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



Some foresters from Myanmar who studied in Australia, left to right: U Shwe Thein, U Myint Swe, U Aung Kyin, U Than Myint and U Khin Maung Lwin. Photo taken 1999, loaned by Ms Paula Reid OAM.

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VALE - MORAY DOUGLAS

We are sorry to learn of the sudden passing of Moray Douglas in early August following a short illness. Moray became a member of the Society in the 1990s when retirement gave him the time to undertake a history of East Gippsland's forests. It was the region he knew intimately during his years working for the Victorian Forests Commission. His thesis on the silviculture and management of the Alpine Ash forests was important in the development of practices to manage them, and gave him particular insights into these areas. Members will know his work best from his papers to our 1997 and 1999 Conferences. He is survived by his wife Rosemary and their four children. An Obituary by Rob Youl is included on p12.

GRANTS FOR ARBORETA

The Forest and Wood Products Research and Development Corporation (now Forest and Wood Products Australia) has recently approved funding for Friends of ACT Arboreta (FACTA) to help John Doran and others at the CSIRO/Ensis office in Yarralumla summarise results of the arboreta program in the ACT which ran from 1928. Most arboreta were destroyed by bushfires in January 2003.

Recent collaboration between FACTA and the ACT Division of the Australian Garden History Society (AGHS) is leading towards better documentation and interpretation of important historical tree sites in the ACT. Flowing from funding for the new Canberra International Arboretum and Gardens, small grants have been made available recently for two projects on Yarralumla Peninsula: (i) to document the condition of plants; and (ii) to prepare a self-guided walk for an area known as The English Garden adjacent to the government nursery, which has been planted by staff of the nursery over many decades. This walk will be integrated with the regular guided walks organised by FACTA. Max Bourke (AFHS and AGHS) is co-ordinating the work on the ground. It is hoped that eventually there will be a ferry link between the Yarralumla tree and garden sites, which include Westbourne Woods, and the Lindsay Pryor Arboretum and International Arboretum and Gardens on the other side of Lake Burley Griffin.

HISTORY OF COONABARABRAN SHIRE

A Thematic History of the Former Coonabarabran Shire has recently been published by the Warrumbungle Shire Council. It includes sections on "Environment - Cultural Landscape" (s3.4) and "Forestry" (s3.8). There are also many references to the railways for those AFHS members interested in such things. For more info, see www.higround.com.au/docs/THCoona.pdf.

TRACKING DOWN MCINTOSH ELLIS

From Mike Roche

Canadian born and University of Toronto trained forester Leon McIntosh Ellis was the first Director of Forests in New Zealand from 1920-1928. He is regarded as the architect of the state afforestation program of the 1920s. Dissatisfied with his salary, he left abruptly for Australia in 1928 where he was employed as a forestry consultant and rounded off his career as Wood Procurement Officer with Australian Paper Manufacturers until his comparatively early death in 1942 aged 54.

Ellis actually spent more of his working career in Australia than in New Zealand albeit that he moved from a high profile position as Director of Forests to more minor roles. His application for the NSW Commissioner of Forests position in 1935 was unsuccessful.

In Sydney Ellis was employed as Director of Technical Operations by Amalgamated Forests (Australia) Ltd and was also a director of the company headquartered in Bond Street. Concurrently he was undertaking consultancy work on his own account. He regarded Australia, and Queensland in particular, as having great possibilities and became involved in a number of entrepreneurial schemes such as tung oil plantations and tobacco growing.

I would be interested in any leads and suggestions regarding information about:

* Amalgamated Forests (Australia) Ltd; and

* Queensland Forests Ltd 60 acre tung tree plantation by the Johnstone River near Innisfail.

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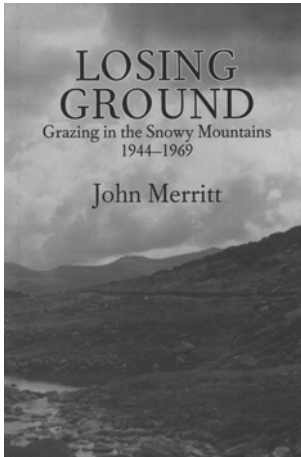
ENVIRONMENT AND NATURE IN NEW ZEALAND

Environment and Nature in New Zealand is a new newsletter which aims to link all of those interested in New Zealand's environment by providing a forum in which to share ideas and information. The newsletter publishes articles, book reviews, and includes conference announcements and discussion pieces. For more information, see <http://cres.anu.edu.au/envirhist/eh-nz.html>, or contact:

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BOOK REVIEW

From John Dargavel



John Merritt 2007. *Losing Ground: Grazing in the Snowy Mountains, 1944-1969*. Canberra: Turalla Press, 136pp. \$25 incl postage from PO Box 132, Dickson ACT 2602.

