

FCRA *News*

The newsletter about retired Forestry Commission employees

Issue 13 June 2001

HEANEY'S HUNDRED

Robin Heaney has just retired after serving 50 years with the FC. He started at Tairlaw in South Scotland in 1951, and after 2 years as a forest worker took up a vacancy as trainee trapper. After progressing through various posts and positions he finished as a Head Ranger, still with Tairlaw as part of his beat. He was awarded an MBE in 1995 for service to the FC and to applied wildlife research. He has a fascinating story about his father James.

James Heaney celebrated his 100th birthday on 27 January 2001. He still gets about, going for short walks most days if the weather is suitable and will be cutting his lawn as usual this year.

He started work with the Forestry Commission in 1948 when he and Bob Ritchie ceremoniously cut the first turf for planting in the new Tairlaw Forest in South Ayrshire, which later became Carrick Forest and is now part of Galloway Forest District. He and Bob were the first two forest workers to be employed by the FC at Tairlaw, though within 2 years there was a squad of over twenty. He and I worked together during my first 2 years in the FC.

He recalled a time when a senior FC officer visited a planting site. In those days that was an important event! The senior officer and forester in charge were scanning the hill for a sight of the planting squad. "There they are" exclaimed the SO. "Where?" "There - moving across the hill."

"Well, if they are moving they're no my squad" came the reply!

My father retired in 1966 after 18 years service and has enjoyed a fairly active retirement, part of which was climbing the Merrick (highest mountain in South Scotland at 2,766 ft) when he was 84.

I suppose there won't be many instances where a father and son are receiving an FC pension at the same time, especially when the father is 100 years old! Surely he must be the only centenarian in the FC. Can anybody beat that?

Readers will be interested to know that Rob Souter, FDM Galloway Forest District, is planning a "wee event" to mark the occasion. More in a future issue of Slasher.

AID FOR TREE AID

Some time ago TREE AID was mentioned in FCRA NEWS. Can I tell you more, because it is a very worthwhile charity for anybody who has worked in forestry. Many FC staff have carried out extreme exploits to raise money for TREE AID.

It was set up by foresters in 1987 who know how vital trees are to the environment and to the lives of people living in drought affected areas of sub Saharan Africa.

Trees provide important everyday needs for families in rural Africa such as wood for home building, fuel wood, medicines and year round food. These are essential for a healthy environment, ensuring that people can grow their own food and be independent.

By supporting Africa's poorest communities in their efforts to restore tree cover in degraded areas, TREE AID offers a chance of food and environmental security, and hope for the future. A single Neem tree has a 200 year lifetime value of \$25,000. Apply this to the multiple uses of the many trees planted and protected through TREE AID projects, and you will get a sense of the enormous long-term potential that trees have for the wider development of communities.

One of the most successful recent fundraising events was sculptree at Westonbirt Arboretum, which raised £17,200. But no less important was the gruelling 13 peak trek in Snowdonia carried out by Woodland Trust staff who raised £890. People think of all sorts of events to raise a little or a lot of cash. We raised £23 at our Christmas lunch. Do you have any ideas?

TREE AID is also building a network of supporters to help distribute leaflets - will you become involved?

Finally, Life after Death and TREE AID. In a recent appeal, John Fletcher said that TREE AID had received around £50,000 in legacies in the last 2 years. In Africa, where the elderly and passing into the "world of ancestral spirits" are particularly revered, this kind of gift is especially meaningful.

If you wish more information on bequests, the legacy pack or any other activity, contact:

TREE AID, Brunswick Court, Bristol BS2 8PE, Tel: 01179 096363,
e-mail: info@treeaid.freemove.co.uk

