

ON THE Origins OF THE IAWF AND ITS Logo

by Dale D. Wade

AUTHOR'S NOTE: Marty Alexander [former IAWF board member] and I were reminiscing over our favorite beverage one evening at the 4th Fire Behavior and Fuels Conference (2013) when the subject of the IAWF logo came up. I told him the story and he suggested I share it.

One of my early fire research mentors, Dr Bill Beaufait (USFS Northern Forest Fire Lab, Missoula, MT), had a business card which I admired. He told me that he had found such card very useful, especially when he had been stationed in the South, and recommended that I develop one to hand out to new acquaintances. This was thus one of my first priorities when I arrived at the USFS Southern Forest Fire Lab in Macon, GA in 1965. My artistic wife drew one of a hand-held fire that I thought was a great idea. I no longer have any of the original batch of business cards, but the card I used while stationed in South Florida between 1974 and 1979 had the same logo (see Figure 1).

and by the late eighties had a plan in place and were looking for seed money to get such a journal started.

Meanwhile, at the 1985 joint Society of American Foresters (SAF) – American Meteorological Society (AMS) Fire and Forest Meteorology Conference, I had a meeting, in my capacity as an officer in the SAF Fire Working Group, with Dr. Andi Koonce, assistant professor of wildland fire at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, and Dr. Charlie Philpot, USFS Director of Fire Research in Washington, DC, regarding the need for a nation-wide organization and scholarly journal dedicated to wildland fire science and management.

Andi was ardently promoting this idea, using every tactic at her disposal to try to convince potential financial sources to come up with the necessary funds to launch her proposal. I think she had Philpot committed, but he left the agency soon thereafter, although I suspect he discussed his seed-money intentions with his successor, Dr. Bill Sommers.

During late summer of 1989, Andi, who was now a project leader at the USFS Forest Fire Lab in Riverside, CA, and Dr. Mike Fosberg, national coordinator for USFS fire meteorology

Now move ahead and cross-country to Santa Cruz, CA in 1983. Jason and Maria Greenlee formed a nonprofit 501c(3) organization called the Fire Research Institute (FRI) as a repository for wildland fire literature. Within a few years they recognized the need for a scientific journal devoted to the subject of wildland fire

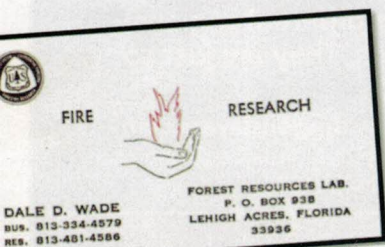


Figure 1. D.D.Wade business card circa 1974

The story of our logo offers an "origin" story of our professional organization.

research, met at the Greenlee residence in Santa Cruz and developed a plan of action to bring this fermenting idea to fruition. Mike returned to the Washington office and sold Bill Sommers on the idea. Soon thereafter, probably early spring 1990, Andi, Bill, and Dick Rothermel, the fire behavior research project leader at the Missoula Fire Lab, met at the Greenlee residence in Roslyn, WA, where it was agreed that the Greenlees would do the groundwork to incorporate a new organization. It would be called the International Association of Wildland Fire and the IAWF would publish a fire journal to be called the *International Journal of Wildland Fire*. Bill returned to Washington, DC and secured the initial funding as promised.

The Greenlees shepherded all three of these endeavors into success stories. The *International Journal of Wildland Fire* has developed an enviable reputation and is now the "go to" wildland fire science journal with a worldwide readership. Likewise, the IAWF quickly exceeded expectations and now sponsors numerous conferences, many outside the USA, as well as webinars, etc. By the mid 1990s it was clear these two projects were thriving and self-supporting. Jason thus separated the RFI from the IAWF umbrella in 1998 so he could concentrate on expanding the library; it now has over 123,000 fire-related documents in its database that can be accessed online or ordered at <http://www.fireresearchinstitute.org/>.

