

A Brief Timeline of The History of Trees, Forestry, Arboriculture and CTPA in Connecticut

On August 16, 1922, the 32 charter members of CTPA met in an organizational meeting at Hammonasset Beach in Madison, CT. Their goal was to form an association of people who share a common interest in the trees of Connecticut. Three years previously, the CT General Assembly had passed a 'Tree Worker Law' requiring that all Connecticut tree workers obtain certification from a board established by the CT Agricultural Experiment Station. CAES had also held a series of Tree Worker Institutes to help provide the foundation for tree workers seeking to pass the certification exam. However, it was time to turn that responsibility over to an independent organization. Hence the founding of CTPA. The following is a brief timeline showing a few of the many events that led up to the founding of CTPA, as well an overview of some of the many activities with which the organization has been involved over the years. CTPA has always been active and engaged. It is good to take a look back at how much has happened over the years.

1875 – The Connecticut Agricultural Experiment Station is formed. It is the first such facility in the country.

1886 – Due largely to the efforts of Dr. Birdsey Grant Northrop, the General Assembly declares that Arbor Day is to be celebrated as an annual event within the State of Connecticut.

1893 – An Act Concerning Shade and Ornamental Trees passes the General Assembly. This Act provides for designating trees along public highways as public shade trees, to be so designated by a nail with a “C” impressed upon the head. Any tree so marked is to be protected from injury or destruction.

1896 – The Connecticut Forest and Park Association is formed.

1901 – The first Connecticut State Forester is appointed. In accordance with an Act of the General Assembly, CAES Station Forester Walter Mulford also takes on the title and duties of being CT State Forester.

1901 – Tree Warden Law is passed by the General Assembly, permitting the appointment of a tree warden in any municipality that chooses to do so.

1903 – Connecticut’s first State Forest is created.

1905 – Chestnut Blight found in New York City.

1906 – The first find of Gypsy Moths in Connecticut (Stonington).

1911 – Chestnut mortality from Chestnut Blight has become severe statewide.

1914 – Connecticut’s first State Park is created.

1917 – The CT General Assembly authorizes \$15,000 for the control of White Pine Blister Rust.

1919 – The CT General Assembly passes the first Tree Worker Certification Law.

The effort to establish the Tree Worker Certification Law (first Arborist Law) was led by several ‘tree men’, with Cornelius A. Millane chief among them. The law established a board made up of officials from the Experiment Station to oversee exams. First Tree Worker (Arborist) Certification Exam given June 27, 1919. Those who successfully passed the exam received certification. Law also stated that “no person shall advertise, solicit or contract to improve the condition of fruit, shade, forest or ornamental trees, by pruning, trimming or filling cavities, or to protect such trees from damage by insect or disease, either by spraying or any other method, without having secured a certificate (from the board)...” An exemption from the certification requirement for work done on one’s own property or that of one’s employer was included in this original law, as it has been throughout the law’s history.

1919 – First CT Tree Worker’s Institute held.

After the first round of exams, the Experiment Station Board recognized that many of the test-takers “knew what to do better than they could tell how or why it should be done.” As a result, the Board held a two-day Tree

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Cavity filling was once considered one of the primary skills of a tree worker.

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Workers' Institute on July 22 and 23, 1919. Out of that first Institute, it was suggested that an organization be formed of state tree workers for the purpose of education on tree care techniques. A committee was formed to study the idea. This eventually led to the formation of CTPA, after discussion at the second Institute. In addition to the 1919 two-day meeting, the Board held one-day Tree Worker Institutes in 1922, 1923 and 1924.

1921 – The General Assembly reorganizes the State Forestry Department so that it is under the State Forest Commission. In the process, the position of 'State Forester' is separated from and made independent of the position of the CT Agricultural Experiment Station 'Station Forester'. This is done in recognition of the increasing number of State Forests being established and because it was becoming increasingly clear that the administrative duties of the State Forester needed to be distinguished from the research duties of the Station Forester. Austin Hawes is appointed State Forester.

1922 – The Connecticut Tree Protective Association is founded on August 22nd at Hammonasset Beach State Park in Madison. Thirty-two individuals attend this organizational meeting and are considered the Association's Charter Members.

