

The SLASHER

**FORESTRY
COMMISSION**
News & Views

Issued by
**INFORMATION
OFFICER**

No. 245

May, 1968

MEET LT. COL. D. B. ROOKE, M.C.

NOW in post at Savile Row as our new
Principal Information Officer is

Lt. Col. D. B. Rooke, M.C., who has come to the Commission from the Ministry of Defence, where he has been in charge of the Press Facilities branch.

A regular soldier, Col. Rooke went through Sandhurst and then to the Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment. He saw pre-war service in India and Palestine and during the war served in North Africa with the Eighth and First Armies and in Sicily. Returning home, he was appointed to Lord Montgomery's planning staff for the invasion of Normandy and Europe and was subsequently in command of the 7th Battalion the Hampshire Regiment and, later, the 2nd Battalion the "Royal West Kents". After the war he attended the first advanced infantry course at the U.S. Infantry School, Fort Belling, Georgia. Following this he went as instructor to the School of Infantry at Warminster and while there (always a countryman by heart and birth) he founded and was the first Master and Huntsman of the School of Infantry Beagles.

Col. Rooke retired from the Army in 1951 and for the next 11 years was engaged in the production and managerial side of the theatre and films, during which time he ran the Repertory Company in Norwich. Following a spell as Registrar of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art he entered the Government Information Service at the War Office in 1962. Col. Rooke, incidentally, has a link with forestry, in that his stepfather, Mr. W. C. ROOKE, was a Conservator of Forests in the Burma Forest Service.

****PRESENTATION TO DENNIS HEALEY**

AT a farewell gathering at Savile Row to mark Mr. DENNIS HEALEY'S retirement from

the Commission the Director General, Mr. JOHN DICKSON, paid tribute to the former's 21 years of service as Principal Information Officer, which had entailed starting the Information Branch from scratch. Mr. Dickson spoke of Mr. Healey's early experience in the world of printing and journalism and his appointment in 1940 to the Ministry of Information, with which he served throughout the war. Subsequently he was Press Officer at the Ministry of Health during the "reign" as Minister of Mr. Aneurin Bevan, prior to joining the Commission. He was awarded the O.B.E. in 1961 but it was not generally known that he had received recognition from General de Gaulle for his work on behalf of the Free French forces during the war!

Paying tribute to Dennis Healey's valuable work with schools in the field of forestry publicity and education, his contribution to the success of the Timber Trades Journal's forestry supplement and the readability (and resilience) of The Slasher, Mr. Dickson said he was sure that Dennis Healey had been "an entirely good man for the Forestry Commission".

In response Mr. Healey thanked all his colleagues for their help and friendship in the "happiest years of service that one could have had". He also entertained and delighted his hearers with a few reminiscences from his varied experiences - but those make another story! As a token of the esteem of friends and wellwishers throughout the Commission, Mr. Dickson presented Mr. Healey with a cheque and best wishes for a happy retirement.

Dennis Healey writes: "I would like

through the medium of The Slasher to thank my colleagues for their most generous gift and to apologise for my oversight (I hope forgivable in the circumstances) at the presentation in not stating the use to which I intended putting the money. Originally I thought I would put it towards the purchase of a new lawn mower (pushable) or a portable typewriter; but such was your generosity I am now able to buy both mower and typewriter. I cannot thank you enough for your kindness in providing the gift and the sentiments behind it."

****GRIZEDALE - DEATH OF MR. H. A. FOOKS** FOR several reasons we bring Grizedale, the Commission's showpiece forest in North West England, back into the news. One of these is rather sad since we have heard of the death recently of Mr. H. A. FOOKS, who in 1956 was appointed the Commission's first Game Warden, with the main duty of advising on methods of controlling deer in our woodlands. For this purpose he was posted to Grizedale and, on leaving the Commission, he continued to live in the area. For a while before joining us he had been secretary of the Calcutta Zoo and he had visited widely separated countries to study animals.

The Satterthwaite forest cottage industry was featured a week or two ago in a BBC programme. This was started about eight years ago after our colleague Mr. MARTIN ORROM, then in charge of the South Lakes district and now at Savile Row, had consulted the Rural Industries Bureau and discussed prospects. The industry makes high quality handbags and slippers from the hides of deer culled at Grizedale and other Lakeland woods and, it is understood, there is a substantial sale for these in Lakeland shops. Roe and fallow deer provide the most favoured skins, for the long hair of red deer hides makes them difficult to sew. The industry manages its affairs on a co-operative basis, each member receiving takings according to output. Many of the products, proudly labelled Grizedale Forest Handcrafts, are sold at the local deer museum, which is an integral part of what is now known as the Wild Life Centre of Grizedale Forest. This latter is the subject of one of the most attractive little booklets we have seen for a long while and derives much of its interest from the excellent wild life photographs that appear in it. This publication describes how, to aid the study of animals and birds, the Commission has erected hides for photographers wishing to "capture" wild life at Grizedale and refers, also, to the erection of the "Treetops" observation tower at the side of a picturesque tarn.

