

SLASHER

ISSUE NO. 317



Newspaper of the Forestry Commission

It's Bellamy down in our model forest

DAVID BELLAMY, with his usually boundless energy planted 100 trees on the Model Forest at The Liverpool Garden Festival with the enthusiastic assistance of youngsters from Toxteth primary schools. The exuberant botanist praised the Commission for its efforts and expressed his amazement at the effect of the seedlings and transplants. "It really works. Looks like a real forest," he said. "Just like the view across Hamsterley Forest down the road from my house." Praise indeed: See pages four and five.

Tuneful
Finlay
is top
of the
pipes!



DISTRICT officer Finlay MacRae could soon be a star in Top of the Pops (or is it Pipes?) The sound of his bagpipes, usually to be heard in the forests near his Dingwall base, is to feature on an album due to appear this summer.

The album, "Airs and Graces," is the work of his son-in-law Phil Cunningham of folk group Silly Wizard. Phil has been described as the instrumental magician behind the wizardry of the group whose albums outsell those of the Chieftains in America.

Finlay MacRae is the only other performer on the new album with his pipe music overlain with other instruments, all played by Phil.

It took 7½ hours of studio time to record one tune, and Finlay says he found the experience "fascinating." There was also a touch of nostalgia as the studio owner is the grandson of the man who gave Finlay his first prize for piping at the age of 13.



£1m BLAZE HAVOC IN FORESTS

THE Forestry Commission suffered its worst ever spell of forest fires during April and May, with the cost of lost plantations and emergency fire-fighting measures put at more than £1m.

In tinder-dry conditions, blazes swept through 1600 hectares of plantations, destroying future wood supplies, wild life and birds and their habitat, and stretching Forestry Commission staff and supporting fire-fighting teams to the limit.

The area of plantations burned in April and May was much greater than in the same two months of 1976, previously the worst on record for forest fires in Britain.

During April and May this year there was exceptionally dry and warm weather, little or no fresh green undergrowth and with strong winds and low humidity affecting parts of the country, fires that started spread faster and were hotter than many experienced foresters can recall.

Dangerous

In thicker and semi-mature crops, the enormous heat made fire-fighting conditions extremely dangerous and exhausting, and in a blaze on the Dinas Mountain, 50 men were nearly trapped and were forced to withdraw at the last minute

leaving hoses and other equipment behind.

Almost every Conservancy reported long periods of high and extreme danger conditions and for the first time ever South Wales closed its forests to the public for a spell. Conservator Alan Rix said: "There were times when we thought the whole of South Wales was aflame. Staff were working round-the-clock and factories worked extra shifts to manufacture and deliver vital fire-fighting equipment."

Bearing by far the worst of the battle against fires, South Wales had 1100 hectares of plantations burned between April 14 and May 14, 95 per cent occurring between April 18 and 30, the seasonal total rising to 1170 hectares in 749 fires.

At the peak of the fires, all available staff were mobilised to

help in the coalfield forests with support teams brought in from other forests; the RAF and Army sent in troops; the Home Office called in Green Goddess fire engines; and other organisations lent vital support.

In North Wales, the worst fires occurred at the end of April, with a total of 200 hectares of plantations burned. In East England, 35 hectares were burned at Thetford. In most other Conservancies in England, fire damage was confined to small areas.

'Copters

In North Scotland, outbreaks occurred in early May, with the worst blaze at Foyers, a few miles south of Inverness, and despite a two-day battle, 100 hectares were burned — taking the Conservancy total to over 120 hectares. In South Scotland, fires affected over 90 hectares,

'SOUTH WALES AFLAME'

SEE PAGE 3

with 70 hectares in one incident in Clydesdale Forest. One lesson to emerge from the potentially disastrous spell of fire danger was the value of helicopters for spotting fires, water bombing, laying foam barriers and transporting men and equipment.

"There is no doubt the use of helicopters saved many hectares of plantations," said Mr Rix.

North Scotland also made use of helicopters, particularly during the Foyers blaze when a newly adapted bucket system for water bombing was used.

Discussions will be taking place involving the Police and Fire Brigades to study the techniques which have emerged

from fire-fighting on the scale experienced this year.

"There is no doubt the use of helicopters saved many hectares of plantations," said Mr Rix. "In one case, we had a three-man team with beaters and knapsack sprayers fighting a fire 45 minutes before reinforcements were able to get in to it by road. In another, the helicopter pilot hovered over a fire and was able to give a map reference of the location from radar scanners at Air Traffic Control."

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Tale of the Fire Falcon

BETWEEN reading the never-ending stream of technical material that arrives on his desk, it seems that Austin Jones, Forest District Manager, Ayrshire FD, cannot escape from his work in the world of fiction. He's been reading "Fire Falcon" by Duff Hart-Davis, and has sent us his own review:

The story describes how a man who refers to himself as "Fire Falcon" bears a huge grudge against the Forestry Commission for planting conifers in the Scottish Highlands, thus interrupting the migration patterns of the red deer between the hilltops and the warmer low ground. Single-handed, he declares war on the FC, and when an ultimatum goes unanswered he sets fire to a young plantation. He later repeats this action with disastrous consequences, not just to the trees! The police launch a massive enquiry, followed by a search and chase over the hills somewhere between Glencoe and Knoydart.

What I disliked about the book was that it could give some people the wrong idea about how to oppose the FC and its activities. On the other hand, I had to smile at the similarity suggested between a male rhinoceros and the FC, viz, "enormous, of uncertain temper, unshiftable, and impregably pachydermatous." The fact that Fire Falcon's real name is MacDonald and the Director General of the FC is a Campbell adds subtle spice to a very good yarn.

Editor's Note.

"Fire Falcon," by Duff Hart-Davis, published by Johnathan Cape, price £7.95, was serialised on BBC Radio 4 Book at Bedtime earlier this year.

Has any other *Slasher* reader come across a book that may have some bearing on FC activities and which may interest others? Reviews welcome.

