

chip from Southland, through the Port of Bluff. To ensure continuity of supply in 1985 they initiated a eucalypt-planting programme that would ultimately replace their traditional indigenous source of hardwoods. The Lilburn block is around 400 hectares and is part of a 5800 hectare eucalypt estate that SWEL manage in Southland. The eucalypts are being grown for chipwood on a 15-year rotation with anticipated recoverable yields of around 300 tonnes per hectare.

The Douglas-fir resource in Southland is around 15,000 hectares, constituting 18 per cent of New Zealand's total resource, and it's growing. Recent large-scale expansion in Otago and Southland is being led by Ernslaw One. They are continuing to plant significant areas of Douglas-fir in the region, on the basis that they believe the strategic long-term outlook for the species is bright, there is a suitable local land bank and that local growth rates are amongst the best in the country.

Phil Taylor and John Edmonds



Thirty-eight-year-old thinned and pruned silver beech, Comp 6 Rowallan Forest. Photo: I. Platt

Obituaries

Geoff Chavasse (1920-1995)

It is difficult to put into few words the many facets of the man we knew as a forester and scientist. Members of the Institute saw him in his most effective role as communicator and leader. He was, to quote Colin Bassett, a prodigious writer as his personal output of scientific papers demonstrated. His commitment to the Institute from 1951 was marked by five years (1970-74) as Journal Editor, Councillor and as President (1978-80).

As part of his published output he was responsible for the first eight of the series of "Forestry Identities" articles. He himself featured in the Personal Profile of November 1994 in the Journal and thus many details of his early background have been recently published.

Geoff was born in Oxford England in 1920, the son of a parson, and his early education instilled respect for the Church which he adorned in his later years with distinction.

Army service (1940-46) in India, Bengal, Karachi and the Maldives interrupted an Oxford degree which was completed in 1949. After a short period of "practical" work on forests and at Alice Holt Lodge Research Station for the British Forestry Commission he came to New Zealand in 1950. His start at Otatau, Southland, gave him an insight into indigenous forest management, both there and in Westland,



Geoff Chavasse

to where he was posted after a spell at Head Office. Allied with the experience of a brief period on National Forest Survey and an association with Jack Holloway in 1958, he made major recommendations on indigenous selection management and silviculture, and raised the alarm on possum damage to Rata-Kamahi vegetation associations some years before this risk to forest health was properly realised.

After a period (1962-68) as Principal Forester, Southland, he moved to FRI and

became a scientist on forest establishment, publishing some 68 papers on establishment, shelter, frost and fertiliser in addition to his papers on indigenous forest and poplars.

While in Southland he was instrumental in establishing the Northern Southland Branch of the Farm Forestry Association, and remained an active member of the Association until his death.

He travelled and reported on study tours to Europe, USA, Canada, Japan and Australia and had a major role in symposia organised by FRI as effective technology transfers in the period up to his retirement in 1981. His involvement with that precursor to the research cooperatives, the Silvicultural Equipment Development Committee, showed the practical man's approach to the implementation of research results.

His post-retirement years were busy, as both a consultant and a teacher. He obviously enjoyed a stint in China in 1984. John Johns and he collaborated on three quality books on forestry and he edited the first NZ Institute of Forestry Handbook.

Geoff showed all the maturity and depth of comprehension on philosophical and technical issues that an Oxford education in history and forestry instilled in him. His fluency with written prose, ability to freshly portray issues that might

have seemed hackneyed from another pen, endeared him to the farmer, nurseryman, farm-forester and forest professionals alike.

The problems besetting the Institute during his period as President called for a robust but urbane and civilised statement of the profession's belief that, as "conservationists in the strict sense", to quote his presidential address of 1979, foresters ought to be heard throughout the land on issues of land use. This was particularly necessary during an era when farming interests were stridently against forest establishment. He returned to this issue in 1980 and also to that of the environmentalists "proclaiming their new-found gospel from the housetops with such enthusiasm that the media and politicians have been conned".

It is of note that for both these concerns and for indigenous forest management he was able to illustrate the worth of his views in practice.

He was honoured in 1984 with an OBE. In 1994, a week after the NZ Farm Forestry Association publicly praised his services to farm forestry, he was awarded the most senior science award in New Zealand, the Kirk Horn Flask, at the Institute's AGM in Nelson.

His later years were dominated by his non-stipendiary involvement with St Luke's Anglican Church in Rotorua. After being ordained as a priest in 1978 he preached, as well as maintaining his interest in choir singing.

