

Photo

The GLASGOW

FORESTRY
COMMISSION
News & Views

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LOCATION OF HEADQUARTERS

It has long been evident to all that a split Headquarters was an inefficiency which should be put right. After considering submissions to them made by both the Commissioners and the Staff Side, Ministers have now approved the Commissioners' proposal that Headquarters should be reunited in Edinburgh.

The following announcement was made to the Press on the 16th September:-

FORESTRY COMMISSION HEADQUARTERS

1. The Forestry Commission have decided, with the approval of Ministers, to reunify their Headquarters at Edinburgh.
2. Since 1966 these Headquarters have been divided between London, Basingstoke and Edinburgh and the main objective of the decision is to secure the improved operational efficiency which reunification will bring.
3. The move to Edinburgh will bring Headquarters more closely in touch with those parts of the Commission's estate where the weight of commercial interests will increasingly lie.
4. The detailed planning of the move will be pursued as rapidly as possible and will be carried out in full consultation with the Staff Side on the problems of staff transfers, recruitment and training. This and the provision of a suitable office building will however inevitably require a preparatory period of at least three years and planning will proceed on the basis of completing the move during the summer of 1975. This will not preclude the transfer of small blocks of work earlier if this can be satisfactorily arranged in consultation with the Staff Side.

1971 SHOW SEASON

Congratulations must go to South West England Conservancy for winning the Moxon Medal for their log display feature; it will be remembered that they received the same award the last time they were responsible for the outdoor exhibit at the Royal. Indeed, the winning of such awards is becoming almost a Commission prerogative, so well have these outdoor exhibits been done in recent years.

We were particularly impressed with the outdoor exhibit at the Royal Welsh Show which had been arranged by the District Officer, Mr. J. H. Currie, and Head Forester G. H. McMillan, of Brecon Forest. The large open space close to the Council and Members' Pavilions is in many ways an ideal spot, though its openness can make it look under-developed with even a great number of exhibits.

This year, an imaginative use of conifer tops broke the area up into a series of groves or glades in much of which was very distinctive picnic furniture, kiddies' play pens, etc. Another feature was a multi-sided wigwam built from Lodgepole pine; this, and the normal "stockade" were very popular with the younger set, whilst their parents rested their feet and ate their sandwiches. Much of this picnic furniture, the stockade and wigwam will be used in this winter's indoor shows.

The touring exhibit which set out to answer the question "Why Grow Trees?" has also been most successful. Less reliance was placed on photographs, but all those used were in colour and this has become a "must" for the future, for the effect on the public is appreciably greater than that caused by black and whites. The audio-visual "Sounds of the Forest" guessing machine with pictures, clues, recordings and commentary, provided by Head Forester R. W. Genever of Research was, as always, a most popular attraction.

In 1972 the theme of the touring exhibit will be Forestry Research, which will set out to explain simply but effectively the work of our Research Establishments.

During the winter indoor show season, the Show Unit will be at:-

International Caravan and Camping Show, Earl's Court, London	- 10th - 20th November, 1971
Walsall & Worthing Library Exhibitions	- December, 1971
Holidays at Home and Abroad Exhibition, Free Trade Hall, Manchester	- 11th - 15th January, 1972
Camping and Outdoor Life Exhibition, Olympia, London	- 26th January - 5th February, 1972
Boat and Leisure Life Exhibition, Bingley Hall, Birmingham	- 12th - 26th February, 1972
Boat Show (probable) Belle Vue, Manchester	- 3rd - 12th March, 1972

THE BLACK ISLE SHOW

The Black Isle Show is held each year at Muir of Ord. It is now the main show in North Scotland and attracts many exhibitors from all over Britain, and is of great interest to the resident and visiting public alike.

District Officer F. M. Macrae, who organised our exhibit, says:-

"The Commission has exhibited at the Black Isle Show for a number of years and last year our exhibit won first prize and also the Kenny Maclean Memorial Cup which is awarded annually for the best trade stand. This year we were delighted to win the same two prizes again.