Elm painter wins contest

A PAINTING competition launched by Westonbirt Arboretum to design the cover of its school's information pack, has reached a successful conclusion.

Open to all primary and junior school children in the counties of Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire, the competition proved most popular and many entries were received.

Anna Turner of Box Highlands School, Corsham, painted a delightful picture of an Elm, which was selected by John White, Curator / Botanist at the Arboretum, as the winning entry.

Mr Phil Drabble, the well known naturalist and broadcaster, presented the prizes and opened an exhibition of entries on June 1.

New picnic spot opened

THE Cefn Coed Forest Walks and Picnic Places in Crynant Forest were officially opened by Mr Alan Rix, Conservator of Forests for South Wales.

This is a joint venture between the Forestry Commission and the West Glamorgan County Council to complement the facilities available at the Cefn Coed Coal and Steam Centre, and to provide further attractions in the forest for family visits.

Cefn Coed is a unique centre which tells the fascinating story of coal mining in the Dulais Valley. Sited alongside a working colliery, it occupies surface buildings of the former Cefn Coed Colliery, and has an impressive steam winding engine and a realistic simulated underground mining gallery.

The two picnic places and three forest walks, ranging in length from 1/2-mile and 3 miles, have been designed and laid out by the Forestry Commission in close co-operation with the West Glamorgan County Council. The County Council is producing a Forest Walk Guide which will be available at the Centre, and at the Aberdulais Tourist Information Centre.

One of the picnic places lies around old oak trees and impressive rock formations, while the other is on higher ground, commanding splendid views of the Dulais Valley.

FISH REPLACED

SOUTH Scotland Conservancy is to restock a tributary of the River Tweed which was contaminated by the insecticide Gammacol, killing hundreds of fish. The incident happened in April when trees for planting in Glentress started to dry out in hot weather and were placed in the Kirk Burn to freshen them up, it was stated in the quarterly report of River Tweed Purification Board director, Mr J. C. Currie.

In a letter to the board, Richard Smith, FDM, said it was an unauthorised operation which did not conform with recognised or even good forestry practice and steps had been taken to tighten up procedures.

The Commission is discussing the restocking of the burn with salmon and trout with the river Tweed Commissioners and the Peebles-shire Angling Association.

NEW PLANS TO SAVE WOODLAND

Proposals for a national policy aimed at safeguarding the future of Britain's broadleaved woodland are contained in a consultative paper published by the Forestry Commission.

"Broadleaves in Britain" is the report of the Broadleaves Policy Review Group set up by the Commission to formulate a new policy for broadleaved woodland and to recommend any new initiatives it felt might be needed.

The policy has four main aims:

- Maintain the broadleaved resource at about its present extent;
- Manage the existing ancient semi-natural woodlands so as to perpetuate their unique features;
- Manage other broadleaved woodlands as productively and profitably as possible while maintaining their value for wildlife and amenity;
- Improve the productivity of broadleaved woodland.

In order to achieve these objectives it is recommended

that a number of new initiatives should be implemented. They include:

- Permission to fell broadleaves should normally require that the site be restocked with broadleaves;
- Applications to clear broadleaved woodland for agriculture should be granted only exceptionally;
- Ancient semi-natural woodlands should be managed in accordance with guidelines agreed between the Nature Conservancy Council and the Forestry Commission;
- Information and advice to farmers and small woodland owners should be co-ordinated through the Forestry Commission in co-operation with other agencies;
- A new grant scheme should be introduced to encourage the establishment, regeneration and care of broadleaved woodlands.

In reaching their conclusions, the Group considered written

evidence from some 50 interested organisations and had a series of meetings with Timber Growers UK, the Nature Conservancy Council, the

British Timber Merchants' Association, the Countryside Commission for Scotland and the Game Conservancy. They also took into account the report of the sub-committee of the House of Lords Select Committee on Science and Technology, chaired by Lord Sherfield, which investigated the Scientific Aspects of Forestry, and the deliberations of the Broadleaves in Britain Symposium of 1982 which concluded that a stable long-term policy for broadleaved woodlands was essential.

In a foreword to the consultative paper, Mr G. D. Holmes, Director General of the Commission, writes that before reaching conclusions on their advice to Government, the Commissioners would welcome the views of interested organisations and individuals on the issues discussed and the recommendations made in the report. These should be sent to the Secretary of the Forestry Commission in Edinburgh by August 31, 1984.



Ted takes over

THE non-industrial unions have appointed as their new Trade Union Side Secretary, CSU member, Ted Radford.

Ted joined the Commission in York in 1959, and after training at Faskally Forestry Training School, spent eight years as a Forester in R&D before being posted to Irfon Forest in S(Wales). He was promoted last year, and is now Head Forester FM at Llandovery in S(Wales).

Ted has been active within CSU ever since becoming a Forester, having served as local branch secretary in three different locations, and on the Section Executive Committee since 1980. He is looking forward to coming back to Edinburgh with his wife, Aileen, who also works for the Commission as a CA at Llandovery.

Ted takes over from Jean Thompson, who was the first "full-time" Trade Union Side Secretary. Jean says: "I have found it interesting and exciting, but five-and-a-half years is long enough. It's a job which is very much what you make it, and I think it needs new blood and a new approach now."

Three new health orders

THE Forestry Commission has introduced three new Orders, two of which relate to Dutch Elm disease.

The Dutch Elm disease (Local Authorities) Order 1984 gives powers to named local authorities to prevent the spread of Dutch Elm disease, and the Dutch Elm Disease (Restriction on Movement of Elms) Order 1984 restricts the movement in specified parts of Great Britain of elms with bark attached.

These new Orders replace ones dating from 1977. The main principles of the earlier Orders are retained, but because of the continued spread and intensity of the disease in certain local authority areas, it has been necessary for practical purposes to redefine the boundaries of the control areas, with the agreement of the local authorities concerned.