History is sometimes said to be written by or about the victors, and much of Australia's environmental history can be read in this light: conservationists fight battles against developers, environmentalists wage

forest wars against the timber industry, and the furred or feathered are "saved". Although Nigel Turvey's book on Terania Creek is an exception, so much of it seems one-sided, and this is why John Merritt's new book is so welcome. Merritt re-tells the story of the Snowy Mountains, not as the triumphalist creation of the Kosciuszko National Park - nor as the earlier grandiose story of the Snowy Mountains Hydroelectric Scheme - but as one in which Monaro graziers lost their summer pastures in a long political battle. Merritt does not attempt to evaluate the environmental claims, his focus is on the political and social history of a 25-year struggle.

Merritt is best known as a labour historian, but recently he has turned his attention to the pastoral industry (with *That voluminous squatter: W.E. Abbott* in 1999 and *Currango Summers: a Snow Belt Pastoral Property 1851-1946* in 2003). Given the Noel Butlin Archives Centre's extensive holdings of the pastoral industry's records, it is no surprise that he makes good use of them. For this book, he drew on the records of the Australian Primary Producers' Union (deposited by its successor, the National Farmers' Federation) and the long run of the *Australian Pastoral Directory* shelved in the Centre's Reading Room. Merritt drew on many other sources, several of which have connections to ANU.

Losing Ground introduces the reader to the start of transhumance grazing in the mid-nineteenth century and explains how the system of summer grazing developed with graziers taking up property in the lower valleys and sending their sheep and cattle to graze on "snow leases" in the high alpine country once the snow had melted. Although the leasehold system and fortunes of the graziers changed with time, seasons and markets, it was not until the late 1920s that it started to be questioned. Building the Hume Weir - Australia's greatest public undertaking at the time - raised the question of erosion in the high country. Would the dam fill with silt?

Charles Lane Poole, the Commonwealth's Inspector-General of Forests was keenly aware of the erosion from what he had seen in the Brindabellas and elsewhere. He managed to get the issue debated in the

1928 Empire Forestry Conference, but getting anything done stalled on inter-governmental jealousies. It was not until the first of Australia's postgraduate foresters returned that he could get anything started, and then only in New South Wales where the new Soil Conservation Service was also starting to take an interest. Baldur Byles rode and tramped through the area in the summer of 1931-32 to produce the first report of the extent of erosion and the effects of grazing and fire. As other histories have told, bush walkers and skiers were also taking an interest in the 1930s, causing the Government to preserve the area for recreation as Kosciuszko State Park in 1944. Logging and mining were stopped, as was grazing in various fragile areas - the graziers' first losses. However, they were allowed to continue on snow leases in other areas.

It was the advent of the great Snowy Mountains Hydroelectric Scheme that brought erosion to the fore politically in the 1950s. Merritt tells the political story of how the conflicting interests of the Monaro graziers on one side, and an emerging "anti-grazing coalition" of scientists, conservationists and bureaucrats on the other, played out in the public and political arena. It is a long tale of shifting influences in the NSW political parties, public opinion and the management of the Park. Merritt tells it through a cast of politicians, officials and individuals. Jack Seiffert, the Labor member for Monaro, battled relentlessly for the graziers. In some ways it was an odd allegiance, but his constituents were more working cattlemen than wealthy pastoralists. Although Seiffert was often effective in caucus when Labor was in office, and the graziers fought a rearguard action, they were no match for their opponents. In 1969 the new urban-scientist-recreationist-environmentalist alliance finally managed to have grazing in the high country stopped. The graziers' older culture of rural settler values was, as Merritt concludes, simply naïve in their new world.

PILLIGA PEOPLE

Social historian Judith Hadfield is writing a second volume of a book about the people who came to live in the Pilliga area to work in the forestry industry, and would welcome any stories or information. The first volume, *The Best of Times: Stories of the Pilliga People*, was published by Outback Press in late 2006 and is an account of the people who came to the Western Pilliga to cut sleepers, open sawmills, work in the mills or the forest, plus the storekeepers and villagers who helped develop the town of Baradine and the villages of Kenebri, Gwabegar and Pilliga. It covers the first sixty years of the twentieth century. Judith has also written *Notes on the History of Pincham's Sawmill* in Baradine and *Notes on the History of Wooleybah Sawmill*. Judith can be contacted on (02) 6843 1818 or e-mail duchess@hwy.com.au. For more info, see www.pilligapeople.hwy.net.au.

FEATURE: MYANMAR FORESTERS IN AUSTRALIA¹

From U Aung Kyaw Myint (e-mail: profjakmyint@gmail.com) and Kim Wells (e-mail: editingplus@cenart.net)

Our meeting up again in Yangon (Rangoon) earlier this year after a space of 25 years coincided with a move to form a Tropical Forestry Special Interest Group within the Institute of Foresters of Australia (IFA). The precise focus of this Group has not yet been resolved but there seems no reason why it should be anything but "wide angle" at the outset. This, and the recent merging of the Association of Consulting Foresters of Australia with the IFA, are potentially big developments in a modernising Institute. This coincidence provided the stimulus for this article.



