

The Birth Of A National Forest

EDITOR'S NOTE — This is the first in the series of special articles about Allegheny National Forest. The articles describe the creation, history, use and management of the Forest. Some of the articles were written by incumbents of the current staff. Many of them are anecdotes drawn from the experiences of former employes, most of whom have long since retired.

By RAYMOND M. CONARRO

Many years ago, the editors of the Pittsburgh Post realized that the condition of the forests on the watersheds of the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers posed a potential flood threat to Pittsburgh and other cities along these streams.

The paper adopted an editorial policy of alerting its readers to the threat of disaster if prompt and sustained action were not taken to reduce the danger.

The Post has a wide circulation in western Pennsylvania, eastern Ohio, and northern West Virginia.

Its editorials called for improved forest fire protection, reforestation of privately

owned lands, an effective state forest program involving complete ownership and control of large bodies of land to be administered for forestry purposes, the establishment of state tree nurseries to furnish forest tree seedlings to land owners, a state forest research policy, and a state forest school to train young men in the art of forest management.

Dr. Rothrock has been acknowledged as the "Father of Forestry in Pennsylvania," and rightly so. The Pittsburgh Post was his chief supporter, aiding him greatly in his dedicated activities.

Early in this century, the Post editorialized in favor of a federal law to establish National Forests in the East. The first law enacted for this purpose was declared unconstitutional by the U. S. Supreme Court. This did not deter the Post's policy, nor did it deter John W. Weeks, a Congressman from Massachusetts. He rewrote the law by adding the phrase "for the protection of the headwaters of navigable rivers."

The new act was signed into law by President Taft on March 1, 1911. A small appropriation was made by Congress to start land purchases for National Forest purposes.

In 1802 and 1803, Dr. Micheau, a French botanist, toured the eastern part of the United States. Both the Allegheny and Monongahela rivers were included in his tour.

He recorded in his diary that the Allegheny River flowed clear and placid and presented no evidence of high rise or flood conditions upstream from Fort Pitt (Pittsburgh).

The Monongahela, on the other hand, ran turbid, fast, and showed considerable evidence of high flood stages upstream from Fort Pitt.

He stated that the two rivers could be traced for some distance down the Ohio by the color of their water: the Allegheny being clear, the Monongahela colored by sediment.

Since the Post editors were more concerned with the frequent flooding caused by the Monongahela, their editorials began agitating for the establishment of a National Forest at the headwaters of this river.

50th
anniversary

Oil City Derrick

Continued

This was accomplished in April 1920, the Monongahela National Forest growing from a nucleus of 7000 acres purchased in 1911. The editors then began their drive for a National Forest at the headwaters of the Allegheny River.

In 1921, Congress appropriated enough funds for the Forest Service to establish the Allegheny Purchase Unit. Late in the summer of 1921, the Forest Service made a survey of the Allegheny River drainage and settled on a boundary essentially the same as that of the present National Forest.

A lot of advance work was necessary to establish the boundary. The amount of land available for purchase at reasonable prices had to be determined, and the location of each parcel.

To head up this work, Loren L. Bishop was transferred in September 1921 from the supervisorship of the Choctawhatchie National Forest in Florida to the Allegheny unit.

He selected Warren as his headquarters, and began to secure land proposals from the large landowners. Of these, the Central Pennsylvania Lumber Company of Williamsport was the largest. Other large land owners were South Penn Oil Co., Wheeler and Dusenberry Lumber Co., T. D. Collins Lumber Co., McKean Chemical Co., Day Chemical Co., Armstrong Forest Co., M. W. Jamison, and Elisha Kane.

After Bishop had secured offers on over 200,000 acres, he reported to District Forester Reed in Washington, D.C., that he was ready to begin active land examination and ap-

praisal of the offered land.

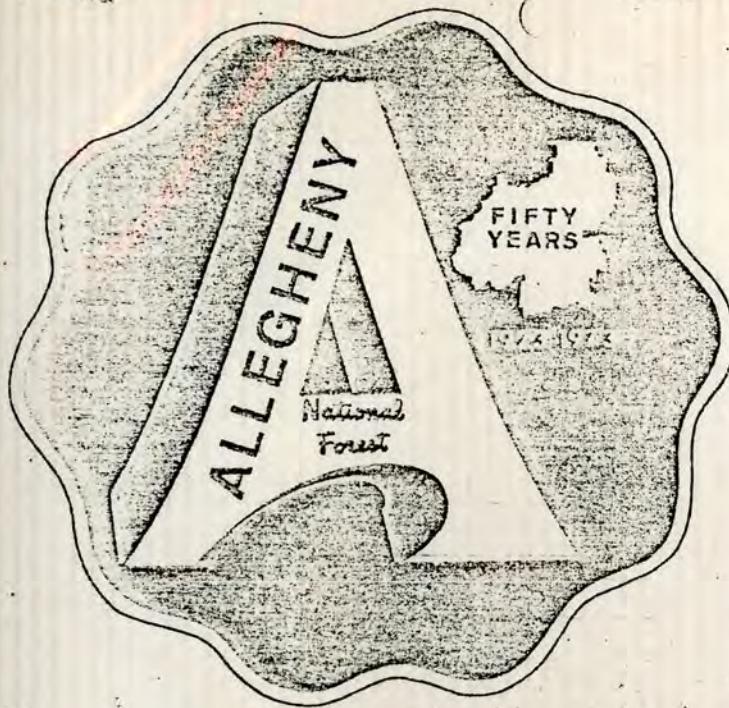
E. V. Stone Jr. was transferred from the Monongahela National Forest in West Virginia, to act as forest assistants to expedite this work.

E. V. Stone Jr. was made party chief of the land examination crew. Forest assistant salaries in those days ranged from \$1,260 to \$1,440 per year. Kay Davis and I were employed on the land examination crew as field assistants at the princely salary of \$50 a month.

RAYMOND M. CONARRO, a native of Warren, was employed by the U.S. Forest Service in 1921, and served as the first District Ranger of Allegheny National Forest from March, 1923, until July, 1927, when the Forest was reorganized into a "two-ranger" unit. He served several southern National Forests, and became the first supervisor of the Mississippi National Forests. In 1940, he was promoted to Directing Chief of Fire Control for the 12 states of the Southern Region; in 1956 he was transferred to the position of Assistant to the Chief of Operations in Washington, D.C.

Upon his retirement from the service in 1961, he returned to Jackson, Miss., where he worked with various conservation efforts and organizations. His efforts in this capacity were recognized in 1972, when he was named "Conservationist of the Year" by the Mississippi Wildlife Federation, and presented with the coveted "Governor's Award."

