet with Tania, Jamie, and FHS Librarian Lauren Bissonette.

Nearly every Friday afternoon ASEH field trip has a forest history connection, so check out the offerings [here](#).

Register

The image is a promotional banner for a webinar series. On the left is a portrait of Jamie Lewis, a man with a beard and glasses, wearing a light blue shirt. To the right of the portrait is the logo for the Forest History Society, which consists of a circular emblem with a tree and mountains. Below the logo, the text reads "FOREST HISTORY Society" in a serif font. Underneath that, it says "Join us for the webinar series" in a smaller font, followed by "Conversations in Forest History" in a large, elegant serif font, and "with Jamie Lewis" in a smaller font at the bottom.

**"The Conservation Collection at the Denver Public Library: Making Environmental History Accessible for Everyone"**  
with Abby Hoverstock & Heidi Young

March 27, 2025 at 1-2 pm ET



Founded in 1960 at the Denver Public Library, the Conservation Collection is a historic trove of published and unpublished materials accessible to the public. The collection was formed by published books and serials first collected in Arthur Carhart's personal library and has grown to reflect modern contributions such as published zines and contemporary master's theses. The collection also comprises over 200 unpublished manuscript collections. Examples include the papers of Ira Gabrielson, first director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Howard Zahniser, Executive Secretary of The Wilderness Society and author of the Wilderness Act, and Velma (Wild Horse Annie) Johnston, animal welfare activist who campaigned for federal protection of wild burros and horses. Recent acquisitions include the papers of EarthFirst! founder Dave Foreman, and Gudrun "Gudy" Gaskill, the driving force behind the Colorado Trail. Join host Jamie Lewis as he talks with Heidi Young and Abby Hoverstock of the Conservation Collection staff to learn more about the holdings and how you can access them.



Heidi Young is a Special Collections Librarian who curates the Conservation Collection's published materials. Abby Hoverstock is Manager of Archival Services, overseeing a team of archivists and support staff who collect, process, and make accessible archival collections in four collecting areas (including the Conservation Collection) across two DPL repositories.

[Register Now](#)

**Announcing the 2025 Blegen & Collier Awards**

## Theodore C. Blegen Article Award

Each year, the Theodore C. Blegen Article Award recognizes the best scholarship in forest and conservation history published in a journal other than *Environmental History*. Editors of scholarly journals in the fields of forest and conservation history annually submit up to two articles from their publications for award consideration. The Blegen award consists of a \$500 cash award.

Entries must be submitted no later than **April 15th, 2025**.

Starting this year, FHS welcomes self-nominations for the Blegen Award.

[Submit Your Article](#)

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## John M. Collier Award for Forest History Journalism

The John M. Collier Award is given annually to a journalist whose work incorporates forest or conservation history in an article or series of articles published in North America that relate to environmental issues. The Collier Award is open to any newspaper or general circulation magazine (including online-only publications) or professional or freelance journalist in North America. The winning article will receive a \$1,000 prize.

An original piece from 2024 publications must be submitted no later than **April 15, 2025**.

[Submit Your Article](#)

Questions about our awards? Contact our office at (919) 682-9319 or email [jennifer.a.watson@foresthistory.org](mailto:jennifer.a.watson@foresthistory.org).

## Researcher at FHS



**Elizabeth Hennessy** visited the Forest History Society to research the history of fast furniture. Her areas of focus included the use of composite materials versus hardwoods, the shift toward sustainability, and wood waste (such as rubberwood) and its uses. She primarily used the [Weyerhaeuser Company Records](#). What surprised her about the collection? She told us she learned that Weyerhaeuser had a presence in Malaysia as early as the 1950s.

Want to learn more about conducting research in the FHS Library & Archives? [Click here to read about our Bell Travel Grant.](#)

**This Month in Forest History...**



- **February 14, 1893:** The Sierra National Forest in California is established by presidential proclamation.

[More Images](#)

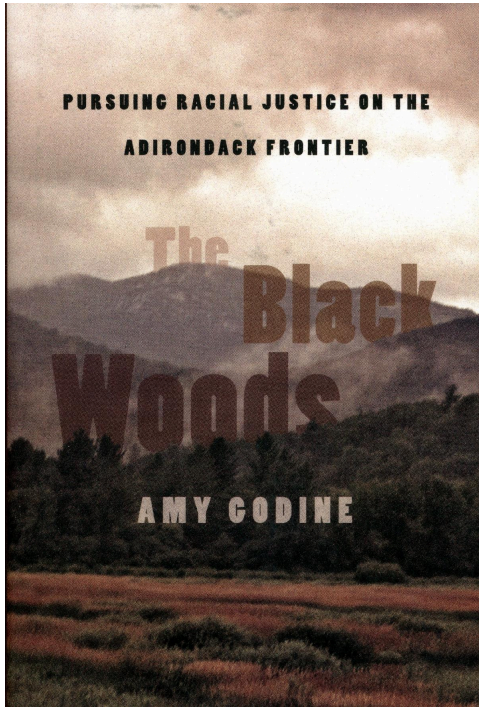
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### Also in February: several birthdays for the U.S. Forest Service!

- Feb. 1, 1905: The [Transfer Act](#) transfers the forest reserves from the Department of the Interior to the Department of Agriculture. Secretary of Agriculture James Wilson designates the new agency the U.S. Forest Service.
- Feb. 13, 1883: [Robert Y. Stuart](#), who served as the 4th USFS chief from 1928-1933, is born in Cumberland County, Pennsylvania.
- Feb. 22, 1897: [The Washington Birthday Reserves are established by President Grover Cleveland](#). There are 13 federal forest reserves totaling about 21 million acres in all. Their establishment touched off a fight in Congress that directly led to the passage of the 1897 Forest Management Act (aka, Organic Act), which stated how federal forests were to be managed for timber and watershed protection.
- Feb. 25, 1899: [Richard E. McArdle](#) is born in Lexington, Kentucky. He served as the 8th chief of U.S. Forest Service from 1952-1962.

## Book of the Month

*The Black Woods: Pursuing Racial Justice on the Adirondack Frontier* by Amy Godine



In *The Black Woods*, Amy Godine recovers a robust history of Black pioneers who carved from the wilderness a future for their families and their civic rights. Her immersive story returns the Black pioneers and their descendants to their rightful place at the center of this history. With stirring accounts of racial justice, and no shortage of heroes, *The Black Woods* amplifies the unique significance of the Adirondacks in the American imagination.

[Read More](#)

This book was chosen by a distinguished panel of judges for the [Charles A. Weyerhaeuser Book Award](#) in 2024.

FHS hosted a webinar with the book's author, Amy Godine, which you can watch on our YouTube channel: "[Black Pioneers in New York's Adirondack Wilderness: A 19th-Century Encounter.](#)"

## From the Archives





Inside winter storage of deciduous nursery seedlings, Prairie States Forestry Project, Fremont, Nebraska, February 1936 (Image ID# K\_3-6-342199). From the [Duke University School of Forestry Lantern Slide Collection](#).

[Explore More](#)



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