CYCLING IS GOOD FOR YOU

Like so many, I was a keen cyclist in my youth but for many years it just slipped away. In my 50s I started again by cycling to work in Glasgow. I recall it was quite a robust activity! Glasgow traffic took little account of cyclists! Its main objective was to maim as many as possible! Later, when I moved to HQ, I cycled each day to catch the bus into Corstorphine. I became more committed to cycling and joined the Edinburgh campaign group - Spokes - which is a keen supporter of Sustrans, the national cycle campaigning body. In Summer 2000 the 5,000 mile national Sustrans Cycle Network opened. Ten thousand miles are forecast by 2005. You may have seen the waymarking route signs. This achievement is immense in the face of huge obstacles of finance, land ownership and credibility with officials. The FC has always been a stalwart supporter of Sustrans and its ideals. Sustrans has produced an "Official Guide to the National Cycle Network", crammed full of details on cycling. But it has achieved more than just the network. Cycling now has a higher profile with officials, there are many "Safe Routes to Schools and Stations", multi-use paths are more common, all of which leads to a safer future.

We still have a very long way to go before cycling is widely accepted and acknowledged as playing a key role in transport. Two recent trips I had to Helsinki and Amsterdam showed this. Both cities were heavily trafficked, but pedestrians, cyclists, private vehicles and public transport were given equal priority. York is leading the way in Britain with such a policy. But more committed cyclists are needed to ensure officials accept that cycling has a role in urban transport. Get on your bike for your health, and the health of the environment!

Sustrans is always looking for volunteer rangers who are given a responsibility to check local sections of the national network. If you are interested in this or want any other information contact Sustrans at 35 King Street, Bristol BS1 4DZ, telephone 01179 290888 or www.sustrans.org.uk

If you are not into cycle campaigning why not try cycle holidays this year. They are offered by many travel companies in Europe and more distant countries. Overnight accommodation can be hotels or tents, meals are healthy and usually local foods are provided and there is a back-up luggage and maintenance service. Often bikes can be hired on site to eliminate awkward air transport problems. I have just been looking at the brochure of "Bike Tours". Amongst one week holidays on offer are Vienna to Prague, Prague to Budapest, Paris to Bordeaux and Bordeaux to Barcelona. Try them on 01225 310859 or www.biketours.co.uk. You can be even more adventurous and cycle the Karakorum Highway. (Why do I keep going on about this place? Easy - I'd like to go there!)

BILL GRANT AT GRIZEDALE

With the FCRA AGM being held in the Lake District this Autumn, it is interesting to consider how Bill Grant's life is intertwined with Grizedale forest.

I had asked him if he would write something for FCRA NEWS - but he had another idea. He kindly let me have 2 of his books from which I have written a short account of his life at Grizedale.

The Lake District has been popular with visitors since it was opened to tourism by the railways in Victorian times. As the demise of the railways occurred, so roads took over bringing even more visitors. Although the popular locations can be crowded and congested, there are always quiet and wild places to enjoy. The FC has had a major influence on shaping the landscape from Greystoke Forest on the foothills and Thornthwaite Forest on the steep northern fells, to Grizedale Forest on the southern rolling hills. All attract many visitors, but it is Grizedale which is unique in having sculpture, arts and theatre in the forest. This uniqueness is a tribute to Bill Grant and his undaunted activities over many years. He first knew Grizedale as a forestry student in 1937, but was not able to return until 1963 as Head Forester. This was the time when the FC very much closed the gate on the undesirable characters which it considered typified the "general public". But Bill and Jack Chard had different ideas. Why not welcome visitors!

Bill had a deeply rooted love of wildlife and wanted people to share his experiences of the wild woods. He and his staff built nature trails, forest walks, observation hides and encouraged outdoor pursuits. A deer museum, set up to teach forest staff about deer management, was expanded into a wildlife centre. Large numbers of visitors were now coming to Grizedale, more facilities were needed. In addition, researchers came with projects on wildlife management. The success of Bill's recreational and wildlife work resulted in the award of a Winston Churchill Fellowship in 1963. He travelled to the USA and Canada, and what he saw confirmed his view that visitor facilities must be of high quality. But his imagination was also fired by the cultural experiences he had. Why not follow daytime experiences in the forest with cultural experiences in the evening. The idea of Theatre in the Forest was born.

It was a long and bumpy road but with the support of North West Arts and the Arts Council the Grizedale Society was formed in 1969.

A number of other bodies provided grants and the building chosen was a coach house with hayloft. A voluntary committee organised its conversion to a 230 seat auditorium, with a bar and reception area. It opened to a packed house in May 1970.

