
AUSTRALIAN

Forest History

SOCIETY Inc.

Newsletter No. 42
December 2005

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



*Near the former forestry settlement of Grimwade in south-west Western Australia
(Photo: Fintán Ó Laighin, Aug 2004)*

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ISSN 1033-937 X

AFHS CONFERENCE - CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND, JAN-FEB 2007

For the first time, the Australian Forest History Society conference will be held in New Zealand! The conference will be held in University Hall, a residential college of the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, with additional facilities provided by the University's forestry school. The Hall has a conference room, accommodation in single rooms, and provision for meals. For those preferring other accommodation, a list of nearby motels will be provided in mid-2006 with the registration brochure.

Christchurch is the largest city in the South Island of New Zealand, with direct flight links to and from Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane, Auckland, Wellington, Dunedin and elsewhere. As one of the least forested parts of New Zealand at the time of European settlement, Canterbury Province became an early centre both for indigenous conservation and for exotic afforestation.

Visitors to Christchurch who wish to experience native forest in its full glory, both nothofagus and mixed podocarp, need only travel via Arthur's Pass to the West Coast.

In line with the six previous conferences, the New Zealand conference welcomes papers and presentations on every aspect of Australian forest history, and it is anticipated that there will be a strong attendance from Australia. As the first Society conference in New Zealand, however, there will undoubtedly also be a major contribution from New Zealanders, with greater than usual emphasis on New Zealand environmental and forest history.

The conference is described as a Trans-Tasman Forest History Conference to encourage participants to consider links and comparisons between New Zealand and Australia's environmental experience. Historical outlooks on both indigenous and exotic forestry and forests, as well as some papers on other environments, will be included.

For New Zealanders interested in their past and present forests, this is a unique opportunity to assess their country's experience and to place it in an international context. Those from beyond the Tasman are also encouraged to attend and share their knowledge and perspectives.

The conference will run from the evening of **Monday 29th January** through to the end of **Friday 2nd February 2007** and will include two full days and one half-day of papers, one afternoon and one full-day field trip, and a conference dinner. Field trips will be at least to Riccarton Bush and Banks' Peninsula, with other possibilities further from Christchurch.

AFHS conferences aim to be inclusive and sociable. They attract people from many different disciplines, occupations and walks of life. They provide a venue for the exchange of knowledge and outlook between foresters, activists, local people, and historians, geographers, biologists and other academics. Everyone is welcome.

The AFHS was formed in 1988 and has members in Australia, New Zealand and other countries. There have been six national conferences to date - in 1988 (Canberra, ACT), 1992 (Creswick, Vic), 1996 (Jervis Bay, ACT), 1999 (Gympie, Qld), 2002 (Hobart, Tas) and 2004 (Augusta, WA). Earlier conference proceedings have been published, most of them in association with the Centre for Resource and Environmental Studies in the Australian National University in Canberra. The Society produces a regular newsletter and maintains contact with similar organisations devoted to environmental and forest history in other countries.

The aim of the Society is to advance historical understanding of human interactions with the environment. While the Society's main emphasis has been on Australian forest and woodland environments, previous conferences have also included contributions on forest environments in New Zealand, Asia and the Pacific, and on ecosystems other than forests. The Society does not provide a forum for advocacy of environmental or forest policy, but welcomes different perspectives. The Society operates without sponsorship. New members are welcome, but membership is not a condition for conference attendance.

To register your interest in this conference, contact Paul Star, Australian Forest History Society, History Department, University of Otago, PO Box 56, Dunedin, New Zealand, or by e-mail at [«starmulq@es.co.nz»](mailto:starmulq@es.co.nz).

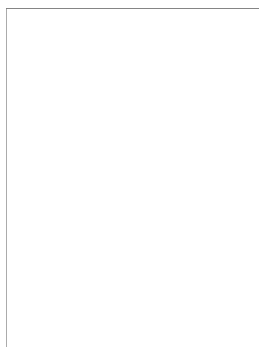
AFHS - NEW COMMITTEE FOR 2005-06

The AFHS Annual General Meeting was held in Canberra on 18th November 2005. The committee for 2005-06 is:

President:	Brett Stubbs
Vice-President:	Paul Star
Secretary:	Kevin Frawley
Treasurer:	Fintán Ó Laighin
Committee:	John Huth
	Peter Davies
	Andrew Wilson
	Sue Feary
	Jenny Mills

Conservation of Australia's Forest Fauna

The second edition of Conservation of Australia's Forest Fauna, edited by **Dan Lunney**, was recently published by the Royal Zoological Society (RZS) of NSW. A number of chapters in the book relate to forest history, including the following which are written by AFHS members or who have been involved in our conferences:



M. Calver and G. Wardell-Johnson, *Sustained unsustainability? An evaluation of evidence for a history of overcutting in the jarrah forests of Western Australia and its consequences for fauna conservation*.

S. M. Legg, *'Bunyips, battues and bears': wildlife portrayed in the popular press, Victoria 1839-1948*.

R. A. Curtin, *The history of fauna conservation in the State Forests of New South Wales*.

The book retails for \$75 can be ordered through the RZS website at «www.rzsnsw.org.au». We hope to have Kevin Frawley's review in the next issue of the newsletter. Kevin contributed to the 1st edition which came out in 1991, but due to workloads, time constraints, etc, had to decline the invitation to contribute to the 2nd.

Wattle Week Presentation

Suzette Searle, our resident acacia expert, gave a wonderful presentation in September as part of the Wattle Week celebrations at the Australian National Botanic Gardens (ANBG) in Canberra. The title of her presentation was *Perfume, paper, fine furniture and glue? Uses of Australian acacias since the 1800s*.

