



FASKALLY FTS

Class of 1962 / 1964

Back Row (left to right): -
Ralph Nickerson, Mike Hanafin,
Dick Ogilvie, Dave Chappell,
Dave Cotton, Dave Douglas,
Gordon Rae

Front Row (left to right): -
Clark Anderson, Don Lindsey,
Bill Stoddart, Norman Tullock,
Sandy Cram, Ian Garrioch,
Mike Smith, Ian Robertson

Not included: Gordon Heddon

South Scotland District Forest Officers 1980

I can see Steve Lee,
John Davies, Bob Farmer,
Richard Toleman,
Jim Dewar, Bill Mason,
Alastair Rowan,
Ernie Michie,
Stan Robertson,
David Goldie, Martin Gale
and Richard Chard.

Many names I can't
remember, can you?



From the Editor

This is our second issue on line and after the first, I received many congratulatory e-mails. I hope we can maintain the standard. I said that it would now be straightforward for readers to send copy for the newsletter or pictures for the Gallery. In addition I have opened a page for illustrated articles. This is a type of gallery but with more supporting text for the pictures. The response has been disappointing. Very few have contributed anything.



I know that the editorship of a small publication is a thankless task. Most of the copy originates from the editor himself, but I was expecting more.

One comment I had was that the newsletter was all obituaries and reminiscences, hardly an imaginative publication of an active retirement association. I can only publish what I receive. So many of you are up to a wide range of activities in retirement and have interesting hobbies, why not write about them and let friends and colleagues know that you are still alive and kicking.

Have a go – now.

Richard Toleman

Timber Carrying on the Caledonian Canal

In November 2010 the MV Kanutta completed her first trip in a 6 month long pilot scheme to transport timber along the Caledonian Canal. Timber is regularly transported by road to the BSW sawmill at Corpach near Fort William and to Norbord near Inverness. This traffic has to use the notorious A82 along the Great Glen. There have been many demands to upgrade this road as it is a key east-west route that suffers many accidents. This project will remove 180,000 lorry miles from this and adjacent roads as each shipment will equal 18 lorry loads.

This pilot scheme has been made possible by grants from the Scottish Parliament and Highlands and Islands Enterprise. Partners in this are Scottish Woodlands, the Great Glen Shipping Company, Boyd Bros.(Haulage) and British Waterways supported by BSW sawmill and Norbord.

A key element in this scheme is a floating mobile loading pier on Loch Etive. Timber harvested in the vicinity will be taken down the loch, past the Falls of Lora, under Connel Bridge, then up the Lynn of Lorne and Loch Linne to enter the canal at Corpach. Some timber will be delivered to the BSW sawmill while further shipments will be taken

through the canal to Inverness for the Norbord plant. Some timber products will also return from Inverness to Corpach. Boyd Bros. has gained a 41/2 year contract to transfer 108,000 tonnes of timber to water transport at Loch Etive.

MV Kanutta has been chartered by the Great Glen Shipping Company and can carry up to 400 tonnes of timber. The company was formed in February 2010 and is based at Corpach.

The Scottish Government's Mode Shift Revenue Support Grant will contribute to this 6 month pilot scheme which has targets of: -

- 6000 tonnes of timber by sea and canal from Loch Etive to Inverness.
- 1600 tonnes of timber products from Inverness to Corpach by canal.
- 6000 tonnes of timber from Loch Etive to Corpach by sea.

More information can be found on this project by putting Great Glen Shipping Co. into Google. The picture of Kanutta at Neptune's staircase was reproduced by permission from British Waterways Scotland www.scottishcanals.co.uk and the Maritime Journal.



Sutherland's Geology Garden



If you are heading north up the A9 to Caithness and Orkney or returning, and looking for an interesting stop, try Sutherland's Geology Garden at Timespan, the museum in Helmsdale. Its collection of big boulders represents the local geology in a very dramatic way. The huge rocks were collected over 20 years ago and initially displayed in the Geology Room of the museum. Such was their size that the last wall of the room could only be built when the boulders were in place. They were arranged around a display which told of the Kildonan Gold Rush of 1869.

Over the years the Geology Room was the most popular feature of Timespan, but circumstance forced a rethink of the display. It was decided to relocate them outside the building, and so the idea of a geology garden was born. The setting is ideal, just off the café, next to the river and beneath the shadow of Telford's bridge. The boulders were craned out of the building and lowered into place. Architecturally, the garden is very distinctive being surrounded by a stone wall with glass barrier and giving a view of the river. The boulders have engraved descriptions and there is a panel outlining Sutherland's geology.

This small museum has been supported by a vast amount of local effort, skill and goodwill to keep it open in this distant part of Scotland. If you are passing by, do call in, you will enjoy it and you will be helping a remote community.

See the Timespan website www.Timespan.org.uk

Ancient Tree Hunt

I know a number of you are involved in recording trees for the Woodland Trust's Ancient Tree Hunt. In the December issue, Andy Gordon wrote about tree recording on National Trust sites. At the end of a very successful year in 2010, over 80,000 were recorded, most have been verified. The WT is confident that the target of 100,000 will be achieved by the end of this year. Anybody can record a tree, just go on the WT website and follow the instructions. Why not have a go and help reach the target.

