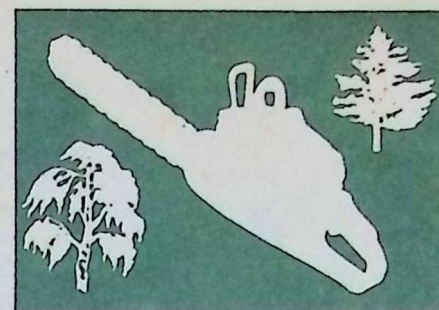




SLASHER

NEWSPAPER OF THE FORESTRY COMMISSION



No. 302

AUTUMN/WINTER 1979

IT'S OUR DIAMOND JUBILEE

1919

1979

NOVEMBER marks a milestone in the history of British forestry. It was on the 29th of November 1919, that the newly formed first British Forest Service — the Forestry Commission — took up its duties.

During the last sixty years forestry has seen many changes. In the early days all efforts concentrated on the establishment of forests — much of it on barren uplands. Techniques employed to prepare the ground and protect the crop earned British foresters the reputation of pioneers in afforestation.

Certainly the achievement of creating over two million acres of plantations of its own, and the encouragement to private woodland owners to do similar, justifies our gratitude to all those who have played their part during the past sixty years.

At the recent meeting of the Board of Commissioners on November 14, Chairman, Sir David Montgomery read out a letter of congratulations from Her Majesty the Queen. We are happy to publish it here.



BUCKINGHAM PALACE

The Chairman,
The Forestry Commission.

I thank you for your kind message of loyal greetings on behalf of the Commissioners and staff of the Forestry Commission — all of whom I congratulate on the occasion of the Commission's Diamond Jubilee.

I send my best wishes for the future work of the Commission, which has such an important contribution to make to life in and the appearance of the British Isles.

ELIZABETH R.

14th November 1979.



IN YOUR JUBILEE ISSUE OF SLASHER

Six pages of this edition of Slasher are devoted to Jubilee stories and pictures:

- ◆ Pages 4 and 5: Looking Back to the Old Days.
- ◆ Pages 6 and 7: The Race to Grow Trees.
- ◆ Pages 8 and 9: Highlights of our 60th Year.
- ◆ Plus your usual news and features.

Tribute to John Mackie

Mr John Mackie has completed his three year term as Chairman of the Forestry Commission.

During his term Mr Mackie was a well-known visitor to forests throughout Britain and he was much liked by staff at all levels.

He is a former Labour MP and served as Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food between 1964 and 1970, where he had special responsibility for forestry matters.

Mr Mackie (69) farms in Essex.

The Director General, Mr George Holmes, pays this tribute to Mr Mackie:

"John Mackie was a most successful and popular Chairman and it was a great pleasure working with him. His services

to forestry and to the Forestry Commission are many and outstanding, but in my opinion one of his most important achievements was the trust and confidence he generated both inside and outside the Commission, and in particular with the farming community. His sincerity and boundless energy and enthusiasm were great assets and as a result he became a well-known and leading figure in the forestry scene in a remarkably short time.

"As one of the country's leading farmers and as a distinguished Parliamentarian and former Minister he brought with him an unrivalled knowledge and sensitivity for the processes of Government and for the countryside. This breadth of experience proved of great benefit to the Commission.

"His love of the land and his conviction about the value to the nation of forestry in both the public and private sectors did much to influence opinion.

"I salute his services to forestry and we wish him well for the future."

The new Chairman is Sir David Montgomery, a member of the Nature Conservancy Council since 1973 and chairman of its Scottish Committee.

Sir David (48) is a landowner and farmer and lives at Kinross, 25 miles north of Edinburgh. He served as Vice-Convenor of Tayside Regional Council and Vice-President of the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities, posts he resigned on taking up his Forestry Commission appointment.

CUTS

How they affect us

THE Government announced its planned expenditure levels for 1980-81 in a White Paper published on November 1.

The figures for the Forestry Commission included in the total for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry show that the previously planned level for 1980-81 has been cut by £5 million to £57 million.

The cuts will fall most heavily on the funds for acquisition of land which are reduced by over two-thirds (about £2.5 million) to £1 million.

The new planting programme — already reduced because of the falling land reserve — will be 12,800 hectares per year at a saving of £450,000.

A cut of £850,000 in recreational expenditure will mean the elimination of all new developments.

Further savings of £1.15 million will come from administration — £250,000; vehicles, machinery and equipment — £300,000; roads — £200,000; increased disposal of land — £200,000; buildings — £100,000; fertilising and protection — £100,000.

The Cabinet have not decided the expenditure levels for later years.

245-T RAISED AT ITC MEETING

AT a meeting on November 13 of the FC Industrial and Trade Council a request was made by the Trade Union side for an immediate halt on the use of weed-killers containing 245-T.

The Forestry Commission management side stated that they relied on the recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Pesticides in the use of all chemicals in the forest. This Committee has reviewed the use of 245-T eight times since 1967 and as recently as March 1979 published a report which confirmed that 245-T "offers no hazard to users, general public, to domestic animals, to wildlife or to the environment generally."

In addition in July of this year

this advice was repeated in the House of Commons following another review after further evidence from the USA.

In view of the thorough investigations and repeated assurances by the Advisory Committee on its safety the Forestry Commission does not feel justified in ceasing to use 245-T against woody weeds in appropriate circumstances.

Following the meeting the Joint Council issued this statement:

"The Trade Unions were not successful in persuading the Forestry Commission (the biggest single user in Great Britain) to ban the use of 245-T."

"In consequence, the Trade Unions within the FC Joint Council agreed to recommend to their respective Executive Committees that members employed be instructed not to use 245-T until further notice."



Pictured (left to right) Mr David Johnston, Director, Research and Development; Mr Dallas Mithen, Commissioner for Harvesting and Marketing; Mr John Zehetmayr, Senior Officer for Wales; Commissioner Sir Ralph Verney; Mr Murray Hunter, Commissioner for Administration and Finance; Chairman, Mr John Mackie; Commissioner Lord Gibson Watt; Mr George Holmes, Director General; Commissioner, Mr John Pollock; Mr George Stewart, Commissioner for Forest and Estate Management; Commissioner, Captain David Bowser; Commissioner, Mr Dennis Hicklin; Mr John Kennedy, Director, Forest Management; and Mr Peter Clarke, Secretary to the Commission.



A group of visitors walking under mature Larch in Rheola Forest.

Photographs by Les Starling



Brian Wycherley and Dai Sandry demonstrate extraction by skyline.

Visitors flock to Rheola Open Days

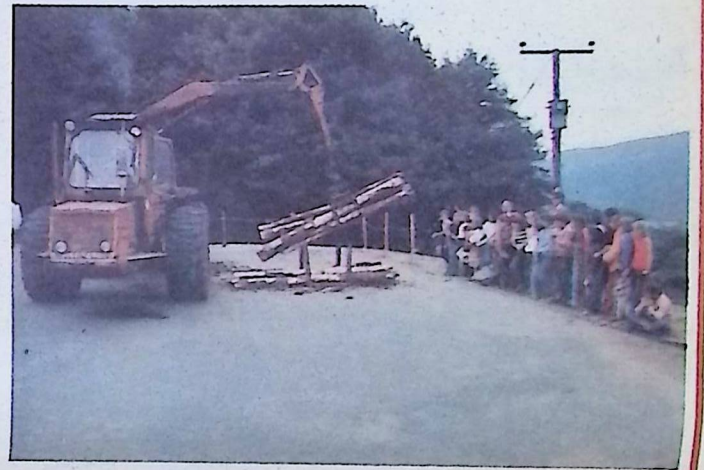
BLESSED with glorious weather throughout, this year's Open Days at Rheola were a great success, attracting 6000 visitors. Such was the demand from school parties that it necessitated opening a day earlier than planned to take the overflow.

A total of 4100 schoolchildren in 70 parties from all over South Wales, with one group of students from Paris, came to see the mysteries the forest had to offer. The guided tours of the timber felling, extraction, conversion, fencing and planting demonstrations by the men in the woods; the wildlife display and quiz arranged by the rangers; the demonstrations of sign making by the Brechfa Sign Unit and training of machine operators at the Rheola Training Centre, were greatly appreciated by all.

Some 2000 adults took the guided tours and an estimated 1300 took advantage of the 10-mile drive, open specially for the occasion, to enjoy impressive views of the surrounding countryside.

The film shows proved very popular, with "Woodland Harvest" being shown no fewer than 50 times during the event. The publications stall did a roaring trade in leaflets, booklets and wildlife charts which were snapped up by the children as mementoes of their visit.

This was an excellent team effort by the local staff and all others who came to help. That the staff enjoyed it despite all the hard work was aptly summed up in a remark by one of the chainsaw operators as a party of cheering young schoolchildren left him — "I've never had such admiration in all my days with the Commission."



Demonstrating training in the use of hydraulic hoist for loading and unloading timber.



Near-miss!

A REPORT has come to us of a dramatic "near miss" accident at Inverllev Forest in West Scotland.

It is a first-class example of how wearing proper protective clothing can prevent serious injury to workers.

Chief Forester George Francey said: "Jimmy Duffy, a skilled operator, was engaged in a clear felling operation. During snedding he stepped forward into an unseen hole. He fell forward with the chainsaw racing and put up his left hand to save his face.

"On contact between the chain and the back of the gloved hand the saw stopped, severely lacerating the glove but causing Jimmy no injury other than slight shock.

"Jimmy was somewhat surprised when his fingers came out of the tattered glove intact but delighted that he was wearing full protective clothing and the protection worked."

The glove is pictured above.

'Welcome' drop in accident rate

A "SMALL but welcome" reduction in the number of accidents is recorded by Safety Officer Don Brady in his annual report for 1978.