ANBG Honours Robert Boden

And talking of the ANBG, **Robert Boden**, the founding director of the Gardens in 1979, has been honoured with a plaque commemorating his contribution. During his 10 year tenure as Director, he helped the Gardens add a conservation biology role to its existing functions of horticulture, education, interpretation and botanical science which brought international recognition. The plaque has been placed in the Eucalypt Lawn at the ANBG, one of Dr Boden's favourite places. Dr Boden studied forestry at the University of Sydney and the Australian Forestry School in Canberra. (Source: *Canberra Times*, 14th July 2005.)

Libby Robin Visits Finland and Hungary

Libby Robin has just returned from a whirlwind trip to Europe in September. She presented papers at two conferences, the first on Nordic Environmental History (in Turku, Finland) and the second on Australian Studies (in Debrecen, Hungary).

The theme at the Nordic conference was new methods for environmental history. Libby presented a paper on art and environmental history in the Australian desert. The paper discussed the *Strata* project with archaeologist Mike Smith and artist Mandy Martin, and eight artists from the Ikuntji-Haasts Bluff community. Anyone interested can see this work at «<http://cres.anu.edu.au/strata>».

At the conference of the European Association for the Study of Australia (EASA) in Hungary, Libby presented work in progress on "Strategic science and the empty north" - which is part of a chapter for her next book, *Nature and Nation*, which will be published with UNSW Press in 2007.

The Australian Studies in Europe group decided that in order to survive the various draconian cuts mooted for European universities, they should be doing more "environmental" things. This was at least partly because of the lively presence at the conference of Peter Christoff (Vice-President of the Australian Conservation Foundation; University of Melbourne's School of Anthropology, Geography and Environmental Studies) and Ruth Balint (University of New South Wales) whose book and film, *Troubled Waters*, documents the stories of Indonesian fishermen clashing with Australian authorities in the Arafura Sea. The conference field trip to see Hungarian cowboys (Puske shepherds) at Hortobágy about 40kms from Debrecen was very interesting. Libby and the group also confronted the difficulties of getting the Australian Football League Grand Final which they succeeded in overcoming: they listened at 6:30am (local time) via internet audio link. You couldn't have an Australian Studies conference without the match! There is no doubt that Europeans studying Australian Studies are interested in the environment - and Libby is sure that forest historians would be welcome at their conferences.

Best Wishes

We send our best wishes to **Graydon Henning** and Susan who married on 20th November. Graydon is one of the earliest members of the Society.

Contributions

Contributions to *Leaf Litter* are invited from members - see the front page for e-mail and postal address details.

BITS AND PIECES

Oral History Interview - Robert Nielsen

Tony Fearnside reports that the Friends of ACT Arboreta (FACTA) has conducted an oral history interview with Robert Nielsen. The interview covers Rob's early life and education, both at school and at the Australian Forestry School, his work with the Queensland Forestry Department and in the Queensland private forestry sector before he took up an assignment with the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Electric Authority where he was responsible for developing techniques for the commercial cultivation of poplars. The interview includes the industrial use of poplars, the demise of the fledgling Australian poplar industry and the problems of rust disease. The interview was funded by the ACT Government.

Why Botanists Change Names

The ANBG in Canberra had a number of activities to mark Wattle Week in September, including a presentation by Tony Orchard on *Why botanists change names: the case of Acacia / Racosperma*. He reported on the background to a 20 year debate arising from a 1986 proposal to divide the 1352 species in the *Acacia* genus into three - *Acacia*, *Racosperma* and *Senegalia*. The original proposal would have meant that *Acacia* would be kept for 73 species across Africa, America and Asia, but that almost 1000 species would have to be renamed. Orchard and his colleague Bruce Maslin argued the case for retaining the name *Acacia* for the bulk of the genus (960 species, including 940 native to Australia). A major controversy surrounding their counter-proposal was that it would mean the "type" specimen of *Acacia*, i.e., the first acacia so named - the African/Asian *A. nilotica* (Prickly Acacia) - would be reclassified into a new genus. Apparently this is not generally the done thing in nomenclature. However, the new type is *A. penninervis* (Mountain Hickory). Tony's account was fascinating - it reminded me of Eric Hansen's book *Orchid Fever*. For more info, see «www.worldwidewattle.com».

Lismore Forest and Wood Expo

Brett Stubbs reports that a *Forest and Wood Expo* was held in Lismore in August in conjunction with the city's annual *Health and Herb Festival*. The event was staged by the Subtropical Farm Forestry Association, and included talks on sustainable farm forestry, displays of works by renowned wood artists and craftsmen, and practical demonstrations of traditional wood-working skills. The level of interest in this inaugural Expo was such that it is planned to make it a major, independent event next year.

AFHS SYMPOSIUM - HISTORY OF THE ARAUCARIAN FORESTS

The Society's symposium on the History of the Araucarian Forests was successfully held on 9th August in Brisbane in conjunction with the IUFRO World Congress. The symposium was one of several outcomes of an invitation from IUFRO to the Society to interact with the World Congress. The *Araucariaceae*, an ancient family of conifers including the familiar hoop, bunya and Norfolk Island pines, was chosen as the focus of the day-long symposium.

Speakers on the day were Trevor Clifford (*History of Araucariaceae*), Gretel Boswijk (*The long history of kauri*), Ann Haebich (*Bunya: culture and diaspora*), Roger Heady (*Inner life of Araucariaceae*), John Huth (*Araucaria forestry in Queensland*), Mike Roche (*New Zealand kauri forestry*), Bob Thistlethwaite (*PNG and Pacific Islands: cultural significance and use*) and Jane Lennon (*"Splendid spars": a history of use and conservation of Araucaria heterophylla on Norfolk Island*).

