

The ELASHER

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THE FORESTRY EXHIBITION

MANY of our readers were among the large crowds which visited the forestry exhibition at Blackbushe last month; others will have heard by word of mouth that the event was generally held to have been an outstanding success. Little point, therefore, in describing the exhibition in detail but a few things in particular occur to us as worthy of being placed on the record.

In the first place there was no doubt that the support given to this show, the first of its kind to be tackled by the Commission, exceeded all expectations. On the one hand the number and variety of exhibitors was exceptional -- about 200 firms and organisations took the opportunity to "show their flags"; on the other, the hearts of the organising committee were warmed to see the steady procession of people on foot and in cars on to the site long before the actual opening hour on the first day. Indeed, supplies of tickets had run out quite early in the afternoon! Surprisingly, despite the atrocious weather on the second day, takings at the gates were comparatively little below those of the first. Over the two days it is thought that the total attendance was of the order of 15,000-16,000.

There were a number of highlights, not least being the visit of H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh who on the Thursday for an hour or so displayed a lively interest in as many exhibits as could be seen in the time. It was during the Duke's tour that one of our colleagues unwittingly introduced some unexpected drama, for Forester William DAVIES, of South East England, in the course of an intrepid display of tree-climbing by "bicycle", had the misfortune to fall for some distance and strike his head on the stem. We take this opportunity to pay tribute to Mr. Davies for the courageous way in which he recovered himself after taking such a blow. At least he had the consolation that reference to his exploit occupied more space in the national newspapers than ever previously given to an individual member of our staff.

Many were the Commission personnel who helped in a major or lesser way to make the exhibition a success and to them go the warmest thanks of the organising committee.

**DEATH OF FORMER FORESTER

WE deeply regret to have to record the sudden death last month of Mr. LEONARD BUTTER, at his home in Bwlch. Mr. Butter, who was Forester in charge of Talybont, South Wales Conservancy, since the forest was started in 1937, only retired at the end of January last.

The funeral took place at the Presbyterian Chapel, Bwlch, and was attended by many of Mr. Butter's former colleagues from widely separated parts of the Conservancy. He is survived by a son, Squadron Leader H. A. J. Butter, to whom we offer our sincere condolences.

**PASSING OF MR. BRUCE GARDNER

THE death occurred suddenly early this month of Mr. R. C. B. GARDNER, formerly Secretary of the Royal Forestry Society of England and Wales and Northern Ireland. He was 74.

Bruce Gardner, who lived at Farnham, Surrey, was well known to many members of the Commission staff for nearly a quarter of a century. He took up office with the Society in 1935, when it was known as the Royal English Forestry Society and at a time when membership was of the order of 1,500; this figure, over the years to his retirement in 1959, he built up to about 3,700. Bruce Gardner was an exceptional photographer and when he left the Society he presented that body with some 600 colour transparencies of woodlands and individual trees; these have been widely used by members for lecturing purposes.

Bruce Gardner held a number of other offices. He was, for example, a member of the official Advisory Committee on trees in the Royal Parks. As long ago as 1928 he was appointed Secretary of the British Wood Preserving Association, holding this office jointly with his secretaryship of the Forestry Society until 1947. From 1935 to 1947 he was Secretary of the Home Timber Marketing Association. During the last war he served as an Acquisition Officer with the home timber production department.

In much earlier days Bruce Gardner was employed at Wye Agricultural College and was later in charge of the Marquis of Bute's natural history museum on the Isle of Bute. He served in the Army from 1914 to 1921 and during this time was in France for three years.

In 1955 Bruce Gardner was appointed an O.B.E.

****PRESENTATION TO MR. J. P. MACKIE-WHYTE** THE staff presentation to Mr. J. P. MACKIE-WHYTE, formerly Chief Land Agent in Scotland, whose retirement we have already reported, took place in the Edinburgh Office before a large gathering. They, together with representatives of our Law Agents in Scotland, saw Mr. Mackie-Whyte receive from Mr. J. A. DICKSON, Director, Scotland, a television set. Prior to this ceremony a reception to Mr. Mackie-Whyte was held in the Royal British Hotel; more than 20 senior members of the Commission's staff were present, including SIR HENRY BERESFORD-PEIRSE, our Director General, and Mr. J. R. THOM, Director, England. SIR ARTHUR GOSLING, formerly Director General and Director, Scotland, was also there to pay tribute to an erstwhile colleague.

****IN THE SWIM**

WE are always pleased to record the personal achievements of Foresters and others of the staff and take this opportunity to congratulate Forester R. D. ANDERSON, of Inglewood Forest, North West England, on qualifying for the Royal Life Saving Society's advanced safety award. To do this, as part only of the test, he had to: give a demonstration of artificial respiration; swim 100 yards in trousers and shirt, in not more than four minutes; tread water for three minutes; recover a 10lb object from a depth of six feet; in deep water remove all clothing except swimming costume in less than 20 seconds; swim 200 yards on his back without using his arms; and swim 200 yards in free style other than backstroke.

