

**McIntosh Ellis**

Sir,  
Mrs Barbara Ellis Colby, the youngest daughter of Leon McIntosh Ellis, visited New Zealand with her husband in February and March of 1996. She had already written to the Ministry of Forestry expressing a desire to meet people who knew, or knew of, her father, about whom she was anxious to gather information.

Lindsay Poole, Andy Kirkland and I met her in John Valentine's office and had a long conversation. Lindsay, as far as I know, is about the only forester in New Zealand who had met and knew Cappy Ellis; Andy and I could only give references to literature which are numerous. We could, though, express our appreciation in 1996 of the exceptionally good work that Ellis did in New Zealand in the 1920s. We reassured Mrs Colby that Ellis was far from forgotten and indeed left the impression with her that as time went on his reputation was becoming even further enhanced.

On the same day the Colbys had a session with Michael Roche who had done so much work on the Ellis era and who came down from Palmerston North especially for the occasion. The meeting was reported to be mutually valuable.

The Colbys subsequently travelled on to Nelson, Greymouth and Christchurch

where they met the other New Zealand Cappy Ellis expert, Peter McKelvey. Peter reports that he enjoyed Mrs Colby's company very much and apparently the feeling was again mutual. Peter arranged a great deal of photostat material for what is hoped will be a small publication by Mrs Colby.

**Priestley Thomson**

**State forest asset sales**

Sir,  
After reading Mr Priestley Thomson's article in the last NZ Forestry (May 1996) I feel bound to comment on his downplaying of forest industry initiatives which have developed since the sale of State forest in 1990-92.

The new initiatives may seem minor in relation to the Bay of Plenty region, but they are certainly not minor for the people living in places such as Gisborne, Dunedin, Masterton, Kaitaia etc, and of course the size of the industries is naturally enough related to the size of the plantations in each region. The sale of the CNI forests is likely to see new ventures in that region too.

The new mills and expansion of forest planting and silviculture initiated by companies like Juken Nissho, Wenita FP, Ernslaw One and Rayonier NZ have brought a breath of fresh air and new momentum to the forest industries of Northland, East Coast, southern North

Island, Otago and Southland.

Examples of new ventures include new mills at Gisborne and Masterton (JNL), revamping of a triboard mill in Kaitaia (formerly in receivership) (JNL), pruning to 9 m (JNL), upgrading of the old State sawmill at Conical Hill (Ernslaw), large-scale new planting of Douglas-fir (Ernslaw), large-scale new planting of radiata pine in southern NI (Ernslaw, JNL), a new MDF plant at Matura (Rayonier), an attempt to set up a large-scale integrated processing plant at Mosgiel (Wenita), opening up of East Coast forests for production at Mangatu and Ruatoria (Rayonier), and large-scale planting in East Coast, e.g. Ihungia station (Ernslaw). The list goes on.

The owners of the ex-State forests have demonstrated that they are here for the long term and they are prepared to invest further in expansion of the resource and in upgrading existing mills and/or setting up new wood-using industries.

There is no reason why the BOP sale should not result in similar new ventures and on a scale relative to the size of the resource, i.e. "large".

I believe the privatisation of the State forests so far has been successful. I expect the sale of FCNZ will also be successful in reducing foreign debt and attracting new investment to New Zealand's expanding forest industry.

**Alan Bell**

**'Coup' or 'Coupe' – terminology in forestry**

Sir,

In response to a continuing confusion in the use and pronunciation of a term that has become fashionable, we resorted to a little etymological research. The term **coup** (pronounced "coo" like the soft sound of amorous pigeons) is not used in forestry texts. **Coup** generally refers to things more sudden or violent than is desirable in forestry and should not be confused with **coupe**.

The term **coupe** (pronounced "coop", as in the cage for fattening fowls) derives from the French verb "couper", meaning to cut, and is widely used in English-language forestry. The French appear to have been using this term in forest ordinances for over 600 years (*Ordonnance de Melun 1376*). The more recent French standard text on beech (E. Tessier du Cros, 1981, *Le Hêtre*) describes **coupes** in a chapter by Lanier. The international five-language *Dictionary of Forestry* (Elsevier, 1966)



Mrs Barbara Colby and Mr Colby, on right, are pictured with three of the Directors-General of Forests, from left Lindsay Poole, Priestley Thomson and Andy Kirkland. Below them are photographs of New Zealand's Directors of Forestry and Directors-General of Forests.

lists over 100 French entries under **coupe** for a range of silvicultural cuts, with many of these including the word **coupe** in the English equivalent. The *British Commonwealth Forest Terminology* of 1953 defines the term **coupe** as a felling area.

