



## Presidential comments

### Diversity within the Institute

At the recent AGM of the Institute it was notable that the quality of debate was enhanced when topics were contentious. A number of observers noted the diversity of views and some expressed the opinion that this could almost be a division within the membership on specific topics. My opinion is that participants were educated by opposite views to their own and a greater awareness and tolerance was generated in this way. It is my intention to ensure that at our next AGM more time is given to debate issues of professional concern so that we can draw from the strength which derives from a diversity of opinions.

One topic of great and continuing interest is sustainability and the vexed question of overcutting. The Labour Party have recently prepared a paper on the environment and forestry issues and I was able to help their spokesmen on Finance and Forestry by use of Graham Whyte's paper from the May 1993 issue of NZ Forestry. It is obvious that continuing work on this topic in both plantation and indigenous forestry is needed, as in many cases people are either uninformed or misinformed on the central issues of forest area, growth and level of utilisation.

This of course will drive arguments on sustainability which, with the new Forests Amendment Act 1993 and the Resource Management Act 1991, is now a much debated topic. Sustainability of resources for use by the community, which include not just soil, water, forest and biodiversity but also people for economic and recreational use, will reintroduce tolerance of the concept of multiple use. This in the 1960-70 period enjoyed an almost hackneyed popularity and suffered, in the 1980-90 era, a reversal of the high level of acceptance which had become accepted in most Western societies.

### Diversity within the Forest Estate

As forests and forest planting become a more widely accepted land use with a broadening ownership base, species other than the highly regarded radiata pine are coming to the fore. The eucalypt planting increase is basically due to interest in short rotation fibre for pulp and paper. Douglas fir is now the subject of more attention, as are the cypresses, and this is being translated into acceptance of these species by

private individuals as a good choice for investment. Once again we have to applaud diversity.

### Forest Valuation Working Party

As more people are involved in investment, the process of valuing the quality of the growth of the forests is of concern to analysts. Our working party on forest valuation has met and commenced work on the format of valuation procedures aiming at guidelines on standards, methods, inputs and quality, the methods of implementation of guidelines and professional education, and providing a basis for compilation of market and cost information together with transaction evidence of forest sales. The results of this effort will be most appreciated by both the profession and by analytical economists and accountants.

### Science Working Party

The science working party have been a valuable adjunct to the provision of a professional view of research activity. It is of interest to note the importance given to this phase of forest activity by the whole



Peter Olsen

forest industry and the support accorded the working party in dealing with MORST and the Foundation for Research Science and Technology.

This support for research has been recently expanded to provision of funds by industry for a further forest fire researcher with specific responsibility for technology transfer. Liam Fogarty joined Grant Pearce at FRI on July 2 and will be involved in extension work with NRFA and the Coordinating Committees at regional level by the coming spring.

**P.F. Olsen**  
President

## 1993 Conference roundup

The 1993 NZIF Conference was held in Napier between May 14 and 16 with the theme "Managing New Zealand's Forests for Future Markets". Over 200 delegates were attracted by two full days of papers plus field trips to local processing sites and forests. Support was no doubt enhanced by the current bullish attitude within the industry and investment sectors. It had also been three years since the Institute had held a stand-alone forestry conference.

John Groome welcomed the delegates in what was for him a nostalgic occasion. John established the Hawkes Bay Branch of the Institute which hosted the 1958 Napier Conference. He wove into his address mention of many key figures in the region's forest industry – Sir Russell Pettigrew, Callum Kirkpatrick, Phil Baker, Hal Nash, Duncan MacIntyre, Sir Richard Harrison, Sandy Hampton and others. With well-founded parochialism John described the favourable growing and location factors of Hawkes Bay forestry. A future constraint could be the supply of

suitable land. A following speaker, Tom Tuhura of the local Ngati Kahungunu, however, noted the potential in the 1.3 million hectares of Maori land in New Zealand.

Forestry industry consultant Dennis Neilson gave the keynote address on wood supply and demand in the Pacific Rim. He touched upon "a number of the important issues facing the Pacific Rim industry which is just showing the first signs of a shift from an adequate to a chronically inadequate regional wood supply environment". A principal issue in the United States is the role of environmental pressure on wood supply and the "flagship" of the environmental movement, the Endangered Species Act. Examining the pedigree of the current US administration suggested that environmental pressures on the supply side would increase rather than diminish.

