

# AUSTRALIAN FOREST HISTORY

SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER No. 4

1990

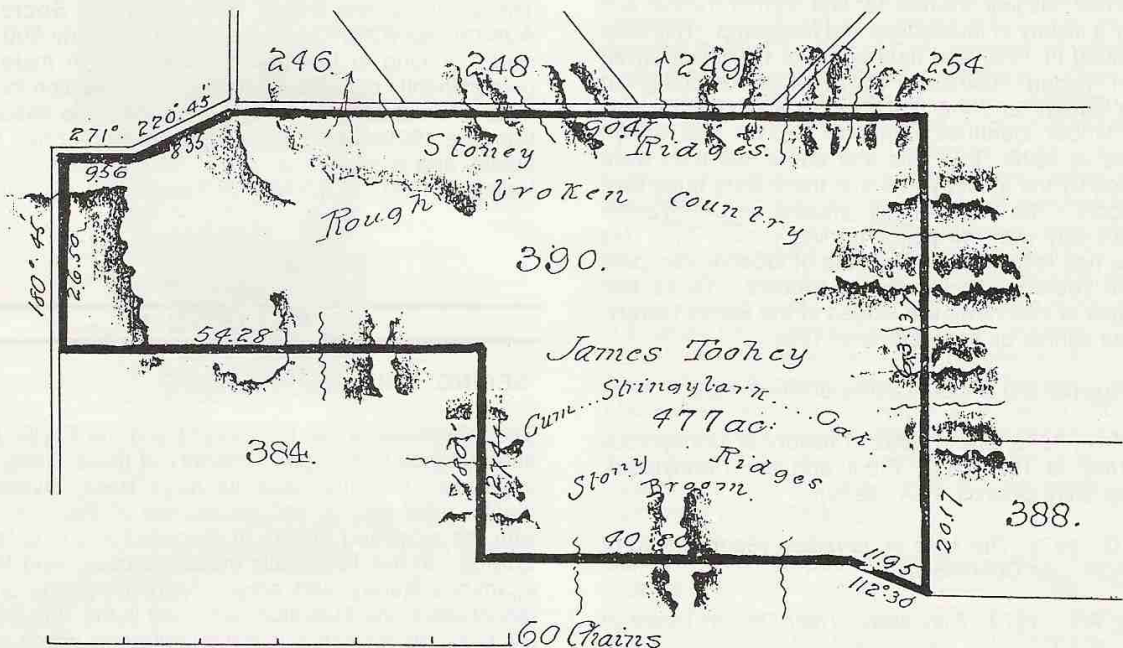
ISSN 1033-937 X

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

As this 4th issue of the Australian Forest History Newsletter goes to press there are 265 names (individuals and institutions) on the mailing list for the society. The membership database indicates a wide range of forest history interests and activities across Australia and New Zealand. This newsletter contains an

invited article by Bill Metcalf (Griffith University, Qld) Alan Hill (Lismore, NSW) on Data Sources for Land-History Research.

Similar articles (up to 1500 words) on research projects would be welcome for forthcoming issues.



1872 Survey Map of part of the current Toohy Forest Area (Brisbane), showing numerous topographical details useful in land-use history. (See Metcalf and Hill)



Editor this issue: Dr Kevin Frawley  
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## WHAT'S HAPPENING IN THE STATES

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### QUEENSLAND

#### Log Chute Restoration

The Royal Geographical Society of Australasia (Qld) is investigating the feasibility of restoring a log chute in Mount Mistake National Park. The chute was constructed in the early 1880s to feed a saw mill at the head of Laidley Creek and was used initially to feed cedar, and later (1938) hoop pine, from Mount Mistake to the mill.

The Society would be pleased to hear from anyone with any information on this log chute. Contact Kath Berg, RGSA (Q), 112 Brookes Street, Fortitude Valley, Q 4006. Phone : (07) 252 3856.

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### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Jenny Mills has sent the following information:

Karen Watkins of Mumbullup near Donnybrook in the South West has just finished her first draft of 'Timber and Two-up' a history of Mumbullup and Noggerup. This area was settled in 1860 and held some of the finest jarrah forest in Western Australia. Railway expansion brought in sleeper cutters and the first sawmill was built by well known timber identities Benjamin Sexton and Simon Drysdale in 1906. It is said that about 500 men were employed by the industry and that there were huge two-up schools. The tradition still remains on Donnybrook bike race day with the police turning a blind eye. Ms Watkins has researched 145 years of local newspapers and 100 years of local authority minutes. Tapes and transcripts of interviews are lodged at the Batty Library, Perth but cannot be accessed until 1995.

Other regional and timber histories of interest are:

Frost, A.C., 1976 *Green Gold: A history of Donnybrook W.A. 1842 to 1974* (A.C. Frost and the Donnybrook Balingup Shire Council, W.A., 6239).

Fall, V.G., 1979 *The Mills of Jarradale* (Sponsorship of Alcoa Australian Operations).