****PROMOTION FOR MR. H. W. GULLIVER** A stage has been reached in the amalgamation of the South East England Conservancy and the New Forest Deputy Surveyorship at which Mr. HARRY GULLIVER, Administration and Finance Officer at Woking, has been promoted to Chief Executive Officer. His many friends throughout the Commission will be delighted to hear of this upgrading.

****RECEIVES HIS B.E.M.** MR. FRANK JOHNSON, Senior Estate Clerk of Works, South Scotland, who was awarded the British Empire Medal in the New Year honours list, recently received his medal from Major General SIR AYMER MAXWELL, Deputy Lord Lieutenant. The ceremony took place at the conclusion of a visit by members of the Dumfries and Galloway Region of the Royal Scottish Forestry Society to Dalbeattie Forest. More than 100 people were present, including Mr. Johnson's wife and family; Mr. J. E. JAMES, Conservator South Scotland; Mr. J. A. B. MACDONALD, former Conservator; Mr. R. R. DONALD, former Assistant Conservator; and members of the present Conservancy staff.

Mr. Johnson joined the Commission in 1947 and has given outstanding service. Until 1955 he was responsible for all the building work in South Scotland, including the creation of the now well-known forest villages of Ae and Glentrool. Since that year his efforts have been concentrated in the eastern half of the Conservancy. Sir Aymer was deputising for the Lord Lieutenant, LORD GALLOWAY, who was ill and paid tribute to Mr. Johnson's work in the community, mentioning also that the latter was a successful bowler and had last year been a semi-finalist in the Scottish Bowling Championships.

****RETIREMENT OF HEAD FORESTER** THE social clubroom in the forest hamlet of Stonehaugh was packed with wellwishers assembled to mark the retirement of Head Forester CHARLIE BROWN after 40 years' service with the Commission. The venue was particularly appropriate because

Charlie Brown was in charge of Wark Forest when the idea of the village was conceived and the houses were built. A native of Hawick, he commenced his service with the Commission in 1928 when he started work at Barcaldine Forest; his first charge in North East England was Harwood in 1929, a forest to which he returned in 1963 after being at various stations throughout the Conservancy.

The Conservator, Mr. G. E. GODWIN, spoke highly of Charlie's capabilities and, on behalf of colleagues of all grades, presented him with a wrist watch. Charlie's numerous friends will be pleased to know that he proposes to remain in Northumberland, where it is hoped he will enjoy many years of retirement and retain a proprietary interest in the extensive woodlands he helped to create.

**ON WITH THE MOTLEY

THE Inforesta (Headquarters) Drama Group have undertaken their annual tour of forest villages and other centres. On this occasion performances of the comedy "When We Are Married" were given at Kielder, Tirabad, Llaneglwys and Parkend and, for the first time, in the villages of Ae, South Scotland, and Dovey, North Wales. Our correspondent writes: "The Group were well received everywhere and first reports indicate that this was one of the most successful tours to date. Audience figures were up on last year and many supporters thought the production was the best so far. The fact that on this occasion the Group gave six performances in nine evenings does not deter them from offering to perform in other villages or centres that would like to have them.

"One sad aspect of the tour was that it was ALAN CHAPMAN'S last for the time being, for he has decided to take a well deserved rest from drama activities. He was one of the founder members of the Group and has been involved in every play since the first production in London in 1962 ("Dangerous Corner"). It is true to say that as well as being one of the Group's leading lights where acting is concerned, he has promoted each of the five tours so far undertaken and has had to contend with all the exacting work of organisation. We hope it will not be long before he again 'treads the boards'".

**IN THE STAR BALLROOM

STAFF of the East Scotland Conservancy held their annual dance in the Star Ballroom, Aberdeen. The Conservator, Mr. G. I. MACKENZIE, welcomed well over 100 people, including the following guests: Mr. Sandy Hogg, of Messrs. Jas. Jones & Sons, Larbert, and Miss Hogg; Mr. Chris McRae of Timbuyers, Aberdeen, and Mrs. McRae; Mr. A. Grigor, Secretary of the local branch of the Royal Scottish Forestry Society, and Mrs. Grigor; and the former Conservator, East Scotland, Mr. FRANK OLIVER, looking as hale and hearty as ever.

The Social Club Committee presented Head Forester GEORGE MURRAY, of Glenlivet Forest, and Mrs. Murray with gift tokens in recognition of the former's impending retirement. George and Rhoda Murray have been regular and popular attenders of the Committee's functions and the presentation was in no way an official retirement one. Through The Slasher the Committee thank all who attended the dance for their support and for contributing to such an enjoyable evening.

