

**FORESTRY
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THE DYING ELMS

Commission Holds London Conference On Problem

In view of the present serious epidemic of (Dutch) Elm Disease, the Commission called a meeting of all authorities interested in elm trees, with the object of describing this disease and its cause, and advising what could be done to contain it.

Many local Councils, Societies with purely forestry or arboricultural interests, authorities such as the NFU etc., attended the meeting on 6th October. The Chair was taken by Mr. G. G. Stewart (Commissioner for Forest and Estate Management), and with him were Dr. John N. Gibbs (Senior Scientific Officer in Research Pathology Branch) and Mr. Morley Penistan (Asst. Conservator, SW(E)).

Dr. Gibbs described, with the aid of colour slides, the various aspects of the disease, what work had been carried out by our Research Division, the effects and locations of the scourge in this country, and how it has affected elm populations in other countries, notably America and Europe. Mr. Penistan outlined his past experience in areas which had been badly hit, and gave his views on what had been done to contain it by a lopping or felling policy.

Some questioners from the floor pointed out that farmers had neither the time nor expertise to take control measures. Where the tree had no commercial value there was no incentive to remove it.

Mr. Peter Wilson, Forestry Officer to the Kent County Council, reminded those present that there were clauses in local Government Acts under which monies from rates could be used to allay the cost of felling of diseased trees in towns. Several speakers demanded that Parliament be asked for emergency legislation to permit compulsory felling.

Basildon New Town, much hit by the disease, is importing a breed of wasps from Austria (already extant in UK in small numbers), which locate the larvae of the elm bark beetle and inject their eggs - thus destroying the larvae and breaking the life cycle.

The main points which came out of the Conference were: (a) that there is at present no known cure or prophylactic treatment for the disease (b) that the only known effective measures to contain the disease is a "Sanitation" policy - which means felling dead or dying trees and burning bark and lop, or amputating and burning limbs of trees partially affected and (c) accelerating efforts to discover ways of eventually eradicating the disease, by chemical or other means, or by

developing hybrid, disease-resistant elms, such as the Commelin or Huntingdon varieties. It was pointed out that the Commission had been carrying out research into the problem for many years, and was now giving higher priority and more resources to this work in view of the urgent need.

Considerable Press and especially broadcasting coverage resulted from this conference; reports were networked on both BBC and Independent Television news channels and got appreciable notice in "Farming To-day". As a result many inquiries from tree owners have come in to headquarters, and doubtless to conservancies.

A special pamphlet bearing the title "The Dying Elms" (F.C. Research & Development Paper No.78) was prepared for the occasion, to be read in conjunction with F.C. Leaflet No.19 (Elm Disease). Copies of these pamphlets, which contain most of the answers to possible inquiries, may be obtained from Publications Branch at London headquarters. Supplies of Paper 19 will in any case be sent to Conservancies.

FURTHER TERM

OF OFFICE

The Queen has been pleased to approve the re-appointment of Mr. Harold Watkins as a part-time member of the Forestry Commission for a further term of three years from 1 October.

Mr. Watkins was first appointed a Forestry Commissioner in 1967. He is a Director of Canusa Ltd., a Company he has served for over 30 years. He was in the Army in India during the last war and has subsequently travelled extensively throughout the world. In addition to his long experience in the timber industry, Mr. Watkins has a degree in Forestry. He lives at Woodford Green, Essex.

MINISTER WELCOMES SETTING UP OF NEW FOREST CONSULTATIVE PANEL

On September 10th, the Forestry Commissioners announced their intention to set up a New Forest Consultative Panel, to be a sounding-board for the expression of views by local organisations and interests on the factors to be taken into account in the management of the Forest.

Commenting on this announcement the Rt. Hon. James Prior, M.P., Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, said:

"I am pleased to approve the Forestry Commissioners' proposal to establish a Consultative Panel in the New Forest and I welcome their initiative in this matter. As the Minister responsible for two Departments actively connected with all that takes place on the land I attach great importance to the solution of conservation and amenity problems. The interests of farming, forestry and conservation are to a large degree complementary. With a mutual understanding of their problems and with tolerance on all sides it should be possible for these various interests to exist alongside each other in harmony in the countryside.

"I am confident that the Consultative Panel will be an effective forum through which this mutual understanding and tolerance will be achieved in the New Forest and that it will be an important step in the conservation of the traditional character of the Forest and the protection of our national heritage there.

"I am looking forward to visiting the New Forest early in the New Year to see its problems at first hand". (This visit is now timed for 23 November).

COMMISSION WIN FOUR "COUNTRYSIDE 1970" AWARDS

Out of the 72 awards given for Countryside projects under a scheme approved by HRH The Duke of Edinburgh, as President of "The Countryside In 1970", four were awarded to entries by the Forestry Commission.

The Commission's winners were as follows:-

E(E): One for the provision of car parks, forest walks, picnic places, view points and information at Halton Woods, near Wendover, Bucks. And a second (jointly with the Northamptonshire Naturalists Trust) for the establishment of a Nature Trail in Salcey Forest, near Northampton.

SW(E): One award for improvements of amenities in the Forest of Dean, and another award for the establishment of a Forest Trail at Castle Neroche in Somerset.

A formal presentation of the awards will be made at London's Guildhall on 28 October in the presence of Prince Philip, and on the following day an exhibition will open at Waterloo Station which will display photographs of a selection of the prize-winners. Two of the Commission's award winners will be represented.

The awards take the form of a certificate and a bronze plaque for display where appropriate on sites figuring in award projects. The presentations and exhibition will be a part of the programme for the "Countryside of 1970" Conference, which is also the United Kingdom National Conference for European Conservation Year. Joint sponsors of the scheme are the Council of Nature; The Nature Conservancy and the Royal Society of Arts.

FAO - European Forestry Commission, Rome, September 1970

FORESTS NOT ONLY FOR PROFIT SAYS UNITED NATIONS (FAO)

The world's forests do not exist solely for what can be cut out of them in the way of materials and profit. Their cool tranquillity is also for leisure, to be enjoyed by the humble camper and picnicker - and foresters should pay more attention to providing them with facilities among the trees and to protecting them from fires and other hazards. At the same time visitors must be protected from their own bad habits and not allowed to pollute the forest environment with litter.

This is the theme which emerged from the 9th session of the European Forestry Commission of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization. Thirty-three economists and forestry experts from 20 European countries and observers from several international organizations took part in the discussions.

The conservation of forests, which is an important part of man's environment, will be achieved when we have resolved "all conflicts between short term, often private, interests, and long-term interests of the community", but also through "the education of citizens, of politicians and above all of the foresters themselves", the Commission states in its final report.

However, it would be a mistake to see the conservation of forests for recreation as a purely humanitarian duty. In fact, tourism in the forests was becoming a major source of profit - in some cases even a better one than the mere extraction of wood. "We derive more profit from tourism and recreation in our forests than from the cutting of trees", said Mr. P. Margaropoulos of Greece. Mr. Marcel Blanc, the French delegate, said he believes that "some distant and low-profit forests could derive new profits from recreation".

Hunting was one of the most active and profit-making sports to be practised and developed in the forests, other delegates said; Mr. J. A. Spencer (U.K. Forestry Commission) said that many British forests were now arranged purposely for hunters. "Some of our forests for instance are especially laid out for pheasant shooting. They mustn't be too damp, with wide lanes for shooting. Woodcock also requires special woods."

"Shooting may sometimes conflict with other recreations, but any measure to improve hunting is also liable to improve the forests from other angles. Hunting also gives a revenue sometimes higher than any other activity," Mr. Spencer said.