2010 was a good year for spreading the Ancient Tree Hunt message. It was featured twice on BBC Country File and once on BBC Breakfast, and almost all the main tabloids and broadsheets have run stories. The WT has organised many training days and events throughout the UK.

Of particular note were: -

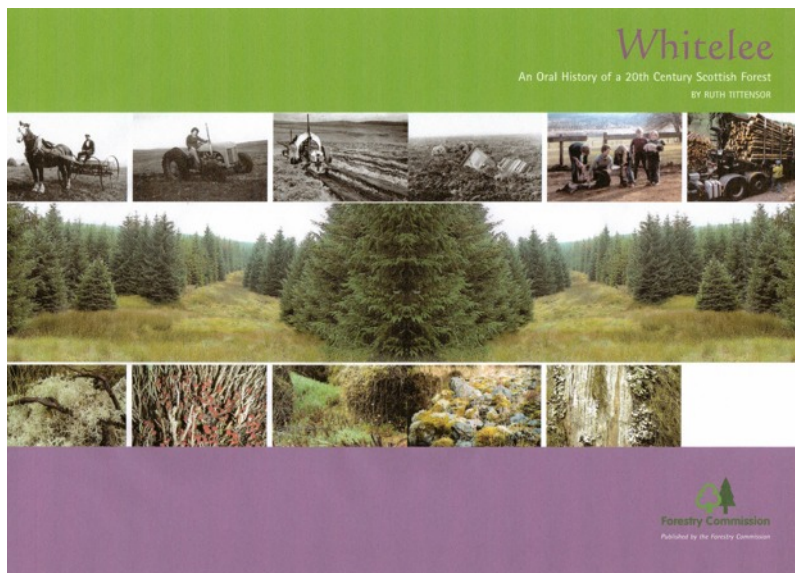
- Go Nuts for Trees. People were encouraged to find and record large sweet chestnut trees. This was picked up by the media, especially in Scotland with this tree's association with Mary, Queen of Scots.
- Listening to Ancient Trees. At Croft Castle people could put on headphones and hear the internal workings of a very old lime tree.
- In Bute Park, Cardiff, children enjoyed a wildlife treasure hunt involving ancient trees.
- Ancient Tree Hunt goes to Town. This was a hugely popular event in Belfast attended by hundreds.
- So this year is the big push to 100,000. Will you help?



From Peat Bog to Conifer Forest: An Oral History of Whitelee, its Community and Landscape

by Ruth Tittensor

Short-listed for the Saltire Society
Scottish History Book of the Year
Award 2009



Why Oral History?

People now march with banners to demonstrate their concern about the government's proposed *sale* of national forests. But, not so long ago, the public vociferously complained about the *planting* of new national forests! Many of you probably remember explaining to dubious friends in the pub, why afforestation was taking place on such a large scale in the British uplands. The afforestation phenomenon experienced by the twentieth century countryside is unlikely to happen again soon, at least at the same huge pace and scale. Two oral history projects were set up to ensure that this afforestation on Britain's open uplands was properly documented for posterity. The reason for using *oral history* is that it gives the people who were actually involved, carried

out the work, or were affected by it, their opportunity to describe and explain what happened.

Hanes y Goedwig (*The Story of the Forest*) was co-ordinated by Caroline Earwood in 2002 and 2003, when 65 interviewees associated with five Welsh forests contributed their recorded memories or written accounts. These are archived in the *National Library of Wales* and *National History Museum of Wales*, as well as in the *five forest localities*.

I coordinated the *Whitelee Forest Oral History Project* (*Word o Mooth o a 20th Century Scots Wuid*) from 2004 to 2009, to record in detail the knowledge and memories of 60 people involved in the afforestation of just one Scottish forest.

Whitelee Forest Contributors

Whitelee Plateau is an isolated upland, overlooking the Firth of Clyde, where East Ayrshire, East Renfrewshire and South Lanarkshire meet. Forty-two people, being local residents, forestry workers and staff – who took part in its afforestation – contributed *recorded discussions* about their part in what

happened. The recordings were, with their permission, saved on individual CDs; they were also transcribed into written documents, which were printed and also saved on CDs. Forty people contributed *written memories*, which were made into attractive, illustrated booklets.

Before The Forest

The oral history of Whitelee, starts early in the twentieth century, then bleak moorland of quaking-peat with ninety burns leaving it in all directions. It was open to all points of the compass, experiencing long winter snows, high rainfall, lashing winds, thick mist and scorching, midgey, summer sun. Tenants of several estates, later owner-occupiers, lived by pastoral farming. One Blackface sheep, Galloway or Blue-grey cow needed 3-4 acres of this peat moorland to support it. Miles of parallel drains were hand-dug. Round the perimeter of the Plateau, conditions were a bit better and farmers kept small milking-herds of Ayrshire cattle and

grew potatoes, turnips and oats on mineral soil. Although farming was difficult, other resources were rich. For instance, local people dug peat for fuel, caught song birds, swam in burns and pools, used wild plants and animals for food, trained their greyhounds and enjoyed fishing and rough-shooting, particularly brown and white hares. Local lace-mill owners ran keepered shoots, mainly for red and black grouse. In May each year local lads collected laundry-baskets'-full of black-headed gulls' eggs to sell, or for their mothers to bake sponges: the eggs produced cakes with an attractive pink colour.

