

Photo 2: Teak planted in 1967, now about 35 - 40 metres tall. Tree form is superb, a result of periodic thinning since establishment.



continue to be measured in Hoppus Foot (or Hoppus ton), tree sizes in inches quarter-girth, areas in acres, long distances in miles and two roadside notices I saw pointed out that it was 4 furlongs to a waterfall and 2½ furlongs to a small nursery!

Despite the increasing misery and anxiety experienced by most Myanmar people that I met because of the difficult

social and economic conditions prevailing in their beleaguered country, I was impressed by the resilience and determination of the Myanmar foresters to uphold a proud tradition of professional forestry. They know that they have an outstanding comparative advantage for the sustainable production of one of the most prized and easily marketed timbers in the world and they are determined to continue to try to do so, notwithstanding severe trade hardships suffered by their country, caused by the international sanctions against it.

I wondered as I was leaving Yangon what it will take to see thoughtfully planned management of some of our New Zealand forests re-introduced? Perhaps the day may come when we as a country will decide that we can't afford not to attempt, once again, to sustainably manage some of our broadleaved forests, especially beech, for the production of high quality and highly priced wood. We know that we have the knowledge and ability to do so, just as Myanmar foresters know how to grow their teak. I wonder what Dr. Brandis would think of the prospects of carefully considered, long-term management of New Zealand beech forests? If he were alive today I'm sure he would be positive and would see it as a great professional challenge – perhaps just as he did when he arrived as a young forester in Pyay in central Burma to manage teak about 150 years ago.

Isolated woodlot on Farewell Spit

Colin O'Loughlin

In late December 2004 I joined a guided tour of the Farewell Spit. This fascinating area, famous for its history of shipwrecks and providing summer habitat for migratory birds such as bar-tailed godwits, knots and turnstones, also provides an interesting example of early tree plantings. Near the eastern extremity of the Spit at Bush End Point there is an historic lighthouse originally built in 1897. One of the early lighthouse keepers, a James Harwood, decided in the late 1890s, to establish a plantation of trees at Bush End Point to help make the lighthouse site more tolerable and to provide an improved visual horizon for ship navigators who had difficulty distinguishing the low sand dunes of the spit during poor weather conditions.

Although the historical records are rather conjectural about the timing of the plantings, it appears that, after some unsuccessful attempts to establish radiata pine seedlings, Harwood imported soil from near Collingwood and finally managed to establish a small woodlot of radiata pine and macrocarpa between 1889 and 1892.

Considering the windy climate and the raw sandy site the trees grew remarkably well. Today there are a few hectares of rather large healthy macrocarpa and radiata pine trees still standing. The average height of the radiata pine appears to be about 30 metres and some of the lower trunks are more than 100 cm in diameter. The foliage appears to be healthy and shows no indication of nutrient deficiencies.

Photo of part of the woodlot from the lighthouse tower.



There are also Tasmanian blue gums and *Banksia ericifolia* growing in the area.

Of the original plantings it appears that only one radiata pine and five macrocarpas remain. The bulk of the existing trees are descendants of the original plantings or result from later plantings, mainly in the 1940s. I understand that the Department of Conservation, which manages the Spit as a nature reserve and bird sanctuary, has plans to eventually replace the exotic trees with native trees and shrubs. To my knowledge, this small woodlot is the most isolated exotic tree woodlot in the country.