



## Presidential Comments

### Research

The annual round of bidding for Public Good Science (PGFS) funds for research supported by the Foundation for Research Science and Technology (FRST) has again demonstrated the problems associated with this contestable process and the stifling of truly cooperative use of research resources. The desire of each Crown Research Institute (CRI) to succeed and build up capability has to be inevitably at the expense of other CRIs in closely related fields. The research strategy review process has not been able to achieve focus as suggested by the STEPS panel. Researchers scramble for access to funds in Outputs favoured by those reviews completed to date, and avoid disclosing their research ambitions to other providers.

Private sector fund providers are treated in a similar fashion and appear to be targeted in areas likely to suffer funding failure in the PGFS bid process.

It is of interest in this context to record the revival of the Royal Society NZ interest in science education, science excellence and ethical standards, science support and science advice. Our representative of the Agricultural and Forestry Electoral College on the RSNZ has been assisted with comment on the 1994 plan for the Society.

Dr Colin O'Loughlin has been our main contributor to science matters at the national level and many members have involvement via the Forest and Forest Products research organisation (FAFPRO) boards of NZFRI divisions or the cooperatives and collaboratives set up over the past five years. It appears obvious that there needs to be a better and more consistent professional interest in activities of research institutes, universities, research associations, and the research staff in these and other providers. These will need to be given attention by your Council in 1994.

### Professional Education

The review being conducted by the University of Canterbury has been supported by the Forestry Industry Technical and Educational Council (FITEC). The Institute nominated members of the panel to FITEC who will recommend two members for the five-member panel to be set up for the review task. The School of Forestry is to be covered in this review and a sub-committee of Council met with

the Chairman of SOFAC to collate views on the role of the School vis a vis Lincoln and Waikato.

The members' interest in setting up a formal continuous professional development process fits well in the context of our concern for the quality of tertiary education and similarly with the development of sub-tertiary NEQA approved educational capacity. In the New Year our working group will be formulating policy and practical implementation processes to be conveyed to members for their consideration.

### Indigenous Forests

The recent publicity given to the risk of Asian Gypsy Moth entry has been seen by many as another possibly overstated risk to monoculture radiata pine forests. The conservation-minded public would be well advised to consider the impact of both European and Asian Gypsy Moth on hardwood stands. In the eastern Canadian context a study of a well-used public viewpoint of oak stands showed 85% of the view was of dead trees. The public wanted to know why? The Gypsy Moth was the culprit and complacency on control from the original 1869 entry point was the reason.

The exposure of over four million hectares of indigenous forest with *Nothofagus* as a significant component should be properly understood together with the increasing risk of entry, not just from Siberian moth infestations, but also now from Europe and probably Eastern USA (North Carolina) and Canada. The Ministry of Forestry and Government should be anxious to ensure that proper funding for research and containment measures is budgeted. This year a MOF increase in activity was published.



Peter Olsen

What was not publicised was that there were no new funds allocated. Department of Conservation and MOF operational research funds were merely diverted from indigenous and associated current work.

Through the Forest Health Advisory Committee I have pressed for better funding of research which is not given priority by the Foundation for Research Science and Technology as it is regarded as "operational" and thus the concern of Departments. Cabinet assesses the priority for research via the Ministry of Research, Science and Technology (MORST). However forest protection appears to be seen as requiring belated action on mainly possums, and the ability to properly analyse other risks depends on advocacy by MOF and DOC. The members with concern in this area and expertise to assist Colin O'Loughlin should communicate this to both Council and Government either directly or via Dr O'Loughlin.

Peter Olsen  
President

## Obituary – Stan Reid

John Stanley Reid died in Wellington last October 5 at the age of 84 (1908-1993). His wife Jean died some three months previously.

Known by friends and acquaintances alike as Stan, he came from a Hawkes Bay orchardist family. He joined the fledgling State Forest Service in 1926 as a Public Service Cadet. This was only a few years after the Forests Act 1921-22 had been passed. It was also a short time into Mac-

Intosh Ellis' initial structuring of the new Service and his drive to secure trained staff. At the time, Leonard Cockayne, the ecological botanist, was attached to the Service as Honorary Botanist while undertaking his assessment of the all-important native forest situation. Cockayne had also been a member of the 1913 Royal Commission on "Forestry and the Use of Native Forests". Cockayne was to have a strong influence over Stan's university