

## **4. THE JOURNALS— FARM FORESTRY AND TREE GROWER**

### **Looking for Publicity**

When the North Island branches met at Rotorua in June 1957 to form the Combined Farm Forestry Association (CFFA), delegates realised that with members scattered throughout the country, meeting occasionally at Branch level but probably only annually at National level, a means had to be found of keeping all in touch with Association affairs.

Two Taranaki representatives, John Parsons and Jack Stronge, successfully moved that *Straight Furrow* be approached to be the official organ of the Association. Jack, who had worked as a journalist for the *New Zealand Herald* and *The Taranaki Daily News* after an Auckland University education, became the logical person to follow up these early attempts to obtain publicity. He reported to a committee meeting in December 1957 that he had had some articles printed in *Straight Furrow*. He also reported that a Mr Ferris of *Straight Furrow* had promised that a page would be made available in a prominent place in the paper, but then had apparently been turned down through lack of space. The committee considered this a most unsatisfactory position and authorised the president, Neil Barr, to use the *NZ Farmer* for any publicity he thought suitable.

Neil Barr was writing a regular feature for the *Farmer* at this time following on from a column started by the late F.B.McWhannell on eucalypts. This long-running series of articles on trees in the *Farmer* introduced many farmers to Neil Barr and resulted in a considerable number of members joining each Association as it was formed.

The Director of Forestry, A.R. Entrican, suggested in August 1958 that the Association ask the *Timber and Forestry Journal* to provide space, but said the editor at the time was awkward to deal with. Neil Barr made a note on this letter

“No Sir—NAB”, with no other comment, but his thoughts were obvious.

On 6 March 1958 Murray Wilson, secretary of the CFFA, received a letter from Lindsay Rollo, General Manager of Editorial Services, Wellington, asking if the Association would be interested in having the papers from the forthcoming conference published, or if they were interested in establishing a journal to cater for farm forestry and a number of non-professional forestry interests.

Lindsay Rollo had been an employee of the NZ Forest Service in earlier years as Technical Publications Officer, and had helped Bill Jolliffe produce two booklets on farm forestry.

Following discussion, Editorial Services gave a quote for printing the proceedings of the 1958 Conference, according to a number of prescriptions; as an example, 800 copies of 48 pages octavo (A5) would cost £101-9-6 (\$202-95), with an agreement for any advertising. Editorial Services would promote advertising at the suggested rate of £7-10-0 (\$15-00) or £4-10-0 (\$9-00) per half page, their fee for this promotion being 10% of gross advertising revenue. This quote was not acted on by the Association.

### **The *Farm Forestry Journal***

On 26 April 1958, Editorial Services submitted some suggested costs for a quarterly journal, also octavo, of 32 pages for from 5/- to 7/6 (50c to 75c) per member, offering to do a dummy of the style if the Association was interested. This was done a week later, with the suggestion that 24 pages be devoted to text and the remainder to advertising. Following positive comment from Murray Wilson, further more-detailed dummies were put together for the Association to consider in June.

Discussions followed between Murray Wilson and Lindsay Rollo regarding detail of the journal, with Lindsay making suggestions on 13 August covering advertisements, with cheaper rates for members, and guaranteeing that advertising content would be restricted to forestry or farming topics. The first issue was to be published in November

1958. Quality of photographs and pictorial cover were outlined, as were details of technical accuracy.

There was to be no restriction on the source of material to be published, but preference would be given to text supplied by members.

A request was made for the Association to appoint an Associate Editor to act on all matters relating to the journal at the request of the publishers.

Later in August, Editorial Services sent an agreement to Murray to confirm the production of a quarterly journal. As the Association was not incorporated at the time, it was left to Murray Wilson and Neil Barr to sign for the Association as trustees.

The agreement called firstly for a term of 18 months, secondly that the publishers should edit, layout, produce, mail, and distribute a journal to be titled "———", and subtitled *Official Journal of the Combined Farm Forestry Association of New Zealand*.

The number of pages of text was not to exceed twice the number of advertisement pages, and the total number of pages per annum was to be not less than 96, with the journal not to be published less than four times per annum.