The delegates agreed that "the forest environment offered many different kinds of attraction, and there was a great need for more research in these matters". They advocated "a kind of market research, with the supporting statistics" to be carried out by the International Union of Forestry Research Organizations, in cooperation with other groups.

Tourist Carelessness A Major Cause Of Spanish Forest Fires

At the same conference a Spanish forestry expert had complained that "too many tourists" are menacing Spain's forests through carelessness with fires. "Spain, which has a population of 33 million, this year received 23 million tourists," he said. "This is becoming more than we can handle, and these tourists, spreading over the country, create problems which are getting out of hand." Forest fires was one of these problems.

Mr. R. De Rade, Assistant Director-General of Spain's Department of Forestry in Madrid, was taking part in a discussion at an ad-hoc working party on forest management. Thirty-three forestry experts from 17 countries, and an observer from Argentina attended the working party's two-day meeting organized by the European Forestry Commission of the F.A.O. Mr. De Rada complained that enormous areas of Spain's forest lands were lost each year through fires. Most of these, he said, were caused by campers and careless tourists from abroad.

"In 1969," he added, "more than 20 000 hectares of our national forests were lost through fires." Mr. De Rada said he would readily accept any suggestion from FAO. Forest fires were typical of the problems raised at the working party, which is concentrating on the growing number of tourists, picknickers and sight-seers using European forests for recreation.

Foresters are increasingly aware of their responsibility to provide facilities to the public in the forests. They also realize that these visitors and pleasure-seekers are a potential source of income - in some case even more profitable than timber production. This means wooing tourists into the forests, by building new roads, hotels, parking spaces and other facilities, instead of keeping them out. The question is whether the provision of tourist or recreation facilities can be reconciled with economic timber production.

Chairman of the meeting was Mr. Marcel A. L. Blanc, Director-General of the French Service of Nature Conservation.

TOMORROW'S FRESH WOODS

Readers may already have seen the special feature article "Tomorrow's Fresh Woods" about the work of the Commission, which appeared in the Illustrated London News of September 26th. As it may be of use to Field Staff as general background information throughout the country, the article is reprinted below.

The article was well illustrated, showing photographs of deep ploughing operations on an upland moor - extraction methods - wild life - planting on opencast mining sites - Forest trails - Youth education and public amenities.

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Trees are a crop. As a farmer grows wheat for the flour miller, so the forester tends his trees for pulp or sawmill use, in due time. The words "in due time" emphasize that forestry is a long term business, for it will be some 25 years before any interim return from relatively unprofitable thinnings - and 50 to 60 years before the earliest final harvest of mature trees.

In prehistoric times natural forests covered most of Britain's land surface. These forests were steadily cleared for cultivation, grazing, and fuel to a point of deforestation much greater than in most European countries. Even now, after considerable reafforestation, the proportion of land under forest (8 per cent) is the lowest in Europe except for the Irish Republic (3 per cent); Belgium and France have 20 per cent, West Germany 28 per cent.

The Industrial Revolution created demands for timber, then as now principally for the softwoods of coniferous trees, that could only be met by importing 93 per cent. The 1914-18 blockade cut off this supply and it was only through drastic premature felling in private woodlands that the nation was able to keep its mines, and so its industries, working.

The Forestry Commission was established in 1919 and told bluntly to get some pit props growing quickly, and some 600,000 acres were planted by 1939. By 1945 the nation's timber reserves had reached their nadir. In 1950 a major planting programme began, since when the great majority of the Commission's plantations have been formed. It now has 1.8 million acres under trees and plants each year about 55,000 acres. The present growth rate of its forests is the equivalent of an increment of $2\frac{1}{2}$ cwts of new wood every second.

Essentially, the Commission's first aim was to plant and grow trees. Now it is to produce wood for use by industry, 90 per cent of whose demand is for conifers. As a secondary objective the Commission provides for public recreation and pays full regard to the conservation of the beauty of the countryside, and of its flora and fauna. As the national forest authority, the Commission is also responsible for administering grants and legislation for private forestry and undertaking research.

Land is acquired by negotiation with willing sellers, not by compulsion, and all acquisitions have to be cleared by the Agricultural Departments. Thus planting takes place mainly on upland moors which have been degraded through overgrazing - another reason for the planting of conifers, for no worthwhile crop of broadleaved trees would survive on such land. To prepare the land for planting, very deep ploughing of the uplands to drain peaty soils or to break hard pans is often essential. As it has necessarily been a pioneer in the creation of forests, as against receiving them as a gift of nature, the Commission leads the world in these techniques.

To supply the young plants, the Commission's nurseries produce some 100 million seedlings a year. After planting out, the young trees must be protected during their early years from damage by weeds or grazing, but apart from this and normal maintenance they are left to grow for about 25 years, when the first of a succession of approximately five-yearly thinnings takes place. It is now that plantations become easily penetrable and of great value for recreation and amenity. Finally, at between 50 and 60 years, the remaining trees are clear felled and the rotation begins again.

As its major planting programme started only 20 years ago, a bare 25 per cent of the Commission's plantations is as yet producing even thinnings, though the earliest plantations are now becoming due for clear felling as mature timber. So the Commission's harvest has considerable growth potential. It is also important, for in 1969 the nation's import bill for timber and wood products was £650 million. The demand for these commodities rises with the standard of living and a European shortage of timber is forecast by the year 2000. In 1969 production was 1.3 million tons, double that of 1960; this will itself double by 1980 and re-double by the year 2000. At present the nation's woodlands - Commission and private - provide about 10 per cent of its requirements. Because of increasing demand it is doubtful whether this will ever rise much above 20 per cent, but even this will show a considerably increased saving in foreign exchange.

The Commission has no difficulty in marketing its timber and could sell twice as much as it can make available. By offering long term supply contracts the Commission has already encouraged the setting up of some 20 new wood-using industries within the past 12 years.

Forestry has recently undergone a technological revolution but the introduction of modern managerial methods and mechanical equipment has inevitably led to a reduction in manpower. Nonetheless without forestry many of the 7,500 workers now employed would not have remained in upland areas for, overall, one forest worker is needed to each 240 acres of woodland, whereas 1,000 acres are needed to sustain one shepherd under rough grazing, the only alternative employment. To the credit of forestry may also be put the appreciable employment provided in rural areas by industries such as the pulp mill operated by Wiggins Teape at Fort William, Inverness.

The value of its forests for purposes other than timber production is a concept which has necessarily been secondary in the Commission's development, but the first Forest Park was opened in 1935 in Argyll, and others were established in Snowdonia and the Forest of Dean before 1939. Four more have since been opened to give, with the New Forest, over 500,000 acres for public enjoyment, and in the past decade the use of forest land for public recreation and wildlife conservation has developed rapidly.

The forests have one great advantage for recreation in that the trees hide car parks and camp sites and provide both for those who wish for solitude and those preferring gregarious enjoyment. The Commission has already provided nine fully equipped camp sites (and 23 others for use by youth organizations), 200 picnic sites and over 100 forest trails. Selected forests have huts of the "Tree Tops" type from which wildlife can be observed and forest centres have been equipped to study animal and plant communities.

It is expected that at least a million people will camp on forest sites this year and a 1968 census showed that some 15 million visits were paid to the Commission's forests by day visitors. In view of these figures the Commission plans to increase not only the number but also the scope of its recreational facilities.

The creation of large new forests on upland moors treeless for centuries, and the re-stocking of largely derelict old woodlands, have produced special problems.