Staples, A.C., 1979 *They Made Their Destiny* (Shire of Harvey, W.A.).

Snell, L.J., 1986 *Drakesbrook Days and Waroona Years* (Shire of Waroona).

Taggart, N., 1984 *Rockingham Looks Back: A History of the Rockingham District 1829-1982* (Rockingham District Historical Society (Inc)).

Elliott, I., 1983 *Mundaring: a History of the Shire* (Shire of Mundaring).

Gabbedy, J.P., 1981 *The Forgotten Pioneers* (Fremantle Arts Centre Press).

There is a newly formed Mundaring Historical Society. Mundaring, quite close to Perth in the Darling Range is one of the very early timber getting areas like Kalamunda. In 1903 water was successfully pumped from the Mundaring Weir to the Kalgoorlie goldfields an engineering scheme which still raises environmental discussion on ringbarking and clearing and burning. The Mundaring area was also the first gazetted State Forest in the 1920's. The new society's prime project is to catalogue the known origins of geographical names such as hills, wells and springs. Aboriginal sites are also known to exist in the Helena Valley area of the Mundaring Shire and are being used as a means by rate payers to try and prevent land development in the valley. The secretary Geoff Murray may be contacted at Lot 20, Le Grange Rd, Stoneville, W.A.

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## SOURCES FOR FOREST HISTORY

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The library of the **Royal Geographical Society of Australasia (Qld)** has a collection of nearly 500 glass slides relating to forestry. The Australian material is predominantly of Queensland, but the collection includes quite a few slides of overseas locations. The slides date from the 1920s and 1930s. The library is open to the public, and is located at 112 Brookes Street, Fortitude Valley, Q 4006. Enquiries : Kath Berg, (07) 252 3856.

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## REVIEWS

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### 'SEEING' THE RAINFORESTS

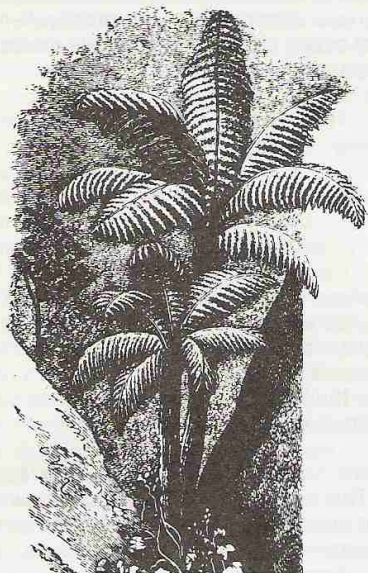
The rainforests of the New World and the Pacific had a special place in European imagery of those lands. This vegetation formation with its huge trees, diversity of plants, rapid growth and abundance of life, contrasted with the simplified forests of glaciated and long farmed Europe. In this beautifully produced book, Rod Ritchie examines literary and artistic representations of, and responses to the Australian rainforest in the 19th century. His basic proposition is that the rainforests which appear to have only been 'discovered' in the public mind recently by figuring so highly in conservation debate and conflict, were in fact the focus of close attention in the 19th century from a utilitarian and aesthetic perspective. However, they were later overshadowed by the sclerophyll vegetation which typified the Australian bush.

The book begins with a consideration of the original inhabitants of the rainforest and shows their representation in art. As part of the Romanticist tradition,



Aboriginal people were often included in 19th century paintings. Though the book focusses on the 19th century some mention could have been made here of Aborigines living in, or closely associated with the rainforest in north Queensland until well into the 20th century.

Subsequent chapters examine the investigations of explorers and natural historians, painting, narrative accounts for armchair travellers, timber getting and agricultural clearing and late in the 19th century, the promotion of the rainforests for recreation. A striking feature of the representation of rainforests through all these sections of the book is the prominence given to palms and ferns. Humboldt had given first place to the palms in symbolizing the rainforests of South America, clearly others felt the same way throughout the 19th century. Indeed in southern Australia, it was the fern gullies often below wet sclerophyll forest rather than rainforest *per se* which were the focus of attention.



These chapters provide a general introduction to each of the themes, though in some parts the treatment is superficial, eg the fiasco of the Kennedy expedition in 1848 (not 1849) (p.59) was due to planning being based on an incorrect body of geographical lore which derived from the early highly romantic representations of P.P. King published in a folio of maps in 1924-5. Also the brief postscript does not fully communicate the prominent role of the rainforests in rapidly changing aesthetic appraisals of the Australian natural environment over the last few decades and the conservation campaigns of the 1970s and 1980s.

The illustrations in the book are superbly presented and give an excellent insight into how some 19th century Australians and visitors saw these forests. Overall, the book makes a useful contribution to Australian environmental history.

