

One Hundred Rings and Counting: Forestry Education and Forestry in Toronto and Canada, 1907-2007 By Mark Kuhlberg

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the title. Jones has arranged the essays in a rough chronology, and readers who proceed from cover to cover will get a quirky history of the town. But one can read the stories in any order, any time, much in the manner of the weekly column where they first appeared. I could wish that Jones had listed the publication dates of the essays, allowing me to appreciate the randomness of his experience, the way so much history comes to us. I admire a scholar who can jump deftly from topic to topic, and accept the resultant repetition. The names Dobbin and Duffus echo throughout, not a problem unless one tries to read the book in a single day. One really shouldn't.

A few essays stand out: Trent University's history through its landholdings, the Barnardo children reception centre, the big brass band war involving a bandmaster by the name of Rackett. Then there is the voter in Harvey Township whose rowboat capsized, whereupon he swam to the polling station to cast the tie-breaking vote in the 1875 provincial by-election. Jones marvels at a collection of old photos, offers thoughts on the Americanness of Peterborough, and explores heritage politics. And who can overlook Robertson Davies, *Examiner* publisher and voice of small-

town Ontario, admonishing a local historian who had lost his literary way? (Jones may consider himself fortunate not to be of the Davies era.)

Lingering questions: Why does the bibliography omit the names of publishers? Do we need the biography of the inventor of the pianoforte who died in England in 1832? And did the essay on Canadians' displeasure with the Brown-Macdonald coalition of 1864 give pause to Opposition leaders plotting in Ottawa late in 2009?

Jones has come up with an extraordinary book. One learns just about enough to write one's own ordinary history of Peterborough; in that sense *An Historian's Notebook* is a primary source. More than that, however, Jones offers entertainment and enlightenment sufficient to stir some readers to compile their own stories of village life in landscapes and eras yet to be recorded. Jones shows how an archive opens doors, and unselfishly shares a career of steering people through those doors into a world of surprises and fun, all of it making the study of history the great pleasure that all of us, I hope, feel.

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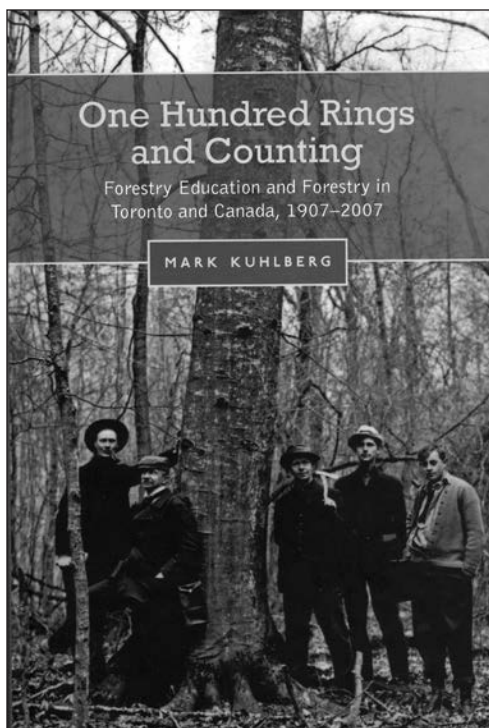
One Hundred Rings and Counting: Forestry Education and Forestry in Toronto and Canada, 1907-2007

By Mark Kuhlberg

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009. xi + 334 pages. \$65.00 hardcover. ISBN 978-0-8020-9685-2 <www.utppublishing.com>

Before reading *One Hundred Rings and Counting*, I doubted that the history of one small faculty at one university could have wide appeal. However Professor Mark Kuhlberg of Laurentian University has largely dispelled my doubt

in this chronicle of the Faculty of Forestry at the University of Toronto. Forestry at U of T has been, at least at times, unloved by its own university and province and has dealt its share of obstinacy to higher-ups over its century-long history. Kuhlberg sup-



plies enough drama to keep readers often on the edges of their seats, deftly tying the history of Canada's oldest forestry faculty to the broader political story and history of forestry in the province and country. To some extent the plight of this small faculty has been a barometer of the broader plight of sustainable forest management nationally, fraught with misunderstanding and indifference.

