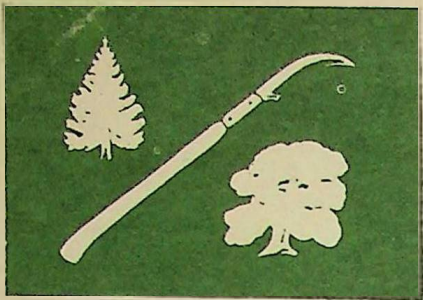




SLASHER

NEWSPAPER OF THE FORESTRY COMMISSION



No. 308

SUMMER 1981

SALES TO RAISE £40m IN 3 YEARS

THE FORESTRY ACT 1981 which received the Royal Assent on July 27, amends the Forestry Act 1967 in a number of important ways. First, it provides Forestry Ministers with wider power to dispose of Forestry Commission land and plantations. This will provide income in order to reduce the dependence of the Commission on public funds for the management of its woodlands.

The Act also introduces powers to enable sums to be transferred from the Forestry Fund to the Consolidated Fund. The proceeds of the disposals programme will be transferred to the Consolidated Fund in this way so as to ensure that the Commission's expenditure programmes and cash limits are separated from, and not adversely affected by, fluctuations in disposals receipts.

A third clause increases the maximum number of Forestry Commissioners, excluding the Chairman, from 9 to 10, in order to provide the Board of Commissioners with additional commercial advice from outside the forestry and wood-using industries.

The new Act also requires Ministers, in performing their functions under the Forestry Act 1967, to have regard to the national interest in maintaining

The Commission's former Chairman, now Lord John-Mackie after being elevated to the Peerage in the special Honours List in April, made his first speech dealing with forestry in the House of Lords during the debate on the Forestry Bill on Wednesday, 1st July.

and expanding the forestry resources of Great Britain.

The new legislation follows the Government's statement on forestry policy of December last which reaffirmed the Government's commitment to a programme of forestry expansion with greater emphasis on the role of the private sector.

Scale of Sales

The intention is to raise some £40 million from disposals over the first three years amounting to some £10 million in 1981-82 and £15 million in 1982-83 and 1983-84. This would represent about 4% of the Commission's total assets in land and plantations.

The value of plantations varies significantly with age, species etc. and to raise the suggested income a realistic programme of sales involving between 7000 and 15,000 hectares of Commission plantations per annum is envisaged. In addition some 7000 hectares of bare land awaiting planting will be offered for sale over the next few years.

"The object of this is to rationalise the Commission's holdings" said Sir David Montgomery, Chairman of the Forestry Commission, "and to raise money from certain of our assets to reduce the call on public funds. This limited objective will be possible without disposals from our core plantations."

Categories of Sales

The Commission will be responsible for selecting areas for disposal and will take into account guidelines set by Forestry Ministers. These include the desirability of its retaining management of those areas where conservation, amenity, recreation and public access are important.

It will also take into account the effect on timber supplies to the wood-using industries and employment in the more socially fragile areas before putting an area on the market. It is envisaged that certain of these more sensitive areas will be sold and leased back so that their

day-to-day management will be retained by the Commission.

The guidelines also recognise the special status of the New Forest where sales will be restricted to those of the kind that have traditionally taken place in the past. The Act itself recognises the unique circumstances of the Forest of Dean where the status quo will be maintained as far as disposals are concerned.

Ministers have also given special undertakings in respect of land leased or feued from the National Trust and the National Trust for Scotland.

Broadly speaking, the disposal programme will include land in the following categories:— Small plantations which are difficult for the Commission to manage efficiently but which are likely to be of interest to neighbouring landowners, lessors or small investors; woodland blocks of generally less than 100 hectares either sold individually or in geographical groups or packages; sale and leaseback of large plantation blocks of 500 hectares and over which are expected to be of interest to the financial institutions interested in forestry investment on a substantial scale, ie willing to invest at least £½ a million or more; large plantation blocks of 100 hectares and upwards for outright sale; areas of plantable land for sale.

Identifying plantations for sale

The Commission intends to select plantations for sale from all parts of the country. This will not only ensure that a range of different types of plantation is available to potential investors, but will also enable the Commission to retain a balanced regional structure of management which is important to its Forestry Authority role.

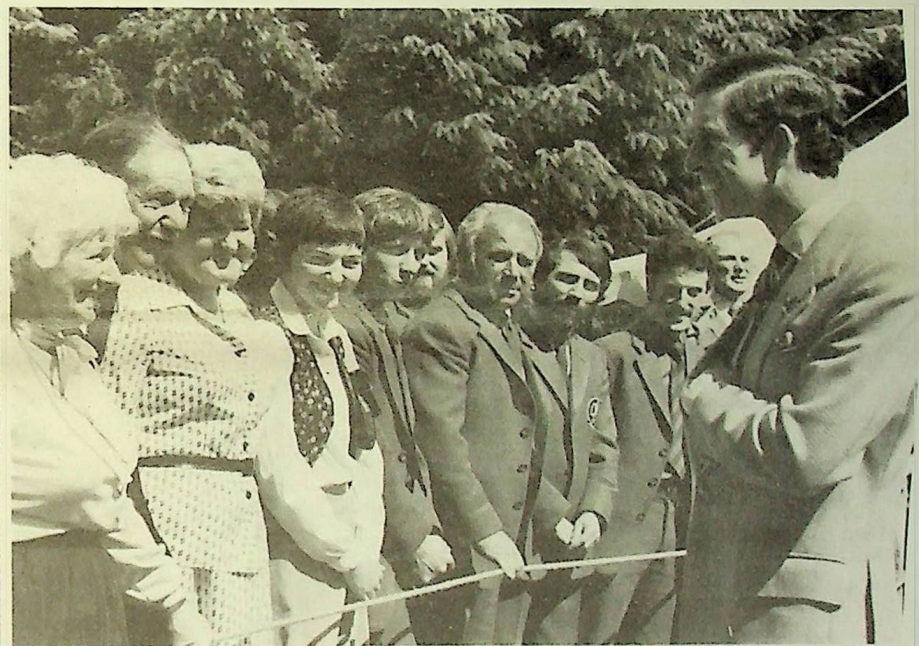
Methods of Disposal

The Commissioners are in the course of selecting the first plantations for sale representative of various categories, and these will be put on the market in September. The total area involved is likely to amount to nearly 3000 hectares, and will include both small plantations and large blocks of 100 hectares and over.

Plantations will normally be advertised and sold competitively on the open market except for sales or surrender to former owners under the offer-back procedure, sales to adjoining owners on clear rational land use grounds and surrenders to lessors of land subject to lease restrictions.

ROYAL ASSENT FOR FORESTRY ACT 1981

SUNSHINE SMILES FOR PRINCE'S FLYING VISIT



Prince Charles chats to FC staff and their wives.

ON ONE of his last public engagements before the Royal Wedding, Prince Charles made a flying visit — literally — to the Commission's Deer Museum at Clatteringshaws, New Galloway, as guest of the British Deer Society, of which he is patron.

The Prince piloted a Wessex helicopter of the Queen's Flight to Clatteringshaws where he was welcomed by BDS President, Lord Dulverton and John Davies, Conservator South Scotland.

After touring the museum, Prince Charles was introduced to a group of foresters, rangers and their wives, and he chatted informally to the large crowd who lined the route from the car park to the museum.

The Royal Visit lasted over an hour, and afterwards the Prince left in the helicopter, accompanied by John Davies, to view The Galloway Forest Park and fly to Eskdalemuir for the rest of

his Deer Society visit, which was private.

EARLIER that week, Prince Charles officially opened the redeveloped Kilmallie sawmill at Fort William. A £5 million modernisation programme has helped the sawmill meet intense foreign competition and win a growing share of the UK market for building timber.

The sawmill, with trebled production, is now the largest processor of home grown timber in the UK. The increase in production, efficiency and profitability has come about through computer assisted automation and a new kiln drying process, only two years after the company faced the choice between closure or massive modernisation because of mounting losses.

PRINCE Charles has welcomed the suggestion that the Royal Wedding should be

commemorated by the Forestry Commission by special tree planting schemes in each of the three countries.

In Scotland we shall plant a grove of Scots pine of Glenmore origin at Loch Morlich in Queen's Forest.

In Wales we shall plant a grove of Welsh oak in Afan Argoed Country Park near Port Talbot.

In England we shall plant a world collection of all species of Ash in the Westonbirt Arboretum in Gloucestershire.

In addition to these commemorative plantings Prince Charles accepted the offer of a number of seedlings associated with the Boscobel Oak in which Charles II is reputed to have hidden after the Battle of Worcester. This gift will be made jointly by The Tree Council and the Forestry Commission and it is hoped the trees will be included in the layout of the Prince's new estate in Gloucestershire.