Continued.



"YOU CAN'T HELP BUT MISS IT!"
Early Land Acquisition on Allegheny National Forest

by
Raymond M. Conarro

Active field examination of lands offered for acquisition in the newly formed Allegheny Purchase Unit began on December 19, 1921, when E. V. Stone, Jr., Phillip Hodgkins, Kay Davis and I examined three lots in the West Branch of Tionesta Creek drainage. We had arranged to stay with the Kalbfus Game Preserve Keeper and his family while we were in this area.

The next day, before establishing a base line along an old railroad grade and State Game Preserve line, we helped the Game Keeper release four deer onto the range. They had been shipped in crates from the West, and were the first deer stocked on the Preserve.

Among lots examined in this area were some on which a forest fire had burned during the spring of 1921. We spent considerable time studying area recovery and damage by the fire. The study was made for future reference and as a tie to damage appraisal for future land examinations. Following the fire studies, we established sample lots for young growth studies. Then we walked to Clarendon and returned to Warren by street car.

On January 3, 1922, we left Warren for Sheffield by street car. At Sheffield, we boarded a passenger train and got off at Mayburg — about two miles from Wheeler and Dusenbury Lumber Company Camp 14. We walked from Mayburg to the camp, where we stayed in a railroad caboose-type private car and ate at the logging camp.

On January 4, 1922, we walked to Wilkie Standford's home at Hearts Content. He gave us a lift to Vandergriff Corners, then back to the Weaver place at Hermit Springs, where Stone and I arranged for board and room. After eating lunch at Weavers, we examined two lots during a driving rain. We returned to our special car at Camp 14, after having walked — in addition to our examination work — about ten miles in a soaking rain.

The above is a small sample of the type of examination work that continued for many months. Personnel changes were made, with Frank T. Murphy succeeding E. V. Stone Jr. Kay Davis resigned to become Assistant Scout Executive, Complanter Council. Hodgkins transferred to the White Mountain National Forest and by May only Murphy and I remained as land examiners.

In February, 1922, Mr. A. Reimer — a civil engineer — was transferred to the Allegheny Unit. He immediately began the planning of the required boundary surveys. In March, James Denman and Carl Muzzy — surveyors — were transferred to the Unit, and in July A. R. Kinney arrived. Transit men had arrived in April.

When the survey crews were ready for the field, each crew consisted of a land surveyor, a transit man, a stadia rodman, and two brush cutters. Two of these crews were assigned to each of the four surveyors, with a transit man in charge of each crew. Tent camps were furnished the land surveyors. Each camp consisted of two sleeping tents, an office-sleeping tent for the land surveyor and a kitchen and a dining tent. The cook for each group slept in his kitchen tent. One of the cooks was a Complanter Indian by the name of Redeye. He was called "Chief."

Many amusing things happened during the 13 months I worked as a land examiner and surveyor assistant. The Forest Service on the Allegheny Unit had only one official car. It was a Model T Roadster, from which the "turtle back" had been removed and a pickup bed installed. This change was made because the Forest Service was not allowed to own passenger carrying cars. Loren Bishop, Forest Supervisor, was proud of his new possession and kept the vehicle at his home. To keep others from driving it, he always removed the car's battery before he left town for an extended stay.

One day, while working in the Mill Creek drainage in Elk County, we had to find a certain survey corner. We inquired of a local man, who gave us directions to the corner, claiming that he knew the location well. He then added, "You'll have no trouble locating the corner. You can't help but miss it." We did miss it, however, and perhaps it has never been found to this day....

One of Surveyor Denman's sleeping tents caught fire and burned beyond repair. A nearby lookout reported the smoke and, upon arrival, I found the crew carefully building a fire in the heating stove to make believe that sparks from the stove's shack had set the tent on fire. Denman was transferred soon after this incident.

50th
anniversary

'A Country...Supposed Uninhabitable...'

Senecas And Settlers On The Allegheny National Forest

This is the third in the series of special articles about Allegheny National Forest, commemorating its 50th Anniversary year. The articles describe the creation, history, use and management of the Forest. Many of the articles are anecdotes drawn from the experiences of former employees, most of whom have long since retired. Some of them were written by incumbents of the current staff.

A short biography of the author, Larry Stotz, will be found at the end of the article. Mr. Stotz, who is currently living in Sheffield, Pennsylvania, is well-known in the area as a writer, and is a member of the Pennsylvania Outdoor Writers Association. His article describes the earliest settlers and Indians in the vicinity of Allegheny National Forest. Stotz experienced an unfortunate accident May 5; while walking his dog he became entangled in the leash, fell, and sustained fractures in both bones of his right leg between ankle and knee. Recuperation is expected to take three or four months.

By LARRY STOTZ

The oldest evidence of Indian occupancy found on the Allegheny National Forest goes back 10,000 years. In 1959, archaeological digs in a rock shelter at Jakes Rocks yielded artifacts of the Paleo-Indian Period (12,000 - 6,000 B.C.).

Ten thousand years ago, the cold breath of the receding glaciers was still felt in northern Pennsylvania. The landscape then was probably part tundra and part forested, with scattered stands of scrubby spruce and fir.

Across this forbidding land, small bands of Ice Age hunters and their families wandered, following the spoor of the woolly mammoth. Their way of life was a nomadic one, and their

only weapons were stabbing spears. They dressed in animal skins, and roasted their meat over open fires.

By the time the first white man had reached this part of Pennsylvania, the Indians were both farmers and hunters. But they were more dependent upon their crops for food than they were upon wild game of the forest. The area now embraced by the Allegheny National Forest never supported a large population of Indians. The Seneca Nation, a member of the Iroquois Confederacy, claimed this land.

The ruins of two hilltop strongholds, built by Iroquoian people 600 to 800 years ago, have been found near Russell City and Kane. Running across the Forest between these two ancient forts was the Kittanning Trail, used by Iroquoian war parties in their raids against hereditary enemies.

Military expeditions against the Indians used the Allegheny River as a convenient route leading to their objective. The first of these was led by Baron de Longueuil in 1739. He gained access to the Allegheny River by using the Chautauqua portage and Conewango Creek to reach the Mississippi in his campaign against the Chicksaw Indians.

By 1750, there was an English trading post at the Indian village of Buckaloons at the junction of the Brokenstraw and the Allegheny River. This marked the most northerly point the Seneca Nation permitted the white man to establish a fur trading station.