"Our exhibit included a rustic log cabin made by workers during wet time at Morangie Forest, near Tain, and the cabin was sold at the Show. The wildlife section and forest quiz with its press-button system attracted much interest, especially among young people.

"A "log of events" cut at Affric Forest and marked at the appropriate annual growth ring depicted events from the Battle of Culloden at the centre, to the opening of the Invergordon Aluminium Smelter this year, as represented by the outside ring. The fixation of sand dunes was modelled in one corner, and the remaining space was occupied by a display of all the pines used in this country in their respective soil and vegetation types. Boxes of tubed seedlings showing the various stages of development was a great attraction and provided novel gifts for the "young foresters" of the future.

"Our thanks to all who helped at the Show, and to Mr. George Small and Mr. Barry Auld who laboured for many late hours to ensure success, a very special "Thank you". In all, 2736 persons visited the Forestry Commission tent, exactly 1000 more than in the previous year."

WOOD MOVES AHEAD THROUGH RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Advances made in evolving new and better uses of wood in building construction and other industrial fields are related in the Annual Report for 1970 of the Timber Research and Development Association, an independent research organisation jointly financed by the Department of the Environment, the timber trade, industry and the professions.

The economical and technical advantages of using timber frame construction in low and medium rise/high density housing were demonstrated, it is claimed in the report, by pilot projects built to TRADA designs for local authorities.

A scheme of four-storey blocks of maisonettes and two-storey houses designed for the Wycombe Rural District Council resulted in an important breakthrough in terms of both costs and building regulations. Although the project was a 'first-off', the cost of the timber frame buildings worked out well below the Ministerial 'yardsticks' for conventional construction. Experience gained on this development enabled TRADA to make representations to the Government which succeeded in getting the building regulations amended and relaxed to allow the use of timber and timber products in the construction of flats and maisonettes up to four-storeys in height.

An 'open' method of low-cost housebuilding employing simple timber and plywood components was developed by TRADA on behalf of the South East Midlands Local Authority Consortium. Two pilot schemes were built which confirmed the validity of the component design and construction detailing. Design, production drawings and specifications for the method were embodied in a comprehensive 'Design handbook' to be made available under licence to organisations concerned with housebuilding. TRADA hopes that the method will enable local authorities, estate developers and 'traditional' builders to reap the main benefits of industrialised building techniques in speed of erection and labour economies while remaining competitive in cost.

To assist the timber industry in the efficient planning and control of yard operations, TRADA undertook the publication of a comprehensive 'Timber yard operating manual', the first of its kind in the world. Supported by a grant from the Ministry of Aviation and Supply, a two-year programme of investigations, testing and design was set up to assist the British Standards Institution in the revision of the timber sections of the 'Packaging code' which are now badly out of date.

DIARY OF A CAMPING VOLUNTEER

As he approached the camping office one Saturday afternoon to begin his duty, the camping volunteer noticed the usual line of cars parked close to the railing and several drivers with puzzled expressions peering at the notice on the door. Upon reaching his destination the volunteer was greeted with the familiar question from one of the peerers: "Are you just opening or just closing?". However obvious the answer may have been, the questioner was satisfied only after receiving a detailed report of opening and closing times for every office in the forest.

The preliminaries over, the volunteer proceeded to open the office, making his usual request for sufficient room to raise the front shutter and install the supports, tactfully declining offers of assistance from unskilled enthusiasts.

The first customer inevitably put our volunteer on his mettle and made him consider alternative employment. He was a first-timer: one of a species having two varieties:-

- (a) One who has never camped in the New Forest; or
- (b) One who has never camped at all.

Both varieties are guaranteed to test the volunteer's resources to the limit. Each requires a personally recommended site not too close to other campers as he wants privacy, but not too far away as he wants to feel that others are in hailing distance should the need arise.

Reactions to the scale of charges range from the I-don't-know-how-you-can-do-it-at-the-price customer (very few in number) to the I-don't-know-how-you-can-charge-so-much-for-so-little type (numerous and invariably tendering a £5 note for a permit costing 50p. The latter necessitates the application of just the right proportions of diplomacy and firmness.