A collection of papers from the event has been published as the second edition of the Society's occasional series, *Australia and New Zealand Forest Histories*. The first edition, published in August 2005, was another outcome of our involvement with the IUFRO World Congress (see Newsletter no. 41).

In the evening, the IUFRO Research Group on Forest and Woodland History sponsored a session on "Social and cultural values of forests benefit for today's society". The several presenters included AFHS member **Sue Feary** whose paper was titled *Using archaeological evidence and oral history in negotiating Aboriginal interest in Australian Regional Forest Agreements*.

CONTRIBUTIONS

Thanks to the following people for their input to this issue - Paul Star, Kevin Frawley, Dan Lunney, Libby Robin, John Dargavel, Tony Fearnside, Brett Stubbs, Bill Semple and Mike Calver. Thanks also to Andrew Wilson, Heather Crompton, Andrea Mettenmeyer and John Parminter for their "leads", and to Lew Morrell for permission to reprint Hugh C. Varnes's article on teaching at a timber mill school in the late 1950s. Apologies if I haven't listed anyone, or worse, overlooked a contribution. And thanks to Juliana Lazzari for proof-reading the draft, although the responsibility for any errors stays with the Editor (Fintán Ó Laighin).

The next issue is scheduled for **April 2006**. Contributions are invited from members - see the front page for e-mail and postal address details.

READING THE JOURNALS

by John Dargavel

We are fortunate to have two such good environmental history journals, and we hear that a third one, *World Environmental History*, will be launched soon out of India. They appear in my mailbox every quarter and I open them with enjoyment, look at the cover, scan the contents and put them aside to read attentively at leisure. Attention seems to have been less plentiful than leisure for the past few months and the pile of a year's journals looks daunting. But having them all together gives me a chance to reflect on their value.



Economists would doubtless call one their "existence value". I find their presence reassuring evidence of the community of environmental and forest researchers of which I am part, even if I meet our colleagues only in these pages. I don't feel alone perched here on the top of the world, to rotate Paul Keating's metaphor. And there is

considerable personal value when our research is accepted for publication. Of course, particular papers may provide a "direct value" with information specific to research that we are doing ourselves, though I suspect that this does not often occur as each issue arrives, given the huge range of topics and places covered. Directly valuable papers are more likely to be found in past issues, somewhere or other on the shelf, if only one could find them again. For this, the US-based Forest History Society's bibliography is invaluable, and moves are afoot to give more international scope.

The greatest value of the journals to me is their "indirect value". The way the themes and ideas that others bring to their work prompts me to think in new ways about how I do my own. There are two sides to this. Sometimes, a paper stimulates me to write my own stuff differently, and sometimes it acts as an awful warning.



CSIRO CELEBRATES 75 YEARS OF STATISTICS



Few research organisations can boast such unique statistical beginnings as the Commonwealth Scientific, Industrial and Research Organisation (CSIRO): its first three statisticians were all women. All three had trained at Rothamsted Experimental Station in England under Fisher or Yates, two of the founders of modern statistics.

Frances Elizabeth "Betty" Allan (pictured) was CSIRO's first statistician. Her appointment marked the beginning of CSIRO's recognition that statistics is vital to extracting more information from scientific research.



Betty's link with forestry is that for over 15 years, she was a part-time lecturer in biometrics at the Australian Forestry School in Canberra. In an article published on the CSIRO website - «www.cmis.csiro.au/reports/FEA_article_for_cmis_website.pdf» - John Field writes that "She first taught there in 1936, and then each year from 1938 until her death in 1952. In 1937 she published an article on the use of statistics in forestry research. In noting her death, the Annual Report of the Forestry and Timber Bureau for 1952 records that she maintained a great interest in her classes and was well known to foresters throughout Australia for her work on statistics. As a measure of the respect in which she was held by the School, forestry students were the pall-bearers at her funeral."

More info on Betty Allan and the 75th Anniversary is available at «<http://www.cmis.csiro.au/stats75>».

Acknowledgements: Thanks to Heather Crompton (Institute of Foresters of Australia) for alerting me to CSIRO's celebration of Betty Allan, and to Andrea Mettenmeyer (CSIRO) for her help, including the invitation to the public talk in Canberra in September 2005.

THE RUSSELL GRIMWADE PRIZE

by Fintán Ó Laighin



One of the things I've been working on lately has been the re-establishment of the Russell Grimwade Prize. This was done as part of my work with the Forest Industries Branch of the Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF). The Prize had originally been administered

by the former Forestry and Timber Bureau, but became the responsibility of what is now DAFF when the Bureau was dismantled in the mid-1970s. The Prize was first awarded in 1930 and most recently in 1994. During 2005, responsibility was transferred to the Forest and Wood Products Research and Development Corporation (FWPRDC), and in September, the Corporation advertised the Prize for study in 2006.

One of the things I particularly liked about doing this, and this is something that I have always loved about studying history, is that I learned things I wasn't expecting. What should have been a somewhat dry exercise in organising to have a postgraduate award reinstated, turned out to be a rather interesting excursion through history. As a result, I learned things about Captain Cook's Cottage, Forestry and the Empire, forestry settlements in Western Australia, the Bibbulmun Track, orchids, one of the biggest corporate scandals in Australia's history, the Felton Bequest and more. I also learned something about the impressive man called Russell Grimwade and his contribution to Australian industry, society and forestry if that doesn't sound overstated.

