

## Leadership focus for 1999 Conference

(3 to 5 May)

A decade ago a very successful NZIF conference was held in Wellington in what was then the new town hall. It was a great success because it was both a time of apprehension and excitement. Members were seeking to understand and evaluate the views of political leaders, newly appointed departmental heads and industry chiefs about the dissolution of the New Zealand Forest Service, further Government restructuring and the possibility of the privatisation of State Forests.

Since then the whole forestry sector has undergone a revolution by moving from a largely Government-led to a private-interested industry. Today, if anything, the rate of change in the sector has accelerated. An increasing volume of wood is becoming available and as a consequence major new investment opportunities are appearing, but at the same time difficulties and constraints are emerging. Among other things these include difficult trading conditions and difficulties in winning conservation funding. More importantly, many people are concerned that, in our increasingly diffuse operating environment, we lack appropriate leadership and that desirable strategic goals are absent. These contentions need to be tested and if they are proven to be true then the next step is to define what needs to be done to rectify the situation so that the potential of the entire sector can be maximised. Hence the genesis of the theme of the 1999 NZIF conference which is "leadership in the New Zealand Forestry Sector".

The conference speakers are not all finally confirmed but they will make up an imposing array of movers and shakers. They include the politicians Helen Clark, Bill Birch, and Max Bradford; key forestry departmental heads Bruce Ross, and Hugh Logan; the chief executive of Fletcher Challenge, Mike Andrews; a forestry research leader, Andy Pearce, and a number of specialist experts in forestry management, processing, marketing, finance, education, training, information, transport, labour, biodiversity and biosecurity.

The 1999 NZIF Conference will also provide members and their families with the opportunity to see Te Papa and interesting

forestry features around Wellington, including the Wainuiomata catchment and treatment plant, the picturesque Kaitoke regional park and timber extraction in the Rimutuka ranges.

Pencil the AGM & conference dates, (i.e. 3 to 5 May 1999), into your diary and fill out the form accompanying this Journal now.

**Hamish Levack**  
Conference Organising Committee.

## The M.R. Jacobs Memorial Prize in Silviculture

Dr Max Jacobs was well known to many New Zealand foresters as Principal of the Australian Forestry School, as Director General of Forestry in Australia and as a Forestry Consultant who visited New Zealand many times. He is already honoured by both Institutes of Forestry through the Max Jacobs Orator at the periodic combined meetings. His contribution to silviculture and encouragement to young foresters was exemplary. To recognise this work for the development of forestry in Australia and New Zealand and to stimulate excellence in students of silviculture, a Memorial Prize fund has already been started. It will be administered by the Australian National University and if there is enough financial support, prizes will be awarded in the Forestry Departments of Canberra, Melbourne and Canterbury Universities. The heads of each of these Departments, currently Prof. Kanowski, Prof. Ferguson, and Prof. Sands, will advise the fund committee on the selection of prize winners each year.

It is hoped that there will be enough support from New Zealand to make the prizes a permanent success. Contributions can be made either direct to R.L. Newman & Partners, P.O. Box 143, Curtin, ACT 2605, or to Prof. R Sands at the School of Forestry, University of Canterbury.

This appeal had started before the proposed Australian Forestry School Reunion in April 2000 was mooted but that will give it added impetus. It was started by a generous benefactor in Australia.

**A.W.Grayburn**

## Peter Olsen - A Personal Note

In his early and later mature years, Peter Olsen had such vitality and vivacity that he must have been something quite special when he was younger. I regret that I did not know him in his student years. However, I did have a neighbour in Wellington with exactly the same name and, by chance, the two of them were together attending a Boy Scout Jamboree in Europe. My neighbour and friend, Peter Olsen, could tell me about my friend and colleague Peter Olsen and it was all good. He sang well even then.

I got to know Peter well during his Kaingaroa days and it was here as his obituary shows that he developed his great intelligence and made his deservedly great reputation. I will mention two activities only: Firstly he did a remarkably successful and competent job in organising the first large anti-Dothistroma sprays. This required both practical ability and intellectual understanding. Peter, quite unusually, had both. Secondly, through his contacts with Tasman and Caxton and their exact wood requirements, he developed a knowledge and understanding of the pulp and paper industry in New Zealand which was quite unique amongst young foresters here. This knowledge naturally led to his selection as a visitor to the USA and Canada to study there the most recent pulp and paper developments; my role as his partner was a somewhat different one.

It was in skiing rather than working together that our friendship came about. We were both members of the Rotorua Ski Club and spent many happy days at their Ruapehu club as well as in later years at various South Island ski lodges. There Peter sang whenever he was asked, which was frequently. He had a great knowledge of tunes, a good memory for words and, if need be, the ability to improvise, sometimes with dubious propriety. The young skiers loved it; Peter was universally and rightly the top of the local popularity chart.

In the United States, Peter was doing a remarkably thorough job when he went down with illness. He succumbed in the middle of what was a rather distinguished gathering of US forestry academics in the home of Stephen Spurr where we were staying. Stephen had the local influence to have him hospitalised immediately and looked after well. I had to box on, trying rather unsuccess-