Anniversary gives cause to ponder the future

In the last edition of the Journal I briefly mentioned that the Queenstown conference was a time for celebrating the 75th anniversary of the NZIF. Bill Studholme’s 75th anniversary address to the conference was reproduced in the same Journal and touched on a number of themes. Prominent amongst these were the huge changes that have taken place in forestry over the years and the role of the NZIF.

In June this year around 30 NZIF members and guests attended a 75th anniversary celebration at Orari Native Bush Reserve in Wellington. A number of NZIF members have had a close association with Orari. Notable amongst these are Dr Leonard Cockayne, the first Director at Orari and an honorary member of the NZIF in 1929, and Stan Reid who carried out ecological surveys at Orari in the 1930s and then again 50 years later.

Former NZIF President Lindsay Poole, who knew Cockayne, and I planted a rimu tree at Orari and a memorial plaque situated alongside the rimu commemorates the event. It was great to see so many people there, a number of whom had not attended an NZIF function for some time.

As Bill had done before me in his presentation, my comments to those gathered at Orari reflected on what the NZIF had achieved over the years. These vary from submissions to local and central government, conferences, the journal, registration scheme, and valuation standards to the fellowship that people find in being part of such an organisation. It is a mixture of all of these that will make the NZIF relevant to members in the future.

The face of forestry in New Zealand has changed markedly since 1927. Forestry is now amongst the top three export earners for New Zealand and most of our indigenous forests are protected in one form or another. There are many foresters today for whom the NZ Forest Service (NZFS) and NZ Forest Products (NZFP) are just names and the Department of Conservation has always been there. It wasn’t always so.

In another 50 years time I will be the same age that Lindsay Poole is now, 95. Interestingly, I was born during the period when Lindsay was President of the NZIF from 1956-1958. In 50 years the NZIF will be 125 years old, well outlasting the NZFS and NZFP which didn’t even reach their 75th anniversaries. Who knows whether I will be able to attend the 125th anniversary of the NZIF, but one thing is for sure the industry will be vastly different to that of today. The question that I ask myself, though, is what will the NZIF look like?

On the day that we gathered at Orari the NZIF Council held a meeting to review its strategic plan. The plan was developed in early 2002 and holds for two years. Progress against the plan has been steady and it is my belief that this will continue over the next 12 months or so. Members should refer to the Council Bullet Points for updates on progress. Copies of the plan can be obtained from the Secretariat if required.

Once again the NZIF has lost one of its prominent members. Jack Henry died in June. Jack was a former President of the NZIF and a Fellow and Honorary member who held senior positions in NZ Forest Products. Our thoughts are with Jack’s family at this time.

Tim Thorpe

New NZIF Southern North Island Section

Following a request from the Wanganui-Manawatu section of the New Zealand Institute of Forestry, the Council has agreed to the formation of a new Southern North Island section to replace both the Wanganui-Manawatu and Wellington sections. Members from both sections generally supported the merger although some expressed reservations about the difficulty of ensuring that all members in the new section had the chance to participate in its activities.

The new section covers the territory of three Regional Councils in the Southern North Island – Taranaki, Wanganui-Manawatu and Wellington. This is essentially that part of the North Island south of a line from Mokau in North Taranaki to the Hauhangaroa Range (including Taumarunui), then curling around the south side of Ruapehu (including Ohakune and Taihape) and across Southern Hawke’s Bay (including Dannevirke). It corresponds to the Southern North Island Wood Supply Region as defined by the National Exotic Forest Description, with the addition of the territory of the Ruapehu District Council (which lies within the Central North Island Wood Supply Region).

The table on Page 41 shows various statistics for the new section area in comparison with New Zealand as a whole.

Significant wood processing plants within the new section boundaries include the Winstone pulp mill at Karori, the Juken Nissho panel board mill at Masterton, ten sawmills producing at least 5,000 m3 sawn timber annually (out of 93 such sawmills nationally), 25 plants...