All these tests were continuous. Mr. Anderson has also qualified for the "Silver Award" for proficiency in personal survival. The tests in this case involved swimming 100 yards in less than three minutes; and swimming half a mile, partly on the back and otherwise on front or side.

A point about all this is that Mr. Anderson took these tests at the age of 48.

Mr. Anderson was already the holder of the Society's Bronze Medallion and is a former King's Scout. He is the Assistant Youth Leader of Cotehill Village and in taking the tests described above he has certainly set a commendable example to the younger people.

****THREE GO TO NORWAY**

THREE enterprising young men from Fountains Forest, North East England -- Messrs. SHEPHERD, SHUTTLEWORTH and SCURRAH, have been successful in obtaining work at the Evenstead Forestry Training School in the Osperdalen district of Eastern Norway. They sailed this month and will remain at or attached to the school until early in September, when they will return to Fountains. To enable themselves to do this the lads are taking their annual leave; they have been granted special unpaid leave in addition. Although they will be accommodated in the school they are taking camping equipment with them, for during the stay they will also be working in private forests.

****A CORRECTION**

IN our last issue we referred to the local government work of Mr. JAMES ALLAN, Forester in the East Scotland Conservancy, and stated that he had been elected Lord Provost of Ladybank, Fife. We should, of course, have said that Mr. Allan had become Provost of Ladybank; the error is regretted.

****THE FIRST SAWMILL**

IN a recent issue, while reviewing a book by Mr. BRYAN LATHAM, we asked if readers knew that the first sawmill erected in Britain was built by Charles Dingley at Limehouse in 1761.

From Mr. P. HUNTER, writing from the Research Branch office at Edinburgh, comes an interesting comment. He says: "I have to inform you that the first reference to a sawmill in Deeside, in known documents, was in the year 1732 when Peter Coutts of Balmoral contracted to erect a two-saw water-powered sawmill upon the water of Tanner. The first sawmiller to operate this machine was Archibald Grant".

****ANTIQUARIAN FINDS IN EAST SCOTLAND**

IN recent years there have been some interesting antiquarian finds in East Scotland. For example, a partly broken cinerary urn measuring nine inches outside diameter at the mouth was found by a trapper at the side of a newly excavated road in Drumtochty Forest, Kincardineshire. Professor R. D. Lockhart, of the Department of Anatomy in Aberdeen University, reported as follows: "The bones contained in the urn have been cremated and are in very small fragments. Probably they belong to a small person between 25 and 40 years of age. There is the neck of one femur and a portion of its head; a small part of the head of another femur; remains of vertebrae and of the crest of the ilium; part of a small astragalus and several disarticulated pieces of flat skull bones."

The urn is now in the University's Anthropological Museum.

A bronze age stone cyst about 4-4½ feet in length, containing a skeleton in a crouched position, was demolished accidentally when gravel was being excavated at Glenisla Forest, Angus. The cyst was sited in a fluvo-glacial mound of sand and gravel, at the highest point in the mound, and very near the surface. It had been covered with a small mound of stones.

Pieces of the skeleton were salvaged and handed over to Aberdeen University. They included the skull (broken but almost complete), the lower jaw in good condition and complete with teeth, the vertebrae, pieces of the pelvis and of each femur and some pieces of ribs.

While planting at Durris Forest, Aberdeenshire, a forest worker found a Charles I gold coin which proved to be an English (London) 20s. piece with a date mark 1640-41. It is very little rubbed but as it had not been well struck the portrait is faint. This coin may possibly have been lost by one of Cromwell's soldiers during the siege of Dunnottar Castle.

****NEW HANDBOOK ON DEER CONTROL**

OF the new journals which have reached us of late for review, few have aroused our interest or evoked our approbation more than "Deer Control", the first publication of the fairly recently formed British Deer Society, of which, incidentally, the Forestry Commission is a "sustaining Member". In effect this handbook is a clear-cut, down-to-earth modus operandi for the setting up of local Deer Control Societies, the formation of which the parent Society believes "provides a sound solution" to the promotion of proper management of the largest, and the most intriguing of all our wild animals.

The authors, H. A. FOOKS and JOHN HOTCHKIS, have gone a great deal further by describing the actual work the local Society must undertake and reaction of many, on reading the hand-book, will almost assuredly be to say to themselves "Can I help?".

If this is so in your case, then you will wish to know that copies of the handbook can be obtained from the Publications Officer of the British Deer Society, Mr. E. H. DOWN, Grey Plovers, Hendon Wood Lane, Mill Hill, London N.W.7. The price is 5s. 9d, including postage.

****NEWS FROM SOUTH WALES**

IN the Forest Year 1960, at the end of the planting season, there was a small surplus of Lodgepole pine at Brechfa, South Wales. This was duly planted by the Forester on the "spill" on the lower side of a newly made road to try and fix the loose soil. In the first year there was very little upward movement but since then many of the trees have put on a height growth of over 14 feet and three are now over 16 feet. None of the trees is spindly; indeed, they are all strong and vigorous. Can any Forester report faster growth than this?

