

Forester of the Year Award

Three excellent nominations made judging difficult. The judges were required to make their selection on the basis of:

- Outstanding academic or professional achievements.
- Representing and upholding the image of the profession.
- Demonstrated leadership in the forestry sector.
- Quality of the presentation of the nomination (of lesser weighting).

Andrew McEwen was selected on the basis of his contribution to NZ Forestry over the last 43 years in terms of these criteria.

This career commenced as a NZ Forest Service forester trainee in Kaingaroa, obtaining a Science degree from Victoria University, a forestry degree from Aberdeen University and three years in general forestry in Southland. He then spent 11 years with FRI as a scientist (including obtaining a PhD in tree growth measurements) before taking up the position of Director of Electronic Data Processing in the Forest Service Head Office.

Those of us with a few grey hairs will recall that these were the days of the IBM 29-80 mainframe and the gradual displacement of the infamous Radio Shacks with up-market IBM desk-top clones having an unbelievable 64K RAM processing power! Andrew's main task was the installation of a computer network with terminals down to district and even forest office level.

Andrew was seconded to the State Services Commission in 1985 where he played a role in the setting up of the Department of Conservation. He was then seconded to the Establishment Unit of New Zealand Forestry Corporation and played a huge role in the privatisation of State Owned plantations in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

For a seven-year period from 1992 Andrew was jointly responsible for the management of the residual Crown forests, which had annual sales of about \$20 million.

He has been actively involved in Treaty of Waitangi



Forester of the Year Andrew McEwen and NZIF President Ket Bradshaw with the Award.

settlements involving forestry land and provided consulting advice to the South African Government on the privatisation of commercial forests. Andrew is now in private practice as a forestry consultant. I was personally highly impressed by one of his more recent commissions – a paper on the pros and cons and business case for a Commodity Levy for the plantation forestry sector.

The judges were particularly impressed by Andrew's commitment to the profession of forestry. His voluntary efforts in producing a comprehensive weekly email newsletter benefit both the forestry sector and the professional standing of foresters and the Institute. Andrew has been highly effective in creating opportunities for networking and in giving a sense of professional community for foresters.

Peter Clark

Response by the Forester of the Year

I was very humbled and somewhat surprised to receive the NZIF Forester of the Year Award for 2005. The receipt of any award such as this is really only possible through the support of others and the particular circumstances that make up a career. It also seems somewhat contradictory to receive an award for enjoying yourself. It has, however, created the opportunity for me to acknowledge publicly some of the people and events that have helped to make my career what it turned out to be (and I apologise to the many that have also contributed but that I have not had room to mention by name).

I started with the former New Zealand Forest Service as a forester trainee in January 1962 shortly after Lindsay Poole was appointed Director-General of Forests (Lindsay, at 97, is still active in forestry and regularly rings to ask me

about forestry or NZIF matters or, as I sometimes suggest, to tell the junior forester what he should be doing). After an induction course in Rotorua, all the forester trainees were posted to Kaingaroa under the control of Peter Olsen, then principal forester at that forest. The single men's camp was quite an experience for a 17 year-old, straight from school. Peter's enthusiasm for forestry was infectious, but he also taught me never to believe that someone else owed me a living. Peter introduced me to NZIF - "there is an NZIF meeting in Rotorua tonight, the vehicle is leaving at 6.30pm so don't be late". How appropriate that 43 years later Peter Clark, Chief Executive of the firm that Peter Olsen went on to establish, should be the one to present the award to me at the NZIF conference at Waitangi.

After a year at Kaingaroa I went to Victoria University