The afternoon saw a steady influx of campers, undeterred by the uncertainty of the weather. Rain had fallen during the morning and the further outlook, as noted through the office window by our amateur but experienced meteorologist, was far from sunny.

At about 5 o'clock our volunteer was feeling peckish and decided now was the time to produce his flask and sandwiches. There is an art to taking tea while on duty which can be acquired only with practice. The golden rule is the assumption that it is impossible to consume a whole sandwich without interruption unless one is prepared to inflict irreparable damage to the digestive system. Each bite must be small so that at all times it is possible to make oneself understood. On this occasion he was fortunate in having only three customers during the course of his meal. One of these, having apologised laughingly for interrupting tea, proceeded to relay a series of anecdotes which lasted a full ten minutes.

As the evening progressed, the number of customers increased, a usual feature of a summer Saturday. The advertisement "Information" attached to the office roof invited questions on a variety of subjects, many unconnected with camping and some having nothing to do with the New Forest at all. Several people wanted to know the Isle of Wight ferry departure points, times and fares, while one couple announced their intention to purchase a bungalow in the area and requested details of local properties for sale, with proximity to shops, bus routes, and so on.

Soon after 8 o'clock a lull occurred, but the volunteer was not misled into thinking that his duties were virtually complete. The office was scheduled to close at 9.00 p.m. and he knew that there would now be a hiatus between the last of the campers who had come in reasonable time to choose their site and erect a tent or position their caravan, and the first of those who, having been stuck in a traffic jam, had a puncture, left home later than they intended, or for a variety of other reasons, were due to arrive just before the dead-line. Soon after 8.30 p.m. the latter began to come so that speed and dexterity were needed to pack away anything that was not essential to the issue of permits. Closing time at a camping office tends to take the form of a battle of wits between the volunteer and his prospective customers.

During the last ten minutes of any duty he tries to close the shutters, leaving the door open so that last-minute arrivals can be served. On this occasion a permit was requested at two minutes to nine, and having issued it he looked hastily outside and, seeing the coast clear, slammed the door. Then, with the aid of a torch he packed away the unissued permits and prepared to depart. As he had feared, there was now a knock at the door and it was necessary to wait for several minutes before the unknown person returned to his car and drove away.

At last our volunteer was free to make his own departure, another camping duty safely completed.

(The camping volunteer who contributed this item is Mr B H Clark of SE(E). Ed.)

COMMISSION "DOUBLE" IN CHAIN SAW COMPETITION

The National Chain Saw Competition was again held at the "Great Yorkshire" Show at Harrogate in mid July. As last year, the competition was in two parts: the Novices on the 14th July and the Masters on the 15th July, with a total entry of 38 competitors. Although most of the entrants were from Northumberland and Yorkshire, there were also entries from Devon, Hampshire, and one from Scotland.

Forestry Commission employees distinguished themselves by winning both competitions. The Masters' Competition was won by Mr James Potts of Wark Forest, and the Novices by Mr. M. Truran of Cropton Forest. In addition, fourth place in the Masters was awarded to Mr. J. A. Hutchinson of Wark Forest, and ninth and tenth places to Mr. Joseph Potts of Wark Forest and Mr. S.V. James of Cropton Forest.

Competition was particularly keen in the Masters' Competition, the penalty points for the first five competitors being as follows:- 106.7, 110, 114.1, 115.9 and 117.1. It is of interest to note that Mr. D. A. Sharp (son of Mr. Alick Sharp, recently retired Forestry Commission Head Forester), was placed second to Mr. Potts. In fact, three Sharp brothers and three Potts brothers competed in the Masters' Competition.

"OFFICIAL" FOREST FIRES - TO HONOUR SIR WALTER

The Commission played its part in the celebrations on August 14th to commemorate the bi-centenary of the birth of the great Scots poet and novelist, Sir Walter Scott.

Beacons were lit in succession all the way from Edinburgh Castle to the Borders. The Commission's beacons were on Minchmuir and on Craik, and in a letter of appreciation to our Chairman, Lord Polwarth says they were "... outstandingly visible and altogether a stirring sight which would have gladdened Sir Walter's heart".