It promoted classical music, jazz, drama, dance, natural history and films. By 1977 it was a well established venue, and at the suggestion of Northern Arts, the Society moved into the visual arts and initiated sculpture in the landscape. The

scheme was based on artists in residence. The artists were given freedom to choose the site and their work to suit the forest environment. Their projects were considered at the point of proposal in the forest. This was just like a large public studio with no planning restrictions. The early sculptors had a difficult time gaining acceptance by the local rural community, but that was soon to change. Visitors and locals alike found pleasure in seeing sculpture in magical spots in the forest. There was a great element of surprise. What shall we see? Where will it be? Will it surprise us? Shall we have to search for it? All these questions resulted in a quiet appreciation of the sculptors' works. Most of the works were situated on or near the 10 mile Silurian Way, which was a good hike at any time, more so in rigorous Lake District weather!

In 1980 the Grizedale Society won the Prudential Arts Award (the largest Arts Award in the UK). This prize of £100,000 enabled a new trail to be created in Ridding Wood, close to the Grizedale Centre. This was designed to allow visitors, who were not able to follow the long Silurian Trail, a chance to see sculptures in the forest.

So the trail could be enjoyed in comfort, adequate seating was incorporated in the design. The seats had different themes and included the Serpentine Seat, the Sessile Seat, the Sheltered Seat, the Lone Seat, the Dunkeld Seat and Royal Seat. Take the trail at your leisure and enjoy the special woodland feelings at each seat.

Many sculptors worked at Grizedale and some were brought to prominence as a result. Andy Goldsworthy, David Kemp, Richard Harris and Andy Frost were some of the more familiar names.

Because new works are being added, while older ones fall with an aesthetic decay, one never knows how many works there are, or where they can be found.

That makes an exploration of Grizedale all the more enjoyable. Some of the sculptures have become "classic", and are imprinted on memories of Grizedale. "Running Table", "Cliff Structure", "Quarry Structure", "The Guardians", "Deer Hunter", "Sidewinder", "Ancient Forester", "Taking a Wall for a Walk" and "Private Meeting". But there are so many works which all stimulate the senses, that it's almost unfair to list just a few.

All of this is a tribute to Bill's vision and determination. Although he received much support, there were many obstacles and frustrations. In his retirement Bill has remained dedicated to Grizedale. Although at present Theatre in the Forest is not functioning, let's hope that this is just a setback to be overcome by Bill and the Grizedale Society.

So much effort has been put into Theatre in the Forest, it seems inconceivable that it has met its demise. It now needs all the support we can raise, it's unique and it's part of Grizedale and part of Bill's life in forestry.

CIVILS SPOT

The last 2 issues of FCRA NEWS encouraged Jock Low to write, recalling civil engineering days in North Wales and West Scotland. He was involved in tram rail bridges and writes

"I bought very many tons of tram rails from Liverpool Corporation. I went to see them and arranged for only straight rails. They were very good about cutting rails to the lengths we needed. The rails were brought back to Chirk Depot and frame cleaned, sometimes anti-rust painted. On occasions we would find that some of the rails were pre-1914 and had KRUPPS-ESSEN cast into them. Certain senior Civil Engineers made the comment that the bridges made with the rails were far too much over-steered - without knowing what the rails had cost.

John Jackson of Benmore Forest I knew fairly well. He had a nursery inside the old walled garden. Yes, trees were grown there, but I also have had a rose or two for my garden from the same site.

The Fordson-Roadless tractor was well known, I had a number of them in North Wales. I had three fitted with steel/rubber bonded tracks. A jockey wheel was fitted between the rear and front wheels. They were a Scandinavian invention - Swedish I think. They were used for ploughing on suitable ground and extraction."

The CIVILS SPOT also revealed the latent engineering skills of "our man at the HQ Drawing

Office" - Keith Ball. He read of the FC's use of Bailey Bridges and recalled the much more practical issue; how to assemble them. Here is his story:

"I am reminded, long before I inflicted myself on the FC, of my involvement with Bailey Bridges.

