

3. THE BRANCHES OF THE ASSOCIATION

There have possibly been 45 Branch Associations under the New Zealand Farm Forestry Association umbrella, but there is some doubt that three or four of these were ever actually formed. Some amalgamated to form stronger Associations with an expanded area, and a few have wound up, so that in 1999 there are 31 still active.

Each Branch is autonomous, coming under the National Association's Incorporation and being covered by the National Public Liability insurance. Branch subscriptions include the levy to the National Association, the cost of the quarterly journal *Tree Grower*, and a fee to cover Branch costs which is set by the Branch. It is not possible to join the National Association alone, but belonging to a Branch automatically gives membership of the parent body.

The strength of the organisation is in its Branches, with meetings, field days, and travel between Branches allowing the spread of information on good practice in growing, managing, and harvesting trees for a variety of purposes.

Following is a list of all Branches since Lower North began in 1950, in chronological order of formation, followed by a brief history of each Branch, the accuracy of which depends on information supplied. Branches marked with * no longer exist.

Branch Formation

Lower North FFA	28 June	1950
Middle Districts FFA	April	1956
Hawke's Bay FFA	23 April	1956
Taranaki Farm Shelter and Forestry Association	13 June	1956
Wairarapa FFA	15 June	1956
Gisborne East Coast FFA	11 June	1957
Waimate FFA *		1957
Marlborough FFA		1957
Wairoa FFA *	November	1957
Waikato FFA	8 May	1958

The Men of the Trees (Southland)	17 May	1958
North Canterbury FFA	24 June	1958
Ashburton FFA	25 June	1958
South Canterbury FFA	27 June	1958
South Auckland FFA	10 Sept	1958
Opotiki FFA * <i>see</i> Bay of Plenty FFA		1958
Canterbury Central FFA	June/July	1958
West Otago FFA *	March	1959
Southern Hawke's Bay/ Tararua FFA	10 June	1959
Rotorua FFA * <i>see</i> Bay of Plenty FFA		1960
Whakatane FFA * <i>see</i> Bay of Plenty FFA		1960
Whangarei FFA * <i>see</i> Mid Northland FFA	July	1960
Northern Wairoa FFA * <i>see</i> Mid Northland FFA		1960
Waimea Plains FFA *	Nov.	1960
Bay of Islands FFA * <i>see</i> Mid Northland FFA		1961
Coromandel FFA in recess, then reformed 1993		1962
Northern Southland/Southland FFA	6 Nov.	1962
Mid Otago FFA		1963
Mangonui/Far North FFA		1963
Galatea FFA * <i>see</i> Bay of Plenty FFA		1964
Tauranga/Te Puke FFA * <i>see</i> Bay of Plenty FFA		196?
South Otago FFA	3 March	1964
Northern King Country/Waitomo FFA	22 April	1964
Nelson FFA	16 July	1964
Bay of Plenty FFA		1971
Chatham Islands FFA ? *		1967
West Coast FFA	10 April	1972
Wellington FFA	14 June	1977
Central Otago FFA *	11 April	1980
North Otago FFA	28 July	1981
Mid Northland FFA		1981
Taupo FFA	9 July	1988
Ruapehu FFA	8 Dec.	1993
Southern High Country FFA	25 Sept.	1994
Golden Bay FFA		1995

Branch Histories

Lower North – 1950

Following World War II farming in Northland, as elsewhere in New Zealand, was difficult because there was little durable fencing material available. The totara and puriri had almost all gone, and no treatment was available for pine.

Shelter was also sparse on many recently cleared farms, with harsh drying conditions in summer and lamb losses due to wet windy conditions in spring.

Neil Barr met Hec Nicholls one windy morning in 1950 on the steps of the Helensville Post Office, and they discussed the effects of the winds sweeping in from the Tasman Sea. They both found an interest in eucalypts, Neil having *E. saligna* growing well and Hec with *E. botryoides* standing the salt winds on his South Head farm.



Neil Barr

They talked of Frank Bartlett who was a recognised botanist in the area, knowing a great deal about native plants but also having a plantation of old eucalypts and other trees planted by his father on their Silverdale farm. They talked then of starting a club to foster the planting of trees, with the objectives of providing shelter, improving the appearance of the farm and homestead, and with possible some financial gain from selling logs, although this was hardly considered.

On 28 June 1950 a field day was arranged at “Bankside”, the Bartlett farm, convened by Neil Barr with the following people present:

J.H.Aubrey, Silverdale	Tom Alach, Glorit
C.M.Blich, Warkworth	M.Alach, Glorit
Fred Brunskill, Kaukapakapa	Mr & Mrs S Brown, Silverdale
W.Earwater, Dairy Flat	H.H.Hooper, Kaukapakapa
Mr & Mrs A.Leaming, Kaukapakapa	J.Marshall, Kaukapakapa
V.B.Storey, Silverdale	A.Q.Tuke, Kaukapakapa
R.West, Helensville	Mr & Mrs F.Bartlett, Silverdale
Jean & Vera Bartlett, Silverdale.	

Hec Nicholls of South Head missed this first meeting but very few of the later ones.

Following a tour to inspect the trees growing at “Bankside”, Neil Barr outlined his idea of forming a farm forestry club, its objects being to gain a knowledge of trees and shrubs available for timber, shade, and shelter, to visit farms where tree planting had been carried out, to exchange experience, ideas, and knowledge, and to foster the spirit of tree planting.

Frank Bartlett moved that Neil Barr be Chairman of the club, Frank was elected Secretary, and a committee was elected comprising J.H.Aubrey, Fred Brunskill, A.Q.Tuke, R.West, and H.H.Hooper.

The membership fee was set at 2/6 (25c), and future field days were to be advertised in the local papers.

Meetings were to be held once a month during the planting season.

The Society was to be named “The Farm Forestry and Horticulture (Lower North) Association”. (In due course this became amended to the Lower North Farm Forestry Association).

The Chairman and Secretary were to prepare a list of objectives, and to consider incorporation of the Association.

At the conclusion of the meeting Neil Barr gave a demonstration of “balling” young trees (wrapping the roots and soil in a hessian ball following wrenching for safe transport). He also gave an interesting outline of the merits and uses of a number of species of eucalypts.

The new Association had its second field day on 1 August 1950 at Neil Barr’s “Beresford” property where 10-year-old plantations of eucalypts, acacias, and macrocarpa were inspected, together with shelterbelts of *Pinus muricata*, *Cupressus macrocarpa*, and *C. lusitanica*, as well as some species of eucalypts. Neil’s full and detailed explanation of species, ages of his trees, and his successes and failures were most helpful to those attending. An accident during lunch resulted in hot water scalding little Margaret Rose Barr, causing Neil to have to rush to the doctor leaving the meeting in the hands of A.L.Leaming.

In discussing the opening of a bank account for the Association, the Secretary was told not to bother, just to use his own account to save complications!

The third field day was at Arthur and Roger West's sawmill at Helensville. Here the 30–40 attending watched a *Eucalyptus botryoides* log sawn into gate timber, and other sawmill operations.

A.Q.Tuke suggested the keeping of records of trees seen on field days, with details of species, age, and size. Mr Tuke was appointed Official Recorder.

Bartlett's "Bankside" was the venue for the next field day in October 1950, where a large gathering was treated to a talk from Professor John Davis of Gainesville University, Florida, on the trees of the south-eastern United States, together with his ideas of what might do well in Northland. He suggested trying trees from south of San Francisco in the west, and from the south-eastern States, but avoiding trees from further north because that was not cold enough. He stressed the idea of a mixed rotational planting, allowing ultimately for continuous cutting and planting of such trees as pines, oaks, hickory, magnolias, and swamp cypress.

The final field day for the year had a conservation theme, with Soil Conservator R.McCarlie from Whangarei discussing poplars and willows. Considerable discussion followed on the protection of areas of native trees remaining, with the need seen to prevent further logging and to control wandering stock.

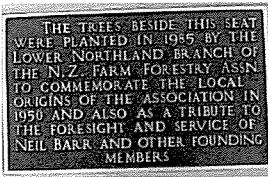
The first AGM was held in the Waitoki Hall on 15 June 1951. The President and Secretary were re-elected with an enlarged committee including Hec Nicholls and Marcus Dill.

Copies of Forest Service economist Matt Grainger's paper on forestry taxation were available, with the President and Secretary to draft a letter to the Hon Clifton Webb on perceived anomalies in taxation as applying to farm forestry.

A move was initiated to get a team from Station 1YA out with a recording unit to visit farm foresters' properties, with

Right: Foundation members of the Lower North Branch in 1985. Back—Roger West, Marcus Dill; front—Fred Brunskill, Neil Barr, Margaret Morison, Hec Nicholls. Absent—Ken Bartlett.

Below: Commemorative plaque inserted in the seat shown in the photo at right.



a discussion panel talking to Jack Aylsbury on the advantages of trees on farms.

Field days throughout the 1950s were typically attended by 50–70, and were usually to local farms to inspect native remnants, shelter or exotic trees. The Forest Service was of great assistance with advice and slide shows to illustrate good practice.

The largest field day was at Barletts in 1954 when about 150 attended to hear a talk by Richard St Barbe Baker.

A number of overseas delegates to the Empire Forestry Conference attended another meeting at “Bankside”.

A feature of the early years of the Lower North Association was the number of experts on various aspects of forestry and tree growing who were invited to speak to the group. A good two-way flow of information resulted, as the professionals could learn much from the knowledgeable membership.

Treating posts and battens was a big subject in the early days, with Marcus Dill arranging orders for creosote and buying 20-drum lots from the Auckland Gas Company. It could be a dangerous job. One drum exploded on Fred Brunskill and his mother rubbed butter over his face and arms to dissolve the creosote. It was reported that he cleaned

up very well! Hec Nicholls says that he still has the scars of burns on his legs from creosote. He made a treatment drum from part of a chimney stack from the Kaipara Dairy Company.

Looking back, members say that some of the posts Neil treated did not last as long as they should have because the creosote did not get into the centre. It was a case of drying and weighing the posts before and after treatment to make sure the right amount of preservative had been absorbed.

Harry Bunn was guest speaker to the 1954 AGM, talking, of course, on eucalypts. He and Neil had by this time struck up a firm friendship.

In 1961, the Lower North Branch hosted the fourth Conference of the National Association, with field trips to Riverhead and Woodhill Forests (NZ Forest Service), to "Bankside" and to "Beresford".

Two events at the Riverhead field day were long remembered. One of the buses climbing the wet greasy road to the lookout slid slowly over the edge, remaining precariously balanced. Farm foresters walking outside jumped up with their hands through the bus windows and hung on to the side to keep the bus steady while all inside climbed out. A bulldozer pulled the bus back on to the road later with no harm done.

The second event was the discussion on the low fertility of the podsolised soil of the forest, and the remarkable effect of superphosphate. Malcolm Conway, then Acting Conservator at Auckland, held up a disc cut from a pine showing the very slow growth becoming almost nil at 15 years, then showing a remarkable increase between the annual rings following the application of super. Earlier experiments had led to the first aerial application of fertiliser to a forest in New Zealand, with superphosphate applied at 5 cwt/acre (625 kg/ha) in 1955.

The field day at "Beresford" looked at shelter, woodlots of pines and eucalypts, the creosote operation, and the fine panelling and furniture in Neil and Rose's home made from Bartlett's *Eucalyptus saligna* and *Acacia melanoxylon*.

At Woodhill, delegates saw the stabilising of moving sand dunes with spinifex and marram grass before planting with *Pinus radiata*, *P. pinaster*, and *Cupressus macrocarpa*. Planting was done mostly by machine, a Lowther Tree Planter towed by a D6 Tractor.

Lower North was very concerned at the damage caused by possums, and wrote to the Ministers of Forestry and Agriculture urging action “to destroy this pest”.

Members were also concerned over low stumpage prices. Neil Barr made frequent mention of this issue in his *NZ Farmer* articles, also in discussions with the National Executive and the Forest Service.

During the 1970s the Branch was able to draw on the professional and business experience of some of its newer members. Mike Smith, with considerable forestry interests in the area, brought a business-like management to the Branch when he became Secretary. Mike Malloy, an Auckland solicitor with considerable plantings of a range of species, contributed a great deal of his thought and philosophy about where forestry was going, firstly in a booklet on “Forest Policy in New Zealand” leading to the drafting of the Cooperative Forestry Companies Act 1978, and later to the Forestry Rights Registration Act 1983.

The National Conference was again hosted by Lower North in 1983, based at Orewa. Delegates visited Neil and Rose Barr’s property to discuss species, spacing, and silviculture, and Bartlett’s to wonder at the grandeur of the *Eucalyptus saligna*. Frank had died in 1979, but Ken demonstrated his sawmilling techniques with his “Forestmill”.

Conference visited the Malloy property where Mike, Pat, and family (when they could be roped in) spent every weekend available planting some 10 000 trees or more per year, mostly of quality hardwoods. Mike showed blackwood interplanted with eucalypts which were gradually thinned to waste. A huge job, but the blackwood stand today is magnificent with tall clean butt logs. The Malloys won the “North Island Farm Forester of the Year” award at this 1983 Conference.



Ken Bartlett among his “Bartlett’s *saligna*” in June 1994.

The committee organising the 1983 Conference was chaired by Alex Morison with the great enthusiasm which he showed in all the other contributions made to the Branch. Alex's extensive plantings began in 1947, with a highlight of his life being able to watch his logs leave on the first log ship to Japan from Whangarei in 1980. He remained convinced that minimum tending of *P. radiata* was the way to go, and entered many a debate with the high-pruning wide-spacing devotees. This argument was revived in a newsletter where members' attention was drawn to a remark by Fletcher Challenge, that the demand for low-grade timber was not growing as anticipated, and so small growers should concentrate on producing high-quality timber.

In 1985 the Branch celebrated its 35th anniversary with a dinner at Orewa and with Harry Bunn as guest speaker. This anniversary was also marked by the planting of native trees at the Omeru Reserve on SH 16 near Neil's farm. This land was a County reserve made available through the good offices of Hec Nicholls who was then on Council. The planting team included four foundation members, the Dills and the Nicholls. The following year a memorial plaque incorporated into a well-designed seat was unveiled at this reserve.

The Branch agreed in 1989 to sponsor the launching of AMIGO by holding a seminar at Warkworth for blackwood enthusiasts.

Neil Barr's 80th birthday was celebrated at a garden party at Marcus and Claire Dill's homestead. In 1991 Kerry McGee, John Millett, and Norval Gibson Smith accompanied Neil on his last walkabout through the eucalypt forest at "Beresford", the day before the new owner took possession. When Neil moved to Northbridge Retirement Village, 20 members attended a tree planting ceremony, helping Neil plant two large deciduous trees close to his unit, with strict instructions that he was not to prune them up for clearwood! Neil died on 1 January 1996, by which time Branch membership was 370. A kauri tree was planted in memory of Neil at the Omeru Reserve by members and the Barr family in 1997.

For a number of years Branch bus tours over a week-end were organised by Mike Smith and John Good. These trips visited other Branches as far away as Gisborne, with reciprocal visits sometimes occurring. In recent years this has lapsed due to the difficult economic circumstances on many farms.

Norval Gibson Smith has supplied the following information on high-profile members of the Lower North Branch:

<i>President</i>	Neil Barr for 15 years.
<i>Secretary</i>	Frank Bartlett for 16 years. Mike Smith for 12+ years. John Good for 6 years.
Neil Barr	Inspirational enthusiast. National President 1957–63.
Alex Morison	Excellent at field days with searching questions.
Marcus Dill	Amazing depth of knowledge in plant identification, geology, and soils.
Hec Nicholls	A tireless worker in the early days until his County position took too much time. National Executive 1966–69.
John Millett	Great for questions and discussion, and thinking forestry questions through in a thoroughly practical way.
Mike Malloy	“The thinking man’s forester” who brought a different and wider perspective to tree growing.
Bob Anderson	(Captain Bob). Valued for his entrepreneurial approach, and the information he brought back from forestry visits to Sweden, Russia, South Africa, USA.
Ralph Silvester	Expert identification skills in exotic and indigenous trees, plus a background of French agricultural and scientific training from the 1930s.
Michael Hay	Another member with business skills, continuing the long run of Lower North members on National Executive 1995–98, including the Treasurer’s role.

Mike Smith Branch galvaniser who got things going with energy and drive, combined with ideas and imagination. Gave the Branch great service. National Executive member 1982–94, President 1988–90, Executive Secretary 1991–94.

Kerry McGee An unsung hero little known beyond the Branch but, as local forestry contractor with a good Forest Service background, he has brought professionalism in silviculture to the Branch. With long service as committee member and Chairman, he has a broad environmentally sensitive approach to forestry. He is a born teacher and worthy successor to the Barr/Bunn clinic tradition.

John Good Representing considerable business interests in Auckland as builders, property developers, and large-scale foresters, John served as Chairman, then Secretary, working efficiently and quietly behind the scene.

Norval Gibson Smith: Norval and his wife Margaret were both professional librarians who bought an 11-ha block next to Parry Kauri Park in Warkworth. They have continued to protect and extend native plantings, as well as plant some exotics, particularly blackwood. Norval founded the blackwood action group, AMIGO, in 1989. He has been on the committee for 10 years, 4 of them as Chairman. Norval and Margaret both attribute their enthusiasm for trees to reading Neil Barr's *NZ Farmer* articles.

Middle Districts – 1956

Neil Barr, with NZ Forest Service personnel, spoke at a meeting in 1955 at Marton but the Branch was formed in

April 1956, with about 40 people attending a meeting at the “Woodendean” property of D.R. Willis at Greatford.

The first President was D.R. Willis, Secretary Murray Wilson, and Treasurer C. Campbell (all of Bulls), with a committee comprising J.P. Wells, T.E. Waight, J.H. Tiffin (all of the Wanganui district), R.C. Gordon (Taihape), B. McLeod (Fielding), Dr J.S. Yeates (Massey College), J.S. Callesen (Longburn), and R.H. Thevenard (Kimbolton). Gerald Hocking of NZ Forest Service in Palmerston North was also co-opted to the committee, and became a great help to the Association in its early days.

Middle Districts area was very large to begin with, including Wellington, west of the main divide to Waiouru and Ohakune, down to Wanganui, and west to Waverley. This is now reduced with a Wellington Branch at the southern, and a Ruapehu Branch at the northern end.

Three National Conferences have been hosted by the Branch; the one in 1958 was the first AGM following the National Association formation the previous year in Rotorua. Much larger Conferences were hosted in 1975 and 1997.

Murray Wilson acted as Branch Secretary for 26 years until 1982, and was also National Association Secretary from 1957 to 1962.

