

# **FARM FORESTRY — THE FIRST 50 YEARS**

**JOLL HOSKING**

**NEW ZEALAND FARM FORESTRY ASSOCIATION INC.  
WELLINGTON**

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*Cover: A view of Jeremy Thomson's property "Makara". (Photo – Bruce Treeby)*

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*Frontispiece—*  
Neil and Rose Barr at  
the Kaipara lookout at  
“Beresford” during the  
Orewa Conference visit  
in 1983.

## FOREWORD

It is indeed appropriate that this book, “Farm Forestry—The First 50 Years”, should be published at the time of the New Zealand Farm Forestry Association’s 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, and that some of the early content comes from foundation members.

It is with great pleasure as Patron of the NZFFA that I have agreed to write this Foreword.

The Association was built on a very sound foundation by farmers with vision and the ability to implement it. For me, one of its greatest achievements, which no university ever managed, was to bring about the integration of farming and forestry, based on the best land use be it woodlots, shelter, shade, land stability, or amenity.

The founders of the Association were mainly farmers who at that period were ahead of their time as far as land use was concerned. They thought of the important role trees could play in increased production, whether of meat, wool, or crops, or in land stabilisation.

From very small beginnings the Association has grown to 31 Branches with a total membership reaching 4700 at peak. Likewise, from a very small start, members are now served by an excellent quarterly journal, *Tree Grower*, quite a large component of which is contributed by members. It also provides up-to-date information in respect of research and forestry concerns.

This book documents the growth of the Farm Forestry Association and the events which were of great significance: these include development of the Loan Scheme and later the Farm Forestry Encouragement Grant, two schemes which, with State aid, established forestry on land well-suited to tree growing and not, as was so often the case, on sites doomed by the cost of extraction. The Association worked with the Forest Research Institute in making properties available for trial work, the development of silviculture regimes, and the selection of other species—and this was just part of their involvement.

One of the Association’s greatest contributions to forestry is its Annual Conference, held alternately in the North and the

South Islands, with up to 400 members attending. This is where people with a common interest meet, be they Ministers, leading scientists, or farmers of all descriptions. Seeing them conversing with one another is a pleasure to behold.

I have purposely not singled out personalities; however, there is one name I must mention—that of Joll Hosking who 3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> years ago undertook the task of compiling this history.

Joll has been a tireless worker, researching, chasing farmers up for information (and trying to decipher it), compiling. I feel the credit for this venture is his and, on behalf of the Farm Forestry Association, I congratulate him on the result.

Such is the worth of the Association, I feel confident there will be a further history 50 years hence.

Peter Smail



## PREFACE

Farm forestry has played an important part in my life. I visited Neil and Rose Barr in the mid-1950s to find, among other things, that Rose had known me at the age of 3 when she nursed my grandmother!

Continued involvement at Branch or National level since 1960, and attending some 34 Conferences, have enabled Marjorie and me to see the country in a way no tourist could. We have seen many fine properties and have some idea of the tremendous work that some Association members put into their trees, as well as gaining an appreciation of the rural areas of New Zealand.

The nursery business we started was enhanced by discussions at field days on planting successes and failures and helped provide some of the information necessary to give advice to customers. Visits to FRI, particularly attending Symposium No.9 in 1967 and No. 22 in 1981 where almost all the country's forestry nurserymen compared notes, and to many other meetings and discussions around the country, would not have happened without a strong interest in farm forestry.

I believe that people who plant trees are perhaps the most stable citizens in the country—they mostly tend to stay on their properties for their lifetime, and watching trees grow is strong motivation. The thought of seeing money in the bank, or children well endowed is also a reward worth waiting for.

So when our worthy Patron caught me in a weak moment at the 1996 Conference, and suggested that I write the Association history, I agreed. It has been a worthwhile experience, going through the records of 50 years. If I have tended to stress the good old days, or criticise more recent events, put it down to age or senility! I have the same feelings for most aspects of the way we live and manage the country.

This is the only book I've written, which may be obvious. It has grown probably too long, but I've tried to cover a somewhat broader picture of forestry than just farm forestry.

My thanks are due to Marjorie, Trish, and Dave who probably hoped they would get a bit more work out of me over the last few years.

Thanks also to Mike Smith and the Neil Barr Farm Forestry Foundation whose support and work at the costly end of the project have made it happen, and to the many farm foresters and retired Forest Service friends who did answer my letters or return my phone calls. They are the ones with all the knowledge.

Joll Hosking

### **NEIL BARR FARM FORESTRY FOUNDATION**

Publication of this history has been made possible by the generous financial support given by the Foundation over the last 4 years. Without this support the project would not have proceeded.

The Neil Barr Farm Forestry Foundation, previously called the New Zealand Farm Forestry Foundation, was set up in 1986 with its main purpose being to provide financial support for any project that would benefit Farm Forestry.

Further details can be obtained from the Secretary—M.E.F. (Mike) Smith, 120 Pahiatua Track, R. D. 1, Palmerston North. Telephone (06) 355-5075, Fax (06) 355-1141.



**Forest Research** has been delighted to see the New Zealand Farm Forestry Association grow to its current level, where it is able to make valuable contributions to the national forestry scene. **Forest Research** has been happy to contribute to that growth, especially through the technology transfer opportunities that the NZFFA has provided to scientists. The entrepreneurial skills of farm foresters have often led researchers into new areas, to our mutual benefit, and the Association's input into **Forest Research** symposia and workshops has been invaluable.

Some specific areas of mutual interest where **Forest Research** and the NZFFA have made significant advances through collaboration are:

- National Farm Forestry conferences
- Tikitere agroforestry trial
- AEM (Agroforestry Estate Model)
- Shelter
- Action groups: Cypress, Paulownia, and AMIGO
- Forest health
- Timber preservation
- Harvesting
- Eucalypts (Neil Barr was very strong in his support of research programmes).

But perhaps the largest NZFFA input to **Forest Research** programmes has been the use of farm foresters' land for research trials, which have provided the foundation for internationally acclaimed databases.

**Forest Research** congratulates the Farm Forestry Association on the occasion of their Jubilee. We wish them well in their endeavours, and hope that the future will bring collaboration as fruitful as we have seen in the past.

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