The maximum fine for offences against the Orders has also been increased to £1000 as permitted under the Criminal Justice Act 1982.

Under the new Orders, the main control area in England will consist of a broad belt across the centre of the country, including Merseyside, Greater Manchester, West Yorkshire and parts of Cheshire, Lancashire and North Yorkshire. Other smaller areas of control, such as Lincoln City, Tyne and Wear, the Peak area of Derbyshire and parts of East Sussex and Cumbria, will remain.

In Wales, controls will be confined to a part of Gwynedd and the Colwyn District of Clwyd. The whole of Scotland, with the exception of Border Region and part of Dumfries and Galloway Region, will continue to be a control area.

Spearheading new bid to control sawfly

A PROGRAMME of research over a number of years by staff of the Institute of Virology at Oxford has led to the application by the Commission of new methods of using a virus to control the pine sawfly ((*Neodiprion sertifer*)).

Lodgepole pine, which is grown extensively in upland areas of northern Britain, often suffers severe damage from this insect over several years prior to canopy closure.

In badly affected crops all except current needles are removed, giving a very thin appearance and the normal suppression of competing vegetation is greatly reduced.

Eventually attack is terminated by a collapse of the sawfly population, largely due to naturally occurring virus disease. Control involves introducing the virus in sufficient quantity to bring about an earlier collapse in the population than would take place naturally and so shortening or forestalling the period of severe defoliation.

The virus is effective only against this species of sawfly and has no effect on closely related

sawflies, still less on other organisms, and thus is environmentally completely safe.

The principle of introducing virus against Pine sawfly has been known for a long time and material prepared locally was in use by Commission foresters some years ago. More recently research led by Mr Philip Entwistle and Dr Hugh Evans (who has now left the Institute of Virology to become the Commission's Principal Entomologist), at Shin Forest, North Scotland Conservancy, has shown the need for spray droplets carrying particles which contain the virus to be thoroughly distributed on the pine needles since the feeding larvae must ingest the virus in order to become infected.

Modern equipment for ultra low volume spray application, used from the ground or from the air enables this distribution to be achieved with maximum economy of the virus material, which has to be obtained from field sources.

A further step has been the formulation of virus from infected larvae, collected at Shin

Forest, by the Tate and Lyle research group on a commercial basis and its marketing as "Virox." The use of this product has been approved under the Pesticides Safety Precautions Scheme, the first time that clearance has been given for large scale use of a virus against an insect in Britain.

Dollar Helicopters, using a Decca Flying Flagman navigation system for more accurate flying, sprayed "Virox" on 3000 hectares of Forestry Commission and private woodland in Ross-shire, Sutherland and Caithness and a further 40 hectares were treated by ground operated sprayers during the second half of May.

Fountain Forestry co-operated closely with the FC in launching this modern biological control operation and assessment of the effectiveness of treatment is currently being carried out by FC entomologists. The Institute of Virology is working on the application of a virus specific to Pine Beauty Moth (*Panolis flammea*) which it is hoped may be used in a similar way.

Three Royal honours

In The Queen's Birthday Honours List, Ian Grant, former Conservator E(S), was awarded the OBE; David Jones N(W) was made an MBE, and Valery Vasilieff, Ganger S(S), BEM.

Ian Grant, from Morayshire, started forestry work on Altire Estate in 1941. He graduated BSc in forestry from Edinburgh University in 1953 and joined the FC at Dingwall before moving to Kielder (1968); Alice Holt (1971) as Chief Work Study

Officer), West Scotland (1975): and became Conservator E(S) in 1978. A quiet, unassuming man, his contribution to forestry management has been quite outstanding.

David Aneurin Jones joined the FC at 15 in 1940 and for 27 years worked as a clerk at Dyfif Forest before transfer to Aberystwyth where he became EO in 1972. His wife Elizabeth has been at Aberystwyth since 1957. He is active in local church and community affairs.

Valery Vasilieff was born in Russia and during the war was transported to Germany and later moved to Czechoslovakia. At the end of the war he cycled back to Germany to become a displaced person and was allowed to settle in Britain where he became a citizen in 1958, seven years after joining the FC. He has played a key role in the large afforestation programme at Clatteringshaws and is a well respected member of the New Galloway community.

Dramatic account of the fire-fighters



The blaze takes a grip as smoke covers the area; a helicopter is called in to help beat back the flames.

'SOUTH WALES WAS ON FIRE'

"There were times during the recent fire season," said the Conservator Alan Rix, "when we thought the whole of South Wales was aflame."

The Forestry Commission lost 1100 hectares of plantations burned between April 14 and May 14, 95% of which went between April 18 and 30, bringing the totals for the season to 1170 hectares burned in 749 fires.

Mid-Glamorgan Fire Service recorded over 3300 grass fires during the same period. Experienced "coalfield" foresters say that the situation was worse than 1976 in that there was no spring green of any sort, the winds were strong and as a result fires were hotter and travelled faster, making it much more dangerous and more difficult to fight.

There were on average 22 incidents a day from April 14 to 29, coinciding with the school holidays. Six major fires started after dark, some in the middle of the night, and about 300 ha — just under a third of the total lost — were destroyed in these fires.

Local staff are convinced that a large proportion of all incidents were arson although the majority of these were considered to be mischievous rather than malicious.

Our own and timber contractor's men and the Fire Services worked ceaselessly for weeks, with no let up at all, fighting this vast number of fires.

In the tinder-dry, windy conditions the fires, many of which were in thickets and semi-nature crops, generated enormous heat and made fire-fighting extremely dangerous and exhausting.

EQUIPMENT

In the fierce fire on the Dinas Mountain, 50 men were nearly trapped in the raging inferno and were withdrawn only in the nick of time, rescuing pumps and vehicles but leaving hoses and other equipment behind. At the height of the Pontrhydyfen fire, which burned the hillside of 30-year-old trees, the village was thought to be in danger but, fortunately, the fire was halted just short of the houses.

