



A View From The Woods

Portable Sawmills,.....the best thing to happen to the farm woodlot since the advent of the gasoline powered chainsaw.

The portable sawmill has been with us for quite a number of years. Until recently however, it took a special breed of man to run one of these contraptions. Often home-built with old automobile parts and lots of scrap iron each was a unique piece of equipment. The owner had to be a Jack-of-all-trades who could not only do the job getting the most out of each log but also perform the necessary maintenance to keep the mill working. This breed of man is still out there doing what only he can do but now there is a new breed of sawmiller. the recreational sawyer.

Unknown to the non-rural public, lightweight factory built bandsaw mills have been undergoing a minor sales boom in recent years. These mills, for about half the cost of a new car, can be operated single handedly and towed behind even a small truck or tractor. They are available from several different manufacturers but all are relatively simple, accurate and even less noisy than traditional circular mills. Their largest drawback is that they are not as fast as circular mills of comparable size. This is why it is mainly the spare-time operator who is attracted to them rather than the man making his living sawing lumber. However, there are reports that the increased accuracy and efficiency can make them pay even on a commercial scale.

With this affordable technology it is now easier than ever for a woodlot owner to use the products of his land. The small size of these mills make it possible to utilize smaller and shorter pieces than would traditionally be called sawlogs. Smaller logs also reduce the need for large and expensive handling equipment.

The majority of the people engaged in this type of milling are farmers and woodlot owners doing so to meet only the needs of themselves and a few neighbours. As the local market gets more accustomed to this wood supply these millers are bound to become better known and quite possibly find those services more in demand. There are currently about 45 sawmills in the counties of Leeds and Grenville alone. Many of these people are operating from their homes or back yards. Others will bring their mill to your wood pile and work for an hourly rate, on shares or by the board foot sawn. Together they make up a large body of lumber producers doing business and adding value to our economy at a very local level.

One of the objectives of the Ministry of Natural Resources is to manage our forests for the continuous economic and social benefit of the people of Ontario. How better to do this right here in Leeds and Grenville than to encourage people to drive by those British Columbia 2x4's at the lumber yard and make better use of the lumber growing right here on our own door step.

This article is presented by the Ministry of Natural Resources, Brockville. For more information on this or any forestry topic contact the private land forestry section at 342-8524.



BOOK REVIEWS

Trust by Mary Flanagan.

A captivating drama about Eleanor, a flaming red-head, Clover a charming little mistake, the three men who loved them both and the fraudulent art sales that engulfed them all. It is a commendable first novel from a new young writer who would appear to be seeking her father's understanding and trust.

JR

The Man in the Mirror by Carole Jerome.

Jerome, a Canadian journalist, writes tenderly of her ill-fated love affair with Sadegh Ghorbzadel (she says it's Gobe-za-day) the man who became Iran's foreign minister in the early days of the Khomeini regime and whose moderate views at the time cost him his life. She was in Teheran following the deposition of the Shah and during the hostage crisis and offers insights into the power struggles, political intrigues and betrayals that have accompanied the Iranian revolution. The title is taken from an old Persian custom concerning bethrothal.

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