Kim Wells and U Aung Kyaw Myint at Bago (Pegu).

Thanks to an excellent little publication, *A brief history of the Australian Forestry School*² written by Dr Les Carron and edited by Dr John Gray for the Australian Forestry School (AFS) Reunion 2000, it was known that sixteen Myanmar (Burmese) studied at the school between 1948 and 1962. The booklet had been taken to Myanmar to give to U Menh Ko Ko Gyi who was the first from Myanmar to study at the Australian National University (ANU). Ms Paula Reid OAM³, who is well known among foresters as librarian and friend at both the AFS (she started there in 1950!) and the ANU Forestry Department, was able to provide his contact details. It seemed a good idea to try to write some notes on these foresters and to expand to include foresters from Myanmar who studied at the ANU Forestry Department. Ms Christine Keller Smith, the ANU Alumni Director, helped in providing the names of graduates on its register. Subsequently the list was expanded still further to include the University of Melbourne, Victoria and the University of New England in Armidale, New South Wales.

How did these Myanmar come to Australia? Recorded within a compilation *Australia and the Colombo Plan 1949-57* published by the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) in 2005, a note written by the Department of External Affairs in December 1949 on Australian aid to SE Asian countries states that a sum of £60,000 had been allocated in

January 1948 for postgraduate fellowships - fellowships that were intended to be six month to two year refresher courses to assist in postwar reconstruction. At the same time, three scholarships were to be awarded annually at technical school or university level.

The first Myanmar to attend the AFS - U Maung Gale in 1948, U Maung Ko Ko Gyi in 1949, and U Tha Tun San and U Sein Maung Wint in 1950 - were Burma State Scholars. By 1956, when five Myanmar were enrolled, the students were sponsored under the Colombo Plan which had been operational for five years but preferentially available to the Commonwealth countries, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka (Ceylon) ahead of other recipient member countries which, by 1954, included Myanmar (Burma) (memo by Department of External Affairs, August 1952 titled *An appraisal of the Colombo Plan* in the DFAT publication cited above). Myanmar who attended the AFS later - two in 1958, three in 1959 and two in 1961 - were also sponsored under this Plan as were at least some of the students attending the ANU. Others would have come out under a program of Australia Development Scholarships which largely replaced the Colombo Plan. An Australian forestry degree was last awarded to a Myanmar in 1994.



Teak which started growing mid fifteenth century recovered from Kanbanza Thargi, King Bayint Naung's (Taungoo Dynasty) palace site at Bago.

The notes that follow on Myanmar foresters who came to Australia to further their forestry qualifications, while brief, show the significant roles that these men played in forestry in their country, while their supervisors, lecturers and fellow students in Australia and abroad would have benefited from their experience of tropical forestry. The notes should be of interest to all who knew them, as well as being a historical record of Australia-Myanmar co-operation. Perhaps a Tropical Forestry Special Interest Group within the IFA might include provision for membership from among these Myanmar foresters and others from tropical countries who have studied or worked in Australia.

In addition to those coming as students, there have been a number of visiting delegations, but we don't intend to touch on these here. Notes on students follow:

Australian Forestry School, Yarralumla, Australian Capital Territory

1961⁴ U Khin Maung Mya

Retired from FD⁵ as Deputy Director General then served as Advisor to the Director General before complete retirement. He lives at Insein, Yangon.

1961 U Kyaw Myint

Retired from FD as Territory Director. He now lives in Mandalay.

1959 U Khin Maung Htwe

Retired from FD and passed away at Yangon.

1959 U Tin Maung Oo

Retired as Territory Director. Now living at Taunggyi, Shan State. He worked part-time with Forest Resources and Environment Development Association (FREDA).

1959 U Aung Than

Retired from FD as Wildlife Director and lived in Aye Tharyar Myothit, Taunggyi. Passed away early 2006.

1958 U Than Htay

Lives in Aye Thar Yar new town, Taunggyi, Shan State after retiring from FD as Territory Director.

1958 U Thein Lwin

Retired from FD as Deputy Director General, then served a few years as Advisor to the Director General. Now living in Yangon.

1956 U Myint Aung

Retired from FD and migrated to Oregon, USA. Passed away a few years ago.

1956 U Hau Zanang Kimlai

After retiring as Director of Forests in Sagaing Division, he was a director of a timber extraction company. Lives in Sagaing and Yangon.

1956 U Kyaw Myint Than

Retired as FD HQ Director. Passed away 1993.

1956 U Ral Lian Sum

Migrated to USA after he retired from FD as Deputy Director General.