With flames leaping to 60 feet and more in some of these fires, it was a miracle no one was seriously injured. The smoke from Dinas Mountain was so dense that Port Talbot was blanketed and vehicles on the

TROUBLE SPOTS

RHEOLA FD: Blaen Llia — 45 ha; Kilvey Hill, overlooking Swansea and planted with financial help from the Swansea City Council — 14 ha; Penderyn — 45 ha; March Hywel — 125 ha in two fires; and Y Wern, previously burned in 1976 — 47 ha.

AFAN FD: Ynys Corrwg — 45 ha; Dinas Mountain, Baglan, now a black mass overlooking Port Talbot — 100 ha; Pontrhydyfen — 43 ha. **LLANWYNNNO FD:** Cwmsaerbrun/Bwlch — 103 ha; Mynydd Ton — 48 ha; Maerdy — 205 ha in a series of fires over the period and Ffaldau — 45 ha; all in the Rhondda. **BRECON FD:** Penmoelallt — 40 ha.

M4 had to crawl, using headlights.

At the peak of the fires all available staff were mobilised to help the hard-pressed men in the coalfield forests. Support teams of fire-fighters and supervisors were brought in from the rural to the coalfield forests and additional supervisory help was received from South West England. Civil engineering staff organised the supply of additional bowsters and water tankers and the distribution of water supplies for the fire-fighters and helicopters.

Mechanical engineering staff used all their ingenuity to ensure that the fleet of Land Rovers, vans and fire-fighting equipment were kept on the road and in

working order despite the gruelling use and fire damage they suffered. Radios were a vital link and radio branch at Tintern kept us "on the air."

TACTICS

A conservancy co-ordinating centre was set up in the Conservancy Office and was manned 24 hours a day for a week by the Conservator and the two Assistant Conservators and, at one stage, a liaison officer from the Army. The control centre organised teams from the rural forests and other conservancies, deciding the best tactical back-up, given that there were not enough men available. Additional equipment — fire tenders and bowsters from other conservancies, Green Goddesses from the Home Office, reinforcements from the Services, helicopters and fuel supplies to meet their special requirements — all had to be arranged.

Factories were persuaded to work extra shifts to manufacture and deliver foam concentrate and to manufacture hoses and hose couplings. The principle adopted was to provide anything that a firemaster called for, as quickly as possible, and without the need for him to be involved in organising that supply.

After the major fires, a rota of two District Officers and one Chief Forester was set up to man the centre to allow the senior staff to get some rest and to take decisions on fire strategy without being embroiled in the minute-by-minute exchange of

information at the control centre.

Valuable help was received from the public and from the Welsh Water Authority, RAF St Athan and Stafford, troops from Salisbury, the Gurkhas and Light Infantry from Sennybridge, Army apprentices from Chepstow and various mountain rescue organisations, Brecon Beacons Wardens and the Rhondda C B Group. Without this help, things would have been much worse.

VALUABLE

By the end of April, the local staff were stretched to the limit and worn-out after weeks of long hours fighting fires. On May 2, 300 officers and men from the Brigade of Guards stationed in London were brought in and drafted to strategic points at Neath, Pontypridd and Sennybridge. Although no further major fires occurred, the troops played a valuable role in many incidents and gave the pressed local men a desperately-needed respite after weeks at full stretch. With the danger to life and property lessened, the troops were withdrawn after three days.

Conservancy Office staff organised and ran a day-and-night "soup kitchen" from the Rheola Training Centre during the worst week of fires. Soup and sandwiches transported to the scenes of fires, especially in the middle of the night, were greatly appreciated.

Five Green Goddesses were brought out of mothballs through the local authority fire services who manned the machines. They were used to back up fire services' machines at forest fires.

The Conservator would like to convey his and the Forestry Commission's thanks and appreciation to all the staff and everyone else who helped South Wales in their crisis.

Awards for 'Slasher'

THE Scottish Region of the British Association of Industrial Editors has awarded two prizes to *Slasher*. Our feature on former Chief Forester Don MacCaskill (Strathgryne) and some of his photographic work earned a second prize in the annual awards list, and a commendation for the headline, "Mister magic with a camera."

Congratulations and thanks to Don. If you have an idea for a feature that will interest *Slasher* readers — and the critics outwith the Forestry Commission — let me know or contact your correspondent.

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Roy Gregor

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W(S) John Watson
S(S) David Gibson

RESEARCH
Alice Holt, Noel Blatchford
NRS John McA Smith

TRADE UNION SIDE
Ted Radford

QUOTE

"When the helicopter went to pick up water from the lake those fishermen were incensed — shaking fists at the pilot, shouting and waving him away. The fire front was half a mile long and a quarter of a mile away. I reckon they hadn't noticed."

— DUNCAN LEE, Afan

"Ivor came running out of the thicket. I've never seen him move so fast or look so scared. The fire was catching up on him . . ."

— OWEN REES, Llanwynno

"The noise was terrific. Both men dived into the cab of the fire tender and the fire went past on both sides like an express train . . ."

— OWEN REES, Llanwynno

"That new helicopter pilot prefers to be filled by bowser rather than dunk in the lake. I've just found out that he can't swim . . ."

— JOHN HUNT, Llanwynno

"These two helicopters worked on two minute turn around delivering about 3000 gallons each, per hour. One took off and flew under the HT cables up to the fire while the other came in empty over the HT cables. Magnificent but crazy. They were working from the rugby field with the fire only 200 yards away. The brigades were hard pressed to keep them in sufficient water."

— STAN HEAVEN, Afan

"The Brigade found an underground reservoir to supply the helicopter. We lowered the level so far and so quickly that air got into the Water Authority electric pump and it burned out. Ton Pentre water supply is cut off and the water man is in a thunderous mood . . ."