OBITUARY

Cliff Tandy, OBE

Mr Clifford Tandy, OBE, PPILA, FRSA, landscape consultant to the Commission, died on July 3 at the age of 62. Cliff Tandy became our consultant in succession to Dame Sylvia Crowe in 1976, and the same year was made OBE for services to landscape.

A past president of the Institute of Landscape Architects, his untimely death after a short illness has robbed the landscape profession of one of its early leaders in this country. He was the first landscape architect to be appointed to a post in local government.

Cliff Tandy's work for the Commission has been of a very high standard and he took a special interest in the training of our staff in landscape design. The sincere and friendly way he discussed landscape problems with the Commission staff and the completely professional way in which these were solved will be sorely missed.

He was a most effective champion for the beauty of the countryside, and lasting memorials to his talent will include his work on flat forest design in Thetford and the afforestation of Beinn Ghùilean mountain rising above Campbeltown.

Axeman's Log

Praise for Forest staff

RECORD YEAR FOR SEED HARVEST

ALTHOUGH last year produced only a moderate cone crop — it proved to be one of the best for seed collection in the Commission's history. Over 2½ tonnes of seed were collected, better even than the bumper yield of 1976 which saw very good cone crops all over the country.

The record yield came after a series of bad seed years had resulted in stocks being so low that orders could not be met from the Alice Holt store. The dramatic increase in demand, especially for Sitka spruce, meant that we were drawing on reserves and importing increased amounts from abroad. The Scots pine stock was in such a critical state that seed was virtually being sold before it had been collected. Buyers were queuing up to buy the seed as soon as it had been extracted and cleaned. Now, thanks to last year's supreme effort, we have managed to end up with nearly 2 years' supply in stock.

Encourage

This all-out campaign to collect seed came about after Director General George Holmes advised a Conservators' Conference of the 'parlous state' of seed supplies, and emphasised the need to collect more from our own forests. At Forest Management Division's suggestion most Conservancies appointed Seed Liaison Officers who were trained to encourage their colleagues in the Conservancies to collect more seed, to advise them how to assess the crop, and how to store and co-ordinate transport to the seed store at Alice Holt.

Three courses were held at Ludlow, Pickering and Dunkeld when the nominated SLOs came together and were addressed by the Principal Seeds Officer Dr Andy Gordon, Colin McLean,

Mike Phillips and Ian Dawson of Genetics Branch, and Jim Hamilton of Forest Management Division who was responsible for seed and plant supply.

Exceptional

When the initial estimates of the 1980 cone crop came in they seemed better than previous years, but by no means a bumper crop. However, when the time came to collect the cones, everyone made a supreme effort to ensure the largest possible crop was picked. Forest Management workers were in the forefront of seed collection, sometimes reinforced by harvesting workers who were available due to temporary marketing setbacks. Casual workers, including foresters' wives and school children on their Autumn holiday were out in force in the New Forest. In Northumberland, mentally handicapped adults helped raise funds for their hospital by making a collection of beech mast. Similar examples of exceptional efforts came from all parts of the country.

When they had been collected, the cones were packed in hessian bags to allow them to breathe and prevent mould. They were then stored in temporary structures at the forest until the harvest was complete, and transported by lorry to Alice Holt.

The response — over 4000 hectolitres* of cones — was so overwhelming that Alice Holt became choked with the bumper crop. Men and machinery were working flat out, but the equipment still could not cope with the flood of cones. To relieve the

Ron leaves the Chair



ON 3 June the Whitley Council Trade Union Side said goodbye to its greatly loved and respected Chairman Ron Brown. Ron has been a most exceptional Chairman. His service to the Forestry Commission Trade Union movement goes back for many years, as a CSU local representative, member of CSU Executive, member of Staff Side and Staff Side Secretary before taking on the job of Chairman 9 years ago.

In addition to his calm handling of often potentially inflammable situations between unions and management, and between the individual unions themselves, he has contributed enormously to ensuring that the TUS has played its part in the wider issues of forest policy.

This has been very much in evidence in recent months, during the passage of the Forestry Bill through all its stages in Parliament. Ron has been tireless in making representations on behalf of the FC staff at all levels; to Ministers, to Members of Parliament and Members of the House of Lords, within the TUC and indeed in every possible forum. He has also faithfully attended at Westminster at each stage of the debate, where his wise words have been detectable on many occasions in the speeches of MPs of all parties.

The TUS presented him with a crystal bowl (not ball!) and a cheque, and his wife Christine with

some flowers. Ron paid tribute to her understanding and support, without which he could have done nothing. He said the driving force behind his service was the same Christian spirit which had inspired the earliest of all trade unionists, the Tolpuddle Martyrs. He was sorry to be leaving during such stirring times, but was confident that TUS affairs were in excellent hands.

Ron intends to devote the remainder of his career in the Commission to his 'real' job — bugs. He is a career Specialist Forester working in Entomology at Alice Holt.

The new Chairman is John Stephen, HEO in Office Services, HQ. John too has a very long history of union activity in the Commission. He has held many offices in SCPS and was Chairman of FC Branch of SCPS for 3 years. During his years in Aberdeen Conservancy Office he served as a Town Councillor, and he continues to act as a magistrate in his local town of Penicuik.

John takes over at a most difficult time. As well as the Forestry Bill there are the manpower cuts, the industrial action, and numerous lesser headaches. However John is well able to cope, and the prayers and good wishes of Ron go to him and his TUS colleagues, together with a promise to continue as an adviser and elder statesman whenever called upon to do so.

FUND APPEALS — “HELP US TO HELP”

OVER the past few years the staff of the Forestry Commission have generously responded to the special appeals by the Civil Service Benevolent Fund. The proceeds of these appeals were expended either on the provision of new residential Homes for the elderly and infirm retired civil servants and their dependants, or on extensions to existing Homes.

However, due to inflation in recent years the fund has suffered a reduction in income in real terms. The provision of additional places in the residential Homes has led to increased expenditure on provisions, heating, lighting, etc., etc. The rate of inflation has required the Fund to draw on its general funds to bridge the gap. At the same time requests for

financial assistance to serving civil servants, retired civil servants and dependants of deceased officers have increased in number and degree of need.

The 1981 appeal target for England, Wales and Northern Ireland is £250,000. The contributions received will make up for the loss of income so that the level of financial assistance and the high standard of residential Homes can be maintained.

The appeal target for Scotland is £50,000 and this appeal is being carried out under the joint sponsorship of the Civil Service Benevolent Fund and the Civil Service Retirement Fellowship. The objective is the provision of more sheltered-type accommodation in Scotland, through the Crown Housing Association. This is to meet the needs of retired civil servants and the elderly dependants of civil servants in need of this type of accommodation.

The help provided by the Civil Service Benevolent Fund has since September 1980 also been available to industrial civil servants, and the 1981 appeal will be made to all civil servants, industrial and non-industrial. Collections throughout the Forestry Commission will begin shortly, and all staff are requested to give generously in response to the 1981 appeal.

Fall in Pine beauty problem

THERE has been a dramatic fall in the area of Lodgepole Pine forests which required treatment by aerial spraying this year against infestation by Pine Beauty Moth (*Panolis flammea*). Spraying was carried out by the Forestry Commission early in June.

Following the Spring egg counts, the area originally proposed for treatment was reduced to just 66 hectares in Helmsdale Forest, North Scotland, compared with 1500 hectares (3600 acres) of plantations in Scottish forests last year.

The area was sprayed by ultra low volume aerial application of Fenitrothion approved by the Pesticides Safety Precautions Scheme. In the last three years this technique has resulted in almost 100 per cent mortality rate of the Pine Beauty Moth caterpillars. Previous applications have been by fixed wing aircraft belonging to a Swiss-based firm, on this occasion a British based helicopter was used.

IN THE MONEY!

THE Llandoverly District Office syndicate have scooped a handsome win on the football pools. The lucky seven share £760.95p between them.

DOUBLE TOPS!

A FIRST trophy has been won to grace the walls of the new Village Hall and Social Club at Dalavich.

Billy Fleming and James Duffy won the Oban and District Darts League Doubles and were presented with this magnificent Shield.

The two Commission employees were doubly delighted because they were the only country club members to lift a trophy in the competition.

situation, 1000 hectolitres were sent to a German extractory — an exercise which proved to be a very inexpensive way of extracting seed despite the transport costs involved. After extracting and cleaning the seed, the Germans then bought some of the cones from the Commission to sell for decorative purposes as ornamental arrangements. In Scotland two private seed extractories were called upon towards the end of the Scots pine collecting season to separate the pine seeds from the cones.

Income

Despite these measures to relieve the pressures on the Commission staff, the 1980 crop was so great that Alice Holt is still processing this summer some of the seed extracted last year.