### Seeing the Rainforests in 19th-century Australia

Rod Ritchie, 1989 (Rainforest Publishing, Paddington)  
ISBN 0 947134 04 2 RRP \$39.95

Kevin Frawley

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## SOURCES FOR FOREST HISTORY

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### DATA SOURCES FOR LAND-USE HISTORY RESEARCH

Land-use history, more than most research processes, requires the ability to utilise a diverse range of data sources. The researcher must not only collect data, but must also develop the ability to *triangulate* or make the best interpretation of the evidence provided by several sources, each of which may be questionable and/or contradictory. The specific mix of sources will vary between research projects, but might generally include the following:

**State or National Archives:** Public archives are the repository for official documents which are no longer deemed 'current' by that part of government which either created or received the material. Archives contain original land survey maps, and maps of land alienation. They contain wills which provide important clues to the disposal of land. The reports and fieldnotes of early surveyors contain information on vegetation and other surface features. Often key (survey) trees will be identified, and may still be in existence. When land was being alienated, an inspection report generally had to be made. These reports often provide a quite detailed description of the land, including location of fences, stocking rates, areas of cultivation, cattle yards, dams etc, then existing. Colonial Secretaries had to write annual reports on the status of Aborigines. A careful reading can disclose details of Aboriginal land use. Reports of early Aboriginal 'Protectors' may likewise offer land-use details, but these must be read carefully, being cognizant of the cultural beliefs, as well as the political and administrative framework then operating.

**Government Department Records:** There is no uniform time after which government departments must archive their records, although 20-30 years is the norm. Many early land-use records are still deemed 'current', and are therefore still held by departments responsible for land, mines, primary industry and forestry. While the researcher's rights to access these documents is unclear and inconsistent, to say the least, a careful, non-threatening approach can often provide data which is crucial to understanding not only how the land was used, but why. If the land in question has never been alienated, then Lands Department records are crucial. Even Railway Department records can be useful, particularly those showing early surveys for rail lines, as well as early freight



records which may indicate not only what crops were being shipped out, but also when key equipment such as a steam engine for a sawmill, or an irrigation pump arrived.

**State Historical Library:** The Mitchell, LaTrobe or Oxley Libraries contain many records of land sales, subdivisions and such. Their photographic collections, although often poorly indexed, can provide century-old photographic evidence of early land use. Often this is the only evidence giving details of early cropping practices. Old diaries, private correspondence, almanacs and district directories can be utilised in identifying not only who was in occupation of a block of land, but what they did, thought and believed about the land. This detail is crucial to good historiography.

**Other Institutional Record Systems:** There are a range of these. The Westpac Bank, for instance, has resulted from the merger of several banks over time. The extant records of these banks are now held, and available to bona-fide researchers, in Westpac's Sydney Archives. Bank details can be important in establishing the valuation of blocks of land, the financial arrangements to hold that land, and can often explain early land-use changes (if under pressure from a creditor). Church archives can also be used to provide information on the owners of particular blocks of land. Pastoral firms and sawmills may hold valuable records which can, with perseverance, be linked to particular owners or occupiers, and hence to particular blocks of land. The records of State and local museums may be helpful. Museums sometimes also hold significant, historical artifacts linked to early land-use for the area in question.

**Land Titles Office:** Much crucial information on land transfers, mortgages, subdivisions and prices can only be obtained from the State Titles Office. In general, however, this information is so sparse that it is only of use to the historical geographer in conjunction with other sources.

**Registry Office:** When one has identified the key actors in the history of a given block of land, information on their birth, death and marriage may be of interest. Often a careful analysis of these records provides clues to other relationships, degree of wealth and where other data may be found. Such personal details can add colour and depth to the final, written account.

**Local Government Records:** This is particularly important for urban land-use research. Copies of drainage plans, for example, will often indicate location of fences, toilets, stairs, paths etc. Council Minutes will indicate the timing, financing and reasons for publicly funded changes in land-use. The declaration of, and changes to, streets and parks, can often be found in sub-committee reports. Council Inspector's reports can provide valuable insights to domestic land-use.

**Aerial Photographs:** While many urban areas in Australia were photographed from the air early this century (Brisbane from a hot air balloon, by 'Herr Zahn Rinaldo', in 1908), systematic aerial photography did not

occur until the late 1920s and early 1930s. During the Second World War much of eastern Australia was photographed by the U.S. Airforce, using techniques superior to those locally available. Locating useable copies of these very early photos can be difficult, however. A compilation of aerial photographs of the area to be studied allows one, by working backwards, to date specific trees, fences, dams, buildings, etc. A great deal of otherwise un-recorded land-use information can often be gleaned from the careful study, using a magnifying stereoscope, of a time series of aerial photos.

**Newspapers and Magazines:** Early newspapers, even from what are now major cities, often contained considerable land-use information. Reports were frequently published of agricultural exports, with names of sellers allowing the researcher to connect data to a specific block of land. Lengthy reports were published extolling the praise of areas of land which were regarded as worthy of settlement. Many bizarre crops were attempted in colonial Australia, and newspapers seemed to follow these experiments with great relish and detail. Entire land-based industries may have disappeared, with only newspaper accounts to bear witness.