— R. V. WILLS, Llanwynno

FELLOWSHIP PLAN

Following the initiative of Welfare Branch, a small ad hoc committee met in Headquarters for the first time to look into the feasibility of a Forestry Commission Retirement Fellowship. The committee comprises Mrs U. A. Farrelly, S. Wales; Mr E. G. Owen, S. Wales; Mr K. B. Harvey, Scotland; Mr I. A. D. Grant, Scotland; Mr I. R. Marshall, North England; Mr E. G. Richards, South England. Mr

Ian Grant, 6 Bridgton Place, Almondbank, Perth PH1 3ND, was elected Chairman.

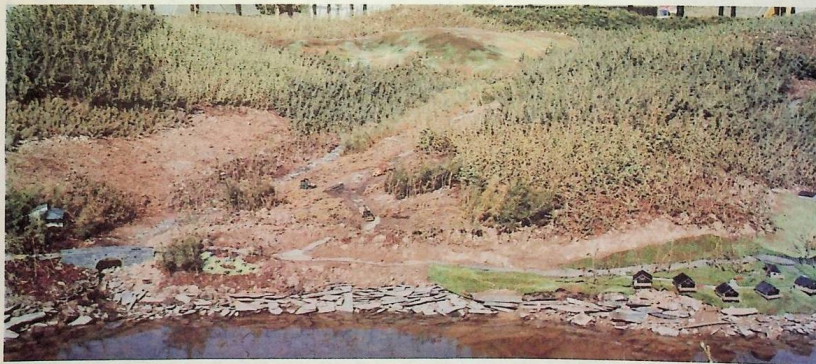
The committee is enthusiastic and discussed the aims and objectives of the proposed Retirement Fellowship plus ideas on organisation, financing, activities and the constitution. The committee meet again on 6 June and intend to report back to pensioners in due course.



ABOVE:
The panoramic
view from the
observation
platform at the
entrance to the
model forest.

Reporter:
**HAZEL
POTTINGER**

BELOW:
Looking across
the lake to a
clear felling and
extraction site.
Forest cabin
development on
the lakeside.



HERE'S A MODEL OF FOREST INGENUITY

OUR Model Forest — the Commission's exhibit at the Liverpool International Garden Festival — is proving to be one of the most popular attractions at this major event, hosted for the first time by Britain.

In the first six weeks since the grand opening by the Queen on May 2, about 60,000 visitors passed through the Model Forest site. The official attendance figures for the Festival as a whole broke the 500,000 barrier in the first week of June.

With more than 60 individual gardens and 20 features to choose from, it is encouraging that more than 10% of the public visiting the Festival are keen to see the Model Forest. They are coming at an average of 1000 a day — many more at weekends — and on Spring Bank Holiday Tuesday our stewards reported a record attendance of an estimated 6000 visitors.

As this was Britain's first world event with an expected attendance of 3,000,000 to 4,000,000 visitors, Heads of Departments saw an important opportunity to demonstrate the best of modern forestry practice, forest design and to increase the public's understanding of forestry, and the importance of maintaining British wood supplies for industry, and to highlight the link between the forest and wood products.

Responsibility for the project was shared between Information Branch and Design and Recreation Branch.

IMAGINATION

The idea of a miniature forest in a miniaturised landscape was chosen as the most effective way of capturing the public's imagination on a small site, and at the same time tell the story of upland forestry in a visually exciting way.

With a budget in excess of £100,000 the Model Forest is one of the Commission's most comprehensive and detailed interpretive projects yet tackled. It is the result of the co-operative efforts of Commission staff and workers from every Division, several Conservancies and forests. The design team, was led by Commission Forester Landscape Architect Simon Bell with Landscape Architect Mary Clark and Graphics Designer Julie Barrowman specially engaged for the project, and Forester John Lyon seconded from Bowland Forest, North West England, as Site Manager.

The task facing the design team was — having to design a landscape on which to create their ideal upland forest. After searching through photographs and landscape plans and site visits to the Lake District and North Wales, they found an area of Dyfi Forest, suitably rugged and diverse, which could be modified to fit the shape and size of the Commission's site.

Although based on this section of Dyfi Forest, the Model Forest is intended to be typical of a rugged upland British landscape. It covers 700 square metres to a scale of approximately 1:100 and represents an area of seven square kilometres or some five square miles of mountain, moorland and forest scenery. The landscape sculptured out of 1200 tons of earth and top soil rises from the lake to a range of mountain tops and bare moorland, nearly 3 metres high, equivalent to altitudes of over 1000 feet. Mountains streams, scree slopes, waterfalls and a lake complete the natural features.

More than 250,000 trees have been planted on the model — young plantations and 300mm transplants representing mature forests. In addition, 2000 germinating seedlings from seed sown in spring, can be seen in the forest.

There is a pattern of billings and hedges. Over 1500 ha of thorn seedlings have been used for model, over half of them laid in the traditional manner.

DRYSTONE WALL

Long, including a village, two small holdings and a farmstead, help to emphasise the reality of the scale. The village is complete with its own village pub. The cottages, about 10 inches high, are authentic replicas of actual stone cottages, photos of which the model is based. Behind the valley at the forest edge a road, cars are on the roads, in car parks and taking part in a rally, and a range of forestry vehicles and machines.

The model is brought to life by its people — over 100 tiny figures less than an inch tall — villagers, forestry workers,

Country house with a difference



Did you know the real country house is on the left, the model on the right.



Thanks to all who helped

THANKS are due to all those who gave practical help and technical guidance from all quarters throughout the Commission.

The bulk of the plants were supplied by Delamere Forest Nursery, thanks to Forest District Manager Pat Dinenen and Nursery Forester Charles Blackwood. Supplies also came in from Wykeham, Dorchester, Tullaghan and Fleet Nurseries. Peter Marr, Superintendent of Works of Keswick Roads Department and his squad were responsible for the initial drainage, excavation and site preparation.