"The number of reportable accidents — those which caused an absence from work longer than three days — was slightly down on the previous year and the second lowest in the current decade," says Mr Brady.

"The reduction from 464 to 443 accidents represents a fall in the accident rate per 100 industrial staff of 0.5. This improvement over the performance of the previous year, although quite small, is nevertheless welcome."

The report says that Forest Management and Engineering employees share a risk factor which is broadly equivalent but those engaged in Harvesting operations are exposed to a risk factor which is threefold by comparison.

There were 261 harvesting accidents — 85 involving felling or take-down; 48 snedding; 35 conversion; 5 peeling, 31 extraction and 57 others.

In the case of chainsaw cuts (32), 11 were caused by kick-back and the remainder could be allocated fairly evenly between failure to adopt a safe working position and a fall or slip.

Six of the injuries could have been avoided or reduced in severity had the operators been using leg protection.

In the case of sprains and bruises more than two-thirds (136) were caused by incorrect technique or method. The majority of back and shoulder strains were associated with the non use of aid tools or the use of aid tools in poor condition.

Of the 12 eye injuries, 7 were sustained by operators who were not using eye protection, said the report.

"The significant further improvement in the juvenile accident rate deserves special mention. There can now be little doubt that the prohibition

on juveniles using chainsaws has made a big impression. This is evidenced by the fact that the age definition of an adult (18 years) is now exactly in line with the minimum age of a chainsaw operator."

Safety Guides

THE Forestry Safety Council publish a series of safety guides aimed at reducing the risk of accidents.

"Many people carry on using bad habits thinking 'accidents cannot happen to me' — but accidents did happen 443 times in 1978," said an official for the council.

"Many of these accidents at work can be traced to poor working techniques or ignoring safety rules. Don't YOU get caught out — if you haven't already got the right safety guide, ask your supervisor for a copy now."

The guides are: — Noise and Hearing Conservation, Clearing Saw, ULV Herbicide Spraying, Application of Herbicides by Knapsack, Spraying, Application of Granular Herbicide, Tractor Mounted Brushcutters, Planting, Hand Weeding, Brashing and Pruning with Handsaw, The Chainsaw, Felling by Chainsaw, Chainsaw Snedding, Chainsaw — Crosscutting and Stacking, Chainsaw — Take Down of Hung-up Trees, Chainsaw — Clearance of Windblow, Tree Climbing and Pruning, Forest Tractors, Extraction by Skidder, Mobile Saw Bench, Mobile Peeling Machine, Stock Fencing (shortly to include HT Steel Fencing, formerly FSC 33), and First Aid.

Newly-weds at risk...

NEWLY-WED operators may be taking more risks in order to earn more money, warns Safety Officer Don Brady in his report.

"The age group which causes most concern continues to be the 20-30 year category," he says.

"This group undoubtedly contains a high proportion of inexperienced employees who because of their age and physical fitness must inevitably be selected for training in the various harvesting skills.

"It is also highly likely that this group contains a large number of newly-weds whose financial responsibilities provide a motivation to achieve earnings in excess of their available skill.

"All these factors lead to the conclusion that supervision must be selective and intensified to ensure that safe practices are not sacrificed by inexperienced employees who may be pursuing other goals."

Axeman's Log

Facing the firing squad...

It's a long, long road

WORK Study Forest Officer Mark Haworth and his wife Carolyn recently completed a 190 mile walk from St Bees Head, Cumbria, to Robin Hood's Bay, North Yorkshire, in 12 days.

They decided to be sponsored in order to raise money for the Addenbrookes Hospital (Cambridge) Cancer Scanning Appeal Fund. The machine needed is a "whole body" scanner and will cost £1.2m to purchase and £1.2m to run for the first 5 years.

Mark would like to thank all the FC employees in Thetford and Cambridge who contributed towards the appeal. All monies are not yet in, but £610 is promised, of which FC contributions are 22% (all collected!). Addenbrookes Hospital radiographers and porters 46%, Mark's and Carolyn's home village of Brinkley 20% and friends, relatives, etc., 12%.

Congratulations

... to Ron Elliott, HEO Personnel Branch, HQ, who achieved 11 As, 4 Bs, and 2 Cs in the Institute of Cost and Management Accountants examinations this year. Ron has now completed the five year course of study leading to his qualification as a professional accountant.

... to Handyman G. Williams, Estates Branch, Rheola, for his fourth consecutive win in the local Onion Show. Not only did he win the prize for the largest onion — over 3½ lbs. — but he also took the trophy for the best collection in the show.

... to Bob Orrell, former Ranger in charge of Whinlatter Visitor Centre, who has completed his journey on horseback through the Scottish Highlands. Bob asks us to pass on his sincere thanks to the many foresters and workers who went out of their way to help him during his journey.

... to Forest Management Division for coming up with an answer to a query from Help the Aged for a quiz: "How many fence stobs do we have in Scotland?" Of course, FMD are never "stumped" and came up with the answer — five million!

Slasher

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North: Richard Westlake
East: Douglas Furneaux
West: Archie Cameron
South: Ben Struthers

RESEARCH:
Alice Holt; Noel Blatchford,
NRS: Fred McLauchlan

SOUTH-West England rangers lining up for their annual competition for the Rangers' Rifle Cup held this year at the Royal Navy's Langport Ranges in Somerset.

The Cup was won by Edwin George, the Senior Ranger at Wyre Forest, with a score of 81 points out of a possible 100. Edwin thus takes the Cup to his home forest for the first time since its presentation. A very appropriate place, since the donor of the cup — Jim King — is now the Forestry Adviser to Shropshire County Council, and spent much of his service in the Forestry Commission in Worcestershire.

The competition was scored in four sections, all shooting at roe deer targets, with penalties for "wounding" shots.

Pictured are (left to right) "Jock" Graham, Head Ranger; Edgar Gwilliam, Dean; Aubrey Neale, Dean; Steven McCartney, Wareham; Brian Price, Hereford.



SLASHER EDITOR LEAVES

NIGEL HAWKINS, Editor of Slasher, left the Forestry Commission this month to take up a new post as Press Officer with the Scottish Sports Council.

Nigel was a Press Officer with Information Branch for two years and one of his last duties was to put the Jubilee Slasher to bed. We wish him luck in his new post.

Peggy's farewell



PEGGY BISSET — known throughout the Commission for her work in Office Services — has left after 40 years' service in the Commission.

She started in the London office in August 1939 just weeks before the outbreak of World War Two. In the course of her career she worked as personal secretary to Sir Arthur Gosling, one of our earlier Director Generals.

She was in the Drumsheugh Gardens office in Edinburgh for many years before headquarters moved north to Edinburgh. She became HEO in Office Services and made many friends in the Commission.

Her colleagues were delighted when as Peggy Liddle she married Jimmy Bisset, himself a headquarters' stalwart, in 1975. Jimmy retired last year and now Peggy joins him in enjoying the pleasures of retirement.

Peggy (with flowers) is pictured above with her husband Jimmy (standing behind her) and several of her friends at headquarters.

Another well-known headquarters figure retired as "Slasher" was going to Press. He is Mr Cyril "Claims" Tucker and a full report will appear in the next edition.

Ferry Shipwrecked—so Harry and Jim down a beer!

THE Danish-owned ferry, Winston Churchill, ran aground on rocks off Gothenburg, Sweden, on August 26.

Four helicopters and several tugs risked gale-force winds and heavy seas to rescue the 587 passengers from the stricken vessel.

On board en route from Gothenburg to Newcastle were Harry Barron, South Scotland's Conservancy Mechanical Engineer, and Moffat District Officer Jim Dewar.

All the passengers were rescued without injury — apart from one elderly lady who broke a leg alighting from a helicopter.

Harry Barron congratulates the rescue services for a "marvellous job." Here is his story:

"We had just obtained our meal and sat down when the ship gave a lurch to starboard, followed by a tremendous crashing sound and then a gigantic roll to starboard. This resulted in the sixty or seventy people (with one exception) seated in the cafeteria being literally hurled towards the starboard side of the ship, accompanied by flying food of every description, crockery and bottles.

"The one exception mentioned was my colleague who, with his canny Scots nature, had somehow managed to hold on to the table with one hand and his plate with the other.

"Amidst the screams and shouts, people were just picking themselves up and checking for injuries when the ship's engines were shut down and the lights went out. Panic was now spreading and a general exodus began from the cafeteria.

"Whether by act of God or masterly steering by the captain, we eventually came aground some 23-30m from the island. It was

amazing how the presence of land, however inhospitable, virtually removed all traces of panic. We were informed over the public address to remain calm and that help was on its way.

"Lifebelts were issued, put on, and we stood obediently in a long queue for the appointed lifeboat station. After a considerable time with very little movement we decided to return to the lounge and await our turn in comfort — the ship at this time being fairly steady and level.

"To our pleasant surprise, the bar was still functioning — the majority of the customers appeared to be crew members having a "shipwreck" party: we requested and got a beer free!!

"We remained in the lounge until about 2100 hours when one of the crew arrived and said if we reported to the aft deck we would be taken off by helicopter. By this time the ship had taken quite a list to starboard and I was eventually taken off by helicopter.

"Around 0200 hours Jim came ashore; apparently after seeing me disappear upwards into the night in the midst of the wind and rain, he had been instructed to return to the lifeboat station.

"We left Gothenburg Airport at 2100 hours and flew to Newcastle. My daughter met us there and brought us back to Lockerbie and our very relieved families."

Tair Onen's special walk

CRAIG Y PARC Spastics School for children is a mansion adjoining FC woods at Tair Onen Forest near Cardiff but most of the children are confined to wheelchairs and they could not reach the woods owing to the lie of the land. A scheme for a special walk was devised by the FC and supported by the Manpower Services Commission.