The First Farm Sold for Afforestation

After the Second World War, Mr Willie Ross of the Scottish Office and MP for Kilmarnock and Loudoun was one of those who pushed hard for government finance to promote afforestation in Scotland. Between 1919 and 1960, state planting had increased Scotland's woodland cover from 5% to only 6%. And help with rural economies and unemployment was needed. He was successful. It is not surprising then, the 1196-acre Whiteleehill Farm was sold

to the Forestry Commission in 1960: the owner wanted a less remote farm to bring up his family. This sale started a trend, with 26 more farmers selling either their complete farm or their very worst land for forestry in the succeeding 30 years. The new finances gave them the chance to diversify their businesses or retire. The Forestry Commission Acquisitions Officer was kept busy! Private forestry firms also bought farms on the Whitelee Plateau.

From Farm to Forest

Farm contributors described how, after each sale, they took their sheep and cattle off the moorland and away. The Forestry Commission engaged fencing contractors to enclose the acquired land and a young trapper was sent to clear it of 'forest vermin' like hares. Skilled tractor drivers ploughed the quaking peat, producing the corrugated landscape for planting trees. Tough young chaps joined the new forest squad: their first task was to open furrows and drains into big cross drains using heavy hand tools like rutter, bottoming shovel and howk. Forester George Caird planted the first tree in March 1961. Brian Speirs planted the second tree – and by 1992, when planting was finished, he had planted 999,999 more! The inbye lands of five steadings were turned into Forest Workers' Holdings for squad members to rent.

Tractors sometimes sank out of sight into the quaking peat, the back-breaking task of planting a thousand or more tree seedlings each day carried on year after year. Beating-up, fertilising by hand and from the air, making rubber fire beaters and practising fire control made work hours long and arduous. Due to the extreme windiness above, and the soggy peat below Whitelee, trees were planted close and a 'No-thin' management regime operated.

By the 1980s, the Forestry Commission had been instructed to sell some land; Whitelee Forest was initially considered suitable and the owners of the Caledonian Paper Mill nearby at Irvine showed interest. However, District Officer Alister Jones worked hard to persuade colleagues of Whitelee's importance close to developing markets – and it remained in state ownership. But the planting phase was drawing to an end and estate management work was found to keep the squad busy.



Run-Down of Planting

Unfortunately, in 1994 the final four men were made redundant. Only a deer-stalker was seen by local people until new-fangled wildlife rangers and young district managers appeared in the last years of the century.

Whitelee Forest was given a new role: to provide benefits other than timber, including enhanced recreation, education and wildlife conservation.

Whitelee Wind Farm

By the end of the twentieth century, 15,000 acres of peat moorland on Whitelee Plateau had been converted into a forest of 10 million Sitka spruce (and some Lodgepole pine, larches and Norway spruce). Harvesting started on time in 2000, but much of the produce was unsuited to structural timber and paper, going instead for wood chips. But early this century, the Forestry Commission agreed that the Forest could be used to house Europe's largest onshore wind farm. The Whitelee Wind Farm now functions and wind turbines tower above the trees.



The Wider Picture

The Whitelee Forest Oral History Project also analysed the huge changes accompanying afforestation. I recorded local residents, farm families and shepherds, country-sportsmen, naturalists, ecologists, meteorological observers and machinery manufacturers. I tracked mechanisation of land management, ecological and landscape changes from be-

fore to after afforestation: lives were long and memories accurate! Naturalist Bryan Simpson produced his field notebook for Whitelee from 1960 to 2006: what a treasure of observation! So the main theme of afforestation can be placed within the context of people's lives, their economies and environment.

Significance

The greening of the Whitelee Plateau represents the most significant change in the Scottish landscape of the twentieth century, that is an increase in woodland cover from a **mere 6% in 1960 to a staggering 17% by 2000**. The Whitelee Forest workers, together with others throughout Scotland,

wrought this change, planting trees on **11% of Scotland, in only 40 years**. It is an episode now receding into history. My book is a unique account of this, because people's own words tell the Whitelee story. It is profusely illustrated in colour.

For retired Forestry Commission staff, the book costs £25.00 plus £4.50 postage from www.ruthtittensor.co.uk or can be collected from 6, East Donington Street, Darvel, Ayrshire KA17 0JR Tel: 01560-320543. From Blackwell's and Waterstones' Bookshops, the price is £27.50.

The Archives

With Contributors' permission, recordings, transcripts and booklets are stored for posterity in the *Library of Forestry Commission Alice Holt Lodge*, in the *National Museum of Scotland (Scottish Life Archive)*, *Edinburgh* and in the *Burns Monument Centre, Kilmarnock, Ayrshire* and are available for anyone to use.