In examples of forestry literature on silviculture (e.g. Troup, 1955, *Silvicultural Systems*), forest management (e.g. Brasnett, 1953, *Planned Management of Forests*), forestry handbooks (e.g. James, 1955, *The Forester's Companion*) and

published papers (e.g. Brit. Comm. Forestry Conf., Canada, 1952, *Organization of sustained yield in previously unmanaged forest*) the word **coupe** is used frequently as an English language technical term.

Among librarians it appears common knowledge that the Oxford Dictionary can be unreliable when used for technical definitions, whereas Webster's Dictionary generally provides more accurate descriptions of technical words. In Webster's

under **coupe** we find definition 4: "cutover", which is elsewhere described as land on which timber has been removed. The Forests Amendment Act 1993 uses **coupe** and describes "beech **coupe** size". It uses the word correctly as a technical term. If it is good enough for bureaucracy, it should be good enough for the profession.

**Udo Benecke, Christchurch  
John Morris, Panton Hill, Victoria**



## CONFERENCE PAPERS



# Alternative approaches to Forestry, and Education for alternative approaches to Forestry

Roger Sands\*

### Abstract

*'Conventional' forestry in New Zealand in 1996 is intensive management and utilisation of radiata pine plantations while excluding logging from most of the indigenous forest. This is decidedly 'alternative' compared to 'conventional' global practice which is harvesting timber from native forests, with little understanding of plantations. International opinion, indicators of sustainability and certification processes are directed towards sustainable management of native forests. Even though 'conventional' forestry in New Zealand is arguably the best model of environmental responsibility, it could become misunderstood in a global market that may move towards penalising wood from clear-cutting of exotic monocultures. The demise of the possum-skin industry in New Zealand bears striking similarities.*

*Radiata pine grows fast, has wide site tolerance and is silviculturally forgiving. The reasons for having 90% of the estate in this species are compelling. Nevertheless, there are good reasons to increase the amount of alternative species in the estate. Radiata grows and processes well, but it is not a good-quality timber and requires considerable re-engineering*

*and modification to meet many end uses. Also, despite attempts to downplay the argument, there is a risk of biotic or abiotic catastrophe in having nearly all the estate in radiata pine.*

*A university education in forestry should not focus narrowly on conventional forestry but should be all about alternative approaches to forestry. Such an education should encourage a student to think, to be creative and to develop planning skills. It should be presented in an historical perspective and in a global context. It should encourage an open and questioning mind. 'Excellence in education' is preferable to 'standards in training', and attempts to confine a university education in forestry to training technicians to meet industry prescriptions of the day should be resisted.*

**Paper presented to the conference of the New Zealand Institute of Forestry at Invercargill from April 29 to May 1, 1996**

### Introduction

The theme, *alternative approaches to forestry*, suggests that there must be a mainstream feeling for what is 'conventional' forestry in New Zealand and that this is the benchmark against which alternative approaches should be evaluated. The situation, though, is considerably complicated by the fact that 'conventional' forestry in New Zealand in 1996 is decidedly 'alternative' globally, and that

some of the 'alternative' forestry options for New Zealand in 1996 are closer approximations to global norms. New Zealand needs to understand the range of global practices and philosophies of forest management if it is to remain to be an effective exporter.

In contrasting alternative approaches to forestry in New Zealand I shall define 'conventional' forestry in New Zealand as the growing and processing of plantations of radiata pine, often high pruned and widely spaced, and managed primarily to derive export income mainly as commodities but increasingly as value-added products. The corollary to this is that the majority of indigenous forests are 'protected' and unavailable for timber production. Plantation establishment on farms and by small investment syndicates can hardly be considered to be an alternative approach. Recently, small growers have collectively planted more area than the major corporates combined and as such farm forestry is mainstream rather than alternative. Nevertheless, the implications of the rapid expansion of farm forestry need to be addressed, and particularly how forestry education should respond to this. There are a range of alternative approaches that are covered in this conference. Besides farm forestry, there is sustainable management of indigenous forests for values including timber production, the use of species other than radiata pine, and the use of alternatives to wood.

I shall leave these to the specialists, although I will discuss the use of alterna-

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