

FORESTRY NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 1980

FROM THE ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

An Auburn Forestry Alumni meeting was held on August 17, 1979 in conjunction with the Alabama SAF Chapter Meeting in Tuscaloosa. More than 40 persons were present for this meeting.

One of the things discussed at this meeting was the fact that the yellow poplar planted in memory of Dr. Christian had died and probably has been replanted by the time this is written.

Forestry student David Tysinger gave a report on the "Knothole" publication which is available from the Forestry Club.

Also each of us was reminded of the opportunity and the need to contribute to the Auburn Forestry Foundation. These donations, when they reach a significant level, will be used to help carry out some of the worthwhile projects being undertaken at Auburn.

Some of these projects were brought into sharper focus for me when I attended the Department of Forestry Advisory Committee Meeting held on November 13 and 14, 1979, in Auburn. The purpose of this meeting was to continue work on the Self-Study Report "Blueprint for Excellence". The point was made here that few, if any universities in the United States can match Auburn's basic justification for developing excellence in forestry education and research. Forests occupy two-thirds of the land area in Alabama and provide the raw material for the State's largest manufacturing industry. Seventy-five percent of Alabama's forest land is in the private, non-industrial ownership category and forest products employment ranks high among manufacturing employers. I am sure many of you are aware of the problem of making some of these non-industrial forest landowners aware of the need and the opportunity to manage these lands to their fullest potential.

Sub-committees were formed to develop the "Blueprint For Excellence" in Forest Biology, Forest Products, Forest Management-Economics, Forest Measurements, and Forest Engineering-Harvesting. All of these sub-committees reported on the importance of their area of study and made recommendations for possible improvements.

One example of beneficial development at Auburn is the introduction of the Forest Engineering Curriculum. Auburn is the second forestry school in the nation to offer a program that will qualify its graduates as both foresters and engineers.

This program should better support the important forest products industry in Alabama as well as the area as a whole. When the current energy situation is considered, this program should be beneficial in developing more fuel efficient machines for site preparation, planting, harvesting, etc.; and the use of parts of trees as fuel which have been discarded in the past.

I think the continuing advancement and up-grading of the Auburn Forestry Department is evident to all of you and hope you will support this program at every opportunity.

James Sherer, President '61

FROM THE DEPARTMENT

EMMETT THOMPSON

Happy New Year Alumni!

As you can see, you are receiving the Fall 1979 Newsletter in Winter 1980. There is no particular reason for this, other than procrastination on my part. The past few months have been quite interesting and eventful for the Department and I am pleased to be able to bring you up-to-date with respect to these activities.

Several new faculty have joined the Department since the last Newsletter. Ralph Meidahl came with the Department last May following completion of his Ph.D. in Forest Biometrics at Wisconsin. Gene Campbell joined us in June after completing the Ph.D. in Forest Economics at Iowa State. Both Ralph and Gene have a paragraph later in the Newsletter.

Bob Leichti joined our Wood Products group as a Research Associate in June, coming from U. S. Gypsum Company in Chicago. Also in the area of wood products, Tom Elder joined us as an Assistant Professor of wood chemistry on December 1, 1979, following completion of his Ph.D. at Texas A & M University.

We are still looking for faculty in two additional areas, forest economics and wood products. Qualified candidates in both these areas are extremely scarce. Any help or leads you could give in this regard will be appreciated.

The new undergraduate curriculum in forest engineering was officially launched Fall Quarter 1979, and we are extremely pleased to have 22 students enrolled. As I mentioned in the previous Newsletter, the forest engineering curriculum is designed to meet accreditation standards in both forestry and engineering. On the subject of enrollment, our overall student numbers are down approximately 20% from a year ago. We have 280 undergraduates, the 22 in forest engineering, seven in wood products, and 251 in forest management. Our graduate enrollment is up with 23 students enrolled. Overall, our goal is to hold the undergraduate enrollment where it is, or perhaps a little lower, with more shifts from forest management into wood products and forest engineering, and continue to increase the level of graduate enrollment. The undergraduate shifts are simply a matter of market realities. Employment opportunities for graduates are much better in forest products and forest engineering than they are in traditional forest management. I should hasten to point out that 80 some percent of our forest management graduates did find permanent, professional employment last year, which is much better than both regional and national averages. However, the large number of students graduating from this curriculum countrywide still has a depressing effect upon salary levels. There is some indication this trend is beginning to reverse. At the recent SAF National Meeting in Boston there was considerable concern among several schools that enrollments are decreasing to the point of possibly causing budget and faculty reductions. So far, this is not a threat to our programs (I hope!).

