OBITUARY
Gerard Yska

Gerard Yska, who was Principal Planning Officer, New Zealand Forest Service, died suddenly in Wellington on 8 March at the age of 46.

Born in Holland, he graduated in economics from Amsterdam University before emigrating to New Zealand in 1951. He joined New Zealand Forest Service as a clerical officer, working with economist Matt Grainger and Jim Davis, the statistical officer. On the death of Jim Davis in 1956, Gerard Yska was appointed statistical officer and became research officer in 1963. In 1964 he advanced to economist and in 1967 to senior research officer. In 1970 he was appointed principal planning officer.

In his work as statistical officer, he was responsible for the collection of all basic statistical information on the forests and forest industry for inclusion in the annual report and for general research and administration purposes. In this work he continually stressed the need not just for accuracy but for meaningful presentation. This is reflected in the continued high standard and usefulness of his triennial publication *Statistics of Forests and Forest Industries of New Zealand*.

In his work as planning officer, he continued his interest in basic statistics but used them in the development of demand projections and the setting of export targets. He had close associations with many people in the forest and forest processing industries. He was also active in promoting the forestry aspects of the NAFTA Trade Agreement.

Following the 1969 Forestry Development Conference, for which he organized much of the basic planning data, he became a valued member of the Targets Working Party of the Forestry Development Council. He supervised the preparation of the recently published 1972 *National Forestry Planning Model*.

Although he rarely failed to express an opinion, Gerard Yska had a warm and pleasant personality. In argument he never hesitated to disagree with the majority. Indeed, he appeared to gain much from making people justify what at times seemed obvious (usually to their betterment). He respected people and opinions, even if they did not agree with him, but rank and position counted for little. He was equally at ease with the Director-General or the newest junior recruit. He did much to break down the generation gap and gave continuing encouragement to the new thinkers in forestry.

He will be remembered by many as a true friend and as one who gave positive encouragement and new confidence to the foresters, economists and others who were fortunate enough to have worked with him. There have been few who have contributed more to the development of New Zealand forestry than Gerard Yska.

Our sympathy goes to his wife, daughter and two sons.

W.R.J.S.