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AUSTRALIAN  
**Forest History**  
SOCIETY Inc.

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Newsletter no. **25**

**May 2000**

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

**Assessing the Queensland Forests**



Deputy Forester Dawson and crew ready to start a flying camp at Woodum in the Gympie District of Queensland, 1927. *Photo: DPI, Forestry Library, courtesy of John Huth.*

**NSW Forest Officers Equipment, 1917**

District Foresters	4 horses, buggy, double harness, saddle, bridle, tent and camp outfit
Assistant Foresters	3 horses, buggy, double harness, saddle, bridle, tent and camp outfit
Forest Guard	2 horses, vehicles, single harness, saddle, bridle, tent and camp outfit
Forest Overseer	1 horse, saddle and bridle

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***Australia's ever-changing forests V:  
Fifth national conference on Australia's  
forest history***

**18-20 February 2002, Hobart, Tasmania  
20-21 February, Study Tour**

Our fifth national conference will be held in Tasmania in the third week of February 2002. The conference will be held in Janet Clark Hall in the University of Tasmania. It will be followed by a study tour of the southern forests in the Huon valley staying at Geeveston on 20 and 21 February. More details will be given in the next newsletter.

**News of members**

Members will be sorry to learn that John Banks was taken seriously ill whilst in Bolivia recently. At the time of going to press, John was recovering in Canberra Hospital. We wish him a quick return to good health.

We welcome Fyfe Bygrave, Patricia Crawford and Andrew Deane to the society. Andrew Deane is based in Forbes and is studying the history of mensuration and silviculture of the white cypress pine forests. Patricia Crawford is in the History Department of the University of Western Australia.

Fyfe Bygrave is writing a book about Australian red cedar (*Toona ciliata*). He and his wife, Tricia, have established a cedar plantation on the mid-north coast of NSW, now over 10 years old, and with colleagues in the Department of Forestry at ANU have been researching aspects of the attack on the trees by the tipmoth, *Hypsipyla robusta*. He will be considering a range of issues including research carried out on other cedar species around the tropics (e.g. attack on *Cedrela* spp. by *H. grandella*), the extent to which the species is being decimated, local historical aspects as well as describing the research they are undertaking. Anyone with particular knowledge and information is asked to contact him (Division of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Faculty of Science, ANU, Canberra ACT 0200; Email: fyfe.bygrave@anu.edu.au). From June through September Fyfe will be writing and researching at Tropical Forestry Institutes in the UK.

Congratulations also to Jann Williams on her election as President of the Ecological Society of Australia. She is in the Department of Land Information in RMIT University and has just undertaken to lead the research team writing the biodiversity chapter for the Commonwealth's 2001 *State of the Environment Report*. Jane Lennon is leading another team writing the chapter on natural and cultural heritage.

Terry Birtles will be resigning from the University of Canberra later this year and is already feeling a sense of freedom. He plans to deliver some geographical papers overseas in August, assist at the Olympic Games in September, build a dwelling on his farm and write some long overdue historical geography publications — we look forward to them.

The new Museum of Victoria, now being built in Melbourne, will have a recreated mountain ash forest as a central, living exhibit. Tom Griffiths has been advising on the historical dimensions and is preparing a guide, drawing on his 1992 *Secrets of the Forest*.

Libby Robin is very busy completing her history of ornithology in Australia. Her travels to interview notable 'birdos' took her over to Western Australia recently where she met up with Jenny Mills whose book on her mother, the painter Elizabeth Blair Barber, is noted later.

Congratulations to Paul Star on gaining a research appointment. Paul is looking into attitudes to the NZ environment 1900-1914. Leonard Cockayne's ideas and the NZ Forestry Commission of 1913 are proving very interesting.

A count of our members in April showed that we have 100 members across Australia and 13 overseas.

Australian Capital Territory	26
Victoria	26
New South Wales	23
Queensland	11
Western Australia	8
New Zealand	7
Tasmania	4
South Australia	2
United States of America	2
Austria	1
Canada	1
Germany	1
United Kingdom	1
Total	113

We also distribute our Newsletter to a number of libraries and other relevant associations.