Chief Forester John Davenport and Forester Gerwin James of Dwf, North Wales, located sites and buildings for reproducing on the model, including the stone wall which was dismantled by North Wales engineers for re-building on the Model Forest Site by Jim Roscoe, Forest Craftsman from Bowland Forest. Tree planting was done by Forester Roger Coppock and his squad from North West England's Motorway Planting Unit, Forest Craftsman Jim Gore, Tim Cockerill, Charlie Smith and Mark Smallwood from Delamere Forest, and Forest Craftsman Steve Wood, Pat

Lyon, Ken Wood and Charles Hagercroft from Bowland, as well as youngsters from the Manpower Services team, who also sculptured the landscape. The wildlife hide, observation platforms and picnic furniture were made by Forest Craftsmen George Lamb and Wilt Stratford of Grizedale Forest under Head Forester John Webster. Models were made by Simon Bell, Mary Clark, Julie Barrowman of the Design Team, Ann Baxter, Forest Design Branch, and Jim Christie, Mechanical Engineer, Headquarters.

Alan Lightly, Chief Forester, Radio Communications, Chesham, supplied the sound recording for the hide and electricity for the pump. Dr Peter Gosling, Seeds Branch, Research and Development Division supplied pre-treated seeds for sowing on the model. Derek Patch of the Arboricultural Advisory Unit, Alice Holt did soil testing and advised on establishment and maintenance of the plants. Geoff Freedman, Civil Engineer, Headquarters, advised on the retaining walls. Douglas Green, Principal Photographer, and Isobel Cameron, Senior Photographer, Information Branch, supplied photographs for the interpretative panels.

Dame Sylvia delighted



DAME SYLVIA CROWE, who was the Forestry Commission's first landscape consultant from 1963 until 1976, during her visit to the Model Forest. At a Press conference in Liverpool on April 10, at which Dame Sylvia was present, John Kennedy (Forestry Commissioner, Forest and Estate Management) announced that Dame Sylvia had been awarded the first Honorary Fellowship of the Institute of Chartered Foresters.

Dame Sylvia, who laid the foundation of the Commission's landscape design policy, said she was delighted with the exhibit.

"I have seen all these ideas I have cared about applied here," she said. "The modelling of a realistic mountain scene on such a small site is mastery. Looking at it from a landscape architect's point of view, the planting follows the right lines, emphasising the beauty and shape of the landscape and the contrasting light being used to accentuate a valley."

Dame Sylvia, at 82, had just returned from a lecture tour of Pennsylvania to complete her latest project as Designer of the British Pavilion Garden at Liverpool.

Cheer for the workers

MUCH credit is due to Forester John Lyon who supervised all the work on the site and who, with a team of young people from Merseyside employed under the MSC Community Programme, transformed the site in six months. Wheelbarrows and spades were the tools in hand to shape the mountains, valleys and streams and hundreds of stakes had to be prepared and hammered in to form the earth retaining palisade. To match the design contours accurately, the entire site was pegged with markers every square metre, and the earth modelled to the exact height shown on the design.

The MSC team were Carr Drayton, supervisor, Paul Rasmussen, Don MacKintosh, Peter Thompson, Walter Halpin, Paul Norris, Andrew Rushton, Wayne Moores and Rob Davison.



THE design team get their heads together to discuss the forest landscape design. Left to right Mary Clark, Landscape Architect, Julie Barrowman, Graphics Designer, Simon Bell, Forester Landscape Architect.

Retirements

Jim Staniforth recently retired on job release having worked in North East England for many years — first as forest worker at Redesdale then ploughing team operator mechanic, and latterly at Redesdale Forest Centre as Storeman — handyman — mechanic — inventor. He will be much missed, but luckily he is staying on at Redesdale. Jim was presented with garden centre tokens.

Steve Cox — recruited originally to the "roads squad," later transferred to the Redesdale forest management team, also left on job release. He was presented with an onyx lighter and pair of ashtrays on his recent retirement.

Margaret Ramsay, forest clerk at Redesdale for the past eight years, now regraded as CO and has transferred to York Forest District on the closure of the Forest Office and the creation of Kielder Forest District. She was presented with a radio alarm.

Peter Thallon, Chief Field Survey Officer since 1974, has retired. Peter joined the Commission in 1950, being posted to Northerwood House on educational duties. He served as District Officer at Helmsley from 1952 to 1965, when he moved to Reading. He was promoted to Assistant Conservator in 1968, filling in turn the Forest Management and Harvesting and Marketing posts at Cambridge before his final move to Alice Holt.

A typical Alice Holt tea-party farewell was attended by his many Research Branch friends and by representatives from South-East and East England. He was presented with pocket binoculars and a cash balance, a tribute from colleagues throughout the Commission. His wife was presented with a bouquet of flowers.

Friends and colleagues gathered at Alice Holt to mark the retirement of **John Christie**, Chief Forester with the Mensuration Section. After war service, John joined the Commission in 1946 as a Forest Worker based at Alice Holt. Shortly afterwards he was given a bicycle and sent to Scotland to measure sample plots! Eighteen months later he went to the Gwydyr Forester Training School, was then posted back to Alice Holt for a two-year tour of duty with the Mensuration Section... which eventually lasted for 35 years.

John's name has appeared on many publications, but we will be best known for his close involvement in the preparation and publication of three sets of Forest Management Tables published in 1966, 1971 and 1981.

John was presented with a cassette radio and a cheque to go some way towards the purchase of a micro-computer which he hopes to use to continue with his interest in mensuration; his wife, Ann, was presented with a bouquet and a pot plant.

Mr Peter Davison NE(E) recently left the Forestry Commission after 23½ years loyal service. Peter has decided to try his hand at working his holding. In fact, he now owns several sheep, a far throw from his Roads Foreman Post at Dalby Engineers. Friends presented Peter with two Shepherd's Crooks and Mrs Davison received a bouquet.