Lord Polwarth quotes aptly from Scott's "Lay of the Last Minstrel":

"And soon a score of fires, I ween
From height and hill and cliff were seen;
Each with warlike tidings fraught;
Each from each the signal caught."

REFLECTIONS ON THE WEATHER

Chief Forester Jack Jennings, Crychan Forest, writes to say that most foresters would agree that the one factor which has the greatest influence on their work and lives is undoubtedly the weather, particularly, he adds "if, like me, you live 900 odd feet above sea level on the edge of a range of mountains. We have no need of a television long-range forecast from the top of the Air Ministry roof or a barometer to tell us what's in store for us nine days out of ten. Switch on the radio in mid-summer and the chances are that it will be ... "Cloudy, with mist on the hills, light drizzle and some showers spreading in from the West".

"No need for us to concern ourselves with isobars or Rockall to let us know what's going on outside; we glance at the telephone wires. If the wires are dry, then rain is imminent. If large drops of water are hanging stationary on the cables then it has stopped for a few moments, and if the drops are sailing merrily along the lines then it's still 'chucking it down'. You lucky people in Dorset or across in East Anglia, have you any idea what life is like in one of those spots marked in purple on the map, where drops of water as large as prize radishes fly into your face horizontally instead of falling on to your head; where 80 inches of rain falls annually, and where no one ventures more than 50 yards without an oilskin.

"It's a bit of a job getting any work done outside, I can tell you. In this neck of the woods farmers bale their hay wearing sou'westers, shear their sheep in thigh boots and even the ducks and snipe suffer from rheumatism!

"Take for instance gardening, and try pulling out a few weeds after a light shower; it's quite impossible. A shovelful of tenacious clay adheres to the soles of your boots with every step you take and you simply have to keep on the move or your fingers get moss growing between them ... lichens start to sprout behind your ears, and the slugs fray the bottoms of your trousers.

"Then there's the wife trying to dry her washing - what a business! She has a clothes line attached to a pulley on the lawn and runs that line up and down like a naval signaller at the Battle of Jutland. It's good for developing the biceps but a bit of a nuisance when she puts on her galoshes to go down to the post box and says "Just watch the clothes line, will you Jack, and bring in my washing if it rains". I find it difficult to carry a basket full of shirts and undies wearing a frogman's suit and carrying an umbrella.

"Of course the angling enthusiasts love a drop of rain. They say it colours the water and brings the fish on the feed. It saves them the trouble and expense of tying flies at 50p a time on to their nylon casts and they don't have to wear themselves out flogging the river. When the water gets a bit grey they dash into the garden to dig up a bag-full of worms which they dangle in the pools on the end of a hawser. There's nothing artistic or skilled about that kind of angling ... there they are, those poor little trout gasping for breath in the muddy water with their mouths wide open and, before they know where they are, they've been choked with a six inch codger worm!

"But what am I complaining about? The clouds were starting to lift a few moments ago. I think I'll go into the garden and sow a few seeds; I've planned my crops for next year - half the area under water cress and the remainder under rice. No, I think I'll clean the car it's started to rain again ... I won't need a hose, it's only bouncing eighteen inches off the ground ... just one of those light showers that we get now and again in Breconshire".

A MATTER OF VALUES

Jack Jennings has also contributed the following verse:-

"Economists armed to the teeth with forms
That spell out variances, standard times and norms
Prove to the fiscal world in terms of cost
That forests as we grow them make a loss.
But F.C. 33's and 35's
Should not dictate our silvicultural lives;
The beauty of a woodland valley's looks
Cannot be found in the accountants's books.
Computed figures surely must be wrong
That give no credit to a linnet's song."

CLYDE EDUCATION EXCURSION

On the 18th September Glasgow Corporation Education Department, on behalf of the Glasgow Geography Panel, chartered the "Queen Mary II" for an Educational cruise down the Clyde.

