

Obituaries

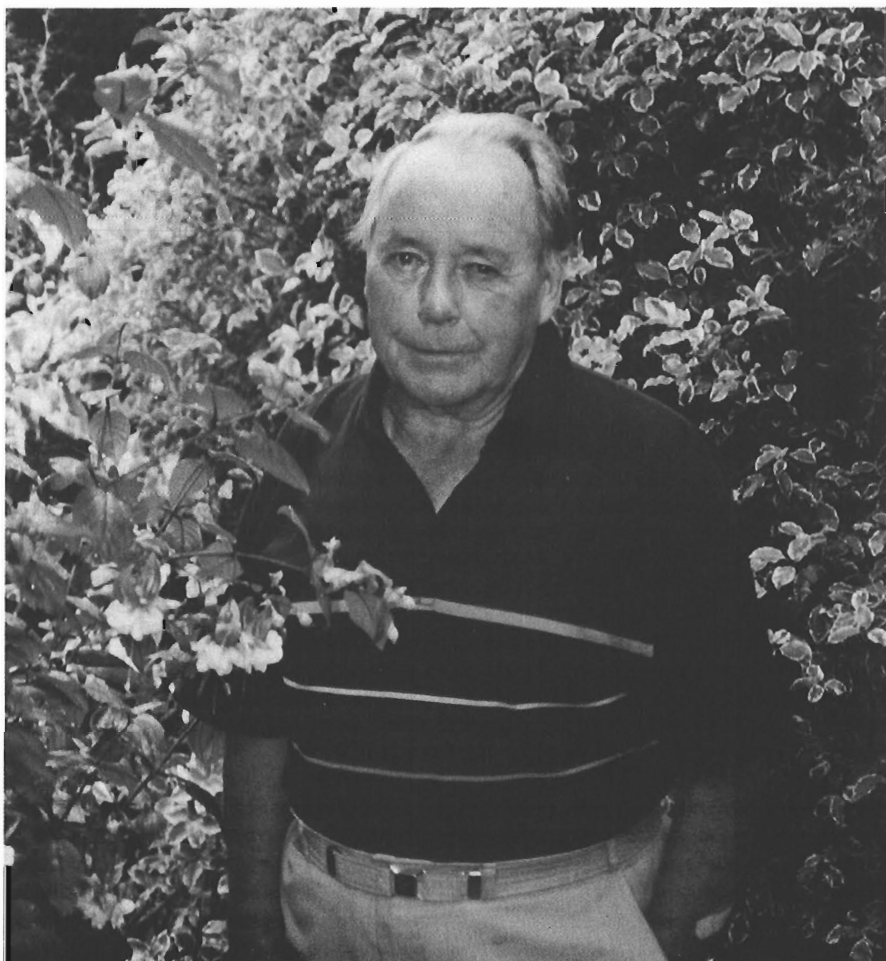
Malcolm James Conway, QSO

Malcolm Conway was born in Hornby in January 1919 and went to Hornby Primary School, where he was Dux. In April 1995 he went down from Nelson to Christchurch to attend the school reunion; he died peacefully the morning the reunion commenced.

Malcolm was originally a schoolteacher and taught in Christchurch primary schools in the early war years. His teaching perhaps led him to one of his well-known habits; in later years he meticulously read and corrected the grammar, punctuation and the spelling of all the outgoing mail he could lay his hands on. It was even rumoured with a certain fond amusement that he was known to correct incoming mail as well. The story is told solely because it was so typical of Malcolm; he was a stickler for order and accuracy and indeed convention. The interesting thing is that this trait in no way lessened his ability and willingness to delegate. He was far too good a front man not to do so.