Interest in farm treatment of posts and battens led Hew McKellar and T.O. Phillips to take part in the graveyard test fences (*see* Chapter 12 “Timber Preservation”), to look at the efficiency of creosote and other chemicals.

The “Wahine” storm of 10 April 1968 caused a great deal of damage throughout the area.

Three local members, Dick Thevenard, J. Wills, and Hew McKellar, took part in the North Island section of the Leyland cypress trials for shelter, organised a couple of years earlier by Peter Smail with Dr Hamish Sturrock of Lincoln College.

The Branch arranged a members’ bulk purchase scheme for seedlings from Murray’s Nursery, Woodville.

In 1977 the idea of forming a co-operative was raised, and after the 1978 Act was passed, Western Forestry Co-

operative Ltd was formed, to help members with tending and marketing of woodlots.

Branch Life Membership was conferred on Dick Thevenard, Murray Wilson, Parry Thorby, and Ian McKean in 1981 in recognition of the great contribution they had made to the district. Ian McKean won the “North Island Farm Forester of the Year” award in 1982, and had the pleasure of hosting the visit by the 1997 Conference to his extensive conifer collection.

Parry Thorby won the same award in 1991 at Whangarei, while the third winner of this prestigious award was Denis Hocking in 1992.

The Hocking family has made a great contribution to farm forestry in the area and nationally. In the early years, Gerald helped the local Branch, but also Neil Barr in his quest for forestry knowledge. June took on the job of National Secretary during 1978–79, and their son Denis was on the National Executive from 1993 to 1995 but has helped in many ways, culminating in demonstrating to the 1997 Conference his considerable plantations and marketing skills.

The Branch holds nine or ten field trips each year, and a newsletter has been distributed since 1981. Membership is currently about 300.

Considerable assistance in running the Branch has been given by the Forest Service, with Ron Wells, Conservator of Forests, Wellington, helping draft the first National Constitution, and helping Neil Barr organise other branches. The Palmerston North office of the Forest Service also provided Norm Gill who acted as National Treasurer and Membership Secretary for years from 1959 to 1983.

Norm was appointed a Life Member of the NZFFA in 1983.

The Manawatu Catchment Board, and Chris van Kraayenoord, Bruce Bulloch, and others from Aokautere Plant Materials Centre also provided much expertise in the field of erosion, poplar and willow establishment, and research. Through the Catchment Authorities, and with subsidies to assist planting in effect for a number of years,



Ian McKean with cones from two species in his extensive collection of conifers.

Photo courtesy of Manawatu Evening Standard



Parry Thorby receiving his award as “North Island Farm Forester of the Year” in 1991.

this erosion-control work has served New Zealand very well, and the discontinuance of the research may prove costly in the future.

Middle District's effort in hosting the 1997 National Conference called for a big input from many people, led by past New Zealand President Mike Smith, now living in the district. National Conferences are now large events, attended by 300–400 people, and lasting about 6 days.

Hawke's Bay – 1956

At a meeting convened by M.S.Chambers, A.I.Rainbow, and H.M.Williams at the Federated Farmers rooms in Hastings on 23 April 1956, Neil Barr gave an outline of the aims of the Lower North Farm Forestry Association, and pointed out the many ways in which a forestry association could help in the planting and harvesting of trees. Ron Wells and Bob Jackson of the Forest Service showed slides of planting and forestry work in the Wairarapa and Taranaki.

Following a decision to form a Hawke's Bay Association, M.S.Chambers was elected President with H.M.Williams as Secretary. Six Vice-Presidents and a committee of the above plus eight others got the new Branch off to an enthusiastic start. The subscription was set at 20/- per year (\$2-00).

The first field day at Sir Andrew Russell's "Tunanui" heard Meyric Williams suggest that the Association might institute "graveyard" tests to show timber durability. This became a major project between various Branches of the Association and FRI.

At the second field day on 29 October 1956 at Gwavas Forest, 21 members heard a trial draft of a constitution for the Association. An election of officers at this meeting resulted in Meyric Williams as President and G.M.Glazebrook as Secretary, with a committee of eight.

On 21 March 1957, 38 members attended a field day at Meyric Williams' "Ngahere".

The decision was made at a meeting in April 1957 that committee members would hold office for 4 years, and that

elections would then be held every 4 years. It was agreed that the Association be registered as a nursery.

Final details of the Constitution were worked through, with a copy to be posted out with the subscription notice. (Only about two Branches formed their own Constitution—the Constitution of the New Zealand Association covers all branches).

Mike Halliday reports that the Constitution and the 4-year election term have not been adhered to, except perhaps for the first few years.

At the 1957 AGM, a letter from Neil Barr suggested the need to form a National body comprising Associations already formed. Such a meeting was held in Rotorua on 25 June 1957, Hawke's Bay being represented by J.O. Williams, Meyric Williams, Brian Pattison, and E.L.Lambe.

The issue of Death Duties on farm trees was raised, with members being firmly behind the need for review of this taxation.

Hawke's Bay hosted its first National Conference in 1963 when Meyric Williams was President of the local Branch. Delegates visited notable properties in the district including Russell's "Tunanui", Chamber's "Rukumoana", Meyric Williams' "Ngahere", and Brian Pattison's "Waiwhero". Neil Barr wrote a report of this Conference in *Farm Forestry* 5(3) August 1963, referring particularly to the good humour of the "Minister of Transport", Dick Gilbertson, who kept the buses on time. As so often happened, Neil spent a few extra days visiting other properties including those of Dick Gilbertson and Gordon Menzies.

In 1981, Hawke's Bay again hosted the Conference, this time based in Hastings with John Renton in charge. This was probably the first Conference to have over 300 delegates. A field day to Patoka and Puketitiri stopped to view the magnificent native podocarps in the forest remnant at Ball's Clearing, then went on to Bill and Mary Whittle's farm with its fine shelter plantings on high country subject to snow. Other properties visited were those of Ron Hartree with fine ornamental plantings, the Van Asche family to inspect trees



Eucalyptus obliqua trees (planted in 1924) near Mike and Helen Halliday's home at "Raumati", Patoka.

for erosion control, and the commercial Rukumoana Forest of Carter Holt.

The Hawke's Bay Branch grew to nearly 300 after this conference boost, with annual dinners following the AGM and the naming of the "Farm Forester of the Year" drawing over 100 members. After several years, numbers began to drop and so the AGM was held at local notable homesteads and gardens.

Seminars were held on topics such as shelter and firewood production. Jack Bilkey, one of those rare people from the Department of Agriculture interested in trees, helped the Hawke's Bay Branch—he had earlier done the same in the Northern Wairoa area.

The Branch manned a tent at the Hawke's Bay A&P Show for a number of years, in 1983 winning the prize for the best trade exhibit. This was the result of a tremendous design effort by Martin Pharazyn. Mike Halliday recalls problems with the showgrounds committee for digging holes in the trotting track when erecting the tent! The display had two main themes: production of quality timber by the use of proper silvicultural techniques, and the role of trees in the farm habitat—the creation of non-timber values.

Hawke's Bay FFA show committee with the Charles Douglas Cup for best overall exhibit at the Royal Show. From left: Michael Halliday, Peter Arthur, Martin Pharazyn, Brian Walker, and Peter Ormond.



Peter Arthur of Touchwood Books exhibited his wares at the show, with great success in selling John and Bunny Mortimer's new book. The first box of books was sold by lunch on the first day, but orders were taken and more arrived by courier for the third day.

Unfortunately these show tent efforts have now ceased due to the cost.

Some of the people contributing a great deal to Hawke's Bay Branch by long service on the committee included:

- Meyric Williams and Mason Chambers in the early days. Meyric was made a Life Member of the National Association in 1983.
- John Renton for some 7 years including a term as President.
- Brian Walker, local nurseryman who acted as Secretary or President for 10 years.
- Theo Herbert for 9 years as Secretary with an honorarium.
- Martin Pharazyn for about 10 years.
- Alec Olsen for some 15 years, with a term as President and currently producing the newsletter.
- Mike Halliday for 20 years including a term as President. Mike has been on the National Executive since 1992.

The Branch has conferred Life Membership on June Williams and Martin Pharazyn.

Tony Watt, an Extension Officer of the NZ Forest Service, served for many years on the committee, some of them as Secretary. He is now a private consultant.

Recent years have seen a vast increase in forestry in Hawke's Bay hill country due to the very good growth, the boom in investment forestry, and poor farming returns. The port at Napier and the mill at Whirinaki provide a short haul to market, and so grower returns should be among the best in the country.

Taranaki Farm Shelter and Forestry Association – 1956

Early settlers in Taranaki from England, the Shetland Islands, and Europe were presented with a daunting task of clearing dense bush to establish pasture. The fertility of the land amazed these pioneers but as a consequence of clearing

the bush, their farms were exposed to the fierce westerly winds sweeping in from the Tasman Sea.

The excellent soil was quickly recognised by early nurserymen who established Norfolk pines as well as *P. radiata* and *Cupressus macrocarpa* between 1850 and 1890. The firm of Duncan and Davies was established in 1910 by combining the resources of the two earlier-established family nurseries. Duncan and Davies has had an enormous effect on tree establishment on farms throughout New Zealand, as for many years they supplied by mail order to a demand created by producing an excellent catalogue of exotic and native tree and shrub species.

Vic Davies quickly got into importing new species and exporting New Zealand trees, taking advantage of knowledge gained when in the army of occupation of Germany and France following World War I. Never one to miss an opportunity, Vic Davies exported 3½ tons of *P. radiata* seed to Messrs Vilmoria Andrieux and Co., France, who sent it on to establish forests in South Africa and Australia.

Mr A. George, another nurseryman, grew large quantities of boxthorn (*Lycium horridum*) which was stockproof, grew very rapidly, and was completely salt-resistant. Many miles of boxthorn shelter were established near the coast. Keeping these hedges narrow required frequent cutting using steel-wheeled or crawler tractors, as the thorns penetrated rubber tyres.

By the 1920s some people had begun thinking of planting exotic species as a future timber resource, with the Maxwells of Oaonui, Andrew Turnbull of Huirangi, and Henry Kitchingham of New Plymouth planting eucalypts and other species. The Honnor Brothers (Percy and Herman) of Huirangi planted some 40 species of eucalypts as well as conifers, and William B. Fussell planted some 100 000 *P. radiata* at Waiongona where he later pioneered the sawmilling of pine with an American imported mill in the 1930s.

By the time Neil Barr made his first branch-establishing visit to the lower North Island in 1956, he already knew the Parsons from Patea, and he met Jack Stronge and Doug Watt

with Ron Wells and Gerald Hocking from the NZ Forest Service.

Early records of the Taranaki Branch have not been found, but Livingston Baker of Patea had personal diary notes recording the inaugural meeting as occurring on 13 June 1956, where Neil Barr, Ron Wells, and Gerald Hocking spoke. The next day they toured sand country in the district. Mr Baker is sure that the inaugural meeting was convened by John Parsons. Jack Stronge was elected as President with Doug Watt as Secretary, both from Opunake. The committee comprised Reg Packer of the NZ Forest Service who was of great assistance in early years, Grant Maxwell of Oaonui, Jim Western of Korito, and John and Peter Parsons of Patea.

The young Branch was given a boost by hosting the third annual Conference of the NZFFA in New Plymouth in 1959. Field trips visited Duncan and Davies Nurseries, the Honnor Brothers, and Grant Maxwell's property.

The twentieth Conference was also held in New Plymouth in 1977, and the properties visited in 1959 were again inspected together with the New Plymouth City Council's Lake Mangamahoe Forest where a range of species and silvicultural treatments were discussed with the forest manager, Mick Busing.

This Conference is remembered by many as providing the most efficient catering, with evening meals always over in time for the speaking programme.

A close liaison has always been maintained with the Forest Research Institute, with Spacing Shelter Trials established at the Waimate Demonstration Farm, the Stratford Demonstration Farm, and the L.A. Alexander Agricultural College Trust, Tikorangi. FRI scientists Jeff Tombleson (shelter), Ian Nicholas (alternative species), Leith Knowles (agroforestry), and others have made frequent visits to trials and field days.

Field days usually attract 40–50 members with special promotional field days drawing up to 200 people.

Three Branch members have been awarded the "North Island Farm Forester of the Year"—Maurice Hawkes in

1986, Peter and Kitty Parsons in 1990, with John and Orrel McIntyre also receiving, for the first time, the carved kauri shield presented by Geoff and Gill Brann of Te Puke.

The Branch established a marketing co-operative, the Tree Growers' Marketing Society, in 1994. Members are on the Advisory Board of the Taranaki Polytechnic Forest and Natural Resources (1992) course, teaching sustainable land use. The Branch has had a good relationship with the old Catchment Commission, more recently the Regional Council, and has members actively involved in retiring erosion-prone land to agroforestry or plantations.

Jack Stronge, President from 1956 to 1970, was a gifted and energetic member with expertise in many fields. As a journalist for the *NZ Herald* and a World War II correspondent, Jack's ability to write articles of interest was seen in his many contributions to *Farm Forestry*. He served on the National Executive from 1959 to 1972, being particularly helpful with the production of the journal, and in liaising with Federated Farmers. He was made a Life Member of the NZFFA in 1970. Jack made a large contribution to farm forestry by contributing to the 1969 Forestry Development Conference.

Jack and the first Secretary, Doug Watt, raised many trees on his "Berryfield" farm nursery. Much of the material propagated was given away to members attending field days.

Jack Stronge served many other bodies in Taranaki including the Oaonui Co-op Dairy Company where he was a director for 24 years, the last 10 as Chairman, the Returned Services Association where he was awarded the Gold Star badge in 1968, and the Egmont County Council, to name but three.

Peter Parsons was Branch President from 1970 to 1986 and, with his brother John, trialled many species of trees on their large-scale dairy farm at Patea, where he could see how valuable shelter could be. Peter kept meticulous records of his plantings from 1947, with seed sources and management details. Some of his steep gullies grew fine timber trees, since used for supplying timber for farm use.

Maurice Hawkes, President from 1986 to 1989, tried many different species on his Tarurutangi farm, keeping very good records. He was able to demonstrate to a 1996 field day that returns from a small area of one-sixth of a hectare were equivalent to \$60 663/ha, with all grades of logs itemised.

Maurice was a founding Director of the Tree Growers' Marketing Society.

Jeremy Thomson, President 1989–92, has planted many gullies and steep areas on his farm, establishing ponds for water fowl with extensive riparian plantings. Jeremy has had a close relationship with FRI, and helped Leith Knowles develop the Agroforestry Estate Models. He is on the policy committee of the Farm Plantation Management Co-operative of FRI.

From 1989 to 1991 Jeremy Thomson was manager of the Atawhai Agroforestry, which helped intellectually handicapped people learn forestry skills to become independent. Atawhai Industries (Jeremy Thomson, D.Sampson, and Maurice Hawkes) won the first MOF "Award for Innovation" in 1988. With his partner Harry Saunders, Jeremy established the Forestry and Land Management Company contracting forestry services.

Jeremy served more than 10 years on the Pukeiti Rhododendron Trust. He was on the NZFFA Executive from 1988 to 1991.

The Taranaki Branch has its own award, the Certificate of Appreciation, which was first presented to Doug Watt, and since to John and Orrel McIntyre 1994, Peter Parsons 1994, Stuart Gane 1995, Maurice Hawkes 1996, Bill Honnor 1997, Noel and Edith Nairn 1997, Jeremy Thomson 1998, and Albert and Anne Larsen 1998.

The Taranaki Regional Council also has presented Environmental Awards to the McIntyre Brothers Partnership (John and Orrel's sons) and Jeremy Thomson in 1997, and to John McIntyre in 1998, for advocacy of sustainable land management practices, both on his farm at Waitui, and in his work at the L.A.Alexander Agricultural Trust farm, and the Taranaki Polytechnic.

Noel and Edith Nairn of Urenui received an award for advocacy of shelter and amenity planting in 1998.

Taranaki is preparing to hold the 1999 National Conference in New Plymouth, the NZFFA's forty-second Conference, and the third in the region.

Wairarapa – 1956

Wairarapa was fortunate to have Murray King, Soil Conservator for the Wairarapa Catchment Board, as its first Secretary. Before the local Branch was formed, he advised the Catchment Board of the movements of Neil Barr and the NZ Forest Service in promoting tree planting, and supplied the Masterton District Forest Ranger, D.M.B. Iythe, with a list of 27 people likely to be interested in the formation of an association.

Federated Farmers actually called the meeting to be held in the Savage Club room at Masterton, with Convener Russell W. Smith, for the afternoon of 15 June 1956.

The Association was duly formed, with Russell Smith as President, John Coom and Hugh Barton as Vice-Presidents, and a committee of Ian Nelson, Bob Williams, and A.C. Ahearn. Murray King was elected Secretary/Treasurer, and the membership fee was set at 5/-.

The new Association's first field day was perhaps one of the most significant farm forestry field days ever held, as it drew attention to the work of the late Will Hull of Whareama. W.B. Hull, made a Life Member of the National Association just before his death in 1964, had planted a range of species between 1924 and 1928, but was a pioneer in pruning. *Pinus radiata* and *C. macrocarpa* had been high pruned to 45 feet, leaving wonderful specimens. In 1963, 12 of the *P. radiata* were taken to Waipa Mill and sawn under FRI supervision, with some material also peeled at Henderson and Pollard's Auckland factory. Unpruned trees from a nearby stand were milled by C.E. Daniell's mill at Masterton to provide comparison. The results of the sawing, with full descriptions of timber grades achieved were written up by G.S. Brown of FRI in *Farm Forestry* 7/1 February 1965, and clearly showed the value of pruning, now so widely practised.



Some of Will Hull's high-pruned *Pinus radiata*.

The second newsletter for the Wairarapa Branch, written by Murray King, described a field day at Russell Smith's property on 28 August 1956, where there was a planting demonstration of several species, and relevant discussion. One member present was a Pahiatua nurseryman, who soon received some advance orders for trees for the next 2 years. These orders included one for Jim Pottinger, later National Secretary and President, who required for 1957, 100 *P. radiata*, 200 *C. macrocarpa*, 100 *Thuja plicata*, and 50 each of *Eucalyptus fraxinoides*, *E. robertsoni*, *E. obliqua*, *E. saligna*, and *E. gigantea*. Jim also requested 300 larch if available, and some black wattle for firewood trees.

From these early beginnings, a very successful Branch developed, with a membership of 197 in 1996. National Conferences were hosted in 1967 and 1987 in Masterton. Several Conference Committee personnel were involved in both events.

Russell Smith was the second National President after Neil Barr and was made a Life Member in 1973. Russell was severely burned in a hay barn fire in December 1969, but made a typically determined recovery to resume an active life. He died in 1983.