Three-quarters of all the seed collected is sold to the private sector, producing an income in excess of £120,000 last year. In previous years, nearly all the seed collected was Sitka, but last year's crop also included Lodgepole pine, Corsican pine, the Larches, Noble fir, Grand fir, Western hemlock, Western red cedar and Lawsons cypress.

Early reports suggest that the 1981 harvest will not be as good as last year, making it even more vitally important to collect what cones there are. Although stocks are higher than for some years, demand is presently increasing for British seeds in preference to imported stock and a good response will ensure the better genetic quality of home produced seed.

Reminder

The extractory staff were full of praise for the magnificent efforts of their forest colleagues — but they do make one reminder to those involved in this year's collection. It is vital to label the sacks accurately, without these labels it is not possible to record the seed origins, which are an important guide to the quality and growth characteristics of the plants grown from these seeds.

So the plea is "Please label every sack accurately, and make sure the label is tied securely."

Mr Andy Neustein, Head of Forest Management Division adds, "We are delighted with the magnificent effort everyone put into seed collection last year, and we look forward to receiving the same enthusiastic help this year."

* 1 hectolitre = 2.75 bushels or 100 litres.

THE MUSIC MAKERS

ALAN'S A FELLOW OF NOTE

AT the age of 26, Alan Craythorne has achieved a musical 'Grand Slam' by his recent award of a Fellowship of Trinity College London.

Added to his other five musical distinctions — Associateship, Licentiate and Fellowship of London College of Music, Licentiate of the Guildhall School of Music and Drama, and Licentiate of Trinity College — this means that the CO in Finance (HQ) has soared up the musical scale as a composer.

And Alan intends to rise even higher. He has matriculated at the University of Durham, and will sit the first exam of his Honours Music course this



summer. Alan's previous musical success means that he does not have to attend lectures, his only visits to the University during the next three years will be to take their exams.

Alan's meteoric rise as a com-

poser has only come about since he joined the Commission in 1977. He had previously been a science student at Edinburgh University, but after his first year changed course to become a student of piano and guitar at Napier College. He chose to switch to music from science because he enjoyed playing both instruments, although he had never sat music exams at school. However, after leaving, he passed his SCE 'Higher' in Music.

Unhappily, his college studies were cut short when he damaged his left hand through over practising at the piano and he had to leave to find a job.

Alan had been 'chipping at

composing' for his own enjoyment for some time, but writing music rather than playing it really became serious when he had to rest the hand for two years. He became more and more involved in studying music — his colleagues say he studies every lunchtime and tea break — and the academic successes began to roll in.

At Associateship level he had to submit his own compositions as well as completing papers in the style of the great composers. He also had to answer questions on musical history and on the psychology of teaching music. The Licentiate meant a more detailed exam and for his Fellowships, Alan had to produce portfolios which included a major orchestral work, plus works for string quartet and mixed choir, and a number of shorter pieces for keyboard or guitar.

Alan never composes at his instruments, but completes all his musical pieces on paper before they are ever played. His hand is now completely healed, but he restricts his piano playing to two hours a day to prevent the injury recurring. He practises every day except Saturday, his rest day from music, when he indulges in his other passion, football. Alan plays for Newton-grange Amateurs and the HQ team.

Writing or playing he never regards as a chore, although the most public airing his compositions usually receive are at family gatherings. He has nerves about playing in public, but playing for himself makes him 'deeply relaxed.'

His musical taste is by no means all 'high brow.' He plays rock guitar and is continually interested in funky and disco music.

Alan's favourite piece of classical music is Mahler's Eighth Symphony, and his own 'Magnum Opus' is his setting of a Shelley sonnet for mixed chorus. He has a great admiration for Bach, Beethoven and Debussy, but above all his passion is for the music of Mahler — and David Bowie!

caster David Glencorse who became my manager and we got a new act together."

John's music has become more romantic, with a strong black influence. The vocal influences come from Bruce Springsteen and Van Morrison, and he is now more competent with his twelve-string guitar.

Music festival

The bookings are steadily coming in again. He has played Tiffany's in Edinburgh and Glasgow, supported jazz rock star John Martin at Aberdeen University, and his next appearance is at a huge open air music festival in West Lothian.

After that, he's off with his guitar for three weeks to Greece where he intends to laze on the beach and wait for musical inspiration.

On his return, if the London record company decides not to release John's songs, David Glencorse has made plans to have a single issued independently.

So, one way or another, we should all be hearing the sound of John Justin McGarvey on our radios over the next few months.

"GETTING IT OVER" ON THE AIRWAYS

"RADIO Forth welcomes John Justin McGarvey" proclaimed the notice board in the foyer, a message which looks like being repeated at radio stations up and down the country.

The young singer / songwriter, who is a Clerical Assistant in Computer Section (HQ), was invited to Radio Forth to record an interview after he sent them a cassette of two of his songs. Whenever they heard the tape, they were on the phone to John asking him to take part in their two-hour Rock Report programme.

Disc jockey Christopher John interviewed John and played both of his songs, "Get it Over" and "Lovers and Fools."

Good omen

The master tape of John's recording is now with a top London record company and he is waiting to hear if they are going to release it as a single. A good omen is that Roger Daltrey of The Who heard the tape when he was playing in Edinburgh, and asked for a copy to be sent to him.

The musicians backing John on the tape, which was recorded in Edinburgh and mixed in London, include John Turner,

keyboard player with the Demis Roussos band and ex-Bay City Roller Nobby Clarke.

John has been with the Commission for a year, and during that time he has appeared twice in the Sports and Social Club. He took up the guitar at the age of 10, and by 15 he was writing his own songs. John studied classical music up to 'Higher' level at school, and began performing publicly when he left at 17. That year he reached the final of the 'Pop Scot' contest run by a national newspaper and a record company, which led to a steady stream of bookings.

John continued to write and perform his own material — "I found it too difficult to copy others!" — and built up a strong stage act.

On the strength of his Scottish popularity he went to London, but discovered that the streets leading to the top night spots were not paved with gold. He survived for six months playing in small clubs, and then moved to Spain where he found dates for a further three months.

"I then came home to find myself the subject of total obscurity — my father had hardly even heard of me! I was right back to square one, but then I met BBC news broad-

John Justin McGarvey (left) is interviewed on Radio Forth by disc jockey Christopher John.



FIRST ALBUM IS FAMILY AFFAIR



IT was through Paul Tabbush's love of Morris Dancing that he took steps which ended up with him bringing out his first record album — of traditional Geordie songs!

"Banks of Tyne," released on the Dingle's Record Label (No. DIN 316) is a tribute by Paul, a Silviculturist at Northern Research Station, Bush, and his wife Carolyn to the music of Northumberland. Some of the tracks feature traditional material, others are contemporary, and the record also includes music hall songs.

The LP was released on 10th July, eighteen months after the original recording was made in their own front lounge. The master tape was given its final mix at Pete Townsend's recording studio in London.

Paul's love of all things Northumbrian — he's even got a certificate as a naturalised Geordie — came about after he met Carolyn in Hexham. The romance sprung from his interest in another English tradition, Morris Dancing.

When he joined the Commission in the Forest of Dean, Paul became involved with the local

Morris Dancers, and on his transfer to Kielder he set up the Hexham Morris Dance team. Paul also plays the mandolin and at a local folk club a young lady asked if he was "Squire of the Morris Men" and could she play her accordion for their dances. He accepted, romance blossomed, and in the summer of 1978 Paul and Carolyn were married. They went on honeymoon touring Brittany — accompanied by the other twelve men in the Morris Dancing team!

Self taught

When Paul decided to take up another musical instrument, Carolyn presented him with a set of Northumbrian pipes that had belonged to her grandfather. Paul taught himself to play them, and he plays the Northumbrian pipes on the record.

The "Banks of Tyne" came about after a librarian friend unearthed a number of Northumbrian songs which had never been recorded, and Paul and Carolyn decided to tape them, and to add some of their own favourite Northumbrian music.

Another friend, from Paul's days in the Forest of Dean, was a recording engineer, so they all got together in the lounge of the Tabbush's home at Ovington, near Hexham. The engineer set up all his recording equipment and they hung mattresses from the ceiling to create the correct acoustics effect.

Special offer

Since Carolyn was known to the Dingle's Record Company because she had sung at their London folk club, she approached them with the tape and they agreed to release the LP. Dingles had a tremendous success with Fiddlers' Dram and "Day Trip to Bangor" and Paul certainly hopes some of that will rub off on their new record.

As a special offer to Slasher readers, Paul is prepared to sell the LP at £4, which is 50p cheaper than the shop price. Contact him direct at NRS.