Russell Grimwade

Wilfrid Russell Grimwade was born in 1879, married (to Mab Kelly) in 1909, knighted in 1950 and died in 1955. The biographical listing on *Bright Sparcs* advises that he studied chemistry at the University of Melbourne, and in 1907 became a partner of his family's firm, Felton, Grimwade & Co. He was a keen botanist, especially of the eucalypts, and was official botanical adviser to the Army Department during World War II. When drugs were in short supply during the war, he grew and processed a number of important plant sources at his country home "Westerfield" in Victoria. He also developed a process for extracting fixed oil from apricot kernels to replace olive oil and manufactured hyoscine (a type of sedative). He was a generous philanthropist who gave £50,000 to the University of Melbourne towards the building of the Russell Grimwade School of Biochemistry, £20,000 to the Commonwealth Forestry and Timber Bureau (£5,000 in 1929 and £15,000 in 1954) for the Russell Grimwade Prize for "the encouragement of scientific forestry", and £10,000 to equip the Forest Products Laboratory in Victoria. As a gift to the people of Melbourne to celebrate the centenary of European settlement in Victoria, he bought and transported Captain Cook's (parents')

cottage from England to Fitzroy Gardens. He was President of the Society of Chemical Industry of Victoria in 1909 and 1910, Chairman of the Australian Chemical Institute from 1946-47, Chairman of the Trustees of the National Museum of Victoria and President of the Australian Forest League. He is also commemorated by the Russell Grimwade Lecture of the Royal Australian Chemical Institute. In 1920, he published an *Anthography of the Eucalypts*, and in 1947 *Flinders Lane: Recollections of Alfred Felton*.

A biography of Russell Grimwade by J.R. Poynter was published in 1967 by the Miegunyah imprint of Melbourne University Press. The imprint was established following a bequest from his estate, and takes its name from the home of Sir Russell and Lady Mabel Grimwade. Lady Grimwade died in 1973.

The Russell Grimwade Prize

The Prize was instituted in March 1929 when Mr Grimwade (as he then was) submitted a Deed of Trust to the Victorian Supreme Court. The Deed advises that he has "set aside the sum of Five thousand pounds (which) shall form an endowment or fund for the maintenance of a prize for the encouragement of scientific forestry to be called *The Russell Grimwade Prize*".

The Deed specifies that the value of the Prize will be £500 "to be utilized to defray the cost of a post-graduate course at the Imperial Forestry Institute at Oxford, England and of such forestry tours on the Continent of Europe or elsewhere as may be arranged". Specifying a set amount but also advising that the award would "defray the cost" - defray meaning "to bear or pay (the costs, expenses, etc)" - was one inconsistency within the Deed of Trust. The Deed was amended on a couple of occasions, including in 1949 to increase the Prize value to £750, but there were no further changes. The value in 1994 when the Prize was last awarded was \$30,000 suggesting that "defray the cost" was how it was being interpreted.

It is ironic that one of the main attractions of the Prize - that it was available only for study at Oxford University - was also the main contributor to its near demise. The Prize was intended to be funded by the income generated by its capital base, but it was not keeping pace with the costs of study at Oxford, not even when the capital base was increased in those years when the Prize wasn't awarded.

While DAFF had tried to retain the Prize according to the original conditions, the Forestry Institute at Oxford was closed in the late 1990s and its functions transferred to the Oxford University Department of Plant Sciences. It also ceased offering a Masters degree in Forestry with prospective students referred to Bristol University. This meant that a major intention of the benefactor could no longer be met - while the Deed referred to "post-graduate study, it had only ever been used for a Masters course and the fact that

funding only lasted a year suggested that this was always the intention.

Sir Russell's memory wasn't being particularly well served by the Prize not being awarded, so to make it once again viable, DAFF and the FWPRDC petitioned the Victorian Attorney-General to amend the Deed to provide for study in Australia. However, the resulting decision actually terminated the Deed on condition that the FWPRDC guaranteed to administer the Prize according to as many of the original conditions as possible. The new conditions allow study to be undertaken at Oxford, but don't require it.

The financial difficulties of the Prize weren't a phenomenon that emerged only in the 1990s. In 1933, for example, Mr Grimwade had to contribute £100 of his own funds to supplement the £400 raised in interest to enable the second recipient to undertake studies at Oxford. In 1954, recognising the difficulties that the Prize was facing, he made a second donation - this time of £15,000.

The Prize was awarded frequently from the 1930s to the early 1990s. While the records I have access to may be incomplete, there seem to have been 29 different recipients, including one who was unable to undertake study due to ill health. The 29 include some illustrious figures in Australian forestry, including the inaugural winner in 1930, T.N. Stoate who was later WA Conservator of Forests and A.O. Lawrence (1933) who later became Victorian Commissioner of Forests. F.M. Bailey (1935) and W.D. Muir (1938) were both later heads of the Forestry Commission of NSW.

More recent winners include AFHS member Kim Wells (1962) and Frank Batini (1971) both of whom attended the Forest History Conference in Augusta in 2004. Jerry Vanclay, now Professor of Forestry at Southern Cross University was the 1982 recipient, while Tony Bartlett (head of DAFF's Forest Industries Branch) received the award in 1984. The most recent winner was Andrew Lugg (1994), then with the NSW Forestry Commission and now with NSW Environment.

In about 1970, the Institute of Foresters magazine published a short article by Max Jacobs on the Prize and the winners. Jacobs was Charles Lane Poole's successor as head of the Forestry and Timber Bureau and Principal of the Australian Forestry School.

Forestry and the Empire

I wondered why Oxford was specified as the place of study. My initial view was that it was a result of the colonial attitude - which remained very strong in Australia until the 1970s - that England was the centre of civilization, and Oxford its most prestigious centre of learning. This was probably part of it, but I suspect it also had something to do with the feeling of being part of the Empire, and wanting to contribute to it.