Head Forester Jimmy Allan, Senior Forest Craftsman Jimmy Reid, Chief Forester Duncan Menzies, Forester Jim Bain, Forest District Manager, Arthur Cuthbert, Mrs Bain.

JIMMY HAS HIS SONG OF PRAISE

JIM BAIN, Forester at Banchory, retired after 36 years with FC. Originally from Orkney (Papa Westray), Jim spent most of his working life in E(S). The occasion was marked by a ceilidh in the Tor-Na-Coille Hotel, Banchory, where Jim was presented with a carriage clock and barometer from his friends and colleagues.



George Murray (left) gives golfing hints to Alex Cowan.

Alex swings into 'this is your life'

There were more than golfing stories to be swapped at the retirement presentation to **Alex Cowan** at HQ. The Senior Principal HQ Budgets Officer was reminded by George Murray, Commissioner Admin. and Fin., that their careers including war service, had followed closely parallel lines.

From a *This is Your Life*-style red book, Mr Murray pointed out that Alec joined Government service in 1940 as a temporary juvenile clerk and eight months later became a temporary male clerk. During the war, Alec was trained by the Royal Navy in telegraphy and radio maintenance and served with the Fleet Air Arm.

Alec joined the Commission in 1946 as CO W(S) and four years later was EO E(S) where he remained for nine years, moving to S(S) as HEO and after a brief spell in HQ London returned to S(S) where he became Principal (CEO), remaining there until 1976, when he became Principal HQ Industrial Personnel Officer (until 1981).

Mr Murray told Alec that, although he had been captain of HQ golf club, he would have to spend time in retirement improving his game if he was going to win trophies. Alex was presented with three woods and a putter and a cheque, which he plans to use to purchase a rocking chair.

Jimmy Allan, Head Forester Kirkhill, spoke of his happy association with Jim Bain spanning over 30 years from Glenbranter in the west to Durris in the east. One of the evening's highlights was Head Forester Bill Brown's rendering of his own composition "Jimmy" which left not a dry eye in the place.

In his retirement, Jim hopes to further the family interest in traditional Scottish fiddle music. His son Alex is one of Scotland's leading fiddlers, having won the Junior Golden Fiddle Award in 1982.

"JIMMY" (to the tune of "Maggie")

You're leaving us soon to retire, Jimmy,
And we are sad to see you go;
But I know you will never forget, Jimmy,
Those years when you helped the trees to grow.

The Pine and the Spruce and Larch, Jimmy,

You nursed them through their early days;

And now when you see them mature, Jimmy,

You know they've done well from your ways.

Many changes you've seen o'er the years, Jimmy,

And like us you've come through them well;

But the change that's affecting us now, Jimmy,
Only time, time alone will tell.

We wish you good health through the years, Jimmy,

And success whate'er you choose to do;

So with those few words I will end, Jimmy,

Good Luck and here's all the best to you.

William Brown
(Sydney Devine)

Emily takes a fond farewell

Mrs Emily Rachel Ward retired after many years in the NE(E). In fact, with her husband John, they managed to amass a total of 67 years service with the Commission. Emily worked for 42 years as a Clerk at Wykeham Forest. She was given an antique pendant, a cheque and flowers by her friends at Wykeham. She received a Long Service Certificate, presented by the Conservator, Mr J. A. Spencer.

Mr Kenneth Collinshaw NE(E) retired under the Job Release Scheme after almost 32 years. He was given a pair of binoculars by his friends and colleagues at Wykeham Forest and was also awarded a Long Service Certificate, presented by the Conservator.

With the closing of the Forest Offices at Chopwell and Slaley, **Mrs E. A. Brown** retired at Chopwell after 25 years service. It was Nancy's wish to retire without any fuss but the occasion was marked by a small gathering of forest and district staff. She was presented with a double row of pearls and a basket of flowers.

Tom Bassey, Area Civil Engineer from North East England, retired after 36 years service. He joined the Commission in 1947 after demob. Recruited as an Assistant Clerk of Works at Hamsterley, he progressed through Clerk of Works at Kielder to Area Civil Engineer at Bellingham and finally Area Civil Engineer at Northallerton looking after Durham Yorkshire Dales and Hambleton Districts.

He was active in union affairs and served on Branch Council of IPCS, representing civil engineering interests, and was on the National Whitley Council.

At a dinner at the Pickering District Office, he was presented with a cheque by Tom Murdock, CC Engineer and also a putter from his old workforce in Kielder.

A small gathering of Sherwood Forest District Staff was joined by retired District Officer John Osmaston and his wife Pat, to bid farewell to **Marian Ibbotson** at Catcliffe House. Marian was District Office Clerk at Bakewell for the past 10 years and her last day at work coincided with the closure of the Bakewell office. The new Forest District is now run from Sherwood.

Harry Hood joined the Commission in 1938. After war service he was transferred to Herodsfoot Forest in Cornwall but in 1953 he transferred again, for health reasons, to Rockingham where he stayed until his retirement.

The final 13 years were served as ganger and his local knowledge was invaluable. Head Forester Keith Wallis presented him with a Long Service Certificate, a stainless steel garden spade and a cheque from friends and colleagues.

Bob Chandler was presented with a wallet packed with £5 notes by Mick Dining, Assistant Conservator Harvesting & Marketing, at his retirement. Mr Dining thanked Bob for his long service to East England which began in August 1955 as an ex-school ganger at Waveney Forest. Bob moved on to Pychley then Bardney and after eight years at Aldewood, finished his career with early voluntary retirement at Rockingham.

About 80 friends and colleagues were at a buffet to say goodbye to **Harry Searle**, District Officer for Suffolk, Essex and Cambridge, for the past 20 years. John Kennedy, Commissioner Forest Management and Commission staff presented Mr Searle with a 24-inch side table made from traditional English oak by a local firm, and also a cheque. The Commissioner was joined by Major Keith Agnew (RAC member) on behalf of friends in the private sector when they expressed thanks to Harry for his loyal service to the Forestry Commission and woodland owners in East Anglia.