The only battle of the Revolutionary War, within the boundaries of the present day Allegheny National Forest, was little more than a skirmish. It occurred in 1779, in the vicinity of Thompson's Island, when Lieutenant Hardin, with 23 men from Colonel Broadhead's expedition, routed between 30 and 40 Seneca warriors.

In 1791, the Legislature of Pennsylvania granted to Chief Cornplanter (Gyatwahia) and his heirs, 640 acres of land on the west bank of the Allegheny River near the New York State line. This grant of land was in appreciation of Cornplanter's "many valuable services to the whites." The grant of land included his own town of Jenuchshadego and two islands in the river. Today, this land is inundated by the waters of the Allegheny Reservoir, thus ending the final chapter of Indian occupancy of Pennsylvania.

It wasn't until 1794, when "Mad Anthony Wayne" defeated the Indians in the Battle of Fallen Timbers in Ohio, that the Indian threat was lifted in northern Pennsylvania and the country became open to safe settlement. A year later, the first permanent settlers arrived in Warren County. They were mostly Scotch-Irish, and they came in from the Susquehanna country. The first recorded resident - Mrs. Ruth (Mead) Dupray - worked at the trading post at Buckaloons. The majority of other early settlers came from New York State.

Most of the land that is now a part of the Allegheny National Forest was of little agricultural value. Its greatest resource was its timber. One of the first white men to pass through the heartland of this former wilderness was Robert King, a figure in the Revolution. In 1838, a surveyor found the following carved on a beech tree near the present village of Barnes: "Robert King, July 17, 1794." But Lieutenant King did not

linger here. He was enroute from the Susquehanna country to take up farming land near Fort Le Bouef.

50th
anniversary

As late as 1832, Gordon's "Gazetteer of Pennsylvania" summed up what was known of the territory of which the Allegheny National Forest is now a part by the following description: "The country on the southeast of the Allegheny River was until lately little known and scarcely explored, and was supposed uninhabitable...."

Except for Kinzua Township in Warren County, in which the first permanent settler arrived in 1801, this was largely uninhabited country until after 1825. The village of Barnes was settled in 1828. The big attraction that brought in early settlers was the lumbering possibilities in this unbroken wilderness.

Kane, on the eastern boundary of the Allegheny National Forest, dates back to 1860, when Colonel Thomas L. Kane built a home on the site known as the "Old Homestead" in that year. In October, 1864, the Pennsylvania Railroad completed its line through Kane and westward. This made possible the settlement of much of the land in the northern tier counties, and the beginning of the modern era.

LAURENCE E. STOTZ was born in Crafton, Pennsylvania, and studied forestry at Cornell University. He was employed as a timber cruiser for paper companies in the Adirondacks, and in the Province of Quebec. He worked on National Forests in Montana, Minnesota, New Mexico, Arizona, and Pennsylvania. An eight-month detail

from the U. S. Forest Service took him to Maine to salvage hurricane-blown white pine under the Northeastern Timber Salvage Administration. For 20 years, he was employed as a District Ranger on the Allegheny National Forest until his retirement in 1967. He lives in Sheffield with his wife, Irma, two dogs, and a cat, in the heart of the Allegheny National Forest, within 400 feet of the deep woods.

'Cut Out And Get Out!'

The Story of Early Logging on Allegheny National Forest

(This is the fourth in the series of special articles about Allegheny National Forest, commemorating its 50th Anniversary year. The articles describe the creation, history, and management of the forest. Many of the articles are anecdotes drawn from the experiences of former employees, most of whom have since retired. Some of them are written by incumbents of the current staff.

A short biography of the author, Larry Stotz, will be found at the end of the article. This article is Mr. Stotz's second contribution to this series. Currently living in Sheffield, Pennsylvania, Mr. Stotz is well known in the area as a writer, and is a member of the Pennsylvania Outdoor Writer's Association. His article describes some of the early logging practices which took place in the area before Allegheny National Forest was established.)

By LARRY STOTZ

Early logging in the area that is presently the Allegheny National Forest was concentrated mainly on a single species—Eastern White Pine. The earliest logging of this species was confined to areas within easy skidding distances of the Allegheny River and its main tributaries. Fortunately, the best pine stands occurred close to the very streams down which lumber could be rafted to distant markets.

The first sawmill in Warren County was established in 1800. It was an overshot wheel water-powered mill. Pine timbers from this mill were rafted to Pittsburgh in 1801. This may well have been the first lumber raft to float down the Allegheny, ushering in the great rafting days which formed such a colorful part of the early logging era. By 1820, Tionesta Creek, which drains the heartland of the Allegheny National Forest, had 21 sawmills along its banks.

In the early days of logging, it was a common sight each spring to see the larger streams filled with rafts of lumber waiting for high water to carry them to market, sometimes as far as New Orleans. Some of the rafts of lumber that floated down the Allegheny River were 250 to 300 feet long, and 60 to 70 feet wide. Fleets of rafts set out from Warren with groups of 30 rafts making up a fleet.

Up until 1850, white pine continued to be the leading species cut in this area. Then hemlock began to be cut for its bark, to be used in tanning leather, while the logs were left to rot in the woods. As white pine became scarcer, hemlock lumber made its appearance. Still, logging of either species in any quantity remained concentrated in the valleys of the larger streams where water transport was feasible. Along the smaller streams, vast amounts of white pine remained untouched by the axe up through 1860.

It wasn't until after 1880 that the exploitation of the great wealth of timber in the Plateau country of the Forest got underway in earnest. After 1885, the era of the logging railroads

made even the most isolated timberlands accessible and assured a year-round supply of logs for the hungry sawmills that soon sprang up.

Railroad-logging aided and abetted the "cut and get out!" policy of the early Pennsylvania lumbermen. Investments in rolling stock, and the cost of building the railroad grades and laying the track were high. Huge band mills, instead of water driven "peckerwood" sawmills, were set up to assure that enough milling capacity was on hand to saw into lumber all the logs that the logging trains could deliver. These band mills had rated capacities of 30 to 40 million board feet annually.

The big lumber companies which operated within the present boundaries of the Allegheny National Forest during the logging railroad era were Central Pennsylvania Lumber Company, Wheeler and Dusenbury Lumber Company, and T.D. Collins Lumber Company.

In 1903, the Central Pennsylvania Lumber Company installed a big steam and electrically powered bandsaw mill at Sheffield. It had a rated capacity of 130,000 board feet of lumber daily. But its all-time production record was on March 14, 1923, when 337,000 board feet of lumber were sawed in a ten-hour period. Between 1908 and 1941, when the C.P.L. closed down because of lack of timber, some one and a half billion board feet of lumber were sawed here.