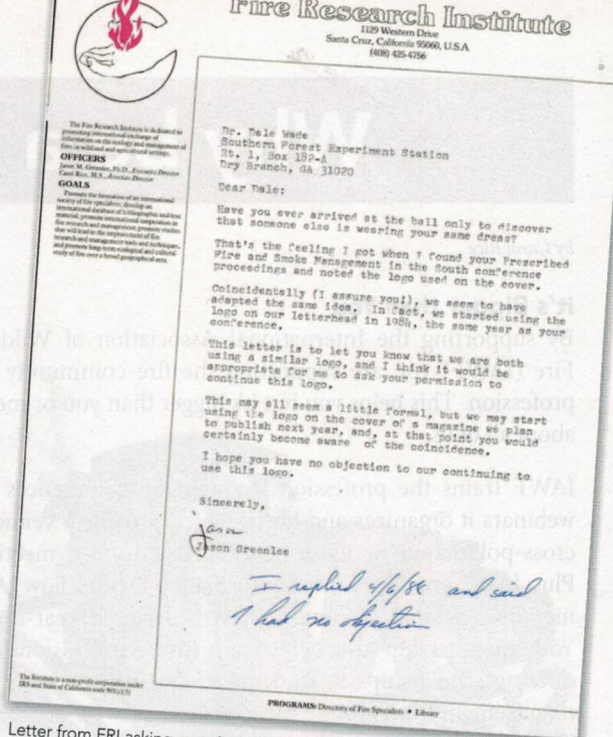
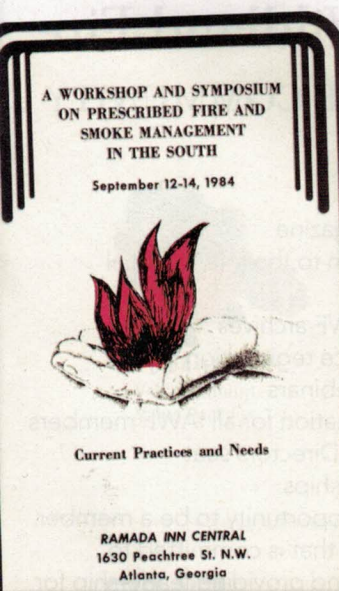
With this background, the origin of the IAWF logo now becomes easier to grasp. I was Chair of a Prescribed Fire and Smoke Management Symposium in 1984 (see Figure 2) and included my hand-held fire logo on the flyer cover.

When Jason Greenlee went to enter the Symposium proceedings into the FRI database, he noticed my logo on the cover, which was very similar to one he and Maria had just come up with.

After a brief investigation, he realized that my logo predated his by almost two decades so he asked for permission to use my logo (see Figure 3), which I gave with no strings attached. The use of the logo was transferred to IAWF when it was founded, and IAWF continues to use the logo on their stationary and other products. I am glad to see it get such wide usage as I continue to think, as I did in 1965, that it is an excellent visual descriptor of managed wildland fire.

About the author: Dale Wade (pyrowade@gmail.com) is owner of The Rx Fire Doctor LLC. He started his fire management career with the Del Rosa CA hotshots in 1957, earned 'veteran' status and a few degrees along the way, and then headed South to the USFS Forest Fire Laboratory in Georgia so he could study fire and burn year-round. He worked for the USFS with the Southern Research Station and served a one-year stint as a Fire Management Specialist with the Southern Region, retiring in 2003. He was red carded and a Certified Prescribed Burner in four southern states and has overseas fire experience as well. Wade is a Fellow in SAF, a charter member of IAWF, and has received numerous accolades, including the USFS Superior service award, USDA Group Honor Award, National Excellence in Prescribed Fire award, and was the first recipient of the Association for Fire Ecology Herbert Stoddard Lifetime Achievement award. He continues to lecture and write about prescribed fire and fire ecology.

Figure 2. Cover of the 1984 symposium flyer.



Letter from FRI asking permission to use the Wade hand-held logo.

About the author

DALE WADE (pyrowade@gmail.com) is owner of The Rx Fire Doctor LLC. He started his fire management career with the Del Rosa CA hotshots in 1957, earned 'veteran' status and a few degrees along the way, and then headed South to the USFS Forest Fire Laboratory in Georgia so he could study fire and burn year-round. He worked for the USFS with the Southern Research Station and served a one-year stint as a Fire Management Specialist with the Southern Region, retiring in 2003. He was red carded and a Certified Prescribed Burner in four southern states and has overseas fire experience as well. Wade is a Fellow in SAF, a charter member of IAWF, and has received numerous accolades, including the USFS Superior service award, USDA Group Honor Award, National Excellence in Prescribed Fire award, and was the first recipient of the Association for Fire Ecology Herbert Stoddard Lifetime Achievement award. He continues to lecture and write about prescribed fire and fire ecology.