The first Empire Forestry Conference was held in London in July 1920, and among its resolutions was a call for Empire countries to support the establishment

of the Imperial Forestry Institute in Oxford. While we might have to wait for John Dargavel's book, I suspect that Grimwade was also influenced by his friend Lane Poole who was a passionate advocate of the need for professionally trained foresters, and also a leading advocate of the establishment of a British Empire Forestry Society, eventually instituted as the Empire Forestry Association in November 1921. After leaving WA where he had been Conservator of Forests, Lane Poole came to Canberra where, from 1927 until his retirement in 1945, he was both head of the Australian Government's Forestry and Timber Bureau and the Principal of the Australian Forestry School.

Forestry Settlements in Western Australia

One of the things I came across was that there is an old forestry settlement in south-west WA called "Grimwade" (postcode 6253). I wondered if there was a connection. The database maintained by the Geographic Names Section of the WA Department of Land Information confirmed that it was named after Russell Grimwade, but didn't explain why. The entry advised that the area was previously known as East Kirup and that the name was changed to Grimwade in 1949. This presented a clue, as the WA Conservator of Forests at that time was Theodore Norman Stoate, the first winner of the Grimwade Prize. My theory was that Stoate organised for the settlement to be named in Grimwade's honour. I was pleased to have this confirmed by Poynter who quotes a 1949 letter from Stoate to Grimwade:

"For some considerable time I have felt that, in view of your benefactions to Forestry in Australia, it would be fitting to perpetuate your name in Western Australia, and recently approached the Nomenclature Committee of the Lands Department for their agreement to change the name of East Kirup to Grimwade" (p.294).

Sir Russell seems to have been quite touched by the honour, and Poynter reports that he "was very proud of 'his' town, and sought frequent reports of it", even donating a projector for the town's entertainment.

Although at its peak it was a thriving settlement that had a mill, a railway station, a store, hall, church, hospital, school and stables, unfortunately there's not a great deal left of the town now. A few building foundations remain, but the settlement will probably be reclaimed by the surrounding bush. The downgrading of the settlement started in the mid-1980s when the houses started being removed by tender, and the CALM office relocated to Kirup in June 1986.

There are quite a few road signs pointing the way to Grimwade, and it is a popular picnic area. It's also on the *Bibbulmun Track* which is WA's only long-distance walking trail and is one of the longest, continuously marked trails in Australia. It is named after a distinct Aboriginal language group, known as the Bibbulmun, who inhabited some of the areas on the south coast through



which the track passes. It is marked by a stylised image of the *Waugal* (rainbow serpent), a spirit being from the Aboriginal Dreaming.

The Bronze Leek Orchid

The *Bright Sparcs* website originally advised that Russell Grimwade had an orchid named after him - *Prasophyllum grimwadeanum*. A check on the Florabase database of WA species said that the common name was the Bronze Leek Orchid, but also that the name "is a taxonomic synonym of *P. giganteum* Lindl." and was no longer current. Lindley described the orchid originally in 1840, whereas *P. grimwadeanum* was described by Nicholls in 1948 in *Victorian Naturalist* 64:175, meaning that Nicholls gave Grimwade's name to a plant that had already been identified. The error seems to have been picked up in 1989 with the publication of M.A. Clements's "Catalogue of Australian Orchidaceae. *Australian Orchid Research* 1: 1-160 (113)". Sadly, I felt obliged to report this to *Bright Sparcs*. I note also the WA connection.

The Corporate Scandal

Shortly after the Deed of Trust was signed, Russell Grimwade appointed a company called *Trustees, Executors and Agency Company Limited* (TEA) as the Trustee. By the early 1990s, however, *ANZ Funds Management* was the Trustee. I idly wondered when and why the change had occurred, assuming that it was just the result of a takeover that characterised Australian finance in the 1980s. However, the Delisted.com website says that TEA was the first trustee company ever to fail in Australia, and its downfall is covered by a whole chapter in Trevor Sykes's book *The Bold Riders: Behind Australia's Corporate Collapses* published by Allen & Unwin in September 1994. The company collapsed in May 1983 in what was one of the biggest corporate scandals of the late 20th century and which resulted in legislation being introduced in State Parliaments around the country. The Victorian Parliament, for instance, passed the *ANZ Executors & Trustees Company Act 1983*, in order "to provide for the transfer to a wholly owned subsidiary of Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Limited of the trust business of The Trustees Executors & Agency Company Limited". A search on the Australasian Legal Information Institute database generates pages of results.

The Felton Bequest

This is one of those interesting things one comes across. The Grimwade family company was called Felton, Grimwade & Co, a partnership between Alfred Felton and Russell Grimwade's father Frederick. Felton died in January 1904 and left an estate of almost £400,000, the equivalent of tens of millions of dollars in today's terms. With no descendants, he left half his estate to charities, and half to the National Gallery of

Victoria. Over the past 100 years more than 15,000 art works have been acquired through the Felton Bequest with a current total value of more than \$1 billion.

In November 2003, Melbourne University Press published *Mr Felton's Bequests* by John Poynter who I think is the J.R. (John Riddoch) Poynter who wrote the biography of Russell Grimwade.

As an aside, the Canberra industrial suburb of Mitchell has both a Felton Street and a Grimwade Street. Felton Street is named after Alfred and the reference recognises him as both an industrialist and an art benefactor. Given the significance of the Felton Bequest, however, I think it's a shame that none of the streets around the National Gallery of Australia bear his name.