The job of getting the logs from the woods to the logging railroad was done by horses. In the winter months, trail skidding of up to 25 logs at a time over snow-covered ground was accomplished over distances of up to a mile with horses. For greater distances, the logs were sledded to the railroad. They were loaded onto sleds from skidways located at sled height.

In the long winters of those days, there have been as many as 100 days of good sledding in a single winter.

In the summer, peeled hemlock logs were skidded and hauled to the logging railroad. The peeling season for hemlock lasted from May 15 to July 4. The first job after the hemlock logs were peeled was getting the bark to the railroad. Most of it was hauled on bark drays by teams, but some was hauled on wagons.

After the loggers had taken out the sawlogs, the chemical wood cutters moved in and cleaned up the rest. They took the "blood, guts and feathers" of the tree world—cull logs, standing cull trees, top-wood, and all trees left standing that were too small or too crooked for sawlogs.

It was this final cleanup by the chemical wood cutters that set the stage for the second-generation forest, in which the valuable black cherry makes up such a large percentage of the stands, on the Allegheny National Forest today.

LAURENCE E. STOTZ was born in Crafton, Pennsylvania, and studied forestry at Cornell University. He was employed as a timber cruiser for paper companies in the Adirondacks, and in the Province of Quebec. He worked on National Forests in Montana, Minnesota, New Mexico, Arizona, and Pennsylvania. An eight-month detail from the U.S. Forest Service took him to Maine to salvage hurricane-blown white pine under the Northeastern Timber Salvage Administration. For 20 years, he was employed as a District Ranger on the Allegheny National Forest until his retirement in 1967. He lives in Sheffield with his wife, Irma, two dogs, and a cat, in the heart of the Allegheny National Forest, within 400 feet of the deep woods.

50th
anniversary

This is the fifth in the series of special articles about Allegheny National Forest, commemorating its 50th Anniversary year. The articles describe the creation, history, use and management of the Forest. Many of the articles are anecdotes drawn from the experiences of former employees, most of whom have long since retired. Some of them were written by incumbents of the current staff.

A short biography of the author, Roy A. Marker, will be found at the end of the article. Marker, who served the Allegheny National Forest for 42 years, is a familiar figure in the Marienville area. His article describes the rather primitive methods of fire-fighting used in the early years of the Allegheny.

By Roy A. Marker

It was the second week in May, 1924, on the Allegheny National Forest. There had been no rain for weeks, and with the high winds conditions on the Forest were explosive. Then it happened. A large smoke at Loleta was reported from Marienville Tower. The fire had taken off like a scared rabbit. Our organized fire crews hit it hard, and we thought we had it nailed down by dark of that same day. But an erroneous report by a line scout had caused a shifting of line crews, and the fire—driven by high winds—roared out of control. Several line crews had to run for their lives due to unauthorized backfiring. Within two days, the fire had covered about 10,000 acres, and was still burning. By then, a systematic attack was being made.

Then word came by messenger that a big fire was burning in the Owl's Nest area. A sea of logging slash, dotted with thousands of cords of chemical wood, was aflame. During the first day, high winds carried the flames through the slash as fast as a horse could run. Over 100 men were transferred from the Loleta Fire to the Bear Creek Fire. Fire headquarters were set up at Owl's Nest. Then three base camps were set up. By the morning of the second day, supervisory personnel arrived from the Chief's Office in Washington. Among them was

the Chief of the U.S. Forest Service—Col. William Greeley. Additional overhead soon arrived from other National Forests, and the big job of controlling the Bear Creek Fire and holding the Loleta Fire was undertaken. An estimated 2,000 men were working around the clock on both fires. Entire towns were cleaned out of food bought to feed the fire crews, and fire tools arrived by the carload.

Feeding all these men was a herculean task, but the lumber camp cooks took it in stride and turned out three regular meals a day, plus one at midnight, for the line crews.

When the Bear Creek Fire was finally controlled, it had burned over an estimated 18,000 acres. Patrol crews were kept on this fire until July 4th. It cost more than a million and a half dollars to control. There was a heavy loss of cut timber and chemical wood, and the Pennsylvania Gas Company suffered extensive damage to gas wells and pipelines.

Many lessons were learned by all the men who worked on the Bear Creek and Loleta fires. They learned what organization, cooperation, and good supervision meant in fire control. The public as a whole learned how destructive forest fires could be.

In the early days on the Allegheny, most phone lines were of the single wire, grounded type, and were not too reliable. These lines were often local ones, and few of them were connected by lines to other communities.

As telephone service improved in the rural areas, metallic circuit lines, consisting of two wires, replaced the old single-wire grounded lines. These were hooked into lines of the Bell Telephone Company, making long-distance calls possible. A lookout on a fire tower could then call anyplace on the Forest where there was a telephone available.

On a big forest fire, messages were often carried by line scouts and messengers. Then, in the mid nineteen-twenties, the Forest Service obtained World War I surplus emergency wire from the Army Signal Corps. They also secured surplus field telephones, which were equipped with hand generators and telegraph keys. The insulated emergency wire was on portable spools which held 2000 feet of wire. For use on a big fire, the reels of wire were

mounted on racks on backpacks. One end of the wire was tied to a tree; the backpack was loaded on a husky man's shoulders, and he took off for a point where field communications were needed. Battery operated phones were hooked into the line at various points. Trouble often developed, because the wire was old and the insulation would strip off where it rubbed against sharp rocks or trees. This would cause the line to short out. If the forest fire went out of control, another section of emergency telephone line had to be strung out.

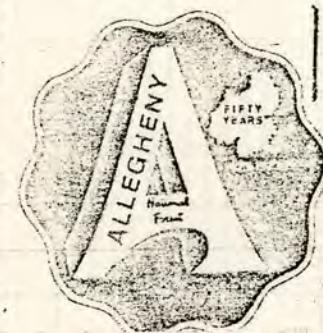
When reliable two-way radios finally came into the picture, years later, direct communication by radio to the fire towers became routine. Mobile radios became standard equipment on fire trucks, and portable radios were used on the fire line so that lookouts and the fire dispatcher could be advised of the progress of fire control, and the need for supplies, equipment, and relief crews.

+++

ROY A. MARKER, better known as "Pinky," began his Forest Service career on the Allegheny National Forest in 1923, and in 1925 was assigned as a field assistant to the first district ranger of the Allegheny Purchase Unit. For the next few years, he worked in fire control and fire prevention in the summer, and during the winter did land examination work and supervised road and trail crews.