**Family Records:** Many land-use records, unfortunately, never enter the public realm, but remain the property of descendants of past owners or occupiers. Considerable sleuthing may be required to locate these descendants, but the effort can be worthwhile. Old photos may show land-use details on a micro level, and help key in and interpret the macro data from aerial photographs. Farm and pastoral records may be available, detailing cropping and grazing practices. Personal diaries and letters may provide important details of major events such as a flood, bushfire or new building. Most importantly, these records can elucidate how the land was then viewed.

**Australian Bicentennial Historic Records Search:** This bicentennial project (see Newsletter No 3) sought out historically significant records and artifacts in the possession of private individuals, throughout Australia. Items were examined by ABHRS staff, and catalogued, but were then left in private hands, after advice was offered on their safe retention. Each State Library, most university libraries and most local authority libraries have a copy of the micro-fiche index which was compiled. This index will give details of item ownership and access. Items are not classified, however, with any particular interest in land-use history, so location of useable items is highly problematic, but possible.

**Oral History:** The tracing of previous owners, occupiers or users of land may locate old people who can be interviewed about land-use. Such interviews are best conducted on-site, and must generally employ techniques to 'jog' or 'refresh' the memory. Old maps, photos, or even government reports can be used here. Oral history interviews must always be conducted over several sessions, to take into account the slow, imperfect recall of long-ago details. Oral history not only provides



valuable data, but can also add colour and life to the written history.

**Other Scholarly Research:** Many theses and academic papers contain land-use information, although often not advertised as such. Many anthropological dissertations, for instance, provide detailed accounts of not only contemporary, but past Aboriginal land-use practices. Many early botanical papers will contain details of vegetation patterns. Even economic and sociological thesis may give information on land-use patterns. State Historical Society Journals, often going back a century, may provide accurate and detailed accounts of land-use. The biggest problem, however, lies in linking the scholarly account to the particular land in question.

**Other (Miscellaneous) Sources:** Secondary accounts, such as school and church histories, can provide useful information, but, perhaps even more than other sources, must never be accepted on face value. Rarely do such accounts have adequate referencing, and often merely result from the repetition of previous, secondary accounts. Nevertheless, these items can provide helpful clues to land-use changes, but the researcher should always verify with reference to primary data sources. Cemetery records and tombstone inscriptions can be useful in clarifying personal details about previous owners. Plaques and notices on old buildings and hoardings often provide important land-use clues. Serendipity and lateral thinking can be valuable attributes to the land-use history researcher.

Land-use history research is a complex process which depends on the use of a diverse range of data sources, and an eclectic resolution of (at least on the surface) contradictory evidence. In general, one always starts from the present and what one already knows (or thinks one knows), and carefully works backwards, selectively using sources as suggested by the data itself. A crucial problem in any historical research is the recording of data in an easily recallable and cross-indexed format. This problem is made more difficult for land-use history work where the data comes from such diverse and incongruous sources. Successful historiography requires the merging of hard land-use data such as areas, crop yields, and vegetation patterns, with the more personal, affective data on perceptions of the land, personal anecdotes and life histories of key actors. Land-use results from the interaction of particular people with a particular block of land, within a given social, economic, political and cultural milieu. All these dimensions must be grasped and integrated if we hope to truly explicate the complexities of land-use history.

Dr William J. Metcalf  
Institute of Applied Environmental Research  
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## PUBLICATIONS

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### TASMANIA

#### *HEARTS OF OAK*

*The Story of the Southern Forest*  
Bill Leitch

The following description is from the publisher's notice:

*Hearts of Oak* shows us the earliest days of settlement in Hobart, when convict timber gangs worked the slopes of Mt Wellington, when whaling flourished in Storm Bay, and boat building was forbidden. It deals with the forest based industries from their beginning to modern times.

Some surprising facts emerge, such as the bungling of the first Huon Road, which took a century to correct, and the decision by a timber business man that was to lead years later to the decline of Franklin and the growth of Huonville as the regional centre.

The photographs could be in a book of their own. They illustrate *Hearts of Oak* abundantly, to create further interest, and to make the history live.

Bill Leitch, when just a lad, went to work in the bush at Recherche Bay as a shoeman's offside (a whistle string boy) where his first job was to cut firewood for the steam boiler. His next job was in the mill, where he was taught to be a tailer out, and to sort, grade and load timber. He progressed through managerial positions to become managing director of a forest-based company, and for some years was a timber industry representative.

He has now written the history of forest exploitation, area by area, and in *Hearts of Oak*, deals with the forests of giant trees in southern Tasmania, and the first determined (but short visioned) men who utilised them.

Bill Leitch wants Australians to understand the daunting long term task of regenerating the forests after a century of damanging, unmanaged exploitation.