An estimate of the primary discipline which the contributors to our four national conferences were thought to belong to were:

Historian	18
Forester	15
Geographer	10
Ecologist	7
Archaeologist	5
Archivist	3
Economist	2
Other	7
Total	67

Jenny Mills 2000. *I buried my dolls in the garden: the life and works of Elizabeth Blair Barber*. Perth: University of Western Australia Press. pp.274, ISBN: 1 876268 27 1, \$75.00

*I buried my dolls in the garden* presents a biography of Elizabeth Blair Barber, together with 134 full-colour reproductions of selected works from the oeuvre of this remarkable painter, for whom recognition has come late, but certainly. Jenny Mills examines Blair Barber's artistic development from one of Perth's early modernists to an exponent of the theories of 'significant form'; her obsession with the South West forests of Western Australia, her spiritual home. Many of her paintings which take the karri forests and sawmills as their subjects will be of particular interest to forest historians. The book captures the enigmatic personality of a woman who shunned the rules of polite society and established the successful Cremorne Art Gallery. Mills writes with insight and perspective, looking beyond the surfaces of her mother's life in the same way that Blair Barber sought truth in her painting.

## Recent Journals

*Environment and History*, 6(1) February 2000

The feature papers cover mining in Latin America, Basutoland, air pollution in Manchester and 'The Origins, Development and Legacy of Scientific Forestry in Cameroon' by Tobias Lanz. The reviews include one on the very substantial volume, *Nature and the Orient*, edited by Richard Grove, Vinita Damodaran and Saptal Sangwan.

*Forest History Today*, Fall [December] 1999.

This attractive publication of the (US) Forest History Society has six feature articles and several shorter pieces, book reviews and reports. The two articles likely to be of most interest to Australian readers are 'Reading the landscape: Aldo Leopold and Wildlife Ecology 118' by Curt Meine, and 'Herman von Schrenk: the beginnings of forest pathology in the US' by Paul D. Peterson and Clay S. Griffith.

*Light Railways* 151 February and 152 April 2000

Jim Longworth has published the second part of his 'An introduction to the timber tramways of the NSW Far South Coast' in issue 151. This covers the area between Ulladulla and the Victorian border. The first part appeared in issue 128 and covers the Nowra to Ulladulla area. A third part is planned for the Bawley Point to Kiola (Kioloa) area.

Issue 152 carries a review of Gregg Borschmann's, *The People's Forest* (as do the March issue of *Australian Forestry* and the *Electronic Journal of*

*Australian and New Zealand History*). A handy book on the *Railtrails of Victoria* by Fiona Colquhoun, Alexander McCooke and Damian McCrohan is also reviewed. Old railway and tramway tracks can make ideal walking tracks. 25 trails have already been established and many more have been assessed.

## Ecoforestry Centre

Anitra Nelson is setting up an Ecoforestry Centre at RMIT University in Melbourne. The first step is establishing a web site with contacts and sources and links to relevant people and bodies. Although ecoforestry is a relatively new development, the ecoforestry approach has had its proponents throughout history.

Anitra is interested in hearing from anyone who can offer networking information for inclusion on the website. Any people, projects, theories, policies etc that feature ecoforestry principles are relevant, i.e. that involve: protecting and restoring forest landscapes as holistic ecosystems; sustainable forest practices and policies; multiple uses and appreciations of forests; timber certification linked to ecologically sustainable standards and practices; community management, stressing Aboriginal involvement. In short, ecoforestry is management that respects balance and integrity of natural ecosystems, not only seeing each forest as a micro-ecosystem but appreciating its services to the unitary planetary ecosystem.

Contact by email: [anitra.nelson@rmit.edu.au](mailto:anitra.nelson@rmit.edu.au); Tel: 03 9925 2527 or 03 9712 0010; or at the Social Science and Planning & Centre for Design, RMIT University, GPO Box 2476V, Melbourne, Victoria 3001.

## A Christmas present

David South in the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences at Auburn University in Alabama, USA, made 'a holiday present for my forestry friends around the world — a 1940 filmstrip about pruning Southern Pines'. Karol Andrzejewski at the Bureau of Rural Sciences in Canberra kindly sent it on to us. It is at: <http://www.forestry.auburn.edu/sfnmc/class/filmstrip/filmstrip.html> [note: best viewed with your display set for 1152 by 864 pixels or greater]. Use the left mouse button to advance the slides.