During the early part of 1933, Pinky helped prepare for the coming of the Civilian Conservation Corps program (CCC). About 1936, he worked with the State Emergency Relief Board to choose a location for a camp for the unemployed; later he contributed to this program by organizing 180 men into working groups.

In 1965, Pinky served as the first Administrative Officer at the newly organized Blue Jay Job Corps Center. It was from this position that he retired in 1966, after 42 years of dedicated work and experience on the Allegheny National Forest.



WILDFIRE

A Saga of Early Fire Control Methods And Communications Systems on the Allegheny National Forest

50th
Anniversary

Tanbark Peelers And Knot Bumpers

(This is the sixth in the series of special articles about Allegheny National Forest, commemorating its 50th Anniversary year.

Harry Jefferson spent nearly 70 years immersed in the work of the forest—beginning his career at the age of 15 and continuing his interest long after retirement with fascinating recounts of the colorful history of the logging industry and its methods. A short biography will be found at the end of this article.)

FROM THE MEMOIRS OF HARRY JEFFERSON

"As a boy at home, I've seen as high as 25 or 30 teams of horses go by our house (in a day) going to Arroyo or Portland Mills." In these words, the late Harry Paul Jefferson began describing some of his earlier, life-long experiences in the forests of the Allegheny Plateau.

Harry Jefferson was a native of Lake City, Pennsylvania, in Elk County. He started working in the woods at the age of 15. In a long and varied career, he served as a lumberjack, a camp superintendent in charge of a Civilian Conservation Corps Camp on Allegheny National Forest, as a foreman and instructor for German and Italian POW's during World War II, and as safety engineer for the American Pulpwood Association. From this lifetime of work in the woods, Jeff described some of his impressions in a series of tape recorded interviews for the Brockway Historical Society, Brockway, Pennsylvania.

The teams that Jeff saw passing by his house as a boy were pulling wagons loaded with hemlock bark for the tanneries. Each wagon was fitted with a sort of cradle made of stakes. The stakes fitted into holes in the bottom of the wagon

bed. According to Jeff, they piled the bark "way above the stakes; as high as they could get it. That made a tremendous load. They moved all of that bark out before bad weather came in the fall."

Jeff remembered other ways of getting the bark out of the woods, too. "On steep hillsides...they ran their bark off in chutes." The chutes were flat-bottom troughs made of wood, down which the bark would slide. Another method used was the two-horse dray—a slide-like affair about ten feet long that "would haul a cord and a half or two cords."

Hemlock bark is rich in tannic acid, a necessary ingredient for the tanning of leather. In the use of the early forests, hemlock bark was a valuable product. In most instances, it had far more value than the logs that could be cut from the tree.

Moving the bark was quite a chore when you consider that each piece had to be loaded and unloaded by hand. No mechanical equipment existed for handling it.

Bark peelers moved into the woods early in the year, according to Jeff. "They peeled bark from the 15th of May—depending on an early or late spring—until the 25th of July, depending on how wet or dry the season was. The latter part of July, the bark would tighten (on the trees) and you couldn't depend on every tree being used.

"Most bark was peeled on a piecework basis. As I remember, we got around a dollar and a half or a dollar and seventy-five cents a day. (We worked a five-man crew)...two men on the crosscut saw, felling and cutting logs; one man 'fitting' the bark; one man spudding. The fifth man turned the log and bumped the knots. That's cutting the knots flush

with the tree (using) a doublebit axe. The weight of a doublebit axe in bark peeling days ran from 3 to 4½ pounds.

"When the bark peeling was over, the bark peelers, as a rule, went out to town...in the 'teens and up through the 'twenties and through the early 'thirties, there would be in Sheffield as high as 300 lumberjacks (converging) on that town in 24 hours, all with their money. And they had it. They were paid by the cord (of bark). They were paid by check. They weren't paid in gold."

The tanning industry has gone from the Allegheny Plateau. The bark peelers are gone from Allegheny National Forest and other forests of the Plateau, and Harry Paul Jefferson is gone, too. The forests remain renewed and vigorous, providing wood, water, wildlife, and pleasure to countless Americans.

50th
Anniversary
1973

Continued...

EDITOR'S NOTE: The quotations in this story are taken from a series of recorded interviews of Harry Paul Jefferson, late of Camp Jeff, Owls Nest, Star Route, Kane, Pa. The interviews were arranged and conducted by members of the Brockway Historical Society, Brockway, Pa. Permission to use the tapes was granted by the Society to Allegheny National Forest.

HARRY JEFFERSON passed away in Warren on February 20, 1973, at the age of 83. A native of Lake City, Pa. (Elk County), he began working in Elk County lumber camps at the age of 15.

About 1909, he began working on the Tionesta Valley Railroad in Sheffield, later opening a soda shop there and concurrently serving as Sheffield's Chief of Police. From 1923 to 1932, he was Sheriff of Warren County.

He began his Forest Service career as a superintendent in charge of various CCC camps on the Allegheny National Forest. In 1942, he transferred to Philadelphia, serving as an inspector of the Air Warning Service on the east coast, and Interceptor Commander and Training Instructor for the Timber Production War Project Personnel, all for the U.S. Forest Service. In 1945, he was employed as a national safety and training officer for the American Pulpwood Association, retiring from this position in 1962.

He busied himself during his retirement selling pulpwood to the Hammermill Paper Co., serving as Civil Defense Director for Spring Creek

Township (Elk County), participating in the activities of historical societies, the Boy Scouts, and Sheffield's Johnny Appleseed Committee; and, being greatly interested in preserving the old skills of lumbering, he showed his slides and lectured on early timbering to various social and church groups. At the age of 81, he hewed square with a broad axe two logs nearly two feet in diameter. One of these is

preserved in the Heart's Content area of the Allegheny National Forest to show how logs were prepared for raft transportation a century ago.

50th
Anniversary

CROSSCUT 'N DOUBLEBIT

*Timber Sales and Timber Utilization on the
Allegheny National Forest*

This is the seventh in the series of special articles about Allegheny National Forest, commemorating its 50th Anniversary year. The articles describe the creation, history, use and management of the Forest.

This article is the third contribution of Mr. Larry Stotz to the series, and discusses past and present practices on timber sales and concerning timber utilization.

