



# Through The Knothole

*a quarterly newsletter of the*

**HURONIA WOODLAND OWNERS' ASSOCIATION**

*At the Annual AGM in February, it was voted that we join as a Chapter of the Ontario Woodlot Owners Association.*

*We are beginning the transition to becoming a Chapter of the OWA. "**Through the Knothole**" will provide the local news and information. Along with the S&W Report of the Ontario Woodlot Association, you will have both local and woodlot related news and information.*

## Message from Michael O'Hara

### Update on becoming an OWA Chapter

We have started the process to becoming a Chapter of the OWA.

We have a committee of three who will be ensuring that our constitution remains intact but also includes wording required by the OWA. We will ensure that any monies that we currently have stay with us. Our name will remain the same Huronia Woodland Owners a Chapter of the OWA. Our existing scholarship account will remain separate and our members will be able to make donations to the fund, that will remain with the fund. We will remain to organize our regular events as we have in the past, so other than getting a renewal membership notice from the OWA in September, everything else should be business as usual.

Our Directors are working hard to behind the scenes as usual so our membership will really not notice the change.

Looking forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the Forest Health Meeting on May 15th.

Cheers

## SAVE THE DATE

**May 15: Forest Health Meeting**, Edgar Hall, 7 pm

**Summer Field Day:** Cancelled for this year

**Oct. 6: Fall Field Day:** Chris Ellsmere's property

**Nov. 10: White Pine Meeting**, Elmvale Legion, 1 pm

**Feb.9, 2019: AGM** at Simcoe County Museum, 1 pm

## FOREST HEALTH MEETING UPDATE

Neil Craig has arranged for Martin Hederich, author of the book "Beautiful Heat", to speak on "Heating with Wood". Don't miss it: Edgar Hall, 7pm, May 15. Martin's Website is: <http://www.northernstoveandfireplace.ca/about-us>

## CALLING ALL AUTHORS

**Please submit a Knothole article, or suggest websites for all of us to enjoy.** Send info about our local "stuff". What are you doing lately in your woodlot? Is there a story, poem or history you wish to share? Send it to me, Jim Marchand, at [jimmarchand5@gmail.com](mailto:jimmarchand5@gmail.com)

## DIRECTORS (in alphabetical order)

**Chairman:** rotating among Directors

**Craig, Neil:** Forest Health (705-726-1334)  
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**OWA COMMITTEE:** Mike O'Hara (chair), Earl Dertinger and Jim Marchand.

**Through the Knothole**, Jim Marchand (contact)

Spring: mailing about April 27 - Summer: mailing about Aug. 24 -  
Fall: mailing about Oct 26 - and Winter: mailing about Jan 25  
Deadline is 2 weeks prior.

## HISTORY OF HWOA by Jim Laking

It is confusing (and some would say - beneficial) to have two Jim(s) stirring the pot in the Knothole etc. The Old Jim is trying to put together a lengthy History of our Association. If you have something to include, forward it to Jim Laking, 24 Mills Circle, Midland L9X 0J7; call 705-722-0512; or email to [jajlaking@rogers.com](mailto:jajlaking@rogers.com).

## **TRENDY TREES** (Part 1) *by Gerry Beauchamp*

The relationship between man and trees has always been a close one. In the early stages of human development trees were used as fuel, shelter, tools, weapons, and even as medicines. This interaction with forests has evolved through the ages, with many wood related products becoming the whimsical favourites of certain generations.

A settler in North America in the seventeenth or eighteenth century would regard the tree as a necessity. It was thought of as a God-given commodity for man to use for building a log cabin, rudimentary tools and furnishings, as well as fuel to get him through the long cold winter. Home furnishings were basic and usually made by the settler himself using the wood that he could find nearby. Assembling a table or chairs for example, would require hand hewn rough cut planks and straight cut limbs that could be joined together by mortise and tenon using very basic tools such as an axe, adze, auger brace and draw knife. The end result could not have been called pretty, but it was usually strong and practical. Commonly harvested tree species of the time were Pine, Spruce, or Poplar, and when extreme strength was required, Maple, Ash, or Oak were used.