BACK BY POPULAR DEMAND

IF the showbusiness accolade 'Retained by public demand for a further week' is a sure sign of an entertainer's popularity, then a young Forestry Commission worker from Fort Augustus must be a huge hit with her audience.

Research worker Pearl Baker has been asked back to sing at a local night spot — every week for the past ten years!

24-year-old Pearl sings every Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights at the Fort Augustus British Legion Club, a complete contrast to her working week at the Auchterawl Research Branch just outside the town.

Regulars make up the majority of the audience — it's just as well she knows 218 songs by heart — but during the summer months the club is packed out with visitors.



Pearl Baker

Pearl's favourite singer is Charlie Pride and the Number One in her hit parade is the Gladys Knight favourite 'Help me make it through the night.'

The club microphone is never needed when Pearl is on stage. She has a big voice — except on Monday mornings. "Monday is my silent day," she explains. "After singing twelve hours over the weekend, I've got no voice left!"



The Newton Nursery staff photographed with some of the specialist equipment.



Chief Forester Struan Stewart gets down to his interview with Gannan Television's Jan Gavin.



BBC Radio reporter Ken Lindsay tapes the story of Newton from Head Forester Sandy MacIntosh.

NEWTON NURSERY'S GOLDEN ANNIVERSARY

OVER 700 visitors joined in the Golden Anniversary celebrations when the Forestry Commission's largest northern nursery threw open its gates to the general public to commemorate 50 years of growing trees in the fertile Moray soil.

Newton Nursery at Elgin celebrated its half century with two Open Days on 5th and 6th June. Nearly five hundred youngsters, mainly school parties from a wide radius in the North East, attended on the Friday and the next day saw a further 250 visitors, many of whom were keen to discuss the latest horticultural techniques with the forestry experts on hand.

Visitors were taken by groups on guided tours of the nursery premises, to see how the tiny trees are nurtured from seed beds and transplanted until they are ready to be sent out to create new forests throughout Scotland and as far afield as Wales.

Over the past 50 years, a staggering 450 million young trees have gone from young

Newton, that's nine trees for every man, woman and child in Britain.

Chief Forester of Liph of Moray, Mr Struan Stewart, and Head Forester Sandy MacIntosh welcomed the visitors and each member of their dozen permanent staff played an important role in giving the public a day to remember. As a lasting souvenir each family was given a Scots pine seedling to plant as a permanent reminder of Newton Nursery's Golden Anniversary.

The media also showed interest in the Open Days. Grampian Television filmed at the nursery for their Country Focus programme and BBC Highland reporter Ken Lindsay taped two radio interviews with Struan Stewart and Sandy MacIntosh. A number of newspapers also gave prominence to the event.

The Forestry Commission bought Newton Farm from Colonel F. W. H. Forth in 1931. The Nursery covers 34 hectares and the main species grown there are Scots pine, Lodgepole pine, Scots pine, Hybrid larch, and Douglas fir. Many others include the fast-growing Corsican pine (for the coastal sands of Culbin), oak, beech, sycamore, Norway maple, birch, rowan.

Every spring, in the short space of 2 months, 8 million trees are dug up and sent for planting to create new forests. Over the 50 years these trees, planted together, would create a forest of 150,000 hectares, almost the size of Greater London.

The seed for the trees comes from the Commission's central store at Alice Holt. Moray foresters make a large contribution to the store from local Scots

pine and from the Hybrid larch seed orchards. To the casual eye, Newton today looks not unlike the Nursery of pre-war days. In fact, although the vast areas of young plants may look the same, enormous changes in nursery techniques have taken place. The efficiency of these has resulted in very large reductions in cost — a thousand Scots spruce ready for replanting can now be produced for less than 260.

Pioneering

Today's nurseriesmen have a much greater understanding of the nutritional needs of the young conifers. Newton is pioneering the application of

phosphate, nitrogen and potash in liquid form to plants. Results show a considerable saving per kilo of active nitrogen used to the acre. Liquid fertiliser is easier to apply and spreads more evenly than when in granular form.

Hand weeding, once a perpetual summer activity, has been virtually eliminated by the use of herbicides, particularly simazine and diphemid. The other back breaking task, transplanting the young trees using lining out boards, has been replaced by machinery. The very latest is a mechanical planter from which loosen the soil and picks up, without damaging the roots, 250,000 trees per day, ten times more than a man.

Newton has benefited from another revolutionary improvement in plant care, the introduction of cold stores which keep surplus plants in a tick-over condition for up to six months. Once out of storage, the germination process is accelerated by 20%.

In addition to the dozen permanent staff, Newton's workforce increases to over 40 during the peak planting and lifting times. Many of these casual workers are women who have been helping out for many years.

Visitors

Newton Nursery receives many distinguished visitors each year. In 1980 they included Lord Mansfield, Minister of State, Mr Jerry Wigan, Parliamentary Secretary for the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, a delegation of leading forestry officials from China, and members of the Royal Scottish Forestry Society.

Despite the chemical knowledge of the Lighties — Newton still adheres to a time-honoured feeding method to ensure healthy growing young trees. Every year they dig in to the plant beds — 150 tons of manure!

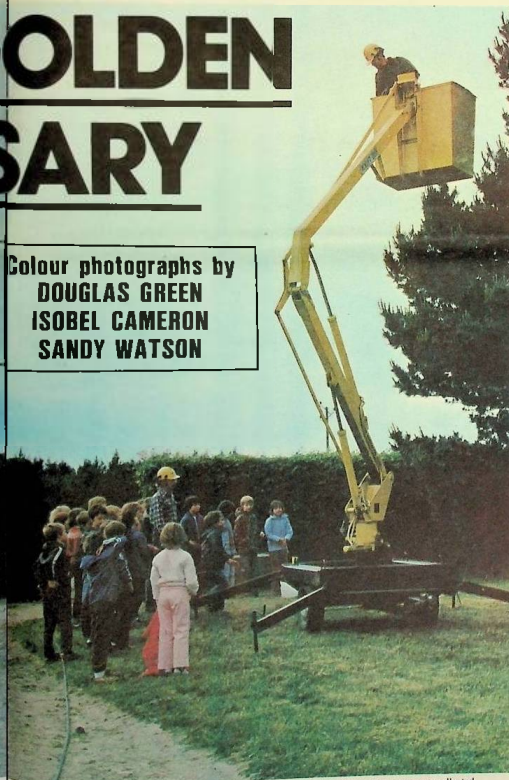
Record

In addition to the Open Days, Newton Nursery will be celebrating their Golden Year with a pictorial record of nursery practice throughout 1981. Forester Sandy Watson is taking photographs of every operation in the nursery from 1st January to 31st December, including the digging of the equipment, which will be collated into a large album for foresters of the future to study.



Back to the beginning! Cultivating Newton in the Thirties.

Colour photographs by
DOUGLAS GREEN
ISOBEL CAMERON
SANDY WATSON



Skilled forest worker Colin Fraser demonstrates to a school party how Scots pine cones are collected using a fork lift.

Nature News

Muntjac study into true origins



A Muntjac buck in winter coat.

A PIEA goes out to 'Slasher' readers to assist in a study to discover the true origins of the Muntjac deer living wild in Britain at the present time.

Muntjac deer were introduced by the Eleventh Duke of Bedford in the late 1920's spread from there. Feral animals can be found now over much of East Anglia, the Midlands and Southern England.

Both the Indian and Chinese species were introduced (and escaped) and there has been, and still is confusion as to the identity of the feral deer. Although it is generally accepted that it is the Chinese Muntjac that is at large, some people still think that it is the Indian species and the author of an article in the latest issue of 'Deer', the journal of the British Deer Society, believes the deer are probably hybrids.

Muntjac deer stand about 50-60 cms. at the shoulder and weigh about 12 kg. Solitary animals, they flourish in areas of dense cover and eat a variety of grasses and shrubs, herbs

and fruits. They are also known as the barking deer because of their barking call. In suburban areas they are frequently killed by cars, and dogs will also attack them. In such cases the dog may be badly cut by the deer's well developed canine teeth in the upper jaw as well as by antlers and hooves.

The Mammal Fund, which is administered by the Mammal Society, has awarded biologist Dr Don Chapman a small grant to study the taxonomic status of feral muntjac in England. Says Dr Chapman, "I wish to borrow specimens of skulls and jaws of feral deer from as many localities as possible, so that I can measure them. Specimens from animals dying in the first half of this century would be of particular value. If any 'Slasher' readers have specimens — even a single skull — that they would be willing to lend me, I would be very pleased to hear from them."

The cost of posting the specimens will be refunded, and Dr Chapman's address is Foreman, The Street, Barton Mills, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP28 6AA.