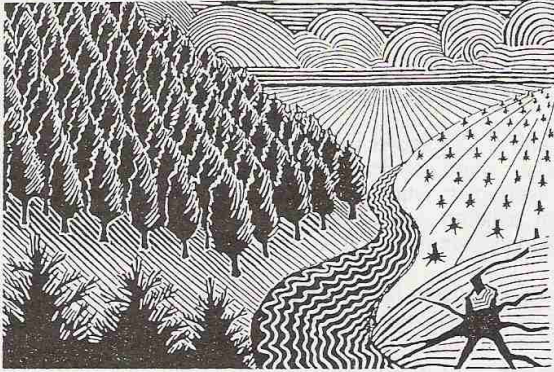
200 pages of text plus 25-30 pages historic photographs, hard cover.

Available from:  
Southern Holdings,  
P.O. Huonville 7109

\$39.95

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#### A FOREST JOURNEY

*The Role of Wood in the Development of Civilization*

John Perlin

Foreword by Lester R. Brown

Again from the publisher's blurb:

One of the most important environmental issues facing our planet today is the destruction of the world's forests. The problems associated with deforestation include depletion of firewood supplies (still the primary source of energy for three-quarters of the population of the developing world), severe flooding, accelerated loss of soil, encroaching deserts, and declining soil productivity. These problems have reached disastrous proportions in many parts of the developing world. All of us face a catastrophic future because of worldwide deforestation: the loss of forests is a major cause of the "greenhouse effect".

The present assault on our forests is part of the same cycle that began thousands of years ago as John Perlin shows in this comprehensive, richly detailed study of the role forests have played in the development of past civilizations. Wood was the principal fuel and building material of almost every society from the Bronze Age through the nineteenth century. Therefore its abundance or scarcity shaped, in large part, the culture, demographics, economy, politics, and technology of past societies. This examination of how other societies dealt with the consequences of deforestation is an important resource for better understanding and resolving these problems today.

ISBN 0 939 02667 1

#### THE JARRAH FOREST: A Complex mediterranean ecosystem

Eds: B. Dell, J.J. Havel, N. Malajczuk (Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht) 1989

*The Jarrah Forest* is arranged in three parts. Part One describes the biophysical elements such as the soils, climate, flora, fauna, hydrology, jarrah dieback and fire. Part Two is an historical account of forest use over the last 150 years. Part Three deals with current forest management e.g. silviculture, fire and management practices.

Part II (the Historical Review) contains three papers:

'Pre-colonial usage of jarrah forest by indigenous people' by R.H. Pearce

'The impact of man on the northern jarrah forest from settlement in 1829 to the Forests Act 1918' by J. Mills

'Land use conflicts and the emergence of multiple land use' by J.J. Havel

Historical material is contained also in other chapters eg Ch 18 'Silviculture' details the beginnings of regeneration treatment in the 1920s and changes in that treatment to the mid 1980s.

#### Change of name for *Journal of Forest History*

The January 1990 issue of the *Journal of Forest History* has a changed title and is now *Forest and Conservation History* reflecting the range of material published in the journal.

Membership and subscription enquiries should be addressed to:

Forest History Society  
701 Vickers Avenue  
Durham, North Carolina 27701  
USA

## NEW VEGETATION MAPS

### Australia's vegetation in the 1780s

This map shows the state of Australia's vegetation cover around the time European settlement began in 1788.

The vegetation cover is defined in terms of its growth form, foliage cover and, in most cases, predominant plant genus.

It was mapped from a large number of historical descriptions and current botanical reconstructions.

The map reveals the great variety of Australia's natural vegetation - from rainforest, through open forest, woodland and shrubland of eucalypts and acacias, to tussock grasslands and vast desert areas dominated by hummock grasses.

The subsequent effects of 200 years of European settlement and land use can be seen by comparing this map with its companion map, *Present Vegetation*, which shows the current situation.

### Australia's vegetation in the 1980s

This map shows Australia's present vegetation cover in terms of its growth form, foliage cover and, in most cases, the predominant plant genus.

It was compiled from satellite imagery interpreted in conjunction with a large number of botanical survey records and reports.

The map reveals the great variety of Australia's vegetation - from rainforest, through open forest, woodland and shrubland of eucalypts and acacias, to tussock grasslands and vast desert areas dominated by hummock grasses.

This is the first map to show the present vegetation cover of the entire continent. Comparison with its companion map, *Natural Vegetation*, reveals the impact of 200 years of European settlement on the vegetation. The major change has been a replacement of forest and woodland by an agricultural landscape of pastures and crops, while less dramatic thinning of the natural vegetation has occurred over much wider areas.

*Natural Vegetation* (1780s) and *Present Vegetation* and other thematic maps are available by contacting AUSLIG Sales:

PO Box 2  
Belconnen ACT 2616  
Tel: (06) 252 6383  
Fax: (02) 251 5446

or Commonwealth Government  
Bookshops

## Other Publications of Interest:

Constantini, A., *et al.*, 1988 Forestry Technical Education in Queensland 1930-1987, *Australian Forestry* 51(4): 232-7.