1956 U Sein Win (1)

Retired as Territory Director of FD and died of a heart attack in 1988 at Yangon.

1950 U Tha Tun San

Retired from FD as Planning Director and passed away at Yangon.

1950 U Sein Maung Wint

Retired from FD as Director General (formerly Chief Conservator), served FAO as Chief Technical Advisor for Asia Pacific Regional Project 1988-1990. Now back in Yangon working as chairman of FREDA.

1949 U Ko Ko Gyi

Arrived in Australia in February 1949 but returned home in April of the same year citing family reasons.

1948 U Maung Gale

Retired from FD as Chief Conservator and migrated to USA. He suffered and overcame heart problems.

Australian National University Forestry Department, Canberra

1994⁶ U Than Myint

Left FD and now working for WCS, a wildlife conservation organisation based in USA.

1993 U Aung Than

Became Rector of the Forestry Institute, Yezin, before retiring. He also worked for Total on loan, but rejoined FD. He lives in Insein, a suburb of Yangon.

1992 U Thein Win

Transferred from the Forestry Institute, Yezin, Pyinmana to the Dry Zone Re-Forestation and Greening project. Now retired and living in Yangon.

1990 U Khin Maung Lwin

Left FD and now working for CARE organisation in Myanmar.

1990 U Myint Swe

Working as Director in Dry Zone Afforestation and Greening Department under Ministry of Forestry.

1989 U Shwe Thein

Left FD and now working for CARE organisation in Myanmar.

1988 U Saw Win

Resigned from FD to join Total Oil Company where he still works. Lives in Yangon.

1982 U Aung Kyin

Worked as Rector in the Forestry Institute, Yezin. After retirement worked as Advisor there till early 2007.

1981 U Tin Ohn

Retired from Myanmar Timber Enterprise (MTE) and now working at the Daewoo Jointventure enterprise as Advisor. Lives in North Dagon new town, Yangon.

1981 U Aung Kyaw Myint

Retired from FD after 30 years service including as Computing Manager and National Project Director UNDP/FAO Community Mangrove Project. Also worked with the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD) in Nepal for two years.

1980 U Sein Win (2)

Studied watershed management. After retiring from FD as Director of Administration, worked in Nepal as Chief Technical Advisor for FAO projects then worked with FREDA for some years. Passed away at Yangon in 1998.

1978 U Shwe Kyaw

Retired as Director General of FD but still working as Advisor to the Minister of Forestry. Lives in Yangon.

1976 U Soe Tint

Worked in the Forest Research Institute Yezin, then became Director General of the Planning and Statistics Department of the Ministry of Forestry (at the Minister's Office). Retired after working 2-3 years beyond retirement age and now lives in Yangon.

1976 U Sein Thet

Retired from FD at the level of Director and now working in ITTO Teak project.

1973 U Menh Ko Ko Gyi

Retired from FD at level of Director and now works in ITTO Teak project. Awaiting government approval to establish an NGO, Environmental Conservation and Community Development Initiative (ECCDI), together with other retired foresters.

University of New England, Armidale, New South Wales, Australia

1991 U Soe Win Hlaing

Working as Director General of FD in Naypyidaw (old name Pynmana) where the forestry school was situated before it was moved to Taungoo and Pyn Oo Lwin (Maymyo).

1990 U Chit Hlaing

Retired from FD as Deputy Director General, Planning and Statistics Department. Now living in North Dagon new town, Yangon.

1989 U Tun Paw Oo

Working as Director of Wildlife at FD, Naypyidaw, nearing retiring age.

1985 U Uga

Retired as Director, Wildlife Division of FD and now chairing his own NGO, Biodiversity and Nature Conservation Association (BANCA) in Yangon.

University of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia

1986 U Tin Tun

Deputy Director of FD.

1985 U Ba Than

Left the FD and lives in Pyn Oo Lwin where he runs a medical store and clinic.

1. This article is to appear in the August/September 2007 issues of both the Australian Forest History Society's newsletter and the Institute of Foresters of Australia publication *The Forester*.

2. Copies are still available from the IFA secretariat, e-mail: ifa@forestry.org.au.

3. Order of Australia Medal for services to forestry.

4. Year of enrolment.

5. Myanmar Forestry Department.

6. Year degree conferred.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Society's Annual General Meeting will be held in Canberra on **Thursday 29th November 2007**, starting at 5pm. The meeting will be held in Room 2 of the Forestry Building, Linnaeus Way, Australian National University.

The agenda will be:

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held 28th November 2006.
3. Matters arising from the Minutes not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.
4. President's report.
5. Audited financial report for the year to 30th June 2007 (Treasurer).
6. Set amount of annual subscription.
7. Election of Office Bearers (President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Secretary) and up to five Committee Members.
8. Nomination of Public Officer (who may be an Office Bearer or Committee Member).
9. Appointment of Auditor for 2007-08 (who may not be an Office Bearer or Committee Member).
10. Any other business for which notice has been given:
 - (a) Update on Newsletter production.
 - (b) Report on 2007 conference.
 - (c) Future AFHS conferences.