**IAN MacIVER GOES NORTH

AFTER 18 years in South West England, IAN MacIVER, District Officer, has been transferred to Scotland. He takes with him (writes our correspondent) the good wishes of everyone in the Conservancy, for all will miss his unfailing good humour, kindness and boundless enthusiasm. We shall miss his burly kilted figure, though we don't regret the day he gave up smoking his own home-grown tobacco! He and his wife, Dorothy, have given unstinted hospitality to all who visited his district and perhaps their request for a stainless steel tea set resulted from the wear and tear on their crockery. He was given these, and an electric clock, at a meeting of Foresters from Devon and Cornwall and, on the eve of his departure, the Conservator, Mr. C. A. CONNELL, District Officers and Foresters gave a dinner for him and his wife at Bideford.

Ian is a most successful cricketer and as bat and wicket keeper has passed many a doughty season, his annual average continuously improving. On the field, however, he dressed the part - in

flannels! Good fortune to him and his family in South Cowal but -- look out, Scotland, Ian is a draining expert and enthusiast and one or two lochs may well disappear.

****NEW JOB FOR SIR HENRY**

WE note with interest that our former Director General, SIR HENRY BERESFORD-PEIRSE, who comparatively recently retired from the Commission, has been appointed a member of the Nature Conservancy. With his wealth of experience of the countryside and as a naturalist in his own right, this is the sort of job which will appeal to him immensely. We wish him well.

****WINS "SILVER WOLF"**

MR. R. G. SANZEN-BAKER, Deputy Surveyor, The Dean has been awarded the highest honour that the Chief Scout can bestow - the Silver Wolf, of which only a dozen or so a year are distributed. Mr. Sanzen-Baker has been in the Scout movement for some 40 years and is only the second Gloucestershire recipient of the award in the last 20 years. He was made Forest of Dean District Scout Commissioner about six years ago. Certainly his public service is extensive for he is a J.P. for Coleford and a member of the Gloucestershire County Education Committee. Mrs. Sanzen-Baker is the Forest of Dean Divisional Girl Guides Commissioner and, it is understood, two sons were Scouts and two daughters were Guides.

****ARE YOU A COMMISSION TOP MAN?**

LEAVING our own "hierachy" out of account, are you one of the Commission's top men? In other words, who of all the Commission's employees live highest in England, Scotland and Wales and of these, who can claim the record? (We mean highest above sea level, of course, not capacity for "living it up").

Reading the other day that none in Britain is domiciled higher than 2,000 feet (and, in Scotland, not more than 1,000 feet because it's coldest in that country) we speculated a little. Our highest forest is probably Queen's Forest, in the Cairngorms, where the forest land rises to more than 4,000 feet and, maybe, someone living in that area has a really good bird's eye view of their surroundings. Anyway, we would be pleased to hear from readers on this subject; it matters not whether the house in which you live is owned by the Commission and if you can send along something about the scenic or other advantages of living where you do (or maybe disadvantages!) this would be of added interest.

****HOT HANDS - AND SEATS!**

IT is reported that in Corona, California, male members of a nudist colony helped fight a forest fire, clad only in their shoes.

Other odd spots: A letter received at the Queen's House, New Forest, came from an 11 years' old boy already considering joining the Commission and writing from the following delightful address: Sycamore, Hazel Road, Ash Green, Aldershot (Alder-shot). Feature of a Commission exhibition was the snappy captioning - for example: "Roe Deer - Why Control? There are no wolves and the deer haven't heard of the pill. So the Commission do the job sensibly." Betwixt and between. From an enquiry about camping facilities in Glenmore Forest Park - "My party are half boys and half girls". Boobs in print. That august publication Hansard, reporting Mr. Marcus Kimball, M.P., on the subject of Commission planting on peat after deep ploughing, said this was a growing practice where it is intended to grow citrus fruit (Sitka Spruce?) very quickly. Press notice from the Agricultural, Horticultural and Forestry Training Board referred to the "Foshally" (Faskally) Forester Training School; issuing a correction the Board said "Please read FOSKALLY, not Foshally.

****WELL DONE, CAROL**

MISS CAROL JUSTICE, Clerical Officer at York, recently played with great success the lead in York Amateur Operatic and Dramatic Society's £5,500 production of "Calamity Jane" in the 950-seater Theatre Royal. Previously, as a member of the Rowntrees Youth Club Amateurs she played a lead in "West Side Story", "Annie Get Your Gun", "Wizard of Oz", "Oklahoma" and "Carousel" and her great ambition was to play the Theatre Royal. Congratulations to Carol on her achievement.