Kesby, J. and Frawley, K.J., 1989 *The Forest Record in Australian Local and Regional History : An Annotated Bibliography*, Monograph Series No. 5, Dept. of Geography and Oceanography, Univ. Coll., Aust. Defence Force Acad., Canberra.  
(Available free of charge from the Department)

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## WORK IN PROGRESS

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MATERIAL CULTURE UNIT  
JAMES COOK UNIVERSITY  
TOWNSVILLE QLD 4810

Ms Barbara Scott, Research Officer

The Material Culture Unit of James Cook University is presently undertaking a study of the logging industry of the Atherton Tablelands.

The aims of this project are multiple: to provide a general historical study of the timber industry of the Atherton Tablelands, to document the associated material technology, to make recommendations to the Heritage Commission re the selection of a mill site which may be suitable for development into an historical wood-milling museum, and to provide a detailed historical/technical study of this site.

The study is to be completed by January 1991. Members with information that may be useful could contact the unit at the above address. Information on Lawson's (sawmillers at Cairns and on the Tableland) would be welcome.

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## HISTORY OF THE NEW ZEALAND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Ross Galbreath, Historical Branch, Internal Affairs Department, Wellington, is working on a history of the New Zealand Wildlife Service. The Service was established in 1945 within the Department of Internal Affairs; that placement, however, was continually criticised not only by sporting and environmental pressure groups but also by official advisers. The competing claims for control by the Marine Department



(which administered fisheries research), the Department of Lands (which administered National Parks) or the Forest Service (which administered State Forests) were finally settled in 1987 with the transfer of many of the functions of the Wildlife Service to a separate Department of Conservation.

The Wildlife Service gained much public attention, especially in its latter years, for its work in the conservation of endangered native birds such as Takahe, Kakapo and Black Robin, but more of its effort had always been in the management and control of introduced wild life. Control of some "noxious" animals, especially deer, was a major activity from 1930 until 1956, when it was transferred to the New Zealand Forest Service. Management of introduced fish and game and oversight of the associated sporting organisations had an even longer history in the Internal Affairs Department dating back to the establishment of the Acclimatisation Societies in the 1860s. Ross Galbreath is tracing the development of the Wildlife Service in the context of some diverse national images of New Zealand as a "sportsman's paradise", and of native forests and birds as a unique heritage worthy of conservation and protection.

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#### ABORIGINES AND RAINFOREST, NORTH QLD

Nicky Horsfall  
90 Howlett Street  
Currajong, Townsville Qld 4812

I am an archaeologist with research interests in rainforests near Cairns.

I excavated a few archaeological sites in the Mulgrave and Russell River areas for my doctoral thesis. According to the radiocarbon dates, one site (a rockshelter) was first occupied about 5,100 years ago. Another site, on the high bank of a small creek, was 2,700 years old. I hope eventually that I (or another researcher) will find yet older sites, but this may be difficult because the wet tropics are not conducive to the preservation of cultural remains. The material in the excavated sites included charcoal from fires, stone artefacts, marine shells and animal bones from meals, and some charred nutshells.

It was these last that most fascinated me. Several species of rainforest nuts and seeds were staple components of the Aboriginal diet in the rainforest district. About half of these were poisonous to some degree, and Aboriginal people used a sophisticated technique of roasting, crushing and leaching in running water to make these plants edible, thus increasing the amount of food that could be obtained.

In the long term, I would like to investigate when and how the use of toxic food plants became so widely used in this area. Other toxic species such as cycads and cheeky yams were widely eaten elsewhere in Australia, using the same techniques, and cycads were eaten at least 4,000 years ago. The difficulty is to find sites with good organic preservation in older deposits.

#### Publications on the subject:

- Horsfall, N.,  
1983 Excavations at Jiyer Cave, northeast Queensland: some results. In M. Smith (ed.) *Archaeology at ANZAAS 1983*, pp172-178. Western Australian Museum: Perth.
- 1984 Theorising about northeast Queensland prehistory. *Queensland Archaeological Research* 1:164-172.
- 1984 The Prehistoric Occupation of Australian Rainforests. In G.L. Werren and A.P. Kershaw (eds.) *Australian National Rainforest Study Report to the World Wildlife Fund (Australia) Volume 1. Proceedings of a workshop on the past, present and future of Australian rainforests, Griffith University, December 1983*, pp524-528. Geography Department, Monash University, for the Australian Conservation Foundation.
- 1987 Aborigines and toxic northeastern Queensland rainforest plants. In J. Covacevich, P. Davie and J. Pearn (eds.), *Toxic Plants and Animals: a guide for Australia*, pp57-63. Queensland Museum: Brisbane.
- 1987 Living in rainforest: the prehistoric occupation of North Queensland's humid tropics. Unpublished PhD thesis, James Cook University.

