

BC forest history: Why is it important?

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Forests have always been important in British Columbia. Humans have used the forest and forest products from pre-colonial times into the present, and will continue to do so into the future. Forests have led to the creation and sustainability of BC communities, jobs, identities, cultures, and social relationships.

BC forest history is a very important part of this province's overall history and should be studied, understood, and remembered. Part of this history includes the experiences of those who lived the past, which help to enlighten the present and the future. It is necessary, then, to ensure that historical materials, which can help tell the stories related to these experiences, are collected, preserved, and made accessible. Of particular interest is the collection and preservation of oral stories.

The Forest History Association of British Columbia, an organization that is helping to make people aware of the



importance of BC forest history, is having a conference entitled "Exploring Our Roots: Forest History in Our Communities" (September 17–19, 2009), which will bring the history of forests and people to the forefront. As the conference is located in Prince George, the focus will be on what forest history means to the people and communities within the Central and Northern Interior of BC. However, much of what will be discussed can be applied throughout the entire province. Also included in the conference will be a workshop on how to conduct oral history interviews.

To access more information about this conference or the Forest History Association of BC, or to register, please visit www.fhabc.org/meeting.html

Another organization that is working to make people aware of the importance of forest history is the Forest History cluster of the Network in Canadian History and Environment (NiCHE). For more information on the Forest History cluster of NiCHE, please visit <http://niche.uwo.ca/foresthstory> 