

Continued from page 1

It's obvious that Wilkinson's love affair with his forested land has never flagged. He is constantly busy, pruning, culling, sometimes even falling trees. He showed us his younger evergreens, growing straight and a little spindly. But that is the way he wants them. Later, as mature trees for harvest, they will still be straight, with no tangle of lower limbs to mar the wood. This, he told us, was the result of growing trees under a "canopy". Alders are his choice. "They are healing trees, too", he told us, "they produce nitrogen in the soil." His young conifers start life under a canopy, preferably of alder. As the evergreens grow, the alder is gradually thinned and removed. Wilkinson feels that no tree is a "waste" tree. "Loggers call alders a junk tree", he says, indignantly. "They won't let people go in and retrieve alders, or leave them to rot -- they BURN them". Yet the wood is marketable; the leaves and cuttings enrich the soil. On a slide area, alder often starts to grow first, holding the soil for other growth.

In order for a forest to thrive, it must have enough bio-degradable material left on the forest floor. Wilkinson has learned just how much is needed. When he harvests a tree, he leaves branches, bits of log, leaves, or any rotting material to go back into the soil.

He speaks bitterly of "the worst crime against the forest soil" -- that of slash burning. Trees need topsoil to grow, and a man-made burn creates havoc, destroying soil that may have taken centuries to form. He is even more saddened by the continuing practice of clear-cutting. He has proven that sustainable logging is practical and conserves the beauty and usefulness of the land and soil. It can create healthy, satisfying employment for huge numbers of citizens. It's hard for him to understand why businesses and governments continue in their destructive ways, with no thought for the future.

I asked him about the various sized trees we saw everywhere. How did he reforest, I asked? He told me he never plants a tree. Re-seeding occurs the natural way. Certain trees are left as "parent trees" and may become giants.

They are spaced throughout the forest and "managed" by the seasons and directions of the winds. The new little trees seem able to pick good growing areas. But the few who do not, or seem to struggle, or are deformed, will be culled. Remembering that these little trees grow best beneath a canopy, I looked and marveled. There it was, yet we had just been told no planting was ever done. How well this sensitive forester has learned to "read" his land! Yet I could see, too, that what he was doing could be learned and practiced everywhere.

Wilkinson pulled a small cedar up for us, to demonstrate what a firm grip the roots already had gained. Later, at his home, we saw samples of similar sized trees that had been pulled, both after being planted as "plugs" and as "bare-root trees." The plugs had only a deformed twist of roots -- roots unable to withstand a windstorm; roots incapable of sustaining a mature tree. Some of the bare-root trees had been planted more carefully than others; the root system seemed to be stretching out. But those that were planted more hastily, or had not had the roots carefully spread in a large enough hole, looked deformed and stressed, just like the "plugs". I thought sorrowfully of the massive clearcuts replanted in this manner; with no protective canopy, the wonderful old trees that could have reseeded the area as parent trees, forever gone.

Near a stretch of land he calls his "meadow", I noticed young trees growing near the edge of the clearing, without canopy protection. Sure enough, they were bushy and squat compared to the trees in the forested area. Obviously, they served no purpose in reforestation; as mature trees, the trunks would be marred by the mass of limbs. I pointed them out to Wilkinson as we sat, mentioning the comparison.

He said, "If I don't sell these for Christmas trees, they'll grow short, with heavy butts and lots of knots. Not good for timber -- just pulp wood. Very few of my trees go for pulpwood -- they're too high quality for that".

"I did an experiment once," he said. "I planted some seedlings in a clear-cut and some seedlings under a canopy, nearby. The protected seedlings showed 15% more growth, at the same age. The trees under the canopy keep reaching for the light."

And, I thought, they grow tall and straight, with no cumbersome lower limbs. If I could learn this in one afternoon's talk, why could not the government and forestry people learn? I questioned Wilkinson about that.

For the first time, Wilkinson lost his enthusiastic glow. "They are educated ignoramuses," he growled. "They are so brainwashed about clear-cutting that they don't want to hear anything that threatens their convictions. U.B.C. teaches nothing else. Forestry Companies give the department 4% of its funding but dictate 80% of the curriculum. Big business and big government -- both equally incompetent."

Wilkinson feels deep respect as well as love for the forests. To him, they are living, breathing entities that can be managed by competent foresters but should be carefully maintained, never destroyed. Forests affect climate, hold moisture and control erosion. They act as filters, purifying our air. "They are absolutely essential to man's survival," he affirmed.

By this time we had trailed our way back to the house, where Anne Wilkinson was anxiously waiting for her husband to make a bonfire so they could have a barbecue with a visiting niece. Still longing to hear more, we followed him to the lakeside, where he and my husband built the fire and I continued my questioning. I wanted to know about the part Wilkinson had played in the 1993-1994 protest against clear-cut logging at Clayoquot Sound. With 308 others, he was finally arrested and he and

his wife were part of the twenty-six mass trials that followed. In February, 1994 he defended himself so convincingly that the judge called him "magnificently unrepentant". He and Anne were sentenced to one hundred hours of community work. He gained the love and respect of the protesters, who changed their demands from "no logging" to "no clear-cut logging" after he explained his philosophy to them.