Jim Pottinger was National Secretary from 1963 to 1968, and National President 1973–76. Airini Pottinger was on the National Executive in 1984, and was Branch President for the 1987 Conference. Both Jim and Airini are NZFFA Life Members.

Joe Taylor served on the National Executive as a co-opted member representing Federated Farmers from 1974 to 1986, being particularly helpful in association endeavours to have representation on the Timber Preservation Authority, and in advising members of changes to rural fire legislation.

Wairarapa Branch had a major input into the making of a 20-minute movie on farm forestry "In the Company of Trees", shot largely at Pottinger's and Taylor's properties. This film was made between 1970 and 1972, and first seen by the National Executive at Pacific Film Studios in Wellington in November 1972. Three copies were made, and were freely available to Branches for local meetings.

The original film has recently (1997) been converted to video cassette, and contains much that is still relevant.

Gisborne East Coast – 1957

The inaugural meeting of this Association was held in Gisborne on 11 June 1957. The District Forest Ranger, NZ Forest Service, introduced guests before handing the meeting to C.H. Williams to act as interim Chairman.

The Conservator of Forests, Mr Dunn, addressed the meeting offering advice and technical assistance to anyone interested in establishing the Farm Forestry Association in the district. He mentioned the need for a State forest in the area.

Neil Barr then addressed the gathering, outlining the history of farm forestry in Lower Northland, and the development of other Branches more recently. Neil said that farmers who had established good stands of timber in the past were now reaping a handsome profit, and he predicted an acute timber shortage over the next 25 years.

After the decision was made to form an association, some debate ensued on the area it should cover. This was finally agreed to be the six counties: Cook, Wairoa, Waikohu, Uawa, Waipapu, and Matakaoa.

The following were elected as the first committee members: J. Holdsworth, S. Monck, C. Spencer, C. Monkton, R. Graham, F. Faulkner, and D. Thomas, with power to add. Mr Whitehead was elected at this stage. The committee in turn elected J. Holdsworth as President, R. Graham as Vice-President, and F. Faulkner as Secretary.

It was agreed that subscriptions be set at 5/- (50c).

The Branch has had a membership of 60–120 over the years, with an active programme of field days. Two National Conferences have been held in Gisborne, in 1969 and 1989.

In 1969 delegates visited Fred Faulkner's Wairakaia Station where a range of eucalypts had been grown, together with successful stands of *Cupressus macrocarpa*. Fred had previously written of his success with creosote-treated macrocarpa which lasted well as posts. The visit to Jim



A stand of macrocarpa at Wairakaia Station.

Holdsworth's property at Te Karaka saw extensive plantations with sawmilling and creosote treatment on a large scale. \$300 profit from this Conference was donated to the Eastwoodhill Arboretum.

The 1989 Conference was most interesting to delegates as it occurred just after Cyclone Bola which caused such devastating erosion in the area, with a vast number of slips in the hills and a huge deposit of silt on the fertile plains. Discussions on the value of forestry as a land use on erosion-prone hills was led by local Catchment Board officer, Bob Miller. Delegates saw the vast Tarndale slip, the Mangatu State Forest, and the huge silt flow in the Waipaoa River.

Wairakaia Station, now owned by Rodney Faulkner, was again visited, with emphasis on eucalypts and cypresses.

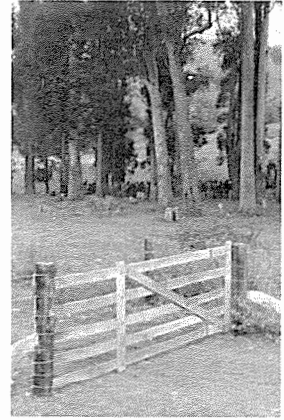
A highlight was the visit to Bob Berry's beautiful property at Tiniroto, where a wide range of native and introduced trees included 170 species of oak, a remarkable collection from all around the world.

John Larsen, National Association Secretary for 10 years, showed delegates some of the finer points of milling a large *Eucalyptus obliqua* log.

Eastwoodhill Arboretum was established by Douglas Cook in 1910, and a visit there was much appreciated with its wide variety of ornamental trees. The Gisborne East Coast Branch has a member on the Eastwoodhill Trust Board established by an Act of Parliament in 1975.

A newsletter which began in a small way in 1958 has increased in size and regularity, these days financed largely by cover advertising. Promotion of farm forestry was also effected by manning a stand at the A & P Show, and by donating a feature wall of many locally grown timbers at the new Federated Farmers building in Gisborne. There was considerable emphasis on species other than *P. radiata*, as shown by a remit to the National Conference in 1966, advocating encouragement for special-purpose species.

As well as donations to Eastwoodhill Arboretum, working parties of members helped bring the property back from a rather neglected state.



Gate made of eucalypt and posts of creosote-treated macrocarpa on Rodney Faulkner's property. In the background are *Eucalyptus globoidea*, *E. saligna*, *E. botryoides*, and hybrids.

The Branch has put considerable effort into making submissions to Local Authorities, helping to define the place of forestry in their District Scheme plans. They were also successful in having the minimum planting area to qualify for the East Coast Project (a Government-assisted scheme for planting trees on erosion-prone land) reduced from 50 ha to 25 ha over a 3-year period.

In 1991, members produced a package of tree-planting information to go into all schools in the district.

Gisborne East Coast helped in 1991 to push for changes to the way the National Executive was elected, giving ordinary members a greater say.

At the 1989 Conference, Bob Berry received the “North Island Farm Forester of the Year” award. In 1988, Nick Seymour won the East Coast tree farm competition. Pat and Nick Seymour won the Husqvarna “North Island Farm Forester of the Year” award in 1997, then Pat and Nick received the MAF “Award for Innovation in Sustainable Farm Forestry” in 1999. Ray and Grace Newman won this same prestigious award for innovation in 1997, while Jim Holdsworth, who had already won the “North Island Farm Forester of the Year” award in 1981, received a Certificate for Services to Farm Forestry in 1997. John Larsen, after retiring from the National Secretary’s position, also received this Certificate in 1992.

Jim Holdsworth served on the National Executive from 1961 to 1966, Fred Faulkner in 1963, and Bob Berry from 1968 to 1970. John Larsen’s term as National Secretary was from 1981 to 1990.

Messrs Holdsworth, Faulkner, and Berry occupied the Branch President’s role from 1957 to 1976.

Although not a large Branch in number of members, Gisborne East Coast has produced people of considerable influence on the New Zealand farm forestry scene.

Because of the difficult climatic conditions, and the hilly erosion-prone land above such fertile plains, trees are going to continue to be an integral part of wise land use, and so the Branch seems assured of an interesting future.

Waimate – 1957–61

Alan Meyer, who served on the National Executive from 1963 to 1966 has confirmed that a Waimate Branch was formed following correspondence between Alan and Neil Barr regarding articles Neil had written in the *NZ Farmer*.

The Branch was formed following a meeting in about 1957 at “Centrewood”, a property then owned by J.W.Hayes. Neil Barr, A.P.Thomson, Charlie Bridgeman, and Bill Jolliffe were present. Alan was elected Chairman, and J.L.Symons from the Department of Agriculture was Secretary.

No records seem to have been kept, but Alan Meyer recalls that the Branch lasted only a few years. Numbers attending meetings fell away and in 1961 South Canterbury welcomed amalgamation with Waimate, thus winding up the Branch.

Marlborough – 1957

The records of this Branch prior to 1980 have not been located but Jim Hughes, who was an early member and was President 1980–87, has provided helpful information.

The Association was formed in 1957, mainly by farmers in the Wairau, Awatere, and East Coast areas who realised they had little timber for firewood, building, and fencing.

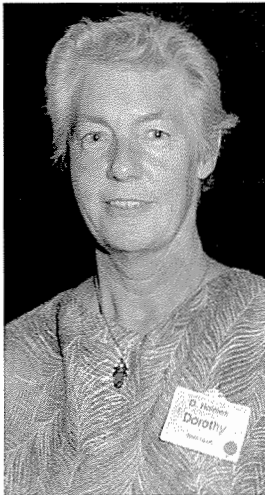
The first Secretary was Ross MacArthur who, as Soil Conservator and head of the Marlborough Catchment Board, had a huge influence on tree planting in the region for a great many years. Ross had previously been a forester with the NZ Forest Service, and in later years was to develop a great interest in the cork oak, *Quercus suber*, which he thought would do well in the area and provide cork for the young wine industry. He wrote a book on the tree.

In partnership with others, Ross planted a large area in pine forest at Linkwater, Queen Charlotte Sound. He was often referred to as the father of farm forestry in the district.

The young Branch with President J.Morton Samson was host to the 1964 National Conference, when field trips visited the Catchment Board forest reserve by the Wairau River where the trees had been planted in gravel to stop the



Gordon Holmes (*above*)
and his wife Dorothy
(*below*).



river breaking its banks. Another field trip was to Gordon Robinson's Lake Timara property with a beautiful mixture of hardwoods and unusual conifers—particularly appealing to Ian McKean who wrote of the Conference trips in *Farm Forestry* 6/2 May 1964.

Gordon Holmes was a Branch President in the 1960s, and frequently attended National Conferences. He and his wife Dorothy won the Sach Dolmar "South Island Farm Forester of the Year" award in 1987. Arthur Parkes was then President until Jim Hughes.

Local M.P. Ted Meachen had been able to help Local Bodies and farm foresters in 1964 by getting the Loan Scheme applied to greater Marlborough, but in 1974 the Marlborough County Council outraged small growers by making forestry a conditional use. The subsequent outcry allowed a consortium of Local Bodies to borrow under the Loan Scheme and plant a forest between Tuamarina and Picton known as the Meachen Forest. The Forest Service then followed with considerable plantations, and individuals planted under the Grant Scheme.

The District Scheme provisions remained tight for the Sounds, with a campaign "keep the Sounds free of pines". This was because where logging adjoins the water, mud and silt caused problems for mussel farmers and tourists who admired the clear water, and had an aversion to pines in the Sounds landscape.

In 1975 the Marlborough Forest Owners Association was formed with D.L.Kidd as Chairman. This was a problem for farm foresters as larger growers tended to join the new body although some belonged to both. A steering committee was set up in 1982 to form the Marlborough Forestry Foundation Society, along the lines of the Canterbury Forestry Foundation. Members included Farm Forestry, the Marlborough Forest Owners, and the Marlborough Forestry Corporation (comprising Local Bodies involved in forestry). The object of the Foundation was to unite forest owners for successful marketing and management of their forests in the hope of achieving better prices, and with economies of scale in employing contractors.

With Ket Smith (later Ket Bradshaw, Executive Officer of the Farm Forestry Association) as manager, business was conducted on behalf of 52 members handling log sales of anything from a truckload to 30 ha. Fortunes varied from year to year, but overheads tended to overtake profits. The Foundation was wound up in 1991, partly because no one was prepared to replace “the present aging and rather discouraged Board”, and partly because other selling agents were active, and growers were not loyal to the Foundation. (This same problem has occurred in other regions of New Zealand where marketing co-operatives have been established.)

The second National Conference was held in Blenheim in 1980 when Arthur Parkes was President and Bill Campbell was Secretary. It was opened by the popular local M.P. Doug Kidd. Field trips included boat travel in the Sounds so that delegates could see the reasons for the debate between land owners wishing to plant trees, mussel farmers, and tourism.

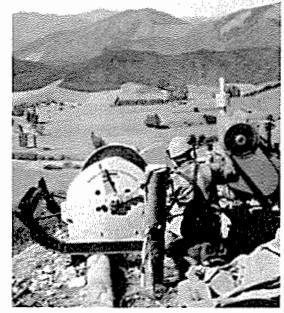
By 1987 when Paul Millen took over from Jim Hughes as President, it had become apparent that Farm Forestry and the Tree Crops Association were overlapping, with many of the same people involved with both. By joining forces, it was thought better attendances with fewer meetings should be possible. After some debate about how the legality of such a new organisation would fit into the rules of the two parent bodies, it was decided to form the Marlborough Tree Grower’s Association, with membership open only to members of either FFA or TCA, and the Committee being evenly divided.

Each year the Gordon Holmes Cup was awarded to the “Best Planted Farm” from several nominations judged independently.

In 1989 the Tree Grower’s Association hosted the National Conference of the Tree Crops Association.

Jim Hughes was awarded Life Membership of the Branch for his many years of outstanding service.

J.Morton Samson was made a Life Member of the Branch, having been auditor for many years after resigning as President.



A trial with the Wyssen W60 Yarder on Jim Hughes’ property in 1991.

Mike Newman became President in 1990, then Secretary in 1991, a position he still holds in 1999 although wishing to resign when a replacement is found.

It was noted at the 1998 AGM that with NZFFA Head Office now handling subscriptions, the Secretary/Treasurer had a reduced role.

The Branch is active, with frequent committee meetings, field days, and the production of a sponsored newsletter.

Wairoa – 1957

A letter was received by Murray Wilson, Secretary of the CFFA, from Ian C. Moore C/- Wairoa County Council and dated 1 November 1957.

Ian Moore advised that the Wairoa Association wished to join CFFA, and enclosed the required fee of £2-2-0. He said the first meeting had been held, and that a field day was planned for Patanama Forest (NZ Forest Service), with a display planned for the A&P Show in January.

The President was D.V. Thomas of Tukara Homestead, Wairoa, with Ian Moore as Secretary. These officers were listed in *Farm Forestry* 1/1 and 1/2.

Farm Forestry 2/4 November 1960 carried a report of a field day looking mainly at properties with a range of eucalypts. Jack Brownlie's woolshed near Frasertown had been built of *Eucalyptus globulus* and *E. macarthurii* grown on the property.

No further records of the Wairoa Association appear to exist, and it is not known when the Branch went into recess.

Waikato – 1958

It has unfortunately not been possible to locate minutes of Waikato Branch meetings and so details of the early years are almost non-existent.

Fortunately, Max Banks who was President of the local Federated Farmers kept a diary and wrote of the formation of the Association in Waikato. His record in a letter to Bob

Inwood in 1989 when Bob was Waikato President gave the following information.

Max Banks met Neil Barr on 4 October 1957, having lunch at the Huntly Hotel. Neil was able to provide names of “key” types to get in touch with, to add to Max’s knowledge of the district through Federated Farmers.

The inaugural meeting of the Waikato Association was held on 8 May 1958 at Tom Smith’s property at Rotorangi. Max Banks was elected President, with Peter Davidson as Secretary.

The first AGM was held at the Federated Farmers Building in Hamilton on 20 April 1959, as was the second AGM on 30 March 1960 with the same President and Secretary, who reported on attending the 1960 National Conference in Christchurch.

On 21 March 1962 Basil Hewitt became President with Tom Smith as Secretary. This team was responsible for a very successful National Conference based in Hamilton in 1965.

Max Banks made mention of some of the early members who helped start off the Branch—in particular, Basil Hewitt, Tom Smith, A.R. Gascoigne, M.C. Gudex, Fred McWhannell, Ted and Jock O’Regan, and others. “That great team, the Mortimers, coming along later on were great medicine”, Max concluded (the Mortimers joined in 1967).

Membership was 69 in 1960, with a subscription of 10/- (\$1-00) per member or 15/- (\$1-50) per family.

The seeding of barberry hedges was an early concern of members, who wanted hedges trimmed each year before flowering.

The 1965 Conference included a field day to Kinleith to see NZ Forest Products mill, forest, and nursery, and a visit to Rukuhia Soil Research Station to hear a talk from Mr Gerlach, an expert on many bamboo species which were seen growing. Delegates also visited Ted and Jock O’Regan’s property to see a pine plantation grown for posts, with a clever way of extracting the posts over the soft peat.



David McNeil, North Island Farm Forester of the Year, 1984.



Bunny Mortimer replying after being made a Life Member.

The long association with the National Fieldays began in 1973 when the Waikato Branch organised a national tree protection competition, where the Branch members provided and planted ornamental trees at the Mystery Creek site, and entrants were invited to build a protective fence around the trees with their own materials and labour. The winning entry, judged at the 1974 Fieldays, was by P.S. Shaw of Frankton, and featured on the cover of *Farm Forestry* 17/4 December 1975. It consisted of 6 m of 900 × 900 silo mesh with two treated posts, the 1974 cost being \$8-40.

The Waikato Branch, led by John and Bunny Mortimer, then as President and Secretary, was active at each winter's Fieldays, promoting farm forestry to the crowds of visitors, and signing up new members from all around the country for their appropriate Branches.

The story of the growth of this display, and the huge efforts involved in putting up a permanent building of substantial proportions at the site, is told separately, but it was a unique effort among the Association's Branches, and consumed much of the local members' time and energy.

The second Hamilton Conference of the NZFFA was held in 1985, with John Mortimer then National President. Field trips at this Conference included visits to the Cumberland Tree Farm south of Te Kuiti (re-visited during the 1993 Te Kuiti Conference), David and Chris McNeil's property on the Kaimai Ranges, John and Bunny Mortimer's property with Charolais cattle among ornamental trees, and the McLaren Falls Arboretum serviced by the Tauranga Tree Society.

The 1993 Te Kuiti Conference also visited the Honokiwi Partnership forestry block. Here 60 ha of *P. radiata* for St Paul's School had been largely managed by John Mortimer.

John Mortimer was a National Executive member from 1978 to 1987, being President from 1984 to 1986. He was made a Life Member of the NZFFA in 1988, with Bunny also being made a Life Member in 1991 for her work at the National Fieldays as Branch Secretary for 5 years, and as a tireless worker for the preservation of indigenous and notable

trees. The Mortimers gifted their 20-ha “Taitua” property to Hamilton City in 1996.

Branch membership in 1996 was 169. Richard Ward, Bob Inwood, and Murray Downs are among those who have given years of service in executive positions in recent years.

The Men of the Trees (Southland) Inc. – 1958

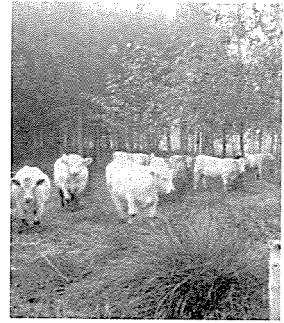
The Men of the Trees (Dunedin) was formed shortly after World War II by Dunedin businessman Philip Barling, and involved a number of Southland members including Alex Campbell of Woodlands and Dave Milligan of Dipton. The North Otago Tree Planting Association, led by Dr Eric Stubbs of Oamaru, had been formed in 1937, and both these organisations had a considerable influence on tree planting in Otago.

When the opportunity arose for a visit to Southland by Richard St Barbe Baker on 8 February 1958, Alex and Dave, with the help of Invercargill dentist Ivon Wilson and Southland County Clerk Harry Gimblett, arranged for a public meeting to hear of Mr Baker’s travels and work for expanded tree planting in Africa, and of the formation of the Men of the Trees in England. At the conclusion of this meeting it was agreed to hold a further meeting on 17 May 1958 to form a branch of the Men of the Trees in Southland.