The passenger list included 600 Senior Geography Pupils in the care of 60 Teachers, 200 newly recruited Geography Teachers, 50 Overseas Geography Teachers, 15 Guests and 36 Commentators. The subjects covered by the Commentators were very wide and included Shipping Experts, Geology, Dredging, Ornithology, Water Pollution, Conservation, Fishing, Agriculture and Forestry. The commentary was linked by the well-known Author and Broadcaster, Mr. Jack House. The Forestry commentary was given by Mr Tom Robbie, Assistant Conservator W(S).

The cruise started from Princes Dock, Glasgow, where the Lord Provost wished the passengers "Bon Voyage". Sailing down the Clyde past Inverkip and Hunterston, the first call was at Millport, where the Provost left the ship, round the Island of Bute and through the Kyles of Bute to the next stop at Rothesay, thence to Dunoon and up the Clyde to Princes Dock.

Tom Robbie was invited to the Bridge on three separate occasions to talk on Forestry and he was especially pleased to speak as the ship approached the Kyles of Bute where he had the opportunity to speak on the Recreation aspect as the site of the Caladh Castle Forest Trail was passed.

During his commentary between Toward and Innellan, Tom Robbie was interrupted by a radio message from Rothesay Piermaster to say that two girls had missed the boat when they went to have "fish and chips" ashore.

Interspersed between the commentaries were short musical interludes where recordings of appropriate songs were played.

From the resounding cheers as Princes Dock was approached at 19.30 hours, it was obvious that the day had proved a most enjoyable one.

THE WONDERS OF OUR TECHNOLOGICAL AGE

The following letter was recently received by SE(E):-

"We apologise that our computer has made yet another nonsense of our August, 1971, statement of account. If you have already received our August statement, please destroy the statement first received, and substitute the enclosed statement as the amended account for August, 1971."

NEWS FROM THE CONSERVANCIES

North West England

'SURVIVAL' SCHEME FOR POLECATS

CONSIDERABLE interest has been aroused recently by the Commission's co-operation in a carefully planned scheme to save the polecat population of Britain from extinction, and some pairs have been released at Grizedale, in the Lake District.

The man who released them - Mr. Eddie Hallam, Curator of the Riber Castle Wildlife Park in Derbyshire - believes that their main activity will be to survive. They will have to hunt and kill enough small mammals and birds to provide their food.

Two hundred years ago there were thousands of polecats in Britain. Now only a few survive in Mid-Wales, apart from those in zoos and the 40 which have been bred in Riber Castle.

Mr. J.S.R. Chard, Conservator NW(E) says:-

"Although polecats have become extremely rare in the Lake District they are not yet extinct, and one was seen in Grizedale as recently as 1968. The present exercise is designed to reinforce this relict population, which has probably become excessively inbred, and at the same time to provide information on the problems and techniques of making such a reintroduction under controlled conditions.

"Afforestation, coupled with the abolition of the gin trap, has enabled the polecat to make a strong recovery in Wales. It is now common in central Wales and has re-established itself firmly in adjoining parts of Shropshire and Herefordshire. It is a welcome and useful predator of small rodents in forestry plantations and in places where it is not wanted it can be easily controlled. Its proverbial ferocity is aroused only when it is attacked or frightened. We would be glad to have records of any polecats recovered or seen in the vicinity of Grizedale."

Polecats are not really cats, but members of the badger family. They live in tree trunks and rocks, and move very quickly. They have a "secret weapon" - when attacked they release a scent which Mr. Hallam says is so putrid that no other animals will go near.

South East England

BEST 'HEAD' FROM THE WEST COUNTRY

IN a feature article in 'The Field' of 19th August, which deals with the judging of 'Heads' for the World Exhibition of Hunting in Budapest (27th August - 30th September), the Commission's Conservation Head Forester, Mr. F.A. Courtier, is credited with the best 'Head' from the West Country, which was assessed at 187.44 units.

Mr. Courtier is at present serving in the New Forest and is an acknowledged authority on deer.

South West England

MR. DOUGLAS COX

MR. DOUGLAS COX's sudden death at the age of 46 was a profound shock to all who knew him. He was a native of the Dean, where he had worked in the Deputy Surveyor's office for the past 20 years. He spent the majority of his time on estate work and his knowledge of the locality and people was immense.