## Recknagel, Schneider and the Internet

In the course of his research into the history of white pine silviculture and measurement, Andrew Deane from Forbes in New South Wales came across a memo by Harold Swain in 1915, then District Forester at Narrabri, to the Forest Officer at Gunnedah. Swain wrote: 'Officers are recommended to read Recknagel's *Theory*

and Practice of Working Plans and Grave's Principles of Handling Woodlands'. Increment was to be calculated by Schneider's formula. The question then arose, what did Recknagel's book say and what was Schneider's formula anyway?

A search of library catalogues on the URICA system showed that there was a copy of the second edition (1917) of Recknagel's book in Melbourne University. Another copy was subsequently located in the Queensland Department of Primary Industry's forestry library. It had been bought from a Brisbane importer of books for 14s. in 1920 and was signed inside by L.S. Irvine (who was he?).

A query about Recknagel and Schneider launched on the Internet's Forest list drew quick replies from Australia, Ireland and the USA. Two replies provided the link to finding a facsimile of the whole text of the first edition of Recknagel's book on Cornell University's web site. It included an exposition of Schneider's formula. Another reply led us to a photograph of Recknagel and we found that some of Recknagel's papers are lodged in the Forest History Society's Archive in Durham, North Carolina.

### **Native Solutions: Indigenous Knowledge and Today's Fires Management: an International Symposium Hobart, 5-8 July 2000**

The Tasmanian Parks and Wildlife Service and the Tasmanian Aboriginal Land Council is organising a major conference in Hobart in July. Some 40 papers will be delivered by speakers from many parts of Australia, India, PNG, USA and Canada.

The conference is particularly timely in view of the debates about the pre-contact fashioning of the Australian environment, Indigenous knowledge and the management of national parks and other reserves. These themes will also be addressed in relation to the *Callitris* forests at the Perfumed Pineries conference in November. The recent publications by Bowman and by Horton, noted above, and the paper by Tom Heinsohn in *Australia's ever-changing forests IV* are very relevant.

### **First Joint Meeting of the American Society for Environmental History and the Forest History Society — 2001**

The American societies of forest history and environment have been collaborating since 1996 to produce the journal *Environmental History*. They will hold their annual conferences together in Durham, North Carolina, USA on 28 March – 1 April 2001. They are calling for papers and would doubtless welcome

inquiries from members of the Australian Forest History Society.

#### *Making Environmental History Relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

Durham, NC, USA, 28 March – 1 April 2001

The American Society for Environmental History and the Forest History Society invite panel and paper proposals for its spring 2001 meeting in Durham, NC. Papers that examine any aspect of human-environment interactions over time are welcome. The program committee especially encourages proposals related to the theme of the conference. As we enter a new century, the field of environmental history has a responsibility to bring historical analysis to bear on environmental/social issues facing the world at the dawn of the new millennium. Papers and panels might focus on examples of how environmental history informs public policy, resource management, pollution control, local and international development, social conflict, the understanding of environmental problems, etc. We welcome proposals from scholars in all fields and disciplines.

Contact: Steve Anderson, President, Forest History Society, 701 Vickers Ave, Durham, NC 27701, USA  
Email: [stevensa@Duke.edu](mailto:stevensa@Duke.edu)

### **Selling our proceedings**

The Society has been able to secure the publication of the proceedings of the four national forest history conferences, thanks to the good offices of the Australian Defence Force Academy for the first volume in 1988, and those of the Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies at The Australian National University for the subsequent three volumes. The continued success of these arrangements and the effective dissemination of our work depends on the timely sale of the volumes. The first two volumes are now out of print but there are stocks of the third and fourth volumes: *Australia's Ever-changing Forests III* (1997) and *Australia's Ever-changing Forests IV* (1999).

Members are urged to bring these volumes to the attention of libraries or at appropriate conferences. Fliers with order forms can be obtained from the Publications Section at:

Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies  
The Australian National University  
Canberra, ACT 0200

Tel: (02) 6249 4598 Fax: (02) 6249 0757

Email: [publications@cres.anu.edu.au](mailto:publications@cres.anu.edu.au)

or on the Internet at:

<http://cres.anu.edu.au/publications/>

Each volume costs \$30.00 plus \$7.50 handling (or A\$15.00 for overseas orders).



