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AUSTRALIAN

# Forest History

SOCIETY Inc.

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**Newsletter No. 41**  
**August 2005**

*'... to advance historical understanding of human interactions with  
Australian forest and woodland environments.'*



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## SOCIETY BUSINESS

### Subscription Reminder

Membership subscriptions to the Australian Forest History Society were due at the end of June. We thank those who have renewed, and look forward to hearing soon from those who have not. Further details are on page 4.

### A Challenge for Creative Thinkers

As part of the standardisation of the AFHS Newsletter explained in the last edition (no. 40, May 2005), 'letters to the editor' and 'news of members' (among others) will become regular features. Accordingly, it is proposed that they should have names. 'Leaf litter' has been suggested for member-related activities; 'Sawdust' and 'Spitting Chips' for the letters section. Please send us *your* ideas.

Even more significantly, it is proposed to give a name to the newsletter. Creative contributions will be gratefully received. The name should, of course, reflect the purposes of the newsletter and the nature of our Society. 'The Forest Log' has been suggested, but perhaps this places too much emphasis on the history of the timber industry at the expense of other aspects of forest history. What do you think?

### Next AFHS Conference to be held in New Zealand

An industrious organising committee have already chosen a time and place for the next AFHS Conference. It will be held in New Zealand during the week 29 January to 2 February 2007. The venue is to be the University of Canterbury at Christchurch. More specific dates and further details of the venue will be provided in the next newsletter, but the foregoing will at least help members to plan for their attendance.

### Newsletter Project

Those of you who are familiar with the Society's website (if you are not, please have a look at it; the address is on the front page of this newsletter) will know that newsletters from no. 34 in 2002 are available as downloadable pdf files. Earlier editions exist only as hard copies, and are much more difficult to obtain; indeed, the earliest numbers are rare. In order to make the entire series easily accessible, the Society has embarked upon a newsletter scanning project with the aim of making all of them available through the website. It is intended also to compile an index to the series; this too will be accessible from the website. Sue Feary has generously volunteered to oversee this scanning and indexing process. The result, it is hoped, will

provide not only a useful resource for researchers in the field of forest history, but a valuable record of the history of this Society itself.

### IUFRO 'News of Forest History'

At the invitation of the Forest History Research Group of IUFRO (the International Union of Forest Research Organizations), the Australian Forest History Society undertook to prepare an Australian issue of *News of Forest History*, the Research Group's publication. Six papers were prepared: Historical biogeography of Australian forests (Alison Specht and Raymond L. Specht), Indigenous Australians and forests (Sue Feary), Milling Australia's forests (Peter S. Evans), Forestry (John Dargavel), National parks and forest conservation (Brett Stubbs), and Australian forest history (Kevin Frawley). The 50-page volume has been printed in Vienna (the headquarters of the IUFRO forest history group), and distributed to the group's 300 members in time for those coming to the IUFRO Congress in Brisbane. The publication will provide Congress delegates, especially, with a concise and informative introduction to the history of Australia's forests.

### New AFHS Occasional Publication

The papers written for *News of Forest History* (see above) provide a resource with value beyond the IUFRO Brisbane Congress. It was therefore decided, with the approval of the IUFRO Forest History Research Group, to re-publish them as the first edition of a new AFHS occasional series of publications under the series title *Australia and New Zealand Forest Histories*. The inaugural publication, edited by John Dargavel, accompanies this edition of the newsletter; it is the reason why the newsletter is a brief four pages and not the regular eight or twelve pages. Further publications in the occasional series will appear from time to time as a need or opportunity arises.

### Call for Contributions to the Next Newsletter

The next edition of the Australian Forest History Society's newsletter will be published in December 2005. Please forward your contributions to the series editor, Sue Feary (email address on page 1), by the 18th of November.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Department of Forestry, University of Adelaide— A history to be investigated

My query in *Newsletter* no. 37 (May 2004) about E. O. Teale (who wrote 'Soil survey and forest physiography of Kuitpo, South Australia', *Bulletin*



no. 6, Department of Forestry, University of Adelaide, 1918) led me to make a preliminary investigation into the history of the Forestry Department in the University of Adelaide.

The Forestry Department, which was established in 1911, was a progenitor of the Australian Forestry School at Canberra. In fact, the Australian Forestry School began its life at the University of Adelaide in 1926 and operated there briefly until the new buildings in Canberra were completed in 1927.

I have found that the archives of the University of Adelaide include files from 1911 concerning the establishment and operation of its Forestry Department. These would provide the basis of a challenging research project for a member of the Australian Forest History Society. The politics of the negotiations which led to the University of Adelaide agreeing to give up its own school and support the new institution in Canberra should be especially interesting. Anyone wishing to tackle this research should contact Helen Bruce, the Reference Archivist at the University of Adelaide ([helen.bruce@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:helen.bruce@adelaide.edu.au)).

Ray Specht

*Emeritus Professor Ray Specht was educated at the University of Adelaide (Ph.D. 1953) and taught there for several years. He later became Reader in Plant Ecology at the University of Melbourne (1961-1965), then Professor of Botany at the University of Queensland (1966-1989), and was a member of the Advisory Committee on Forestry Education at the Australian National University, 1970-1985. Ed.*

### Upper Yarra forests history

I am a member of a small team that is working to collect oral history of forestry of the Upper Yarra. This was the product of the 'Community Forests Program' initiated by the Department of Sustainability and Environment and implemented through our local Shire, Yarra Ranges (which is based at Lilydale, about 40km east of Melbourne).

We would be very interested to learn of the work of the Forest History Society in regard to our region to fill out our own knowledge and work program. Essentially we are interviewing people with direct knowledge of the Upper Yarra forests and the communities that lived here, as far back as we can go. We are particularly seeking to engage with young people in this process, through the local schools. We want to help school students to learn about the life and times of people who were closely involved in our region's most important and controversial industry.