A keen cricketer and latterly umpire for the local village team, Doug was a man of very resolute character and would stick to his guns through thick and thin, invariably

for the benefit of the Commission.

He will be sadly missed by all his colleagues and friends; a seat is to be provided at Parkend cricket ground in his memory. His funeral at Parkend was attended by a large number of Commission staff and friends.

East Scotland

HEAD FORESTER W. WATT
LEAVES FOR CONSULTANCY

HEAD FORESTER W. WATT, formerly in charge of Strathmore Forest, has resigned to take up an appointment with a firm of Forestry Consultants.

He started his forestry career as a boy at the ~~Bin Forest~~ near his home town of Huntly in Aberdeenshire, in 1929. From there he went to the Forestry School at Benmore in 1937.

During the War he saw service in the R.A.F. as a navigator and after the War returned to his native Aberdeenshire to take charge of Gartly Moor. In 1950 he started planting in the beautiful but remote Glen Doll Forest in Angus, and in 1954 he was transferred to the equally attractive but less remote forest of Allean. In 1967 he took charge of the combined forests of Halliburton and Kinfauns, renamed Strathmore.

Bill Watt will mainly be remembered for the skill and thought he put into afforestation on difficult sites, and the effort he put into encouraging controlled public access into forests.

Among colleagues' memories of Bill will be the cheerfulness with which he tackled the difficulties at Glen Doll. The snow, the red deer, the precipitous slopes, the difficult fence lines, the ever-changing and uncertain labour in the hostel; these, and many other difficulties, he overcame with little contact with, or help from, the outside world.

A cheque subscribed to by his friends in the Commission was sent to Bill, who has written expressing his thanks and saying that he has purchased an Onyx time-piece for his lounge as a reminder of their kind thought.

HEAD FORESTER N. R. HEPBURN

NOT everybody who is fond of the hills has the good fortune to work among them but Mr. N.R. Hepburn, who retired as Head Forester from Braes of Angus on the 24th June, was one of the lucky ones.

The glens which formed his charge gave him plenty of opportunity to combine climbing with his daily work. A day out with him in the hills, whether working or on holiday, was always a worthwhile experience.

Randall Hepburn joined the Commission in 1925 as a Forest Worker on Morayshire and by 1941 he had been promoted to Forester at Dallas. Eight years later he moved south to take over Hallyburton. Finally, in 1968, he took over the new forest of Glenclova, which was later extended to become Braes of Angus.

On his last day of service there was an informal gathering of friends and colleagues when Mr. E.G. Richards, Conservator E(S), presented him with two water colours of his own choice, by Colin Gibson, whose work is well-known within the Commission. We wish him and Mrs. Hepburn a long and happy retirement.

South Scotland

PRESSMENNAN FOREST TRAIL

AN interesting ceremony took place in South Scotland Conservancy on August 30th. This was the formal opening of the Pressmennan Forest Trail at Stenton Forest, East Lothian. Mr. J. E. James, Senior Officer for Scotland and Conservator S(S), welcomed all visitors present and introduced Forestry Commissioner Sir William Strang Steel, who performed the opening ceremony.

In his remarks, Sir William illustrated the many varied attractions of Pressmennan, which in itself was famous for its oak woods, and said that the Commission had maintained a fair composition when introducing other species with the hardwoods to provide a fuller use of the ground. He also made reference to the bequest made in 1950 by the late Maurice W.W.M. Yeates, Registrar General for India, who left £500 for the planting of non-coniferous trees in suitable regions of the Lothians. Under this bequest 30 acres of planting was done at Stenton and a plaque erected in commemoration. This could be seen at the edge of the plantations near the car park provided for use of visitors. The Nature Conservancy were also interested in this area as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and in the faunal and floristic composition of the woods. There is also much wildlife to attract attention.

Tribute was paid to the previous owner, Vice-Admiral Brooke, who was also present, with his daughter. He still owned an area of oak timber within the Forestry Commission land and, notwithstanding his sporting interests, had kindly agreed to the trail being established. Thanks were also expressed to the East Lothian County Council for their co-operation, including the signposting of the route from the village of Stenton.