A STEP team set to work last January. They cleared undergrowth, laid out and surfaced a graded pathway to and through the woods for both wheelchairs and children using walking frames; in addition a log cabin and picnic place were provided at good viewpoints.

To show how much they appreciated what had been done, the schoolchildren invited the men to a special tea when the work was completed recently so that they could say "a proper thank you," as the Headmistress put it.

New Appointments

Mr John Kennedy has been appointed Forestry Commissioner to succeed Mr George Stewart, Commissioner for Forest and Estate Management, who retires at the end of this year.

Mr Kennedy (52), is presently Director of Forest Management, and has served as DO in East England; head of Forest Operations; and Conservator, North Wales.

Mr Gwyn Francis (49), head of Harvesting and Marketing Division, has been promoted to Director. The new head of Forest Management will be Mr S. Andreas Neustein at Conservator level. Mr Neustein (47), is presently Assistant Conservator at Chester.

Westonbirt "Outstanding"

THE new visitor pavilion at Westonbirt Arboretum has received a commendation from the Royal Institute of British Architects.

The jury said that the building was "outstanding in several respects." They added: "Within a small compass it manifests a presence suggesting a minor celebratory temple to the care, appreciation and use of trees."

Architect was Andris Berzins with Nicolas Scarfe and design of interior display was by Bob Jones, Forest Design Branch.

Looking back..... to the Old Days.....



Lodgepole Pine planted at Borgia in North Scotland in 1920. Picture taken in 1931.

I MET Charlie Long in 1926 in the hazel coppices of Dorset. The quality of his work was amazing and a joy to see; all the produce clean cut and tied into neat bundles with twisted hazel wand.

In 1928 I went to the Forestry School at Parkend, in the Forest of Dean, and there met tall, thin Elam Ward who was our instructor in tree felling. His axe-work was really wonderful and a great old oak trimmed out by him was indeed a work of art.

Bill Gray was in charge of Kennington Nursery from 1925 until shortly before he died in 1968 — a long and very distinguished career. He was a remarkable man, ever helpful to all who came to him.

None of these great foresters would have made a fortune on piece-work; neither speed nor riches was their main aim. Their pride and joy was the quality of their work and that great inner satisfaction that comes from a job well done.

Maurice Nimmo, former DO Silviculture (South).



The smiling faces of South Wales Division staff in May 1939.

FRONT ROW: T. E. Little (Michaelston), T. H. Lewis (Crychan), L. T. Edwards (Brechfa), G. B. Ryle (Divisional Officer), T. D. H. Morris (Clerical Officer), A. H. Cameron (Crynan), A. H. Jones (Aberdare), D. H. Farrance (Rheola), G. H. Richards (Cwmogwr), T. Caddy (Llantisant), J. F. Cowie (Pembrey).
BACK ROW: S. J. C. West (Brechfa), R. E. Pallett (Fair Oen), C. Adams (St Gwynno), W. D. Haldane (Divisional Officer), D. M. Morgan (Rheola), P. Harrison (Rheola), D. Ace (Brechfa), E. H. Bradford (Divisional Officer), R. Cowell Smith (Divisional Officer), G. W. Backhouse (Divisional Officer), T. G. Saunders (Celo), H. C. Young (Mynydd Ddu), A. T. G. Gunter (Margam), A. C. Evans (Penlleege), L. Butter (Usk), C. V. Squires (Brecon), T. N. Browne (Hensoll), A. J. Mackenzie (Halfway).

I FEEL the old photograph (right) taken in 1938 in Rockingham Forest in Northampton may be of interest.

It is of the forest staff of those days and includes the Forester W. R. Halsey; myself, then a Foreman; and Arthur Pywell, ganger (whom I last heard of in East England).

The three boys in the foreground used to work mainly in the Nursery as "Bird Scarsers" (getting up in those days at 3.30 a.m.). One small boy called "Blinder" was a remarkable individual who, whilst bird-scaring in the nursery, lit a fire inside the hut to warm himself. The building was destroyed along with most of the nursery slating and a large percentage of the tools.

He appeared shortly after this disaster at my lodgings where he stood on the doorstep (he was about 3 ft. 6 in. high) and remarked: "I have had a bit of a fire but it is all right now — I have shut it in."

Needless to say as he had about three miles to walk before arriving at my abode, when I reached the scene myself, the picture was one of complete chaos.

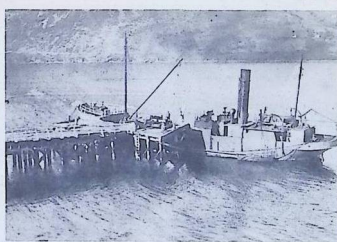
I went on to serve a further 35 years with the Commission, retiring in 1972 but no doubt many people on the snap are still alive.

B. H. Hammond,
3 Prospect Terrace,
St Ann's Chapel,
Gunnislake,
Cornwall.



Rockingham Forest staff in 1938. The three boys in the front are "bird-scarsers."

★★★★★



Loading timber — Loch Broom, 1932.

5/- cycle allowance!

IT'S a long, long time since any forest office could produce monthly accounts showing expenditure of less than £20!

But a look at the books for Mildenhall Forest in East England for May 1934, shows an expenditure of only £19 11s 7d.

Wages, of course, were the major expense item costing the grand total of £18 18s. The accounts do not show how many people were paid — the mind boggles! National Insurance stamps cost 7/6 and postages were 1/4.

The most unusual item is the forest's monthly CYCLE allowance of 5/-. This remained the same until July 1937, when it jumped to 8/5 and changed its name to "Bicycle allowance".



Burning a four-foot fire line with a Primus flare at Culloden in the 1920s.

Dear Sir,
"SLASHER" is much appreciated by this old Forester. I commenced work in 1906 for the Office of Woods, joined the School of Forestry in 1912, and was appointed Forester at Dymock in 1914.
In the last War I was District Officer, Acquisitions Officer and then DDO before returning to the Forest of Dean as Head Forester, retiring in March 1957 after a happy and interesting life.
With all best wishes to all in Forestry Commission work.
Yours sincerely,
A. E. Walker,
28 Sandycroft Road,
Cheltenham Road East,
Churchdown,
Glos. GL3 1JH.

THE DIAMOND JUBILEE

Days.....



Divisional car on icy roads in Caithness in January 1927.

Train started 46 fires...

MORAG BRUCE, retired clerkess at Leananachan Forest Office, recalls the days when after each train went by on the neighbouring Glasgow to Fort William line, a forest worker would be dispatched on a bicycle to follow the train and put out any fires that were started through flying sparks!

Tom MacBeath, A&FO at Inverness, particularly remembers one train which passed through Achnashellach Forest on the Kyle to Inverness line starting no less than 46 separate fires!

By this time, however, many stretches of such railway line had forest roads built alongside them so that a landrover could chase the trains that passed, dropping off one forest worker armed with a fire broom at each separate outbreak.

This became a source of forest revenue — British Railways paid 2/6d for each outbreak!



Some faces which were to become very well-known in the Commission — the Dean Forestry School 1930-31.

Back Row: D. H. Farrance, N. Smith, P. Harmanston, T. G. Saunders, G. A. Jenkinson, M. Oongur, S. Kamitsis, J. F. Clark, W. L. McCavish, F. G. Parsons, L. Jones, D. M. Morgan.
Second Row: J. Rowland, D. M. D. Davies, N. D. Teale, D. W. Gillmore, Ch. G. Michaelides, J. Weatherell, T. C. Bowdler, A. L. Mitchell, G. T. S. Gwilliam, W. Pearson, R. D. Smith, N. R. Lingwood, W. T. Smith, W. E. Mason.
Seated: G. S. Davies, C. W. Redford, Mr D. N. Williams, Mr A. H. Peppert, Mr D. W. Young, Mr R. G. Broadwood, R. Bailey, B. H. King, T. J. R. Rees. Front: J. Hirst, John Ch. Mouskos.

Pioneering

Dwarf gorse and purple heather thrived with bilberry in compacted peat. *Molinia* grass and sphagnum moss. Quaked in the bog beneath our feet.

This was the barren land we met To first commence afforestation. Here tall spruce point towards the heavens. Admired by men of many nations.

Jack Jennings (Chief Forester, retired) Hampton Bishop, Hereford.



Lachlan Cameron

One week's holiday a year...

AT 93 years old Lachlan Cameron, of Fort William, can look back over a number of years in the West Scottish Highlands, where he worked since the turn of the century.

He joined the Forestry Commission in 1931 at the relatively late age of 45 at Leananachan. His inducement to join the Forestry Commission was the salary of 38/- per week, 8/- more than his previous wage as stalker and shepherd on the Dalmally Estate in Argyll.

After two years he was made trapper for the Forestry Commission which increased his wage to £2. Big money in those days. For this he worked a six-day week, having one week's holiday per year which he regularly spent travelling by train down to Glasgow to stay with his sister.

Lachlan's work as trapper was far from a solitary existence. His house each evening was full of people who used to call by. A few drams were frequently exchanged and spontaneous ceilidhs often developed. Tramps often called in too, bedding down for the night in the barn.

Meat was always available in the house in the form of rabbit or venison. A marked difference to today was that because of poor transport there was no market for venison and some of the deer shot by Lachlan in the forest were buried!

The transport available was chiefly bicycles and horses, although the occasional lorry was held by a forest. Imagine then the difficulty of fire fighting!

The Computer of 1937

Slasher...

Dear Editor,
I thank you for sending "The Slasher" to me with useful forestry information which I very much enjoy reading.

I remember my late father carried a Slasher with a long wooden handle for walking purposes. It was inserted with a steel cutting blade used for the removal of briars or other growth of a useless nature.