## Australian Forestry School Records

By John Gray

I managed to find the enrollment register of the Australian Forestry School in the National Archives of Australia. It had been deposited there about 1965 and as far as I could tell had remained unopened until the day I asked to see it 34 years later.

The register, which is handwritten, had been faithfully kept since 1926 when the first students entered the Australian Forestry School at Adelaide University. The first name entered was Frederick Manson Bailey. Two pages were allocated to each student and on these were recorded the schools and universities they had attended, passes in their higher school leaving certificates, war service, practical field forestry experience, subjects taken at the Australian Forestry School with marks gained, and finally awards.

Of the 584 students enrolled at the Australian Forestry School between 1926 and 1965, the Diploma in Forestry was awarded to 501, the Diploma in Forest Technology to 4, the one-year Certificate in Forestry to 8, while 71 were non-award students. The non-award students included research students (including Max Jacobs, Doug Lindsay and Baldur Byles), a number of overseas students, single subject students, and the 29 students in the 1964 class. This last group transferred to the Australian National University for their second year and were unable to receive awards from The Australian Forestry School.

As Les Carron has pointed out in his history of the school, the first two decades were difficult. The Depression and World War II had their impact. There were few students and the school was close to closing on a number of occasions. In the first 20 years, only 121 students were enrolled — an average of 6 per annum. Many of those who graduated enlisted during the War, although the register is limited in detail in this regard. Sadly, it does record that at least three graduates lost their lives in war service. There may well have been others.

The post-war years brought new challenges. Student numbers swelled in the immediate post-war years as those who had served in the military returned to their education. The record was reached in 1950 when 41 students entered the school. In the 20 years from 1945 to the closure in 1965, 463 students were enrolled, an average of 23 new students per annum. During this period, the school attracted overseas students for the first time. The main enrollments were 43 from New Zealand and 40 from Asia. In addition there were 8 enrollments from Africa and 2 from the United States of America. No female students were enrolled in the Australian Forestry School.

The temporary student accommodation in Solander Place was closed in 1951 and Forestry House opened the following year.

*(We hope to bring you, dear readers, an account of the reunion of former students which was held in April. A most successful occasion, from what we have heard — Ed.)*

## Help wanted to preserve the forest records in North Queensland

*From Christine Doan, Regional Plantation Committee for Far North Queensland, PO Box 700, Atherton, 4883.*

I am writing on behalf of the Regional Plantation Committee for Far North Queensland. We are currently seeking funds (though not yet obtained) to compile a history of tropical rainforest hardwood plantations in Far North Queensland since 1903.

There are many records being eaten by cockroaches in the bowels of our local Department of Primary Industry Office and we feel that the history should be compiled before it is lost. We are hoping that this research will combine oral records and written archives and that it will be of both historical and silvicultural interest.

Do you know of anyone who would be interested in taking up such a project? As funding is by no means guaranteed, it would be a labour of love to begin with.

It worries many of us that the foresight of the early foresters who, for example, started planting red cedars as early as 1903, will all be for naught. Some of the earliest established plantations are now being milled without even the most basic measurements being taken. Quite apart from the urgency if this issue and the slow destruction of paper records inevitable in the tropics, there is the gradual but inevitable loss of the holders of oral tradition.

Contacts: Christine Doan, Tel: 07 4091 1801

Email: [christinedoan@internethnorth.com.au](mailto:christinedoan@internethnorth.com.au)

Mark Annandale, QFRI, Tel: 07 4091 5200

Email: [annandm@dpi.qld.gov.au](mailto:annandm@dpi.qld.gov.au)

## Special trees

*Sybil Jack*

My husband's cousin is a well-known maker of high quality violins and the sight and smell of his irreplaceable, small and select stock of special timber taken from the forests from which Stradivarius had selected his wood two hundred and fifty years ago, woods which are now, thanks to the vagaries of wars and politics inaccessible, led me to wonder who was keeping a data base of such woods and where rare or unique timbers were still being cultivated. When the curators of the *Mary Rose* were looking for willow

wood suitable for reproducing the old long bows of English military fame, they were unable to locate any, although willows proliferate. Quality woods for renovations and restorations of all sorts can be simply unobtainable.