Currently living in Sheffield and recuperating from a broken leg, suffered while walking his dogs (there was some disagreement among the dogs as to which direction they were going to go next), Larry is well known as a writer in this area and a member of the Pennsylvania Outdoor Writer's Association. He retired from the Forest Service in 1967.

By Larry Stotz

Scattered among the old slashings that dominated the newly formed Allegheny National Forest were islands of culled-over old growth timber. Here, the chemical woodcutter had not penetrated. It was here that the first sales of sawtimber were made on the Allegheny. The first big sale was made in 1923, when 395,000 board feet of hemlock and mixed hardwoods were harvested.

In these culled-over old growth stands, most of the timber of sawlog size was heavily defective. But when the myth of an endless supply of timber had died at the end of the "cut out and get out" era of logging, second-generation lumbermen were willing to bid on timber sales in culled-over old growth stands.

On these early National Forest timber sales, trees were marked selectively by foresters who estimated the number of board feet by species for appraisal purposes. After a sale was advertised for 30 days, it was awarded to the highest bidder. All logs were scaled at the stump by a Forest Service scaler before they could be removed from the sale area.

Two-man crosscut saws and double bit axes were used by the felling crews. Most of the skidding of logs was done by

horses, and the logs were often loaded onto trucks from skidways by sheer muscle power.

Through a series of selective cuts at 10 to 20 year intervals, these stands of timber could be expected to be whipped into shape for intensive management. As the defective and mature trees were cut, young growth was expected to spring up through natural re-seeding in the small openings created. From these thrifty trees were to come future sawtimber crops.

But as Robert Burns so aptly put it, "The best laid schemes o' mice and men gang aft a-gley."

An over-sized deer herd destroyed, or badly crippled, the seedlings that came up in the small openings created by selective cutting. Herd reduction was too little or too late to maintain a proper balance between the deer and their food supply. Still, the selective system was practiced on the Allegheny National Forest until 1960.

50
Allegheny Forest

Continued...

About the time the last of the culled-over old growth patches had been re-logged under the selection system, the fast-growing black cherry dominated the new forest that had risen from the great slashings. Enough trees of this valuable species had reached pulpwood and small sawlog size

to permit large increases in the allowable cut on the Forest.

It was the chemical wood cutter, following hard on the heels of the logger and bark peeler, who had set the stage for the big takeover by black cherry. Call it destructive cutting, slashing, or plain clearcutting, it had nevertheless provided ideal conditions for such a catastrophic species as black cherry to become established and thrive. Along with black cherry, other valuable, light-loving species were components of the new forest. Chief among these were white ash and red maple.

Selective cutting in this second-generation forest removed "poor risk" trees of sawtimber size. It provided more living space for crop trees through removal of pulpwood trees in thinnings. The most valuable trees on these sale areas were black cherry of veneer log quality, and white ash containing bat stock material.

When the changeover was made from scale sales to tree measurement sales, both the timber operator and the Forest Service benefitted. It provided more flexibility for both. In tree measurement sales, the maker carefully determines the net volume of board feet in each tree he marks for cutting, and grades the tree to establish lumber values. The purchaser

of the timber accepts the tree estimate on the sale area as final.

In 1960, uneven-aged management (selective cutting) gave way to even-aged management (clearcutting) in the administration of the timber resources. This was no wholesale throwback to the system of slashings that had created the great "Allegheny brush heap." Actually, most of the area cut over in any single year would be selectively thinned—not clearcut. The total acreage that could be clearcut in any year would not exceed one percent of the operable timber stands on the Forest. No single clearcut could exceed 50 acres in size. Under even-aged management, it would take 100 years to clearcut the Forest. By then, there would be even-aged

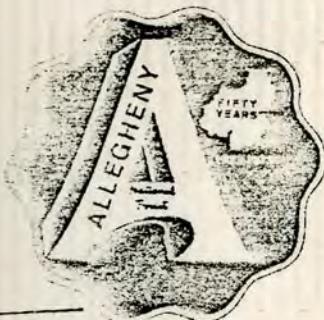
blocks of timber from seedling size to mature timber distributed over the Forest.

As long as there are strict grading rules for lumber, many trees ripe for cutting will not pay their way out of the woods. Some of these will go into pulpwood, but the demand for this product is limited. The day may come in the distant future when nearly every part of the tree will be utilized except the sound of it crashing to the ground when the chain saw bites through it.

50th Anniversary

More Than 1000 Acres A Year

The 'New Look' In Reforestation On The Allegheny National Forest



This is the eighth in the series of special articles commemorating Allegheny National Forest's Fiftieth Anniversary year. This article describes the tremendous planting job done in the early years of the Allegheny National Forest, particularly the 14,000 acres which were planted between 1928 and 1939.

A short biography of the author, W.C. Curnutt, will be found at the end of the article. Mr. Curnutt, retired since 1966 and living in Roanoke, Virginia, will be remembered by many in this area.

By WILLIAM C. CURNUTT

In the spring of 1931, an extensive planting survey was made on the Allegheny National Forest, with the survey crew headquarters at Owls Nest—a pumping station for the Pennsylvania Gas Company. Here,

room, board, and office space were secured from the gas company.

The Owls Nest fire in 1928 had devastated thousands of acres, from Spring Creek east to Owls Nest, across Bear Creek and Otter Run to Mill Creek—near Ridgway. Ironically, Owls Nest territory was not planted for years, because of the heavy deer population.

Later, planting surveys were made in Mill Creek, Spring Creek, Loleta, Seldom Seen, Salmon Creek, Millstone, Brockston, Hickory Creek, and many other old burns. The purpose of the planting survey was to map plantable areas, and to determine the best species to plant.

According to my diary, it rained on 28 of the first 34 days we were on the job at Owls Nest. G.L. Varney, the District Ranger from Marienville, was in charge. He was a salty Yankee from Maine. One morning before leaving for another day of fighting gigantic blackberry briars, I asked Varney if he thought it might rain that day. His reply, never

forgotten, was, "Nobody but damned fools or strangers prophesy the weather in northwestern Pennsylvania." All summer long, I wondered about my status.

From 1928 to 1930, planting had been completed near Loleta, on the East Branch of Millstone Creek, east toward Hallton. In the fall of 1931, a planting camp was established in Buzzard Swamp, southeast of Marienville. About 1,000,000 seedlings and transplants—mostly Norway Pine, red and white spruce, and some Norway Spruce—were planted. About 75 men, housed in tents, did the planting.

