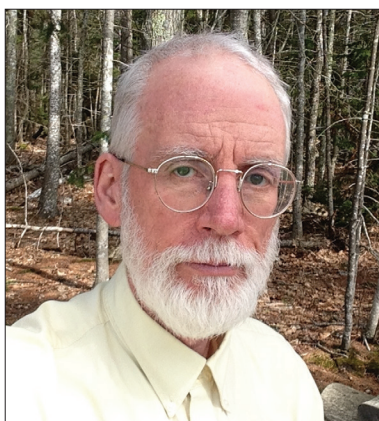




LES/WOOD

EDITORIAL / UVODNIK

Reflections by a member of the Editorial Board / Razmišljanje člana uredniškega odbora
Kevin T. Smith



I thank Co-Editors Ass. Prof. Dr. Jože Kropivšek and Prof. Dr. Katarina Čufar for the opportunity to serve as an Editorial Board member of *Les/Wood*, an international journal firmly grounded in the broad sweep of Slovene wood science and technology. The Editorial Board works to extend the relevance and impact of *Les/Wood* within and beyond Slovenia to the international community of wood science and technology in the broadest sense. We see the journal as a tool to support research and development of specific technologies, as well as to develop common terminology.

I would like to use this opportunity to sketch out how I came to be involved with wood science in Slovenia. In retrospect that involvement seems inevitable, but the path was not always clear at the time! After completing my postgraduate education in plant pathology and mycology in the USA in 1982, I accepted my current position as supervisory plant physiologist for the USDA Forest Service, a US federal land management agency with a strong commitment to research & development and to international forestry.

Throughout my career, my personal research has involved tree growth and wood decay in response to injury, infection, and environmental change. These tree responses affect forest health, the economic value of wood for art and industry, the tree-ring record of environmental conditions, and the performance of trees in urban and community environments.

My USDA FS mentor and colleague Dr. Walter Shortle met Prof. Dr. Niko Torelli and Prof. Dr. Katarina Čufar at the IAWA conference in Hamburg (1983) and at the IUFRO World Conference 1996 in Ljubljana, where the two of them were local organizers. Afterwards they obtained a joint Yugoslav American Project, "Possible alterations of wood in air polluted trees", which defined my earlier collaborations with Professor Torelli and Katarina Čufar on silver fir decline in Slovenia and Europe. Later, Katarina Čufar, Dr. Tom Levanič, and I identified changes in the climatic responses of silver fir in Slovenia and of red spruce in the northeastern US. I also worked with Dr. Primož Oven on special considerations for the health and safety of city trees. Later, Katarina Čufar and I both served on the Executive Council of the Tree Ring Society, an international association for dendrochronological research. We co-taught a tree biology section at the Dendro Fieldweek as part of the World Dendro conference 2010 in Finland. We found that our combination of research experience both intensified and broadened our understanding and presentation of wood structure and function. Since then, we have worked to provide Slovene students and scientists a platform to share techniques and experiences that both extend the science and community of scientists in the international research community.

As an active researcher, I see *Les/Wood* as noteworthy because of the potential breadth of articles reporting on topics from wood mechanical properties to technologies and industrial processing to underlying anatomy and the biological processes that result in wood formation and preservation. In addition to the high level of scholarship and technical expertise within *Les/Wood*, I find collegiality of spirit, openness of approach, and pride of history and context. These qualities lift up and support ongoing and future research for Slovenia, its geographic surroundings, and the broader world research community. I'm excited at the prospect of *Les/Wood* extending its traditional strengths to meet the critical need for wood science to optimize wood utilization, ecological understanding, and cultural patrimony.

Zahvaljujem se sourednikoma doc. dr. Jožetu Kropivšku in prof. dr. Katarini Čufar za priložnost, da sem postal član uredniškega odbora revije Les/Wood, ki je trdno zasidrana v širokem spektru znanosti o lesu v Sloveniji. Uredniški odbor si prizadeva razširiti pomen in vpliv revije Les/Wood na širšo geografsko regijo in širšo mednarodno skupnost. Revijo vidimo kot orodje za podporo raziskavam in razvoju znanosti in tehnologij ter strokovne terminologije.