The Association was to have the right to approve all material published in the journal, while the publishers had sole rights to contract for advertisements.

The publishers were to supply a copy of each issue to members of the Association, and any other addresses as directed by the Association.

Payment was to be 1/3 (12c) for every copy distributed at the Association's direction, and the publishers would retain all advertising, subscription, and reprint revenue, and would pay all printing, posting, and other costs incidental to the production and distribution of the journal.

Everything was in place and in November 1958, Vol.1 No.1 of *Farm Forestry* was published. The first invoice, No.1098, from Editorial Services Ltd to CFFA on 2 December shows:

To

800 copies Vol.1 No.1 "Farm Forestry" @ 1/3 ea £50-0-0 (\$100)  
 695 copies posted to members  
 35 supplied to R.W.Smith  
 70 held in stock for CFFANZ

The first journal contained inaugural messages from Neil Barr as President, the Hon E.T.Tirikatene Minister of Forests, the Hon C.F.Skinner Minister of Agriculture, and A.R.Entrican Director of Forestry. An article by A.R.Entrican and M.B.Grainger of the NZ Forest Service looked at "Farm Forestry and the Forward Timber Position", with another by C.G.W.Mason, Technical Officer of the Forest Service, considering "Timber Preservation and Farm Forestry".

There were Branch notes from Taranaki announcing the third annual Conference to be held in New Plymouth on 1–3 April 1959, and also from South Canterbury, South Auckland, North Canterbury, and Lower Northland. Advertisements were for the Tirfor Super Model T 13 (a pulling and lifting device for logs, etc.), Editorial Services Ltd, and the NZ Forest Service.

Lindsay Rollo left Editorial Services late in 1959, being replaced by John Wilson and his associate, Margaret Brown. A long relationship between the CFFA (which became the New Zealand Farm Forestry Association (NZFFA) from April 1959) and John Wilson followed. This relationship lasted 21 years until May 1979.

For many years the annual Executive Meeting of the Association was held at the Editorial Services office in Wellington, where John or Margaret sat in on matters relating to the journal. Members looked forward to receiving their quarterly journal, with the standard of editing and text of high calibre.

Jack Stronge, with his reporting background, liaised with John Wilson on journal content, and was co-opted to the National Executive from 1963 on a journal sub-committee.

### **Collecting Journal Subscriptions**

Norm Gill, a clerk at the Palmerston North office of the Forest Service, was seconded to the Association in 1959 to act as Treasurer. Apart from meetings and Conferences,

Norm did this work in his own time, for which the Association paid him 20 guineas (\$42-00) in 1963 and 100 guineas (\$210-00) per year from 1964.

There was a debate at the 1960 Secretaries' meeting as to whether the National Treasurer should receive all subscriptions and deduct the national fee and cost of journal, remitting the balance to the Branch, or allow Branches to collect subscriptions, deduct the local fee, and submit the balance to Norm Gill to pay national and journal fees. The latter course was followed because each Branch set its own subscription, and this system was followed right through to 1997, when a new form of subscription based on a member's tree area, was introduced.

In this way, Norm Gill kept all membership records updated, and supplied addresses to Editorial Services (and later, the publishers of *Tree Grower*) until his retirement in 1983, when he was appointed a Life Member of the Association.

During the 1960s a considerable amount of work went into a project to produce a Handbook on farm forestry, with John Wilson as Editor-in-Chief, and Association editors, Jack Stronge, Neil Barr, Dick Beauchamp, Gerald Hocking, and Russell Smith.

At one stage, editors were to have material to John Wilson by June 1966, with publication by the end of that year. One report states that half the material was to hand by late 1966, but the project appeared to get bogged down.

In 1967, Ivan Frost was to help John Wilson collate material, then Jim Pottinger was to help in 1972, but no further references can be found so the project must have been abandoned about this time. The early impetus for this project came largely from Gerald Hocking who died in 1971, and Jack Stronge who died in 1975. Jim Pottinger recalls that it was found difficult to cover all topics for all members, with the geographic spread, and different interests.

## **Problems with Late Publication**

From about 1967 and through the 1970s there were a number of problems with late publication of the journal.