As As National Serviceman 22590837 (can we ever forget our number), Sapper Ball, in the winter of 1951/52, at No 8 Training Regiment Royal Engineers, Pinefield Camp, Elgin I was "invited" to attend a Field Engineering Course to learn the intricacies of constructing and launching said Bailey Bridges.

Under the eloquent and colourful vocabulary of Staff Sergeant instructors and their NCOs, it was a "joy" to heave 6 man loads of side panels, 4 man loads of deck transoms, plus the side and cross braces, "easy" single man loads. At the beginning of each day these loads were not too onerous, but after 5 to 6 hours, and despite odd NAAFI van breaks, these components appeared to grow, both in size and weight.

Each successive assembled section of double side panels, braces and deck transoms was placed over a series of rollers to allow forward movement out over the gap to be bridged, two-thirds of the whole structure remaining on the landward side to ensure no over-balance.

The secret of bridge construction was by the interconnection of the "male and female" joints on each

of the section components; and you can be sure that the method of their coming together was the subject of most detailed, graphic and explicit description by the instructors. Once the bridge was completely decked with wooden planks, the squad was invited to test the structure with the command "break step or break the bridge". I never saw a broken bridge.

Having mastered "dry" construction techniques, we were additionally "invited" to make our way, in Field Marching Order, (full pack, helmet, rifle etc) over land (20 miles) to a Watermanship course at Findhorn Bay on the Moray coast. Here, heaving 24 man load pontoons waist deep into the refreshing February sea, joining them together in pairs and then building more Bailey Bridge sections across them, we had a floating bridge. Finally, with the aid of a Petters engine at each corner of the craft, we were required to navigate across the bay. We had dire warnings to avoid being swept, by the rip tide, through the channel, way out into the Moray Firth and, moreover, to avoid standing inside the coiled anchor rope when the anchor was due to be thrown out!

My Bailey Bridge association then, may be somewhat less nostalgic than other FC operators; however, Pinefield is now a retail industrial park, the Findhorn bay depot is a caravan camping site and my reminiscences have probably mellowed with the passage of time."

Life in retirement

Frankie (Frances) Edwards, who is Social Secretary of the Alice Holt Group of the FCRA, must enjoy retirement as she has become very poetical about it.

What's retirement all about? Lazing round and doing nowt?

Don't believe a word you hear 'cos tish'n't true you know m'dear.

No getting up at half past eight, or thinking nine may be a bit late.

No rushing around with Hoover and broom to tidy up the sitting room.

Or popping off to the local shops to buy a couple of nice pork chops.

Oh no! The housework has to wait until one hasn't got a date

With CSRF or FCRA for another jolly outings day.

Maybe to Windsor or perhaps the zoo - you can always bring a friend or two.

No time for chatting over the garden gate, I've to be at Alice Holt by half past eight.

We're off for a day bside the sea. We'll have a nice lunch and them some tea.

Next time perhaps we'll see a show, though I should be doing some washing you know,

But I'm afraid that'll have to wait 'cos next week we've got another date;

Five days in Sidmouth with our little gang - it's sure to be fun and go off with a bang.

But when I get home I come down to earth for of blouses and undies there is a great dearth.

No more hankies or knickers to wear - Oh! What a bore, it really ain't fair.

I pour in the water; the telephone rings and what I hear then makes my heart sing.

"We're off on a jaunt next Tuesday old chum, we've booked up the coach so hope you will come".

I hurriedly wash and Hoover and cook, and when I've done that I have a good look

To see what needs dusting or what I can leave - it all looks passable - or so I believe.

I've finished the washing and tumble-dried too, so I pop on the kettle and have a quick brew.

Then I get out the iron and press all my stuff. That's the end of the housework, and that's QUITE ENOUGH!!

David Fraser, who worked with JOHN STEVEN at HQ for about 2 years, saw his obituary in the 'Scotsman' in January. I have reproduced some parts of it. He was born in Old Aberdeen in 1923. During World War 1 he was shot down over France and with the aid of the French Resistance hid in Paris until the liberation. Returning to civilian life he joined the FC and became Staff Side Secretary of the FC Whitley Council. He retired from HQ as HEO. He lived in Penicuik and continued to remain a JP, but also took up golf, playing more speedily than skilfully at the Peebles club. He was a modest man whose sense of fairness and justice inspired colleagues.