In declaring the trail open officially, Sir William said he hoped it would bring "as much pleasure as possible to as many people as possible"; he planted an oak sapling to mark the occasion. Mr. H.V.S. Dier, Assistant Conservator, Forest Management, thanked Sir William and all those involved in the preparation of the trail and its environs.

Thereafter Sir William and all the visitors walked along part of the trail, and on their return to the car park enjoyed tea and biscuits. Representatives of the wide range of interests were among the many visitors present:-

Mr. John Foster, Director of Countryside Commission for Scotland;
Mr. Gibb of Scottish Wild Life Trust;
Lt.Col. Paterson, representing the Scottish Tourist Board;
Mr. W.B.C. Walker, MA, LLB, Secretary of the Royal Scottish Forestry Society;
Mr. H.A.L. Chapman, Deputy Secretary of the Scottish Council of Physical Recreation;
Mr. F.P. Tindall, East Lothian County Planning Officer, and the County Ranger;
Mrs. Jeffrey, Local County Councillor;
Local farmers and their wives.

Also present was a representative of the Nature Conservancy, and Mr. R.P. Steel who was District Forest Officer in the area prior to his retirement just over a year ago.

A booklet has been produced covering this trail, priced at 5p, and available at the car park.

HEAD FORESTER R.M. EDWARD
RETIRES

HEAD FORESTER 'BERT' EDWARD retired in June after some twenty-eight years' service with the Commission, and to mark the occasion some of his many friends met recently to present him with a cheque.

The presentation was made by District Officer J. D. Whitaker who, in the course of his remarks, traced Bert's history in the Commission since Mr. J.R. Thom recruited him - along with a sizeable estate at Mabie - in 1943. He served at Wauchope, Brownmoor (now part of Solway Forest), and for the last five years at Garcrogo (now part of Bennan Forest), where he gained the respect of all his colleagues by his interest in, and devotion to, his forests.

In his reply Bert spoke of the many happy memories he had of his days with the Commission and expressed his thanks to all those who had contributed to his presentation. He is going to use the money to help buy a record player, which he has wanted for a long time. Mr. and Mrs. Edward hope to continue to stay in the Corsock-New Galloway area.

West Scotland

TRAGIC DEATH OF
JOE HUNTLEY

IT is with great sadness we report the sudden death, in a drowning accident, of District Officer I Joseph Hendray Huntley. He was 38, and was stationed at the Commission's West Perthshire district office in Stirling.

Mr. Huntley, who lived at Bridge of Allan, was on holiday at Dunbar in East Lothian and went out on September 7th aboard the fishing vessel Norwood, wearing skin-diving equipment, with the intention of helping friends to free a fishing net lost some months ago. According to a newspaper report at the time, Joe Huntley made two dives and when he surfaced for the second time he shouted for help as he was in difficulties. He then sank and did not reappear.

Joe Huntley started his career with the Commission as D.O.II at Dornich, East Scotland, in October 1961, following graduation from the University of British Columbia as Master of Forestry. He moved to West Scotland in 1964 and was promoted D.O.I in 1967. Joe did much to help the success of our Jubilee Exhibition and was actively concerned with the F.C. exhibit at the Royal Highland Show last June.

He leaves a widow and young family, to whom we extend our deepest sympathy in their loss.

South Wales

DEEPLY INVOLVED

MR. PETER CHARLESWORTH, a Forester at Crychan Forest, South Wales, and leader of the 1st Llandovery Scout Troop, was one of those "deeply" involved during the severe flooding which washed out the World Jamboree camp site at Asgiri Heights, Japan, in August.

The 22-strong contingent from Wales, of which Mr. Charlesworth was one of the leaders, spent a night sleeping on the floor of a nearby temple, and then moved on to an old people's home where there was plenty of food for them.