The meeting will be followed by dinner at a venue yet to be decided.

Enquiries regarding the AGM should be directed to the Secretary, Dr Kevin Frawley on (02) 6282 2973 / 0427 578 338 or by e-mail to kfrawley@webone.com.au.

OBITUARIES

Gretna Margaret Weste (1917-2006) - Plant pathologist in Australian forests

From Linden Gillbank
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Fire and disease are among the catastrophic interruptions which dramatically shape forest ecosystems and their histories. Unlike fire, to which plants in Australian post Gondwanan ecosystems have long become adapted, the widely destructive "dieback" pathogen, *Phytophthora cinnamomi*, is a relatively recent intruder - one which we humans have unwittingly introduced and spread. Commonly known as "cinnamon fungus" because of its initial discovery on cinnamon trees, *P. cinnamomi* (with its swimming spores) is more closely related to certain algae than fungi. Both fire and *Phytophthora* shaped the research career of Australia's much missed botanist, mycologist and plant pathologist, Dr Gretna Weste (née Parkin), who died last year.

Gretna Parkin learned about Australian forests, their plants and pathogens, at the University of Melbourne in the 1930s when the University's botany department was rich in forest interest and expertise - both staff and students. Students included Creswick-trained foresters, who studied second and third year botany in the Bachelor of Science (BSc) degree course. Professor Alfred Ewart, author of *Handbook of Forest Trees for Victorian Foresters*, argued for university involvement in Victorian forestry education, and was the long standing chairman of the Board of Examiners of the Victorian School of Forestry at Creswick. Dr Reuben Patton, whose research focussed on forests and timber, taught plant taxonomy and ecology. With a Harvard Master of Forestry (MF) degree and a Melbourne Doctorate of Science (DSc) degree for his thesis, "The factors controlling the distribution of trees in Victoria", Patton wrote a series of articles on Victorian vegetation, including the Red Box - Red Stringybark and Box - Ironbark associations, and an introductory book on common eucalypts, *Know Your Own Trees*. Associate Professor Ethel McLennan taught plant pathology and mycology, and supervised research on rot and decay in trees and timber for the Forests Commission of Victoria (FCV) and the Forest Products Division of CSIR (later CSIRO) - often for the University's Master of Science (MSc) degree. This was the university department in which Gretna studied botany during her three year BSc degree course.

In her third year in 1937, Gretna Parkin shared the Botany Part III Exhibition with Alan Gordon, a Creswick-trained forester, and gained a scholarship to undertake research for the MSc degree in 1938. Gretna investigated wood structure in the new South Melbourne premises of CSIR's Forest Products Division - in H.E. Dadswell's Wood Structure Section where, as Assistant Wood Anatomist, an earlier Melbourne botany graduate, Audrey Eckersley, MSc, had worked for several

years on the structure of Australian timbers. Gretna studied the "reaction wood" which forms in response to bending.

Compression wood in softwood trees was understood, but the structure of reaction wood in Australian hardwood trees was undocumented. Using bent logs from Victorian forests and some sent by Max Jacobs from the federal Forestry Bureau in Canberra¹, Gretna investigated the anatomy and strength of the tension wood formed above the bend. Her foundation investigations gained her the nickname "Gelatinous Gretna" due to the gelatinous cellulose layer inside the tension wood.

In the spring of 1938 Gretna took a short break from her MSc research project to help introduce Ewart's newly-arrived successor, Professor John Turner, to Australia's very tall and very flammable Mountain Ash, *Eucalyptus regnans*, forests beyond Marysville.

The bushfires in January 1939 left vast numbers of Mountain Ash and other eucalypts killed but not incinerated in Victoria's central highlands, and Gretna was appointed to the FCV to investigate the preservation and durability of this huge timber resource. Gretna Parkin was not the first female botany graduate from the University of Melbourne to work in the FCV. She remembered two working there in 1938 - Edna Cromie, BSc, in the library, and Joy Girdwood, MSc², with a clerical job - but she, Gretna, was invited by the FCV chairman (A.V. Galbraith) to accept a research officer position. Gretna worked for some months in the FCV library (during Edna's absence), then moved to a laboratory in the Treasury Building, East Melbourne, from where, with her MSc degree (conferred on 1st April 1939), she undertook her work as forest pathologist - research on the fungal decay of living eucalypts as well as the preservation for pulpwood of dead standing trees. Gretna remembered accompanying foresters into the bush to collect samples - always the sole woman and always treated with helpful courtesy and respect. Surprised that, unlike her male research officer colleagues, her salary did not increase incrementally she queried the situation. The Public Service Board investigated her research reports and typewriter free laboratory and, ignoring the apparently irregular paperwork of her appointment, somehow concluded that, as a woman, her classification and salary were those of a temporary typist. Gretna's findings that preservation of timber, including the rot susceptible Mountain Ash, required constant dryness or constant wetness led to the FCV's policy of keeping salvaged timber sprayed with water; but her paper on wood rotting fungi on forest trees was not published.