This inaugural meeting was held in the Automobile Association meeting room, and was attended by 40 people with apologies from another 11. Mr Ivon Wilson chaired the meeting with Harry Gimblett acting as secretary.

The election of officers following the decision to form the branch resulted in Alex Campbell being elected as President, Harry Gimblett as temporary Secretary, and a committee of Dave Milligan, Ian Robertson, J.L.Hazlett, A.W.Newman, Rev. F.H.Waldron, and John Cook. Charles Brown (NZ Forest Service) was a co-opted member.

Alex Campbell served as President for three terms totalling 8 years, while Allen Calvert was Secretary for 20 years from 1962 to 1982.



Cattle amongst the poplars at Mortimer’s.



Don and Margaret Lamont,
with their Best Planted
Farm Award.

Don and Margaret Lamont were there from the beginning, and their property at Pine Bush was the venue for many field days. Don and Margaret were awarded Life Membership in 1997.

The timing of the formation of the Men of the Trees (Southland) coincided with correspondence from Neil Barr regarding farm forestry, and a visit from Neil and Rose Barr in 1962. This later resulted in the formation of the Northern Southland branch of NZFFA but it was agreed at the outset to have reciprocal membership available to members of the two organisations for a small fee to cover the cost of newsletters.

The Men of the Trees (Southland) Inc. was affiliated with the NZFFA from early days, and at one stage a change of name was considered but because of the wide interest of members both urban and rural and some differences in aims and objectives, it was decided to retain the name Men of the Trees (Southland). While some members subscribed to the English journal *Trees* during the period of its publication, their only affiliation has been with and continues to be with the NZFFA.

Allen Calvert was elected to the National Executive of NZFFA in 1965, and became South Island Vice-President in 1967 and President for 3 years from 1969 to 1971.

The Men of the Trees (Southland) hosted the National Conference of NZFFA in 1966 and again in 1986, with both events stimulating local interest.

Allen Calvert established a Registered Nursery on his Roslyn Bush property to grow some trees for members, but also to be able to buy and distribute trees from the NZ Forest Service (over 35 000 recorded in 1 year). In later years Allen and his wife Margaret reduced their nursery to a more personal interest in alpine plants.

Members helped in community plantings, firstly on a piece of land donated by Dave Milligan at Dipton next to the road rest area on State Highway 6, and more recently across the river at David Milligan Park working with farm foresters and the Women's Division of Federated Farmers.

In the 1960s a large-scale operation began at Te Anau where Ivon Wilson envisaged a park adjacent to the camping ground. He, with his “lieutenant” Ivan O’Brien, had a real flair for organising working bees which usually took the form of hole digging in manuka scrub and boulders in July followed by tree planting in August. A wide variety of species, often in groups of five, were planted over a number of years.

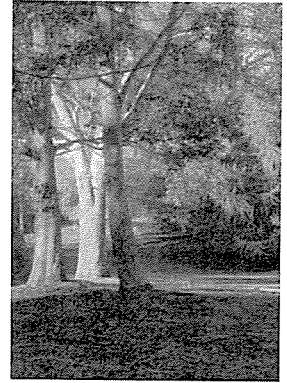
Finally, following Ivon Wilson’s death, the local Lions Club organised a clean-up to remove invading Douglas-fir. Then when the Department of Conservation took over from Lands and Survey, Jock Dickson, a retired farmer, used a tractor with bucket and transport tray to remove tons of boulders, enabling the whole area to be mowed.

Delegates attending the 1998 NZFFA Conference visited this park, and were most impressed by the beautiful area, realising the work that had been put into it.

Members have helped with school projects, in managing the Pourakino Reserve of 150 acres (approx. 60 ha) of native bush, and in running a “Best Planted Small Farm” competition every 5 years, the prize being a carved wood trophy donated by Ivan Bulling.

A difficult project involved planting on the Bluff Road where salt-laden winds make tree establishment a challenge.

In 1996 a Roadside Enhancement 2000 competition was planned to encourage interest in improving road frontages in



Ivon Wilson Park in 1998.



The southernmost trial of Leyland cypress, south-east of Invercargill on the way to Bluff. These trees are part of the South Island trial programme of Hamish Sturrock and Peter Smail.

the area. Having to comply with a new Local Body plan, members are looking forward to see what can be achieved by entrants within the confines of the planning regulations.

Membership in 1996 was 115, of which 22 were members of the NZFFA—not large but, looking back, much has been achieved, with a main objective being a study of farm shelter on the windy coastal plain. Lifelong friendships have been made and considerable satisfaction can be taken in the changes brought to Southland's landscape.

North Canterbury – 1958

(Largely contributed by Arthur Hyde.)

Arthur was the Cheviot representative on the first committee of North Canterbury Branch, and is still a committee member in 1997, having missed only a few years. He was Branch President for 3 years in the early 1960s.

Arthur described the farming problems in the area before World War II, with lack of fencing materials being the biggest drawback to stock management. Iron standards, or West Coast silver pine, then concrete, were the only posts available.

Articles by Neil Barr in the *NZ Farmer* were of great interest to local farmers interested in growing trees and treating posts on the farm, and so the scene was set when Neil attended a meeting held in the Waipara Hall on 24 June 1958, to describe the fledgling farm forestry movement in the North Island, and how it could develop. Russell Smith from Masterton outlined Branch activities, while A.P. Thomson, Conservator of Forests in Canterbury, offered to make available local Forest Service operations and facilities for field days.

Bill Jolliffe, Senior Extension Officer of the NZ Forest Service in Wellington, spoke of Forest Service operations and how the NZFS could make low-cost seedlings available to farmers.

George Malcolm, from Ministry of Works, promoted roadside beautification, encouraging farmers to plant trees.

After general discussion, it was proposed by Tom Rutherford, seconded by Arthur Shand, "that an Association be formed, covering the Cheviot, Amuri, Waipara, Kowhai, and Ashley Counties, and that the name of the Association be the North Canterbury Farm Forestry Association". Interim officers to hold office until the first AGM were:

Chairman: Tom H.Rutherford, "Waituna", Waikari

Secretary: no nominations; Keith Prior, NZ Forest Service, wrote the minutes.

Committee: one from each County

Ashley – no nomination.

Kowhai – Robin D.Gould, Amberley.

Waipara – T.M.Ray Maskew

Cheviot – Arthur C.Hyde, "Cathill", Cheviot

Amuri – Arthur C.Shand, "Island Hills",
Culverdon

Two field days were arranged before the busy season, to be advertised in the *Press* and on radio. Subscriptions were set at 5/- (raised to 10/- in 1959).

The first AGM was held at the "Glenmark" homestead, with the following officers elected:

Chairman: Robin D.Gould

Secretary: Tom H.Rutherford

Committee: Kowhai – Michael Starkey, Jack Elder.

Ashley – John H.McCracken, Ces Croft.

Waipara – Ray Maskew, Tom Rutherford.

Cheviot – Arthur Hyde, Bruce Child.

Amuri – Arthur Shand, David Henshaw.

North Canterbury is an interesting diverse area, stretching from the coast, across the Plains, to the foothills of the Southern Alps. The dry sunny climate of Amberley has made it ideal for the establishment by FRI of seed orchards of superior *P. radiata*. Heavy coning at a young age produces good crops of valuable seed.

Shelterbelts form perhaps the most important tree planting activity on the Plains, while the higher rainfall and altitude of the foothills are good for Douglas-fir establishment, as well as *P. radiata*, cypresses, and other species.

In July 1996, the Branch had 216 members, with current Chairman, Don Wyllie, and Secretary, Nick Ledgard, a scientist at FRI with special knowledge of high country tree establishment.

For the National Association, Dugald Rutherford was an Executive member from 1982 to 1993 and National President 1990–92, while running a hill country station “Melrose”, Hawarden, with 6000 stock units and 160 ha of forestry.

Doug Eaves, who has a forest nursery at Amberley, also served on the National Executive in 1978–79.

North Canterbury hosted the National Conference in 1982 at Ilam University, Christchurch, which proved a very popular venue, utilising student accommodation during the May holidays—a month later than usual, but useful in keeping costs down and providing quick meals.

Ashburton – 1958

The NZ Forest Service, with Canterbury Conservator A.P.Thomson and Charlie Bridgeman, then Senior Forest Ranger for the South Island, together with Federated Farmers, arranged the inaugural meeting of the Ashburton Association on 25 June 1958. A.N.McIntosh chaired the meeting which included Neil Barr as guest speaker.

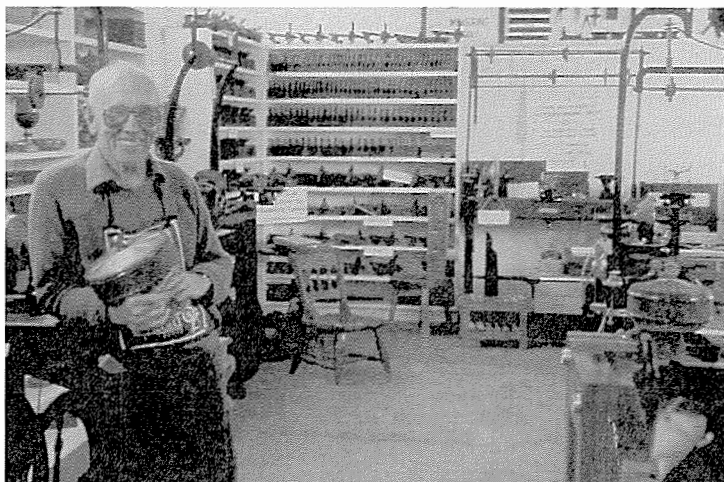
Neil outlined the efforts of the young New Zealand Association to promote tree planting, and paid tribute to Dr Stubbs of Oamaru who had done so much through the North Otago Tree Planting Association to establish ornamental trees in the region.

Bill Buchan of Digby’s Bridge was elected first President, with E.W.Taylor as Secretary. Bill remained President for 15 years. His energy and enthusiasm got the Branch off to a strong start, and he remained active on the committee for many more years. Bill was elected NZFFA Life Member in 1981, and died in 1994.

Membership of the Branch has gone from about 60, up to 129 in 1970 when apparently it was influenced by Catchment Board subsidies, to about 100 in 1996.

Shelter was probably more important to most members than woodlots, and so field days ranged over much of Canterbury, with considerable interest in the work of Dr J.W. Sturrock of Lincoln on Leyland cypress for shelter.

Interest was also high in the planting of ornamental trees around farm homesteads, made possible following the establishment of good shelter. The Branch was fortunate to have as a keen member Bob Lynn who is an expert in wood turning and joinery, making beautiful furniture from unusual timbers. Bob carved a plaque in kauri for the annual “Farm Forester of the Year” award, presented by the Branch to a local member since 1990.



Above: The plaque carved in kauri by Bob Lynn for presentation to the Ashburton “Farm Forester of the Year”.

Left: Bob Lynn in his museum.

Bob Lynn has a remarkable collection of wood working tools, including six Holtzaffel ornamental turning lathes capable of intricate work. His collection of some 1500 wood samples from around the world completes a remarkable museum for one man to accumulate.

Ted Tarbotton was Secretary of the Branch for 19 years, 1967–86, and was followed in office by his grandson, Alistair Whiting.

To celebrate the first 30 years in the life of the Ashburton Branch, a booklet was produced by George Haywood, Bob Lynn, Olive Philpott, and Peter Winter which outlined events and the people involved in the success of the Branch from 1958 to 1988.

Ivan McIlroy of Allenton Nursery presented each member with a tree to mark the occasion, a choice of *Castanea sativa* (sweet chestnut) or the weeping form of *Podocarpus totara*.

The Ashburton Branch hosted the National Conference in 1978, at which Bill Buchan was awarded the McCulloch chainsaw for “South Island Farm Forester of the Year”. John and Pat Bayne won the same award in 1992, with Brian and Ann Marsden winning in 1996.

1993 saw the presentation of Ashburton Life Membership to Bob Lynn and John Bayne.

South Canterbury – 1958

In May 1958, A.P.Thomson, Conservator of Forests for Canterbury, wrote to the Federated Farmers and Young Farmers Clubs of Canterbury to advise them that Neil Barr would soon be visiting the area promoting farm forestry and was keen to see branches formed in the South Island.

This resulted in a meeting being held in the Department of Agriculture Rooms, Timaru, on 27 June 1958 which 45 people attended. Mr Thomson as Convenor asked A.D.Talbot to chair the meeting and C.J.Kerr to act as secretary. Mr Talbot introduced Neil Barr who gave a brief history of the formation of North Island Branches of the Association.

On the motion of C.C.Burdon it was unanimously agreed to form a South Canterbury Association. Interim officers elected were: Chairman A.D.Talbot, Secretary C.J.Kerr, with a committee of R.S.Scott, G.Gumbrell, G.Watson, C.C.Burdon, G.H.Steven, O.J.Smith, and Miss P.Woodhouse. The subscription was set at 2/6 (25c). A suggestion was made to charge a higher subscription so that a nursery could be formed and a gang employed to assist with planting and maintaining trees. Charlie Bridgeman, then Senior Forest Ranger in Canterbury, wrote that it might be wise to let the Branch develop for a year before rapid expansion, to build up membership and find where interests lay.

C.J.Kerr as Secretary compiled a remarkably comprehensive list of farmers in South Canterbury with

plantations of exotic trees, which he forwarded to T.A. Strong at FRI. The list included 82 farmers with their addresses and the area planted. This sort of inventory has been sought on a number of occasions throughout the country to help the National Executive know what resource members owned, but seldom has it been as complete as this 1958 list. Mr Strong wanted the information as part of the National Exotic Forest Survey.

South Canterbury combined with Waimate Branch to hold its first field day at Raincliff State Forest on 12 August 1958, with 60 visitors given practical demonstrations of planting, pruning, and thinning. Charlie Bridgeman and Forest Ranger A.Jolly led the demonstrations and discussion at 10 stops throughout the forest.

At the second AGM, G.Watson became President and Owen Smith Secretary. Owen won a trophy for the best farm in South Canterbury on the basis of woodlot silviculture, and a field day was held on his property in May 1961.

The Branch hosted the 1962 National Conference with 150 delegates. This Conference was notable for the introduction of the Forestry Encouragement Loan Scheme announced by the Minister of Forests, the Hon R.G.Gerard, and included field trips to Alan Meyer's farm and Raincliff State Forest.

1974 saw the Catchment Board's introduction of an attractive shelter scheme with a 60% subsidy. A farmer doing his own work could establish shelter for almost no outlay. Although the subsidy was slowly lowered, many farmers became interested through this scheme and continued in tree planting.

The terrifying nor'-west gale of 1 August 1975 caused enormous damage but sawmillers were encouraged to use windthrown material first, and valuable lessons on shelter design were learned.

The Branch made several 2-day bus trips to other areas including the West Coast, Gardens and Mackays in Otago, and John Wardle at Oxford. Other Branches in return visited South Canterbury.



John Steven.

During the 1980s several submissions were made to District Schemes and resulted in a positive increase in forestry being allowed as a predominant use. This came about due to the efforts of John Steven, Owen Smith, Jim Bell, and Graham Black.

The Branch sent a letter of commendation to Lincoln College in 1983 for making a course in farm forestry available to students.

South Canterbury hosted their second National Conference in Timaru in 1984 with Jim Steven as Conference committee chairman, and this time 300 delegates attended. Field trips included visits to Alan Meyer's Waimate property, Andrew Hope's "Albury Park", Raincliff State Forest, and a post-Conference visit to the Mackenzie Country and Mt Cook. The growth rates of larch and Douglas-fir were described by Nick Ledgard as being 22 m³ and 25 m³ per annum on good sites.

John Steven described another round of District Planning under the Resource Management Act. Although touted as participatory democracy, John said the system was grossly unfair. Farmers and landowners working all day struggled with planning jargon and issues after work at their own expense. Against them were full-time paid employees of DOC, Regional Councils, and Planners. Some progress was being made but after 5 years' gestation no plans had been finalised.

Macrocarpa was being planted increasingly in plantations in the Branch area, with encouragement from FRI's Patrick Milne and Dudley Franklin, using selected stock, and some good-looking stands were showing up.

Alan Meyer has had a big influence on tree planters in South Canterbury, and has taken an active part in Association affairs. He was a foundation member of the Branch and an early Chairman, and a member of the National Executive 1963–67. In 1982 he was the Sach Dolmar "South Island Farm Forester of the Year".

Owen Smith, also a foundation member and Chairman for 7 years, was elected to the National Executive in 1976 and was President 1980–82.

Arthur Rowell led the South Canterbury Catchment Board and was an enthusiastic supporter of farm forestry. As well as serving as Chairman and Secretary, Arthur had an input into the National Shelter Working Party.

David Stringer was the driving force behind the Catchment Board's subsidised shelter scheme, producing useful booklets on the subject.

Jon Anderson, a farmer at Albury, was well known as a deer stalker, author, botanist, and international tree collector.

The Steven family provided three generations of Branch committee men, all Chairmen at times. Jim and Kay Steven won the "South Island Farm Forester of the Year" award in 1990, and brother John was on the National Executive 1985–88. Andrew Steven is the current Branch Chairman.

As with most Branches, the Forest Service personnel are remembered for their considerable input during the years of the Loan and Grant Schemes.

Two South Canterbury members reached the top of the tree—both John Elworthy and Jim Sutton were Ministers of Forests for their Governments.

South Auckland – 1958

Records of the South Auckland Branch prior to 1964 appear to have been lost, but the recollections of Stan Drake, Nathan Sutton, and Jack Harper fill in many details.

Niall Alexander convened the first meeting, and was elected the first President. The first *Farm Forestry*, November 1958, showed the Branch in existence, with Secretary A.M. Austin. Nathan Sutton recalled the first field day at Stan Drake's property, Ararimu, to inspect eucalypts. The group then moved to look at native bush on the properties of S. Broughton and Logan Shaw.

The annual meeting and field day on 28 October 1959 was held at Wesley College, with Neil Barr and Malcolm Conway (NZ Forest Service) present to help identify trees and lead discussion. Niall Alexander and Murray Austin were re-elected as President and Secretary.



Kay and Jim Steven receive their "South Island Farm Forester of the Year" award.



Kauri growing under a nurse crop of *Acacia melanoxyton* in a trial in the Hunua Ranges.

Interestingly, in discussion the suggestion was made that farmers and the NZ Forest Service could form some sort of partnership, where the farmer would supply the land, and the Forest Service, with or without help from the farmer, would plant and tend the trees. Proceeds of the woodlot would be shared on a basis agreeable to both. Although the idea did not get off the ground, it led the way to loan and grant schemes, and in more recent times to joint ventures under the Forestry Rights Registration Act 1983.