I was a foreman with the Forestry School students for seven years. I was then promoted to Forester, retiring after 42 years' service. On 15 July 1979 I was 91 years of age.

T. R. Morgan,
Pleasant View,
High Street,
Brecon,
Lynedey,
Glas.



A far cry from the computers of today... Alex Mackenzie, former DOT at headquarters, using a Fuller's Calculator in 1937 while working on sample plots in the North of England.



The first Chairman of the Forestry Commission — Lord Lovat, who was Chairman in the formative years between 1919 and 1927.

Looking forward to the next 60 years

By Sir David Montgomery, Chairman of the Forestry Commission

THIS page was once part of a growing tree. The building in which you work depended on timber for its construction. The laminated work surfaces in your kitchen at home are a wood product. We are all surrounded by timber in its many forms, and we accept it as casually as the air we breathe. Trees have always been there, and are one of our great infinitely renewable resources. It is unimaginable that it should ever be otherwise.

DOUBLED

Yet, 60 years ago, it was a desperate lack of growing timber in Britain that led to the formation of the Forestry Commission. Since that time — and despite the Second World War — the area of the country's productive forest resource has been doubled. The Commission today manages 2.2 million acres of forests. Add to this Britain's 2.1 million acres of private woodlands, and the 5 million acre goal suggested in 1919 is well within sight.

But, despite the very considerable achievements of the last 60 years, by both the Commission and landowners in restoring our depleted forest resources, Britain today has to import more than 90% of its timber and timber products at enormous cost to our balance of payments.

FUTURE

It is possible to raise our self-sufficiency level over the next 60 years, even to as much as 25%.

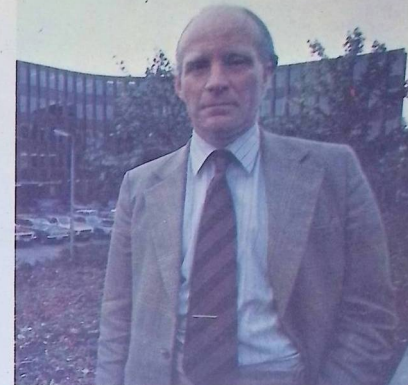
The time scale inherent in timber production requires us to be thinking now about supplies for the first half of the 21st Century — a time for which many forecasters are predicting increasing pressure on the world's timber supplies. We are today faced with taking decisions about the future of forestry in Britain as fundamental and vital as those taken by the Commission's first Chairman, Lord Lovat, in 1919.

I am confident that we can produce the right answers, but I also believe that the nation at large must stop taking wood for granted, and come to a better appreciation of our forests, of the timber they produce and of its place in all our daily lives.

The work carried out by our foresters, forest workers, engineers, land agents, Conservancy and District staff and all our other workers over the past 60 years has resulted in a very considerable achievement — one which is of benefit to the whole nation.

LOYALTY

I would like to thank all members of staff, past and present, for fulfilling this task so well. If the enthusiasm, dedication and loyalty of the past is continued into the next 60 years, the Forestry Commission can look to the future with optimism, confidence and determination.



The present Chairman of the Forestry Commission — Sir David Montgomery, who took up office earlier this year. He is the 10th Chairman of the Commission.

THE RACE TO GROW TREES

Tom's encounter with Lord Lovat

FORMER Head Forester Tom Anderson had an interesting encounter with the first Chairman of the Forestry Commission, Lord Lovat during the early days of the Commission.

The incident happened in the mid-1920's while Tom was working at Clipston Forest near Nottingham. Tom (88) takes up the story: "I had a telephone even in those days and was surprised when it rang one day and I found myself talking to Lord Lovat himself.

"He said he was shooting on a neighbouring estate and would like to come over to see establishment work at Clipston. I said: 'Yes Sir, and he duly arrived to see the forest.

He asked me how I travelled about the forest and I said head foresters used bicycles. He said: 'But it is miles and miles you have to travel. Surely you would like something better than a bicycle. I said I would prefer a motor cycle and side-car.

I was amazed when several weeks later a motor-cycle and side-car duly arrived — issued by the Forestry Commission."

Private Estate

Tom started work in forestry on private estates before the First World War at Shotley Bridge, Northumberland and in Wiltshire.

When left the army after the war I started work as a forester with the Office of Woods at Chapelwood near Durham and was there when we became the Forestry Commission in 1919.

In 1924 I moved to Clipston Forest, near Nottingham as head forester with 240 men working for me. In 1938 I went to Alesford Forest which is now part of Dalby in Yorkshire."

Six forests

During the Second World War Tom was seconded to the Ministry of Supply and in 1947 moved to his present home in Thornton-Le-Dale. "I was Head Forester for the area with six forests," he said.

Tom and his wife Nora (80) have a son and daughter both living in Canada. His son is married with three girls and a boy. And one of his grand-daughters is married with a daughter. "Which makes us great-grandparents," said Tom with a smile.

SIXTY years ago two simple tree-planting ceremonies took place — one on a hillside in Morayshire in the North of Scotland — the other on a moor in Devon.

In Scotland just one week after his appointment as first Chairman of the newly created Forestry Commission, Simon Fraser, 16th Lord Lovat led a small group to Monaghty Forest, near Elgin, to plant the Commission's first trees. Hours earlier Lord Clinton, Forestry Commissioner destined to become the Commission's second Chairman, had completed his historic tree planting at Eggesford Forest in Devon.

The tree race had begun — a race which has continued at a steady pace in an attempt to close the gap on a rising timber import bill and to plant enough trees to try and catch up with consumption and reduce our dependence on foreign wood and wood products.

It was in 1919 that the Asquith Government recognised with some alarm the sorry state of Britain's devastated woodlands.

Unlike other timber producing countries Britain had no significant natural woods left. These had been destroyed over the centuries either to meet man's insatiable appetite for timber or cleared to make way for agriculture. The area of woodlands in 1919 was estimated to cover only about 3% of the total land surface of Britain. A large percentage of these privately owned woods had little or no commercial value because the best stands of timber had been removed in the large scale war-time fellings.

A national forest policy defined by the Acland Committee and accepted by Parliament had as its ultimate objective the creation of reserves of standing timber sufficient to meet the essential requirements of the nation over a limited period of three years, in time of war or national emergency. The Forestry Commission was set up, and on 29 November 1919 took up its duties.

The Commission was charged with establishing its own forest estate of 1.8 million acres and encouraging the private sector to reconstruct some 3 million acres of timber-producing woodlands by the end of the century.

First Ten Years

Perhaps the biggest challenge facing the Commission acting in its role of Forestry Enterprise was to acquire and prepare the land for its ambitious afforestation programme.

By 1929 the Commissioners had acquired a total of 602,000 acres, including some 120,000 acres of Crown lands. They had planted over 138,000 acres and were managing 152 forest units evenly distributed with 65 forests in Scotland and 65 in England and Wales. There were over 300 million seedlings growing in its nurseries.

By 1929 there was a total of 70 technical, 100 clerical and 3500 forest workers employed by the Commission. Cost to the Exchequer for all this was £3.5 million.

THE DIAMOND JUBILEE

A statement in the House of Commons by Winston Churchill in July 1928 ensured an expanding forestry programme over the next decade.

Churchill's support

Speaking as the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr Churchill confirmed the Government would ask Parliament to vote the sum of £5½ million in the Forest Fund for the period 1929-30. "These sums will enable the Commission to provide 225,000 acres of new plantations, to devote £1 million to forest workers' holdings, and to make grants for other purposes."

"The Government fully appreciate the importance of proceeding with the agreed policy of forestry development, and of endeavouring to ensure, so far as the national finances permit that the country shall grow an adequate proportion of its timber requirements."

By the time war broke out in new forests — 800,000 acres to provide timber.

In 1943 a Report of Post War Forest Policy set the target of 5 million acres of productive forest by the year 2000. The Forestry Commission were planted the rate of new planting in dramatically.

By the 1950's the Commission average of 40,000 acres and the private sector some 30,000 acres with the aid of grants.

Historic

In 1956 a second historic tree-planting ceremony took place on the same site as the first one, to re-plant this time — Her Majesty the Queen, the planting of the millionth tree of the Forestry Commission.

Expansion continued at such a magic 2 million figure was reached in the Forest of Dean on 5 May 1971. In the Forest of Dean on 5 May 1971.

In this year when the Forestry Commission celebrates its

60th birthday many of those first forests are also coming of age.

The mechanisation of forestry has greatly contributed to increased productivity. The replacement of the axe by the power saw revolutionised harvesting as did the introduction of skidder and skyline winch as successor to the horse in the early days.

The forests have provided sanctuary for wildlife and much needed opportunities for countryside recreation. Since the day in 1935 when the Commissioners created the first Forest Park in Argyl, recreation facilities have expanded on a rapid scale.

Certainly the experience of the first 60 years has shown that forestry has a very positive role in rural Britain, not only as a vital natural resource, but also as part of the fabric of the countryside with its additional benefits for local industrial expansion, amenity, wildlife conservation and public recreation.

Those first trees . . .

THE tale has been told often, but it may bear re-telling.

It is said that Lord Lovat, first Chairman of the Forestry Commission, on that auspicious day in 1919, the 7th of December, closed the Commissioners' inaugural meeting with the announcement that he was off to plant the first trees in the North of Scotland. The story has it that Monaghty Forest was to be the one honoured, but that suggestion has been disputed.

Lord Clinton had his own ideas and arranged by telegraph that Tom Brown, a now legendary forester, would be available at Eggesford Station early next morning with pony and trap, plans and spades.

The result was a telegram which, the story relates, Lord Lovat received as he left his hotel after breakfast, telling him the first trees were planted. The bare fact is certainly recorded in bronze in the Flashdown Wood in Eggesford Forest. The first trees planted by 1919 by Lord Clinton, H. Murray, Asst. Commissioner, C. O. Hanson, Divisional Officer, and Tom Brown.