In December 1941 Gretna married Geoff Weste, a Creswick-trained forester and, since married women were not accepted in the Public Service, she had to resign from the FCV. Fortunately marriage was not an explicit barrier to university women, and Professor Turner welcomed her back in the wartime-depleted Botany School to continue, albeit briefly, work he claimed was of

national importance - research on the pathology and preservation of timber salvaged after the 1939 fires. Professor Turner also arranged for her to undertake research on decay in mine-timber in Broken Hill in 1942. That year the University and the FCV finally reached an agreement on a new University forestry course. A Bachelor of Science in Forestry (BScF) degree course would be available to Creswick-trained foresters and the Forestry School would be established within the Science Faculty.



Gretna Parkin working in the FCV laboratory in 1940.
Photo courtesy of Sandra Heard (née Weste).

In 1961, after an absence of nearly two predominantly domestic decades, Gretna returned to the Botany School, where she taught and undertook research in plant pathology. From 1965 she taught forest pathology to BScF students. In 1969 she was awarded a PhD degree for her thesis on a fungal disease of wheat - just as two coincident events propelled her back to Victoria's forests. That year it was decided that University research and teaching in agricultural plant pathology would be transferred from the Botany School to the Agriculture School, and symptoms of a non-agricultural disease were detected in a Victorian forest. Frank Podger had recently completed his University of Melbourne MScF thesis on the devastating "dieback" caused by *Phytophthora cinnamomi* in Western Australia's Jarrah forests³, and Gretna's ecologist colleague, Dr David Ashton, took him to the Brisbane Ranges, west of Melbourne, where they noticed symptoms which were confirmed to be caused by *P. cinnamomi*. This was its first record in eastern Australian forests, *P. cinnamomi* having probably reached the Brisbane Ranges State Forest during road construction in the early 1960s.

And so, from the Botany School, Dr Gretna Weste transferred her research gaze from an agriculturally important soil-borne pathogen to one which was seriously threatening Australian forests. In the 1970s she undertook and supervised research on diverse aspects of *P. cinnamomi* in Australian ecosystems, sometimes in collaboration with the FCV, and contributed to inquiries into pulpwood harvesting in Australia, a pulpwood industry in east Gippsland and a woodchip industry. She continued to teach forestry students. When the University's Forestry School was transferred from the Science Faculty to amalgamate with Agriculture in 1973, the Bachelor of Forest Science (BForSc) degree was established and Gretna taught BForSc undergraduates

about interactions between micro-organisms and plants in Australian ecosystems.

She was an executive member of the International Society of Plant Pathologists' Committee on *Phytophthora*, chaired the Organising Committee of the Society's 4th International Congress of Plant Pathology, which was held in Melbourne in 1983, and was research group leader on the Disease Impact Section of the International Union of Forestry Research Organizations. Beyond her official retirement as Reader in 1982, her receipt in 1984 of a DSc degree for her published research papers and in 1989 a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) for her scientific contributions, and subsequent honours and awards, Dr Weste and her postgraduate students continued their investigations of the physiological and ecological consequences of this virulent root rotting pathogen which, unfortunately for Australian forests, uses many hundreds of Australian species as plant hosts.

As stringybark and ash eucalypts, banksias, and whole understoreys of colourful, insect-, bird- and mammal-attracting species succumbed to dieback, Weste *et al* followed the fate and fancies of *P. cinnamomi* in Victoria's Brisbane Ranges, Grampians, Wilsons Promontory and east Gippsland. Long-term studies have allowed them to document the recovery of some vegetation - the common, but not universal, decline in the pathogen's presence and the concomitant reappearance of susceptible trees and understorey species decades after the initial infestation of *P. cinnamomi*.

Their ongoing investigations in the Brisbane Ranges and Grampians State Forests were begun in conjunction with the FCV whose recent research on rare and endangered plants endemic in the Brisbane Ranges and Grampians (Gariwerd) National Parks have revealed Grampians Rock Banksia, *Banksia saxicola*, and other species to be highly susceptible to *P. cinnamomi* and, alarmingly, at high risk of extinction.

The patient, perceptive and persistent investigations of Dr Gretna Weste and her students and colleagues have shown how this alien micro-organism devastates Australian forest and woodland ecosystems, and how logging and other vehicle-facilitated operations have silently spread the infestation. They have revealed the modus operandi of the pathogen, the different susceptibilities of Australian forest plants, and the cyclic nature of the infestation, all of which enrich our understanding of forest histories and management. Forest managers now have scientific data on which to base appropriate management practices to sustain and shape Australian forests into the future.