Niall Alexander, in his first editorial as President in May 1967, spoke of the shortage of material being supplied to John Wilson resulting in delays, with the editor often having to fall back on technical articles from outside farm forestry to fill an issue. He exhorted members to send in short practical articles of general interest to make the journal more readable.

Continued late publication caused a sub-committee to be set up in 1974 to look at all aspects of journal production. Bruce Treeby, who had become well known to farm foresters because of his work at the Technical Correspondence Institute in producing a correspondence course on farm forestry, was appointed Associate Editor and ex officio member of the Executive in December 1974. At this meeting a long discussion was held with John Wilson who said that the cost was now 38c a copy, with the Association paying only 17c. He floated the idea of the Association publishing the journal with Editorial Services producing it, and splitting advertising revenue.

The sub-committee reported in 1975 with a firm journal policy, a timetable for articles, and a threat that if these arrangements were not implemented, then alternative publication and printing be sought. There were no problems for a while, with Bruce Treeby reporting plenty of suitable material, but at the 1976 Queenstown Conference a discussion on amalgamating the journal with *Forest and Bird*, *Soil and Water*, and the Forest Service to produce a larger magazine was not well received.

Following more problems with lack of topical material, rapidly increasing costs, and lateness, another journal sub-committee was formed in 1977.

### **How *Tree Grower* Began**

1979 President Joll Hosking and Bruce Treeby met Shane Niblock, of Modern Productions, Auckland, to discuss an alternative to *Farm Forestry*.

Following a talk to the Executive at the 1979 South Auckland Conference by Shane Niblock, plans were made to draw up an agreement for the production of a new magazine.

Correspondence with John Wilson became rather one-sided, with John not answering letters, but as there was doubt as to ownership of the name "Farm Forestry", the Association offered to buy this name from Editorial Services.

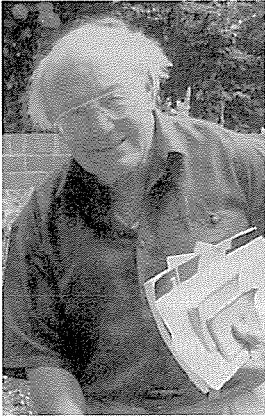
On 15 August 1979, after hearing nothing from John, the Association advised him that we were no longer interested in purchasing the "Farm Forestry" name, but were going ahead with the production of a new magazine, the *New Zealand Tree Grower*. An agreement drawn up between Modern Productions and the Association was duly signed to bring the *Tree Grower* into being. The name *Tree Grower* was chosen partly because of similar interests to those of the NZ Tree Crops Association. NZFFA met with NZTCA at this time with a view to possible merging of magazines, but the Tree Crops Association people decided against such a merger. Later, when *Tree Grower* had proved successful, NZTCA approached NZFFA with a similar suggestion, but this time the Farm Forestry Association declined.

This change was not without regret. Some considered that it would be difficult to match the editorial skills and high standards set. Jim Pottinger referred to the long association between John Wilson and farm foresters, and wished the thanks of the Association to be sent to Editorial Services for their long and valued partnership.

The last *Farm Forestry*, Vol.21 No.2, was published in May 1979 and unfortunately contained no note of the goodwill that had existed for so long, indeed no mention that it was the last issue. The Executive had asked John to contribute something as editorial opinion for this last issue, but this was not included.

Vol.1 No.1 of *Tree Grower* came out in February 1980, with the first full-colour cover, sponsored by Dalgety's, showing Neil Barr with his pruning saw and favourite knapsack sprayer. When negotiating the new magazine with Modern Productions, Bruce Treeby and Joll Hosking exceeded their authority by agreeing to an A4, larger page production. The Executive had wanted to retain the A5 *Farm Forestry* size, but A4 was now standard for national magazines, with advertisements being interchangeable.

*Tree Grower* used the larger A4 page and, in editorial comment, Tony Edmonds of Modern Productions referred to their 10-year publication of *Forest Industries Review*, and their awareness of the increasingly important role farm forestry was playing in the New Zealand economy. There were more, shorter articles on a wide range of topics, and more advertising. The agreement called for a 60:40 split between text and advertising which still applies in 1998, although in practice text has been the winner in this arrangement. Advertising has never become a dominant feature of *Tree Grower* with few full-page advertisements other than inside covers and back cover.