In the new forests the most marked changes of habitat have occurred on sites which previously were not very rich in flora and fauna. The newly provided cover attracts a more varied population of birds and animals and the thinning, felling, and restocking of parts of the forest, each in turn, vary the ages, sizes and kinds of tree present, and so achieve and maintain an ecological balance. In addition, breaks of natural vegetation such as birch, alder, and oak - left wherever possible on stream sides - clumps of broad leaved trees and patches of scrub retained when replanting old woodland areas, and dams built to make ponds for fire fighting, produce a variety of habitat and enrich the forest flora and fauna.

Conservation projects include the reclamation of large acreages of coastal sand dunes, principally at Culbin Forest on the Moray Firth and Newborough Forest on Anglesey. Of major significance also is the afforestation of spoil heaps and old industrial workings in the valleys of South Wales and elsewhere.

It is fortunate that all the measures taken to conserve wildlife also contribute to the landscape and that nearly all improvements in landscape create better wildlife habitats. The Commission has always given special consideration to amenity and landscape. For example, in the New Forest, the Chilterns, the Lake District, the Forest of Dean, the North Yorkshire Moors, and the Caledonian pine woods, normal silvicultural practices are modified to perpetuate the local type of woodland, and in 1969 the Commission planted some 60,000 oak and some 500,000 beech trees in such special areas.

In 1964 Miss Sylvia Crowe, past President of the Institute of Landscape Architects, was appointed landscape consultant to the Commission, and provisions for the maintenance of amenity and the landscape are now written into the long term plans of every forest. With such planning, many of the features of forestry which have drawn criticism in the past can be avoided.

The ever increasing demand for timber and wood products, and the high import bill, give commercial forestry a special economic importance. It is also of increasing moment that the urban population shall be able to find peace and refreshment in the countryside. Where foresters harmonize their silviculture and commercial forest management with the landscape, wildlife conservation, and recreation the woodlands reach their full potential. The Commission's policy aims to achieve just this.

NEW MEMBER FOR COUNTRYSIDE COMMISSION

Mr. Peter Walker, Minister of Housing and Local Government, and Mr. Peter Thomas, Secretary of State for Wales have appointed Mr. Tudor E. Watkins to be a member of the Countryside Commission. His appointment takes effect from 30 September 1970.

Mr. Watkins was MP for Brecon and Radnor from 1945 until June 1970, when he did not seek re-election. He has been an Alderman of Breconshire County Council since 1940 and is an Hon Freeman of Brecon. He is a former member of the Wales Tourist Board and Vice President of the Rural District Councils and Parish Councils Associations.

He is also Chairman of the Breconshire National Park Planning Committee of the Joint Advisory Committee for the Brecon Beacons National Park.

MINISTER APPOINTS LIAISON OFFICERS

The Rt. Hon. James Prior, M.P., Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, has appointed the following to be his personal Liaison Officers for the areas shown:

Mr. F. K. Abbey	Lancashire and Yorkshire (East and West Ridings).
Sir Richard Boughey, Bt., D.L., J.P.	Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Isle of Wight, Kent, Oxfordshire, Surrey and East and West Sussex.
Mr. J. Brocklebank, C.B.E., J.P.	Cumberland, Durham, Northumberland, Westmorland and Yorkshire (North Riding).
The Rt. Hon. The Lord De Ramsey, T.D., L.L.	Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire and Isle of Ely, Essex, Hertfordshire, Huntingdonshire and Peterborough, Lincolnshire (Holland), Norfolk and Suffolk.
Lt. Col. G. W. F. Luttrell, M.C., D.L., J.P.	Cornwall, Devonshire, Dorset, Gloucestershire, Isle of Scilly, Somerset and Wiltshire.
Col. N. V. Stepford Sackville, C.B.E., T.D., D.L., J.P.	Derbyshire, Leicestershire, Lincolnshire (Kesteven and Lindsey), Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Rutland.
Lt. Col. Sir Richard Verdin, C.B.E., T.D., D.L., J.P.	Cheshire, Herefordshire, Shropshire, Staffordshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire.
Mr. Stephen Williams, M.Sc., F.R.Ag.S.	Brecknockshire, Cardiganshire, Carmarthenshire, Glamorgan, Monmouthshire, Montgomeryshire, Pembrokeshire and Radnorshire.
Mr. C. E. I. Wynne-Finch	Anglesey, Caernarvonshire, Denbighshire, Flintshire and Merionethshire.

SPECIAL DELIVERY - FROM GERMANY

Professor Sir Harry Champion who was for 20 years Professor of Forestry at Oxford, couldn't go to Germany to receive the Fernow medal which has been awarded for his services to forestry, so one of the leading foresters in Germany (Dr. Franz Klose, President of The German Forestry Society) flew to England to present it to him personally.

Sir Harry, the first Englishman to be awarded the medal, had been advised by his doctor not to go to Germany so he stayed at home at Boars Hill, Oxford, and waited for the medal to arrive, though he had no idea how it would be sent to him.

In 1944 Sir Harry was the British delegate to the conference in the United States which set up the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organisation.

The Fernow Medal is sponsored jointly by the American Forestry Association and the German Forestry Society, and is awarded annually by each body in turn.

MR. THOMAS W. DALGLEISH

We note with regret the death early in October of Mr. Tom Dalgleish at the age of 68, who will be remembered by foresters all over Scotland for his great services to his chosen profession. For many years he did an outstanding job in forestry education and training, before this task was undertaken by the Industrial Training Boards.

Mr. Dalgleish was a staunch supporter of the Royal Scottish Forestry Society. As a working forester he became a life member in 1925, and its first working forester President in 1947. He was also a prime mover in establishing the Society of Consultant Foresters of Scotland.

THANK YOU
FROM R.N.L.I.

Mr. Nigel Dixon, Secretary of the Royal National Life-boat Institution wrote 'Thanks' to Mr. N. W. Tulloch, E & T Officer for Faskally Forester Training School, as follows.

"Thank you for your letter of the 17th September, with which you enclosed the splendid sum of £243 8s. 2d. being the balance of the Forester Training School's Recreation and Welfare Fund.

The calls upon the life-boat service are more numerous than ever before, and this increased activity inevitably results not only in new problems but also in higher costs. This generous support is thus particularly welcome, and we are most grateful to all concerned.

A formal receipt is enclosed with warmest thanks."

The storm-tossed waves may seem far removed from our peaceful forests, but these fellows on the little boats do a great job, and who knows but what one or two of us may need them one day.

F.C.'s OWN CHRISTMAS CARD

Christmas is not far off now, and members of the Commission who have not yet bought Christmas cards may like to consider buying a Forestry Commission card this year - all the profits from the sale of which will go to the Benevolent Fund.

The Sylvatica Sports Club (HQ Basingstoke) have sponsored and underwritten the production of a very attractive card showing a snow scene in the grounds of Alice Holt, and carrying a simple message. Cards (with envelope) cost ten shillings a dozen, and all Conservancy offices will now have supplies. Officers co-ordinating sale of the card are Messrs. Milson and Boyd at HQ(B), who may also be contacted.

All the Sports Club's Funds have been invested in this enterprise, and if it is successful, next year's card could be more ambitious - at varying price levels and perhaps in colour.

Another excellent proposal is that a design competition be organised for the next year's card for there is much artistic talent within the Commission. It is hoped that all will support this praiseworthy enterprise by purchasing a dozen or so cards now.

PROPOSED NEW FORESTRY COMMISSION GOLFING SOCIETY

Are you a golfer? Would you like to be a member of a Forestry Commission golfing Society?

If the answer is 'Yes' to both questions, readers will be interested to know that it is proposed to form such a Society - to which the Director General has given his blessing - and all that is now required is the support of enthusiastic members.

The primary object of the FCGS would be to enable all grades, past and present, to meet in friendly rivalry on the course, and in social amity at the "19th", and play inter-Branch and inter-Service competitions - both team and individual.