And certainly, in 1969, the Forestry Commission Jubilee was celebrated on the 8th December with the planting of an avenue of copper beech trees by the present Lord Clinton, Mrs Marion Roach (Tom Brown's daughter), Mr Leslie Jenkins, then Chairman of the Forestry Commission, Mr G. D. Rouse, Conservator, and Mr A. G. Fulford, Head Forester.

But doubts are being expressed on the whole story. The 8th December 1919 was a Monday. Did the Commissioners really have their first meeting on a Sunday? The better the day, the better the deed!

It is interesting to consider two other dates. The Commissioners were appointed on the 29th November 1919, which was a Saturday, but of course we still worked a 5½ day week then, or possibly even still a 6 day week.

The other date was the 1st September 1919 when the Forestry Act came into force — that was a Monday, very nice and tidy.

S. Forrester, Principal Forest Officer.

Family's 300 years of service

CHARLEY ADAMS, a member of the famous Forest of Dean Adams family of foresters, who started work with the Office of Woods in 1916, is enjoying his retirement at Bryn, near Port Talbot.

Charley was born in 1902, one of a family of 6 boys and 7 girls. His father James Adams was a Woodman with the Office of Woods having started work in the woods at the age of 12 and continued with FC until his retirement in 1929 at 68 years of age. His grandfather had also spent his lifetime working in the woods.

When Charley started work at 14 years of age in the Forest of Dean he was paid 7/6d a week. He transferred to the Forestry Commission at its inception in 1919 and after a further 3 years learning his trade as a forest craftsman attended the Dean Forester Training School in 1922-23.

From the School he went to Eggesford Forest, in Devon as a ganger where the FC's first trees had been planted on that memorable Monday, 8 December 1919.

Charley was very happy at Eggesford and did not mind much of being sent to Penlenger, near Swansea, in 1934, but he soon changed his mind about South Wales for it was here that he met his future wife. They were married in 1937, at which time Charley's salary was £2.5s per week.

He was promoted to Forester in the same year and went to St Gwynno to start the planting there.

In November 1939, he was seconded to the Home Timber Production Department serving at Abercynon, Crickhowell, Llanarth and in Essex, Herefordshire and Bedfordshire.

Charley returned to the Commission in 1946 and after a short spell at Tal Onen Nursery, which then employed over 50 land army girls and as many men, he took charge of Taf Fechan Forest where

he stayed for 10 years establishing woodlands on Corporation's catchment area leased to the Commission.

After a 4 year spell at Hafren Forest in North Wales he returned to Margam Forest in 1960 where he stayed until retirement in 1967 at the age of 65 after 51 years' service.

In 1963 Charley received the Coronation Medal in recognition of his services to forestry.

The service the Adams family

have given to forestry must be something of a record.

Grandfather: — About 50 years; Father: — James Adams 56 years; Sons: — Charley — 51 years; Jim — 51 years (much of it in New Forest); Ike — 50 years (much of it at Mortimer); Harry — 50 years (7 years in Dean, 20 years in Ugandan Forest Service, and 23 years with FC mainly at Brandon after returning from Uganda); Will — 7 years in the Dean and 20 years in Kenyan Forest Service.



Charley Adams (77) in his garden with a splendid panoramic view of Margam Forest, South Wales.

THE DIAMOND JUBILEE

IN OUR BOTH

Collecting our forest heritage

JACK WILSON until recently Head Forester in charge of Arden Forest has taken on the task of collecting together the story of our British forest heritage in material and documentary form.

Jack began this collection many years ago and many visitors saw the exhibition and craft demonstrations that he arranged so successfully at Arden Forest.

Today his task is to record the story of forestry and its products including the use of forest tools and the working conditions of foresters, through the ages.

Naturally he will concentrate on the present century whilst there is so much first hand evidence available. As the work progresses strong regional differences may emerge. Already a good start has been made and contacts within the Commission and in the tool making trade have been most fruitful.

The eventual aim is to both exhibit the Heritage at one or more centres in Britain and to offer a loan service for forest interpretive centres and temporary exhibitions. No decisions have yet been taken as to any permanent exhibition site though the present Tool Museum at the Royal Show Ground in Warwickshire will provide a very small shop window to the work and be seen by many visitors.

Collection

In the meantime Jack Wilson would like to hear from any forestry well wisher who might be able to contribute to the collection with gifts of hand tools, written or photographic material or to provide reminiscences which can be tape-recorded. He is particularly interested in hearing from those who have been part of a new idea which became absorbed into common practice.

His address is 15 Moorlands Avenue, Kenilworth, Warwickshire.

Helpful

Jack Wilson said "Foresters think that we are only interested in antique tools. This is not the case because the tools in use today are of vital importance."

"Reaction from most foresters has been very favourable and helpful."

"First interesting items collected are scrap books from retired Chief Foresters, tape recording of forest folk songs by a forest worker, tools and their histories and information about the edge tool industry of the Black Country."

It's a Double Celebration!

The year 1979 gave cause for a double celebration in SE(E) — the 60th birthday of the Forestry Commission and the 90th anniversary of the New Forest.

The occasions were marked by FC staff, their friends and families, with a barbecue held at Millyford Bridge in the New Forest. Altogether about 120 people came to the barbecue — the fire was ceremonially lit by Brian Tipping (A & FO) (at least we think that was him under the smoke!). He and Mrs Tipping, Berry Stone (Drawing Office), Trevor (Berry's cousin) and Liz Broadley (Estates) were principal chefs — in under 1 hour they cooked and served 80 chops, 100 hamburgers and 200 sausages (all in one string!). — Brenda Smith, CO Estab. SE(E)g.



A PROUD moment for Arthur Hazard, Forest Clerk at Rhondda Forest, when he receives his BEM from Mr Henry Knight, Lieutenant of Mid Glamorgan and chairman of South Wales RAC. Arthur received the award for services to forestry and the community including his work for Treherbert Boys Club.

IN OUR DIAMOND JUBILEE YEAR, THE DG PRESENTS AN IMPORTANT PAPER TO THE BA...

Britain should take a fresh look at countryside policies



LOOKING beyond the year 2000, Britain should be able to continue expanding her forests while maintaining agricultural production, Mr George Holmes, Director General of the Forestry Commission, told the British Association for the Advancement of Science Conference in Edinburgh.

By the first quarter of next century this could bring a further 1.5 million hectares of land under forestry and the total area of British forestry would be 3.2 million or 14 per cent of the nation's land area.

"This seems a fairly modest target by comparison with, say, the existing 24 per cent for France and 21 per cent for Italy, both of whom seem capable of sustaining their agricultural production while expanding their forest areas still further," said Mr Holmes.

"It is necessary to take a fresh look at existing national policies for the countryside which largely stem from the post-war era. It is perfectly feasible to integrate forestry into countryside management alongside the conservation of wildlife and landscape and increased agricultural production, but it needs a collective effort if the best balance of interests is to be struck," he said.

The Director General was addressing the annual conference of the BA during a debate entitled "Making the Most of British Hills and Uplands."

Mr Holmes said there were 600,000 hectares of common land in England and Wales and a similar area of crofters' common grazings in Scotland where afforestation was virtually precluded by restrictions on land-use.

"Integration of forestry and farming can offer a wide range of opportunities for developing the full potential of hill land to the mutual benefit of both partners."

"Forty per cent of the technically plantable area is situated in England and Wales, and virtually the whole of it is subject to a conservation designation of one sort or another — half the area lies within National Parks."

"Some accommodation must obviously be found if a reasonable share of forestry expansion is to take place south of the Border."

Mr Holmes added: "It is during the first half of next century that greatest pressure will be felt on this country's ability to import its requirements of wood and wood products because of overall changes in the balance of world supply and demand and therefore of the real price of wood products."

"Because of the time scale inherent in forestry, action is required now if difficulties in wood supply and the balance of payments; next century are not to be further exacerbated."

SPEAKERS

MR DAVID SEAL, Chief Research Officer North, was chairman of the Forestry Section of the BA Conference and gave an address on "Making the Most of Britain's Upland Forests."

Other speakers were: Mr Donn Small, Deputy Surveyor of the New Forest; Mr Clifford Tandy, Landscape Consultant to the Forestry Commission; Dr P. C. Macdonald, of Edinburgh University; Dr Jean Balfour, Chairman of the Countryside Commission for Scotland; Mr R. C. Steele, of the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology at Cambridge; Mr John Cameron, President of the National Farmers' Union of Scotland; and Mr J. C. Dunning, a member of the Countryside Commission.



Diamond of Trees

A DIAMOND-SHAPED group of white flowering gean has been planted in Halton Wood, Chiltern Forest, East England.

The jubilee commemorative planting was carried out during the visit by the National Committee for England and taking part were members of the committee, local authority guests, the Conservator Mr Rod Hewitt, and Commission staff.

The planting is on an open picnic area on the crest of the Halton Wood ridge. By the turn of the century the gean at blossom time should be visible in fine weather to air travellers between London and Edinburgh.

Forestry Commissioner George Stewart, who retires at the end of this year, plants one of the young gean (right).



Sir Ralph leads visit to China

FORESTRY Commissioner Sir Ralph Verney has invited China to send a forestry delegation to Britain next year.

The invitation was made to Vice-Premier Wang Zhen at the People's Palace in Peking during a three-week visit to China by a delegation representing British forestry.

