

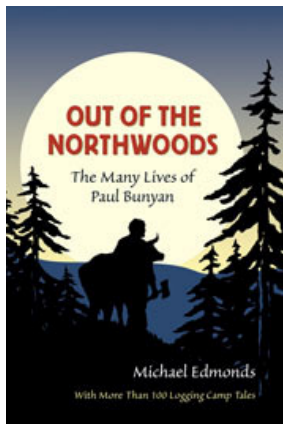


Wisconsin Historical Society
P R E S S

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 2009

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**"OUT OF THE NORTHWOODS" UNCOVERS
THE TRUE TALE BEHIND THE TALL TALE OF PAUL BUNYAN**



The Wisconsin Historical Society Press announces the release of "Out of the Northwoods: The Many Lives of Paul Bunyan" (ISBN: 978-0-87020-437-1; \$24.95) by Michael Edmonds, to be published October 2009. "Out of the Northwoods" uncovers Paul Bunyan's Wisconsin roots through bibliographic mystery and the social history of 19th century lumberjacks.

"The real Paul Bunyan of lumber camp storytelling lives through Michael Edmond's superbly researched, richly illustrated, and engagingly written study. The last and best word on Bunyan!"

— **James P. Leary, professor and director of the Folklore Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison**

Everyone has heard tall tales about the lumberjack hero Paul Bunyan and his big blue ox, but "Out of the Northwoods" tells the true tale behind Bunyan's origins in the Wisconsin northwoods. It includes eyewitness accounts of how the first Bunyan stories were shared on frigid winter nights around logging camp stoves in the Wisconsin pinery. It describes where the tales began, how they moved out of the forest and into print, and why publication changed them forever.

By sifting through the unpublished manuscripts of early editors of the tales, Michael Edmonds unearths dozens of authentic Bunyan stories told aloud by lumberjacks between 1885 and 1915. Edmonds recounts a saga of lies, hoaxes, thefts and greed that transformed the private jokes of working-class loggers into mass-market picture books for toddlers. The central characters include a genial northern Wisconsin con-man who claimed he invented the lumberjack hero, a spunky University of Wisconsin co-ed who collected the tales in logging camps in 1915, and a mild-mannered curator of the Wisconsin Historical Museum who lifted federal documents to keep the truth alive.

The book also contains more than 100 original tales about Bunyan, his camps, his crew and his adventures taken directly from loggers early in the last century.

The Wisconsin Historical Society Press, publishing since 1855, is the state's oldest publisher.
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Collecting, Preserving and Sharing Stories Since 1846

816 State Street Madison, Wisconsin 53706

wisconsinhistory.org

Praise for
"Out of the Northwoods: The Many Lives of Paul Bunyan"

"Long left for dead by folklorists as the largely fake creation of timber industry ad men and bombastic fiction writers, the real Paul Bunyan of lumber camp storytelling lives through Michael Edmond's superbly researched, richly illustrated, and engagingly written study. The last and best word on Bunyan!"

— **James P. Leary, professor and director of the Folklore Program, University of Wisconsin-Madison**

"Through exhaustive research and sound reasoning Michael Edmonds makes a convincing case to move Bunyan's birthplace from New England or Canada to the logging camps of northern Wisconsin. In the process, he introduces readers to a largely unfamiliar, un-sanitized, pre-print Bunyan known only to woodsmen of a bygone era. This is an important contribution to the study of folklore and, at the same time, something new and fun for the Bunyan fan in all of us."

— **Professor Kurt Kortenhof, Saint Paul College**

About the Author:

Michael Edmonds has published several books and articles on literary and intellectual history. He joined the staff of the Wisconsin Historical Society in 1982 and helped lead its effort to mount rare books and manuscripts on the Web, stumbling on the mystery of Paul Bunyan's origin while looking for lumberjack memoirs to share online. He holds degrees from Harvard University and Simmons College. He received a 2007 American Local and State Historical Society Award for his pioneering work on the "Turning Points in Wisconsin History" portion of the Wisconsin Historical Society website.

How to order the book:

"Out of the Northwoods: The Many Lives of Paul Bunyan" by Michael Edmonds

Hardcover: \$24.95

288 pages, 45 b/w photos and illus., 6 x 9

ISBN 978-0-87020-437-1

"Out of the Northwoods" is available in all major bookstores, and can be ordered online at:
<http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/whspress/>

Retail and wholesale orders, returns, payments, and customer service inquiries:

Please direct to:

Wisconsin Historical Society Press

c/o Chicago Distribution Center

11030 South Langley Avenue

Chicago, IL 60628-3830

Phone: (800) 621-2736

Fax: (800) 621-8476 or (773) 702-7212

Email: custserv@press.uchicago.edu

Scheduled Author Events

Saturday, October 17, 2009

Time: 11:00am to 12:00pm

Location: Edgerton Public Library, 101 Albion St, Edgerton WI 53534

Tuesday, October 20, 2009

Time: 7:00pm to 8:00pm

Location: Verona Public Library, 500 Silent St, Verona WI 53593

Monday, November 9, 2009

Time: 6:30pm to 8:00pm

Location: DeForest Area Public Library, 203 Library St., DeForest WI 53532

Thursday, December 3, 2009

Time: 6:30pm to 7:30pm

Location: North Shore Library, 6800 N. Port Washington Rd., Glendale WI 53217

Tuesday, December 8, 2009

Time: 1:00pm to 2:30pm

Location: Madison Senior Center, 330 W Mifflin St, Madison WI 53703

Tuesday, January 19, 2010

Time: 6:30pm to 7:30pm

Location: Waunakee Public Library, 710 South Street, Waunakee, WI 53597

Sunday, January 31, 2010

Time: 2:00pm to 3:00pm

Location: Hedberg Public Library, 316 South Main Street, Janesville, WI 53545

Saturday, February 6, 2010

Time: 11:00am to 1:00pm

Location: Wisconsin Historical Museum, 30 N. Carroll Street, Madison, WI 53703

Sunday, March 21, 2010

Time: 1:30pm to 3:00pm

Location: Russell J. Rassbach Heritage Museum, 1820 Wakanda St, Menomonie, WI 54751

Wednesday, March 24, 2010

Time: 12:00pm to 1:00pm

Location: Center for the History of Print Culture in Modern America, 4207 Helen C. White Hall, UW School of Library & Information Studies 600 N. Park St., Madison, WI 53706

Michael Edmonds is open to any new events and is willing to travel. He teaches during the week but is willing to explore any ideas. If you would like to set up a book event, please contact Melanie Roth, Marketing Coordinator, Wisconsin Historical Society Press:

melanie.roth@wisconsinhistory.org