Sandy Hampton, Carter Holt Harvey Forests' Regional Manager, also welcomed delegates and traced some of the

land-use issues and local body attitudes which had strongly influenced forest development until very recently.

The following four conference sessions dealt with:

- market trends and opportunities
- the physical and social environment
- forest management and research
- investment.

As noted in an accompanying article, a proceedings of the conference, containing all papers and discussion sessions, has been published.

Within the wealth of technical and management information presented and discussed at the conference, a number of issues were identified for attention by the Institute:

**Political interference:** John Groome urged the Institute to back a forest policy which would ensure that the forest will not be devastated by "political misdemeanours in the form of politically inspired land-use laws or iniquitous taxation regimes".

**Physiological Workload, Health and Safety:** Richard Parker of LIRO illustrated the very high physiological workload on many workers in our forests. Mechanisation of some tasks, modification of personal equipment and redesign of the work to include more rest breaks, are possible strategies to reduce high workloads to safer, healthier levels.

Michael Duggan of Tasman Forestry described his company's efforts to find mechanised options of felling and delimbing and succinctly answered the tradeoff between jobs and productivity, by noting that he would "rather attend a redundancy ceremony than a tangi".

**Self Regulation in Resource Management:** Murray Tonks of Works Services Consultancy urged the industry to seek more self-regulation under the RMA: by encouraging regional councils to off-load responsibilities onto the industry itself. On a parallel theme, Andy Ezell of Mississippi pushed the proactive development of best management practices as a way for professional forestry to control its own destiny.

**Professional Watchdog:** Charles Wallis of Forest Investments Ltd urged the NZIF to take a more active role in protecting the integrity of forest investment. He fears that in the current climate unscrupulous promoters could try for exorbitant up-front fees and inflated returns and shake investor

confidence. The Institute needs to more widely promote its professional and self-policing role in maintaining the standards of its members and recognised consultants.

In an innovative and risky approach to conference lunches, delegates were whisked away on buses to local vineyards and on foot to downtown art deco cafes. Fortunately the logistics worked and happy, well-fed audiences were back in place each day for the afternoon programme. Families were not forgotten, with children's programmes to local fun-parks and amusements, and partners' tours of gardens, vineyards and countryside.

The high level of sponsorship from forest owners and suppliers kept registration fees down and provided extras such as environmentally friendly satchels and proceedings.

#### Conference Dinner

The conference dinner on Thursday evening featured presentations of the Mary Sutherland Award to Nicky Booth, the Schlich Memorial Prize to David Paul and the Kirk Horn Flask to Peter Smail. Retired Principal Judge of the Planning Tribunal, Arnold Turner gave a thought-provoking address on the subject "Why Protect Endangered Species?"

The Friday forest field trip visited Waikoau and Mohaka forests to the north of Napier. Waikoau is one of the early examples of private investment in forestry and in its heyday supported two sawmills and a thriving rural community. The visit to Waikoau illustrated the trend toward later thinning and maintaining higher stockings to maximise the value of both the pruned butt log and unpruned

second log.

Mohaka forest was established by the NZ Forest Service during the sixties and seventies on reverted farmland. It contains some of the most productive forest land in the country with site indices over 30 m carrying basal areas up to 80 square metres per hectare. Pruning and heavy early thinning have produced big pruned butts and big branches. In an age 22 stand of genetically improved radiata with 234 stems per hectare and 59 cm DBH the debate over final crop stockings resumed and generally concluded that stockings of over 300 would have produced much higher returns per hectare.

The processing field trip took in the Pan Pac sawmill and pulpmill complex, Carter Holt Buildings Supplies' Waitane remanufacturing site and the Port of Napier.

Altogether a very successful conference which rewarded the efforts of organising committee chairman Barry Keating and his team over 12 months of planning and organisation.

John Galbraith

## CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

Papers and discussion sessions from the Napier conference have been published in a proceedings and sent to all registrants. A limited number of additional copies are available from John Galbraith (Ph. 06-835 6390, Fax 06-835 6239) at \$25 per copy for NZIF members and \$50 for non-members.

## 1994 National Conference & AGM

Nelson April 27th to 29th

The key theme of the conference will be:

**"Sustainable Plantation Forestry"**

The dates are set, venue confirmed and a committee of 13 is now in full swing!

**Keep these dates free**

**Full details in the next journal**