

Creative dissertation wins new prize

Bruce Gerdes has won the inaugural \$700 prize for the most creative final-year research Dissertation. The topic of the Dissertation was "Mountain Beech Seedling Distribution in Pit and Mound Microtopography in the Craieburn Range". Bruce, who graduated this year, received the prize just before heading to Sabah on a 12-month work contract. Congratulations Bruce!



Bruce Gerdes receiving his prize from Dean Ron O'Reilly

Dr. Robert Douglas has been a busy lad. He recently presented a keynote address about central tyre inflation on logging trucks to the Rotorua Conference on Low Volume Roads and followed that up with a presentation on Low Volume Roads and Their Place in the Road Infrastructure.

He also spoke in Melbourne to the Australian Road Research Board Conference on the topic of Road Contact - Normal and Shear Stresses Under Tyres with Low Inflation Pressure!

As a reward, Rob will be helping to organise the next L.V.R. Workshop to be held in Christchurch in 2002.

Following on from the interest in the recent workshop, forest roads and trucking will be key items in the 2002 workshop.

He has also been given the task of setting up an abstracts database for low volume roads literature, to be accessible by all practitioners in New Zealand.

The number of Postdoctoral Fellows in the School has swelled to 5 with the arrival of Dr. Matthew Wood who has joined the Staff.

Matt, who completed his Ph.D. (The Effect of Forest Harvesting Machinery on Soil Physical Properties) at the University of Lancaster and Southampton earlier this year, will be carrying out research on generic indicators of the effect of changes in soil structure on long-term site productivity, and developing indices of soil susceptibility to structural change during mechanised forest harvesting operations.

Welcome to the School, Matt!

Sarawak field tour

Hugh Bigsby has taken a group of final year students to Sarawak for a field tour in April. The tour is at the invitation of the Sarawak Timber Association, and provides an opportunity for students to visit and experience the forest industry in Asia. This type of experience will be important given New Zealand's growing dependence on Asian markets.



Hugh, centre left, with group at seminar in Sarawak

Led by Don Mead, a group of Chilean researchers from INFOR in Concepcion recently visited the University as part of a visit to New Zealand to look at how the Chilean government can encourage private land owners into plantation forestry, and transfer forestry skills to these landowners.

In conjunction with Nelson Polytechnic, Lincoln University students will again be offered the opportunity to undertake Unit Standards necessary for the General Requirements. The aim is for students to augment their university studies with practical skills and give them access to employment in forestry operations as part of their work experience. Instruction is provided by Christchurch-based trainers.

WAIARIKI INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Diploma in Wood Processing Technology

After many years of wide consultation with industry, enrolments are now being taken for Forest Industries Training's new National Diploma in Wood Processing Technology. The programme is the first of its kind to be offered in Australasia, and initially will be geared to people already working in the wood processing industry, looking to further their qualifications. Piet Otto, who heads the new diploma team, says a lot of people in the wood processing industry have been trained to operating Level 4, but the new Level 5 Diploma will help them develop and attain supervisory and higher skills and positions. The topics covered in the two year Diploma include solid wood processing, wood panels manufacturing, pulp and paper manufacturing, wood properties affecting processing, operations management, legal and financial units, computer control, change management and optimising production. Piet Otto joined Waiariki's teaching team at TITC, south of Rotorua, from the Faculty of Forestry at the Port Elizabeth Technikon in South Africa.