More than ninety percent of Canada's forest is publicly owned and managed, unique in the world. One might imagine that this circumstance could lead to prudent, well-regulated utilization of forest resources and a perpetual income stream to the public purse. However, unlike the European situation (and to some extent the American one also), Canada did not embrace forestry as a profession or establish the goal of long-term sustainability until well into the twentieth century. Only

then, burdened by a legacy of wanton cutting, did Ontario recognize that its forests were not inexhaustible. The uphill battle to establish sustainable forest management in Canada in many respects is paralleled by the challenges faced by the Faculty itself. The University appears to have pushed for forestry simply to prevent Queen's University or its own satellite Ontario Agricultural College campus (now University of Guelph) from doing so. Both would have arguably been better homes.

Kuhlberg asserts that Judson Clark, Ontario's first provincial forester, was ideally suited to be dean of the new faculty, but was astute enough to sidestep an academic post where he believed his activity would have been ignored by province and industry alike. Instead, U of T offered the position to Bernard Fernow, Clark's PhD supervisor at Cornell University and a scholar less aware of the province's weak stand on forest management. U of T began turning out well-trained, progressive foresters, but government and industry were reluctant to offer them jobs, still not inclined to endorse forest sustainability. Furthermore, the University was not prepared to provide adequate staff and facilities. Kuhlberg notes how remarkable it was that, despite these struggles, Forestry at Toronto nevertheless has had important periods of glory. Clearly it has had a meaningful impact on Canadian society.

Kuhlberg points out that the Faculty has not helped its own cause, having missed some key opportunities. One, in the late 1960s, was the proposal to move out of downtown Toronto to Erindale College, the new suburban campus in Mississauga, located in a wooded setting along the revitalized Credit River. Less than a decade later Forestry rejected what seemed to be a viable move to U of T's other suburban

campus, in Scarborough. In both cases Forestry could have been a big fish in newer, smaller ponds (and ponds surrounded by actual forests!). Kuhlberg believes that the failed Scarborough move may have set in motion the termination of Toronto's undergraduate forestry program, concluded in 1993. Yet *One Hundred Rings and Counting* ends on an optimistic note. In 2007, the centennial year, Kuhlberg had found Forestry—now a faculty for graduate study only—to have become a research powerhouse with a strong conservation ethic and a firm national and international reputation.

In contemporary times, however, I note (as does Kuhlberg) a relapse into old denials, particularly the belief that Canadian forests were inexhaustible. In comparison with most developed countries, can we honestly label ourselves today as exemplary environmental stewards? As of early 2010, Forestry at the University of Toronto also sits on another precipice

of major restructuring. Can one imagine the outcome, had Queen's or Guelph been home to forestry? Is Lakehead University poised to be home for the leading (or only) forestry faculty in Ontario in the present century? The title of the concluding chapter—“all that is old is new again”—rings on even beyond the end of *One Hundred Rings and Counting*.

I greatly enjoyed *One Hundred Rings and Counting*, both as an exciting and easy read and as an important historical summary of a yet broadly undocumented and important piece of Ontario's forestry legacy. It should appeal to anyone with a concern for resource management and will have a particular pull for those with an interest in forestry or the inner workings of Canadian universities. I hope that this book also finds a place in the courses of Canada's (remaining) forestry programs.

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Woldemar Neufeld's Canada: A Mennonite Artist in the Canadian Landscape, 1925-1995

By Laurence Neufeld and Monika McKillen, eds., Hildi Froese Tiessen and Paul Gerard Tiessen.

Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2010. vi + 146 pages. \$50.00 hard-cover. ISBN 978-1-55458-190-0 (www.wlupress.wlu.ca)

One of the gratifying events in the life of a curator or art historian is discovering a new voice. Rarely does an artist appear fully formed with a body of work that is unique, deeply felt and resonant. All the more is the pleasure when the artist's life and work are digested between the covers of a book that explores the art fully, in depth and with an intelligence that accords the artist a proper place

in the landscape of Canadian art. Hildi Froese Tiessen and Paul Gerard Tiessen have done such a service in their sensitive and nuanced analysis of the art of Woldemar Neufeld, a Mennonite artist whose work is deceptively simple, yet speaks to the great feelings of loss and longing clothed in the garments of what the artist saw in front of his eyes and in the back of his mind.