Interestingly, Grimwade Street is not named after Frederick, but after both Russell and his elder brother Edward for their contributions to industry.

Sources

In addition to files held by DAFF (one of which has a copy of the 1929 Deed of Trust), the following sources were used:

- ACT Planning and Land Authority, *Place Names*, www.actpla.act.gov.au/actlic/places
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- Bright Sparcs, *Biographical Entry - Grimwade, Wilfrid Russell (Russell) (1879-1955)*, www.asap.unimelb.edu.au/bsparcs/biogs/P002563b.htm
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- Uncredited, *The History of Grimwade* (a 3 page A4-sized pamphlet from Balingup District Tourist Information Centre)
- UTS and UNSW Faculties of Law, *Australasian Legal Information Institute*, www.austlii.edu.au
- WA Department of Conservation and Land Management, *Naturebase - The Bibbulmun Track*, www.naturebase.net/tourism/bibbulmun_splash.html
- WA Department of Land Information, *WA Place Names*, www.dli.wa.gov.au/corporate.nsf/web/WA+Place+Names



WA Herbarium / WA Department of Conservation and Land
Management, *Florabase - The Western Australian Flora*,
<http://florabase.calm.wa.gov.au>

TEACHING AT A TIMBER MILL SCHOOL IN THE LATE 1950s

Bill Semple has drawn my attention to an article published in the July 2005 issue of *Talkabout*, a publication of the Alumni of Wagga Teachers' College. The article by Hugh C. Varnes is about his first appointment, in 1957, to a school run by a timber company - Mt. Seaview Timbers - in north-western NSW. I am also grateful to *Talkabout* editor, Lew Morrell, for permission to reprint it in our newsletter. The newsletter is posted on the Charles Sturt University website at [«www.csu.edu.au/division/alumni/jul2005.pdf»](http://www.csu.edu.au/division/alumni/jul2005.pdf).

My First School Appointment

by Hugh C. Varnes

In 1957, my first appointment was to Mt. Seaview Timbers Pty. Ltd., yes, that's correct, not to a town or village, but to a timber mill. The actual Mt. Seaview was at least 20 miles away as the crow flies and there was no settlement there at that time. The mill, which cut coachwood to be used as rifle butts at Lithgow Small Arms Factory, was situated between Yarras and Yarrowich on the then unsealed Oxley Highway. This was 60 miles west of Wauchope and 27 miles from the nearest school and post office at Yarras.

Like many other small school appointees I had been unable to find this place on any map. I received my notification of appointment in Rockhampton, Qld. (where my parents then lived) only three days prior to school commencement. Arriving in Wauchope on the Brisbane-Sydney express well after midnight I was met by the Mill manager and bundled into a hotel room. However, I was astonished to discover that I had to go another 60 miles by truck at 6am in order to be at school on time on the first day.

The mill hamlet was made up of the mill, the school, nine houses and a boarding house for single men. The five small weatherboard shacks in the married quarters were painted black with sump oil. There was one Army Nissan hut made of corrugated iron which looked like a half water tank on its side. Three slightly larger shacks on a hillock at one end were reserved for the manager, the foreman and the engineer and their families. The boarding house had only basic facilities and had guests only four days a week (i.e., the four working days). The boarding house manager/cook and his family lived in very cramped quarters at one end of this building. The Oxley Highway ran right through the hamlet and the whole was surrounded by dense bush.

The school was conducted in an unfenced building which also served as the local hall and meeting place. The old fashioned long box-top desks in my

classroom were very uncomfortable, especially for the Lower Division children. In my first year there were eleven pupils. This number included two girls doing High School correspondence courses.

The children came from about eight families who lived in the mill cottages. Incidentally, there were also about 15 dogs!

The hut provided for the teacher had no bathroom or kitchen. It contained a single bed, a small table and stool, a kerosene heater on which one could boil a kettle and a curtain across one corner to form a wardrobe. Later, the Inspector, in a report to the Department of Education, referred to this hut as a piano box. The bathroom and kitchen were found in the single men's quarters about 60 yards distant. When there was a resident cook there were meals, when there wasn't, one had to manage as best one could, or, at times, be rostered for one hot meal a day with one of the families.

I recall that on one occasion a boarding house manager threatened to kill me because of the way I had reacted to his daughter's profuse bad language in school. He stormed into the building in front of the children shouting a stream of profanities, shaking his fist and making threats and positioned himself about an inch in front of me, in this way pinning me to the blackboard. Fortunately I remained silent and when he finally ran out of puff some minutes later I quietly enquired: "And now Mr —, would you like to hear my side of the story?" He immediately turned around and stamped off slamming the door behind him leaving both the children and myself stunned. Later that day it was with great difficulty that I wrenched my lunch plate out of his wife's hands after she had refused to hand it to me even though I had paid for it.

The mill workers worked very long hours which meant that they were there for only four days a week. They quickly disappeared on Fridays and some of the families would go away as well. When the mill was working we had electricity, so at other times we used lanterns and candles. The only telephone available for the teacher to use was in the mill office 500 yards away and there was only one mail delivery a week - on Saturdays. A bus passed by on Fridays travelling from Armidale to Port Macquarie, but always far too early to be of any use to the teacher. Its return journey on Saturdays invariably proved to be a special event. A small group of people always waited for the mail bag and the needed supplies which it brought. The nearest general store was three miles away at Ginger's Creek which was a stopping place for almost all passing traffic.

We frequently walked to this store that also sold petrol and provided rescue services for broken down vehicles especially those who were bogged in wet weather.

About four or five vehicles would pass each way each day but usually between 10am and 2pm as motorists generally chose to begin their journeys in the morning and to travel over this lonely highway in daylight. Rarely did we hear a car at night.