In November we held our annual meeting of the Departmental Advisory Committee. This Committee, composed of 40 some individuals representing all facets of Alabama Forestry, has been extremely helpful to the Department in setting goals and charting a course to achieve them. We have joined with the Advisory Committee in developing a self-study report which attempts to document our potential, current situation, and needs to achieve our potential. Essentially we feel our programs in forest management, forest products and forest engineering can be good or better than any in the country. To do this, however, will require tremendous effort not only from faculty, but also students, alumni, and the State's professional community and industry. When the document is finished, we will summarize it in a future Newsletter.

In December, we held a Short Course in Forest Taxation. Thirty-nine foresters attended and, based upon their comments, the Course was quite successful. Because of enrollment limitations, we had to return a number of applications. We will probably hold the Course again in the Spring. I think continuing education for professionals in an area where Auburn, and most forestry schools, has been negligent. Your comments and suggestions in this area will be appreciated.

I am tempted to say quite a bit about last year's Summer Camp and the first Camp at the Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center in 1980. However, I notice most faculty paragraphs go into quite a bit of detail about the experiences for last summer, in which we had over two hundred students in the combined summer camps. So, I will leave this discussion to them. I will say the Solon Dixon Forestry Education Center is complete and a Resident Manager was employed in September. The Manager, Rhett Johnson, has a Bachelors degree in Wildlife Management from North Carolina State and a Masters in Forestry from Clemson. Rhett is fast becoming familiar with the Andalusia, Brewton area and I am sure would be glad to give guided tours of the Center to anyone who can take the time to drop by. The Center will be dedicated some time in early April. Hopefully, a number of you, particularly those living in South Alabama, will be able to attend.

The latter part of this Newsletter contains comments from some of our recent graduates, and we have attached a form for each of you to provide information you would like to pass on to your classmates and other alumni. If you will fill out the form and return it some time in the next two or three months, your comments will be included in the next Newsletter.

Again, best wishes to each of you for the 1980's.

E. J. BIBLIS

I am currently involved with the following 3 research projects: (1) Evaluation of structural flakeboard and composite board panels for housing made from small dimension low grade hardwoods and southern pine. With this project we hope to be able to utilize southern red oak in combination with S. pine or sweetgum for sheathing panels in housing. (2) Evaluation of structural properties of southern yellow pine and southern hardwood plywood for sheathing panels in housing. We have evaluated plywood made entirely from sweetgum and plywood from pine faces and sweetgum cores. We will try to combine pine with oak and sweetgum and oak. (3) Evaluation of floor, wall and ceiling systems in housing for maximum energy conservation. Specific objectives of this project are as follows:

To evaluate the thermo-insulating performance of various existing systems of house cells defined by the floors, walls and ceilings. Experimental house cells will be one-room structures approximately 8' X 12' X 12' inside dimensions. Evaluation will include:

- a. Thermo-insulating performance of each cell structure in terms of required energy to maintain "acceptable" levels of "inside" temperature for both winter and summer.
- b. The cost and evaluate the thermo-insulating performance of new "cell" systems for floor, walls and ceilings in housing without sacrificing structural reliability of the house.

The anticipated contribution of this project can be summarized as follows:

The design of the experimental units and the collection of data of the required quantities of electricity for heating and for cooling, will allow us to make direct comparisons of the effect of the construction and insulation of each unit on the energy requirements for heating and cooling.

Completion of the proposed work will determine experimentally the most efficient thermo-insulating performance of the various existing and new cell systems in housing.

Dissemination of the experimental results of this work will help home builders and future new-home owners build houses that can be comfortable with the minimum amount of required energy.

Wh-Chung Lee has received his Ph.D. degree and is now employed by the Concrete Wood Products, at Terry, Mississippi. We are searching for a research associate, preferably with M.S. in wood technology to replace Lee.

GENE E. CAMPBELL

First, as one of the Department of Forestry's newest faculty members, I would like to say hello and that I am pleased to be at Auburn. Part of my first summer was spent on tour with a group of summer camp students and later with the faculty. I welcomed the opportunity to get acquainted with southern forestry and enjoyed meeting some of the people involved in the forest industry within Alabama and bordering States. I look forward to becoming more involved in southern forestry and in working with some of you.

This December I will help instruct a short course on forest taxation and will teach forest management and administration winter quarter. I anticipate both will be challenging and exciting assignments. I am currently involved with the Department of Chemistry on campus to determine the economic feasibility of a new chemical pretreatment process to convert plant residues, including wood, to other products such as alcohols and animal feed. My other research interests include improving multiple product utilization on Alabama's forest lands.