Mr. Charlesworth said, "We had an hilarious time up to our knees in water. The boys did not want to go, but circumstances forced them out. Now they are all back again and very happy. All the boys have been very impressed by the Japanese hospitality over the past two days. The operational arrangements for getting them out during the storm were tremendous."

RETIREMENT OF MR. H.E. HERBERT,
BLACKSMITH

ON the 22nd August, Mr. Harold Herbert retired after 32 years' service with the South Wales Conservancy.

He joined the Commission after working on the construction of the R.A.F. airfield at St. Athan, starting at the Tair Onen Nursery as a tree planter. He then became successively Rotatiller operator and Tractor driver, driving the first tractor to come to Tair Onen; he also acted in the capacity of storeman before starting repair and alterations of ploughs under the supervision of the late Fred Cownie, Divisional Officer. From that point he took over the duties of blacksmith, moving to the new St. Hilary Workshop in June 1969.

His retirement was marked by a farewell gathering, on the 12th August, at the Eastgate Hotel, Cowbridge, where his many well-wishers presented him with a transistor radio, and his wife received a bouquet.

Unfortunately, he was admitted to hospital on the day before his retirement to undergo an operation to cure an ailment from which he had suffered for many years, but we are glad to say that he has now returned home, and we wish him a speedy recovery and many years in which to enjoy his retirement.

Arrangements are in hand for Mr. J.W.L. Zehetmayr, Senior Officer for Wales, to present Mr. Herbert with the Commission's illuminated address to mark his 32 years' service.

Research

'BLOOMING' GOOD SHOW

CONGRATULATIONS to Research Forester (Ecology) PAT MARCH, on being awarded the Foremarke Cup presented by the Royal Horticultural Society at their annual Gladiolus Show in London during August.

Pat won the Open Class (12 different cultivars), and he also obtained three other First prizes. Some of his blooms were flown to Toronto immediately after the Show, for entry in the Gladiolus World Fair.

Northern Research

VISIT TO PAPER MILL

MR. M. ABRAHAMS, of Northern Research Station has sent us the following report of a tour he made with Mr. John Droukalis, a Greek Forest Officer (who spent 6 weeks at the Station), of the Valleyfield paper mills of Alex Cowan & Sons Ltd, Penicuik.

"The Mill employs 750 people and is one of Penicuik's main employers. The firm has been making paper at Penicuik since 1779, although paper had been made on the site for some time before that date. The widow of James VI of Scotland's printer was responsible for a paper-making operation which had certainly been started on the site by 1708.

"It is possible to make some kind of paper from almost any vegetable fibre, but the choice of raw material is governed by various factors, such as availability, cost of treatment, and yield, so that in practice relatively few types of fibre are used. At Valleyfield the materials which have been used are:-

- (a) Cotton, linen and hemp fibres, in the form of cotton linters, textile wastes of various descriptions, and rags which come already graded from the rag merchants:
- (b) Esparto grass from North Africa and Spain:

(c) Woodpulp of various types from Scandinavia and North Africa.

"Mr. Droukalis and I were shown through the whole Mill, starting from the time the raw material comes in as esparto grass or as imported wood pulp. Five thousand tons of grass and cotton linters, primarily from Tunisia, and 15,000 tons of wood pulp mainly from Scandinavia and North Africa, are imported each year.

"In production they use 780 million gallons of water and $23\frac{1}{2}$ thousand tons of coal per year. The raw materials go through many stages, some with strange names, including breaking, beating, through "stuff" chests, dandy rolls and calendars on to tubsizers, then to a cutting machine, before being "overhauled" and, finally, sheets are counted and packed for despatch.

"Much of the paper produced by Cowans is manufactured for specific purposes, in contrast to mass-produced newsprint. Our guide expressed the opinion that this was one of the reasons why the firm were able to continue on such a large scale while other mills, including one in Penicuik, were closing down.

"The Mill produces 18,000 tons of paper yearly; of this, over 1,000 tons are exported to many countries, including New Zealand, South Africa, Hong Kong, the American continent, Nigeria, and almost all the countries of Western Europe. A recent addition to their export list is Yugoslavia. The firm of Cowans was bought over by the Reed Paper Group in 1965."