The visit was the result of co-operation between the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Forestry Commission and the Great Britain/China Centre. The delegation was led by Sir Ralph Verney, who was accompanied by Mr Tom Smith, Managing Director of Thomas Smith & Sons (Kirkoswald) Ltd., Ayrshire; Mr Ron Kemp, Forestry Adviser; Professor J. D. Matthews of Aberdeen University's Department of Forestry; Mr David Johnston, the Forestry Commission's Director of Research and Development; and the Earl Bathurst who represented the interests of the private woodland owners.

Welcome

Sir Ralph told the Vice-Premier: "The warmth of welcome everywhere has been overwhelming. Foresters all over the world usually work well together because they have few secrets from each other. We have received frank and detailed answers to all our questions."

"We cannot claim to be experts on Chinese forestry after two and a half weeks in the country, but have learnt something of the scale and magnitude of the problems and the courageous way they are being tackled. We particularly admired the roadside and roadside planting, the 4-around schemes, the planting for flood and desert protection, and the urban landscaping to make China green with millions of trees."

"Our proposal is that during the summer of 1980 a return delegation of Chinese foresters should visit Britain under the auspices of the Great Britain/China Centre. We would endeavour to answer their questions as clearly and fully as they have answered ours."



Well done Jock!

JOHN "Jock" Martin, of Barcalde Forest, West Scotland, receives his BEM from Lord MacLean of Duart and Morven, Lord Lieutenant of Argyll, at a ceremony at Barcalde Hall (left).

Jock (65) retired this November. Since 1957 he has looked after plant and machinery in Lorne and the handicap of an artificial leg never deterred him from going out in all weathers.

COMMISSION WINS TOURISM AWARD

In the very month of our Diamond Jubilee — November — it was learned that the Forestry Commission had received a plaque for its contribution to tourism in Britain. The award was made by the British Tourist Authority and the plaque was presented to the Commission by Mr John Nott, Secretary of State for Trade, at a reception in London.

Roger lands deer trophy

ROGER LARSEN, former head of the Conservation and Recreation Branch of the Forestry Commission, has been awarded the Balfour Brown Deer Trophy for this year.

Mr Larsen was presented with the trophy by Lord Mansfield Minister of State at the Scottish Office, at a deer conference organised by the Red Deer Commission in Inverclyde.

The trophy, entitled "The Challenge", was originally presented to the Forestry Commission in 1945 by Miss E. M. C. Balfour Brown, in memory of her brother, Mr Vincent Balfour Brown, the famous Scottish deer hunter and author.

It is awarded to mark exceptional work in promoting the proper conservation and management of deer.

Mr Larsen received the award only days before he left his post at the Forestry Commission headquarters in Edinburgh to take up the post of Principal Forest Officer in charge of forests in Perthshire, Angus and Fife.

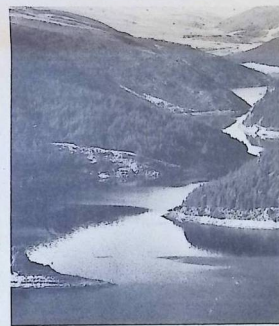
Largest forest in Wales...

Tywi starts production

TYWI Forest, high in the Cambrian Mountains in the upper reaches of the Tywi and Camddwr Valleys, where tree planting began in 1953, is now the largest forest in Wales with 7300 ha of woodlands.

During the period since the first areas for planting were acquired efforts have been concentrated on building roads to provide access for men and machinery, on preparing the often difficult ground for planting, on planting the trees and caring for the young plantations established to form this impressive forest.

The forest is now entering into an exciting new phase in its history. As the earliest plantings reach the thinning stage, timber is beginning to flow from these uplands to feed the local sawmills, to provide pulpwood for papermaking and woodchips for forest and farm use — a flow which will continue well into the future. It is a happy coincidence, therefore, that Wales' largest forest should be coming into production in this the Forestry Commission's diamond jubilee year, when there is a pressing need to increase the country's output of British timber.



The Camddwr Valley.

Nostalgic visit...

To mark this new phase in the history of Tywi the South Wales regions of the Royal Forestry Society visited the forest this year to see the first tree crop being harvested and to see the splendid scenery under the guidance of Ian Watt, District Forest Officer and Dai Morris, Chief Forester.

Some 90 visitors attended including William Seymour, President of the Royal Forestry Society of England, Wales and Northern Ireland; Rt. Hon. Lord Gibson-Watt, Forestry Commissioner; Chairman of the National Committee for Wales; Mrs D. Williams, Ian Haws and Elwyn Benjamin, Chairmen of the Caron-is-Clawdd, Caron-is-Clawdd and Llundudw Brefi Community Councils, respectively and Jeff Hampson, Assistant Director Recreation, Welsh Water Authority.

Also present were former DFO's Jac West (1942-54) and Euros Jones (1954-79) as well as former Foresters and Craftsman on a nostalgic visit to admire the fruits of their labours and to relieve for a day the fun as well as the difficulties of the early days.



The first thinnings from Tywi.

Around & About

Around & About

Around & About

NORTH SCOTLAND

Bobby leaves Sunart



Bobby with his fishing rod after the presentation.

BOBBY CAMERON, leading ganger at Sunart Forest, has retired after 30 years' service with the Forestry Commission.

Bobby who spent all his service at the Glenhurich section of Sunart Forest, started as a forest worker in 1949. A few years later as a lorry driver he transported some of the finest timber out of Glenhurich to Glenfinnan Station en route to the south.

Eventually he was promoted to

ganger and then leading ganger for the last eight years.

Ceilidh

The occasion was marked with a farewell ceilidh / buffet / dance in the Strontian Hotel where Bobby was presented with a fine fishing rod and radio. Mrs

Cameron received a piece of crystal from their many friends and colleagues.

At another ceremony at Polloch Office Bobby was presented with his Long Service Certificate by Conservator Robert Cathie who thanked him for his valuable service and wished him a happy retirement.

Roddie of the North

RODDIE MATHESON of Ardross retired after 40 years service with the Forestry Commission. Born at Killearnan in the Black Isle in 1913 he took up work on Redcastle Estate in 1932, with spells as a ghillie at Kildermorie and also as a commercial rabbit trapper, until 1938.

In 1939 he entered permanent Forestry Commission service as a trapper at Ardross and in 1968 he was promoted to Head Ranger with responsibility for the most northerly part of the Highlands.

Of complete integrity, loyalty, and with a vast knowledge of wildlife and firearms, Roddie pursued his work with vigour until his last day of service.

Binoculars

At an informal gathering at Ardross, Donald Laird, Chief Forester presented Roddie with beautiful Zeiss binoculars from his many fellow workers, rangers, etc., in North Scotland.

District Officer Finlay MacRae adds: "I would like to thank Roddie for many happy hours spent on the hill where he gave freely of his wildlife knowledge. It is also my sincere hope that he will refrain from "tree climbing" in his retirement, which I hope will be as long, and happy as his working life."

Four leave Ratagan



FOUR workers have retired from Ratagan Forest in North Scotland.

Pictured they are (left to right): Christopher Macrae who received a watch after 25 years' service.

John Allan Macrae who received a fishing rod after 25 years' service.

Gordon Macrae who received a camera after 40 years' service.

Angus Stewart who received a radio after 42 years' service.



Alastair's farewell

ALASTAIR MORISON has retired as Head Forester at Queens Forest, Glenmore.

He joined the Forestry Commission in 1949 as foreman at Clunes becoming a forester in 1955 when he moved to the Black Isle Forest. In 1971 Alastair moved again to Queens Forest at Aviemore on promotion to Head Forester where amongst other responsibilities he took charge of the Glenmore Forest Park.

At a buffet and dance to celebrate his retirement Alastair was presented with a wallet of money collected from Forestry Commission staff and a clock from local residents in the area.

Highland Double

TORRACHILTY Forest was the scene of a double retiral presentation of long service awards.

In the morning at Lael, Mr Dougie MacKenzie, ganger, after 41 years' service with the Forestry Commission, was presented by Mr Cathie, Conservator, with a long service certificate while Mr Thom, Head Forester, presented Dougie with a hedge cutter and a cold frame on behalf of his colleagues.

In the afternoon the ceremony was repeated when our ranger, Mr Izydor Szmytkowski, after 31 years' service received from Mr Cathie his long service certificate and from his colleagues a pair of binoculars, a striking clock and wallet presented on their behalf by the clerkess, Miss Valerie MacDonald.

We wish both of them a long and happy retirement.

EAST ENGLAND

GRAHAM'S DEPARTURE IS "END OF AN ERA"

GRAHAM COOK, Conservancy Mechanical Engineer, has retired after 31 years service with the Commission, all of which was spent in E(E). His departure almost marks the end of an era in E(E) in that he is the last retiring officer who joined in the immediate post-war period.

Graham had an eventful period of service in the Army during the Second World War, being almost trapped in France in 1940 after the B.E.F. Dunkirk evacuation, and he also served in India.

A farewell party was arranged in his honour at the University Arms Hotel, Cambridge, at which he was accompanied by his wife and daughter. Many past and present friends and colleagues attended including three Conservators under whom he had served. Mr Hewitt, Conservator, paid tribute to Graham's service with the Commission and thanked him for all he had done.

He presented him with a pair of cut glass decanters and a cheque, subscribed to by friends far and wide. Mr Hewitt wished Graham a long, happy and healthy retirement. Wally Roshier, the Workshop Manager and close associate of Graham's for many years spoke of their work together, particularly in the early days and presented him with a model of a tractor made by a local blacksmith.

Arrested by KGB!

MARIAN KRACEWICZ is another ex-Polish Army employee who has retired after 31 years service. He had a very eventful war and saw service in his native land against the Germans in 1939. During the Russian occupation he was arrested by the KGB and imprisoned at Samarkand. Marian came to England and joined the Commission in 1947 and did a variety of jobs on one of the Thetford Beats. He was transferred to Brandon Central Depot in April 1972.