The right woods for specialist tasks require a complex combination of location, climate, care and cultivation. Then they must be cut and allowed to mature in suitable places and temperatures. Fine woods bring high prices, but they may not meet simple economic criteria even so. Does this mean that we are losing an irreplaceable part of our world heritage? What should we do to identify places with resources which should be protected for the use of future generations? What of the knowledge of foresters and timber workers who knew what should be done to ensure that timber had the right grain, density, pliability and shape for particular functions?

Commercial forestry is primarily directed at a mass market. It is highly geared to production within a limited time frame and most large-scale mills deal in only a limited number of varieties of timber. They are not organised for the management of small amounts of 'exotic' woods from trees which may be difficult in size or shape. Should there not be a subsidised program to preserve the rarer specialist timbers and the skills and knowledge that went into their manufacture?

### Conference update

Plans for this conference being organised as a co-operatively by the Society, The Australian National University and Macquarie University are proceeding well. State Forests of NSW has approved a study tour of the Pilliga forest and Don Nicholson of the Dubbo office has kindly offered to organise the route in collaboration with Marty Linchan at Baradine. Part of the day will be spent inspecting the soils and vegetation investigation sites and part at various cultural and historic sites. Appropriate contacts are being made to involve the Indigenous community of the region.

List of papers offered as at 19 May 2000:

David Bowman, Dynamics of *C.intratropica* following cessation of Aboriginal landscape burning in Western Arnhem Land, northern Australia.

David Cameron, A vanishing presence - Cultural heritage places in the public cypress forests of the Southern Brigalow Belt Biogeographic region of Queensland.

Pauline Curby and Patrick Tap, Disturbance history mapping.

John Dargavel and Margaret Kowald, History of planning forest management in two States.

Andrew Deane, Historical methods of calculating sustained yield in the white cypress forests of NSW.

Teresa Eyre, Anne Kelly and Dave Jermyn, Cypress forest condition in Southern Brigalow Bioregion, Queensland.

Tom Griffiths, The writing of 'A million wild acres'.

Mark Harris, Sean McPhail and David Lamb, Litter, nutrients and seeding dynamics in Cypress dominated communities.

Diane Hart, Old European gardens.

Roger Heady, The wood anatomy of cypress pine: a descriptive, functional and historic perspective using scanning electron microscopy.

Paul Hesse and Geoff Humphreys, Quaternary stratigraphy, geomorphology and landscape history of the Pilliga forest.

Geoff Humphreys, Elizabeth Norris, Paul Hesse, Diane Hart, Peter Mitchell and Steven Kamper, Soils, topography and vegetation relationships in the Pilliga forest.

Rod Kavanagh, Koala in the Pilliga.

Ian Lunt, David Parker and Wayne Robinson, Identification of historical changes in Callitris densities using stump surveys.

Lachlan McCaw, Fire history of Callitris and Actinostrobus in semi-arid south-western Australia.

Robert McKillop, Pine and the pioneers of NW NSW.

Henry Nix, A long environmental history of white pine.

Jim Noble, A tale of two pineries: Callitris population vegetation in mallee and poplar box woodlands.

Phill Purcell and Paul Hesse, Aboriginal cultural use of the Pilliga forest and its association with geomorphology and Quaternary history.

Brian Roberts and Bob Walker, Queensland Cypress Plan - a case study in co-management.

Eric Rolls t.b.a.

David Ryan, The work of Doug Lindsay.

David Taylor and Peter Mayle, A history of silvicultural research and management.

### Map of Australia's forests

The National Forest Inventory's 'Forests of Australia' map has recently been updated. It is available in several sizes enabling you to preview the map on screen and print it on an A4 sheet.