L. E. DEBRUNNER

Another summer camp is finished, the last of the travel types that has been the style since 1967. One hundred and five students took part and are

glad to say that it is over. It was a most interesting summer and I want to take this opportunity to thank alot of you alumni for your part in making it possible. Next year we will start a new tradition at the Solon Dixon Forestry Center. I can already appreciate the comforts that will be there. Air conditioned quarters, roofs that do not leak, soft beds, hot showers, and low mileage trips, to name a few. The Dixon Center is not Little River, but I am certain that it will, in a short time, have its own collection of stories, trials and tribulations. But just in case, it has been arranged to have the old saw blade that served as a bell for so many years at Little River transferred to the new facility at Andalusia. I am certain that it will be appreciated by all who pass that way.

STUART DUBA

I began the summer, in June, by attending the Southern Forest Tree Improvement Conference in Starkville, Mississippi. I also attended the 5-23 (tree breeding) regional project committee meeting while in Starkville. Throughout the summer I spent alot of time working on a publication dealing with white ash. During July and August, with the help of the AFC, I graded 56 candidate trees for inclusion in our catalog of select trees. I was also able to give a presentation of the genetics program to the students who attended the new-summer camp. In August, I attended the 5-128 (Christmas trees) regional project committee meeting held in Colloge Station, Texas. I was elected to serve as secretary for the next year. Before leaving Texas, I toured the drought tolerance work of the Texas Forest Service, and arranged to obtain some materials for testing in Alabama.

JAMES F. GOGGANS

The weather is turning cold! Summer must be gone, however, I cannot remember what happened to it. I do remember attending the Southern Forest Tree Improvement Conference at Starkville, Mississippi and meeting some of our alumni there. We are making an effort to select additional parents for our pine seed orchards and this summer we graded 50 new parents.

My memory is improving. Certainly, I can't forget the 45 acres of Virginia pine seed source tests that we are growing. Protecting them from tip moth and red-headed-saw fly during the growing season did require a bit of effort. However, we expect to find some good new sources of Virginia pine for Christmas trees in these seed source tests.

BOBBY L. LANFORD

Both the teaching and research programs in Forest Engineering and Harvesting are very active at this time. The new Forest Engineering curriculum commenced officially this fall even though some students began earlier with courses necessary in the new program. Currently, we have twenty-two students enrolled. Upon graduation Forest Engineering students will be recognized as professionals by the Society of American Foresters and the Engineering Council for Professional Development. Two students who transferred out of other engineering programs should graduate by the end of the 1980 and become Auburn's first Forest Engineers.

In research, two projects are starting to produce reports. Over the last two summers the Forest Service Engineering Group and I have been conducting time and production studies on rubber tired drive-to-tree feller bunchers. Most of this data has been analyzed and the first of a series of reports is close to completion. This work will continue in the future with additional findings and more studies on a small four wheel drive skidder made by Helder. That data has been analyzed and is being put in report form by Roy Hoffman, an Honors student in Forest Management, as his senior thesis.

New research developments include approval of a project to study methods and equipment for thinning and a new graduate student, Chuck Lawrence. Chuck's interest are in operations research with an emphasis on simulation as applied the harvesting operations.

H. S. LARSEN

The year of the new curriculum began with the 1979 summer camp. One major change was the transfer of dendrology which I teach, from the fall to the summer quarter and a broadening of coverage. Henceforth, students will be required to know not only the trees, but some of those "weeds" growing underneath them as well. This is a response to the growing emphasis on multiple-use management and the forester's need for a better understanding of the total forest community. The primary goal is not to teach recognition of a large number understory plants which would be impractical, but to develop the ability to use standard botanical keys for identification of any kind of plant when necessary.

The two other courses which have been my responsibility, Silvics I and Silvics II, have also been changed, in both name and content. Silvics I is now Tree Physiology. Its lab has been eliminated and the lecture reduced from 4 to 3 hours per week necessitating elimination of some topics and revision of some material retained. Silvics II is now Forest Ecology. Its lab has been reduced from 2 to 1 session per week, reducing the class time and report load for both instructor and students, and the lecture has been extended one hour per week. This will give more coverage of some additional applied ecology involved in silvicultural practice.

SAM LYLE

This past year has been a busy one for me and everyone in the department. At times, we seem to have students coming out of our ears. Summer camp, with two sets of students, may have beaten Tuskegee Forest to her knees. Some of the section lines looked like highways after about four crews of five students each had run the line with transit and staff compass.

I have a new grant from Drummond Coal Company to do some more surface mine reclamation research. It is interesting work, even though the new federal reclamation law sometimes confuses things for researchers and reclamationist. Don Jones is now working for Drummond as a statistics and computer expert. I see him often and he likes his work.

We are thinking about having a one or two day short course for people who are concerned with tree planting. If it comes about, it will be shortly

before tree planting season in the Fall of 1980. Do you think such a short course would be worthwhile? If you have any ideas or comments about such a school, let us know.