Ob tej priložnosti bi rad orisal, kako sem prišel v stik z znanostjo o lesu v Sloveniji. Če se ozrem nazaj, se zdi, da je bila ta vključenost neizogibna, vendar pot na začetku ni bila tako jasna! Po končanem podiplomskem izobraževanju iz rastlinske patologije in mikologije v ZDA sem se leta 1982 zaposlil na sedanjem delovnem mestu nadzornega rastlinskega fiziologa pri USDA Forest Service, ameriški zvezni agenciji za upravljanje okolja, ki je močno zavezana raziskavam in razvoju ter mednarodnemu gozdarstvu v najširšem smislu.

V svoji karieri sem se posvečal raziskavam rasti dreves in razkroju lesa kot odzivu na poškodbe, okužbe in okoljske spremembe. Ti odzivi dreves vplivajo na zdravje gozdov, ekonomsko vrednost lesa za predelavo in rabo, informacije o okoljskih razmerah, zapisane v branikah ter obnašanje dreves v urbanem in skupnostnem okolju.

Moj mentor in kolega iz USDA FS dr. Walter Shortle je prof. dr. Nika Torellija in prof. dr. Katarino Čufar spoznal na konferenci IAWA v Hamburgu (1983) in na svetovni konferenci IUFRO 1996 v Ljubljani, kjer sta bila lokalna organizatorja. Po tem, ko so pridobili skupni jugoslovansko-ameriški projekt „Možne spremembe lesa pri drevesih iz območij z onesnaženim zrakom“, sem s profesorjem Torellijem in Katarino Čufar začel sodelovati pri raziskavah umiranja jelke v Sloveniji. Kasneje smo s Katarino Čufar, dr. Tomom Levaničem in sodelavci proučevali odzive jelke v Sloveniji in rdeče smreke na severovzhodu ZDA na podnebne spremembe. Z dr. Primožem Ovnom sem sodeloval tudi pri proučevanju različnih vidikov zdravja in varnosti mestnih dreves. Kasneje sva bila s Katarino Čufar člana izvršnega sveta mednarodnega združenja za dendrokronološke raziskave Tree Ring Society. Leta 2010 sva na dendrokronološkem terenskem tednu v okviru svetovne konference World Dendro na Finskem skupaj vodila sekcijo za biologijo lesa. Ugotovila sva, da je kombinacija najinih raziskovalnih izkušenj okrepila in razširila razumevanje in predstavitev strukture in funkcije lesa. Od takrat si prizadevamo, da bi slovenskim študentom in znanstvenikom zagotovili platformo za izmenjavo tehnik in izkušenj, ki širijo tako znanost kot tudi skupnost znanstvenikov v mednarodni raziskovalni prostor.

Kot aktivnemu raziskovalcu se mi zdi revija Les/Wood pomembna zaradi potencialne širine vprašanj, ki jih obravnavajo članki, od mehanskih lastnosti lesa do tehnologij, predelave in optimalne rabe lesa, ki temeljijo v anatomiji lesa in bioloških procesih, ki spremljajo nastajanje in razkroj lesa in so pomembni za zaščito in uporabno vrednost lesa. Poleg visoke znanstvene in stro-

kovne ravni revija Les/Wood odraža tudi visoko stopnjo kolegialnosti in odprtosti ter ponos na zgodovino in tradicijo. Te kvalitete revije krepijo in podpirajo trenutne in bodoče raziskave v Sloveniji, njeni okolici in širši svetovni raziskovalni skupnosti. Navdušen sem, ker kaže, da bo revija Les/Wood v prihodnje še razširila svoje tradicionalne prednosti in tako zadostila naraščajočim potrebam po znanju o lesu, kar bo vplivalo na optimalno rabo lesa, njegovo razumevanje z vidika ekologije in njegov pomen za kulturno dediščino.