After the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was established in April 1933, planting commenced in earnest. Spring Creek, Gilfoyle Run, and Watson Branch in Forest County were planted. The 731 acres planted at Spring Creek, between May 5 and June 2, 1933, became the first plantation established by the Civilian Conservation Corps in the United States. In succeeding years, Seldom Seen, Porter Farm, Beaver Meadows, Salmon Creek, Brockston, and Nansen were reforested. Vast areas near Wetmore and Red Bridge were planted. The CCC and various relief programs provided hand labor to clothe old burns and other large openings with a blanket of green.

Planting was carried out on a reduced scale in the late thirties because of excess numbers of deer. Many people believed that the heavy antlerless deer harvest in the thirties had

decimated the herds, but much of the browse in the second-growth timber had grown out of reach of the deer. Severe winters, with heavy snowfalls, had brought death to thousands of deer through starvation. In one drainage alone, we found over 200 deer that had died of starvation. The stomach contents of many of these deer were examined. They contained mostly hemlock, mountain laurel, and rhododendron—starvation fare for deer.

When the deer herds were gradually reduced, tree planting was resumed. Beginning in 1940, enrollees of the Bull Hill CCC Camp, near Sheffield, planted the Hunter Estate near Eisenbrown Corners. The Pennsylvania Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution contributed funds to assist in the planting of this area, which became a part of the Penny Pines Plantations. A total of 254 acres, in four plantations, constituted the Penny Pines Plantations on the Allegheny National Forest.

In the fall of 1949, contour plowing was carried out on 235 acres of open fields that had once belonged to the Economites. The next spring, planting of tree seedlings was done in the prepared furrows. Planting bars were used to plant 100,000 each of red pine and European Larch, and 4,000 Scotch Pine.

Before planting began, the role that the Economy Farm plantations would play as wildlife habitat in future years was taken into consideration. Locations for wildlife food

50th Anniversary

continued.

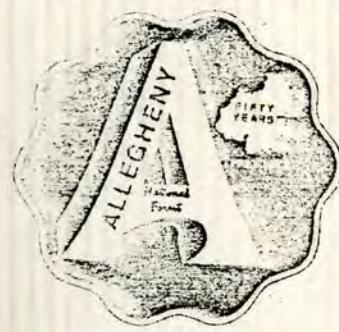
strips were staked out through the centers of the plantations. The food strips were 50 feet wide, and followed the contour. They were left unplanted until 1956. By then the plantation trees were large enough that deer couldn't damage them. Prior to cultivation, the food strips were limed and fertilized. Then they were planted to alsike and ladino clover by a Pennsylvania Game Commission wildlife habitat development crew. The "new look" in forest plantations on the Allegheny meant more than just future crops of sawtimber. It also meant improved habitat for wildlife.

During the 50-year history of the Allegheny National Forest, 19,921 acres of idle land have been planted to trees. Of this total, 14,000 acres were planted between 1928 and 1939.

WILLIAM C. CURNUTT was born "on the banks of the Wabash" in Indiana. He studied forestry at Purdue University. He served on National Forests in Georgia, Pennsylvania, Maine, Vermont, West Virginia, and Virginia. For twelve years he was employed on the Allegheny as field assistant, junior forester, superintendent of a CCC camp, and as a district ranger. Before serving for ten years as forest supervisor of the Jefferson National Forest in Virginia, he was in charge of timber management for the Eastern Region, then located in Philadelphia. Curnutt retired in 1966. He lives in Roanoke, Virginia, and spends considerable time at his camp on Six Mile Run near Tiona, Pennsylvania.

50th
anniversary

Timber Won't Grow—As Fast As Topsy



This is the ninth in the series of special articles about Allegheny National Forest, commemorating its Fiftieth Anniversary year. The articles describe the creation, history, use and management of the forest. Many of the articles are drawn from the experiences of former employees, most of whom have long since retired.

The current article, the second contribution of Mr. W. C. Curnutt to the series, discusses some interesting aspects of early timber management on the Allegheny National Forest. A biographical sketch of Mr. Curnutt, who retired in 1966, will be found at the end of the article.

By William C. Curnutt

Prior to the advent of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) in 1933, there were no funds for cultural work in the existing timber stands on the Allegheny National Forest. The timber ranged in age from 20 to 30 years old, prior to purchase by the government, to 120 to 140 years old.

During the period from 1933 to 1942, the Forest Service had up to 14 CCC Camps and two Transient Camps on the Forest for a labor source. Later, on a much reduced scale, Conscientious Objector and Prisoner of War Camps were established. Each CCC Camp and Transient Camp had a total enrollment of about 200 men. Timber stand improvement was high in priority, and usually 50 to 60 men were assigned to this task from each camp.

Double bit axes were used to fell or girdle undesirable trees. Crew foremen, who were trained foresters, directed the work. The enrollee had to be trained in the proper use and maintenance of tools, and many

of these young men became quite proficient in the use of axes and saws.

Young timber stands ranging in age from 5 to 20 years were treated first. Crop trees were selected on a spacing, varying from 10' x 10' to 16' by 16'. Dominant, well-formed saplings of desirable species were chosen as crop trees. Species selected to form the future stands were black cherry, sugar maple, red oak, white ash, cucumber, yellow poplar, basswood, beech, and hemlock.

Saplings and poles that were felled or girdled were usually red maple, beech, black birch, pin cherry, and aspen. The latter species are short-lived and generally produce little or no merchantable material if left to mature.

Black cherry, red oak, ash, and sugar maple were favored. These species today are in greatest demand and bring the best stumpage prices. The versatile black cherry, along with white ash, appear to reach their climax in a narrow belt which includes all of the Allegheny National Forest.

The beautiful hardwood stands that are now being harvested on the Allegheny National Forest did not grow "like Topsy." They were thinned and nurtured to reach their present stature. Timber has to be treated as a crop, not a mine, to reach maximum productivity.

In treating stands under 40 years of age, the cull trees are removed. These include diseased and crooked trees. Seedlings, originating from seed, are favored over stems originating from stump or root

sprouts. It is during this treatment that black cherry, sugar maple, red oak, ash, and other species are favored over low value, short-lived trees. Just as the farmer or gardener favors the thrifty plants, the forester selects the better-formed trees of favored species to reach maturity.

Practically all timber stands on the better sites were treated during the time the CCC and Transient camps were in existence. Areas containing merchantable timber were not treated after a harvest cut was made.