Other people who played an important part in the early years of Branch activities were Geoff Morrell, the Ackerley family, and Ian Barton who was forester for the Auckland Regional Authority at Hunua with quite a large forestry estate as well as considerable plantings of native trees around the Auckland water supply dams in the area. Ian, now a forestry consultant, is particularly well known for his work on kauri growth and management, and more recently as convener of the Paulownia Action Group.

Niall Alexander became the third President of the NZFFA in 1967, following Russell Smith. Niall was a gifted writer with a fine way with words—would that he was still alive to write this history!

In an article in *Farm Forestry* 1/3 he wrote of “Trees as Companions”, including a passage “Now I suppose it could be argued that in choosing his wife, a man should consider only the size of her dowry (her timber value), and her competence as a housekeeper (her shelter value). A pood pastoralist like myself is unlikely to under-estimate the importance in life of cash and cakes, but I still suggest that a more happy and harmonious marriage is likely where the wife is chosen because she is fair to look upon and agreeable to live with—in short, where she is chosen for her ornamental – social value. One of the lucky few may find all three attributes combined in one person, but the rest of us, in a monogamous society have to make do with something short of this ideal.”

The use of the word “pood”, produced some humour in the following journal, where Neil Barr wrote “... Horrors, what is this? It cannot be a misprint for ‘good’ for in spite of

his Irish ancestry, he has humility; nor can it be a misprint for 'poor', for surely there can be no poor pastoralists. Is this then some occupational term denoting one who has grazed off his pasture efficiently, paid his taxes, and tried negotiating with his bank manager for a few hundreds to plant his trees? 'Poood' might be the word."

Niall responded "Mr Barr is quite right in thinking that 'poood' is not a misprint. It is an Irish word for poor and unrewarding land such as poor peat ...".

The editor added a note accepting full responsibility for the proof reading, and thanking the two members for trying to "out-Irish" each other.

Jack Harper of Waiuku was another Branch President who served on the National Executive 1970–76. Jack had a big voice and a delightful way of speaking to many remits and motions at National Conferences, often in the minority against the motion when he always wanted his "no" vote recorded. In recent years, Jack has covenanted a considerable area of native bush under the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust.

South Auckland hosted the 1979 conference, basing it at the Logan Park venue in Auckland. Interesting field trips included a visit to the iron sand deposit and forest near Waikato River mouth, the trees of the Auckland Regional Authority, and the magnificent row of *Eucalyptus tereticornis* at Ackerley's property.

Canterbury Central – 1958

A meeting to establish what became the Canterbury Farm Forestry Association was held in the Young Farmers Memorial Hall at Lincoln College on a wet winter's night in 1958, with Dick Beauchamp as Chairman, and speakers including Neil Barr, Priestly Thomson (Conservator of Forests, Canterbury), and Extension Officer Charlie Bridgeman.

A field day was arranged for 10 July 1958, when members visited forests of the Selwyn Plantation Board. This Board, holding extensive forest resources in the area

dating back to 1883, has been helpful to the Branch over the years, with Arthur Cooney and Bill Studholm as Executive Officers, and Board members including Peter Smail who served as Board Chairman for a number of years.

At this first field day, Hugh Deans was elected Chairman, with Dick Beauchamp as Secretary. The Deans family farms at Darfield had plantings going back to the 1880s.

Hugh's uncle, James Deans, was NZFFA Patron in 1963 but unfortunately died in the same year. James's son Hamish was New Zealand President for a term, and went on to develop an interest in the Tree Crops Association, particularly research on hazelnuts. Hamish's wife Eva was Branch Secretary for 10 years.

Because of the growth of interest in farm forestry, and the wide geographic spread of Canterbury, the region was soon divided into North Canterbury, Canterbury Central, Ashburton, and South Canterbury Branches.

Shelter has always been the prime requirement for the whole region because of the often very strong, warm nor'-westerlies which desiccate pasture, and can be followed in winter and spring by cold southerlies bearing snow, and likely to cause extensive stock losses after lambing or shearing.

Most early shelterbelts consisted of *P. radiata* or *C. macrocarpa*, often trimmed into hedges. A book in 1965 by J.M. Caborn, Dept of Forestry and Natural Resources at the University of Edinburgh, drew attention to the windflow effects of differing types of shelter. Peter Smail, at his dry windy Hororata farm, developed ways of establishing trees in such a harsh climate and demonstrated the importance of height, permeability, and double-row planting, with *P. radiata* on the lee side and such species as *Cedrus deodara*, slower and longer lived, on the windward side. This combination gave a wide root zone preventing windthrow in gales.

With the establishment of multiple-row woodlots where sheep and lambs could go for cover in severe conditions, whole farm plans could be drawn up to best ameliorate the conditions and make life easier for animals, pasture, and the farmer.

Peter Smail is currently Patron of the NZFFA, served on the National Executive from 1971 to 1975, and played a major role in the work of the National Shelter Working Party. Large numbers of visitors, including researchers and forestry students from School of Forestry and Lincoln College, have visited his farm and learned of his practices.

Although these systems have now been proved over decades, and received considerable publicity in many ways, it remains a mystery why so many farmers do not follow the lead.

Woodlots on poorer sites, and the management of shelter to produce good sawlogs, have seen Canterbury go from a deficiency to an exporter of timber.

Amenity plantings have been most important around windswept homesteads, and many Branch members have learned how to establish shelter first, which has made it possible to then plant many desirable evergreen and deciduous trees. The plantings at Lake Coleridge, Orton Bradley Park, Hagley Park, and other well-managed parks and estates have provided examples for members to follow, and excellent venues for field days.

Christchurch held the fourth National Conference in 1960, and Canterbury Central Branch has since hosted Conferences in 1968 and 1990.

Membership in 1997 was 170, with Frank White, Ross McKenzie, and Peter Smail still active although having attended the inaugural meeting in 1958.

Frank White won the Sach Dolmar “South Island Farm Forester of the Year” award in 1983, with John and Rosalie Wardle winning the same award (the Husqvarna) in 1995. In 1990, the MOF “Award for Innovation” went to Peter and Nan Smail, and in recent years there has been an award each year for shelter excellence in some part of the country named the “Peter Smail Award for Shelter”.

West Otago – 1959

With encouragement from Habin Cooney from the NZ Forest Service at Tapanui, and Allen Calvert from the “Men



Jack Mackay in the mid-1970s beside a young *Eucalyptus delegatensis* in one of his many plantings at “Montana”.

of the Trees” in Southland, a West Otago Branch was formed on 31 March 1959, with David Alderton elected as President and Jack Mackay as Secretary. David Alderton was President until L.E. Wallington took over in 1962, while Jack Mackay remained Secretary until 1964.

An active committee arranged a number of field days, based largely on the establishment of good shelter which was so necessary in the district.

The Branch established a nursery on a quarter-acre section gifted by C.K.White, with application to the Department of Agriculture for registration, and with a nursery committee of H.J.Cooney, C.K.White, and J.S.Mackay. Unfortunately this nursery site proved to be wet and unsuitable and so a new nursery was established on Mackay’s property, where great care was taken to produce trees with good straight roots and a sturdy top to avoid the common windthrow problems.

David Alderton and Jack Mackay waged a national campaign through farm forestry for a number of years, to demand high standards of seedlings from commercial nurserymen and, although they were not popular at times because of this, they felt rewarded at the gradual increase in quality of seedlings and awareness of planters of what to look for. This debate was made public when a panel discussion on the topic took place at the 1965 Hamilton Conference. David Alderton and Jack Stronge spoke for the Association while the nursery industry was represented by Messrs Robinson and McIlroy.

David Alderton planted his first major woodlot in 1959 and was able to harvest it in 1988. He outlined costs and returns in an article in the *Tree Grower* February 1990, in which he showed a net annual return of \$555-00/ha, far above anything that could be earned from livestock on the same type of site.

West Otago helped in the formation of the South Otago Branch, which has become so strong, while the Northern Southland Branch developed to the south.

West Otago gradually became an enclave of highly productive farmland between these two strong associations.

Following the Forestry Development Conference in 1969, Jack Mackay thought that efforts were all being directed to large-scale forestry, and that with falling membership perhaps West Otago had reached the end of its usefulness. Finally, on 6 May 1971 a special meeting wound up the Branch. After the records were placed in the Bank for safekeeping, and after generous donations were made to local Domain Boards and honorary subscriptions were paid to the remaining 80 members for their last year, the National Association was sent a cheque for \$249-33 as the final balance.

David Alderton was South Island Vice-President of the NZFFA from 1961 to 1965.

The Invercargill National Conference of 1986 visited “Montana”, the property of Jack Mackay who had unfortunately died the year before. Members were able to see his plantings, and the work being carried on by his son John who was National President at the time.

Southern Hawke’s Bay / Tararua – 1959

Southern Hawke’s Bay Branch began at a meeting in Dannevirke on 10 June 1959, chaired by Federated Farmer’s president, J.B.Ellingham. Just as for the other lower North Island Branches, encouragement came from a dedicated group of NZ Forest Service and other people including H.M.(Meyric) Williams, then president of Hawke’s Bay Branch, Ron Wells (Conservator of Forests, Wellington), Gerald Hocking (Senior Forester, Palmerston North), J.I.Cook (District Ranger for Hawke’s Bay), and Chris van Kraayenoord from Aokautere (Soil Conservator).

Messrs Wells and Hocking stated that the NZ Forest Service welcomed the formation of such associations as a means of spreading information among members.

Mr E.J.Klein was elected first Chairman, and H.G.(Gordon) Menzies became the first Secretary, a post he held for 22 years, followed by two terms as Chairman.

Eight of the foundation members were still active in the Branch 37 years later in 1996.

The Branch held its first field day at “Sherwood”, L.N.White’s property at Takapau.

The first annual report quoted a membership of 50, and complained of considerable apathy among farmers of the district toward the Branch and its activities. “Little new planting of shelterbelts is being practised, and only a small number of woodlots are being planted, while planting for soil conservation is rarely carried out unless the need is urgent. It is hoped that greater interest will be taken with the extension of activities of the association.”

A problem was discovered in the lack of good shelter or woodlots at which to have field days for demonstration purposes, but a large-scale planting was planned for a newly developed property, the Mangaorapa Station at Porongahau.

An advisory committee set up to plan this venture consisted of Dr Yeates (Massey College), Gerald Hocking, Chris van Kraayenoord, Farm Advisory Officer I.W.Blackmore, Meyric Williams, and Gordon Menzies.

A demonstration of treating thinnings from woodlots was held at J.Bolton’s property in Woodville, where Osmosar paste was used on *Pinus radiata*, *Cupressus macrocarpa*, *Populus yunanensis*, *P. robusta*, *P. nigra* ‘italica’, and willow. After being painted with the paste, the posts were covered in a stack for penetration by sap displacement.

With the merging of boroughs and counties in the late 1980s, the area became the Tararua District Council, and so the Branch changed its name to the Tararua Farm Forestry Association.

In July 1996, membership stood at 87, the current Secretary being Gordon Thompson.

Waimea Plains – 1960

There was a report of a Waimea Plains Branch field day in *Farm Forestry* 2/4 November 1960, where 23 members and friends visited three properties near Gore. Charlie Brown of the NZ Forest Service talked about the trees growing at Mrs MacGibbon’s property, a wide variety complete with

name tags, with only a macrocarpa hedge having more than two of the same species.

A visit to A.W.Newman's nursery was a chance to see different types of propagation, and finally a visit to E.Bowmar's farm where several woodlots of Douglas-fir and *P. radiata* planted from 1947 were inspected.

No other reference to the Waimea Plains Branch is evident and older members in the South do not remember a Branch existing. It is possible that this field day was to test the feeling of the district, but that no action was taken.

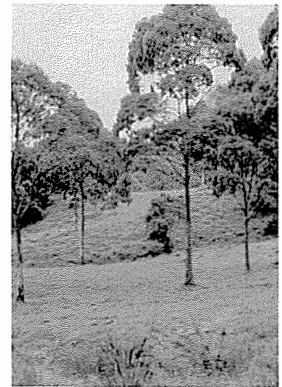
Coromandel – 1962/1993

There is a brief reference to the formation of a Branch in Coromandel in 1962, but present Branch officers have no records. In 1964, National Treasurer Norm Gill had no response to correspondence, and so it was assumed the Branch was in recess. The only name associated with this early group was Andrew Goudie (now deceased).

April 1993 saw Logan Lingard instigating a meeting in Tony Lingard's woolshed at Coroglen, to see if there was sufficient interest to start afresh. Mike Smith, then National Executive Secretary, chaired the meeting, and both Tom MacBride and Geoff Brann attended to set the wheels in motion. The Branch was formed with Logan Lingard as Chairman and Kate Small as Secretary, and a committee of seven. The first meeting was held on 17 May 1993.

Membership has grown from 49 to about 75.

Representatives have attended Conferences since formation, presenting a remit in 1994 drawing attention to the need to present a unified approach to Local Bodies such as Regional and District Councils who had failed to interpret correctly the objectives and aims of the Resource Management Act. The following remit was carried "That the National Executive recommends that Branches co-operate with forestry interests and Federated Farmers to adopt a code of practice, and present a unified approach to Regional and District Councils on Policy Statements, Regional Plans and District Plans where forestry issues are of significance".



Eucalypt agroforestry in the Whenuakite area, eastern Coromandel.

The 1996 Chairman, Paul Hill, won a merit award from Environment Waikato, for excellence in riparian management.

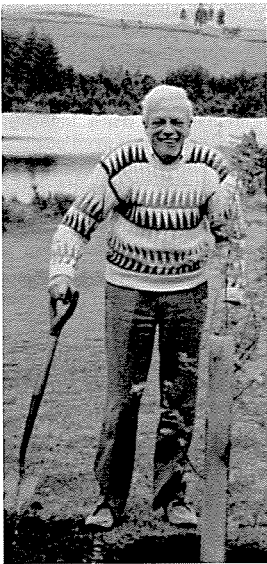
Northern Southland / Southland – 1962

The Men of the Trees in Southland, formed in 1958, satisfied the needs of tree enthusiasts for a time, but after a visit by Neil and Rose Barr to Southland in 1962 which included visits to several farms and an evening meeting in Dipton, Dave and Ethel Milligan and John and Cecily Naylor decided to go to the Timaru NZFFA Conference in April 1962.

While keen enough to form a Branch in Southland, no one wanted to upset the Men of the Trees. However, Jim Campbell, a brother of Alex who was Men of the Trees President, called a meeting in Mossburn on 6 November 1962. After some debate on the pros and cons of having two organisations in Southland, it was decided to form a Branch of farm forestry to be known as the Northern Southland Farm Forestry Association. Archie Drummond was elected President with Mike Saunders as Secretary, and a committee of A. Donaldson, J. Naylor, B. Hamilton, D. Milligan, J. Speight, and C. McLean, with Geoff Chavasse, then Principal Forester with the NZ Forest Service, co-opted.

Archie Drummond died shortly after this meeting and so an AGM was called for March 1963, at which Les McLean was elected President and Dave Milligan Secretary, a position he held until 1985, a period of 22 years, followed by 2 years as Publicity Officer.

Dave Milligan wrote some notes for the 25th Anniversary of the Northern Southland Branch in 1987, and referred to the rapid early growth. With Chum Mincher as Treasurer from 1964 to 1977, and committee member until 1986, the Branch developed a big business in buying trees for members at 15% discount from the Forest Service, and a lesser discount from private nurserymen. The Branch kept half the discount to build up funds, and with sales of trees of 500 000 per year rising to over 1 million for 3 years, the Branch prospered.



Dave Milligan planting a dawn redwood at Ivon Wilson Park, November 1988.

Geoff Chavasse was very helpful to members, producing the early newsletters until transferring to FRI in Rotorua. Dave recalls how often, even then, Geoff helped via correspondence.

Dave took over the printing of newsletters written by Bruce Hamilton and later Bill Stevens. By using the school Gestetner, and later buying one at auction, newsletters were produced very cheaply. Dave finally cut his own stencils on an old typewriter, and after receiving the “South Island Farm Forester of the Year” award in 1986, he sold the chainsaw prize to buy an electric typewriter which was much easier on his rheumatic finger joints.

The Branch has hosted three National Conferences—in 1966 jointly with the Men of the Trees, in 1975 based in Queenstown which involved much travel by the organising committee, and in 1998. All had excellent field days of great interest to delegates from further north, for the scenery as well as the trees.

The NZ Forest Service was of great help in early years, with Charlie Brown (Assistant Conservator in 1962), Geoff Chavasse, John Purey-Cust, Dennys Guild, and Extension Officers Digger Ward and Ted Ramsey administering Loans and Grants.

George Stockley, Forest Service nurseryman at Milton, helped Southland members, and so when he wrote his book “Trees, Farms and the New Zealand Landscape”, the Northern Southland Association agreed to publish it. The first printing sold out within a year, and so it was reprinted. George Stockley and Clive Anstey each took 30% of profits, with the Association taking 40% and the risks.

A seminar in 1978 on “Trees on the Land” was held in Invercargill in Association with MAF, the Tree Crops Association, the Invercargill Conservation Committee, the Southland Catchment Board, and the Forest and Bird Society.

Dave Milligan served on the National Executive in 1973 and 1974, Bruce Hamilton 1975–77, and Bill Stevens in 1980.

John and Anne Mackay followed John’s father Jack with a strong interest in trees on their “Montana” property.



Bill Stevens

Though now belonging to the South Otago Branch, John Mackay served on the Southland committee for some 13 years, with 2 years as President in 1986–87. He and Anne won the Husqvarna “South Island Farm Forester of the Year” award in 1991, following on from Jack Mackay in 1980 and followed in 1992 by brother Colin and Gwenda (Southern High Country Branch) winning the MOF award. They keep it in the family!

Graeme and Helen Cook received the Husqvarna “South Island Farm Forester of the Year” prize in 1997. The 1998 Conference visited their property to inspect 18 ha of woodlots and 6.5 km of shelter. The same award in 1999 went to another Southland couple, Michael and Michelle Anderson of Hokonui, also visited by the 1998 Conference.

Dave Milligan was made a Life Member of the NZFFA in 1972, and died in 1989. The 1998 Conference had a lunch stop on an area of land cut off by the County for road improvements, and now named David Milligan Park. Trees are planted and managed by a committee of local people including farm foresters.

Local awards began in 1969 with trophies donated by the NZ Forest Service for best woodlot, by the Catchment Board for conservation planting, and by the Branch itself for amenity planting. A “Best Planted Farm” award started in 1971.

Bruce Hamilton served as President for 7 years (in two terms), John Naylor for 4 years, with Les McLean and David Broughton doing 3 years each. There is now a 2-year term for President.

