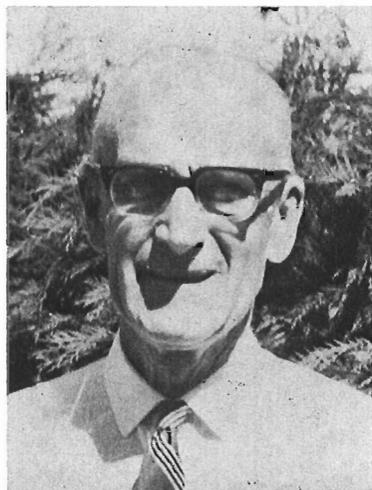


OBITUARY

Vivian Taiaroa Fail

V. T. Fail, a longtime member of our Institute, died at Taupo on 2 November 1978. Born 1898 in Dunedin, as his name indicates, Viv qualified as a licensed surveyor in 1920, and saw service with the Dunedin City Council and the Public Works Department, before joining the Forest Service in 1921. He was the Forest Service's first surveyor, and our acquaintance dates from the day I joined the Service in late 1923.



Naturally, he spent much time in the field; and, also naturally, when he did come to Head Office he was glad to talk to anyone interested in his problems.

At that time he was surveying Hanmer State Forest, whose back boundary runs up to a high and broken ridge. To avoid much impossible chaining, Viv triangulated-in more than was permitted in boundary surveys at the time, and it was necessary to secure a special dispensation from the Surveyor-General before Viv's plan was accepted.

He was original in other ways, too. He had made up to his own design a packsack evenly distributing the weight on his back, while giving greatest freedom of movement in his work.

When, after 1925, many companies were formed to plant open land to exotic pines in the volcanic plateau, Viv left the Forest Service to become forest administrator for an Australian company which had acquired some 12 000 hectares north of Taupo; and this tract became his life work from then until his retirement. Though small beside many of the forestry projects of that time, it came to express the preciseness of his nature, being conspicuous among the forests of the region for the regularity of its planting and the excellence of its internal roading.

A portion of his forest was swept by the 1946 fire and covered by the aftermath of excessively profuse natural regeneration. Many present members of the Institute will recall field trips in the fifties and early sixties at which Viv demonstrated his efforts to deal with this problem by tractor crushing, early thinning and post extraction.

Following his retirement Viv was able to indulge his bent for overseas travel, and made several trips to places not then on regular tourist itineraries. He was a good raconteur, and I cherish several anecdotes of his experiences on these tours.

—F.E.H.

Jack Desmond Rolls

After nearly three years as a patient in Sunnyside Hospital following the Hanmer fire of 22 March 1976, Jack died on 11 January 1979. He was buried in Hanmer Cemetery in the middle of the forest in which he spent almost the whole of his working life. Beginning as a 15-year-old wage worker in 1947, he became a Forest Foreman before the age of 21 and an Assistant Ranger three and a half years later. A little under five years he spent as Officer in Charge, Naseby, before returning to Hanmer in 1967 as Officer in Charge. Thus, more than 24 of his 29 years with the Forest Service were spent in the one forest.



Inevitably Jack developed a deep attachment to and personal relationship with Hanmer Forest. He had the vision to see the tremendous amenity and recreation value of the forest in its intimate relationship with a very popular holiday resort; and the drive and initiative to do something about it. To Jack belongs the lion's share of the credit for the development of the forest walks, the subalpine walk, Conical Hill public lookout, the artificial lake, picnic areas, and the beautification of forest roads and margins.

The traumatic experience of immediate responsibility for dealing with an exotic forest fire driven by a gale-force wind in conditions of high hazard is one that few have to undergo. After his battle of the first day, Jack was physically and mentally exhausted. In the days that followed he was treated mercilessly by insensitive media reporters, and never again recovered his confidence.

Jack has left in Hanmer Forest Park a contribution of which he could be justly proud. The numerous colleagues and townspeople of Hanmer who attended his funeral were testimony to the high regard in which he was held. He was a public servant in the best sense of the term.

—J.W.L.