BRANDON'S BIRDLIFE BOAST

BRANDON Depot in Thetford Forest, although more an industrial situation than most Forestry Commission units, can boast some fairly unique wildlife features, as the photograph illustrates.

Chief Forester Barry Griggs reports, "The light fitting on which this swallow has built its nest and reared its young is situated only 6 feet from a 30-inch circular saw in daily use on a pitwood production line. The noise of the saw together with conveyors and loaders is considerable, but it has failed to discourage the occupant from the job in hand."

"In addition, a nightjar has chosen to nest in our stake stack yard. So we feel we are not so far removed from 'normal' forestry as some would have us believe!"



Mother swallow in her 'al electric' home.

Around & About

Around & About

Around & About

EAST SCOTLAND



Bob Roberts receives his cheque from Conservator Ian Grant with Charles Simmonds looking on.

Three Conservators attended Bob's farewell lunch

MR BOB ROBERTS, A & FO, East Scotland Conservancy, has retired after 34 years service with the FC, the last 7 years being in Aberdeen. Prior to 1974, he served at Lyndhurst, Dumfries, Cardiff and at Drumsheugh Gardens, Edinburgh in the office of Director (Scotland). Before joining the Commission, he served with the Post Office and the Royal Air Force.

Bob had already made the acquaintance of the East Scotland staff for a brief spell before 1974 when he deputised during the absence on sick leave of Joe Steele under Conservator

George McKenzie. During his comparatively brief spell in East Scotland, he served with a further three Conservators, Gunnar Godwin, Sandy Morrison and the present Conservator Ian Grant.

These three Conservators attended a presentation lunch at a local hotel along with many other colleagues and friends, including Charles Simmonds from Headquarters, Bob Cathie, Conservator North (Scotland) and representatives of the Timber Trade and Regional Advisory Committee.

The lunch and its aftermath

was a most convivial and entertaining affair, as befitted so popular a man. Some amusing references to his past service were made by Charles Simmonds and Ian Grant and it emerged that in his day, Bob had been an accomplished accordion player and also a football referee of Scottish First Grade status.

Conservator Ian Grant presented Bob with a cheque, on behalf of his colleagues, with which he will purchase a writing desk. Bob's wife, Mary, who has not enjoyed the best of health, was presented with a Caithness glass vase by typist Jackie Smith.

EAST ENGLAND

PRESENTATION PARTY FOR RAY AND DAPHNE

A PRESENTATION party was held at Silverstone Village Hall to mark the retirement of two Hazelborough Forest employees, Mr Ray Schofield, Forester, and Mrs Daphne Whitlock, Forest Clerk, who, between them, have worked 'in the woods' for 63 years.

There to pay tribute and officially hand over the 'thank you' gifts were Mr Rod Hewitt, Conservator for Eastern England, and Mr George Liddington of Whittlebury, who was Head Forester at Hazelborough for 34 years until his retirement in 1963.

Ray Schofield, who joined the Forestry Commission in 1946, is a much travelled man who served with the RAF and the Royal Indian Air Force during the war as a machine gun instructor. He was presented with a walking stick made of Hazelborough hazel, books about travel and a cheque.

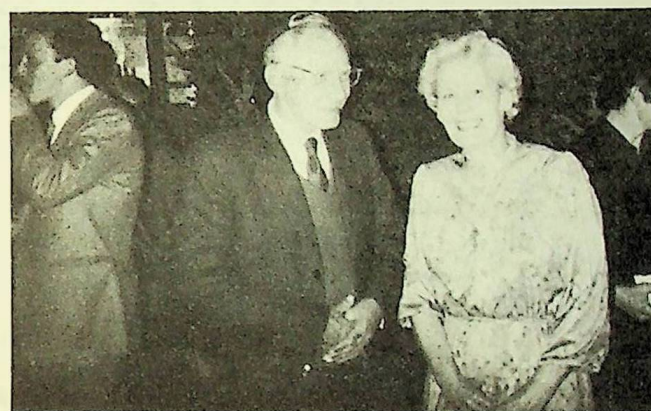
Mrs Whitlock, of Little London, Silverstone, started work in the nurseries at Hazelborough in 1952, transferring to the office as clerk under George Liddington in 1953.

George signed her on and it

was considered fitting that he should sign her off!

In those early days there were 34 employees at the forest — three times as many as there are now and the office was an elephant shelter, without toilets or lighting, freezing cold in winter and often uncomfortably hot in summer. The 'luxury' of a more modern office did not come until 1974.

Daphne was a familiar face to all those who bought such things as Christmas trees, pea sticks and bean poles at Hazelborough over the years and she too was thanked with a gift that will always remind her of the forest. It was a coffee table made by a local craftsman from Silverstone oak, planted in King Richard's plantation in 1826. She was also given a camera 'to spur her into taking up a new hobby,' and a cheque.



Ray and Daphne at their farewell party.

Fond Farewells

JACK READER has retired at Walden Forest, Essex. During his 28 years' service, Jack had played his part in the establishment of this forest virtually from the start. Mr Eric Winterflood, ACFM, thanked Jack for his long service, and Mr Ron Lilley presented him with a salver on behalf of staff and workmates at Walden.

FOREST Craftsman Bill Buck has retired after 22 years service in the Markshall area of Lavenham Forest. Although a little disappointed that his retirement occurred during the first sick absence he had experienced during his service, Bill was able to attend a small farewell ceremony in Markshall Wood, where he was presented with a table lighter and tray from his colleagues, and was thanked by Assistant Conservator Mr Eric Winterflood for all his valuable work.

HEAD Forester Eddie Hamstead retired from Swaffam Forest on 5 June, his 60th Birthday. Eddie was a quiet sort of chap and preferred to leave with no fuss so there was no formal presentation. Apart from war service when he was much involved with anti-aircraft in the London blitz and later took part in fighting through France and Belgium, Eddie has been concerned with timber and forestry all his working life.

MR A. S. W. White (Chalky to his associates — obviously), Paperkeeper in the East England Conservancy office for the past 13 years has retired. Friends and colleagues from the office and the field contributed to his parting gift of a radio which was presented to Chalky by Bill Wittering at a gathering in the bar of the Green Man, Trumpington, a favourite "watering" place and Chalky's local for many years. Chalky has been away from work for some months with leg trouble (the Green Man is within his walking range) and everyone wished him a speedy and good recovery so that he may fully enjoy his retirement.

AT the same gathering, Bill Wittering presented a cut glass decanter to Clerical Officer Julie Cole to mark the occasion of her wedding. Although Julie has been with the Commission for only 19 months, transferring from Central Office of Information, she has become a very popular and well liked member of the Conservancy Staff, and best wishes for her future happiness were very sincerely voiced.

WEST SCOTLAND

Two leave Benmore

TWO well known members of Benmore Forest staff have retired and were presented with their long service certificates by Mr David Robertson, Conservator West Scotland.

Mr John McIntyre, Forest Craftsman at Glenfinart completed 50 years service.

John is one of the few people to have planted trees and seen them cut down at maturity, during their service.

Mr Robertson thanked him for all his work over the years and, on handing over the certificate, remarked that this was the longest certificate he had yet presented to one of the staff.

Mr Alex McCluskey, Joiner and Handyman completed 31 years service.

Alex was part of the scene at Benmore for a long time and his cheery face will be missed by many.

Mr Robertson wished both John and Alex and their wives well in their retirement.

MR Andrew Thomson, the Area Civil Engineer, Aberfoyle, has retired after 18 years service in the Commission. He was presented with a pair of binoculars and a cheque by Mr John Dishington, the Conservancy Civil Engineer, at an informal gathering of his colleagues and friends in Aberfoyle.

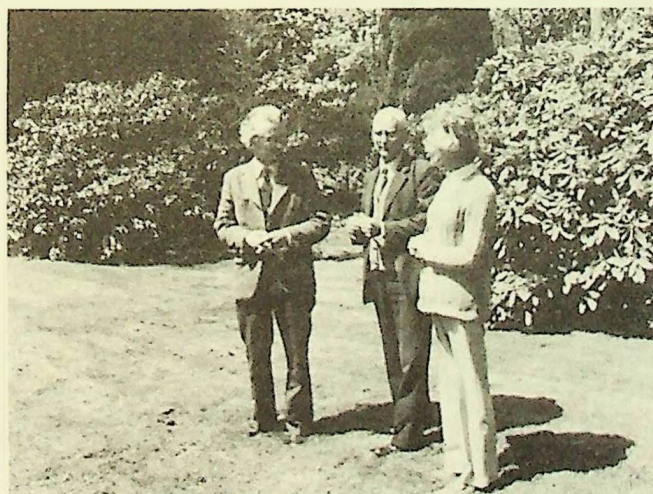
SOUTH-EAST ENGLAND

Alf was in charge for over 30 years

MR A. W. ('Alf') Westall, Head Forester at Bedgebury Pinetum, has retired after 33 years with the Forestry Commission, nearly all of this time being in charge of the Bedgebury Pinetum.

