

## **Stewart, Donald William Russell**

Born 15.7.1907. At Australian Forestry School 1927-28. Commenced with Forests Department 29.1.1929. District Forests Officer Manjimup in the mid 1930s-40s. Was based in Manjimup for 18 years. Transferred to Perth in 1953. Became Chief of Division during 1964/65. Conservator of Forests 1972. Retired 15.7.1972, replaced by Bruce Beggs. Died 15.6.1985.

For the first 50 years of forestry in Western Australia an early warning system for bush fires depended on a network of lookout towers. These towers were built about 40 km apart on prominent hills in the forest, and were staffed continuously in summer. But the karri forest posed a special problem. With few peaks, and giant trees towering 70-80m above the ground, the task of building a tower to overlook the forest was formidable. In 1937, young forester Don Stewart suggested using the trees themselves as lookout towers. The first tower was built on a large marri tree at Alco, SE of Nannup.