Dick Jackson recalls ATHOLE WHAYMAN who died recently. He was a fun-loving extrovert with a heart of gold, a fact that my wife and I found for ourselves on moving from Edinburgh to a Commission house in Aberdeenshire on a bitter day of snow and ice in January 1959. The fires were lit, the house was warm and the water was hot - wonderful. It was to be long enough before we identified the good fairy.

At that time he was on PW work in the north-east and we shared a room in the Queens Gate office. It was quite an eye-opener. Some of his telephone conversations made my hair almost stand on end with their dire threats of facing the Inquisition or even a spell in Peterhead poured out on the head of some poor, often unknown, soul who had transgressed some Forestry Edict! It was all said with such good humour and without any trace of malice that it could only be taken in the sense in which it was given. In the course of my own duties I met more than one recipient of an Athole broadside and they all had great respect for him.

Before that he was the founding forester of Rannoch Forest where amongst other things he researched and wrote the history of the Black Wood. This was published in the old FC Journal and is well worth reading. While there he was an enumerator during the 1951 Census, a job that required him to visit all the houses in that sparsely populated part of the country. This was no mean feat and while the dam-keeper at Loch Erich at least had 3 miles of a rough road to his house, there were several railway families living 6 miles out on Rannoch Moor. There were only two ways to get there - walk along the line or hitch a lift on one of the occasional trains. I can guess which he chose!

He joined Work Study in 1965 and became part of

OBITUARIES

the newly established Experimental Team which was based at Kielder. Its work covered all terrain vehicles, and he was involved in the use of the Holder tractor and the development of the hydrostatic tractor. He tackled these projects energetically, and for his efforts was awarded an MBE. He had chosen to live across the border in Hawick, where he subsequently enjoyed a long retirement.

Nick Banister remembers ARTHUR CADMAN, a talented, if controversial character.

Born in Scarborough before the First World War, he grew up as a countryman well versed in field sports and in particular wildfowling. It was natural therefore that he should choose forestry as a career. His professional training commenced at Oxford and continued with his first appointment in the Forestry Commission at Thetford, this was followed by a posting to Wales. This proved, not surprisingly, to be a challenge that he enjoyed. It was a change of topography from the relatively level terrain of Thetford to the rugged mountain and moorland of Wales. Not only was the climate different but so was the silviculture; the choice of species; the management regimes and to his delight, the wildlife. It is not often that the Job Description of an FC Officer (not that they used that word in those days!) included the Management of Grouse Moors, a conservation factor that was very much to his liking.

In the late 1950s he was appointed Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest. He was very conscious of the fact that this ancient title and job dated back 400 years to Tudor times. But for all his interest in the history of the Forest, there were new problems to contend with. These included the emergence of a post-war phenomenon. Leisure. This coupled with a huge increase in car ownership and a wish to explore the great outdoors led to a massive invasion of both day visitors and campers. At that time, provided you had obtained a permit, you could camp anywhere in the Forest as long as it was not on top of a water supply or next to the Keeper's cottage.

During his Surveyorship there was a change in the policy of the Forestry Commission, this placed a greater emphasis on economic management as opposed to the creation of a strategic reserve of

WHO AND WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

In the last issue of FCRA NEWS I published a photo of Glentress FTS taken in the late '40s and asked for information.

I received a prompt reply from D'Arcy Black now retired to Dunkeld. He said he could identify the "POWs", and the year was 1947-49. They are from right to left - Joe Roe, Malcolm Scott, Johnny Dyce, Alistair Morrison and D'Arcy.

D'Arcy feels more could be made of this news item, so if anybody has contributions to "Who And Where Are They Now", please send them in.