Acknowledgements

I acknowledge the friendship and commitment of all Contributors and helpers, without whom there would be no Whitelee Forest Oral History Project or Book. The Whitelee project was generously funded by the Forestry Commission with additional help from East Ayrshire Council, Loudoun Valley Trust, Russell Trust, South Lanarkshire Council and Strathmartine Trust. The project was originally the idea of Richard Toleman and Christopher Smout.

Contributors to the Project

a. Forestry Commission

<u>Name</u>	<u>Job in Connection with Whitelee Forest</u>
Robert Allan	Ploughing Tractor Driver 1970-1990
Patrick Armstrong	Last Resident Head Forester 1975-1987
Fred Cowie	Resident Head Forester 1970-1975
Gordon Cowie	Conservator, CE Forest Enterprise 1979-1996
Malcolm Crosby	Forester (Planning) 2000s
Alexander Fenton	Squad, Wildlife Ranger 1970s, 1990s
Roy Harvey	Ploughing Forester 1960s-1980s
Peter Innes	Chief Acquisitions Officer 1960-1978
Frank Jackson	District Forester (Planning & Implementation) 1990s-2000s
Alister Jones	District Officer 1970s-1980s
Bob Logan	Senior Ranger 1960s on
Bill Meadows	Forester 1970s
Jim Newall	Wildlife Ranger 1980s-2000s
Kerr Robertson	Head Forester 1987-1990s
Stan Share	Trapper 1961-1963
Jim Smalls	Community & Environment Ranger 2000s
Brian Speirs	Squad Worker 1961-1994
John Speirs	Childhood on Forest Workers' Holding 1970s- 1990s
W.B. (Bill) Sutherland	District Officer 1960, Acquisitions Officer 1960s-1970s
Rena Tarwinska	Forester (Community & Education) 2000s
Richard Toleman	Forest Surveyor 1972, Project Instigator 2000s

b. Local Contractors to Forestry Commission

Robert Graham	Forest-harvesting Contractor 2000s
Tom Grant	Tree Planting, Tractor Driving 1970s
Iain Hamilton	Fencing Contractor 1960s-2000s
George Young	Tree Planting Contractor 1960s

New Visitor Centre for Glentress

A major expansion of the services at Glentress near Peebles in the Scottish Borders will be opening this spring. The FC is creating this to cope with the ever increasing demand. Glentress already attracts over 300,000 visitors a year who come to enjoy biking, wildlife watching or just exploring the forest.

It will be known as the Glentress Peel Visitor Centre and will consist of four buildings. There will be an orientation building with osprey viewing and exhibition space, a café with outdoor decking that overlooks a pond, a bike shop with hire services and offices with business and training facilities.



The project, which was funded by a partnership of the FC, Scottish Enterprise and Sportscotland, sits in 5ha. of landscaped woodland and open space. Locally sourced timber has been used in its construction and a wood fuel boiler will provide hot water and heating for all the buildings.

Those of you who visit Glentress regularly will look forward to the new experience, and if you haven't been there for some time, pick a good day, enjoy the forest and the Centre, and have a great time. More information on: - www.forestry.gov.uk/glentress Ed.



Capercaillie Numbers on the Rise

The numbers of capercaillie in FC forests have increased over the last four years despite being in decline across Scotland. The number of male birds displaying at leks has increased from 31 in 2000 to 61 last year.

They are found in pinewoods in Grampian, Tayside and Highlands where they currently breed in 16 FC forests. However the general decline has been so rapid that there are still fears of extinction. Their increase in FC forests is the result of 10 years of managing forests in ways aimed at improving the conditions for capercaillie. Over the last 6 years higher numbers have been recorded than 10 years ago, but in the last 4 years there has been an unbroken annual increase.

This demonstrates that it is possible to combine conservation management with other objectives. Interestingly, they appear to breed well in pine forests managed primarily for timber production. The reason for this is unknown but is being investigated.

FC staff around Scotland are supporting capercaillie populations in forests where they occur and their habitat is being constantly improved. Any potential disturbance from recreation and other forest activities is carefully managed. All redundant fences which could pose a risk to their flight are being or have been removed.

More details on www.forestry.gov.uk/forestry/capercaillie

Photograph by Desmond Dugan



Letters to the Editor



I was delighted to get news from the FC of the web based 14 page FCA Today.

Congratulations to the editor and the “backroom boys” who have got this copy into production.

Two items caught my notice, both relating to Thetford – it was good to get an update of Tony Butcher’s whereabouts, I was in digs with him and his family for a short time 45 years ago.

Secondly the last two gallery pictures of the Thetford Chase Creosoting Plant, where I

sweated it out with hot creosote for a couple of weeks in June 66.

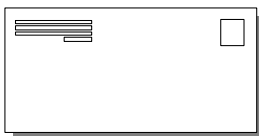
The Deckaville rail track and bogies, the 400 gallons of creosote we used every day on 1,100 5½ foot fencing stakes. Block and tackle winches for the cradles, heating fuel of dead SP killed by Fomes, all bought back memories.

Yours ever,
Martin Fletcher

Send your letters to the editor for publication in FCA Today



by e-mail to editor@fca-today.com



by post to Richard Toleman, Manuel Stables, Linlithgow, EH49 6JF.