Rex Monigatti, publisher of *Tree Grower* from 1981 to 1998.

With Bruce as Associate Editor handling articles from members and increasingly involved in providing photographs, the new format was quickly appreciated by members. Unfortunately, after only five issues, Modern Productions decided to sell their business, and so the arrangements with them came to an end. However, Bruce was able to negotiate an agreement with Rex Monigatti in Wellington to pick up the task of publishing *Tree Grower* with only a month's delay. Executive were impressed with *The Orchardist* produced by Rex Monigatti, and signed an agreement drawn up by Mike Malloy for Rex to produce a 24-page A4 journal for 60c per copy plus postage of 12<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>c.

### **Bruce Treeby as Associate Editor**

There were considerable advantages for Bruce in working in the same city as the publisher, with easy frequent contact, and the arrangement has gone from strength to strength for over 16 years now.

In fact Bruce Treeby had found it very difficult dealing with Modern Productions from a distance, and could not oversee a real farm forestry flavour. He was on the point of resigning when the change to Rex Monigatti was made, and so a very fortuitous change it became. Bruce described Rex as "a real gentleman who loves putting *Tree Grower* together and is always looking for ways of keeping the price down." He also published *New Zealand Forestry*, the official journal of the NZ Institute of Forestry, in a similar format.



Bruce maintains that the philosophy has been all along that the journal should be “end-user oriented”, not just a medium for the publication of scientific papers. It should educate, inform, and amuse/entertain.

Bruce has been Associate Editor and an important member of the Executive for 24 years now, and his contribution through many articles published over the years has been a major factor in the Association’s wide appeal. His skill as a photographer, and the collection of photographs built up from early black and white to modern high quality colour pictures, has added a large dimension to the quarterly magazine.

His different, more academic background from others on Executive has provided a fresh approach to many topics under consideration, while mixing with such a group and travelling extensively to farm foresters’ homes have also enriched his life.

In recent years, Bruce has developed an interest in forest health, and his reminders to foresters, quarantine officers at ports, and to politicians, have kept the need for effective policing of our borders against the importation of unwanted pests and diseases at a high level.

It is valuable to the Association to have him as a member of the Forest Biosecurity Advisory Committee. Research has become of increasing interest to members, particularly with the “user pays” philosophy now in vogue. With an increasingly large proportion of the Association’s budget going to help with research projects, the *Tree Grower* becomes the most valuable method of information transfer.

Without the Forestry Extension Service that members relied on for help for many years, the magazine together with Branch and National field days performs the extension service, bringing a wide range of ideas, advice, and results of research to all members, many of whom do not attend national Conferences or even local field days. Text printed in *Tree Grower* together with feedback from members is the main method of keeping in touch between Executive and membership. It has always been difficult for Presidents and Executive members to represent the total membership because

of infrequent contact, and so in discussion with Government, other forestry interests, or researchers comment received in *Tree Grower* is of considerable benefit. Presidents have usually used the editorial for each issue as a means of raising member awareness of national events or concerns.

### **Improvements in *Tree Grower***

Since *Tree Grower* first came out in 1980, technology in the printing world has come a long way, and so many improvements have occurred. The person providing photographs has been acknowledged since 1982, while the number of pages per issue has increased from 24 to some issues of 28 in 1985, 36 pages in 1993, and 40 pages continually since May 1994, with one issue in November 1994 containing 44 pages.

Some colour in printed headings was tried in 1987, and has become common since 1992.

The first full-colour photographic cover (apart from Vol.1 No.1) was produced in August 1987, while from November 1991 colour was increasingly used for text photographs.

From February 1997, the cover has been a full double-page wrap-around photograph of high quality, on much better quality paper than early issues.

Many issues in recent years have included a four-page extra colour paper centrepiece, giving information on Branch Secretaries, with an application form for new members. A list of library books available from the Executive Officer (started by Mike Smith when Executive Secretary) is displayed, and application details for the next Conference are published in each November copy.