At the service for his internment, the forestry mourners were far outnumbered by his congregation who assembled for a final farewell to their popular priest. It must have given considerable comfort to Shirley and the family to see the depth of community sense of loss on that day, and the membership of the Institute joins in extending our condolences.

P.F. Olsen

Stephen Mark O'Dea

Stephen (Steve) O'Dea died as a result of an accident at Cave Creek near Punakaiki, in the Paparoa National Park, on April 28, 1995.

Steve worked for the Forest Research Institute during 1987 and 1988 where he was a liked and respected member of the Harvest Planning group.

Prior to working at FRI Steve had completed his Bachelor of Forest Science degree at the University of Canterbury, and had worked for the New Zealand Forest Service on Stewart Island and the West Coast. He was a former member of the New Zealand Institute of Forestry.

In late 1988, Steve joined the Depart-

John Wendelken (1923-1995)

John, or as he was also known to colleagues, Wendy or Wendeljohn, was as committed to the outdoors in his professional life as he was in his family life. Indeed, it no doubt seemed to his family over the years that the two were difficult to distinguish, for he was a man of enthusiasm, boundless energy and commitment to whatever he undertook, which led to frequent absence in the field, or to additional hours in the office.

We do not know what led John into forestry, but we surmise that it may have been a link with Jack Holloway through the Otago Ski Club or the Alpine Club prior to the war; whatever it was, John took a science degree at Otago during 1948-50, and spent summer vacations with the Forest Service on National Forest Survey in Western Southland.

Notes prepared for delivery by J. S. Holloway at W. J. Wendelken's funeral service, August 7, 1995.

After graduation, John and Peggy-Ann spent the following year at Kings Camp in the depths of Golden Downs forest, a place now thought to be so unacceptable as to have had all traces removed; but of such experiences were the character of men and women of his generation built.

John returned to Britain in 1952 with Peggy-Ann to take a forestry degree at Edinburgh. He did extremely well and carried off several prizes.

On return to New Zealand in 1954 he was posted to Eyrewell, where as a small boy I have my first recollections of him, playing with the children in the dammed-up water race under a hot Canterbury sun and driving a Mark I Zephyr, at that time the epitome of modern automobiles. John threw himself into plantation forestry with the gusto that was to characterise his career, and later published a paper in the NZ Journal of Forestry on the challenges of managing a plantation forest in that dry and windy environment.

ment of Conservation as a Conservation Officer in Fox Glacier, where he eventually reached the position of Field Centre Manager. In March 1995 he transferred to Punakaiki to take up a position as Field Centre Manager.

Steve was loved and respected by many, and his death is a shock to all who knew him. He is survived by his parents, brother, and his eight-year-old-son, Sam.

Philip Wilcox

But his first love was the hills, and he soon joined Jack Holloway, and with Mike Wraight, John Morris and Peter Wardle, as a founding member of the Forest and Range Experiment Station, or FRES, with which he was to stay for seven years. John participated fully in the annual catchment condition and trend surveys: the Harper Avoca, the Waimakariri, and the Hokitika – and doubtless more, contributing to the development of an understanding of the ecology of mountainlands and of their management, when this was a field at the leading edge of applied science.

John was always an enthusiast for trees and was convinced that the future of the high country lay in their widespread use. He personally established and tended trials of different species on many sites – while this is not today universally regarded favourably, lessons were learnt and experience gained. That this was clear to John's heart is obvious from what was probably his last major piece of writing – a submission to the Commissioner of Crown Lands on the Review of the Land Act, in which John argued strenuously that whatever form the future administration of these lands took, it had to recognise the desirability and inevitability of increased forest cover.

From 1963 to 1975 John was Principal Forester, and later Assistant Director of Forest Management Division, in Head Office, and here he probably did his best work. Initially in charge of management planning, sample plots, yield tables and the arcane forestry technology which is fundamental to sustainable harvest, John assumed responsibility for silviculture, planning nurseries, organising seed supply and overseeing tending policy. During this period he finally terminated the practice of poison thinning. It was a time of tremendous change and expansion in plantation forestry. John played an important role in the 1969 Forestry Development Conference – again not a politically correct concept for 1995, but one which led to a massive increase in investment in plantation forestry, which placed enormous demands on the few head office policy and coordination staff, and which is now bearing considerable fruit.

Through all this John is remembered for his pleasant and cheerful manner; his wit; and his unfailing support for and encouragement of junior staff, who remember his willingness when travelling to spend the time required to communicate to field staff his commitment and vision.

About 1975 John sought new pastures, and joined Ian Baumgart, who had taken