Would all those interested, both rabbits and scratch types, please write to Mr. M. E. S. Dickenson, District Officer, Forestry Commission, West View, Bellingham, Hexham, Northumberland, giving the following information:-

Name - Branch or Conservancy - Official Station - Address for correspondence - Handicap - Home Club (if any) - whether willing or not to act as local organiser or on national committee - any other comments or information considered relevant.

Do please support this new venture and remember, the handicap system makes all golfers equal - so they say! Please also tell your colleagues who may not have seen this item.

JOIN THE CLUB -
WEAR YOUR TIE

Men who wear bright ties are likely to be popular with the ladies, according to the Tie Manufacturers' Association, who say that men attach sexual significance to ties. In a survey carried out by the T.M.A., all men between the ages of 18 and 25 questioned about their tie preferences - said they regarded ties as "sexual signals".

A completely random spot-check survey carried out in the Commission revealed that men seldom even thought about their ties at all - which could suggest that likewise they seldom thought about its use as a sexual signal either. One individual at Savile Row even kept a spare tie in his drawer as sometimes he even forgot to put one on in the morning.

Although it has not been positively proved that the Forestry Commission's own tie has any particular magnetic attraction to the opposite sex - alluring though it may be in its own quiet way - it does serve a useful purpose in identifying fellow members when paths cross.

Purchasing Branch at HQ Basingstoke have a new supply of Terylene F.C. ties, price 13/- each, which is a rise of 6d on the old price due to higher manufacturing costs. So send for one and see what it can do for you!

MUST BE THE
WELSH AIR

According to a report in the Western Mail, the forest trails which we opened in North Wales for the first time this summer have hit a snag - most tourists just won't leave their cars, and many of the complaints came from youngsters.

A survey showed that 40 yards is the farthest seven out of every ten motorists will go from their cars,, and one particular half-mile of specially designed scenic walk resulted in a flood of complaints pouring in from tired motorists. The only points from which many saw the forests were the car parks and picnic sites provided by the Commission.

All this happened in Snowdonia, and so unusual it is to find the public complaining that they are too tired to enjoy a pleasant half-mile stroll through lovely woodlands, that all we can think of is it must be the rich Welsh air which makes them so lethargic.

One is also tempted to wonder if (Male) motorists would baulk at a half mile walk through the woods if there was a striptease show at the end of it as apparently happens in Denmark - an idea which a Welsh University Forestry Professor suggested, in a speech to the British Association at Durham. But all foresters' wives can relax - such 'way-out' attractions are not yet being considered at headquarters!

LUCKY ESCAPES

According to a report in the Bury Free Press, forester Mr. John Ling, East (E) and his son got the fright of their lives recently when a T100 Super Sabre jet fighter 'plane crashed into a wood at Brandon Park only 100 yards short of the F.C. office and a cottage where they were, together with three other people.

The plane - from the USAF base at Lakenheath - was approaching to land after a training flight when it crashed, two miles from the runway. The pilot baled out, and was picked up - unhurt - by a helicopter.

Some small fires started by the crash, were soon extinguished.

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Another aircraft accident occurred on August 11th at Libanus, near Brecon S(W), when a single-seater Cessna 188 - on charter to the Commission for crop-spraying - crashed on takeoff. The pilot - 26 year old New Zealander Kevin Roberts - escaped unhurt, but the 'plane was burnt out.

Mr. Roberts is an experienced 'low flying' pilot, and had already made forty take-offs from the same field where the accident happened. He was working on a "Busman's Holiday" for a Norfolk firm which specialises in low flying crop spraying.

THE EXPORT DRIVE

In its first full year of sales more than a quarter of George Ryle's story of the Forestry Commission, "FOREST SERVICE" (David & Charles), went for export.

COUNTING THE CAMPERS

Scottish Women's Rural Institute members have been out counting campers and caravanners every evening this summer to help local planners. A 13% increase has been noted since last summer.

On one night in August, 2810 caravans, 332 motor caravans and 2806 tents were counted in Inverness-shire, 20% in lay-bys or fields with no sanitation. The county council is now trying to encourage the provision of more sites.

Local planners and others with similar interests in Britain might think of seeking the help of W.I. members on similar projects next season.

OVERHEARD ON TRAIN

One commuter to another when passing a timber merchant's yard. "What's all that wood lying about. Nobody uses wood these days."

NEW CANADIAN MILL

What is claimed to be the largest enclosed lumber mill in Canada was officially opened on August 13th by The Hon. W. A. C. Bennett, Premier of British Columbia. Owned by Buckley Forest Industries of Houston, in the North-central region of British Columbia, it will have an annual capacity of 270 million Board ft. when in full production next year; it will be fully equipped with kiln drying and planer capacity for the entire output.

TRADA BREAKTHROUGH IN TIMBER USE

The Timber Research and Development Association claims to have achieved an important breakthrough in terms of both building regulations and costs on a timber frame housing scheme at Watery Lane, Wooburn Green, Bucks. The scheme - which has been built to TRADA designs for the Wycombe Rural District Council by George Calverley & Sons (Contractors) Ltd - comprises 48 maisonettes arranged in three blocks four-storey in height, and 24 two-storey houses.

Although conventional in appearance, this development incorporates a number of technical innovations which, in TRADA's view, are likely to have a significant influence on housebuilding methods generally. All dwellings at Watery Lane are constructed entirely of load-bearing timber frame construction, and no brickwork, masonry, steel, or concrete have been used in the party walls, party floors or on any of the elevations. TRADA hopes that as a result of the successful completion of this 'pilot' project, other local authorities and building contractors will be encouraged to adopt timber frame construction in medium rise/high density housing developments.

HOME-GROWN CHIPS TO BOOST OUTPUT

Enlargements in the pulping capacity of Bowater's Mersey Mill at Ellesmere Port are expected to result in savings of millions of pounds worth of imported pulp. At present the Mersey mill consumes about 250,000 tons of home-grown wood a year and this figure will be doubled under the mill's five-year plan. The Mersey mill can produce over 6,000 tons of newsprint a week and is Bowaters' largest UK newsprint producer. It makes about half the Company's mechanical pulp requirements.

A chip refiner plus sawmill complex due to be completed early next year will enable the mill to use a greater variety of wood. At present it can only handle spruce 'four-lengths'. The chipping plant will handle logs of virtually any length or wood that is twisted and tapering. An advantage of the chipping process is that it produces longer-fibred pulp.

ANIMAL FEED FROM THE TIMBER-MILL

Two Canadian government scientists have developed a method of turning wood into animal food similar to hay. Dr. David Heanay of the Department of Agriculture and Dr. Fred Bender of the Department of Fisheries and Forestry steamed poplar wood under pressure at from 320 to 390 degree Centigrade. They fed the resulting material as roughage to sheep for eight weeks, and a control group was fed with alfalfa hay. Average daily weight gains and the final weight of slaughtered carcasses were essentially the same in each group. One per cent of ammonia can be added to the wood, to neutralize organic acids and provide a nitrogen source for the sheep.

The researchers claim that their processed wood will be economically competitive with medium quality hay, and should interest paper and plywood companies, some of whose plants produce up to 200 tons of waste poplar a day. So far, the Canadian Department of Agriculture announces, the method has only worked for deciduous trees, and the greatest success has come with poplar. Bagasse, the waste after sugar has been extracted from cane, is an obvious alternative raw material, and in tropical countries with protein shortages the method might be used to convert forest vegetation indigestible by man into high-quality protein. If the system could be adapted to conifers, it would offer a more complete exploitation of evergreen forests.