Alder in History and Folklore by Karen Bell

One of the sacred woods of the druids, Alder was symbolic of secrecy and places of refuge. It was also sacred to the ancient Celtic god Bran.

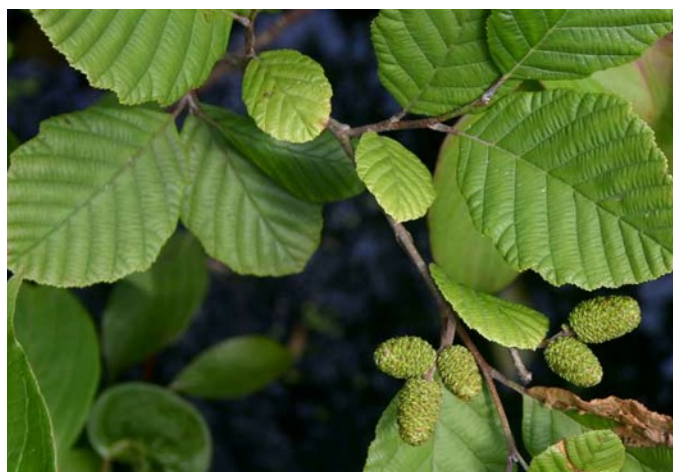
In the Welsh Triads the ‘crimson stained heroes’, who were sacred kings connected to Bran’s Alder cult stained their faces red with the dye from the Alder tree. The dye obtained from the Alder may explain why the Alder was held so sacred to our ancient ancestors, when Alder is felled the wood first appears white and then begins to bleed crimson, as though it were a man.

The green dye obtained from the flowers also has connections to British folklore. This is where fairies are supposed to obtain the dye for their clothes – as did mediaeval foresters and outlaws such as Robin Hood.

In ancient times the cost of cutting down a sacred Alder in the country districts of Ireland was to be visited with the burning down of ones house.

The Alder was used in ancient Ireland for making milking pails and other dairy vessels. The poetical

name given to them in The Book of Ballymote was Comet lachta, which means guarding the milk. Alder was used not only because it was considered protective against ill wishing but also because Alder is more resistant to water than many other tree species, in fact it was used as the piles for many of the ancient water-side structures, including crannogs.