In 1942 he joined the RAF and was pilot of Catalinas and Sunderlands from Africa and England. One of his crew was Ross Macarthur who, like Malcolm, was to become a well-known New Zealand forester. Ross has commented on the high qualities of captaincy, flying skill and leadership which Malcolm possessed. He and Ross met up by chance again after the war at Oxford University where they both took their forestry degrees. Malcolm had been a mountain climber in Canterbury, climbing with his brother Stan with the Canterbury Mountaineering Club. He climbed again in Switzerland with an old friend but unfortunately disaster struck and his climbing companion was killed. Malcolm was badly injured but survived to lead an active life again.

His early years in the New Zealand Forest Service were spent at Reefton where he worked in the largest area in New Zealand of good-quality, potentially manageable indigenous forest. He took over the sample plots already there and instituted new ones. This period left him with a feeling for and understanding of indigenous forests which were to stand him in good stead in later years. One of his first steps as Director-General was to produce for the 1975 National Forestry Conference a major and rather revolutionary document on native forests. The environmental movement was growing rapidly at this time and Malcolm's paper was a good response to it; it was scarcely his fault that it did not go far enough.



Malcolm Conway in his beloved garden – with a backdrop of native shrubs – in 1991.

He then had two years in charge of Kaingaroa Forest. This was always a big job, both administratively and professionally. At the time Kaingaroa, which had been hastily planted, was untended and rather untidy; Malcolm played a large part in the second rotation management planning of Kaingaroa, bringing the forest forward so that it became not just the largest but also, silviculturally, one of the best exotic forests in the Southern Hemisphere. Working with Peter Olsen, he was faced with a huge problem of curbing the spread of the *Dothistroma* pine needle cast fungus. Aerial spraying was successful in preventing severe damage to young radiata plantations and was carried out on a large scale. It was less effective against Corsican and Ponderosa pines. There were good old stands of these species, which were considered a possible reserve for Tasman. No risks were taken and Malcolm Conway was a party to having them clearfelled.

Malcolm went on to Auckland as

Assistant Conservator and he was involved there in a major joint research and management project on soil deficiencies in the Auckland sand dune forests. He wrote the authoritative article on this for the Commonwealth Forestry Journal.

From Auckland he became Conservator of Forests, Canterbury. Canterbury is a small conservancy with a variety of exotic forests, indigenous forests and land-use problems. As Conservator, Malcolm worked with his usual aplomb and efficiency. Like most Canterbury conservators, he had his ration of windthrow and log salvage crises. The familiarity he developed with high-country issues was invaluable to him in his later post-Director General years.

Malcolm had seven and a half years in Wellington, first as Deputy Director-General and then Director-General. He brought to these jobs the same qualities he had shown throughout his career – hard work, extreme caution and thoroughness and impeccably accurate analysis and

interpretation. He was a good and wholly professional forester. He was also a very kindly man who looked after his staff well.

He had a distinguished career in the NZ Institute of Foresters, being Vice-President in 1967-68 and President in 1969-70.

After his retirement he became Chairman of the Soil Conservation and Rivers Control Council and a member of the Water and Soil Authority, the second retired Director-General to do so. For this and his Forest Service career, he was awarded the Queen's Service Order.

Malcolm had been ill for some years and a few months before he died he contracted motor neurone syndrome; it was in some ways a relief to all that he died peacefully without a long period of crippling illness.

A.P. Thomson

Membership changes 1994-95

Between July 1, 1994 and June 30, 1995 an additional 72 applications from new or returning members were received and approved by Council. There were 13 resignations or deaths. Members' names are listed below. A number of advancements from Associate to Full member status were also received and approved. These may be published at a later date.