CALLING ALL ARCHITECTS

The success of last year's competition 'Design a Beef Building for the National Agricultural Centre' has encouraged the Farm Buildings Centre to run a competition again this year. The Crown Estate Commissioners have once again agreed to sponsor this competition as their contribution to the design of more attractive and economical farm buildings.

The growing awareness of the importance of putting up economical buildings has led many farmers to construct their own buildings. Many of these have been successful, others less so, and this competition is intended to highlight the importance of good design in simple buildings. Entries will be judged on technical merit, economic viability and appearance. Entries may be of completed buildings or designs and must be received by 28 February 1971.

Judging will be by an independant panel and the following prizes will be awarded providing entries of sufficient merit are received. 1st Prize - £50, 2nd Prize - £25, 3rd Prize - £10. Special awards of £5 may be made at the judges' discretion and there will be an extra prize of £10 for the best building constructed predominately of home-grown timber.

For full details of the competition and entry forms write to Mr. John Young, The Farm Buildings Centre, National Agricultural Centre, Kenilworth, Warwicks, CV8 24G, marking the envelope 'Pole Barn Competition'.

A BOOK FOR THE ENTHUSIAST

One can usually tell, even by a very quick flip through a new book, whether one is going to like it and consider the money a well-spent investment. This is how a new book by our own Publications Officer Mr. H. L. (Bill) Edlin, appealed to me - it just "Looked right".

Its title is "Tree Planting & Cultivation", published by Collins at 42 shillings.

As probably nearly all of 'Slasher' readers already know a great deal about trees, why indeed buy another book on the subject? To my mind one can never know enough about anything one is really interested in, which is probably why I buy so many books on photography. I pay for learning something I may not already know - or a fresh approach to an old subject.

This clear-cut production is beautifully illustrated both by photograph and line illustrations, and is well indexed. It is in two main parts under the headings 'Tending Trees' and 'Choosing Trees'. Part I takes the reader from the understanding of exactly how trees live and grow, to long-term planning and maintenance. Part II deals with subjects from tree classification and identification - conifers, broadleaves, shrubs and miniatures - through to the technicalities of shelter belts and Christmas trees.

Mr. Edlin examines all our worthwhile trees, group by group, and within each group he describes all the best species and varieties - their advantages and drawbacks. There is sound advice on the types of trees to choose or avoid for particular situations, legal and planning issues involved, and a host of other worthwhile information too varied to describe here.

Bill already has a world-wide reputation as an "Authoritative Writer" on his subject, and his latest effort will surely underline this reputation. M.D.

DISCOVERING ENGLAND'S TREES

How many office workers sunning themselves during their lunch hour under the London plane trees in Berkeley Square realise that Lord Berkeley planted those very trees during the year of the French Revolution? Or that the catalpa, like those by St. James', Piccadilly, came to England from Florida in the reign of George I.

Famous author Miles Hadfield knows a very great deal about the trees of this country, and he has crammed much of his knowledge into a very interesting little book 'Discovering England's Trees', published by Shire Publications of Tring for 5/-.

The unique aspect of this book is its analysis of the specimen trees, wood and forests to be found in each country, so that the reader can immediately appreciate the arboreal significance of his locality, visit the best collections, and know what to look for. The book is illustrated with 29 photographs from Miles Hadfield's collection.

'GOING METRIC' ON TOUR

The Polytechnic in Ellison Place, Newcastle, will house the Metrication Board's exhibition 'Going Metric' when it comes to Tyneside in October. 'Going Metric' will be opened before an invited audience by the Chairman of the Metrication Board, Lord Ritchie-Calder.

For those in industry the exhibition gives information and guidance on management planning, design, inspection techniques, company standards, stock reduction, training and retraining. The general public are welcome and will be able to familiarise themselves with the metric units which we are adopting.

Following the show in Newcastle 'Going Metric' will be in Huddersfield from October 26 to November 6 and will then visit other principal cities throughout the country. Further details from the Metrication Board, 22 Kingsway, London WC2.

NEWS FROM CONSERVANCIES

H.Q. (Basingstoke)

BOMB SCARE IN BASINGSTOKE

A few weeks ago, three clean-cut athletic types from HQ (Basingstoke) went for their weekly bathe in the pool at the Town's Sports Centre. They were Messers Dennis Gubby, Ken Folkes and Dennis Boyd.

All three were splashing away merrily with their rubber rings when suddenly - without warning - in rushed a bevy of Bobbies who ordered our three splashers (and everyone else) to clear out of the pool speedily and to vacate not only the pool, but also the building.

Having grabbed up their clothes at the double, our unfortunate lunch-time bathers were obliged to struggle into them in a glass shelter in the middle of the shopping centre, much to the amusement of passers-by:

It turned out that someone had started the scare that a bomb had been planted in the building. It turned out to be a hoax, but the authorities had decided that it was better to cause some embarrassment than to sweep up bits and pieces - so they acted fast and firmly.

One of the three later muttered to our reporter that Norman Stutter needn't have played a trick like that!

N.E.(E)

GOOD P.R. PAYS OFF

Generations of beekeepers have taken their hives to the heather on land managed by the Commission, or nearby. So it was not surprising that beekeepers, and others such as naturalists and other organisations were concerned by the Commission's decision - faced with a serious build up of pine looper moth infestation in Wykeham and Langdale Forest near Scarborough - to spray insecticide by helicopter on 1500 acres of Scots pine in the area.

Aware of an inevitable public reaction to this necessary operation, the Commission not only warned all interested parties well in advance of what had to be done, but called a special meeting to which representatives of all parties were invited, including the Press, so that everyone should know exactly what was being done - the reasons - and that absolutely every possible precaution was being taken to prevent contamination or damage.

This piece of advance Public Relations was appreciated by all concerned, and received considerable publicity resulting in no unpleasant post-mortems which might have been the case had the trouble to explain the position in advance not been taken. The following item headed "A Mammoth Spraying Operation" is reprinted from the journal "Bee Craft", as an example of the favourable response to the combined efforts of our Research Staff and NE(E) Conservancy:

"Often crop spraying against pests is a last ditch affair with little or no warning to bee-keepers or the Advisory Service which guides the warning schemes. Not so in the case of the Forestry Commission faced with the problem of spraying insecticide over 1500 acres of Scots Pine, in Wykeham and Langdale Forests, near Scarborough. Under Dr. D. Bevan, Principal Forest Entomologist, at its Research Station in Surrey, the whole operation was examined and co-ordinated with staff in the north.

The trouble has been an enormous build up of pine looper moth which has led to a serious infestation of the pine tree foliage by its caterpillar, which has already ruined some thousands of immature trees and become a threat to the whole area.

Investigation and planning started towards the end of last year and D-day was fixed to be at a time when the eggs of the insect had hatched, at which time the pest is most vulnerable. Incidentally egg counts, on the trees, have been recorded of over 20,000 per tree, which is more than twenty times the critical figure. The writer was advised of the Commission's decision to spray and Dr. Bevan proceeded to inform local organizations, including bee-keepers, and the NAAS office at York. Mr. Jack Barker, Secretary of the Yorkshire BKA., lives in Scarborough so the whole business was under personal supervision from the start. A meeting was held at the forest and a wide range of questions answered.

When weather conditions prevented a start on August 17 bee-keepers were properly informed, but the helicopter commenced its tricky tree-top dance, which went on for two days of calm and enabled minimal drift to be contained within the forest. There were some bees left flying one and a half miles from the sprayed area, but no harm befell them. They were observed flying towards some heather forage on the moors.