Alf, a Londoner, became interested in trees as a boy when visiting Kew Gardens so after six years war service in the Royal Engineers, rising to sergeant, he did not go back to his old job in a solicitor's office but joined the Forestry Commission as a forest worker and then went to a forester training school. On finishing his training he began at Bedgebury Pinetum, quickly taking charge, and remained there for the whole of his service.

At the meeting of the Bedgebury Advisory Committee, the Chairman, Sir Giles Loder, presented Alf with a fishing rod and reel. At a later gathering at Bedgebury of colleagues from



Alf Westall (centre) and Mrs Westall being presented with their cheque by Mr R. E. Crowther.

Research and SE(E) Conservancy, Alf was presented by Mr R. E. Crowther, Principal Silviculturist, with a cheque, a record token and gardeners' trug from the Pinetum staff. Mrs Westall, who has worked as part-time forest clerk for several years was given a bouquet.

Fishing, together with raising dwarf and miniature conifers are going to occupy Mr and Mrs Westall in their retirement — they are moving to their new house in Thetford, Norfolk, bought some years ago with retirement in mind.

The presentation was followed by a picnic lunch and a conducted walk round the Pinetum by Mr Westall.

TOM WILL TAKE TIME TO TRAVEL

MR Tom Clark has retired from Bedgebury after nine years service as the Forest Clerk.

Coming to the Forestry Commission late in his working life, after managing a sub-Post Office, Tom mastered all the rigours of computer input documents and ensured all returns were submitted well on time. His fluent approach, tidiness and understanding of instructions have been of great assistance to all Foresters. Tom hopes to spend more time in his garden and travel the country.

MORE TIME FOR HIS HOBBIES

CLERICAL Officer Dick Williams has retired after 31 years in the East England Conservancy office. Dick served in the Post Office before and immediately after War Service, and joined the Commission in 1950. He overcame serious injury during his war service and illness in his early days with the Commission to become a highly respected member of the staff. Dick elected to retire immediately on his 60th birthday and took advantage of the Job Release Scheme for the Disabled to devote more time to his hobbies of gardening and DIY. Bill Wittering presented Dick with books on horticulture and a "tool" for his DIY activities.

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South East: John Ward
South West: Audrey Child

WALES:
South: Gwyn Owen
North: Caroline Jones

SCOTLAND:

North: Richard Westlake
East: Douglas Furneaux
West: Archie Cameron
South: Chris Smith

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

STAFF SIDE (Based in Headquarters):
Mrs Jean Thompson

Around & About

HEADQUARTERS

60 PAY TRIBUTE AT ZOO DINNER

OVER 60 staff from headquarters crossed the road to the Zoo for a farewell dinner for two long-serving Commission members.

Mr George Murray, Commissioner for Administration and Finance chaired the evening held in honour of BILL ELLIOTT, Senior Principal in Finance (Control) and JACK LAX, SEO in Non-Industrial Establs.

John Kennedy, Commissioner for F & EM paid tribute to Bill Elliott's career and presented him with photographic equipment which should be well used on Bill's forthcoming trips to South Africa and Germany. The balance of the money raised by his colleagues was handed over as a cheque and, in another surprise "pay out" Bill received his gratuity money which had been made out as a manual payment instead of waiting for the computer. A bouquet for Mrs Maude Elliott was presented by Mrs Stella Simpson.

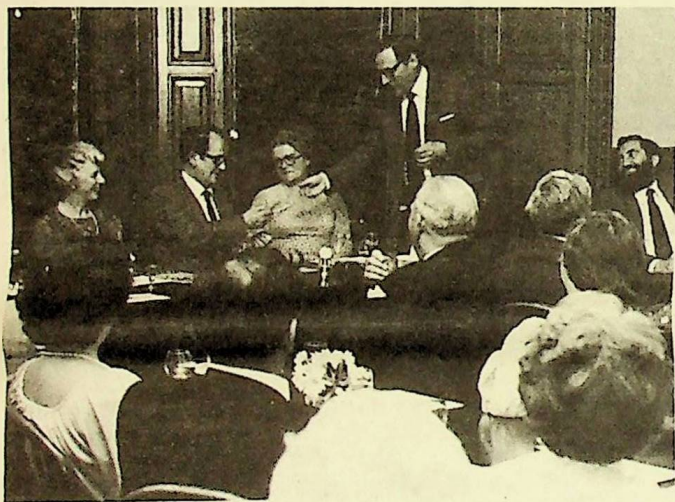
Jack Lax's career was hilariously described by Establishment Officer Charles Simmonds including the revelation that Jack's Civil Service record includes a "crime sheet." As a telegram boy, Jack was hauled over the coals for speeding — on his Post Office

bike! Jack received a cheque to buy garden furniture for their new home in Devon, and his wife Marjorie was presented with a bouquet by Mrs Moira Barty.

The dinner was attended by several past members, including Tommy McGeorge, Malcolm Shapcott, George Stewart, Norman Stutter, George Dunford and Jim Davidson, plus representatives from North Wales, North-West England and South Scotland.

Bill Elliott joined the Commission in 1938 as a CO in Dumfries. Making steady progress through the grades he was appointed A & FO in Chester in 1959. Transferring to Aberystwyth, he became Principal in 1971 and Senior Principal in 1974.

Jack Lax came from the GPO, which he had joined as a Boy Messenger in 1936, to Estates Branch as an HEO in 1967. After serving at Alice Holt, he transferred to Edinburgh in 1974 as an SEO in Estate Management Division, moving to Personnel Branch in 1976.



Bill Elliott receives his cheque from John Kennedy.



His friends obviously appreciate one of Jack Lax's stories.

SOUTH-WEST ENGLAND

They'll miss Ken's "Morning All"

CONSERVATOR Les Troup presided over a presentation at the Bristol Conservancy Office to mark the retirement of Civil Engineer Assistant Mr Ken Payne. Ken joined the Commission from Ordnance Survey in 1958. He started as a Cartographic Draughtsman, but after three years changed over to the Civil Engineering side. Ken was a popular member of the staff and we shall miss his cheery 'Morning all' on those days when he was confined to the office. He was presented with a watch from colleagues in the field, and Conservancy Office staff gave him a large suitcase in readiness for a holiday in the United States which he and his wife are planning.

GILLIAN WINS

£200— NOW SHE'S OFF!

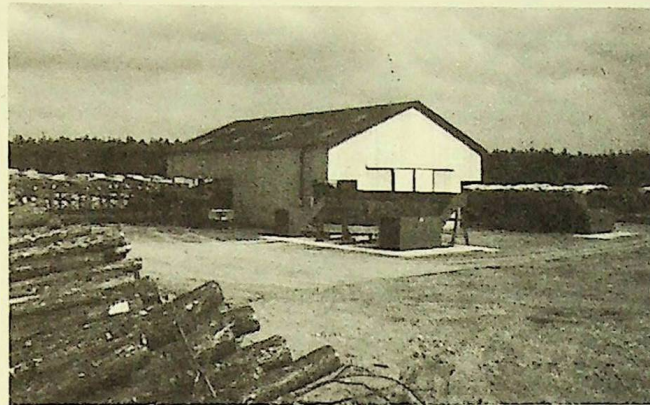
MISS Gillian Duff, audio typist in Perth District Office came back from a holiday in Tenerife to find she was the winner of £200 worth of travel vouchers.

Now, Gillian is going to use her prize — to leave the Commission for a new job in Strasbourg! She is becoming a shorthand typist at the Council of Europe, and the vouchers will be used to pay for her flights there.

Gillian won her prize in the Friends of Aschaffenburg raffle. The Bavarian town is Perth's twin town.



Chairman opens Brandon Complex



THE newly completed Peeler / Bark Mill / Bark Storage complex at Brandon Central Depot was opened by Chairman Sir David Montgomery during the Commissioners' visit to East England in May.

Brandon Central Depot produces mainly peeled pitwood, woodwool billets, stakes and pine bark. With only piecemeal developments over the years, the depot throughput has increased fivefold since the 1950's, and has now reached over 50,000 m3.

A major 3 year redevelopment programme is now in train. The replacement of obsolete machinery and buildings will further increase processing capacity, with no increase in manpower, and will greatly improve working conditions. The next stage in this development is the completion of the new sawmill, which will come into use next year.

Ex-Commissioner chairs SWT

FORMER Commissioner for Forest and Estate Management, Mr George Stewart is the new Chairman of the Scottish Wildlife Trust in succession to Mr Maxwell Hamilton. Mr Stewart, who is the representative of the National Trust for Scotland at Branklyn Garden in Perth, retired from the Commission in 1979. He is a member of the Environment Panel of British Railways Board.