In the late 1800's and early 1900's, commonly referred to as the Victorian era, household furnishings were an indicator of one's wealth and place in the social order. Massive cabinets and armoires, as well as intricately crafted tables and chairs, graced many Victorian homes and the construction of these were completed by the craftsmen of the time. Having the title of a cabinetmaker or carpenter was certainly an occupation that was to be respected, and becoming a cabinet maker was a slow process with many years of apprenticeship required. The furniture designs of the day were meticulously detailed, sporting finials, turnings and intricate carvings. They were also quite large, filling the massive rooms in which they stood in imposing fashion. To the modern eye these pieces would appear gaudy and pretentious, but such was the style of the time. The craftsmen who built these pieces knew well the characteristics of the various woods which they worked with and became extremely proficient at selecting the best grain structures and species to complete their task. Quarter-sawn lumber was frequently used because of its superior stability and appealing grain pattern. Wood kilns had not yet been developed, and great care was required to evenly air dry the material gradually so as not to damage the natural elasticity of the wood fibres. The most popular woods of the day were Oak, Elm, Cherry and Walnut, and these tree species were harvested readily to feed a growing market. For the person who perhaps only aspired to being wealthy, a scaled down version of popular furnishings could be crafted in Ash, which became widely known as "poor man's oak".

With the coming of the industrial revolution, more change was to invade the forests. Henry Ford's development of the automobile assembly line soon spread into other sectors of manufacturing. Furniture was now being a mass produced commodity. Factory produced furniture changed the home furnishings concept completely. No longer was a furniture piece a unique item, with assembly line workers cranking out copies of the same item continuously. In order to try to

introduce some individuality into the sales, manufacturers began introducing the same items in different wood types and finishes. A dining table and chairs could be purchased in solid Oak or perhaps in a more moderately priced Birch finish. By the 1930's and 40's some problems accompanied mass production of furniture. Artificial drying of wood was becoming widespread but could not yet be described as an "exact science". As a result the stability of the finished product sometimes left a lot to be desired. In addition, the factories consumed a lot of raw material and it was sometimes a significant challenge to be able to access desired wood species in the volumes required and with the Great Depression followed by the War Years, the buying public was becoming significantly more frugal. The solution to the volume problem and cost cutting requirement was answered by the introduction of veneer. Rather than use solid wood materials to produce furniture, an inferior sub-base product could be used and covered with a thin slice layer of quality wood veneer and so came the introduction of terms like plywood and particle board. Although in its infancy, these products, manufactured from what previously had been wood waste, were leading the furniture manufacturing process into new territory. Another interesting development of the time was the application of faux finishes. Painting technology had produced tools for high production techniques that could mimic the look of wood grain patterns. It was now possible to take less desirable species such as Basswood or Poplar and make them look like Oak. To the knowledgeable eye the transformation was obvious but the buying public was receptive to the reduced retail cost and the manufacturers greatly appreciated the reduction in production costs. It was a win situation for the manufacturer, consumer, and the over harvested premium tree species that were becoming harder to find.

*(Editor's note: continued next issue - 1950's and beyond)*

## **Preparing my Woodlot for Climate Change**

*By Jim Marchand*

I joined the HWOA when I entered the MFTIP program, and then began my learning curve. Peter DeVillers helped me to set up my plan, concentrating on recreation and wildlife use.

Recently I have been trying to follow the MNRF small information brochure "Managing Your Woodlot in a Changing Climate". Among the things from the brochure that I am trying to follow, with minimal equipment, are:

- Enhancing connectivity to allow for easy migration of treestand and wildlife through afforestation
- Regenerating and establishing a diversity of native species, favoring those that will thrive in the projected climate.
- Enhancing stand edges – to keep out drying winds, and encourage snow cover for spring moisture and help in reducing the vulnerability of interior stems to windthrow. With these actions I hope to increase stand resilience and maintain the health of the remaining trees.

Along with Forests Ontario and Ontario Woodlot Assoc. websites, the MNRF brochure also suggests:

Land Owner Resource Center [www.lronline.com](http://www.lronline.com)

Ontario Professional Foresters Association [www.opta.ca](http://www.opta.ca)

MNRF Climate Change Research Reports [www.ontario.ca](http://www.ontario.ca)