

# Obituary

## Mr J. T. Currie, OBE.

During 1985, Jim Currie died at the age of 71 years after quite a short illness. Jim was a Full Member of this Institute.

An Australian by birth, he had come to New Zealand in 1945 to a new NZ Forest Products Limited appointment as Wood Technologist. He was to become very well known in the forest products industry in New Zealand, affectionately recognised as "Big Jim" for all the reasons that that title might conjure up. While not an active member of the Institute, he took a great interest in forestry, logging, sawmilling and timber marketing. His contribution that way was substantial.

Jim Currie commenced his work in the industry by joining the Forest Products Division of CSIRO in Melbourne. He was seconded to Australian Military Service during World War II on the timber supply side, particularly on aspects of plywood supply for the war effort. Hence his appointment as a wood technologist in New Zealand.

By the end of 1945, Jim had been posted to Pinedale Sawmill, just outside

Putaruru, in a technical position. His first real introduction to the forest was during the 1946 Taupo fires when he had relief supervisory roles during fire fighting in the company's forests. He was never to forget that experience and always took a great interest in forest fire protection, the Forest and Rural Fires Act and the operations of the Tokoroa Rural Fire District Committee. Jim moved to Tokoroa when the complex at Kinleith was being developed, namely the sawmill in 1950 and the first pulp and paper mills in 1953. The green belt established around the site is partly due to the risks he could see to the mills were another forest fire to be experienced like that of 1946. Jim's drive and energy were recognised by his appointment to Associate Director in 1959, Director of Forest, Logging and Timber Operations in 1961 and Resident Director, Kinleith in 1963. He was to become Joint Deputy Managing Director of NZ Forest Products Limited in 1973, still based at Kinleith, and Joint Managing Director in 1978. He retired in 1979.

Jim Currie took an active part in forest industry affairs. From 1949 to 1973 he was on the Executive of the NZ Sawmillers Federation but never President. During that time he was associated with

such well known names as Fletcher, Carter, Pollard, Mason, Buckett and Perham. He helped form the Council of the Timber Industry, encouraged the formation of the NZ Forest Owners Association and was an early member of the original New Zealand Forestry Council. Jim travelled widely and was well known in many parts of the world.

But Jim's interests and encouragement did not stop at work. As an early resident of Tokoroa, and as a senior member of the company staff, he gave generously of his time to solve the growing pains of the burgeoning town. These were particularly necessary in the areas of housing, camps, education, sporting and cultural facilities. There were never enough of these necessities and Jim used all his imagination to help solve the shortages. Because of his hard work in this area, he became a well known figure to the residents and workers of the Tokoroa-Kinleith district. He will be remembered for a long time. He saw the exotic forest industry in this country grow enormously during his 40 years in New Zealand.

A. W. Grayburn

## NEW INFORMATION

### TWO FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

#### Forestry Handbook. Edited by H. Levack

The N.Z. Institute of Foresters is publishing a second edition of the very popular Forestry Handbook. The first edition was published in 1977 and has been unavailable for several years. Much of the material in the old edition is now dated.

The new edition has been completely revised and covers a wider range of topics in forestry and allied fields. The emphasis is on New Zealand practices. Some 75 people have contributed to the revision.

This handbook may be ordered through the Institute of Foresters (see advertisement).

#### Plantation Forestry with *Pinus radiata* — Review Papers Peter B.

#### Lavery. Paper No. 12, School of Forestry, University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand.

This is a 'guide to the literature' on *Pinus radiata*, the world's most successful exotic species. The papers, which were originally written as part of an M. For.Sci. at the School of Forestry, cover these broad areas:

Papers I: Current status, Prospects and Management strategies

Papers II: Growth Characteristics, Wood Properties and Outturn Relationships.

Papers III: Environment and Growth, Land Classification and Productivity Rating.

The publication, which will be about 250 pages in length, will be available for purchase later this year.

### BOOK REVIEWS

#### Research needs for shelter

Shelter Research Needs In Relation To Primary Production: The Report of the National Shelter Working Party. Edited by J.W. Sturrock. 1984. Water and Soil Miscellaneous Publication No. 59, Ministry of Works and Development, Wellington. \$10. 113p.