Applications

Adam K., Aitken C., Beech J., Birk E., Brown R., Cadman A.L., Cossens G., Dakin A.J., Davies-Colley P., Derks J., Donaldson B., Estcourt M.J., Falloon J., Farman G., Ford C., Garden E.R.H., Gillett P., Greer A.J., Grimmett R., Guild B., Hollinshead P., Hornby J.V., Houston P.A., Howe R., Inglis M., Keenan S., Kennedy C., Kingi W., Kovacic N., Larcombe R., Lissington P., Lovell R., Manson P., McMiken C., Melhopt P., Merriam M., Nash K., Ogle R.M., Pannell M., Parsons R., Pascoe J., Perry B., Pope B., Reid A.D., Riddell N.A., Rogerson A.G., Rolls S., Sands Professor R., Schipper F., Shearman W., Sherratt R., Slui B., Smith T., Souness J., Speirs J.A., Spiers R., Stafford J., Tapley M.J.L., Tapper R., Te Morenga L.A., Temple S., Thum R., Wakelin S.J., Wakelin M., Walker S., Wealiens K., Webster R., Weterings R., Weytmans K., Winthrop L., Woods N.G., Wybourne M.

Resignations

Clemett N.L., Cowan M.A., Depta D.J., Duff G.C., Eder N., Jacks Dr H., Lewis J.T., McKeesick H.A., Moore T., Nicholls M.C.P., Poole D.J., Smith M.F., Ure J.

Gowan (Pat) Duff

Pat Duff was born in Edievale, South West Otago, in 1910. He died at Rotorua in November 1993. Pat completed a forestry degree in the early 1930s, the deepest years of the Great Depression.

Initially, he assisted his father with a short-lived country newspaper but by the time of the outbreak of war in 1939 he was employed by the Forest Service.

Joining the armed services, he was fated to be captured in the disastrous Greek campaign. Sergeant Duff and a like-minded companion refused to surrender with a large group who were under orders to do so. They slipped away, holding on to their arms in further defiance of instruction. Sadly, they were captured within days, trying to arrange an escape boat.

A long and filthy train journey later Pat commenced four years as a prisoner of war in Germany.

Repatriated in the closing year of the war, he soon renewed his forestry career and in late 1945 was assigned, at Rotorua, to Priestley Thomson. Priestley was then in the field preparation stages of planning the first comprehensive survey of indigenous forests. Headquarters for this enterprise was the fledgling Forestry Training Centre at Whakarewarewa. The centre was a short time later to be the nucleus of the Forest Experiment Station, forerunner

of the present Forest Research Institute.

The first field work for the National Forest Survey was carried out by Forester Duff and Ranger Bob Lawn on the Mamaku plateau. They were pioneers of a project which spanned ten years and became something of a legendary exercise in forestry circles and beyond.

Pat Duff's association with the survey was soon to go from the early field work into the core of the wider scientific endeavour and community which formed the young Forest Research Institute. The necessity to refine volume tables for native tree species and provide statistical work for presentation of the large volume of raw data beginning to be generated by field staff of the survey led Priestley Thomson to initiate a mensuration section. He appointed Pat to lead it.

This move set the course for the following 28 years of Pat's working career. As a senior Scientific Officer he provided lengthy guidance of dedicated people who laid solid foundations for the present era of computer-based forest mensuration.

Pat was a great conversationalist. His interests were wide; his general knowledge and measured opinions commanded respect. Foremost among his outdoor pursuits was deer-stalking. Here he reflected

(Continued on page 44)

Institute AGM and Conference 1996

The 1996 Conference will be hosted by the Otago/Southland Section and will be held in Invercargill.

Dates: Monday 29th April to Wednesday 1st May, 1996
Venue: Ascot Park Hotel/Motel, Conference Centre
Theme: Alternative Approaches to Forestry
e.g. Species, Management, Decision Making, Multi-use

Planning for the conference is well "on track" with a number of sub-committees appointed and working well.

It is hoped to make this conference an exciting one with a difference. The theme chosen allows scope to address subjects which it is hoped will encourage some lively discussions.

Please make a note of these dates and endeavour to be there to not only attend an enjoyable conference, but to partake of some real "Southern Hospitality".

After the conference stay awhile and visit some of our scenic attractions such as Stewart Island, Te Anau, or how about Queenstown, and flying home from there?

Bye for now, and more news in later issues. But remember – *Invercargill for '96*.

P.F. Parker
J.A. Smith
Joint Section Secretaries