<http://www.brs.gov.au/nfi/forestinfo/forestypes.html>

*(This is the first and very welcome map that the NFI has made readily available to the general public, but you still need an Internet connection and a colour printer to get it! It is not much good in black and white — Ed.)*

## Calendar

### Australia

- 14 June 2000. Deadline for buying copies *A brief history of the Australian Forestry School*. Mail orders to: Australian Forestry School Reunion 2000 Inc., PO Box 57, Jamison Centre, ACT 2614. Price (incl. postage) Australia \$7.00, NZ and Asia \$A8.50, other overseas \$A10.
- 5-8 July 2000, Hobart. Native Solutions: *Indigenous Knowledge and Today's Fire Management: an International Symposium*. Tasmania's Parks and Wildlife Service and Tasmanian Aboriginal Land Council. Contact: Conference Design P/L PO Box 342, Sandy Bay, Tasmania, 7006. Tel: 03 6224 3773 Email: [mail@design.com.au](mailto:mail@design.com.au). Details at URL: <http://www.parks.tas.gov.au/manage/conferences/invite.html>
- 5-9 July 2000, Adelaide. *Futures in the past*. Australian Historical Association and Australian Mining History Conference. Contact: Katharine Massam Email: [aha@adelaide.edu.au](mailto:aha@adelaide.edu.au) or [mdavies@kroner.ecel.uwa.edu.au](mailto:mdavies@kroner.ecel.uwa.edu.au) URL: <http://arts.adelaide.edu.au/arts-web/News/AHACConf/>
- 20-23 November 2000, Coonabarabran, NSW. *The Perfumed Pineries: Histories of the Callitris forests of New South Wales and Queensland*. Jointly by The Australian National University, Macquarie University and the Australian Forest History Society. Contact: John Dargavel, Tel: (02) 6258 9102 or Di Hart, Tel: (02) 9869 2516 Email: [Pineries@anu.edu.au](mailto:Pineries@anu.edu.au) URL: <http://www.es.mq.edu.au/physgeog/pineries.htm>
- 18-20 February 2002, Hobart. *Australia's ever-changing forests V: Fifth national conference on Australia's forest history*. Followed by study tour of southern forests. Contact: Denise Gaughwin, Tel: 03 6336 5384 Email: [deniseg@fpb.tas.gov.au](mailto:deniseg@fpb.tas.gov.au) or John Dargavel, Tel: (02) 6258 9102 Email: [dargavel@spirit.com.au](mailto:dargavel@spirit.com.au)

### International

- 29-30 July 2000, Wellington, New Zealand. *Public History — Meanings, Ownership, Practice*. PHANZA (the Professional Historians Association of NZ/Aotearoa). Contact: [gavin.mclean@dia.govt.nz](mailto:gavin.mclean@dia.govt.nz) or [bronwyn.dalley@dia.govt.nz](mailto:bronwyn.dalley@dia.govt.nz) or PHANZA, Box 1904, Wellington, New Zealand
- 7-12 August 2000, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. *Forests and Society: the Role of Research*. XXI IUFRO World Congress Contact for Conference details and registration: IUFRO 2000 Congress Secretariat Forest Research Institute, Kepong, 52109 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Fax: +6 03 6365687 Email: [iufroxxi@frim.gov.my](mailto:iufroxxi@frim.gov.my) URL: <http://frim.gov.my/iufro/html>  
Contact for Forest History Group sessions: Dr Elisabeth Johann, Wlassakstrasse 56, 1130 Wein, Austria. Email: [elis.johann@carinthia.com](mailto:elis.johann@carinthia.com)
- 2-3 September 2000, Wellington, New Zealand. *Public History: Meanings, Ownership, Practice*. Contact: PHANZ, PO Box 1904, Wellington, New Zealand. Email: [gavin.mclean@dia.govt.nz](mailto:gavin.mclean@dia.govt.nz)
- 28 March-1 April 2001, Durham, NC, USA. *Making Environmental History Relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Jointly by American Society for Environmental History and Forest History Society. Contact: Steve Anderson, President, Forest History Society, 701 Vickers Ave, Durham, NC 27701, USA Email: [stevena@Duke.edu](mailto:stevena@Duke.edu)

### APPLICATION/RENEWAL OF MEMBERSHIP FOR THE YEAR TO 30 JUNE 2001

The subscription for the year to 30 June 2001 has been set at \$25 (overseas \$30 Australian) with a discounted rate for students of \$15.

Name: .....

Address: .....  
.....(State) .....(Postcode) .....

Tel: ..... Fax: ..... Email: .....

Please mail cheque or money order for \$25 or \$15 for students (Overseas \$30 in Australian currency) payable to:  
Australian Forest History Society Inc., 20 Laidley Place, Florey, ACT 2615