Mr Stewart is a former Commanding Officer of 278 (Lowland) Field Regiment RA (TA) and a past president of the Scottish Ski Club. He was appointed CB in 1979. Mr Hamilton is a Chartered Accountant in Edinburgh and has been Chairman of the Scottish Wildlife Trust since February 1978.

Mr Stewart said on his appointment "The land is the most important capital asset we possess and it is our responsibility to use it wisely. There are many legitimate claims on the land — for food, for wood, for leisure, for sport. Wildlife also has a claim on the land and we must see that Scotland's wildlife is given its proper place. It is the aim of the Scottish Wildlife Trust to conserve Scotland's heritage of wildlife for our own and future generations."

SCHOOL WINNERS AT HIGHLAND SHOW

THE winners of the Forestry Commission's annual schools competition to provide a display for the Information Centre at Tummel Forest, Perthshire received their prizes at the Royal Highland Show.

The winners were pupils from Hill Primary School, Blairgowrie (in the 7-9 years age section) and Gowriehill Primary School, Dundee (10-14 years). They were presented with a cheque for £25 for each school plus books and posters about

trees. The presentations were made by Mr Roger Wheeler, Director of the Royal Zoological Society of Scotland.

Both schools chose the theme 'Forests and Wildlife' for their displays, which were judged for originality, relationship to the chosen subject, and presentation.

The winning entries will be on display for the rest of the year at the Tummel Forest Information Centre.

BRIGHT IDEAS LEAD TO £928 REWARD

THE number of suggestions received throughout the Commission was slightly below that of the previous year — 107 compared with 116. Twenty-five suggestions were accepted for 1980/81, three more than in 1979/80. The number of awards for 1980/81 was 38, an increase of 10 over 1979/80, and the value of benefit to the Commission for the year was £4100 of which £2500 is recurring annual saving.

The following cases are examples of the suggestions which gained awards during the year:—

Wheel Extension for Wheeled Ditching Machines

This suggestion sets out a well-designed method of modifying the rear wheels of these machines to facilitate the removal of the outer set for ease of transportation and movement through narrow gateways etc. and to obviate the need for Terra tyres. The suggestion allowed the removal and refitting of the outer wheels to be carried out with greater efficiency and savings in time. An award of £50 was made by the Central Committee in addition to a local award of £30.

Choker Chain Repairs

This suggestion for a "C" hook repair kit found favour with local users, and Work Study Officer. Under this system repairs to the chain took only a few minutes — a simple operation requiring only a hammer. In due course an MESB will be issued by Engineering Division. The Central Committee awarded £50 in addition to a local award of £25.

Grabsaw Butting Plate

This was a suggestion for a butting plate designed to achieve accuracy in cutting requirements for one metre pulpwood.

Although the scope within the Commission may be lifted, nevertheless this suggestion has shown foresight and endeavour with a view to precision cutting of pulpwood, providing greater efficiency. An award of £30 was made in addition to a local award of £20.

Diazochrome Film Developer Unit

This was a suggestion for a system for developing Diazochrome film by using existing resources at a very small cost, instead of purchasing a commercial unit at considerable expense. The suggestor was given a Central award of £20 in addition to a local award of £20.

Venison Skidding Bag

This was a suggestion for a venison skidding bag which had been developed in North Scotland. It had proved to be very useful, particularly for red deer, and would also be suitable for fallow deer. It took much of the strain out of carcass movement and saved valuable time. All Conservancies had been advised of the skidding bag's existence and how to procure this. A Central award of £25 was given in addition to a Local award of £20.

The total value of the awards for 1980/81 was £928. Nineteen awards were between £25 and £99, and the other nineteen were for under £25.

POSTBAG

End of the Name Game

Dear Editor,
Andrew Bearhop should beware. He should never get out of bed too early. Does he realise that he is a "RARE DAWN-PHOBE?"

Yours sincerely,
D. S. BOWSER,
Commissioner.

Dear Editor,
Before you close your "anagram" correspondence (or perhaps to close it) may I offer

you the following anagrams of "FORESTRY COMMISSION":—

O SYSTEMIC FIR MORONS
FIRE IS COMMON, SO TRY
MY FIR CONES MISS ROOTS
ROSE IS NO MYSTIC FORM
MONEY CRISIS FOR MOST

Yours sincerely,

H. S. FROST,
(ex. E(E), N(W) and HQ).

AWARD FOR CENTRE

THE British Tourist Authority have awarded a Certificate of Merit to one of the Commission's most popular Visitor Centres in the 'Come to Britain' Trophy Competition 1980.

The David Marshall Lodge Visitor Centre at Queen Elizabeth Forest Park, Aberfoyle, Stirling won the award in respect of the recent improvement work carried out there.

Mr John Kennedy, Commissioner for Forest and Estate Management received the Certificate from the Rt. Hon. Sally Oppenheim MP at a ceremony in London on 21st July.

focus

They became Austrians for 3 weeks

ALAN PADMORE, Forest Craftsman at Wymersley Forest, Northamptonshire was one of 7 Commission employees selected to take part in a three week Forestry Tour in Austria. A total of eleven young people employed in forestry took part in the visit which was organised by the British Association of the Experiment in International Living and sponsored by the Ernest Cook Trust (after the founder of Cooks Travel) and the visitors' employees. Alan Padmore gives some impressions of the tour:

THE objective of the experiment was for our group to become Austrians and during working hours to be taught Austrian forestry techniques at the old and beautiful forestry school in Gmunden, Upper Austria. We would live with Austrians — a daunting thought as ten of us could hardly speak any German — but we quickly adapted and were made most welcome by our host families. The first two days were spent getting to know one another as well as our new families, and learning a few useful words of German, "Wie weit ist das beer, Hans" ... "Danke" ... "Prost!"

Our first lecture was on general forestry and with the help of booklets and colour slides we learned that forest covers 44% (3.7m ha) of Austria and that one-fifth of the population are employed in forestry (1.33 million). But this number includes vast numbers of farmers as 50% of the productive forest area is owned by them. 80.4% of the productive forests are coniferous (63.5% spruce) and 17.6% broadleaf (9.4% beech).

Micro-climates

Spruce and beech are the most successful species in Austria, but the country's climate is influenced by Atlantic, Continental and Mediterranean weather and the Alps cause many micro-climates which change the dominance of certain species from one area to another. The State Forestry has charted maps of the climatic differences to help avoid planting unsuitable species for certain climates. Very basically Austria is broken into four zones:—
Flood Plains — willow, poplar, alder.

Foot Hills — beech, lime, ash, maple, birch, Scots and Austrian pine, oak.

Beech Level — beech, spruce, turkey, oak, fir and larch.

Alpine Zone — shrubs and stunted trees.

The estimated growing stocks of timber in Austria totals approximately 800,000,000m³. Most of the timber produced goes for pulp, sawlogs and furniture. Firewood is one of the main sources of domestic heating and is very expensive, £20-£30 per m³, split ready for the stove.

Four Grades

Employment in the State Forest breaks down into four basic grades:—

Forest Worker: 3 year education, by block release, in logging, silviculture, extraction and transport, once the course is completed the worker is highly skilled and works with minimum supervision. Unskilled workers work only under supervision. Austria has 4 forestry schools for workers. Skilled workers can take another 3 year course to become 'Master of Forests' there are only 30 masters in Austria.

Forest Keeper: 2 schools in Austria, (Tirol and lower Austria) the student, usually a forest worker, attends for one year and is then responsible for the organisation of hunting, grazing rights and tourist control. Each village has a forest keeper.

Forester: After a good general education a student attends a further 5 year education at one of 4 schools and is then responsible for the supervision and management of forests.

Engineer: 4 or 5 years at University: Higher Forestry Management.

Forest law states a forester must be employed for a forest over 500ha and an engineer in addition to the foresters for an area over 1800ha.

For six days of the programme we were shown the use and maintenance of chainsaws. Most of us knew this subject back to front, inside out,

'Super-Sec' Ros.

MRS Rosalind Bull, Personal Secretary to Head of Information, Peter Drumm, should be retitled "Super-Secretary" after coming runner-up to the winner in a competition to find the Ideal Secretary.

The Department of Secretarial Studies at Stevenson College of Further Education, Edinburgh, circulated hundreds of firms inviting secretaries to complete a questionnaire listing the ideal secretary's ten top qualities.

From the dozens of replies received, the judges selected four girls, including Ros, to attend a Final at the college. A judging panel interviewed the secretaries, and Ros was judged runner-up to the winner, Mrs Clarke of Croda Inks who received an electric typewriter and engraved silver tray. Ros was presented with a Digital Clock, and matching Pen and Pencil Set.

