

TREES FOR TOMORROW, INC.

Trees, if they could talk, would have applauded a unique organization, Trees for Tomorrow, Inc., founded on a wintry day, February 29, 1944.

Trees for Tomorrow's first step was to become known and to be accepted. Eyebrows were raised when an industry sponsored organization suddenly emerged with plans for a large scale reforestation program.

Reforestation Institute at Rhinelander hand planted 10,000 seedlings, 200,000 free trees were distributed to private landowners, and the first machine planting of trees got underway at Camp Tesomas.

Before long, landowners sought help in managing their second growth forests, and then help with timber sales.

Dramatic changes were taking place in wood procurement. Sophisticated machinery, including the Prentice hydraulic loader, as well as lightweight chain saws helped increase production.

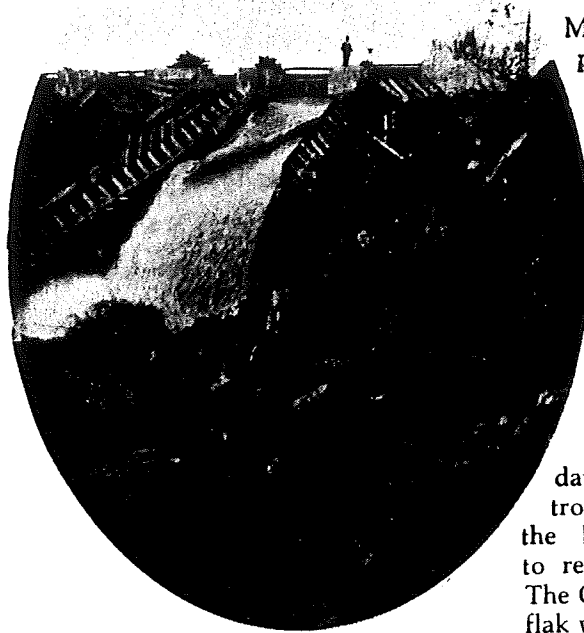
But there was a critical shortage of woods workers. To help alleviate the problem, Trees for Tomorrow established the first logger's apprenticeship training program.

Membership in the organization, originally limited to the paper, then the power industries, was broadened to include a wide cross section of the public.

The following comment by Folke Becker, president of Trees for Tomorrow for 17 years, is appropriate. He said, "I believe the philosophy of Trees for Tomorrow brings into focus what can be accomplished when industry, resource agencies, educational institutions, and private individuals join forces behind a common objective—the social and economic welfare of the people of Wisconsin."

—M.N. Taylor

The Merrill Machinery and Supply Co. was organized in 1900 as the Merrill Iron Works by John O'Day, John Daley and William Geshart. In 1983 the company is called Merrill Manufacturing, owned by Don and Dick Taylor.



PRAIRIE DELLS

The Prairie Dells Dam has been the height of controversy in this area ever since it was built. Over three quarters of a century has passed since the Merrill Paper Co. built the dam to power a new industry for Merrill. A turbine was installed before it was discovered that the engineer had misplaced a decimal point indicating a power potential of 3,000 kw instead of the actual 300 kw.

Nearly every decade has discussed keeping or remodeling the dam. For whatever reason one could think of, the dam has remained till the present concerted effort. When the Army Corps of Engineers deemed the dam "hydraulically unsafe" in 1979, trout organizations with the DNR in the background, renewed their efforts to return the stream to a trout fishery. The Corps left the DNR to handle the flak when local people protested the draw down in early 1980. It became obvious in October of that year that the dam was no weakling as a one ton chisel, dropped 200 feet every minute or so, made very little headway.

In mid November, the only people involved in this whole affair with an investment at stake, the landowners, organized the Society for the Preservation of the Prairie Dells Dam, inviting all interested parties to join. Generations of picnickers, sightseers and "other fish" fishermen have participated in meetings and fund raisers contributing time and money to save the dam.

In March, 1983, the County Board re-stated its support for repair of the dam and approved a transfer of funds. The project was again stalled when a Trout Unlimited member filed an appeal to the State's go-ahead. A decision is expected no later than mid-October.

My father told of starting out at four o'clock in the morning on cold winter days seated on the high seat of the horse drawn hearse with no protection from the wind and cold except the heavy fur lined melton cloth coat and beaver fur cap, to drive ten or fifteen miles out in the country, conducting a funeral and not getting home until well after dark, no heater to stay warm except on occasion a foot warmer containing hot bricks. He recalled one time he and his brother alternated driving while the other rode inside the hearse out of the wind. When they got home the liveryman met them at the stable door and nearly fainted when the one riding in the back suddenly got up and stepped out. That old coat of Dad's is still hanging in my closet as a reminder of the kind of tough life our forefathers lived.

—Arthur E. Taylor, Jr.

"Old Brown had an icehouse on the end of Third Street towards the river. We used to make that ripper run out onto the river when it was frozen. But mostly we'd make the turn onto Cottage Street. We'd start on the top of Prospect and West Third. . .cross Genesee and State Street, turn left on Cottage and go all the way down to West Main on one ride."

—The Chilsen Shack Chronicles