For the technically minded the helicopter took on seventy gallons of diluted pesticide for each seven minute trip and from touch-down to take-off less than one minute was required. The pilot was guided over the target by tractors driven up and down the fire breaks in the forest. Each tractor carried a fifty-five foot mast with a bright orange coloured flag. The chemical used was Shellstar Gardona (tetrachlorvinphos). It was selected for its safe lethal dosage and low activity towards insect groups, including bees, but highly active to lepidoptera, coleoptera and diptera. Thus the Forestry people were also able to combat the pine shoot beetle, another troublemaker, at the same time.

The operation's success has yet to be measured, but as an example of good communication, consultation and public relations on all sides it is deserving of merit."

DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND PRESENTS B.E.M.
TO SENIOR RANGER

Mr. Harry Earsman, a Senior Ranger of the Commission at Falston Forest Northumberland, who was awarded the British Empire Medal in the Birthday Honours List, will receive his award from the Duke of Northumberland at a presentation at Kielder on 9 October.

The presentation will take place at the Hall, in the Lewisburn Caravan Site, Kielder at 2 p.m. on Friday 9 October and afterwards the Duke and other guests will make a short tour of Kielder Forest, a large part of which was formed on land purchased from the Duke by the Commission in 1932.

Mr. Earsman who is 61 and lives at Whickhope Lodge, Falstone, is the only forestry worker to receive an award in this year's Honours. He was born at Greystone Lea, Eskdalemuir, Dumfriesshire.

He joined the Forestry Commission in 1939 and is now a senior ranger at Falstone Forest, part of the Kielder District. The main part of his duties is in wild life management, particularly of roe deer. He is an active member of the British Deer Society; he has been a Special Constable for the past 14 years.

Eleven New Nature Reserves for Northumberland

On Thursday, 25th June Mr. G. E. Godwin, Conservator N.E.(E), formally handed over to the Chairman of the Northumberland and Durham Naturalists' Trust, the agreements which created eleven new nature reserves in Northumberland. This is the Commission's major contribution to European Conservation Year in the north-east of England.

Covering 800 acres, these additional reserves include some of the most botanically interesting habitats in the north-east. Three of the reserves are in the beautiful Coquet Valley above Rothbury. The biggest, over 300 acres, is above Harbottle Village and includes the famous Drake Stone and the Harbottle Lough; 60 acres are in the valley of the Holystone Burn where many uncommon plants and the rare Juniper tree still flourish. In the same area is Holystone North Wood, a magnificent 36 acre oakwood - now a very rare environment in Northumberland. The other eight reserves are completely unspoiled areas of sphagnum bog in the wild rippling scenery of the Roman Wall country in the west of the county. Of interest particularly to the botanist and birdwatcher for the plant and wildlife sanctuary they provide, these bogs are probably the best examples of this type of habitat remaining in the country. Some of the reserves are deep in the Forestry Commission's immense plantations and lend added variety and interest to them.

The eleven new reserves continue the policy of the Commission to enter into agreements with the County Trusts for the establishment of nature reserves in parts of national forests which are of high scientific interest. Some 40 reserves on Forestry Commission land are included in the total of over 500 nature reserves now owned or managed by the County Trusts.

E.(E)

SPECIAL PRIZE FOR E.(E)

East England Conservancy co-operated with the Kingscliffe Secondary School in presenting an exhibit at the East of England Show, where in common with our other exhibits throughout the country this year, the theme was Conservation. Tree tops of various species were used to create a woodland environment, and habitats were made for stuffed wild animals and birds, which were much admired. Kingscliffe school had reconstructed some antique wood-working tools and machinery and these were arranged amongst the trees. Tent pegs and rakes were made and a bodger's lathe was used to make tool handles and chair legs.

Inside the tent there was a Commission photographic display of forestry operations. The school exhibited the work done on their forest plot and in their rural study classes. The exhibit was popular with the public and was visited by the Duke of Edinburgh and Prince William of Gloucester. The stand was awarded the Society's Special Prize for "Outstanding merit by reason of originality, educational or instructional value, ingenious construction or other interesting feature."

Many congratulations to all concerned.

S.E.(E)

TWENTY-TON "THANK YOU" TO THE COMMISSION

More than 2,000 people of all ages scoured the New Forest on 29 September in an end-of-season "Operation Clean Sweep", which netted over 20 tons of litter.

The operation was sponsored by the Hampshire Branch of the British Legion as a 'Thank You' gesture to the Forestry Commission which allowed them to use the forest for two sponsored walks, and the idea was put forward by the Branch's Secretary - Commander Horatio Nelson - a descendant of Admiral Lord Nelson.

During the week preceding the operation, Commission workers had brought together a few derelict car bodies, mattresses, and a large assortment of old iron and other discarded items, and inscribed on the fenced-off area was a notice "Examples of Litter Collected In The Forest".

The litter 'Commandos', which included some 700 Legion Members, Scouts, Clubs, Girl Guides, old age pensioners and Commission staff, arrived at the twelve various assembly points previously ear-marked, and then were delegated by marshalls to certain 'dirty areas' which required treatment.

Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest - Mr. Dallas Mithen - and his family also turned out to lend a hand, bringing with them five sacks which they filled with litter. Mr. Mithen was one of the few casualties reported from the operation, having sustained a minor cut on his hand from a piece of broken glass.

Altogether it was a highly successful project, which not only served the practical purpose of helping clean up one of the Commission's blackest litter areas but also, due to the widespread Press and broadcasting coverage it received, served to benefit the Commission greatly by the favourable publicity, which comes as a refreshing change following certain recent unfavourable reportage from that area.

Our congratulations to Hampshire British Legion and to our New Forest Staff for their joint effort and thanks to all those others who participated. Perhaps the idea will catch on in other Conservancies which have a litter problem.

S.W.(E)

WEDDING BELLS

After many years of professed misogamy and bachelorhood, Tony Joslin, District Officer in charge of the Forest of Dean, has abandoned the single state. On September 3rd in the lovely church of Weston-under Penyard, near Ross-on-Wye, he was married to Mary Bevan.

Several of his colleagues, from Conservancy office and the Crown offices at Coleford, attended the church service and reception, and up to the time of going away Tony still preserved his individuality and volubility.

We all wish him continued joy and prosperity.

S(S)

MR. CALLUM NICOLSON RETIRES

There was a goodly gathering at 25 Drumsheugh Gardens on 3 September when 'Callum' Nicolson, Assistant Senior Officer for Scotland, was presented with a handsome tea trolley and a pair of binoculars from friends and colleagues throughout the Commission to mark his retirement after 24 years service.

The presentation was made by Mr. J.H. James, Senior Officer for Scotland, who especially welcomed the retired staff and those who had travelled far to be present, and said that the substantial nature of the contributions made showed the great esteem in which Mr. Nicolson was held in the Commission.

In reply, Mr. Nicolson thanked everyone for their kindness and generosity. He felt it would be relatively easy for him to start afresh and to put aside the routine of Commission life, but he would not easily forget all the people he had worked with for so long.

Mr. T.S.B. Macbeath, who had been associated with Mr. Nicolson for most of his service, gave an outline of 'Callum's' career, interspersed with anecdotes of the unorthodox days of the Fraser/Nicolson partnership in North Scotland.

Tales past and present were then exchanged over a quiet drink (or two) kindly provided by Mr. Nicolson.

N.(S)

FIRST CHAIRMAN

The Institution of Highway Engineers has recently divided its Scottish Branch into separate North and South Branches. The North of Scotland Branch, which covers the counties of Argyll, Perth and Angus, has elected PETER MALCOLMSON, Conservancy Civil Engineer of North Scotland as its first Chairman.

The Institution is a professional body of Highway Engineers having a membership of approximately 8,000 engineers.

