



Pierce County

Fred & Dorthea Hart

“When I began my career, it was the end of steam pots and all of the big logging you read about in picture books.” Fred Hart gives an eye-witness account of old-time logging. “I equipped fire inspections on steam engines, checked out fire tools on logging railroads, conducted forest practice on huge high leads with swing trees and tail trees – all kinds of things they don’t have today.

“In 1944, we were at the end of the war, and that drove everything we did. It hadn’t tapered off until maybe 1952 or 1953, when things started to become more civilized. We were quite wasteful when we were logging for the war effort. Hemlock wasn’t even a tree to look at, so we just pulled it over and burned it up. Land eventually became more valuable. Settings became smaller. Equipment became smaller and more efficient.”

Fred recalls his early years with the Department of Conservation and Development in the late 1940s. While in high school, Fred spent his summers on the forestry crew fighting fires and his winter weekends planting trees. Fred, “I was 16 when I went to work for the state. So I must have been 14 when I was planting trees. I found a real good guy to work for, Art Lindor. He liked me and I never quit. He was a real great old-timer.”

Fred Hart and his wife Dorthea (Dort) both graduated from Enumclaw High School. They married June 6, 1949. Fred has been involved in forestry his entire life, “I started with the State Forestry in 1947 at the beginning of the Forest Practice Act, and became one of the first forest practice foresters.”

As early as the 1950s, Fred was involved with the Western Washington Farm Forestry Association (WWFFA) through his work and youth-oriented programs such as Smokey the Bear. There were “Keep Washington Green” signs and lots of forestry demonstrations at that time. The Washington Farm Forestry Association (WFFA) was a participant in the conferences, displays and tours. Fred, “I was a participant with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). We worked together and each would man a station or demonstration. Little by little my association with them grew. After I retired, I joined them.”

Fred and Dort sponsored Forestry Field Days on the 22 acres of land they had purchased in the 1970s. Groups of school children would come from seven different urban areas to attend a

four-hour session. Those sessions involved members of the WFFA and industrial foresters who would have different stations, snacks and entertainment from Smokey the Bear. The Pierce County Chapter would pitch in for bus transportation when needed.

Fred, “We did a lot of work with fourth graders and tree farms. We had some of the neatest kids. There were some kids from Renton with a great science teacher who had those kids so pumped up. They had papers to fill out when they got here, and 20 questions they had to have written answers for. We’d give them zip lock bags so they could collect anything they wanted. They were the most alert and active kids. We really enjoyed them.”

With the help of their own children they have built their dream home with logs from their property. For now they’re unsure about the future of their 22 acres of paradise in an ever expanding population area and an unfriendly growth management movement.

“This place is surrounded by growth management areas and will be eaten up before another tree has a chance to grow. It’s a dedicated tree farm, so it will last as long as we last.”

HART TREE FARM

Fred Hart , born July 12, 1929

Dorthea Anderson Hart, born February 15, 1931

Pierce County Tree Farmer of the Year, 1993

Pierce County Chapter President, 1991-1992