Ray stays at Thetford

RAY YOUNG, Chief Forester at Santon Downham, has retired after serving with the Commission since 1946.

During the War, Ray served with the Infantry at Dunkirk, Alamein, Italy and Germany. After leaving the Parkend School he moved to Pickering NE(E) then to Kielder as Forester in charge. In 1959 Ray was transferred to SW(E) first on Private Woodland duties, and was later transferred to Wyre Forest on promotion to Head Forester.

In March 1970 he was again promoted — to Chief Forester — and transferred to E(E) to take charge of Santon Downham Forest.

At a local ceremony Ray was presented with some cut glass by the Director General, who thanked him for his loyal service and wished him and his wife every happiness in retirement. Other gifts were presented including some from the timber trade. Ray replied, saying that he expected to remain in the Thetford area in retirement.

John leaves

John Williams, a forest craftsman at Hazelborough, has been forced to retire prematurely on health grounds. John started with the Commission in 1938.

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND

Ted was plastered!

TED RUTHERFORD, New Forest Estate Craftsman, retired after 39 years' service.

A gathering of friends and colleagues said farewell to Ted at Lyndhurst. Some incidents from his career were revealed by David Gardner, Area Land Agent, during his tribute to Ted: "Maurice Loader, ex New Forest EO, recalls his own first day with the Commission at Red Lodge. He was in a room next door to Ernie's stationery store, where Ted Rutherford was preparing the ceiling for distempering.

"Ted was such a clean worker that Ernie had not bothered to cover his stock until the actual distempering began. Suddenly

Maurice heard the most appalling roaring crash that seemed to continue for several minutes. Then the door opened and Ted appeared smiling and covered with dust and plaster.

"I understand that as he met the horrified gaze of the thunder-struck occupants of the office he said 'That's improved it a bit like'. Ernie's comments have not been recorded."

It was fitting that Ted, in his final year with the Commission, should have the honour to be presented to the Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh on the recent Royal visit to the New Forest.

Albert's Paradise Isle

AFTER 31 years' service with the Forestry Commission, the whole of the time on the Isle of Wight, Mr Albert Cullen has retired.

Mr Cullen was presented with a long service certificate by the Conservator for South East England, Mr Charles Begley.

From friends and colleagues he was presented with a flashgun to mark his retirement, a pen for his 65th birthday and, as it was near Christmas, a Christmas Tree decorated with tinsel, paper forest tools and small gifts. Mr Cullen, a widower, will continue to live on the Island.

Tom's career spanned 40 years

TOM KIPLING, District Officer, retired after a career that had spanned 40 years as a professional forester.

His working life has included War Service in the 129 Forestry Company Royal Engineers. This was followed by 14 years in the Sudan Forest Service and finally 24 years in the Forestry Commission, all of which was in East and South East England.

A presentation by the Conservator, Mr Charles Begley, followed a buffet lunch at the Lyndhurst Park Hotel.

His many friends wish him a very, very happy retirement.

Around & About

NORTH WALES

Double retirement at Gwydyr

THERE was a double retirement at Gwydyr when Forest Craftsmen, R. F. Jones and J. Williams both retired on health grounds.

Colleagues gathered at Gwydyr Uchaf where Chief Forester W. Taylor presented Bob Jones with a radio, and Mrs Jones with a memento of her long association with Gwydyr. Bob has 29 years' service. Recently he has been responsible for maintaining Gwydyr Uchaf and manning the Forestry Exhibition. Conservator R. T. Bradley spoke of the admiration of all Bob's colleagues for the courageous battle he has fought against failing health.

Later Conservator Bradley, Chief Forester Taylor and Head Forester W. H. Jones visited John Williams at his home to present him with a Long Service Certificate after 31 years' service, and also a set of hand tools to aid him in his hobby of making walking sticks.

Both Bob and John will continue to live in the forest, where they can see the maturing results of their efforts over many years. We wish them both good health in their retirement.

NORTH WEST ENGLAND

423 years' work

FOURTEEN workers who have clocked up a total service of 423 years' service to the Forestry Commission have retired in North West England.

Pride of place goes to forest craftswoman Mrs E. Brookes, of Delamere Nursery, who leaves after 50 years' service.

The others retiring were:

G. Steele, Tractor Driver, of Blengdale (19 years).

A. Dear, Foreman Mechanic I, of Sherwood Depot (26 years).

W. Marshall, Building Craftsman, of Kershope (28 years).

L. Moss, Forest Craftsman, of Grizedale (20 years).

J. A. Wood, Chief Forester, of Delamere (30 years).

W. Robson, Forest Craftsman, of Kershope (33 years).

J. Dixon, Ranger Grade I, of Thornthwaite (31 years).

G. Underwood, Ganger, of Inglewood (32 years).

E. Hanking, Forest Craftsman, of Kershope (26 years).

L. Chapman, Forest Craftsman, of Thornthwaite (32 years).

T. J. Attenborough, Forester, of Shropshire Hills (33 years).

V. J. Brandon, Forest Craftsman, of Cannock (32 years).

J. T. R. Little, Forest Craftsman, of Kershope (31 years).

B. J. Jordan, Forest Worker, of Kinner (31 years).

EAST SCOTLAND

Garden seat for David

MR DAVID CAMPBELL, Ganger, Drummond Hill Forest, has retired.

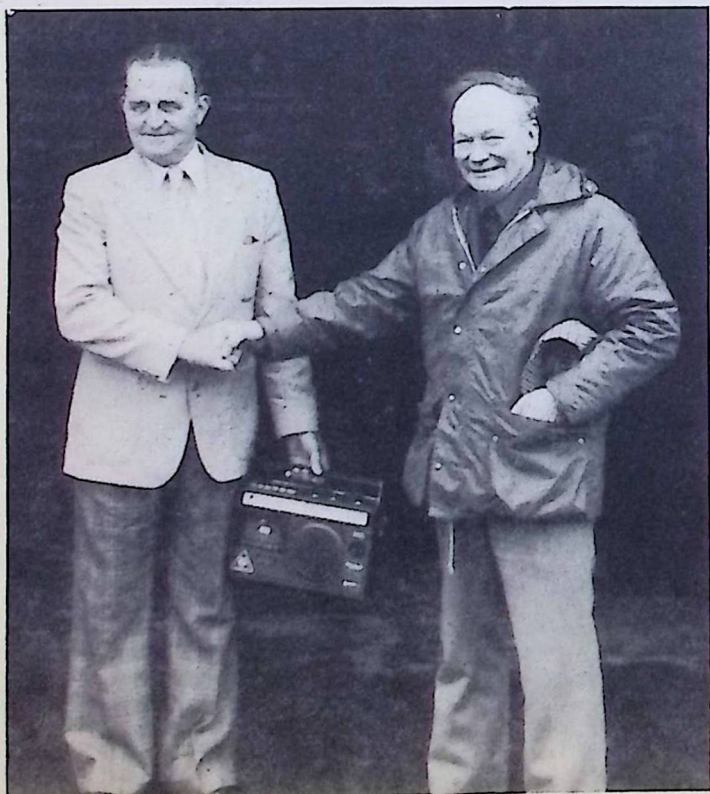
He joined the Commission after army service in 1946 and gave loyal and conscientious service during his 33 years at Drummond Hill. He was awarded a long service certificate at the Royal Highland Show in Edinburgh this year.

For his retirement, he chose a garden seat presented to him on behalf of the staff on his last day of service by Chief Forester Mr G. L. McBain. Mrs Campbell was presented with a house plant.

David and his wife will spend their retirement in the Loch Tay area of which he has an intimate knowledge.

SOUTH SCOTLAND

Peter ploughed 10,000 acres!



Peter McDonald (left) receives a cassette recorder from Conservator John Davies.

PETER McDONALD, Ploughing Tractor Operator based at Glentool Forest, recently retired from the Commission after 27 years' service.

After working for 14 years with a local timber merchant, Peter joined the Commission in 1952 when he became one of the first inhabitants of Glentool Village.

He was involved in the early development of the Long Wide Country Tractor and the 10,000 or so acres which he personally ploughed have made a considerable contribution to the large areas of well-established plantations that now exist in South Scotland.

At a special presentation at Glentool, Mr John Davies, Conservator, thanked Peter for his many years of devoted service and, on behalf of friends and colleagues, presented him with a cassette recorder and electric razor.

Asked what he would do in his retirement, Peter replied "Take things easy."

Nature News

Life-rafts for the Divers



Black-throated Diver at nesting site (West Scotland).

Report and Picture by Desmond Dugan

In liaison with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, conservation and ranger staff of West Scotland have been building flotation rafts on some of the hill lochs in an effort to help the breeding success of the Red-throated (*Colymbus stellatus*) and Black-throated (*Colymbus arcticus*) Divers.

Because of the increased use of these lochs as recreational resources, it has been found that the breeding success of these birds has somewhat declined in recent years.

The small artificial islands when anchored out in the lochs provide alternative nesting sites which in some cases have already been utilised with success.

ELM DISEASE MARCHES ON

Popular Bulletin

AMENDING legislation which came into effect last summer reflects the spread of Dutch elm disease in areas in the North Midlands and Wales.

The latest amendments to the Dutch Elm Disease Orders lists the areas classified for sanitation control as "lightly affected," which because of disease levels local authorities have sought to be re-designated as "heavily affected."

Local authorities concerned will now give up their powers to control the spread of the disease and the Forestry Commission will lift restrictions on the movement of elm timber in the counties of Nottinghamshire, West Glamorgan, the remaining parts of Leicestershire which were formerly "lightly affected," the Wirral District of Merseyside, parts of Derbyshire and Lincolnshire, the Glyndwr District of Clwyd and the Llanelli district of Dyfed.