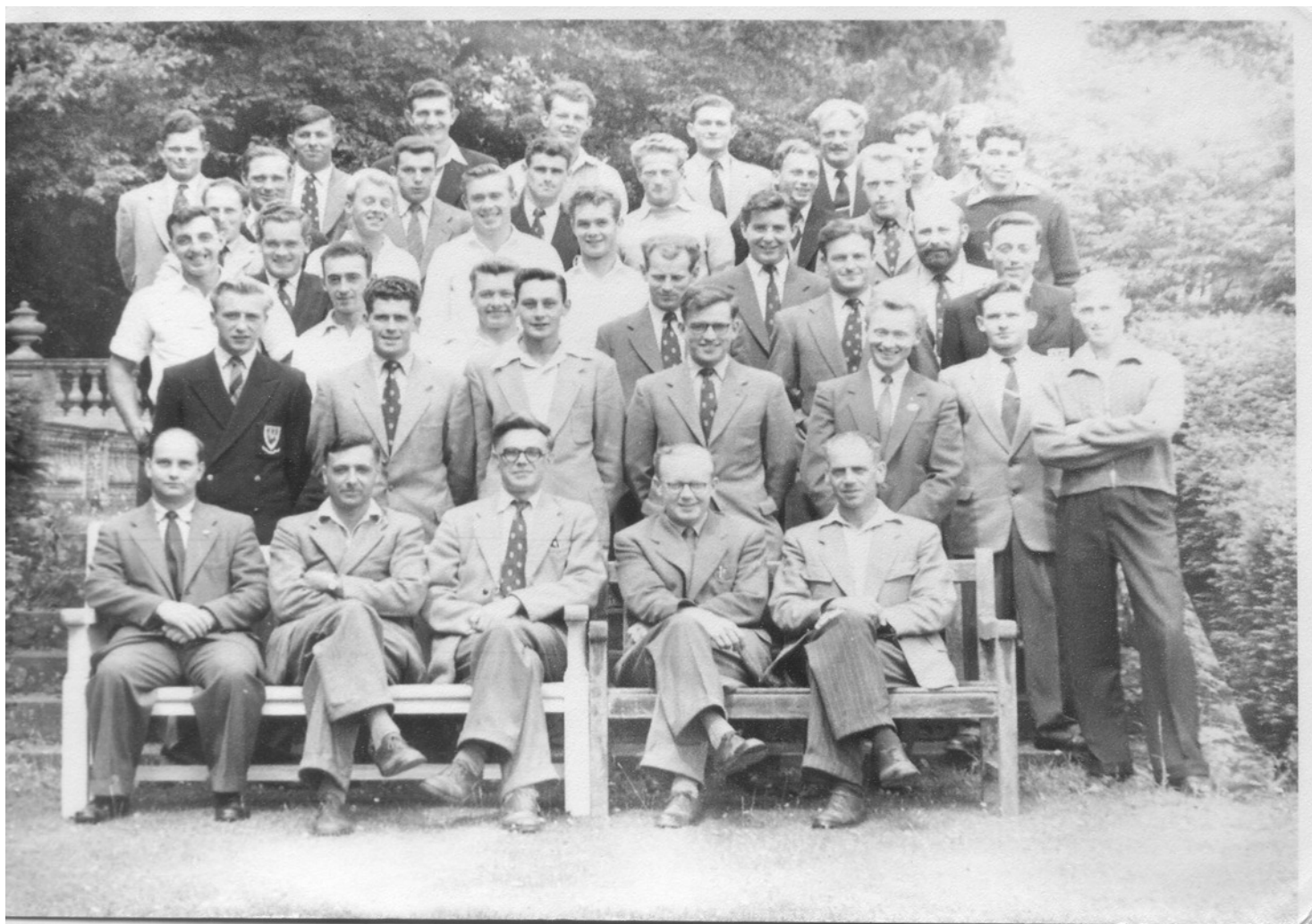


ANOTHER LYNFORD MEMORY by Geoff Barry

Lynford Hall was an old Elizabethan style of house which we were assured had been built by an industrialist who had made his fortune from glass dolls eyes in the 19th century. Before the FC bought it, it had been thought that the Prince of Wales was a likely customer, but the story was that he had not been able to buy because there was a Roman Catholic church in the grounds. Whether or not that was true the FC started the FTS in the late 40's.

When I started my forestry training in 1955 there were 5 Forester Training Schools and all of them had two classes of students, seniors and juniors. In

1955/56 the decision to close Lynford Hall was made. As ours was the final course, there were no juniors, so 6 students were transferred from the Dean to make up numbers, much to their horror. This photograph, taken by Ken Mills, was of the final class. Unfortunately I am unable to remember all the names and to those people I apologise, but many of them will be familiar even to present FC staff. I think that this would probably be one of the last courses with WW2 servicemen in it and most of us had been through National Service.



As I remember them, this is the list of names:

Back row: anon; Ted Fletcher, Bart Venner, Peter Lansdown, David Mobbs, Ken Gabriel, Bob Budden, Gordon Simpson
Row 4: Martin ?, Eddie Hampstead, Geoff Patching, Ron Hoblyn, Chris Hodgson, Andy Graham, Geoff Appleyard, Chris Langton

Row 3: Arthur Dixon, Albert Davison, Lou Hunt, John Anderson, Peter Featherstone, Arthur Arbon, Jim Hall

Row 2: Dave Snowden, Brian Roebuck, John Humphreys, George Wilbert, Geoff Green

Row 1: John Walton, Adrian Stangroom, Geoff Simpkins, Geoff Barry, Mike Johnson, Tony Tyers, and Ken Mills.

Sitting on the bench with the instructors far left is student John Wainwright. The instructors were Don Sherrell, Norman Tulloch, Graham Semple and Charles Dick.

*Well, have a look at those names and faces, they are part of forestry myth and legend!
I am sure further tales will emerge. How about it? Ed.*

OBITUARIES

Peter Webb said that it was with great sadness that he heard of the death of **FRED BEASLEY** at the wonderful age of 103. He led a very full and interesting life up until the end and was the FC's oldest retiree.

Fred was born at Cannock in Staffordshire. His father was a colliery engineer and Fred was keen to follow his father and become an engineer. Unfortunately the colliery closed so Fred came into forestry in Cannock Chase in 1926. However Fred retained his love of engineering all his life and he left a legacy of a number of model steam engines that he had built. He carried out his car servicing and repairs up until his late 80s and continued to drive up until his late 90s.

Fred attended the Dean Forestry Training School from 1928 to 1929 and was the oldest remaining Dean student. During his career he served at Kielder, the North York Moors, Thetford Chase and Northampton. His final posting was to Halwill Forest in North Devon for 22 years where he was promoted to Chief Forester. While at Kielder he had the task of organising the spreading of the late DG, Lord Robinson's ashes. After the Second World War he served in the North Germany Timber Control Commission from 1946-48. In retirement he continued working in forestry with EFG.

Fred was a very keen supporter of the FCA since its inception often attending the Annual Conference, the last time was when he was in his early 90s driving himself from Devon to the Forest of Dean. He was also a founder and active member of

Okehampton Probus until he was over 100.

Fred was well known amongst retired FC staff where he will be greatly missed. We send our sympathies to all his family.

Fred's career was remarkable in that it spanned almost the entire existence in the FC, he entered it only 7 years after its formation. To my knowledge, nobody else has achieved this unique record. Ed.

George Holmes, along with others, recalls **JOHN ALDHOUS'S** long and distinguished career in forestry. After service in the RAF in Rhodesia, John graduated in Forestry from Oxford University, and in 1954 joined the Research Division of the FC at Alice Holt. There, as Research Silviculturist, he was responsible for important developments in seed, nursery practice and use of herbicides.

In 1974 he was appointed Assistant Conservator for Forest Management in SW England. In 1985 he was posted to FC HQ Edinburgh as Head of Silviculture where, amongst other things, he initiated a review of FC nurseries that resulted in the establishment of Delamere as a major centre for propagating genetically improved Sitka spruce.