Cwm Farm, the home of Mr. JOHN PHILLIPS, a forest worker at Talybont, nestles in a deep dingle under the wellknown Llangattock cliffs. In 1955 and the following year Mr. Phillips planted two acres of Japanese larch on his farm and duly received the small woods planting grants. His plantations have flourished and are approaching the brashing stage, and he has followed up this success with the planting of a further five acres this year.

This operation reflects a characteristic pride in one's calling and one day the plantation will undoubtedly do much to restore the former sylvan beauty of the valley. Perhaps, also, some of Mr. Phillip's neighbours will follow his example!

**GROUSE: LATE NESTING

ASSISTER FORESTER G. N. BARRY of Kielder Forest, North East England, writes:

"I was reading in a magazine recently that some scientists believe we are entering a colder and wetter period of weather. Certainly if this spring was anything to go by, this could be true.

"The weather greatly influenced the nesting of grouse. When we first started work in February on the P64 planting area they had already paired up, doubtless in preparation for the early spring which they expected to follow the relatively mild winter. The weather then changed and March brought periods of cold wet weather which lasted well into April. The birds did not fulfil their promise of early nesting and in fact the first nest with eggs was not found until the last week in April. When compared with normal years this is quite late and even after the severe winter of 1963 the birds had laid their eggs before the third week in that month.

"Has this been the experience of other Foresters? I wonder if this weather affected other birds as well?"

**IN THE LOCH

A correspondent in North Scotland writes:

"At first sight it appeared that the story of the tractor in the loch (April last) had 'got out' from this area, but not so. Nevertheless a mechanical loader, due for write-off, did have a power failure while loading gravel on the shore of a freshwater loch. This failure also causes a brake failure, in which the emergency precaution is to drop the shovel to act as a brake. The temporary operator did not know this and after he jumped clear the tractor ran down the beach and ended with about 20 feet of water over it. Nothing daunted we received a sale offer of £50, 'as lying', which was accepted. The new owner had a friend who was a diver on a nearby waterway, and between them they had no difficulty in extricating the machine."

**PERSONAL

DURING the exhibition at Blackbushe, Miss M. J. EDEN, of Headquarters was presented by the FAO-ECE delegates with a gold brooch as a token of their appreciation of the part played by Miss Eden in organising their meetings and tours in this country. The delegates included a visit to the exhibition in their programme.

**STAFF OUTINGS

THE annual educational outing of South Scotland Conservancy Office was to the Tweed Valley. This included a visit to the acquisition of Glenbreck where attention was centred on modern ploughing techniques and on planting. Next stop was at Glentress Forest, where work began in 1920. Today Glentress comprises well over 2,000 acres of hill slopes planted mainly with Scots and Corsican pines, Norway and Sitka spruces, Douglas fir and European and Japanese larches. Interest was focused on thinning, marking, felling and extraction. Later stops were made at Cardrona, Elibank and Traquair and Yair Hill to view extensive Commission plantations, which greatly enhanced the scenic beauty all along the Tweed Valley.

The party then visited Bowhill Estate by courtesy of His Grace The Duke of Buccleuch. Points of special interest were the sawmill, pressure celcure plant and the nursery. Everyone was impressed by the beauty of the estate.

Thanks for an enlightening and most enjoyable outing were due to Divisional Officer W. N. GIBSON; District Officer N. M. BROWN; Foresters A. R. McLAREN and W. R. RAE; and Mr. T. FARMER, Chief Clerk.

The venue for this year's educational outing of the Edinburgh staff was Kielder Forest and village via Wauchope forest, in South Scotland. The very cold day did not mar the pleasure of the 31 members who took part in this interesting outing.

Notice to All Forestry Commission Employees

ORGANISATION COMMITTEE

The Director General has recently set up a Committee, to be named Organisation Committee, with the following terms of reference:-

"To review the structure and organisation of the Forestry Commission within the existing statutory framework.

"To make recommendations for an appropriate structure and organisation, paying full regard to the duties and responsibilities of all grades and special attention to the numbers of the professional forest officer class."

This is an important assignment and the findings of the Committee can have a major effect on the Commission's development and efficiency for many years ahead. It will be necessary for the Committee to collect as much relevant information as possible from sources both inside and outside the Commission and they wish to draw upon as wide a field of experience and inspiration as possible. WE THEREFORE INVITE ANY EMPLOYEE who wishes to present constructive proposals to the Committee, to send them direct to the Committee Secretary at the address below before 15th September 1964. Such proposals should as far as possible be prepared as comparative studies contrasting the present organisation and structure with any improvements proposed, and supported by assessments of comparative economy and efficiency with as much supporting data as possible.

Those employees who only have experience of part of the Commission's organisation should not be inhibited from presenting ideas relating only to that part, but the suggestions must be confined to the terms of reference. The Committee has no authority to consider matters of pay, allowances or other conditions of service.

M. A. E. Gubby

Secretary of the Organisation Committee

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