RICHARD MARTIN

This past summer I had the opportunity to teach Forest Engineering in the "Last Old Summer Camp". One hundred ten students, Good Grief! But, they were good students (better than I was if I recall) and worked hard, forcing me to at least work as hard as they did. I also felt the presence of someone I never knew looking over my shoulder and spurring me on. All in all it was fun and a great experience.

Beetle damage in several experiment stations has been extensive and resulted in several salvage sales. If the winter doesn't knock them back, loss threatens to be severe. I have managed to get out and work up treatment plans for the Piedmont and Upper Coastal Plain stations. Both station managers have shown an interest going beyond harvest. It's encouraging and there is an opportunity to demonstrate some basic techniques applicable to small landowners.

RALPH MELDAHL

After surviving my first summer in the South I am glad to be at Auburn. The mensuration portion of the last "old" summer camp kept me quite busy, to say the least. It was a learning experience for both the students and the professor. I am preparing to teach the mensuration course in the winter and spring quarter and will cover basic mensuration and growth and yield.

I have also spent considerable time discussing possible research areas with other biometricians in the South and am currently preparing a research proposal in the area of growth and yield with some emphasis on simulation modeling. There appears to be a need for information in this area and I hope to develop an active research program.

ROBERT TUFTS

I'm sure that by the time you get to my paragraph you will have heard plenty about this year's summer camp. Although I was hoping to forget it as soon as possible. I will say something about it also, since I was responsible for teaching over half of the courses in the new camp. My courses included three sections of surveying, cartography, and mensuration and one section of directed studies in engineering. I had classes eight hours per day five days a week for ten weeks except for one week when I was off in the morning. However, the next week I had three completely different classes going at the same time to make up for the slack. To make my summer complete my prelude to camp was two weeks in Tooele (where?), Utah to perform my yearly active duty for the Alabama National Guard.

Since summer, I have completed a study of equipment cost escalation which will come out as an American Pulpwood Association report sometime in the near future. I am, also, still working on my dissertation and hopefully by the next newsletter will be able to report my promotion to assistant professor.

In the spring the Forestry Club will publish the third volume of its yearbook, The Knothole. The members of the Knothole staff invite you to keep up with student activities within the Forestry department by subscribing to The Knothole. Please send the attached order form and \$5.00 per subscription to:

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NEWS FROM ALUMNI

Nancy Abernethy - Class of 1978

Presently working on master's degree in Forest Biometrics at University of Georgia. Expected graduation date is June 1980.

Mike Bailey - Class of 1978

Graduate student in Biometrics, University of Washington

Paul Dean - Class of 1978

Presently working as Holmes County Forester in Bonifay, Florida.

Nina M. Dowling - Class of 1979

In my position as forest engineer with Buckeye Cellulose, I am dealing primarily with the design of harvesting systems and the ongoing studies of company equipment.

William C. Jones - Class of 1978

Employed by Pope-Jones pulpwood Company as a procurement forester.

Roy C. Kendrick - Class of 1978

I will be District Conservationist for SCS serving Tallapoosa County.

Kay Lenoir - Class of 1979 and

Glen Brown - Class of 1978

Were married September 22. Kay works for Resource Management Service in Birmingham, Alabama and Glen works for Arthur Brown & Sons Pulpwood Dealers in Jasper, Alabama.

James Allen Morris, Jr. - Class of 1978

There are currently only six Vocational Forestry (high school) programs in the State. I think this is one very important area to be covered in educating the public on the forest industry. This is a way by which we can begin the education of young people into the world of forestry. The other programs have sent some students on into forestry, and I have several continuing their education in forestry directly because of this course. I would like to thank the Forestry Industry (several companies) in their help and cooperation with our program. Our programs are not just book-work since to learn forestry you have to be outside and much of the learning done is by a hands-on situation. The students gain skill and experience in such areas as:

- Timber Harvesting
- Prescribed Burning
- Operation and Maintenance of Chainsaws
- Tree Identification
- Mapping
- Tree Planting
- Nursery work
- etc.

This is not to say these students are professionals, we have but touched the surface on many of these areas but they do have a very good general ground-work of Forestry. We do still need help by speakers and field trips from the forest

industry and also jobs for these students in the non-professional ranks. These students are not competitive for the professional ranks and are not taking away any jobs of the college graduate.

Charlotte A. Sage - Class of 1978

Kisatchie National Forest, Louisiana

Evangeline Ranger District

Assistant-Timber Management

My daughter, Jamie, and I are doing fine and are looking forward for the day when we'll be back in Alabama.

Barry J. Turpin - Class of 1979

Nursery Supervisor for Champion International's Alabama Region.