Soon after, Tom Johnstone retired to Pickering, added more information. He confirmed from the right Joe Roe, one of the 6 Sassanachs of the year, who went into private forestry in the Borders, and Johnny Dyce, an Aberdonian who was proud of his head of hair. Enraged after a visit to a Peebles barber, he subsequently went to Edinburgh for haircuts! Alistair Morrison. Then there was George Rogers, whom Tom first met in the army in Edinburgh. He worked his way up the FC, but then started Stichill Forest Nursery near Kelso, with his brother Frank (a junior in 1947-49). Finally D'Arcy, the top student with a prodigious memory!

growing timber. Arthur Cadman did not take kindly to the concept and philosophy that stemmed from a management regime based on Net Discount Revenue. He maintained that the New Forest was a national heritage and that priority should be given to conserving its traditional character of fine timber, ancient woodlands and open lawns, together with a positive approach to the management of flora and fauna. All this may sound like common sense today but it was not well received in the corridors of power at the time. Despite his pioneering approach whereby the management plan embraced the whole forest and not just the production and felling plan, he found it necessary to retire in 1969.

On leaving the FC he went to Scotland where he ran a nursery and landscape firm whilst at the same time managing wildfowling and stalking in Ross-shire. It was during this period that he was appointed OBE for his services to conservation. Latterly he moved to Northumberland where he died on 2 December 2000. He is survived by his wife Phyllis and three sons.

His publications included: Tales of a Wildfowler (illus Sir Peter Scott) 1957; Dawn, Dusk and Deer (illus C F Tunnicliffe) 1966; A Dog Beside Me and Rough Shooting; as well as regular contributions to Country Life, The Field, Shooting Times, The Shooting Gazette and others.

Although ROBERT SANGSTER, who died in February, was not a member of the FC, he did have contacts with it. He graduated at Aberdeen in forestry and joined the Colonial Forestry Service. He later studied tropical forestry in Oxford and for a short period worked for the FC in Research. In 1975 he went to Uganda and in 1954 became Chief Conservator in Tanganyika. He had a considerable interest in staff training and established a Forestry School. When the country gained independence and became Tanzania in 1961, he remained in post, and continued to build the reputation of the Forestry School and Forestry Department. He was responsible for developing extensive plantations of pine, cypress and teak on which later profitable industries were based, in particular a successful pulp and sawmill producing high value products. He retired to Scotland in 1965 and became Secretary of the Scottish Woodland Owners Association, leading a long and happy retirement at Murrayfield in Edinburgh.

TREE TEST - ANSWERED

In the last issue of FCRA NEWS I asked whether anybody could identify Molika fir, the tree illegally felled at Christmas by the German ambassador to Macedonia. I knew I should not have to wait long for a reply - it was Roger Lines who had a story.

The tree is Macedonian pine or *Pinus peuce*. Botanists are silly of course because peuce is just the Greek word for pine, so translated we get pine pine! I had the good fortune to visit Macedonia in September 1982. This was one of a number of "minor species" which we thought would repay greater interest. The local name is "molika". When I retired in 1986 I was given a box of seedlings of various species, including *P. peuce*. Characteristically it started slowly but is now growing at a steady rate and is a very beautiful tree with its five greeny-grey needles. No cones yet. An adjacent *Metasequoia* is twice as tall!

ATTENTION ALL HOARDERS

John Zehetmayr has a collection of SLASHER from 1974-2001. This runs from the first colour issue and change of format, which was given No 1. Lord Taylor wrote the editorial. The next issue returned to the correct numbering sequence, No 274, as SLASHER had already been published up to issue 273 in black and white. Does anybody want this valuable hoard? If so, please contact John in South Wales at 02920 701694.

POSTPONEMENT OF AGM

Due to foot and mouth disease, the FCRA decided to postpone its AGM until 11 and 12 September. We plan to retain the same sparkling venue and attractions, only the dates have changed. Autumn in the Lake District will be a great time to meet old friends. There are many retirees in the Lakes. That is an opportunity for them to meet the hardcore AGM goers. We should like to know what you have been doing in retirement!

HAVE YOU REALLY BEEN THERE?

Good, two more responses. Fred Hummel has been to Taklamakan and the Gobi, starting at Alma Ata. John Keenleyside has been to Alaska. Both promise material, which, together with Charles Cook's trip to the Karakoram, means I have something for future issues.