After his arrival in Edinburgh, he became an active member of the RSFS serving on Council and as Convenor of the Publications Committee. He was also active in the ICF and a Fellow, for over 55 years.

He wrote several important publications including Forest

Nursery Practice, a revision of his earlier Forest Nursery Bulletin. Latterly he published a book on the use of chemicals in forestry as well as another on pesticides, pollutants, chemicals and trees. In addition, he wrote many articles for forestry journals including *A Short History of the Royal Scottish Forestry Society* published in its journal on its 150th anniversary.

When John retired in 1989, he served as Director of the Central Scotland Forestry Trust, contributed to the British and Irish Hardwoods Improvement

Programme and set up a woodlands services consultancy.

Outwith his forestry and voluntary activities, he was fond of choral music, singing on stage in the chorus of the Edinburgh Grand Opera, for which he was also treasurer. As a family man, his four children and the grandchildren were very important to him.

He was a delightful and kindly man. While he was highly respected for his outstanding professional work, he was also much liked for his generous and thoughtful personality and for his enthusiasm and cheerful outlook. John remained interested in forestry and forestry folk right up to the end, and his kindness and encouragement will be widely missed.

He ended his history of the RSFS, "If there is any single lesson from our past, it is that leadership, vision and persistence have brought about the changes we have sought at the time". John abided by his own dictat and was a leader in British forestry.

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OBITUARIES

Continued from previous page
1962. It was the first place that they could enter the local community and become part of it, as they spent six whole years there.

His final move with the FC was the furthest, going to East Stratton, near Winchester. He took charge of Micheldever Forest for 16 years before retiring at the age of 61 in 1985.

Bill enjoyed his time with the FC, saying 'The work had its own rewards, seeing a woodland being created and looked after. The comradeship had been marvellous – in spite of the fact that no two Foresters would agree about treatments – they got there in the end'

Following retirement from the FC he worked for Basingstoke & Deane District Council carrying out a tree census and root & branch survey of protected trees within the district. The workload increased considerably in 1987 following the Great Storm, but on his 65th birthday he decided he would not work another day. He then concentrated on village activities, his love of photography, gardening and his family, especially enjoying time with his four grandchildren. He measured the rainfall in East Stratton for the Met Office for more than 25 years.

In 1999 he became aware his memory was not what it used to be and gradually had to give up many of these things. After a few more years he was diagnosed with Alzheimer's and needed round the clock care which was lovingly given by Betty, his wife of 57 years.

On the 12 January 2011 he died from a fall. He will be fondly

remembered by many and missed dearly by his family.

Mrs. E. Thomason of Linmere Visitor Centre, Delamere tells of the death of **ELSIE BROOKS** aged 96. She had been employed at Delamere from 1929 until her retirement in 1979. In recognition of her 50 years service, she was awarded the BEM. In her personal effects are many congratulatory letters on this achievement. She cycled daily from her home in Winsford to work, a round trip of 22 miles. Although in frail physical health for past few years, she maintained a keen interest in local affairs and was active mentally, a good achievement for her age.

Rod Leslie and Roger Busby remember **JOHN EVERARD** who was brought up in Worcestershire and joined the FC as an industrial worker in 1952. After National Service he trained at the Dean FTS, becoming an Assistant Forester at Hurn in the New Forest in 1957. Some 12 years later John returned to education, gaining a forestry degree from Bangor University in 1963. In those days this was the only way to make the step from Forester to District Officer. Following graduation, John returned to the FC to work with John Zehetmayr on Work Study, first at Loch Carron and then in the Great Glen.

In 1964 John was promoted to Assistant District Officer at Fochabers under Bob Cathie. Four years later he was posted to Silvicultural Research at Alice Holt, working on species and fertilisers. His career progressed rapidly and in 1974 he

was posted as District Officer for Rothbury Forest District in Northumberland. 1978 saw John again working under John Zehetmayr as Assistant Conservator Harvesting and Marketing for South Wales.

When the South Wales office closed in 1986 John took up the prestigious and challenging post of Deputy Surveyor in the Forest of Dean. In a short gap between jobs he had travelled extensively in France studying broadleaf silviculture. This knowledge was used to good effect in the work for which John is probably best known, the regeneration of broadleaves and continuous cover forestry. Not only did he transform management of broadleaves in the Dean, introducing the shelter wood system and experimenting extensively with natural regeneration techniques, but also had a significant influence on both FC and wider forestry thinking.

John was awarded the OBE on his retirement in 1996. A mature oak, dedicated by the Verderers to John, stands in High Meadow in The Dean to mark his contribution to the Forest and its oaks.

A devoted family man, John was married to Shirley for over 50 years. They met when she also worked for the FC in the Forest of Dean. He is survived by Shirley, his two sons, a daughter and 6 grandchildren. John was active in the community, a keen scout leader and a stalwart of the church in Mitchel Troy where he lived since his posting to the Dean. A lover of France and the outdoors, John and Shirley walked over 1,100 miles of the 'Grande Radonnée' footpath through the Alps over a number of years.