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### CONFERENCES

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#### IUFRO

'History of Forest Products Trade around the Pacific Rim', IUFRO Forest History Group, Hawaii, 27 May - 2 June 1991.

'Forest History of Tropical Africa', IUFRO Forest History Group, Nairobi, Kenya, 1992 (tentative).

#### Details from:

Forest History Society  
701 Vickers Avenue  
Durham NC 27701



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## More New Zealand Forest History in the Making

Three developments of note for the long term future of forests and forestry in New Zealand occurred in 1989. In late October full page newspaper advertisements headlined "The Next Important Period in the Growth of our Forest Industry Begins Today" announced the sale of over 550,000 ha in 90 State owned forests. This represents a little over half of the country's plantations. Some 5 million ha of indigenous forest in public hands, now controlled by the Department of Conservation was excluded from this sale. Prospective buyers would purchase licences to harvest existing forest and make productive use of land for 35 to 70 years. The whole forestry assets sale programme has attracted both international interest and domestic criticism. Jim Scott, former Carter Holt Harvey Operations Manager, slammed the whole proposal and Elders NZFP and Tasman Forestry executives have been equally critical. Selling forests to top bidders according to Tasman's Bryce Heard was "picking the eyes out of the good forests". Major environmental groups and Maori concerns over the sale of lands, which might otherwise be the subject of Waitangi Tribunal claims, have provided other points of criticism. The passage of the Crown Forests Assets Bill has apparently tempered these concerns. International interest was almost immediately apparent, with newspaper announcements of a Chinese-owned conglomerate applying for New Zealand Commerce Commission approval to buy all the State Forests; an application for similar blanket approval had earlier been denied to locally based companies, Carter Holt Harvey, Elders NZFP and Tasman Forestry. Interestingly enough Japanese importers have expressed some misgivings about the forest sales programme. One long time importer argued that it would disrupt the domestic market conditions and replanting programmes both of which could impact on the export timber trade. Further bids from South Korean, Chinese, Canadian and United States interests are expected.

Another aspect of corporatization and privatization as it effects the New Zealand forestry sector was announced in early November, 1989 when a review of forestry research in New Zealand commissioned by the Ministry of Forestry and the New Zealand Forest Industries Council and undertaken by Professor Ian Ferguson of Melbourne University was made public. Dealing with the future of commercial forestry research in New Zealand, the report recommends restructuring of the existing research branch, the Forest Research Institute, so that it operates as a partnership between Government and Industry. The future of non-commercial forestry research is to be considered in a separate report.

The third development of note was the publication of a discussion paper outlining a national policy for indigenous forests. Issued by the Secretary for the Environment with a Foreword jointly signed by the Ministers of Environment, Conservation, Forestry and



Maori Affairs, the document outlined a range of options for developing and implementing a national indigenous forest management policy on public and private lands. The thrust of the document is clearly revealed by the definition of conservation as "the preservation and protection of natural and historic resources for the purpose of maintaining their intrinsic values ...". The real difficulties will lie in deciding whether indigenous forests should come under the umbrella of the ongoing Resource Management Law Reform or be provided for by other means. The difficult question in the New Zealand context of increasing restraints and restrictions on what private indigenous forest owners can do, is also poised to emerge as a difficult issue.

In review, 1989 witnessed some very important developments with regard to forest preservation and utilization, the exact form of which are still unclear, but which will exert a long term presence on the New Zealand scene.

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7. Williams, M. 'Safeguards in forest sales applauded', *Dominion*, October 27, 1989.

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## Resource Assessment Commission Forest and Timber Inquiry

The first reference by the Prime Minister to the Resource Assessment Commission established in 1989 was to conduct an inquiry into options for the use of Australia's forest and timber resources.

#### The Commission is to:

- identify and evaluate options for the use of those resources; and
- take into account both the existing management strategies and alternative uses for forestry resources, including the Forestry and Forest Products Industry Council (FAFPIC) Growth Plan and the Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF) Alternative Strategy.

The Chairperson of the Commission is Mr Justice D.G. Stewart. Dr D. James and Dr G. Caughley have been appointed as special Commissioners for the inquiry.

This inquiry is now under way and will deal with much that is relevant to those with an interest in forest history. Material produced will include background papers by Commission staff, written submissions from interested parties, evidence at public hearings, and ultimately the final report to the Prime Minister.

A Background Paper (No 1, 1990) entitled Australia's Forest and Timber Resources has been produced and is available (without charge) from the Commission.

Submissions made to the inquiry (approximately 180) may be viewed at a range of public libraries and at the Commission's public hearings. They will also be available for purchase.

Enquiries about submissions can be made on toll-free 008-020586.

Hearings are open to the public and the following is a draft timetable of locations. The Draft report of the Inquiry is due in March 1991.