THE SAFETY EIGHTEEN

Eighteen members of the Commission were presented with National Road Safety Driving Awards by Mr. Russell Johnston MP at a ceremony in Inverness at the end of September. Congratulations to the winners, who were: J.Ewen (Black Isle) First Diploma, N.W. Hurst (Black Isle) First Diploma, C. Hannah (GlenGarry) Oak leaf to 10 year medal, W. Pringle (Black Isle) Oak leaf to 10 year medal, K.C. MacKenzie (Affric) 15 year brooch, W.G. MacDonald (Dornoch) First Diploma, N. MacKinnon (Black Isle) Third Diploma, W. Zuckert (Boblainy) First Diploma, J.A. Fraser (Boblainy) First Diploma, W. MacDonald (Morangie) First Diploma, D. Ewen (Black Isle) First Diploma, F. Wood (Skye) Third Diploma, R. Ritchie (Black Isle) First Diploma, A. Fraser (GlenGarry) Fourth Diploma, J.A. MacKenzie (Lael) First Diploma, E.A. MacAulay (Affric) First Diploma, A. Smith (Affric) First Diploma, E. Broadley (Glen Urquhart) Third Diploma.

FIRST PRIZE FOR 'FAR NORTH'

The Conservancy recently had stalls at the Nairn, Black Isle and Grantown Agricultural Shows. At the Black Isle Show the Commission won the first prize, and the Kenny Maclean Cup for the best individual stand at the Show, no mean achievement considering that we only exhibited at this Show for the first time last year.

* * * * *

The Conservancy has opened a permanent forestry exhibition - in a converted cottage - at FARIGAIG FOREST on Loch Ness-side which, in conjunction with the neighbouring forest walk, is proving highly popular amongst visitors. Among the exhibits are a cross section of a 250-year old oak, a model forest showing timber harvesting, and including a large number of "Dinky" toy tractors and lorries, and a wild-life section containing specimens (stuffed) of common birds and beasts of the forest.

One of the more popular items is a "press button" board posing a number of general knowledge questions and emitting a loud and rather rude noise if the wrong answer is given. A live Mongolian pheasant in an enclosure outside also attracts attention, especially from the young.

THIS IS A RECORD!

Mr. George R. Mackay, B.E.M., the Ganger at Borgie Forest, retired in February of this year after exactly 50 years service. George began work in February 1920 as a 15-year old boy and assisted at the first planting at Borgie in the spring of that year. (In 1969 he was still planting 900 plants per day - on time work!) In 1929 he transferred to Inchnacardoch Forest, Fort Augustus, and in 1931 was transferred to the Research Branch when he assisted in the layout and analysis of the important early experiments on the poor deep peat of the Lon Mor.

In 1935, he had to return to Borgie to look after the family holding as his father had to retire from the Borgie squad due to ill health. In 1946, George gained top place on a Forester Training Course. Three years ago he was awarded the British Empire Medal for his work for the Forestry Commission.

To mark his retirement, the Borgie and Naver squads presented George with a gold watch. From the Forestry Commission he received a 50-year Long Service Certificate - the first ever to be presented.

S.(S)

MCC BEATEN BY FORESTRY TEAM

A Cricketing event of some significance has not been widely reported in the National press, so we shall do our best to rectify it here. A scratch Forestry Commission XI, drawn from employees of that august body in Dumfriesshire including one from Edinburgh, batted first (in a gentle drizzle) in a 40-overs match one recent Sunday, against M.C.C.

Forestry scored 80 runs all-out, top score of 22 going to forester Bert Fisher (Castle O'er) who hit out gaily after narrowly surviving his first three balls. He was ably supported by District Officers Stanley Robertson (Moffat), (18), Jim Stirling (Acquisitions), (10), and Chief Forester Alan Young (Ae), (10).

M.C.C., in their turn, were tied down by hostile and accurate seam bowling. LCEA James Irvine demoralised his opponents chiefly by making frequent contact with leg stumps. He finished with an analysis of 5 wickets for 17 runs. At the other end, Alex Cowan (A & F.O.) had a little less luck but returned the very creditable figures of 3 for 19, and Keith Wallace (Work Study) destroyed the tail with one wicket for 0 runs. M.C.C. were all out for 40 runs.

Casualties included at least one senior officer who found his next week's golf seriously impaired, and another who informed his wife (before the match) that he couldn't score less than 0 runs - but he didn't reckon on being bowled first ball by one of the best balls of the match.

Oh - by the way, MCC stands for "Moffat Cricket Club".

• W.(S)

A GLASGOW DOUBLE

The staff of the Conservancy office celebrated a double event recently - the retirement of Mr. K. H. C. Taylor, H.E.O. and the then forthcoming wedding of Miss C. Wilson, C.O. - with a most enjoyable social evening in the Civil Service Club, Glasgow at the end of July.

Ken Taylor started his Civil Service career as a Boy Messenger with the Post Office in 1934 to which Department he returned after service with H.M. Forces. In 1951 he transferred to the Commission's York office where he remained until 1959 when he moved to Work Study. After service at various field stations in the Borders and North England, he came to Glasgow in 1966.

He has chosen voluntary early retirement so that with Mrs. Taylor he can enjoy the quiet country life at their cottage in the Borders. It is most unlikely however that he will be entirely absent from the Commission scene, for no doubt he will be around some of his old haunts devoting much more time to the hobby to which he brings a fine touch of professionalism - bird and other wild life study and nature photography. On behalf of colleagues throughout the Conservancy, Mr. W. A. Johnson (Assistant Conservator) presented a cheque which needless to say will be used for the purchase of special photographic equipment. Mrs. Taylor also received a bouquet of flowers.

* * * *

Carolyn Wilson whose "trendy" fashions have brightened the Glasgow Office scene for the past few years became the wife of commercial art student Mr. Fergus McVarish on August first. Her gift from her colleagues was a stainless steel clock.

Incidentally the evening unearthed musical talent in the shape of Arthur Ross the Stores E.O. Although much of his training was on old NAAFI pianos, he acquitted himself very well and contributed greatly to the success of the occasion.

FAREWELL TO THE FOUR

Our West Scotland correspondent sends us a report of four foresters in the Conservancy who retired earlier in the year. They are Messrs. John Jackson, N. Morrison, Donald McCullum and Jake Maceachern.

Mr. John Jackson, Head Forester at Benmore, has served forty years with the Commission, the last 24 of which he was in charge of Benmore forest. More than 100 of his friends gathered at a farewell celebration in a hotel at Strachur, when Mr. E. J. M. Davies (Conservator) paid tribute to John's long and enthusiastic career with the Commission.

* * * *

A small party of colleagues gathered at Kildonan Hotel, Arran, on 11 March to pay tribute to Mr. N. Morrison on his retirement from Glenrickard Forest where he had been in charge for about eight years.

The party was quite an informal affair but speakers dealing with various aspects of their relations with Mr. Morrison included the two gangers, Mr. McSporran, Mr. White and the District Officer, Mr. W. P. Thomson. As the party developed, considerable musical talent was shown, some from unexpected quarters. Mr. Morrison received a cheque and Mrs. Morrison a brooch.

Head Forester Donald McCullum first joined the Commission in 1923 at Glenbranter and served in East Scotland before returning to Benmore School. In 1944 he went to Ardgarth and later to Achaglachgach where he remained until his retirement.

Foreman Jake Maceachern shared his farewell party with his friend Donald McCallum, as well as much of his professional life. Jake started at Achaglachgach in 1931 as a worker, and finished there in 1960 as foreman, moving to his native Isley to take charge until he retired this year. Conservator Mr. John Davies attended the ceilidh given in honour of this redoubtable pair of stalwarts.