These areas will now be rescheduled as "heavily affected" where the only Dutch elm disease restriction still applying is the prohibition of the movement of elm timber with bark attached from "heavily affected" into "lightly affected" areas.

Palestine Service

CERTAIN service in the Palestine Police Force may now count as one-half for pension purposes.

Forestry Commission employees and those in receipt of a Forestry Commission pension who had service in the Palestine Police Force during the period 27 May 1942 to 15 May 1948 should write to the Superannuation Branch, Forestry Commission, Room 243, 231 Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh, enclosing where possible documentary evidence of the service, particularly the "Leave and Last Pay Certificate."

The concession also applies to widows and dependants of Forestry Commission employees.

The Forestry Commission has produced a large number of scientific and technical publications on a wide variety of forestry subjects.

Over the years a particularly popular and valued item has been Bulletin 14 — "Forestry Practice." First published in 1933, the ninth edition has just been issued.

It represents the combined work of a very large number of our staff, experts in their own fields, from all parts of the Commission. Together they have collected the basic information on all aspects of practical forestry work from seed collecting to final felling.

Anyone starting to work in forestry or wishing to look up particular aspects of forest practice will find this comprehensive and easily read publication an essential part of their library.

focus

Snow put out the fires!



Frank Wood and his wife.

By Gwyn Owen

BORN in March 1892 in Sussex, Frank Wood started his career in Forestry as a farming and forestry student on the Earl of Egmont's Cowdray Estate in Sussex. He assisted in the management of a number of estates in Sussex, Nuneaton and Pembroke Dock.

Then in the early 30's as a complete change, he took up a post teaching practical farming and forestry at a Home Office reform school at Little Mill, near Usk in Gwent.

In 1937, he joined the Forestry Commission and started work at Michaelston (now Margam) forest.

In those days men walked up from Neath, a distance of 5 miles, to start work at 7 am. Many of the areas were turf planted — one man would cut the turf with a hay knife and another would come along and turn the turf over ready for planting.

Frank married in 1938 and has two daughters. His home in Margam afforded good views of Swansea Bay and many an hour, until forced to take cover from the "ack ack" shrapnel, was spent watching the Swansea searchlights, as they tried to track the German bombers attacking the city.

Whilst a number of bombs fell in the forest little damage was caused — one night a stick of a dozen incendiaries landed in the forest but fortunately as Frank and his helpers dashed out to fight the fires there was a sudden heavy fall of snow which put out the fires.

Another day, a barrage balloon which had broken its moorings landed in the forest but much to Mr Wood's delight it was too badly damaged for further use and provided the Wood family with waterproof clothing for the rest of the war.

In 1942 Frank moved to Crychan and then in 1947 to Glasfynydd Forest.

In October 1956, at the age of 64 he started on a new career when he was seconded to manage the Llandovery Co-operative Woodlands Society which he managed for 20 years.

But Frank even at 84 could not retire completely from forestry and has continued to act as forestry consultant to the National Trust in West Wales as well as managing Welsh woodlands of a Surrey Estate. Two years ago the Woods moved into a bungalow in Llandovery.

At 87 years of age, Frank says he feels, and certainly looks, as fit as ever and both he and Mrs Wood hope to continue in Forestry for many years to come.

On the Plodgy trail with David Bellamy

More than 2000 visitors turned up when the Forestry Commission and Durham County Conservation Trust held their Open Day at Hamsterley Forest under the title of "The Hamsterley Forest Workshop."

What, you may ask, is a "Forest Workshop?" — It is a cross between a show and an open day but with the emphasis very much on public participation.

The idea was the brain child of the "Botanic Man" — Dr David Bellamy, who lives at Hamsterley; and was organised jointly by John Oakley (DO Durham) for the Commission and Julie Gamon (Administrative Officer) for the Trust.

The object was to bring together countryside activities, crafts and work in one place so as to promote a better understanding of the countryside by a predominantly urban population.

Demonstration

The Workshop was blessed by fine weather and over 2000 people enjoyed a magnificent weekend during which there was something for everyone.

On the forest side, Roy Brown (Ganger, Hamsterley) demonstrated his skill at erecting a fence whilst next door two farmers from Teesdale introduced the public to the craft of drystone walling.

Training foresters Dave Hornby and Tom Bowbeer were kept busy advising on the use and maintenance of saws. Adjacent to them the public were invited to take part in a cross-cutting competition (using a bow saw because of safety) or try their hand at splitting Oak logs to make fencing stakes — not a common sight in the North of England.

Horse

There were not so many volunteers trying their hand at digging ditches, an activity ably demonstrated by Tommy Fletcher (F. Craftsman Hamsterley).

On the other hand it could have been that Bill Richardson (Ganger, Chopwell) and Cassius (a working horse kindly loaned by E.F.G.) who were extracting timber, were too big an attraction. Next to David



With David Bellamy on the "plodgy" trail . . .

Photo: John Oakley.

Bellamy they must have been the most photographed personalities. The timber was being felled by Ray Walker (a Hamsterley contractor).

For the energetic there was Nature trail, Geological trail Botanical trail (led by forest ranger Brian Walker), Photographic trail, Orienteering instruction and an Artists' trail with local wildlife artists sketching and painting and at the same time giving instruction to budding artists. Keith Wilson (Acquisitions Officer) ran a Tree Identification class which complemented a Stream Study class further down the Bedburn Beck.

Crafts

The focal point of the weekend was the craft marquee where local craftsmen demonstrated and allowed visitors to participate. Amongst the crafts were: fly-tying (Wilf Howell, H/F Wynyard), Batik work, leather work, blacksmiths, silver and pewter work, wood carving, bee keeping, Durham Quilting, lace making, proggy and hookey mat making, spinning and weaving, corn dollies, flower arranging, next box manufacture, pottery, ceramic animals and the local Young Farmers club who also laid on a demonstration of sheep shearing.

Champagne

A more staid but hardly a more sober event was a Champagne Breakfast served at 9 am on the lawns of the Grove

As far as the children were concerned the greatest attraction of the whole weekend was a chance to go plodging (paddling to the non Geordie) with David Bellamy exploring the stream life and at the same time taking part in a Poohstick race — floating sticks down the stream — immortalised by A. A. Milne in "Winnie the Pooh."

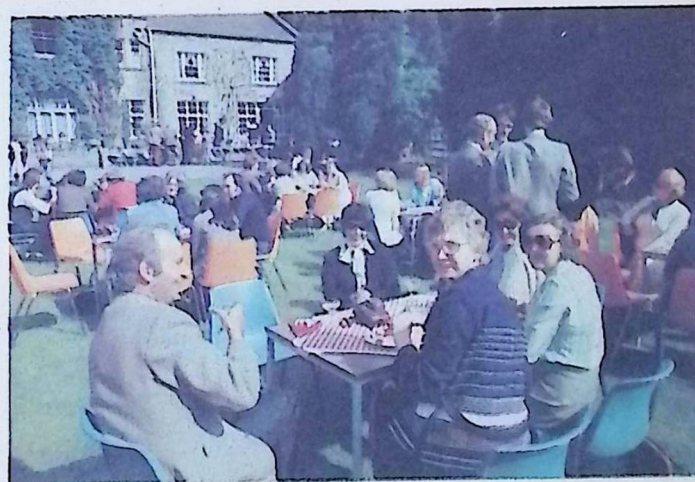
★★★★★★★★★★

House in the middle of the forest. Over 100 guests were happy to pay £5 a head for the privilege of listening to an excellent recording of the dawn chorus — the original was at 3 am! — and to partake of pâté, mousse, strawberries and cream, all washed down by excellent champagne. It is quite the most civilised way to start the day and bookings for next

year's event are now being taken!

Dr Bellamy's contacts with the media resulted in coverage by local TV. BBC Newcastle used the occasion to film a programme in their "Looks Natural" series and BBC Manchester filmed one of their "Go With Noakes" episodes complete with John Noakes and Shep. This latter programme will go out nationally in the Autumn.

"Joint ventures of this nature have a lot to commend them. We have the venue, they have the volunteers and non-forest expertise. The Commission's thanks and appreciation is due to the Trust members in general and to Julie Gamon in particular for all their help and involvement," said John Oakley.



Enjoying the champagne breakfast.

Photo: John Oakley.

OBITUARY

MRS MARGARET BARBOUR

WEST Scotland Conservancy staff were shocked and saddened by the sudden death of their former colleague, Mrs Margaret Barbour, who had worked as a CO from May 1970 to December 1977, when she voluntarily retired.

Margaret, who endeared herself to all who knew her by her sterling qualities of character and personality, was most dependable at all times, and when that little bit of extra

effort was needed, Margaret was never found to be wanting.

She will be much missed by her wide circle of friends and colleagues, many of whom attended her funeral at Craigton Crematorium.

Our sincere sympathy is extended to her husband in his very sad loss.

MR CHARLES BLOOR

With regret we report the death of Mr Charles Bloor, former head forester at Yardley, Northants District, East (England).

MR HORACE WILLIAM FOWLER

Mr Horace William Fowler, of Kesteven Forest, East England, died suddenly at the local bowling green whilst selecting a team.

Horace, who had only been off work three times during his 24 years' service, will be greatly missed by all his colleagues at Kesteven not least for his excellent workmanship in all aspects of forest management work.

He is survived by his wife and son.

MR WALTER LEGG

With regret we report the

death of Mr Walter Legg, former ganger at Banchory Forest, who retired only recently on medical grounds.

MR STANLEY MATTHEWS

Sadly we report the death of Mr Stanley Matthews, former forest craftsman at Banchory Forest, East Scotland.

MR CHARLES McDOWELL

And also sadly we report the death of Mr Charles McDowell, well-known former head forester of Pitfichie Forest, East Scotland.