He continues to explain this philosophy to a variety of groups -- school children, college or university students, classes such as the one living in his woods when we were there. (This particular class, from the University of Oregon, was doing a practicum as part of their course in Sustainable Forestry.) Visitors include environmental groups from many nations -- Chili, Cuba, Britain, Australia, the USA -- and particularly Germany. Germany started to clear-cut and plant 200 years ago. Now the citizens are working against time, trying to rebuild their devastated soil. Many German scientists have come to Wildwood, to learn Wilkinson's methods.

In 1993 British Columbia's Knowledge Network created a series of programs on B.C. forestry, with Wilkinson on the Advisory Committee.

In 1995 he celebrated his fiftieth anniversary in selective logging, and was chosen by the government of B.C. as one of the Individual Citizen Category of the Minister's Environmental Awards for his achievements. In the Spring of 1996 he received an award under the Forest Renewal Plan for Excellence in Forestry.

To quote from his statement to the Supreme Court after his arrest:

"Proper forestry is a matter of using more labor and less equipment. . . Every hectare of clear-cut forest in B.C. puts one forest worker out of work for one hundred and fifty years. . . I could no longer stand idly by and see one of the most beautiful and productive areas of my province wiped out."

"Diversity" is a word on many lips today. Wildwood Farm is a perfect example of diversity of habitat as well as sustainable tree forestry. It is an eco-system, part of a world-wide eco-system to which we too belong. It is the result of fifty years of loving labor by one remarkable man. I felt humbled and honored to have made his acquaintance.

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Counter Culture
by Sandy Rea

I have a friend who is a songwriter (Milton Kelly), who claims that "Every town is a lady / Every lady's a song." He's quite good, could elicit emotion from a stop sign, can make you care about a cockroach. We were all going to be stars when we got older. I was successful at the latter. Milton is still active in the music industry, using his genius to write magnificent lyrics and melodies that he promptly forgets, unless one of us records him immediately.

Seaside is a song, perhaps a collection of them. And she used to be a lady. I would like to see her regain that status, to see her relieved of her current duty as courtesan to Oregon City/PDX/Beaverton. In a letter to the editor I once accused the city council of pimping her to the lowest bidder. All were outraged; then, of course, resumed doing exactly that. I wish they could see the lady that she is, and allow her some dignity, instead of slathering her in the tawdry jewels and faux satin of their Madison Avenue minds.

If one were to start at the edge of the ocean and work slowly toward the hills, the first melody in Seaside's opus would surely be reminiscent of Aaron Copeland. Even within the subtle frame of Tillamook Head on the left, and evidence of civilization (Gearhart) on the far right, facing out to sea on this sunflower seed-colored sand beach, it is impossible not to experience the feeling of vastness offered. There is an omnipresent timelessness and healing there, for the taking.

Imagine, moving over the sand toward the Prom and town, the strains of Scott Joplin accompany children playing with buckets, lovers of all ages walking, reserving a more critical eye for another time, another place. Kites soar, toddlers shriek with private joy.

Approaching midtown, the music changes, taking on a decidedly 50's sound. Rock is King. Cars are shinier, girls are prettier, guys are taller. The exuberant invincibility of youth is thick in the air, like a sparkling gel. It serves as an elixir for any who pass through it, regardless of the decades owned.

In the blocks where the homes are, the oddly aligned streets that sport front yard gardens as individual as the residents themselves, a haunting delicate strain -- Glenn Miller's A String of Pearls -- drifts through like smoke. The tune mingles with the odor of barbecued chicken, weaving complaisance and camaraderie in its wake.

Further east on the trek is The River. The Necanicum. A sober reminder: I was here Before; I will be here when you are gone. I am mightier and more capricious than your bridges, your channeling, your silly ordinances. Its deceptively gentle flow, carrying biological mysteries through the heart of town, oblivious to the tinsel on its banks, suggests the power and determination of Beethoven. Primordial avatar.

Beyond the River, towards the highway, it is necessary to pass the Chamber of Commerce and the City Hall. "Money Makes The World Go Around", from the musical Cabaret, blares out from amphitheater-sized loudspeakers placed back-to-back, 24 hours a day. One rushes in any other direction to escape the blast.

Toward the foothills, another river, the Neawanna, gentler, more meandering in nature. It sculpts its own richly green banks in S-curves, creating miles of fascination for those of Lilliputian thought. Water pops with the lives of animals, insects, assorted aquatics *in vitro*. Wetlands, miles of them, its denizens quite safe from bulldozers, due to happy flukes of zoning. Vivaldi spills throughout, like soft laughter.

And lastly, Seaside's foothills, where the process of healing from the scars of logging and construction are ongoing, effective. She is gracefully reclaiming forest land, repopulating her crevasses with creatures long overlooked by those with limited sight. The music here is of rills, of wind through new trees. It is the crackle of sun-dried leaves being perforated by earthworms as they teach us the natural laws of circulation. Hawk and osprey solos sprinkle the score. Lie quietly within her arms, listen: The music is in the process of composition; it will never be completed.