I used to try and get to Wauchope each weekend but remember that I frequently waited in vain to hitch hike to town on Friday afternoons as often no vehicle passed by between 3.30pm and nightfall. On these occasions I would have to try again on Saturday mornings but this could mean arriving in town after all the shops had closed at 12.30pm!

The return journey to my school after a weekend away was one I came to dread - even to hate! It was a nightmare! It was necessary to leave Wauchope on Sunday evenings at 6.30pm in the mill truck. The mill manager and the accountant were always allowed to sit in the cabin with the driver but the rest of us sat in the back under a canvas canopy. The benches ran along the sides of the truck and the floor space was taken up with equipment and supplies. This meant that we could not face the direction of travel and that on the many bends we were thrown first one way and then the other. They always stopped at the pub at Long Flat for 'refreshments' and, when everyone was feeling happy, resumed the journey. The driver usually was reckless and we lurched from side to side over that badly corrugated gravel road. Worst of all were the thick clouds of dust which enveloped us, especially on the bends or when we passed traffic going in the opposite direction. Soon we all were chocolate brown in colour with matted hair and eyebrows whilst nothing was adequate to prevent the dust penetrating our eyes, noses and throats! Clothes became filthy, talking was impossible and the whole journey sheer misery! Invariably someone would be sick and I recall that on a number of occasions I helped in a search by torchlight as we walked back down the road looking for somebody's teeth!

If I didn't take the Sunday night journey the only alternative was to rise between 3am and 4am on Monday and hurry to the outskirts of Wauchope. Here I would hail passing timber jinkers heading for the bush to bring a load of logs into town to other mills. The drivers soon got to know me and readily picked me up. In this way I had a comfortable ride in the cabin and was at school by 6am. I grew to prefer this mode of transport but one had to watch the weather closely because the timber jinkers didn't go out if it rained!

At that time my parents were going through serious economic hardship (through no fault of their own) and I was doing all I could to send money to them. For this reason I was unable to have my own transport. And, for the first few months I didn't even have a radio! I remember how excited I was the day I had enough money to buy my first portable battery-electric radio in Wauchope (I remember how heavy it was!). In my second year I was able to buy a second hand AJS500 motorbike. I had some hair raising journeys on that machine but that is quite another story!

The Inspector of Schools didn't visit me until almost the end of my first year, complaining when he did that I was so far from Kempsey - in fact, I was the last school in his inspectorate. However I desperately needed his encouragement and some reassurance that I was doing things in the right way! I wished he had come much sooner! Had he been more communicative I would have applied for a transfer at the end of that first year but I assumed I had to remain there to complete my country service! It dawned on me at a later stage why the school had had three teachers during the previous year, each staying for only one term! However, 45 years later I was to learn why I had had to remain there for a second year!

In my second year (1958) there were only nine pupils and the school was threatened with closure. So, the shopkeepers, three miles away, offered to bring their four and a half year old son to school each day in order to keep the school open. This year proved to be a happy one for me although I was often lonely - there being no one around of my own age or interests.

Nearly 20 years later, in the mid 1970s when I returned after spending almost ten years in Peru, South America, I took my wife and two small sons up the now sealed Oxley Highway to see my first school. I remember being surprised at how many of the bends had been taken out of the road when they had put down the bitumen. However when we arrived at the site I discovered that both the mill and the school had closed long before and that it was very difficult to work out where the school and the teacher's hut had even stood. There was no trace of the mill either. The whole area was overgrown with bush. I therefore thought that I would never hear of that school again.

Imagine my surprise then, when in 2002, the year I retired from teaching, my phone rang, and male voice asked: 'Is that Hugh Varnes?'
 I replied in the affirmative.
 He then gave his name.
 I said, 'Oh, Mt. Seaview Timbers Pty. Ltd.'

He said: 'You remember?'

I replied: 'How could I forget?' I then realised that the caller was affected emotionally by my response.

This turned out to be the boy who at four and a half years of age had been brought to the school in my second year in order to keep the school open. He had had no idea that the teacher he had apparently revered had been only 20 at the time! Not long after we met I turned 65 and a few months later he celebrated his 50th birthday!

His had been a colourful life but in many ways a traumatic one as well. He reminded me of the garden plot each pupil had had and of the art, music and scripture classes - and even of a school play we produced, all of which had apparently made a deep impression on him. He had become a very successful major-domo, chef and florist with skills in interior decorating, landscape gardening and a thorough appreciation of art. To my amazement he traced all of these things back to his experience in his first school - even his cooking which he said he practised in the plasticine tray! What touched me most was that he said he had first known love, passion and inspiration in his life, at his first school. He stressed that it was the inspiration and the passion which had remained with him throughout his life. I learned that he had tracked me down through some quite remarkable circumstances but that is his story! I now at long last knew why I had been at that school for that second year!

This man, Warren Hannah, has been extremely kind to me. One example I must share with you is that the walls of the Department of Housing bed-sitter I occupy in my retirement are adorned with a magnificent painting of Narrawallee Beach and four valuable framed etchings by Pamela Griffith, the well known Australian artist who is also one of Australia's foremost etchers. These have been lent to me - indefinitely - by my former pupil!

In this totally unexpected but wonderful way, I am reminded every day of the years I spent so long ago at my first, now totally unknown, small school.