For some reason, unknown to foresters and game biologists, porcupines had reached unprecedented numbers in the 1930s. Porcupines thrive on black cherry, yellow poplar, and hemlock. Their diet is the inner bark, and they kill trees by girdling them. Clearly, something had to be done to reduce the population of this destructive rodent if valuable crop trees were to be saved. Control measures involved the use of poison, made into pellets about the size and thickness of a silver dollar. Common salt, Epsom salts, and strychnine were the ingredients used. The pellets were placed in large,

hollow den trees and in sandstone outcrops — the favorite homes of porcupines. The poison was placed by experienced people, and there is no question that the control measures were effective.

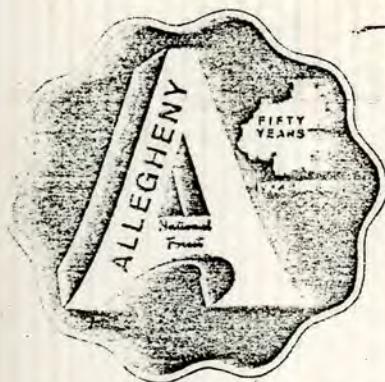
There were people who claimed that the porcupine control work killed deer as well as porcupines, even though the poison was always placed out of reach of deer. Most deer that were found near roads and in fields, and were examined by qualified biologists and myself during the "porcupine campaign," had met death by autos and by poachers' bullets. No evidence was found that the poison used against porcupines had killed deer.

The northern hardwood-hemlock forests that characterize northwest Pennsylvania require extensive treatment, both commercial and non-commercial, if they are to reach the maximum quality growth of which they are capable. Northern hardwoods respond

readily to cultural practices, and commercial cuts of products. The forest, large and small, rewards its owner handsomely when properly managed.

WILLIAM C. CURNUTT was born "on the banks of the Wabash" in Indiana. He studied forestry at Purdue University. He served on National Forests in Georgia, Pennsylvania, Maine, Vermont, West Virginia, and Virginia. For twelve years he was employed on the Allegheny as field assistant, junior forester, superintendent of a CCC camp, and as a district ranger. Before serving for ten years as forest supervisor of the Jefferson National Forest in Virginia, he was in charge of timber management for the Eastern Region, then located in Philadelphia. Curnutt retired in 1966. He lives in Roanoke, Virginia, and spends considerable time at his camp on Six Mile Run near Tiona, Pennsylvania.

50th
Annives-
sary



This is the tenth in the series of special articles about Allegheny National Forest, commemorating the Fiftieth Anniversary year. It is the fourth contribution of Larry Stotz to the series, and describes the work, past and present, of a District Ranger with the Forest Service.

After 20 years as a District Ranger on the Allegheny National Forest, Mr. Stotz retired to Sheffield in 1967. Well-known in this area for his ability with the printed word, he spent his career as a forester and naturalist.

KEEPERS OF THE BRUSH

HEAP:

The Work of Your District Rangers
by Larry Stotz

Every one of the 154 National Forests is divided into management units, known as Ranger Districts. The size, complexity, and workload of the Forest determines the number of Ranger Districts it will have.

Each Ranger District is under the direct supervision of a District Ranger. He is the on-the-ground land manager of anywhere from 50,000 to 400,000 acres of government real estate. Being a highly decentralized agency, the Forest Service gives the Ranger the authority to settle on-the-ground most of the problems that beset his District.

When the Allegheny National Forest came into being 50 years ago, it contained a crazy-quilt pattern of federal and private ownership within its proclaimed boundaries. Land acquisition by the government was still going on at a rapid rate. In 1923, there was but one Ranger District on the Allegheny National Forest. Ray Conarro was the first Ranger, and his headquarters were in Warren, across the Allegheny River from the Forest boundary.

In 1923 and for many years after, the work of a District Ranger was mainly custodial in nature. The National Forest had not yet come into their own. In the West, they were largely inaccessible to the general public, and the public image of a Ranger was that of a man wearing a World War I vintage, stiff-brimmed campaign hat, and riding a horse; or of a "timber beast" wearing "high-water" pants, caulked boots, and a checkered shirt, and carrying a double bit axe.

In 1947, when I transferred from the Santa Fe National Forest in New Mexico to the Allegheny, there were only two Ranger Districts on the Forest—the Northern assigned to the Northern District and the Southern Districts. I was as District Ranger—a position which I held until I retired from the Service 20 years later. Art Van Nort was in charge of the Southern District at that time.

I was fortunate in having an "anchor man" Frank Rudolph, a woods wise General District Assistant. Being a local man, who had been in this area for years, he aided me immeasurably in making the transition from 14 years in the ponderosa pine forests of the Southern Rockies to the hardwood forests of the Northeast.

It was after World War II that the District Rangers felt the winds of change begin to sweep through the National Forests. As university graduates of accredited forestry schools, they had never had full opportunity to practice their profession during the custodial stage of administration.

Still, the changeover was gradual. Like most other National Forests, the Allegheny was under staffed for the job it should be doing. The "brush heap" that Ray Conarro—the first Ranger on the Allegheny—had to administer, was growing into pulpwood and small sawlog-size timber. Local sawmills were finding private timber becoming scarce. They began to rely upon National Forest timber sales more and more to keep their mills running. Recreationists, in increasing numbers, were discovering the Allegheny National Forest. The demands for summer homes and hunting camp sites on the Forest were increasing. Hunters and fishermen by the thousands filled the Forest on opening days of hunting and fishing seasons. The oil and gas industries, with their subsurface rights on National Forest

land, were active, and the general public began to take an increasing interest in how their National Forests were being managed.

As a Ranger in the Southwest, my "brief case" had been a saddlebag, and much of my travel had been on horseback. My contacts had been mostly with cattlemen, sheepherders, homesteaders, and operators of "peckerwood" sawmills; but on the Allegheny National Forest, with 47 million people living within 300 air miles of the center of the Forest, and most of them from urban areas, a tremendous public relations job was indicated.

I soon found myself carrying the conservation message to the public through a weekly newspaper column, as well as through talks to service clubs and other organizations. It was obvious that the old cliche "if the Forest Service does its work well, the public will soon know about it," didn't hold water.

As far back as 1905, the National Forests had been operating under the multiple use principle, but this concept of enlightened management was strengthened with the passage of the Multiple Use Act of 1960.

With the increasing workload and complexity of administration, the two Ranger Districts on the Allegheny were broken up into four smaller Districts in 1958 and 1957; from the old Northern and Southern Ranger Districts there developed the Sheffield, Marienville, Bradford, and Ridgway Ranger Districts—each of which was named after its headquarters town. With four District headquarters, the Rangers of the Allegheny National Forest are now better able to serve the growing needs of the public.

50th
anniversary