After Dave Milligan’s 22-year stint as Secretary, John Thomson did the job for 4 years, Margaret Gimblett for 4 years, and current Secretary Julie Keast has now been 7 years in the position.

Branch Life Membership was bestowed on Bruce and Dorothy Hamilton and Dave and Ethel Milligan in 1981.

Dave Milligan’s sons Russell and Graham have each acted as President for a 2-year term, while Graham and Heather have produced the newsletter for 6 years.

Older members note the change that has come over the landscape with the planting of trees, and recall the excellent field days held, some in very cold conditions with snow. In recent years, the name Northern Southland has been changed to just Southland Farm Forestry Association.

Mid Otago – 1963

Records of the first 3 years of this Branch have not been located, but Ron Reid recalls that the inaugural meeting was held at the Lee Stream Hall in 1963, with Lloyd Anderson elected as President and John Blaikie as Secretary. The first meeting was arranged with help from Jack Mackay (then Secretary of West Otago), and with NZ Forest Service officers Jack Barber, Ted Ramsey, and Percy Parker.

An early field day on Tom Nichol's property to discuss shelter led to the Branch establishing a shelter trial at Clarke's Junction and this was completed in 1966.

Another early field day was at Lake Mahinerangi, a hydro lake south-west of Dunedin, producing power for the city and where Council had established plantations using many species. Graeme Flett reports that a 1-m snowfall in 1939 broke many of these trees, and that they reduced the water yield.

The variety of older trees was naturally of interest to farm foresters. Dunedin City had substantial forests planted over many years with the purpose of easing the rate burden on its citizens.

Lloyd Anderson remained President until 1972 when succeeded by John Flett (farming at that time in partnership with Graeme). Lloyd was also a member of the National Executive from 1969 to 1972.

The Branch acted as host to the National Conference in Dunedin in 1972, making a profit of \$380-00. The only reference to this Conference either in Mid Otago minutes or in *Farm Forestry* was to the inclement weather!

John Flett's 1974 Annual Report mentioned a Branch viewing of the NZFFA's film "In the Company of Trees" which was well received.

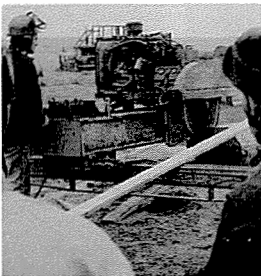
The leasing of grazing in Berwick State Forest, with early pruning and thinning and oversowing, was being watched with interest. This increased interest in forestry and grazing continued in the following year with a talk from Leith Knowles of FRI on agroforestry.

Further planting was carried out at the Clarke's Junction shelter trial. John Edmonds, Forest Service Extension Officer, wrote a detailed article on the species grown and their comparative success in *Farm Forestry* 16/4 December 1974.

John Edmonds helped Mid Otago with talks and field day demonstrations, and had a big influence on farm forestry in the lower South Island.

Graeme Flett took over from John as President in 1977, remaining in office until 1982. Russell Anderson was a long-serving Secretary 1966–82. There was some discussion at the 1977 AGM of winding up the Branch, but it was felt important to keep going, partly because of the opportunity city people had of meeting small woodlot growers and those interested in trees.

The 1988 Conference hosted by both Mid and South Otago was held in Dunedin with the theme "Farm Forestry—Legitimate Land Use". Excellent field trips visited Jolyon Manning's property at Alexandra where interesting trees were established in very difficult conditions, Mackay's "Montana" property at Moa Flat, and Vic and Ken Stephen's property at Kakapuaka. Debate at this Conference continued to revolve around good land use, with the District Schemes of many counties trying to make forestry a conditional use.



Daryl Brewer demonstrating the use of his portable mill, sawing up macrocarpa at Sid Harbrow's property.

At the 1988 AGM, the 25th Anniversary of the formation of the Branch was celebrated by making three foundation members, Mrs Audrey Reid, Lloyd Anderson, and S.Orchiston, together with the retiring Secretary Mrs G.Heenan, Life Members of the Mid Otago Branch.

In 1991 there was a membership drive, with assistance from Combined Rural Traders in allowing free advertising in their quarterly magazine. Circulars were sent to non-members and organisations. The result of this effort was an increase in members from 52 to 89.

John Paterson, Secretary at the time, floated the idea of using accumulated funds for a library, so that books, pamphlets, and videos on farm forestry topics would be available to members. This was amended to videos only, at least to start with.

Jolyon Manning raised concerns about Dunedin City Council wanting to sell its forestry assets. With good economic prospects for the sale of wood, he suggested action should be taken by way of petition against the Council proposal. Chris Perley from Ministry of Forestry said that these forests had been developed for watershed management, and needed only 5 years before good cash flows would be available.

John Edmonds and Chris Perley continued to help in talks and field day discussions, with MOF thanked on various occasions. President David Pearson in his 1998 Annual Report wished both these MOF officers well in the future, as MOF was being restructured into the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

Membership in 1999 was 58 full members and 12 associate members.

Graeme and Joy Flett were the 1988 winners of the Husqvarna “South Island Farm Forester of the Year” award. Graeme had started planting trees at the age of 22, with locals saying he was wasting his time. He has now been able to see the rotation through, with a son managing the extensive 250-ha forest and the farming side of the property leased. Graeme and Joy have moved to Milton and now belong to the South Otago branch.

Graeme was elected to the National Executive in 1986, was South Island Vice-President 1990–93 filling the role of Treasurer, and National President 1994–96. Through these years he was able to keep the Mid Otago Branch in touch with National Association affairs, an advantage to any branch.

Mangonui - Far North – 1963

The Mangonui Branch of the Association was formed early in 1963, in response to the announcement in 1962 of a Government loan scheme for tree planting.

Alex MacRae of Awanui, with some pressure from George Halwell of the Tree Crops Association, organised the inaugural meeting, with Neil Barr attending and speaking of the aims of the Farm Forestry Association. Alex was elected first President with Bob Coulter, a Kaitaia businessman keen on forestry, as Secretary.

Membership was small, but included some enthusiasts ahead of their times such as George Panther of Honeymoon Valley who planted quite large numbers of good eucalypts, notably *E. pilularis*. Alex MacRae was also always keen on eucalypts, and continues to plant them in combination with *P. radiata* in the belief of a symbiotic relationship between the two species as Neil Barr and others have often discussed.

Reg West and Bob Coulter planted large areas of pine under the loan scheme.

Meetings were rather infrequent and small, the Branch going into recess about 1977. No minutes have been found.

On 10 September 1983 a public seminar was held, attended by about 25 people, and a decision was made to re-activate the Branch. The name was changed to Far North Farm Forestry Association, with funds started from the remaining \$100 still in the Mangonui account.

The President elected was Wahi Mackenzie of Broadwood, with Secretary Robin Shepherd, Treasurer Ewen McKinnon, and a committee of E. Adams, Bob Coulter, Alex MacRae, R. Meiklejohn, and Millie Srhoj.

Richard Davies-Colley, NZFFA President, spoke enthusiastically to the meeting, saying that New Zealand needed a totally working landscape for both aesthetic and commercial reasons, and that farm forestry had a large part to play in realising that aim. Bill Gimblett, national farm forestry Co-ordinator, told the group what a bright future New Zealand-grown softwoods had, as other world reserves were decreasing.

A very successful seminar was arranged in conjunction with the Northland Regional Council in March 1994, when Catherine Mackenzie was Branch President.

Membership remained at about 20 until 1991 when it grew rapidly to 60.

A well-attended early field day was at Richard Ward's two forestry blocks in Honeymoon Valley. Richard had lived in the area, but is now resident in Hamilton where he is well known for his "Tree Tools" range of pruning equipment.

Alex MacRae, Wahi Mackenzie, Roger Gale, and Bob Coulter, all made major contributions to the Far North Branch.

South Otago – 1964

The most successful farm forestry Branch in the country began with an informal meeting of about 20 farmers to hear Russell Smith, New Zealand President, and Dave Alderton, South Island Vice-President from the adjoining West Otago Branch, together with a strong representation from the NZ Forest Service including Geoff Chavasse, and Messrs Prior, Bainbridge, and Gilbertson. Arthur Cooney from the Selwyn Plantation Board also attended this discussion on 3 March 1964.

A motion to form a South Otago Branch was passed, and an interim committee set up to arrange the first field day at Christie's property on 6 April, following which the Branch formation was formalised and officers were elected: President, P. Moffat; Secretary, K. Christie; and Treasurer, Vic Stephens.

Very quickly, supplies of seedlings were secured from reliable nurseries, mainly Ford's who allowed a discount half of which was retained by the Branch, which initially paid the accounts.

Seedlings could also be obtained from the NZ Forest Service, which supplied surplus plants to registered nurserymen. To qualify for this service, the Branch decided to establish a nursery on Vic Stephens' land, and this was registered in March 1967.

Apart from obtaining NZ Forest Service stock, committee members in working bees raised many thousands of their own seedlings and poplar cuttings. This had the double advantage of raising finance for the Branch, and bringing a team spirit to the workers.

Members of the South Otago Branch operating their post peeler at the Balclutha Summer Show in 1989.



Similarly, a supply of pruning equipment from loppers to ladders was also bought and sold to members, building up a very good relationship within the Branch as well as strengthening the financial base. The fact that membership has grown from 50 to 550 currently, shows how the service was appreciated by the district.

Members channelled all seedling orders through the Branch, with numbers growing from 28 000 in 1968 to a 1994 total of 2 250 268.

Because of this financial strength, the Branch has been able to make contributions to the Neil Barr Farm Forestry Foundation, provide a \$1000 annual bursary to a student at Telford Rural Polytechnic, and donate a sum for amenity planting in schools, domains, and public places in South Otago.

Several members have represented the South Island on the National Executive; Graeme Flett was President from 1994 to 96 following 8 years on the Executive. Eoin Garden has been on the National Executive since 1990, firstly as a representative of Federated Farmers, but as a full member since 1992.

Ally Campbell has been an Executive member since 1994. Ally and his wife Lyn won the national MOF "Award

for Innovation” in 1994, and Eoin and Noeline Garden won the same award in 1996. Members who have won the South Island award from the NZFFA, donated by Sach Dolmar or Husqvarna over the years, include Joyce and Vic Stephens, Joy and Graeme Flett, Barbara and Bill Wise, and Carolyn and Ken Stephens.

The Branch has also made its own awards, either the Peter and Pearl Moffat award, or the Joyce and Vic Stephens award.

Vic Stephens, who died in 1997, had a huge impact on the Branch as its Treasurer 1964–86, and Secretary 1976–88. He was a Life Member of the National Association, and made a large contribution to secretaries or branch management meetings at annual Conferences, where other Branches were able to pick up on his ideas and successes.

John Edmonds, firstly a Forest Service Extension Officer for the area, and then with MOF/MAF, also had a great input in to the successful establishment of many members’ plantations.

Partly because of the impending maturity of earlier planted plantations, and partly because of the lack of reputable forestry consultants in the area, the idea of forming a full consultancy and marketing operation was born. This probably would not have happened without the business success already achieved by the Branch. A steering committee was elected in 1993, getting advice on the best structure to adopt as well as looking for possible pitfalls. Otago South Forestry Consultants Ltd held its first meeting on 31 January 1994, and set up as a limited liability company, owned by South Otago Farm Forestry (Inc.), with 99 shares held by the Association and one by the Secretary/Treasurer. There were no financial problems due to the healthy state of the Branch’s finances.

The company presently employs a forestry consultant, Alan Laurie, to provide advice on all aspects of forestry from planting and silvicultural operations, through to efficiencies in transport and marketing due to combining woodlots and ensuring differing grades of logs go to the best paying market. The commercial operation, including the sale of

seedlings, saws, ladders, etc. previously handled by the Branch, is now handled by the consultancy company.

Benefits are expected to increase as wood volumes grow, giving more marketing opportunities. 25 000 tonnes were logged in 1995/96, with company turnover reaching \$1 860 688.

Don Gordon is currently both Branch and Company Secretary.

Northern King Country, King Country, Waitomo – 1964

Early in 1964, some local farmers had discussions with Tom Dowding, Officer-in-Charge, NZ Forest Service, Te Kuiti, about the possibility of forming a branch of the Farm Forestry Association in the area. The inaugural meeting attended by 60 people was held in the Te Kuiti Post Office building on 22 April 1964. Neil Barr was present and, with Jim Buchanan (NZ Forest Service, Rotorua) and Tom Dowding, spoke to the meeting on the advantages of promoting farm forestry in the district.

Temporary officers elected at the meeting included Chairman Bob Voyce, Secretary/Treasurer Bill Potter, and a committee of George Hodson, Mel Scott, Gerald Soler, Gil Bevan, and Gerald Barlow.

The first field day was held in conjunction with the Agricultural Club on 6 May at Bob Voyce's farm. Sixty attended, inspecting a shelterbelt of *Sequoia sempervirens* and *Cryptomeria japonica*, together with plantings of *Acacia melanoxylon*, *Eucalyptus delegatensis*, and *E. regnans*. In the afternoon, homestead plantings and a poplar nursery were inspected at J.Carrick-Robertson's farm where Chris van Kraayenoord spoke about poplars, creating much interest and leading to orders for 600 Italian hybrid cuttings for distribution to members.

Permanent officers were elected at a field day held in the Pureora Forest on 30 June 1964. President was Bob Miln, Vice-President Bob Voyce, Secretary/Treasurer Bill Potter, and the committee included Gerald Barlow and George Hodson.

This field day saw the felling of rimu, totara, miro, and matai, with the cutover area being cleared by a D8 bulldozer fitted with root rakes, ready for replanting with Douglas-fir. This type of clearance caused much fury from conservationists years later when a tree sit-in gained publicity for the cause in the same forest.

In the 1960s many farmers were still felling and burning bush, and were not keen to join an Association that urged farmers to plant trees. As a result, membership was only 50–60 in the early years. At that time most emphasis was on shelter and amenity plantings. Hybrid poplars were planted for soil erosion control and timber, and grew very well until the rust took its toll. It was not until the late 1960s that *P. radiata* started to be planted in any quantity. Records show that 25 000 were ordered for members in 1971.

In 1966, the Branch had an exhibit at the Te Kuiti A & P Show with the theme “Trees for Profit and Pleasure”.

In the early 1970s, a number of members with mature *P. radiata* and *Cupressus macrocarpa* formed a co-operative and were able to obtain good prices from a major timber firm.

In 1972 the Branch took over about 0.5 ha at Waitomo, and over the next few years cleared blackberry, gorse, and honeysuckle to enable natives to be planted. The area was finally taken over by the Department of Conservation.

A very successful seminar attended by 75 people was held at Te Kuiti in 1979, with well-known speakers covering topics such as the Grant Scheme, Agroforestry, Co-operatives, Shelter, and Special-purpose Species.

Between 1981 and 1984 the Branch was involved in the management of Brook Park, a 20-ha area close to Te Kuiti. This area was planted in many species of trees in the 1940s, with plane and poplar predominating. Assistance was also given to the planting of native trees in the Max Somerville Memorial Grove in Brook Park.

Neil Barr and Harry Bunn visited the Branch in 1987, conducting a very successful *P. radiata* pruning demonstration in Alan and Helen Sutherland’s plantation.

Several bus trips to other Branches stimulated members, with a reciprocal visit from the Lower North Branch in 1989 ending in a joint dinner to celebrate Northern King Country's 25th anniversary.

In 1993, the Branch hosted the National Conference, a big undertaking for a small district. Accommodation was stretched to the limit as the Conference was one of the largest due to the "93 price spike". Delegates were home hosted as well as being spread among motels in Otorohanga, Waitomo, Te Kuiti, and Pio Pio. Major field trips included Cumberland Farm, St Paul's College Honokiwi Forest, and a tour to Rayonnier's Tawarau Forest, the Taharoa ironsands forest, and the Tainui-Kawhia Forest. That day ended with a memorable visit to the Maketu Marae, Kawhia, where dinner was served.



A stand of *Eucalyptus saligna* at least 50 years old on "Golden Acres", the farm of Joyce and Sandy Fortescue.

Also visited by Conference delegates were members' properties including Sandy and Joyce Fortescue's farm, Howard and Doff Tombleson's extensive garden, and the farms of Lyndon Wilson, John and Lois Fredrikson, and Malcolm and Alison Mackenzie.

The name changed in 1988 from Northern King Country to King Country, reflecting the spread of members. This was followed just 6 years later by the split into two Branches—Ruapehu centred on Taumarunui and Waitomo centred on Te Kuiti and Otorohanga. The split was due to the difficulty in adequately servicing members of both areas despite a membership high of just over 100. Attracting farmers from near and south of Taumarunui to field days around Te Kuiti, or vice versa, was an ongoing problem. Despite scepticism, the two more-focused smaller Branches have been successful and boosted total membership. Waitomo membership is about 70, with most field days attracting between 15 and 30 members.

The longest-serving member of the Branch has been Bob Miln who was recently made a Life Member. He served as Chairman, Secretary/Treasurer, and committee member for at least 25 years. Other long-serving members include Bill Potter, Ian Leadley, Ian McKinlay, Malcolm Mackenzie, and the late Lawrie Goldsbury.

In the last decade, members and other local landowners have planted substantial areas of *P. radiata*, reflecting the long-term decline in sheep and beef returns. Other species have sparked variable interest, principally *Cupressus lusitanica*, *Eucalyptus nitens*, *E. regnans*, and *Acacia melanoxylon*. The past year or two has seen an upsurge in interest in harvesting and marketing as several woodlots planted in the 1970s have reached maturity.

Nelson – 1964

A good attendance of farmers from a wide area attended a meeting at the Memorial Hall on 16 July 1964, to hear officers of the NZ Forest Service and NZFFA President Russell Smith put forward a case for establishing a Branch in Nelson.

After it was decided that a Branch of the Farm Forestry Association should be formed, B.R.Faulkner was elected Chairman and H.J.Hancock the Secretary/Treasurer, with a committee comprising R.Higgins and D.Drummond.

The first field day at the Golden Downs Forest nursery at Motupiko followed on 29 July 1964, with Forest Service officers describing pruning techniques and answering questions. The subscription was set at £1 per year (\$2-00).

One or two field days were held each year, with considerable help from the Forest Service and H.Baigent and Sons Ltd. In May 1968 a good field day took place at Brian Faulkner's property, with members able to see some fine old specimens of *P. radiata* and Douglas-fir, as well as plantations of larch and young pine.

The possibility was considered of holding the National Conference in Nelson in 1970, and this was indeed successfully organised. Conference field trips included a visit to the Nelson Catchment Board's nursery where Chris van Kraayenoord discussed hybrid poplars, a visit to Baigent's to watch V-blade land clearing prior to planting pines, and a visit to the port to study the wood chip industry.