A HELP IN GRIEF – Coping with the death of someone close

By Julian Evans

Rather more than 9 years ago my late wife passed away very suddenly. Indeed, an hour before she died we didn't realise how ill she was. My three sons and I were taken totally unawares; for days we were in shock and disbelief. We received many helps and support, especially from friends at church, but as we came to look back on the experience in later years we would have welcomed knowing more of what was happening emotionally and about all the practical matters that bereavement brings. So my youngest son and I have written the book we wish we had been given all those years ago.

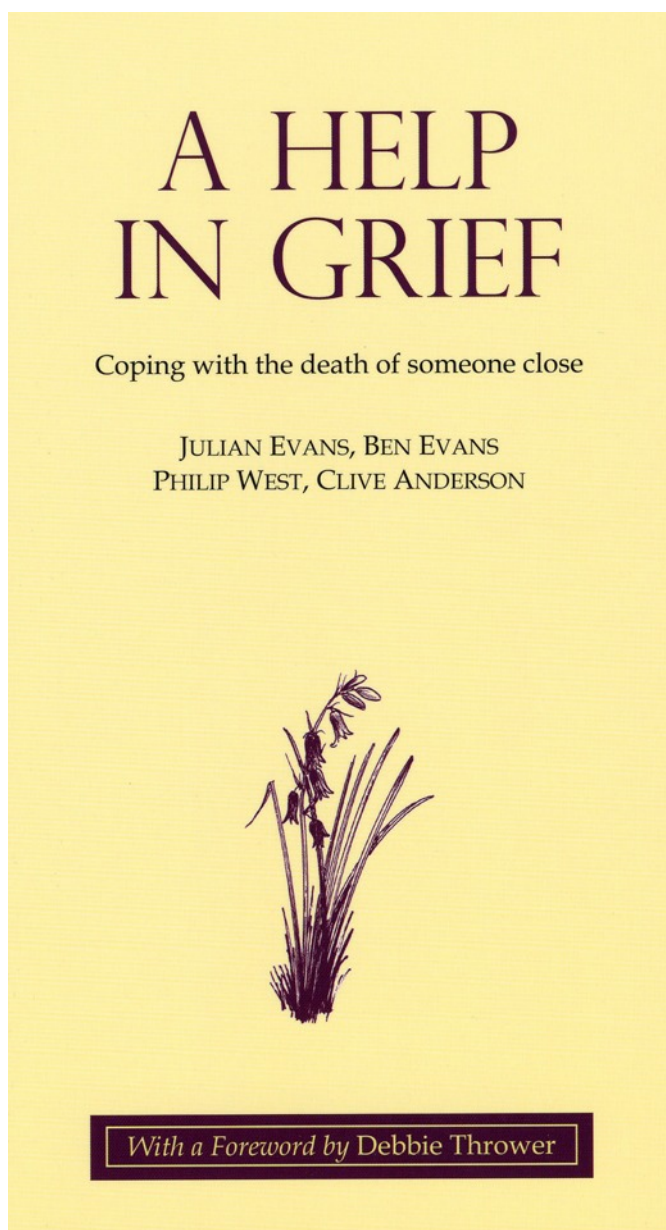
A Help in Grief is written at an introductory level, it's not a manual. Ben, my son, has written mainly about the emotional journey we travel and I have covered the practical things like registering a death, the funeral, and executing a Will. In writing on such a sensitive and painful matter we soon found that there were topics we were not competent to handle and so joining us as co-authors are a GP, Dr Phil West, who has taken a medical interest in grief and bereavement, and a minister, Rev. Clive Anderson. Also we received specialist input from a funeral director, a chaplain, two involved with hospices, a probate expert, and a trauma adviser. The result is a 145 page paperback that was published last August of 12 chapters along with several appendices giving sources of help and advice. Up to the time of writing it has been selling at 30 per week since publication, so it appears to be meeting a real need. That said, not everyone wants to turn to a book when confronted with the anguish of bereavement, but some, like me, find it helpful.

In writing such a book our hope is to be just one of many helps the bereaved receive. Above all we didn't want price to be an obstacle so *A Help in Grief*, while produced to high quality, is inexpensive at just £4.95. Our other hope is that by sharing genuine real life anecdotes and experiences to illustrate points, often as box inserts in the text, that it brings the book from the dispassionate and impersonal to being able to come alongside someone in their journey if only to say that they are not alone. A number of readers have said how much they appreciated this approach. There are a few well-chosen pen-and-ink illustrations mostly by John White, formerly Curator of Westonbirt Arboretum.

A final comment that several have remarked is that really *A Help in Grief* should be read before bereavement comes to help us be prepared. Indeed, one church minister was so taken by this thought that he bought enough copies to give one to every member of his congregation!

A Help in Grief – coping with the death of someone close. Julian Evans, Ben Evans, Phil West and Clive Anderson. Patula Books, Basingstoke 2010. ISBN 978-0-9541947-3-4 Price £4.95. It's available from Patula Books, Box 6674, Basingstoke RG24 4DP or via www.patulabooks.co.uk and it also can be readily bought on **Amazon**.

Julian Evans was formerly the FC Chief Research Officer (S) at Alice Holt.



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