John Ridley

*Do any members possess information that would assist this project? To help, or to find out more, contact John Ridley by phone (work 03 9654 3522, home 03 5966 5396, mobile 0417 307281) or email ([john.ridley@cliftongroup.com.au](mailto:john.ridley@cliftongroup.com.au)). Ed.*

### NEWS OF MEMBERS

Since completion of the Community-Based Heritage Study of Copmanhurst Shire in 2004 (see Newsletter no. 34, December 2002), **Brett Stubbs** has been working as project historian on three further such studies in north-eastern New South Wales. These are for Byron Shire (based at Mullumbimby), Richmond Valley Shire (based at Casino), and the former City of Grafton (now part of the new Clarence Valley Shire). Forest history is an important theme in the history of all three areas.

### FOREST HISTORY BOOKS IN LIBRARIES

At our last AGM in Augusta, Kim Wells and Andrew Wilson kindly took on the task of seeing if the library holdings of our forest history books could be increased. They checked the existing holdings in the national Kinetica catalogue and saw that there were many apparent gaps. The Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies at the Australian National University kindly agreed to mail free copies to any major public libraries who requested them.

The books concerned are the proceedings of our conferences: Australia's Ever-changing Forests, volumes II, III, IV and V, and Perfumed Pineries, all published by CRES in association with the AFHS.

Kim and Andrew prepared sticky address labels for all the relevant libraries and Nikki Hughes in CRES mailed out letters to them all asking if they would like to add to their holdings. Thirteen libraries replied with requests for 35 volumes which Nicki kindly despatched to:

Charles Sturt University, Albury-Wodonga  
Flinders University, South Australia  
Forests NSW  
James Cook University, Townsville  
La Trobe University, Victoria  
National Library of Australia  
New Zealand Forest Research Institute  
Parliamentary Library, Canberra  
State Library, Queensland  
University of Auckland  
University of Canterbury  
University of Otago

Our sincere thanks go to CRES, Nikki, Kim and Andrew for making our studies on the history of Australian forests available more widely.



## FOREST HISTORY IN BYRON SHIRE, NSW

Byron Shire in north-eastern New South Wales includes the towns of Mullumbimby, Byron Bay, Brunswick Heads, and Bangalow. The Shire's forests and associated industries and activities are an important theme in a Community-based Heritage Study currently nearing completion (see News of Members).

In the middle of the 1940s there were about 22 sawmills licensed to operate in Byron Shire, evidence of the economic importance of timber in the district. One of the most enduring of these was the Hollingworth mill in Mullumbimby. The log-yard at this mill is shown in the cover photograph (1940s?); Mullumbimby landmark Mount Chincogan is in the background. Hollingworth's, est. 1902, was the first sawmill in Mullumbimby, and the family ran it until 1963 when it was closed.

A second Hollingworth mill was established in 1921 at nearby Goonengerry where the timber rights had been acquired over a 1200 acre private property. In the 1940s this property was purchased by the Banana Growers' Federation as a source of timber for the locally important purpose of manufacturing packing cases for bananas. It became known as Tom Rummery Forest after the forester whom the BGF employed to supervise reforestation there. By 1941, about 1 million cases of bananas were produced annually in New South Wales, of which 60% came from adjoining Byron and Tweed Shires.

In 1985 Tom Rummery Forest became Goonengerry State Forest no.1044, after the Forestry Commission purchased the property from the BGF. It joined three much older State Forests in Byron Shire: Whian Whian East (dedicated 1913), Whian Whian (1914), and Nullum (1917). Its life as a State Forest was brief. Since the mid-1990s, ALL of the State Forest land in Byron Shire has been progressively transferred into the control of the National Parks and Wildlife Service. As part of this process, in 1999, after around 80 years of timber harvesting and reforestation on the property, Goonengerry State Forest became Goonengerry National Park.

## AFHS PUBLICATIONS AVAILABLE FROM CRES

*Australia's ever-changing forests II* 1993, Dargavel, J. and S. Feary (eds), pb 300pp, \$25.00.

*Australia's Ever-changing Forests III* 1997, Dargavel, J. (ed), pb 400pp \$30.00.

*Australia's Ever-changing Forests IV* 1999, Dargavel, J. and B. Libbis (eds), pb 388pp

*Australia's Ever-changing Forests V* 2002 Dargavel, J., D. Gaughwin and B. Libbis (eds), pb 422pp \$30.00.

*Perfumed Pineries: Environmental history of Australia's Callitris forests* 2001, Dargavel, J., D. Hart and B. Libbis (eds) pb 209pp \$30.00

Order forms available from:

<http://cres.anu.edu.au/publications/orderform-pubs.php>

## 2004 AFHS CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

*A Forest Conscienceness: Proceedings of the 6<sup>th</sup> National Conference of the Australian Forest History Society* 2005, edited by Mike Calver et al, hardbound abstract book, CD-Rom with full papers included, Millpress.

Available from Millpress Science Publishers,  
<http://www.millpress.com/> price: €105

**Membership of the Australian Forest History Society (AFHS) Inc** is \$25 a year, or \$15 a year for students. For overseas addressees, it is \$30 (**in Australian currency please**). These prices do not include GST as the AFHS is not registered for paying or claiming GST. Membership expires on 30th June each year.

Payment can be made by cheque or money order, or through Electronic Funds Transfer.

Cheques or Money Orders should be made payable to the AFHS and sent to:

Australian Forest History Society Inc.  
 PO Box 5128  
 Kingston ACT 2604

Electronic Funds Transfer can be paid into:

Commonwealth Savings Bank  
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