After a lull in activities in the early 1980s, interest increased again with a combined seminar being held over

2 days in 1986, involving Marlborough and Nelson Branches and the Tree Crops Association, organised by the Nelson Polytechnic, and with Neil Barr among the guest speakers.

At the 1984 AGM, Bob Irvine was presented with a book to mark 11 years' service as Secretary. He later served as Treasurer for several more years.

Several remits were submitted to National Conferences, and submissions were made to the Brash Committee on Primary Sector Taxation which was upsetting many members at a time of rapid political change.

Newsletters to members have been a regular feature since 1992, with informative notes on field days held or to come. President Gary Drummond wrote in the July 1994 newsletter "While in Wellington I will be describing the wild enthusiasm that the Nelson branch is displaying for the 1996 Conference, which will be pure fabrication of course as we have only five or six people front up to help out!"

However, a good Conference committee organised a particularly successful second Nelson Conference, with an outstanding field day at Appleton's Nurseries, one of the finest tree nurseries in the country, showing spectacular autumn colour at that time of year. Other field trips included a visit to see magnificent Douglas-fir forest at Golden Downs, a fine example of native revegetation at Martin Conway's property, and high pruning of *Cupressus macrocarpa* at Ross Higgin's property.

The Branch has been particularly watchful of developments in rural fire fighting, and fire insurance, over the years, as a normally hot dry summer with plenty of gorse creates a hazardous fire situation.

Methods of land preparation, both to loosen the soil and to control gorse and other weeds, have also been discussed and demonstrated.

Land use issues, with the attitude of various councils to tree planting, have worried members, and details of how to make a submission to the Tasman District Council Resource Management Plan were given prominence in a 1996 newsletter.



Ross Higgins pruning *macrocarpa*.

Perhaps because of the number of small holdings in the district, and the climate, there has always been a strong interest in the Tree Crops Association. With topics such as shelter, and trees for beautification, common to both Farm Forestry and Tree Crops, membership has been split between the two organisations.

Membership of the Branch reached 75 in 1996. Ross Higgins served a term on the National Executive, and recently officers putting in considerable effort include Gary Drummond and Ian Stringer (current–1999) as Presidents, Dave De Gray as Secretary, and Stuart Slack as Treasurer.

Bay of Plenty – 1958/1971

The Bay of Plenty Branch is composed of a number of twigs formed separately as small autonomous branches, but coming together in 1971.

Opotiki: The Opotiki Branch was registered in the first *Farm Forestry* in 1958, with G.Black as President and H.Watson as Secretary. There are no records available, and the only other mention is of a revival in 1962! Opotiki therefore appears to be the first of the Bay of Plenty branches, so it is a pity that early records have not been found.

Rotorua: The Rotorua Farm Shelter and Forestry Association (changed to Rotorua Farm Forestry Association in 1964) was formed from initiatives by the Waikite Branch of Federated Farmers who called the inaugural meeting at Rotorua on 29 March 1960. The Conservator of Forests, A.P.Thomson, told the meeting that the farm forestry organisation was entirely a farmer show, organised by farmers for farmers, but that the NZ Forest Service was in the background always willing and ready to help. He explained the nursery policy of making trees available to nurserymen at a 15% discount which a branch could take advantage of by registering a small nursery of their own, and passing on savings to members, or building funds.

Neil Barr spoke to the meeting outlining the aims of the National Association, mentioning the journal *Farm Forestry*. He thought the future demand for timber by big companies such as Tasman should make tree growing profitable, but

that shelter was probably the most important aspect for a farmer, benefiting stock and pasture.

Ed Graham of Waikite was elected first President, A.K.Bolstad Secretary/Treasurer, and a committee was made up of R.K.Gray of Ngakuru, A.D.Dibley of Ngongataha, A.W.Hansen of Rerewhakaaitu, and J.A.Alley of Atiamuri.

A.J.Williamson was President in 1964–65, and D.G.Sandilands in 1966–70.

The only record of early field days was of one held at A.D.Dibley's property, and it is pleasing to report that Mr Dibley turned 100 in 1996. There is mention of enthusiasm at the 1969 AGM, and the beginning of much help from Extension Officer Eric Purnell, who explained the new grant scheme proposed for 1970.

Whakatane: A meeting at Edgecumbe, also in 1960, and also attended by Neil Barr, resulted in a Branch being formed at Whakatane. The Chairman was Bill Reynolds, but the Branch functioned only spasmodically.

Jim Barr went to the 1969 Gisborne Conference, and asked Neil, and Alex and Margaret Morison from Lower Northland, to call in on the way home. Jim thinks this visit stimulated some activity and resulted in his attending the 1971 Whangarei Conference where he stuck his neck out, and offered to host the National Conference at Rotorua in 1973. He was Whakatane Chairman at the time, but realised the size of the task of organising a Conference, so proceeded to contact the other small Branches in the region with a view to amalgamation.

Galatea: There is reference to the formation of a Branch at Galatea in the editorial from Russell Smith in *Farm Forestry* 6/3 August 1964. Jim Barr also recalls a Galatea group in the 1960s, but no records are available.

Tauranga/Te Puke: Jim Barr recalls a group in the area, but there are no details and no written confirmation has been found.

Bay of Plenty: The NZFFA was keen to hold a Conference in 1973 based at Rotorua. In the winter of 1971, Jim Barr

organised a meeting of the Whakatane and Rotorua Branches and people he knew from other smaller branches. This meeting was attended by David McNeil, an active Waikato member who was helpful, and Eric Purnell, the Rotorua Extension Officer, who was a considerable motivating force in the new Branch.

The meeting was held in the Kawerau Forest, and the motion to form a new Branch called Bay of Plenty FFA was carried, with subscriptions to remain at \$1-50.

Jim Barr was President from 1971 to 1974, with Don Sandilands as Vice-President and Basil Coles as Secretary.

All efforts of the new Branch were directed towards organising the 1973 Rotorua Conference, and Jim Barr acknowledges the great help of Harry Bunn and FRI staff. The Conference, says Jim, “was the birthplace of the agroforestry concept, and led to the establishment of the Tikitere Agroforestry Research Project”. The theme of the conference was “Grazing In Forests”.

Many meetings were held, leading up to a successful Conference, and a formal dinner at the Rotorua DB Hotel wound up the organising committee.

Geoff Brann, currently National President (1996–98), was Branch President of Bay of Plenty for 3 years about 1975–78, and his wife Gill was Secretary for 15 years from 1975 to 1990. Gill is adamant that 5 years should be the maximum for this job! During this time membership was between 70 and 100, but by 1996 had reached 203.

Most years about five field days were held, and the Branch pays tribute to the considerable assistance from FRI personnel who have often taken part. After Eric Purnell, Extension Officers Robin Galbreath, Bob Hight, and Charlie Schell had a large input into Branch activities and, since his retirement to Te Puke, Ivan Frost has been a very strong supporter.

Gill Brann mentions the importance of National Conferences in motivating a Branch, and with the 1995 Tauranga venue being the second for the area, impetus was maintained.

Being at the centre of New Zealand's largest forest growing area, as well as including the research facilities of FRI, the Bay of Plenty Branch seems assured of a positive future.

Chatham Islands?

A mention of this Branch, or the possibility of forming such a branch, appeared in National Executive minutes of November 1967. The suggestion was made that it might affiliate with Canterbury Central, but apparently no action was taken.

West Coast – 1972

The National Association thought it would be a good thing to hold a conference on the West Coast, but there was no farm forestry branch there; no problem, create one!

Bill Templeton, first Secretary, and George Ferguson, first President, arranged the first meeting for 10 April 1972, with National Executive members Hamish Deans, Peter Smail, and Joll Hosking coming over the hill to help get the Branch organised.

Membership began with 75, and has averaged about 50, with 55 in 1996. The first main project was the National Conference of 1974; this gave delegates an opportunity of inspecting the difficult pakihi soil types which created problems for both farm and forest establishment. Planting exotic trees, mainly *P. radiata*, on old mine tailings and in cutover native bush, together with the long-running debate on logging of native forest v. conservation, made for an interesting Conference.

The Branch also hosted the National Conference in 1994, at which a highlight was the opening address by Geoff Chavasse, a forester who spent his early days on the West Coast after an English education, and who ended his service at FRI in Rotorua. Geoff was a very good friend to farm forestry, and in this address could give a very measured contribution to the debate on sustainable yields from West Coast forests.



Attractive native forest remnants dot many West Coast farms.

Delegates visited Waipuna Station for the second time, owned by the late George Ferguson, and now farmed by his two sons, Ken and Mark. The property had remained in the same family for 130 years. It was difficult to imagine the problems of bringing 50 sheep and six in-calf heifers over mountain passes from Christchurch, and yet this property at one time had more stock units than any other property in the South Island.

Members attending this Conference also learned of new methods of planting trees on pakihi soils, using V-blading with big machinery to improve drainage and greatly increase tree growth; emphasis was also given to the fertiliser needs of young trees.

The continuing debate on conservation *v.* development had been eased somewhat by the 1986 West Coast Accord, in which conservation and forestry groups agreed to a number of measures to safeguard indigenous forest but allow some sustainable logging.

Ron Ferguson served on the National Executive from 1978 to 1985, and was a leader in establishing an arboretum of exotic and native species in the late 1970s on land he leased from the Marist Brothers Trust.

Charlie Schell was appointed by the Forest Service as full-time Extension Officer about 1980 to help administer the grant scheme, and in 1986 Neil Barr and Harry Bunn visited to give five of their popular pruning clinics.

In recent years, field days have been combined with the Tree Crops Association, or Institute of Forestry, with a wide variety of topics ranging from blueberries to blackwoods, to beech silviculture, and of course to *P. radiata* establishment and tending.

John Mortimer made the point that although the rainfall at Hokitika averages 2920 mm, it falls on the same number of days as at Auckland—184.

Wellington – 1977

Wellington people interested in investing in forestry projects had no farm forestry Branch closer than Middle



A 9-year-old grazed woodlot of *Eucalyptus nitens* at Waipuna Station. This is one of the fastest-growing species on West Coast sites.

Districts centred at Palmerston North, or Wairarapa centred at Masterton.

A meeting was convened on 14 June 1977 by Peter Owles. It was attended by 40 owners or potential owners of plantations, with Hamish Deans and Jim Pottinger from the NZFFA, and with the NZ Forest Service represented by Gavin McKenzie and John Cawston. Those present unanimously adopted a resolution to form a Branch in Wellington, with a northern boundary at the Otaki River.

Peter Owles was elected Chairman, with a committee of David Gratton, Gary Blake, Geoff Stanton, Pat Clancy, and Roger Redington. Geoff Stanton was Secretary until the first AGM in April 1978 when Alistair McLay took on the job with Roger Redington as Treasurer.

Geoff Stanton was a professional forester with the Wellington City and Suburban Water Supply Board, and provided much organising ability, knowledge, and expertise in the early years, with frequent articles in the local newsletter until his death in 1995.

A Branch initiative was the planting of 5 ha of mixed species, now (in 1997) 17 years old, as a joint venture and currently named Stanton Park. The Branch also administers and manages the Tony Sargent Arboretum of 15 ha.

Membership grew from 50 initially to 129 in 1996, averaging 100. Committee member Jenni Lean is currently on the National Executive. Malcolm Buist, employed by the legal division of the Forest Service for many years, represented the Branch at Conferences where his legal mind often helped the national body sort out matters pertaining to NZFFA rules and to meeting procedure.

The first AGM of the Branch included a visit to Sir John Marshall's plantations at Reikorangi. Sir John was Patron of the National Association from 1978 to 1988.

Wellington Branch members form a somewhat different group to other Branches throughout the country, in that they have but one full-time farmer in Danny James. It is interesting to record from Geoff Stanton's report on the first meeting in 1977 "It is worthy of record that occupations of those present ranged from chemists to logging and forest contractors, from

doctors to hydrologists, from jewellers to sawmillers ... this new branch will be a businessman's forestry group, interested primarily in the growing of trees for profit."

Three foundation members, Peter Owles, D. Gratton, and Roger Redington, are still actively engaged in Branch affairs.

Central Otago – 1980

Due to the close ties between farm foresters and members of the NZ Tree Crops Association in Central Otago, there has been a different and changing structure in the local Farm Forestry Association.

The Branch was formed on 11 April 1980, apparently made possible by Men of the Trees (Otago) changing to a Farm Forestry Association, with additional members joining.

The officers of the new association were: Chairman, Don Harley; Secretary, Ken Hale; and a committee of Gary Glassford, Keith Falconer, Francis Dundas, Morris Mee, and Trevor Heaney.

The first subscription was \$10-00 which covered the *Tree Grower* and NZFFA subscription as well as Branch requirements.

A field day on windbreak establishment and management, demonstrating spot and boom spraying, planting, and pruning, was held at Bill Hunt's property, Maungawera Valley in the Upper Clutha, on Wednesday 21 May 1980.

By the end of the first year, membership was 59, with enthusiasm for a proposed windbreak scheme in the Wakatipu Basin, as well as for the Forest Service Grant Scheme for woodlots. A field day at Naseby Forest Headquarters was held on 20 February 1981, where Paul Erikson of the Forest Service spoke on woodlot planting and management. Consideration was given to ordering tree seedlings in bulk if enough members co-operated.

Brian Taylor took over as Secretary in 1981, regular newsletters were sent to members, and regular field days were held.

A combined meeting was held of the Central Otago Branch of the NZ Tree Crops Association and the Farm Forestry Association Branch on 28 April 1984, after a decision had been made to amalgamate the two organisations.

Chairman of the new grouping was Bob Macfie, with Ernest (Ernie) New as Secretary, Angela Meecham as Treasurer, and committee members Ian Smith and Bruce Hamilton (who had been on the National Executive of NZFFA 1975–77). Representing the NZFFA at this meeting were John Mackay and Bill Gimblett.

The management of the Branch was organised so that members could belong to either NZFFA or NZTCA, or both, with payment of \$4-00 to the Branch, plus the subscription to either of the National Associations.

A discussion on the Ruataniwha High Country Training School expressed the wish that both NZTCA and NZFFA should be represented on any committee set up to administer the school. This effort was later abandoned as the school was to be pastorally oriented.

Problems were seen in the considerable distances between committee members, and the possible need for district representatives from some outlying areas.

On 11 July 1984, 40 members attended a combined Farm Forestry and Tree Crops Seminar at Alexandra with good speakers covering a wide range of topics.

Central Otago joined with three adjoining branches to discuss submissions to the United Council prepared by the Secretary, because of concerns that the United Council's Draft Regional Planning Scheme could affect tree croppers or farm foresters. It was considered very worthwhile for branches to work together on such an issue.

At a meeting on 4 January 1985 a discussion was held on the development of a piece of land it was hoped could be obtained from the Department of Lands or the Ministry of Works as a major trial area for tree crops and farm forestry, complete with irrigation if necessary. The project was to be known as the "Central Otago Trials Area Development Scheme", with Trustees appointed being Bob Macfie and

Don Harley. Ultimately, upon full development, it was proposed that the land be returned to the owners and be used as a camping ground as well as a demonstration area.

At this meeting it was decided to recommend to the AGM that NZTCA and NZFFA in Central Otago combine to form an organisation to be called the Central Otago Treegrowers, and that incorporation should be sought. The general feeling of the meeting was that the Branch was not looking for direction from a “national body”, and that there should be no increase in fees to the “national body”.

At the AGM on 10 March 1985 it was agreed to form Central Otago Treegrowers, to incorporate, and to wind up the Central Otago Tree Crops and Farm Forestry branches, transferring their funds to COT. The inaugural meeting of COT held also on 10 March 1985 resulted in the election of Ian Smith as Chairman, Ernest New as Secretary, and Angela Meecham as Treasurer, with a committee of Don Harley, Gerald Goodger, Bob Macfie, and Martyn van Geldermalsen. The subscription was set at \$4-00, and one objective was to encourage members to join either NZTCA or NZFFA.

This became the end of direct representation on the NZFFA until the Southern High Country Branch was formed in 1994, with Gerald Goodger as Chairman.

North Otago – 1981

Perhaps the earliest tree interest group in New Zealand was the North Otago Tree Planting Association (Inc.) (NOTPA), which was formed at an inaugural meeting held in the Oamaru Town Hall on 19 March 1937, with Dr E. Stubbs in the chair. The aims and objectives were to establish a tree nursery, and to foster tree planting in barren North Otago.

A nursery was established in 1937 on Borough reserve land. Over the years many thousands of trees were sold at low cost, and many given to community groups. For 40-odd years Waitaki Boys' High School operated a tree-planting club with advice and help from the Association.

In 1937, also, Dr Stubbs wrote to the Minister of Internal Affairs with reference to planting trees at the Waitaki Hydro. Subsequently, a large meeting of local bodies was convened by the Association to set this in motion.

The same year, tree planting was undertaken at the Railway Reserve from the Waitaki Bridge south, using unemployed workers with the Association augmenting their pay by 3/- to 4/1 per man per week. 6250 trees were ordered from Millichamp's Nurseries in Ashburton at a cost of over £26.

A full-time forestry officer was employed by the Association from 1954 to 1963.

In 1963 a local farm forestry conference was held in Oamaru, resulting in a sub-committee being formed to co-ordinate action taken in the Waitaki Valley Beautification Scheme.

Also in 1963, NOTPA convened and helped form the Waitaki Lakes Committee, together with the local bodies concerned, and the Association had a large input into the trees planted around Lakes Benmore and Aviemore.

The nursery was closed in 1980 as it was no longer economic.

The NOTPA is in good heart today, with President Rob Douglas, Raeleen Garvan as Secretary, and Robyn Kirk as Treasurer. Reserves are looked after in a number of scenic spots.

Dr Stubbs had a large influence involving people with an interest in trees over many years. He travelled to Invercargill to address the newly formed Men of the Trees (Southland) Inc. on 26 July 1958, and gave very good advice on the management of NOTPA which could apply to Men of the Trees. He particularly mentioned the nursery which had supplied to farmers about 400 000 trees since its inception 21 years before.

By 1981, it was clear that NOTPA had different objectives, and could not service the needs of farm foresters in the district, and so a meeting was held in the Herbert Hall on 28 July to form a North Otago Farm Forestry Association.

31 people attended, with apologies from another 12. The meeting was chaired by Graeme Scott who introduced the current President of the NZFFA, Owen Smith of Timaru. Owen thanked Forest Service people, particularly John Edmonds and the organisers of the meeting, and outlined the work of the Farm Forestry Association. He made particular reference to the involvement with Town and Country Planning, the debate on farm-scale planting v. large company planting with its social aspects.