June 14-22	Canberra
July 16-19	Brisbane
July 23-24	Lismore
July 26-August 3	Sydney
August 6-10	Melbourne
August 13	Orbost
August 14-15	Eden
August 20-21	Launceston
August 22-24	Hobart
September 4-7	Adelaide
September 10	Pemberton
September 11-14	Perth
September 17-18	Darwin
October 2-5	Canberra and other locations as necessary



Members interested in being placed on the mailing list for material related to the Inquiry should send details of name/organisation (if applicable)/address/telephone/fax to

Resource Assessment Commission  
 Locked Bag No. 1  
 Queen Victoria Terrace  
 Canberra ACT 2600  
 Telephone (06) 271 5111  
 Facsimile (06) 271 5929

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**MEMBERS**

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To facilitate contact it is hoped in future editions of the newsletter to more fully list members and their interest.

Possibly the oldest member is John Thompson of Perth:

John A. Thompson  
 (Retired forester (non-graduate) WA Forests Department  
 1917 to 1946)  
 88 King George Street  
 South Perth WA 6151

Field of Interest:

I was an original forestry apprentice to C.E. Lane Poole the first scientifically trained conservator in WA (1916-1921). His epic struggle to establish forestry principles in WA have always inspired me. I am an honorary life member of five WA conservation groups and have had experience in tree establishment all over the state. Although 86 years old I feel I can be of use to the A.F.H. Society.

\* \* \* \*

Some other interests of members:

(Mr) Norman David Endacott  
 (Retired forester)  
 67 Barbers Road  
 Kalorama Vic 3766

Field of Interest:

- (1) Forestry History of Specific Areas:
- East Gippsland (Victoria)
  - Far North Eastern Victoria
  - Victorian Midlands, particularly Wombat Forest
  - Tropical rainforests of North Queensland (especially management and harvesting)
- (2) Development and evolution of forest management of native forests, throughout this century (all states)

\* \* \* \*

Mr Len Purcell  
 Hotham Valley Tourist Railway Inc  
 Railway Historical Society (W.A. Div)  
 Light Railway Research Soceity of Australia

21 Albermarle Way  
 High Wycombe WA 6057

Field of Interest:

Bush railways: timber lines: forest tramways: steam preservation: sawmilling generally (as a life-long employee in the industry; now retired).

\* \* \* \*

Mr Harold Ware  
 Monto Historical Society

3 Morse Street  
 Monto Qld 4630

Field of Interest:

Introduction of Forestry Department to the immediate area. Application of Italian Prisoners of War to the Forestry work force. Types of hand work executed by Italian P.O.W. employees.

\* \* \* \*

Mr Peter C. Sims,

P.O. Box 692 Quoiba Tasmania 7310

Field of Interest:

Pre-European contact of Tasmanian forests  
 History of fire and its effects in Tasmanai  
 Huon pine industry in Tasmania

\* \* \* \*

Douglas W. Porter  
 Landholder

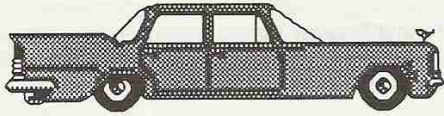
'Telopea'  
 Manumbar Road  
 via Nanango Qld 4315

Field of Interest:

Aboriginal use of forests  
 Environmental affects related to forest use  
 Forest conservation history  
 Forest evolution  
 Rainforests of Queensland  
 The use of fire and its impact on forests and wild life

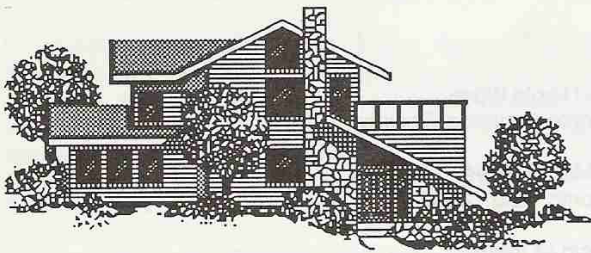
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**Change of address**

Help us keep our membership list up to date by notifying change of address or incorrect details in the current mailing label.



Contributions are needed for Newsletter No 5. Please send news of publications, copies of books for review, articles on research projects, any other items of relevance to forest history. The Newsletter is produced on a Macintosh II computer. Contributions may be sent on 3.5 inch disks preferably using Microsoft Word software

PRODUCTION: THANKS TO JULIE KESBY  
AND EILEEN HAMPSON  
(WORD PROCESSING AND LAYOUT)  
PAUL BALLARD (DESIGN AND LAYOUT)

<b>AUSTRALIAN FOREST HISTORY SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION</b>
<b>NAME</b>
(TITLE) (FIRST NAME) (SURNAME)
<b>ORGANISATION (IF ANY)</b>
<b>ADDRESS</b>
<b>FIELD OF INTEREST IN FOREST HISTORY</b>
<b>POST TO:</b>
DR KEVIN FRAWLEY
DEPARTMENT OF GEOGRAPHY & OCEANOGRAPHY
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
AUSTRALIAN DEFENCE FORCE ACADEMY
CAMPBELL ACT 2600