Of Dr Weste's over 100 papers on *P. cinnamomi*, the following provide glimpses of a few of her forest research projects and collaborators:

Weste, G. *et al.* 1971-73. "Invasion of native forest by *Phytophthora cinnamomi*", *Australian Journal of Botany* 19: 281-294; 21: 13-29; 21: 31-51.

Weste, G. and Ruppin, P. 1975. "Factors affecting population density of *Phytophthora cinnamomi* in native

forests of the Brisbane Ranges, Victoria", *Australian Journal of Botany* 23: 77-85.

Weste, G. *et al.* 1971-73. "Invasion of native forest by *Phytophthora cinnamomi*", *Australian Journal of Botany* 19: 281-294; 21: 13-29; 21: 31-51.

Weste, G. and Ruppin, P. 1975. "Factors affecting population density of *Phytophthora cinnamomi* in native forests of the Brisbane Ranges, Victoria", *Australian Journal of Botany* 23: 77-85.

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(I thank Fintán Ó Laighin, John Dargavel, Alan Brown and Norman Endacott for forestry information.)

1. Forerunner of the Forestry and Timber Bureau.
2. The title of Girdwood's 1937 MSc thesis is "The toxicity of various chemicals to some wood destroying fungi".
3. While working in Western Australia for the Commonwealth Forest Research Institute (newly established from divisions of the Forestry and Timber Bureau), Podger was an external postgraduate student of the University of Melbourne. For his thesis, "Aetiology of Jarrah Dieback", Podger's MScF degree was conferred in absentia in December 1968.

Norman Hall (10th January 1906 - 10th June 2005)

From Alan Brown, Canberra

Norman was born to schoolteacher parents, migrants from England, William and Martha Hall, at Pahiatua, near Palmerston North, New Zealand. The family subsequently lived on a tiny island in the Kerikeri Inlet, Bay of Islands, the only access to which was by a small dingy. He was among the first class of students to gain a BForSci from the Auckland University College of the University of New Zealand, and commenced his professional career in forestry in 1930 with NZ Perpetual Forests (later NZ Forest Products) before transferring to the Woods and Forests Department, South Australia, in 1937.

During World War II he served (April 1940-September 1945) as lieutenant and captain in the 2/1 Australian Forestry Company, Royal Australian Engineers, near Lockerbie in Scotland, and later RAE, New Guinea Forests, and (1945-1947) as a technical officer on the staff of the British Element of the Allied Control Commission at Graz, Austria.

He returned to South Australia in 1947 as Superintending Forester to establish the Working Plans Field Section with the principal task of assessing the suitability of unplanted departmental land for plantations. He joined the Forestry and Timber Bureau in Sydney in 1948 before that office was transferred to Canberra in July 1952. Norman's initial work with the Bureau was on forest resources and particularly plans for a national forest survey, a vision which came to fruition many decades later through the National Forest Inventory. At the time of his inventory work, he became an associate member of the Australian Institute of Cartography.

In the early 1950s there was new international interest in the possible cultivation of eucalypts in countries other than Australia, and there was a rising demand for information about them. Unfortunately, useful information was scattered, incomplete and outdated. In response, Norman took up a pivotal role, among colleagues, in the preparation of a diverse range of publications on Australian trees, a task that continued over the following four decades. *Forest Trees of Australia*, first published in 1957, was the culmination of the first few years of this effort. It combined botanical and ecological descriptions with a comprehensive set of new photographs for each species treated. Many of the photos of foliage, buds and fruit were taken in hotel rooms at night, while the material would be fresh and so that as much field work as possible could be squeezed into the daylight hours.

In 1958 Norman was appointed a Senior Lecturer (engineering and utilisation) at the Australian Forestry School, a role he retained until 1967 when the Australian National University assumed full responsibility for such education. He is remembered by former students as described by Ian Bevege:

"Norman taught many foresters the basics of forest engineering and utilisation. He also had a keen interest in many other areas of forestry, including forest botany, as is witnessed by his preparation, with Doug Johnston and Charley Hamilton, of *Forest Trees of Australia* (1957). Norman will be remembered fondly by many foresters for the fatherly interest he took in their welfare as students, an interest that he demonstrated in many practical ways."

Soon after leaving lecturing in 1967 to return to the Forestry and Timber Bureau, further new books appeared - *Growing Trees on Australian Farms* in 1968, an expanded edition of *Forest Trees of Australia* in 1970 and *The Use of Trees and Shrubs in the Dry Country of Australia* in 1972. Although "retiring" in 1972, the ink on these manuscripts was barely dry before he began writing *Forest Tree Leaflets*: descriptions of eucalypt species not then included in *Forest Trees of Australia* but which were incorporated in later editions. In all, with Ian Brooker and other collaborators, some 220 of these were produced. He also undertook a similar series covering more than 100 acacias, most of which still await publication, and casuarinas.