This publication results from an inter-departmental working party set up in 1979 to study the research needs for shelter in New Zealand. The working party, chaired by Dr Harvey Smith, had 14 members drawn from the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, Forest Research Institute, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Ministry of Works and Development, Catchment Boards, Lincoln College and N.Z. Farm Forestry Association. The report takes the form of a series of papers.

The report, however, is more than a document on research needs. It contains a valuable review of most facets of shelter. It is, therefore, an excellent summary of our current knowledge on shelter and provides the reader with a clear oversight of the subject. The report concentrates on the need for shelter (did you know for example that over 3.3m ha of New Zealand may suffer from wind erosion), how animals and plants respond to shelter, and the need for shelter in specific situations. The management of shelter for wood production and the dissemination of information on shelter are also covered.

Surprisingly the relation of shelter to landscape values was not discussed, although it may have been considered outside the scope of the Working Party.

These topics are viewed from both an international and a national viewpoint; the number of references is impressive.

It also contains a limited amount of previously unpublished research results. From these reviews the authors have discussed future research needs.

The central theme is that shelter is a very complex topic. Hence past research has often been patchy, much is of limited value and does not necessarily apply to New Zealand conditions. It is clear, for example, that we cannot predict the size of responses possible under the wide variation found in climate, topography and shelterbelt design, nor are we in a good position to translate these into optimum farm management strategies. However, the potential value to the farming and forestry sector economies is great. C. G. R. Chavasse, in his review of timber production, highlighted the potential production from shelterbelts. At the same time he stressed a need for research into assessing volumes and values of

shelter trees, the determination of best shelterbelt structure and the development of shelter for hilly country.

The review also points out that in 1984 there was only a 12-man-year-equivalent research effort into shelter. Considering the potential benefits and comparing this to the research effort into other branches of agriculture and forestry (e.g. 345 man years in hill country investigations), it is apparent that a good case can be made for more manpower.

Indications are that the report has stimulated some extra effort. Furthermore, one of the main recommendations that a coordinating committee for research and extension in shelter be set up has been implemented.

It is good that this report is not gathering dust. The general reader will also find it a useful readable account. At \$10 it is very good value.

D.J.M.

## PRICE INDICES

**Forest Products Price Indices — A Practical Choice.** Lachlan Hunter. 1986. New Zealand Forestry Council Working Paper 7, 10p.

Currently stumpages for state wood are adjusted automatically between stumpage reviews in line with the Consumers Price Index (CPI). There was general agreement in the Working Party on the Sale of State Wood of the 1981 Forestry Conference that the CPI was not an appropriate index for stumpage adjustment because it ensured the seller maintained his purchasing power but provided no such protection to the buyer. The Working Party considered the index particularly inappropriate for an increasingly export orientated industry because of the likely weak association of movements in domestic retail prices and world prices of forest products. Any link between the two is perhaps even more unlikely following the floating of the New Zealand dollar.

This report is the result of the deliberations of a specialist sub-committee of the Forestry Council which was asked by the Forestry Conference to examine the possibility of deriving "market related" indices to replace the CPI. The early sections of the paper point out the shortcomings of the CPI and merits of an index linked to prices of processed forest products. Problems of deciding the correct product weightings for an index and the number of price quotations to be collected for each product type included in an index are discussed.

The second part of the report presents worked examples of two indices: one for

pulpwood and one for sawlogs. The Council plans to publish these indices regularly together with four additional ones for posts and poles, peeler logs, wood-based panels and an All Forest Products Price Index. The Council clearly feels that the two indices most likely to be taken up are those for sawlogs and pulpwood.

Possible changes in price escalation indices should in the writer's view be seen in the broader context of the changing policies on the pricing of state wood. If imposed, these policies will lead to

substantial and rapid increases in stumpages (see A. Kirkland: The Pricing and Allocation of State Wood — A Discussion Paper. Forestry Council Working Paper No. 2 1984) and it therefore seems a particularly apt time to change from the CPI to a more equitable base. The proposed indices show how this could be done. They have much to commend them to grower and user.

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Forest Product Price Indices et al.  
Export Incentives Excluded