The teacher's hut

FELLOWSHIPS AND PRIZES

National Museum Research Fellowships

The National Museum of Australia (NMA) is currently assessing applications for a prestigious new fellowship program which begins in 2006. Applications closed in late November and invited established scholars to apply for *National Museum Research Fellowships* which the NMA says demonstrate the Museum's commitment to research and scholarship. The principal focus of the Museum's research and scholarship are its collections and its role in creating an understanding of Australia's past. The scholars in residence will work at the Museum in Canberra on either a part- or full-time basis for a period of at least three months, up to 12 months. They will undertake a significant piece of research for publication. More than one fellow may be appointed each year.

Student Prize - History of Australian Science / Australian Environmental History

The NMA has joined forces with the Australian Academy of Science and its National Committee for History and Philosophy of Science to establish two essay prizes, to be known respectively as *The NMA Student Prize for the History of Australian Science* and *The NMA Student Prize for Australian Environmental History*. In each case, the Prize will be a certificate and \$2,500.

The prizes will be awarded for original unpublished research undertaken whilst enrolled as a student (postgraduate or undergraduate) at any tertiary educational institution. The research should be presented as an essay not exceeding 8,000 words in length (exclusive of endnotes). Essays must be written in English and fully documented following the style specified for the Australian Academy of Science's journal, *Historical Records of Australian Science*. The prizes will be awarded in alternate years in May. Applications will normally close on 28th February each year, with the history of science prize being offered in even-numbered years and the environmental history prize in odd-numbered years.

The initial prize, a history of science prize, will be offered in 2006. In view of the late announcement, a later closing date has been set for 2006 only, namely 30th April. Entries should be sent to the Librarian, Australian Academy of Science, GPO Box 783, Canberra ACT 2601. A cover sheet should be attached giving the following information: full name; contact details (postal and e-mail addresses and phone number); title of submission; university course (and year of course if undergraduate); and student number. Inquiries to rosanne.walker@science.org.au.

Entries must be accompanied by a letter from the candidate's academic supervisor attesting that the entry meets the eligibility criterion set out above.

In the case of the history of science prize, essays may deal with any aspect of the history of Australian science, pure or applied, or its cultural influences. The winning entry will be considered for publication in *Historical Records of Australian Science*. In the case of the environmental history prize, winning entries will be considered for publication in the NMA's new journal, *reCollections: Journal of the National Museum of Australia*.

The judging panel will comprise the Chair (or nominee), National Committee for History and Philosophy of Science (who will chair the panel), the Editor (or nominee) of *Historical Records of Australian Science* and the Director of Research (or nominee), NMA.

EUROPEAN SOCIETY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL HISTORY, AMSTERDAM, 5TH-8TH JUNE 2007

The European Society for Environmental History - «www.eseh.org» - invites proposals for panels and posters for its 4th conference which will be held in Amsterdam, The Netherlands, from 5th-8th June 2007. The conference theme is *Environmental Connections: Europe and the Wider World*. Abstracts are requested between 1st Feb and 1st June 2006 on the following thematic strands:

- * exchange of biota (both intentional and unintentional);
- * exchange of environmental techniques and practices (particularly regarding water);
- * climate changes;
- * environmental movements and organisations; and
- * monitoring the resources of the earth.

BRITISH COLUMBIA FOREST HISTORY SOCIETY

The August 2005 issue (no 77) of the Newsletter of the Forest History Society of British Columbia contains a lead article by Audrey Pearson from the Centre for Applied Conservation Research at the University of British Columbia. Her article, *Forest History Meets Ecology: Understanding the Present from the Past*, raises similar issues to ones confronting us in the AFHS. She writes "Old records are most at risk in this digital age. It's easy for a stack of dusty old maps or cruise cards to get tossed. The most valuable air photos pre-date World War II and they are physically deteriorating simply because of their age. In many cases, the negatives have already disintegrated. Further, the people who were there and remember are getting on. We need to document the knowledge these sources contain now before it is lost. Not only are they part of our cultural and natural heritage, but valuable ecological tools as well."



Other articles in the newsletter discuss *Starting out in forest surveys and inventory division* by Gerhard Eichel, *Celebrating my eighteenth birthday* by Ralph Schmidt, *Goings on at Lake Cowichan* by John Parminter and *Timber Cruising* by Jack Ker. For info on the Society and its newsletter, contact John Parminter at «jvparminter@telus.net».

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 6TH AFHS CONFERENCE, AUGUST 2004

As members may know, the *Proceedings of the 6th National Conference of the Australian Forest History Society* have been published on CD-ROM by Millpress Science Publishers. Long-term availability of the proceedings will be closely related to the number of copies available in university libraries. Quick checks suggest that few people have recommended the title for their institution's library. Budgets permitting, this should be easy to rectify. It would be useful for AFHS members with the opportunity do so to recommend the recent proceedings for acquisition by their institutional libraries. (They can only say "no".)

The proceedings retails for €125 and can be ordered on-line direct from Millpress at «www.millpress.nl/shop/index.php?isbn=90-5966-026-9».

AFHS MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Australian Forest History Society (AFHS) Inc is \$25 a year, or \$15 a year for students. For overseas addressees, it is \$30 (**in Australian currency please**). These prices do not include GST as the AFHS is not registered for paying or claiming GST. Membership expires on **30th June** each year.

Payment can be made by cheque or money order, or through Electronic Funds Transfer. Cheques or Money Orders should be made payable to the AFHS and sent to:

Australian Forest History Society Inc.
PO Box 5128
Kingston ACT 2604

Electronic Funds Transfer can be paid into:

Commonwealth Savings Bank
BSB 062911 / Account No.: 1010 1753

(Please also return this form if you pay by EFT.)

Name:	
Address:	
Tel:	
Fax:	
E-mail	

<input type="checkbox"/>	Please mark the box if you would like a receipt - otherwise an acknowledgment will be sent by e-mail.
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