1923 – First Annual Meeting of CTPA is held on January 23rd at the Bond Hotel in Hartford. A Constitution is adopted and the following officers elected: Cornelius A. Millane, President; Francis A. Bartlett, Vice-President, and Walter O. Filley, Secretary-Treasurer. W. F. Britton, Philip Hansling, Jr. and W. R. Markham round out the Executive Committee.

1924 – CTPA is instrumental in organizing the first meeting of the National Shade Tree Conference, held in Stamford, CT. The success of this first National Shade Tree Conference led to its becoming an annual event. In 1968, it was renamed the International Shade Tree Conference. Then, in 1976, the organizers behind the Shade Tree Conference renamed their organization the International Society of Arboriculture.

1925 – At the 2nd Annual Meeting of the National Shade Tree Conference, held in Boston, a presenter gives a demonstration on the use of ropes to access the canopy of a tree. As stated in the record of the meeting, "By means of 150 feet of rope, all parts of a tree 60 feet high were reached with great efficiency and safety. While the demonstrator was undoubtedly a born climber, the method might be used to advantage by less skilled men."

1929 – In an update of the State Statute, the board for certifying tree workers is officially designated as the Tree Protection Examining Board.

1933 – First confirmed case of Dutch Elm Disease is found in Connecticut.

1938 – A category 3 hurricane hits Connecticut, causing massive tree damage statewide.

1939 – The term "tree expert" is officially added to State Statute, replacing the term "tree worker", as is the term "license", replacing the term "certification". The statute now reads "no person shall advertise, solicit or contract as a tree expert to improve the condition of fruit, shade, forest or ornamental trees, by feeding or fertilizing, or by pruning, trimming, bracing or filling cavities, or to protect such trees from damage by insect or disease, either by spraying or any other method, without having secured a license (from the Tree Protection Examining Board)..." Feeding, fertilizing and bracing have all been added in this new version of the law.

1946 – Following World War II, DDT begins to be applied to peacetime uses, including in arboriculture.



Pesticide applications have changed in many ways over the years, including with respect to concerns about safety.

1947 – CTPA celebrates its Silver Anniversary.

1947 – Encouraged by CTPA, the Connecticut General Assembly declares the white oak as the State Tree. The first official planting of a white oak as the State Tree is on the UConn Campus. It was planted by CTPA at its Summer Meeting, held on the campus. The tree planted is a grandchild of the famed Charter Oak.

1949 – The CTPA logo is adopted.

1955 – CTPA incorporates as a non-profit.

1967 – The designation of licensed tree care professionals in State Law changes from the licensees being called "Tree Experts" to their being called "Custom Tree Workers". "Custom Tree Work" is defined as "any

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work done for hire to improve the condition of a fruit, shade or ornamental tree by feeding or fertilizing, or by pruning, trimming, bracing or filling cavities, or to protect such trees from damage by insect or disease, either by spraying or any other method.” This adds the phrase ‘for hire’ to the law. The statute also simplifies the language relating to who can do this work. That passage now reads, in part, “no person shall contract to do custom tree work within this state without a license issued in accordance with the provisions of this act, provided any person may improve a tree on his own property or on the property of his employer without securing such a license.”

1977 – The 1967 State Law is changed so that the term “Custom Tree Work” is replaced by the term “Arboriculture”. An Arborist is defined in statute for the first time. In statute, an Arborist is “one who is qualified to perform arboriculture and who is licensed by the State Tree Protection Examining Board”. In this version of the statute, the law returns to previous wording when it states that “no person shall advertise, solicit or contract to do” what is now called arboriculture. These 1977 changes were made at the urging of many people, including CAES Station Forester, George Stevens.

1979 – CTPA donates 20 dawn redwood trees to Dinosaur State Park, helping to initiate an arboretum at the park, with this arboretum envisioned as a 'Mesozoic Garden'.

1981 – The Tree Protection Examining Board is placed by the General Assembly within the Department of Consumer Protection, which is also given responsibility for enforcement of the Arborist License.

1985 – The Hemlock Woolly Adelgid is first found in Connecticut.

1992 – The Tree Wardens' Association of Connecticut is formed.

1996 – The first session of Arboriculture 101, the CTPA-led course for those seeking their Arborist License, is held at the CT Agricultural Experiment Station in New Haven. Board Member Bruce Pauley leads this effort.