We wish these four men many happy days to come, and thanks indeed for their many years of faithful service to the Commission.

N.(W)

RETIREMENT OF "TOMMY" THOMPSON

Tommy Thompson joined the Commission in South Wales in 1953, having served the cause of forestry in Burma and New Zealand for 22 years in all, before returning to the UK.

In South Wales he was Utilisation Officer for eight years before taking charge of the North Cardiganshire District in North Wales in 1961. He moved to Llandrindod in 1968 to take charge of the Llanidloes District. Tommy is going to live in the west of Ireland on retirement and will pursue his interests of fishing and sailing.

On Monday 28 October friends and colleagues gathered at the Conservancy Office where he was presented with a cheque representing contributions from his many well wishers, by the Conservator, Mr. J. H. James. Tommy is going to purchase a spinnaker for his new sailing cruiser with the money.

GOLF IN NORTH WALES

The North Wales Conservancy met the North Wales Timber Trade in a golf match at Hawkestone Park Course on September 11th. This match resulted from a challenge issued earlier in the year, and the firm of Bowaters Ltd. ensured the future for such encounters by donating a handsome challenge cup.

During the morning the six singles matches were shared, and the Forestry Commission went down gamely by 2 matches to 1 in the afternoon pairs. A challenge to resume the encounter was accepted and next year the North Wales Conservancy golfers will have the advantage of local knowledge on a course nearer home.

Bowaters also presented replicas to the winning team and the new cup was suitably launched in 'champers and brandy' during the convivial post-match proceedings.

CIVIC VISIT TO GWYDYR FOREST BY MAYOR OF BANGOR

On Friday 25 September, a party consisting of Councillor Vivian Lewis, Mayor of Bangor; Councillor Ralph Hogan, Deputy Mayor, and Mr. Edward Lloyd, Town Clerk, visited Gwydyr forest at Bettws-y-Coed.

They were greeted on behalf of the Forestry Commission by Mr. J. H. James the Conservator, who explained the aims of the Commission and the work that was going on in the forest. Mr. James welcomed the visit as a sign of the growing interest of townspeople in the activities of the countryside, and of the importance of forests in many aspects of national life.

In the course of a tour, the Mayor's party was shown recently planted hill land, and at the other end of the scale, mature trees, ready for felling to provide raw material for newly developing industries.

The Mayor was interested to see the numbers of walkers using the forest for recreation, and paused to talk to holiday-makers at one of the picnic places provided by the Commission. The party also visited the forestry Exhibition at Gwydyr Uchaf which has attracted over 7000 visitors this year.

This visit was one of a series which the Mayor of Bangor is making this year, with the object of achieving a better understanding between the City of Bangor, and the people and organisations who live and work in the surrounding area.

S.(W)

EXIT THE PLANTERS - ENTER THE HARVESTERS

The young lads, lean loined and supple, who left the forestry schools in the early thirties with a gleam in their eyes and hope in their hearts determined to make forestry their career - what has happened to them?

Some left the service very soon after leaving school, some saw their star of hope in lands beyond the seas and joined the Colonial Service; others set their sights on closer targets, aimed high, and became District Officers, Divisional Officers and even higher. And those who stayed the course, what have they done?

We have planted trees; we have planted them by the million. We have planted all types of trees on all types of terrain and have changed the face of Britain; the labours of our hands can be seen on the flatland and rolling downlands of England, the moorlands of Scotland and the valleys of Wales. We have stabilised shifting sands, we have tamed inhospitable barren tracts and converted them to pleasant and profitable forest glades, creating sanctuaries for wild creatures; we have blotted out coal tips and covered up many unsightly scars of industry.

Some fortunate few have been rooted to their first postings and have therefore started to reap some of the fruits of their earlier labours, but for most of us we have been transferred from time to time and have handed our forests over, with all their benefits and burdens, to our succeeding colleagues.

Nearly forty years have passed since those bright-eyed budding foresters left the schools. How do we fare now? The spring has gone from our steps, we are more paunchy, more wheezy, yet more wiley and wise. With the aid of Landrovers, radios and roads we accomplish far more with far less effort than of yore. We have accumulated a great deal of experience and knowledge of forestry, yet are very conscious of our ignorance. Our numbers are now fast diminishing and soon we will fade out, leaving to the present and future generations of foresters, increasing millions of hoppus feet of timber to harvest and market.

With these millions of hoppus feet, we leave you some problems too, for we planted trees in some "horrible" places, but these are your burdens together with the benefits. As we had to invent ways and means of getting men and materials into almost inaccessible places, so will you have to invent ways and means of getting the timber out of deep ravines, over bottomless bogs and boulder-strewn slopes.

By about 1975 most of the big planters will have gone, and by the time this article is in print my office chair will be ready to eject me, and I must bid farewell to all my friends and colleagues in the Forestry Commission.

Perhaps I should bid the Navvy's farewell, but that is unprintable, even in this permissive age!

Our thanks to Mr. "Danny" Morgan, Chief Forester at Cymmer (South Wales) for this contribution, which is his way of bidding farewell to all his many friends of the Commission before he retires at the end of the year. (ED)

MALICIOUS FIRE RAISING

A report from our Cardiff office on the 1970 "Fire Season" in South Wales shows that there were 118 fires in the nine months from October '69 to June '70 - about the average number, but the losses at 119 acres have been relatively low. Last season there were 239 fires and 620 acres lost: the worst since 1956.

Among the causes, malicious fire raising remains regrettably only too common - several fires having multiple starts late at night. One unusual cause was an electricity supply leaking to earth via a pylon at Ebbw forest. A very regrettable feature also was illegal hill burning as at Taf Fechan - Coed Taf Fawr in early May where about 2000 acres of moorland in the Brecon Beacon National Park were burnt deliberately with the inevitable holocaust of nesting birds.

Lessons learned simply reinforce the old ones:- early detection, good radio communication, quick access for fighting by Landrover and follow up with water: the Fire Services bearing an equal share and playing the major part with water. One new lesson is that all forests should have chainsaws on call.

MR. N. SMITH M.B.E.

The home address of (Retired) Chief Forester Mr. Norman Smith MBE (see report P4 last Slasher) was incorrect in the report we received, so we are pleased now to give his present address, which is: Forest Lodge, Resolven, Neath, Glamorgan.

Research

ROMANCE AT RESEARCH

Congratulations to Mr. Michael Johnston, Laboratory Mechanic at the Forest Research Station, Alice Holt Lodge, and Miss Ann Davidge, Clerical Officer in the Silviculture Section of Research, on their marriage on 5 September 1970 at Holy Angel's Church, Ash, near Aldershot. The happy couple were presented with an electric food mixer and other gifts from their colleagues.

Closure of the Grizedale Propagation Centre

This Centre, comprised of a walled garden and a range of lean-to glasshouses and outbuildings and which has been used by the Genetics Section as the main centre for producing grafted plants for use in seed orchards, was closed in July. Future propagation work will be mainly conducted in the new glasshouse facilities at the Northern Research Station.

The Grizedale glasshouses, which were built in the 1890's, were acquired by the Forestry Commission along with the main Grizedale estate and were re-furnished by the Genetics Section in the 1950's. They had a capacity of some 8,000 plants per year and when in use provided one of the main attractions at the Grizedale Centre. Many thousands of visitors to Grizedale have visited the Propagation Centre since it opened and have been ably guided by local Conservancy and Genetics staff members.

Mr. Fred Major, the chief propagator, who retires later this year after fifteen years' service was presented by Mr. R. Faulkner, Principal Geneticist, with gardening equipment to mark his departure from the Genetics Section.