Owen spoke of Bill Gimblett's work in helping farmers find good markets for their trees, mentioning the work of the National Shelter Working Party, and the 1981 Forestry Development Conference. He told the audience about the *Tree Grower* magazine, and answered a range of questions. Owen explained what was involved in running a Branch, with \$7 capitation going to the National Body, and the rights of delegates to National Conferences.

Following a motion by Jack Smith, who managed the Southland Counties forest at Waikaia, it was agreed to form a North Otago Branch of the Farm Forestry Association. Though Jack was never a landowner himself, he was very supportive of the new Branch, instilling much enthusiasm in others to plant trees. He was elected the first President.

Colin Matheson has been on the executive for 15 years and is currently President. John Prebble has also served for 15 years, 11 of them as Secretary, and is currently President of the National Association. Bert Lory was Treasurer for 9 of his 14 years on the committee. John Prebble's wife Heather has now been Treasurer for 7 years.

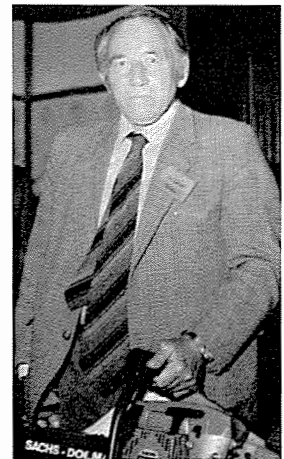
John Prebble chaired a Conference committee which ran a very successful National Conference at Oamaru in 1992.

Jim Garvan won the "South Island Farm Forester of the Year" award at the 1985 conference, with Colin and Gwenda Mackay (now of the Southern High Country Branch) winning the MOF "Award for Innovation" in 1992.

Membership of the Branch has varied from 63 to 104, currently (in 1996) being 97.



Good form macrocarpa on John Prebble's property.



Jim Garvan, "South Island Farm Forester of the Year" in 1985.

Mid Northland – 1960/1981

This Branch originally began as three separate Branches—Northern Wairoa, Bay of Islands, and Whangarei.

Northern Wairoa: It has not proved possible to trace early minutes of this Branch, but it was formed early in 1960, with the inaugural meeting at Herb Watkins' farm on flat land near the Northern Wairoa river close to Dargaville. Herb had a magnificent shelterbelt of *Eucalyptus botryoides* to cut off the south-westerlies.

Herb became the first President, with Ian Pasley from Paparoa as Secretary. Membership peaked at about 88, with the centre of interest becoming Pouto Forest Farms, a large agroforestry block on windswept sandy coastal land near the Kaipara Harbour entrance. Mark Farnsworth was the last Chairman of the Branch, with Ian Russell, stock manager for Pouto Forest Farms, as Secretary.

There is no record of the winding up of the Branch, but by 1972 field days tended to be more regional, so this would have been about the time for amalgamation with Whangarei.

A big input into Branch activities was provided by Jack Bilkey, one of a rare breed of Department of Agriculture officers who saw the benefits of farm shelter. Although shelter was the most important topic in the area, some substantial plantations were planted by such members as Paul Nash, Peter Blackmore, and Selwyn Philpott.

Bay of Islands: The inaugural meeting of the Branch was held at Waitangi on 19 April 1961, sponsored by the Kaikohe-Taheke Federated Farmers, with NZ Forest Service help.

Neil Barr spoke of the Association, and Frank Morrison from the Forest Service, later to become Senior Extension Officer in Wellington, joined in the discussion.

The first Chairman was Cliff Price, with Secretary Tom Wightman, and a committee of Warren Beasley, E.G.V. Clements, and G. Harris, with Frank Morrison as a co-opted member.

The Forest Service arranged the first field day at Puketi Forest on 1 June 1962, with 15 present.

An important meeting was held in Kaikohe on 23 March 1964, when members met with representatives of local authorities and farming groups to discuss an increase in forestry in the area. Concern was expressed at the depopulation occurring in the district, the large amount of land (private, Crown, and Maori) not being properly utilised, and ended with a resolution “that the Government be requested urgently to implement a forestry scheme for Northland to an extent which will —

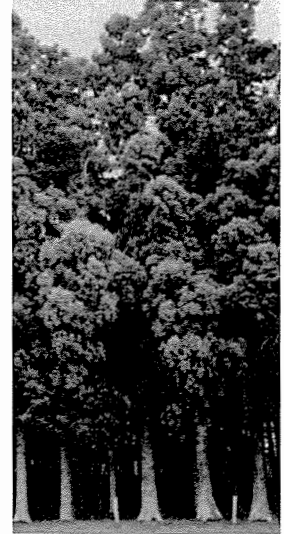
- (a) create and sustain the economy of the area
- (b) utilise the very large area of suitable land available
- (c) provide ample timber for local use and for the future requirements of Auckland
- (d) provide a considerable surplus of timber for overseas export.”

Gordon Gillespie became the local Forest Extension Officer about 1969, and was prominent in farm forestry throughout Northland for many years until his retirement. The final AGM recorded in 1975 elected John Horrell as Chairman, Don Currie as Secretary, and a committee of Bruce Killen, Cliff Price, and Jack Lees.

In 1970, a combined committee of Bay of Islands, Northern Wairoa, and Whangarei was formed to organise the 1971 National Conference in Whangarei. A large committee of 19, a number of whom travelled considerable distances to fairly frequent meetings, very much enjoyed the experience of running such a Conference and, as in so many other regions, farm forestry received a considerable boost from hosting such an event.

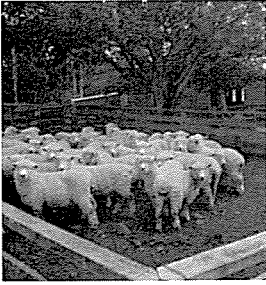
Whangarei: A meeting of interested people was called by the Whangarei Agricultural Club President Tom McKegg, and this resulted in about 50 people gathering at Glenbervie Forest Headquarters on 14 July 1960. It was agreed to form a Branch of the Farm Forestry Association at Whangarei, with annual subscription set at 10/-.

Jack Richards was elected first President, with Joll Hosking as Secretary, and a committee of Eric Austen, Mac Moore, and Trevor Coop.



Mature *Cryptomeria japonica* at the Killens' property near Kaikohe.

Neil Barr and Herb Watkins demonstrated the preservation of posts and battens using creosote, and with Bolit salts using cold soak diffusion and sap replacement methods.



An old oak tree gives shade to sheep in the yards at Moore's property at Pipiwai.

Frank Morrison from the Forest Service, led a demonstration of good planting methods, followed by pruning with a pole saw, and a discussion of thinning.

The Branch was active from the start, with meetings addressed by Chris van Kraayenoord on poplars and willows, a field day at Briscoe and Mac Moore's property on 31 March 1961, and a combined meeting of Northland Branches at Hosking's Nurseries on 21 November 1961, at which Neil Barr spoke of the likelihood of a Government loan scheme for forestry beginning soon.

Another well-attended field day at the same venue in 1968, was addressed by NZFFA President, Niall Alexander, with Neil and Hec Nicholls from Lower Northland.

Extension Officers Gavin McKenzie from Kaikohe and Barry Walsh from Auckland outlined the loan scheme, saying that large numbers of farmers had applied for loans, but were declined due to a cap on finance. This was happening when top Forest Service personnel were pointing to shortages of timber by 1990 unless planting was increased.

Hec Nicholls spoke of poor prices received from some sawmillers for farmers' logs, and of the need for Association members to combine in some way for marketing their timber.

Northland Catchment Commission members Brian Burrige and Bob Cathcart attended a number of meetings, with helpful advice on erosion control by the use of poplars, willows, and other trees. At the 1981 AGM (21st), it was agreed to change the name of the Association to Mid Northland, as by then it represented the three Branches which had earlier been separate.

Mid Northland: Because it originated by combining three Branches (on 14 February 1981), Mid Northland began by endeavouring to have field days at widely separated venues

each year. This practice has continued, and has resulted in good attendances at most field days.

Model plantations were established at Barge Park near Whangarei with cypresses in 1981, followed by pines, eucalypts, and blackwoods.

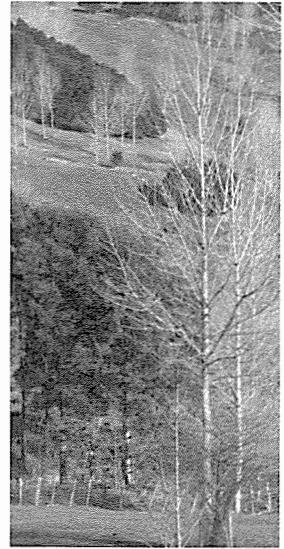
The National Association Conference was held in Whangarei for a second time in 1991, where a feature was perhaps the largest field day ever held at a Conference, when over 400 people visited the Davies-Colley farm, forest, and sawmill.

A joint venture was set up with the NZ Girl Guides Association for tree planting at Trefoil Park, where several species of eucalypt, as well as blackwood, cypresses, and some trials of minor species were established on 6 ha in 1992. This was largely through the efforts of David Davies-Colley.

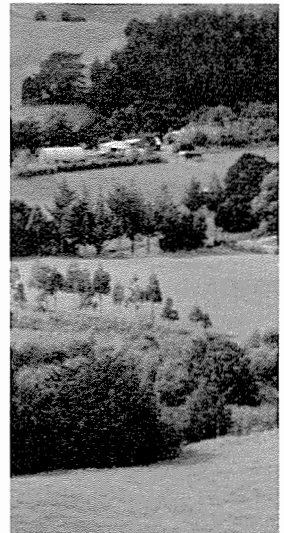
The Branch had a membership of 343 in 1996, the second-largest in the country. A high profile for farm forestry was considerably helped by having Neil Barr handy, and over the years having three National Presidents in Joll Hosking, Richard Davies-Colley, and Tom MacBride, and so members were always kept in touch with NZFFA matters.

A regular newsletter, and up to 10 field days a year, have ensured continuing interest. Mid Northland was the first Branch to arrange for newsletter covers, paid for by local advertisers. In effect, enough covers are printed each run to last for 2 years. The revenue received covers the cost of newsletter production and mailing. Other Branches have adopted the same system.

Noeline MacBride who was Secretary for many years is a Branch Life Member, as also is Sid Ware, past President, newsletter editor, and stalwart of the Dargaville Field Days. This Dargaville event for 2 or 3 days at the beginning of March each year has been a good source of new members, and has brought excellent publicity for the Association due to the work of John Pedersen, Sid Ware, and other committee members.



Poplars in the winter at the Davies-Colley's property near Titoki.



An attractive farm forestry setting at Ian and Sandy Page's property, "Whareora".

Taupo – 1988

This Branch may not have come into being had not Mike and Donna Smith decided to purchase a property there in 1987. Mike was then NZFFA President, with a wealth of knowledge gained from active years in tree planting and on the local committee of the Lower Northland branch.

Mike could see that the Taupo area was pretty remote from adjoining branches—Bay of Plenty, Hawke's Bay, Middle Districts, and Waitomo. It also had unique characteristics in being elevated (Lake Taupo is 369 m above sea level), having a raw pumice soil, and being only recently settled and so there were few examples of old plantations, shelterbelts, or ornamental trees. At the same time it could be seen that trees grew well in the area.

On 9 July 1988 Mike organised an inaugural meeting at Mike and Valerie Steiner's property. In spite of a black frost which meant the temperature had not reached zero when the meeting started, about 60 people turned up with guest speakers Neil Barr, Bruce Treeby, Bill and Mary Whittle (Hawke's Bay), Geoff and Gill Brann (Bay of Plenty), and John Cawston from MOF.

Mike says that after all the guests had spoken about the Association there was some hesitation to take any action until Mary Whittle pushed the issue, and the decision was made to form the Branch. Dave Cox was the first elected Chairman, with Mike Smith as Secretary/Treasurer. Committee members were Trevor Charman, Tom Scott, Jim Fox (a schoolteacher who became editor of the newsletter), Mike Steiner, Tony Farr, and Craig Bell.

The first field day was held at Steiner's property with an amazing attendance of over 80 people. Everyone was very impressed with what Mike Steiner had achieved with virtually no assistance. He had planted 15 ha of *P. radiata* with his own ripper/planter, with special directional planting to allow the sun to shine down the 20-m avenues between trees at 10 a.m. in mid-winter to quickly thaw the grass. Even though the trees were only 2¹/₂ years old, Mike had harvested silage in June due to the microclimate established, a rare event at Taupo.

Leith Knowles (FRI) spoke of the value of high quality seedlings, Neil Barr demonstrated early pruning to save windthrow, and Ian Nicholas (FRI) talked of eucalypt establishment.

Many field days followed, with valuable help from John Cawston and Leith Knowles in particular.

Membership grew from 37 to 69 over the first year, and in 1997 was about 140.

Mike Smith used contacts in the forestry world to obtain top-quality seedlings and on-sold these to Branch members with the result that the Branch had in excess of \$17 000 invested by 1995. An advertisement-sponsored newsletter also helped with finances.

One very successful event was a complete forestry exhibition from planting to sawing timber, and then an auction of the product, held at the Kinloch Country Fair.

With the finances in such a sound position, an annual scholarship of \$500 to a second-year student at Waiariki Polytechnic was instituted, the first one going to Geraldine Fitzgerald of Whakatane.

Conditions for further growth in the Branch are rather more limited at present, with low returns for sheep and beef farmers, commercial forestry companies buying farmland to extend their plantings, and the conversion of some farms to dairying where, as in most of New Zealand, little interest is shown in tree planting.

Mike and Donna Smith left Taupo for Palmerston North in 1996. Mike had been President for several years with Benjamin Lee of Reporoa as Secretary. Benjamin is the son of Alan Lee, one of farm forestry's pioneers who was an early tree planter in the Wairarapa district before moving to Reporoa.

Ruapehu – 1993

Ruapehu is a recent Branch formed at a meeting in Taumarunui on 8 December 1993, made up largely of a breakaway group from the Waitomo (previously King Country) Branch.

The first Chairman elected was Robin Caldwell who is now the newsletter editor. Secretary/Treasurer is Kevin Stephenson and present Chairman is Ian Forster.

Membership has varied around 50, with the most important meeting to date being a public meeting in 1995 to discuss the effects of the arrival of Carter Holt in the area. 150 people attended this meeting.

Southern High Country – 1994

On 25 September 1994, 24 people gathered in the woolshed at Merivale Station to discuss the formation of a new Branch of the Association, welcomed by Gerald Goodger.

Eoin Garden, National Executive member, explained the need for a new Branch to serve the Mackenzie Basin and Central Otago, which would not overlap the activities of any other Branch.

Graeme Flett, National President, spoke of the structure and size of the Association, and benefits to Branch members such as receiving the *Tree Grower* as well as a focus on the Branch area.

John Edmonds, from MOF with a long service in forestry extension work, explained the relationship between the Association and MOF, which could include assistance with field days and in the production of a newsletter.

After it was formally agreed to form the Branch, officers elected were Gerald Goodger as Chairman, Tony Gloag vice-Chairman, Mike Floate Secretary, and Gwenda Mackay Treasurer, with a committee of four.

The Southern High Country was preferred to Lower Mackenzie/Upper Clutha as a name for the Branch.

Eoin Garden recommended the Open Polytechnic course on Farm Forestry, and Tony Gloag raised the adverse publicity relating to the spread of Douglas-fir. John Edmonds assured the meeting that he was trying to acquaint his Head Office of the position.

The first committee meeting was held in the Tarras Hall on 22 January 1995, where efforts were made to define the

Branch area and to attract members by drawing up a mailing list and putting together a leaflet for distribution.

Subscription was fixed at \$50, and seeding finance was to be sought from the national body.

Jolyon Manning was to edit a Branch newsletter, Gerald Goodger was appointed Councillor to the National Conference, and also to liaise with the Tree Crops Association which had a membership in the same area.

“Back to basics” was to be the theme of the first field days, with John Edmonds to lead on species choice and pruning. The first field day was at Gerald Goodger’s Merivale Station, to look at the successful growth of 13-year-old trees in a harsh climate, and the second to be in the form of a wide-ranging workshop at the Garvan homestead, Lovell’s Flat, Balclutha.

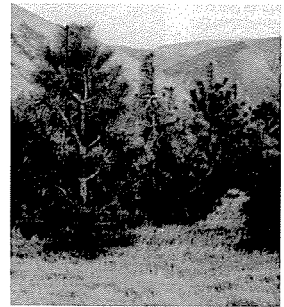
The third field day at Colin and Gwenda Mackay’s Ribbonwood property followed the lines of a National Conference field day held on the same property during the Oamaru Conference in 1992. Ribbonwood has a harsh climate with a low rainfall, but carries up to 13 000 stock units, and 3 million trees have been planted since 1981. In 1994, 10 truckloads of logs left the property from trees planted 40–50 years earlier.

Special care is taken on this property to prevent wildings escaping from plantation trees, mainly by good stock management. Colin and Gwenda won the MOF “Award for Innovation” at the 1992 conference.

Nick Ledgard led a discussion on the choice of species, and the management of wilding spread. Wildings are usually widely spaced, of poor form, and unlikely to be worth logging, as well as environmentally insensitive. Forestry by default is not wanted.

This led to a debate on the Resource Management Act—some see it as a bureaucratic hurdle, but it was suggested that if used properly, it can smooth the way for the planting of trees.

It was felt that having the Farm Forestry Association in the area could provide a more balanced view of the use of



Seven-year-old *Pinus ponderosa* at Ribbonwood.

trees, and help overcome a negative public opposition to tree planting.

The first AGM of Southern High Country Branch was held at John Scurr's property at Cardrona. In 1996 membership stood at 31.

Golden Bay – 1995

In the early 1990s, a Collingwood-based group of tree enthusiasts held an occasional field day, usually featuring Ross Jamieson from the Ministry of Forestry in Christchurch.

By 1995 it had become obvious that there was a need to formally constitute a Golden Bay Branch of the NZFFA. Derry Kingston convened the inaugural meeting at Rockville in the Aorere Valley and it was attended by Ket Bradshaw, Executive Officer of the National Association. Keith Tomlinson was elected President, a position he still holds, while Derry Kingston acted as Secretary/Treasurer from 1995 to 1999 when Don Mead took over. After the meeting the group enjoyed a field trip to the President's woodlot.



A log house built by Andrew Dixon of Takaka.

Soon after the Branch was set up Russell Fitzgerald, a retired forestry nutrition scientist, came to settle in Takaka, and has been greatly valued for the advice, knowledge, and enthusiasm that he has brought to field days.

Dr Don Mead, a retired lecturer in forestry from Lincoln University, migrated to Golden Bay where he is likewise proving of great help to the Branch.

The Branch sets itself a goal of holding at least four field days per year. It has about 20 members so far who enjoy visiting each other's woodlots.