FROM THE EDITOR

Soon we shall be into early summer, retirees have left their hibernation behind and thoughts will be turning to outdoor activities. FMD will not hold back the enthusiast who is planning bungee jumping, sky diving, paragliding, white water rafting or abseiling. Nothing is too extreme for the professional retiree! But even if your ambitions only urge you towards cycling, hiking, boating and fishing - less extreme activities - go for it, and enjoy it. Hot lazy days ahead when you can enjoy the benefits of retirement. If nothing else, while enjoying a beer in the garden, you can contemplate the fate of the working classes toiling away in the disembowelled remains of HQ. And if by chance you feel inclined to write something for FCRA NEWS - do it now! It may not be published right away, but it will appear. Your contribution will give enjoyment to others

WARTIME STORIES

Cyril Lewis, now retired to Lydney, was forester in charge on the Isle of Wight during the War. He and his wife lived at Signal House in the middle of Parkhurst Forest and were subject to many restrictions.

Visitors from the mainland were confined to near blood relatives and needed a permit from the Chief Constable. All mail from the island was censored, and access to all beaches was prohibited.

He kept a copy of a fire report, caused by enemy action, which he sent to the Deputy Surveyor, New, on 29 April 1941. I have taken extracts from it.

Forest fire - Parkhurst, 24 April 1941. Conditions were extremely dangerous with a strong NE wind. The air raid alert sounded at 9.50 pm and immediately incendiary bombs were being scattered very thickly on the NE side of the forest, in the direction of the wind. Others were scattered near Signal House. By 10 pm there were a large number of fires in the forest, and the task of extinguishing looked hopeless. However with our own men, a few neighbours and the soldiers, the last fire was out at 1.30 am. All the young conifer, oak and ash plantations under 20 years burnt fiercely, but it was significant that conifer plantations over 20 years, which had been brashed some years previously, did not burn. In these plantations there were only a few small patches of fire which went out of their own accord, and little or no damage was done. In the young chestnut coppice, ground fires swept through the dead leaves, bracken and gorse, but in the planted chestnut, with a ground vegetation of brambles and bluebell the bombs burnt themselves out, causing no damage.

I have no doubt that our system of fire lines prevented a more serious fire. There is no evidence of a fire having crossed a fire line or gravel road, every compartment burnt had an incendiary bomb dropped on it.

Some idea of the number of bombs dropped and number of subsequent fires will be gathered from the fact that over 150 acres were burnt in 4 hours, or one every 1½ minutes!

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Check with contacts for exact area covered.

FAREWELL

		Retired	Aged			Retired	Aged
William Burnett	Peterhead	1984	80	Edward Humphreys	Welshpool	-	94
Edward Conder	Kirby Lonsdale	1977	83	George Hutchinson	Crowthorne	2000	63
Sidney Davies	Aberystwyth	1987	73	John Keiller	Auchtermuchty	1989	76
Robert Edwards	Dolgellau	1982	80	James McLeary	Hamilton	1976	84
Bernard Elley	Lydney	1991	68	William McGrady	Bedford	1991	74
Thomas George	Llandrindod Wells	1971	88	Michael Marko	Newton Stewart	1983	74
Edward Grant	Inverness	1994	71	Wilfred Stratford	Coniston	1986	78
Leslie Howard	Warminster	-	80	Peter Stuart	Banchory	1976	86

WELCOME TO RETIREMENT

Calder Miller	Edinburgh	Brian Gore	Wootton Hants
Jack Rayton	Ulverston	Paula Harris	Grizedale
Margaret Robinson	Dunoon	Robin Heaney	Maybole
Ann Yeoman	Farnham	William Hook	Coleford
Pete Bland	Wykeham	Thomas Jones	Pontrhydfendigaid
Roy Cox	Ringwood	Duncan McNiven	Balfon
David Buegg	Dingwall	George Mercer	Penicuik
Philip Evans	Ipswich	George Wiseman	Fochabers
Alan Gordon	New Galloway		

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