He published on botanical and forestry subjects in the *Australian Journal of Botany*, *Unasylva* and *Australian Forestry*. For the last, he prepared a cumulative index covering the first 20 volumes of the journal to 1957, and managed the journal archives for many years.

Another important series of publications, *Botanists of the Eucalypts* (1978, Supplements in 1979, 1989, 1992), and *Botanists of Australian Acacias* (1984, Supplement in 1993), provide a comprehensive collection of biographies of Australian botanists and collectors. His contribution to forest botany is commemorated in the name of *Eucalyptus hallii*, Goodwood gum, which occurs between Bundaberg and Maryborough in Queensland.

His contribution to Australian forestry and the Institute of Foresters of Australia (including much of the organisation of the Institute's first conference, in Canberra) was recognised in the award of the N.W. Jolly Medal in 1977.

His later writing was undertaken in Sydney, where he combined it with other voluntary work in the Herbarium of the Royal Botanic Garden.

Norman moved in 1972 from Canberra to Anglican retirement villages, Hopetoun Village and (later) Nuffield Village, Castle Hill, where his contribution to village life is commemorated by Norman Hall Drive. He died peacefully at the latter; his wife Kate Cordett Hoyte, a New Zealander, had died shortly after their marriage in March 1948.

Few will match his legacy to Australian forestry.

(This obituary appeared in *Australian Forestry* **68**, 221-222, September 2005.)



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Moray Guild Douglas (27th May 1930 - 3rd August 2007)

From Rob Youl

A superb field forester, Moray Douglas died at Bairnsdale in early August after a short illness. He grew up in the Victorian Mallee at Werrimul on a wheat farm, and was educated at The Geelong College and the Victorian School of Forestry, Creswick (1947-49), part of the huge post-war influx that made its mark on practical Victorian land management for decades afterwards.

He was attracted early to the mountains, and to alpine ash silviculture, and worked closely with Ron Grose, the highly influential research worker whose PhD thesis demonstrated the best ways to regenerate the species. Alpine ash grows, generally in pure stands, from 800-1500 metres in the Eastern Highlands, yielding an excellent joinery timber that was in great demand for housing in the post-war era.

After service at Bendoc and Orbost his first district was Omeo (headquarters Swifts Creek), where he and wife Rosemary were deeply involved with the community. Moray played rugged football for Swifts Creek in the then four-team competition, the Tambo Valley Football League. Moving to another major alpine ash forest district, Heyfield, was a logical move, given his ability to oversee complex and widespread operations, but remain an astute observer of detail. He thought deeply about plant germination and growth, fire regimes and forest history. In this period, Moray completed his Diploma of Forestry (Victoria), a study of, naturally, alpine ash.

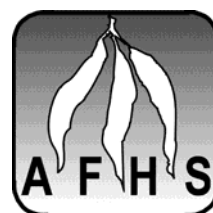
He moved over the Divide to Mansfield to a similar-sized forest district also important for sawmilling, again with alpine ash a key species. Mansfield as well had pine plantations and recreation, the hitherto generally overlooked land use within Victorian state forest, except perhaps in the Dandenongs. Lake Eildon drew thousands of tourists, and development started along its shores. A more demanding involvement for Moray was membership of the Mount Buller Alpine Reserve Committee of Management, which dealt with many engineering challenges and complex upper echelon personalities.

After a stint at Mildura, to which he and Rosemary readily adapted, he became assistant divisional forester at Bairnsdale, working under Keith Gidley in the vast and complex region stretching from Bairnsdale and Omeo east to the border where he had spent so much of his career. He was a mentor to many younger foresters, a valued fire tactician and he embraced the cause of farm tree regeneration in the late 1970s and early 1980s, retiring happily and with universal respect in 1989.

As it happens he was my first boss, in 1965; he and Rosemary were marvellously hospitable to young foresters, and dinner table conversations were fascinating, inspiring and formative. He and Rosemary contributed to my recent anthology, *Landcare in Victoria*, and I last spoke to him about a book of his own: he was

planning a summary of silviculture in East Gippsland, and we discussed details of self-publication. I hope we see this in print, a distillation of Moray's unique knowledge and insight. Naturally, Moray Douglas was a stalwart of IFA's Gippsland branch, a keen student of forest history and a long time member of the AFHS, attending most conferences and contributing chapters to publications.

In retirement he led the development of the Bairnsdale Botanic Gardens, where his funeral was held. The coffin had been fabricated from regrowth alpine ash, possibly from stands he had regenerated during his long and fruitful career.



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