The cost of the *New Zealand Tree Grower* to members is \$3.66 per copy posted (late 1996). Since the first issue of *Farm Forestry* in 1958, the cost of the magazine has been included in members' subscriptions. Members are well pleased with "their" magazine, and look forward to the next copy.

The efforts of Lindsay Rollo, John Wilson, Jack Stronge, and Bruce Treeby in producing *Farm Forestry*, and of Shane

Niblock but mostly Rex Monigatti and Bruce in producing *Tree Grower*, are much appreciated by the National Executive, and constitute a real success story for the Association.

Unfortunately, Rex Monigatti died early in 1998, but his daughter Debbie Monigatti who was already working in the communications business entered into an interim arrangement with the Association to continue publishing *Tree Grower*. Bruce Treeby took the opportunity to introduce a new format which was reflected in the August, November 1998, and February 1999 issues.

Although the cost of *Tree Grower* had stayed static over the 1990s, and had become a relatively smaller portion of the membership subscription, the significantly increased cost of running a head office operation in Wellington was putting financial pressure on the resources of the organisation, and there were concerns about drawing down any further reserves. Some members of Executive saw commercialising of the *Tree Grower* as a way of freeing up funds for use elsewhere.

At a mid-year meeting in 1998, publishing and advertising people spoke to Executive, advising that with 35%–40% advertising content a free magazine was possible. There was also a recommendation that we should have six issues per year.

Some members of Executive felt we should just go ahead and make the changes, but others felt that any major change to *Tree Grower*, an essential part of the reason that people are members of NZFFA, called for membership consultation.

Bruce Treeby cautioned that an advertising-driven publication could result in a significant change in the “feel” of the publication, and care was needed that content driven by advertising did not become a large component.

Executive drew up a questionnaire that was sent to all branches, with three options.

- (1) status quo with some advertising;
- (2) four issues a year and free publication funded by advertising;
- (3) six issues a year funded by advertising.

The matter was discussed by branch committees (not the whole membership), and option three, six issues funded by advertising, easily carried the day. The November 1998 Executive meeting agreed to go ahead on this basis.

It is probable that many branches were swayed by the financial contribution from advertising, and did not have the knowledge of editorial input, costings of the alternatives, or the personalities involved, to make such an important decision. Many members felt that only a discussion at AGM could cover all the matters under consideration.

Although Bruce Treeby had gone along with the majority vote, after a few days' thought on the work involved in producing six issues, as well as doubts on publication philosophy and finding advertising, he decided to resign as Associate Editor of *Tree Grower*. In discussions with President John Prebble, he agreed to do the February 1999 issue to give time for the change. This came out on time as Vol.19 No.5 (instead of 20/1).

This ended a 25-year relationship between the Association and Bruce. At the 1999 Taranaki conference Biddy Barrett, who had contributed a series of amenity tree articles at Bruce's request, spoke of Bruce's contribution to the Association and wished it put on record. Her comments were carried by acclamation.

Bruce Treeby had been made a Life Member of the Association in 1990.

The first of the new *Tree Grower*, Vol.20 No.2 May 1999, was published by Julian Bateson of Bateson Publishing Ltd in Wellington, with Editorial Co-ordinator Dee Guja also of Wellington, and Advertising Management by Adjust Media Ltd.

Whether the magazine goes to six issues per year will be dependent on costs and the advertising available. Members will be watching with interest.

### **Complete Sets of Journals**

In 1988 Mike Smith recognised that our past records were far from complete. Whilst he had a complete set of Journals, he was at that time unable to establish who else had

a complete set. So the idea was born that he would collect up any old Journals in an endeavour to make a full set and along the way “trade” spare copies with similar-minded people.

Eight years later, and after considerable trading, Mike had two complete sets. These he had bound at his own expense and has presented one set to the Alexander Turnbull Library and the other to the New Zealand Farm Forestry Association. It is held in the Association Library.

Mike is still trading and is only five copies short of a third set. Please contact him should you have any spares or require spares.

Jim Pottinger and Joll Hosking also have complete sets of both *Farm Forestry* and *Tree Grower*.