1998 – The responsibility for administration and enforcement of the Arborist License is given to the Department of Environmental Protection, with Tree Protection Examining Board now reporting to the Commissioner of DEP. In the same Public Act, the penalties for practicing arboriculture without an arborist license are substantially increased. CTPA is the spearhead behind these changes.

1999 – Although CTPA has long held Arbor Day celebrations, this year the Association updated this tradition through an essay contest for 5th grade students throughout the state.

2001 – At the encouragement of CTPA President Jeff Ward, CTPA establishes an Arborist Scholarship, to be awarded annually to a college student studying arboriculture or urban forestry.

2004 – CTPA forms a Safety Committee. This leads to the adoption of a CTPA “Code of Safety” at the 2005 Annual Meeting

2005 – CTPA and the New England ISA join forces to host the first Connecticut Tree Climbing Competition. Since 2007, the CTCC has been run solely by CTPA.

2006 – CTPA hosts the first of its now annual Electrical Hazard Awareness Program workshops.

2007 – CTPA elects as its President Maryjane Arsenault. Maryjane is CTPA’s first President who also happens to be woman.

2008 - The Asian Longhorned Beetle is found in Worcester, MA, near to the Connecticut border.

2011 – A surprise late October snowstorm causes extensive tree damage throughout Connecticut

2012 – The Emerald Ash Borer is found in Connecticut.

2014 – The Arborist Law is amended to require that Arborist Businesses be registered with DEEP. This



CTPA Board meets with Governor John Rowland as he signs the 1998 legislation moving the Arborist License to DEP. Standing left to right: President Alan Carey, Dr. Mark McClure, Greg Piontek (DEP), Bob Horan, Armando Paolino (representing CTPA), Bill Personatti, Chris Donnelly, Mark Sullivan, Larry Dvorsky, Charlie Ballou. Seated: Governor John Rowland.

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CTPA Board Member Maryjane Arsenault shares a moment with Oscar Stone at the 2004 CTPA Summer Meeting.

and involved extensive participation and support, from CTPA members, tree care companies, the Tree Wardens Association and others. 5 native trees were donated and planted in recognition of the 5 branches of the service.

2019 – CTPA provides white oak seedlings to arborists, to be planted in each of the state's 169 cities and towns in honor of the Centennial of the original 1919 Tree Workers Law.

2022 – CTPA begins its Centennial Celebration with its 100th Annual Meeting at the Aqua Turf in Southington.

Linda Schmidt Retires from DEEP



On November 1, it became official, as Linda Schmidt stepped down from her role in the Pesticide Management Program at DEEP. More than a few CTPA members have commented on how important Linda's efforts have been to them, whom they got to know as they

navigated the sometimes tricky waters of renewing a license or getting signed up for a certification exam. Her care and patience in explaining the occasionally convoluted rules associated with these processes, as well as the sense of a real connection that people felt as they worked with her, will certainly remain as a lasting legacy. CTPA wishes Linda great joy and happiness in her retirement, as she gets to enjoy more time with her husband, children and grandchildren.

DEEP is not leaving the Pesticide Program short-staffed, however. The agency has already hired Kate Scimeca to take over Linda's duties with regards to licensing, certification and continuing education. A new field inspector has also been hired to bring the field staff up to its previous level of commitment and a new staff person has been hired to cover pesticide registration and aquatic permitting.

change is seen as having the potential to help with the enforcement of the Arborist Law.

2016 – CTPA initiates its "Go to the Top" campaign to promote public awareness of the value of the Arborist License and of Arboriculture. It introduces the "Go to the Top" logo as part of this campaign.

2018 – CTPA reaches an agreement with the University of Connecticut, to work with UConn in the establishment of a two-year degree program in Arboriculture and Urban Forestry.

2018 – The Veterans' Healing Garden at the Connecticut Veterans Healthcare and Residential Facility in Rocky Hill is dedicated. This project was initiated by CTPA Board Member Bud Neal



Dr. Alex Shigo of the US Forest Service addresses the 1987 Annual Meeting as Board Member Dr. Mark McClure looks on.



CAES Forester Jeff Ward catches up with retired Greenwich Tree Warden Bruce Spanan at the 2020 Annual Meeting.