• Still with Information Branch, July was wedding month when CA John Henderson married Miss Lorna Barton on the 11th, and the following Saturday saw a Commission 'double' with CO Miss Kay Beattie marrying Gordon Inglis, EO in Finance. Congratulations and Best Wishes to both couples.

upside down etc. But it was very interesting to exchange differences of opinion, and learn a few new 'tricks of the trade.' The most popular types of saw appear to be Stihl, Husquarna and Jonsered.

We were amazed at the high percentage of chainsaw accidents in the State Forest. In 1979 870 accidents were reported from 2000 chainsaw users, 33% to the trunk and head, 30% to the left arm and hand and 37% to the left leg, 1 in 2 workers is liable to have a bad accident. Safety clothing is not issued free. Staff workers receive 2000 schillings (£60) a year to buy boots, padded trousers, work smock, gloves and safety helmet, but there are no rules or union regulations stating that they must be worn. Apart from good boots, most workers wore no safety clothing at all.

For the last week we were again taken up into the mountains to see examples of timber extraction, recreation in forests, tourist control and torrent, landslide and avalanche control and protection.

Most of the extraction is done by skidding, skyline or highlead according to the degree of slope. There are very few forwarders in Austria. Within 2km along a forest road 1200m above sea level we were shown a highlead extracting whole trees for a processor which could shed, peel and cross-cut at the rate of 35m per min. and could on a good day produce 400m³ of sawlogs and pulpwood.

Packed programme

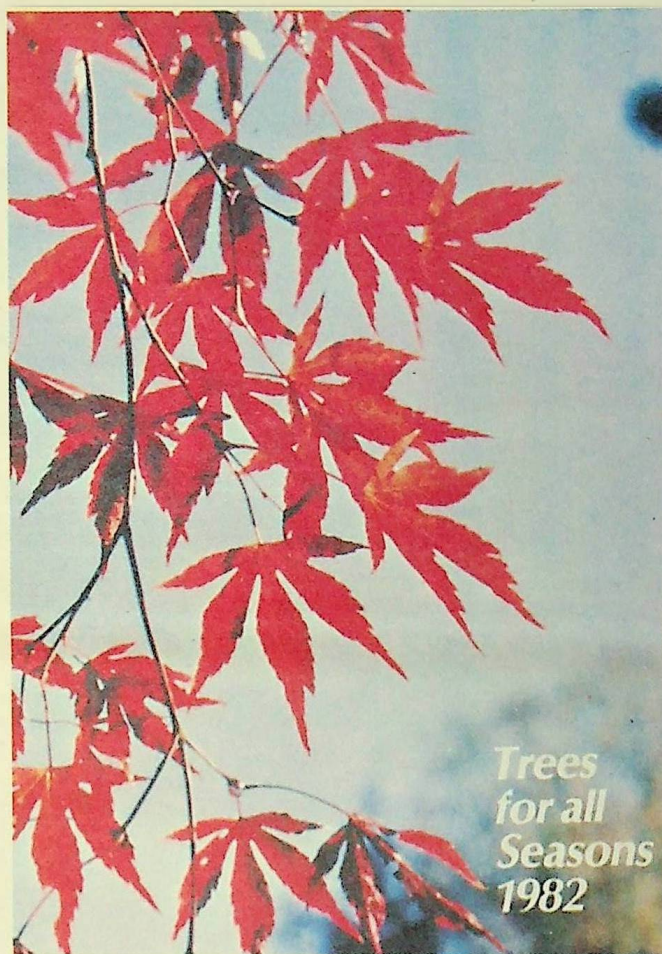
One of the main recreation uses of the Austrian forests is for hunting. Hunters rent small areas and build high seats, attracting the beasts to their area with salt licks and winter feeding. Roe and Red Deer are hunted most. The list of game also includes in higher areas, chamois and in lower areas, wild boar.

The programme was packed and varied and the time passed all too quickly. We were also taken to a small nursery containing spruce and larch trees to be planted out in areas where natural regeneration is not successful enough.

I would like to take this opportunity on behalf of the Commission men to thank those responsible for our selection. We thoroughly enjoyed the course and learned a lot about forestry tech-

niques in Austria. In fact there was so much to absorb in such a short time, it would be a good idea if we could go again next year. What do you say?

NEW CALENDAR FOR 1982



THIS calendar initiated by the Forestry Commission during Diamond Jubilee year is winning more and more friends. Already, orders are being received for this new edition now on sale for 1982. Following suggestions from satisfied customers and staff some developments in design have been made and the calendar features photographs from Skye to Queen Elizabeth Forest in Hampshire — all the work of Commission staff.

Make a point of seeing the calendar at your station office at which orders can be placed, for collection there, using the coupon below.

'Slasher' readers unable to secure their calendar(s) in this way are invited to send the coupon below (or a copy if you wish) to the Publications Section. If you list friends to receive a calendar we'll see they get one for the New Year.

The cost? Only a little more than before — £1.60 for orders received in this way.

ORDER THIS UNIQUE CALENDAR NOW.

TREES FOR ALL SEASONS — 1982

£1.60 each (post free)

I would like (no.) calendar(s) for which £.... is forwarded in payment.

★ I will collect at the(location) Office

★ Please send to me (name) at

.....

★ Please send a copy to friends on list attached.

★ Delete appropriately.

Publications Section, Forest Research Station, Alice Holt Lodge, Farnham, Surrey, GU10 4LH.

Obituary

MR REG CARNELL

SADLY we report the death of Mr Reg Carnell, former DO1 in Exeter. Mr Carnell died in hospital after major heart surgery. A forester of the old school, Mr Carnell retired in 1968, his last two years being spent among the trees he had planted 30 years before. Our sympathy goes to his widow, Lilian, and family.

MR GEORGE DALLIMORE

WE regret to report the death of Mr George Dallimore, who worked at Mendip Forest until his retirement. Mr Dallimore was 78.

MR CHARLES C. DAVIES

Charles Clifford Davies, a Forester at Ystwyth Forest, died at Bronglais Hospital, aged 51. He is survived by his wife

Kathleen and two daughters, Meiriona and Anwen.

Mr Davies joined the FC in 1949, at Dyfnant Forest, and has served at several forests in the North Wales Conservancy — Gwydyr, Radnor, Hafren, Dyfi and Ystwyth, where he was on temporary promotion to Head Forester at the time of his death.

MR BERT GIDDENS

MR Bert Giddens a former Executive Officer in the South East England Conservancy Office has died aged 72.

Bert retired in 1974 after serving as a Clerical Officer in the Cambridge Office since 1953 and latterly as an Executive Officer in the Lyndhurst Office from 1967 until his retirement.

One of Bert's hobbies was wood turning and he will be remembered for presenting a gavel to the Forestry Commissioners on the occasion of their visit to the New Forest in 1973.

Our sympathy is extended to his widow and family.

MR C. J. HOLTON

SADLY, Mr Charlie Holton, former Foreman Mechanic at Sherwood Repair Depot N W (E) has died at the age of 79. Mr Holton is fondly remembered at Sherwood and in S W (E) where, along with one other mobile mechanic, he carried out maintenance and repairs on vehicles scattered over six counties.

MR HERBERT LARGENT

IT is with regret that we report the death at age 59 of Herbert Largent, Forest Craftsman at Kings Forest, East England Conservancy.

Herbert joined the Commission in 1939 and worked on the old Redneck Beat of Thetford Forest. After war service in the Royal Navy he returned to Thetford on harvesting operations.

He was an original forest worker member of the Thetford Joint Consultative Committee. He became staff side secretary in 1952 and remained as such until his untimely death. His advice and guidance was sought and appreciated by management and fellow workers alike. Deservedly he was awarded the British Empire Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours List in 1969.

He played a major part in the local village life of Santon Downham and will be greatly missed for his community work and for his involvement in particular in the annual Woodchoppers Gala.

The high esteem in which he was held was very evident from the large attendance at his funeral service at the village church where even standing room was at a premium.

Herbert leaves a widow and two daughters to whom our sympathy is extended.

MR HARRY NANKIVELL

MR Harry Nankivell, for 25 years Ganger in the Grogley-Bishops Wood area of Bodmin Forest, has died at the age of 86. He was a dedicated countryman whose work was his life, and he was also known for his wit and dry sense of humour.

MR JOHN WILSON

IT is with regret that we report the death of Mr John Wilson in Paisley at the age of 95. An ex-guardian, he was gamekeeper on the Achnamara beat of Poltalloch Estate when the Commission bought Knapdale Forest in 1931. John then became an FC employee and continued as gamekeeper until his retirement in 1950.



The British group in the forest, preparing to fell the trees in the background as part of their Austrian forestry training.