Harry joined the Commission in 1951 and served as District Officer in Lincoln, Thetford, Cambridge and Woodbridge.

Three members from North Scotland's North Area Civil Engineering units left recently.

Jimmy MacDonald from North Kessock was presented with a long service certificate and an engraved Caithness glass bowl. Jimmy started not long after the war, in the Munloch (Black Isle) saw-mill, became a bulldozer driver on road construction, and for the past 15 years has been engaged on road maintenance in Caithness, Sutherland and Easter Ross.

Roddy MacLennan from Scalpail, off Harris, was also presented with an engraved Caithness glass bowl. Roddy has worked all over the Highlands but particularly in Skye and Sutherland, opening up forests for harvesting. His work principally as a shotfirer and driller took him to the more remote and difficult areas of the North. Roddy has now hung up his drill steels and returned to his native island to his first love, fishing.

Billy MacKenzie received a piece of engraved Caithness glass to remind him of his time with the Commission.

All three received a copy of the latest lavishly illustrated Poucher book on Highland Hills and a copy of John Davis book on Scottish forestry.

Peter Cannon, Forest Craftsman at Banchory Section of Kincardine Forest District retired after 35 years. Peter started at the (then) Fetteresso Forest in 1947 and moved to Banchory in 1975. He helped to establish the large plantations at Fetteresso and Drumtochty and more recently was involved in restocking at Banchory.

Dick Jackson, who began his service as a District Officer in East (Scotland) in December 1951, retired while Forest District Manager of Tay Forest District. Apart from a three-year spell with Director (Scotland), Dick's service was in East (Scotland) and he was in charge at different times of districts in the northern and southern parts of the conservancy.

Dick was presented with an envelope full of notes. A piece of Caithness glass jewellery was given to Mrs Jackson.

Hamish (James Hector) MacDonald retired from Inverliever Forest, Argyll, after 46 years' service with FC and at Dalavich Village Hall was presented with a long service certificate by Conservator W(S) J. Atterson, and a wristwatch bought by workmates and the local community. Hamish worked in Fernoch, Inverinan and Inverliever.

Retirements



Mr R. G. Thomas retired after 50 years' service at Gwydyr. The Conservator presented Bob with his Long Service Certificate and to mark the occasion he planted an oak tree near the forest office. Head Forester Bill Jones presented a cheque from his colleagues.

More than 100 guests were at the Huntly Hotel, Aberdeen for Ian Grant's retirement after 30 years with the Commission. Director-General George Holmes presented Ian with a fishing rod and tackle, several exotic species of tree as reminders of his service with R & D Division, and a cheque. Ron Marnie, Buchan Forest District Manager, spoke on behalf of the Conservancy Staff and presented Ian with a framed picture of Bennachie. Ian and his wife Ianswythe have already settled into their retirement home at Almondbank, Perthshire, where there is no lack of fishing.

Don Jones, Head Forester at Brecon Forest District, retired on 9 March 1984 after 32 years service with the Commission. He joined the Commission as a forest worker at Margam in 1952, attended the Gwydyr FTS from 1953 to 1955, returned to Margam for a further 14 years. He moved to Ebbw on promotion to Head Forester in 1969 and had charge of Talybont from 1974.

At a ceremony at the Forest District Office, David Evans presented Don with a holdall on behalf of colleagues.

John (Jock) Bell came late to forestry after half his working life time in arable farming, cultivating the rich soil of Strathearn. In the small St Fillan's unit, he found the transition from family farm fairly easy before its amalgamation to the older larger Strathgry.

He was versatile enough to train, when 54, on the powersaw.

Colin Ferguson (ganger) retired from Achaglachgach Forest after serving nearly 30 years. Although he was of slight stature, he was looked on as a "giant" by the squad and the Foresters with whom he served. He was a good man to have around, reliable and efficient in all he undertook and his retirement leaves a gap that will be difficult to fill.

At a gathering of the Forest staff, at his home, Colin was presented with a music centre. He will now be able to devote his time to his many hobbies, among which photography and natural history and antiques are the foremost.

Head Forester W. H. Jones retired after 44 years. Bill spent the whole of his career in North Wales in Hafren, Ceri, Dyfi, Myherin (Ystwyth) and for the past 12 years at Gwydyr. At an informal lunch Chief Forester Bill Taylor presented a cheque from his friends and colleagues.

For the past 15 years, Head Forester Alan Freeth has been responsible for private woodlands in West Sussex, one of the most densely wooded counties of England. It was appropriate therefore that many of those attending his retirement party were from the private sector, including agents and head foresters. On behalf of them and Alan's Forestry Commission colleagues, who were also attending, FDM Rod Stern presented him with a stainless steel spade and a mechanical planer. Alan started in the Isle of Wight, studied at both Dean and Benmore FT Schools, had a spell in the Royal Navy, and served in the New Forest and Hursley Forest before going to Southwater Forest, where he remained for the rest of his career, continuing to live there when he transferred to Private Woodlands. He and his wife Jessie will continue to live in their bungalow in Southwater.

Miss Margaret McIntyre retired after 19 years as clerk in the West Galloway District Office, Newton Stewart, although her first association with the Commission was as a Forest Clerk at Kirroghtree Forest. Margaret was entertained to a farewell lunch by a small party of staff and colleagues and later District Officer, Jim Hamilton, presented her with a carriage clock. She set off two days later, with everyone's good wishes, for a month in Spain.

Mrs Margaret Gebbie retired after 31½ years service as a forest clerk with the Commission, mainly at Elibank and Traquair Forest and more recently at Glentress.

Due appreciation of her loyal, efficient and dedicated service over the years was paid by both Chief Forester Dave Solway and retired Tweed Valley District Officer Norman Brown in making presentations of a cheque and a Long Service Certificate.

Forester P. Butterworth retired after 35 years service, the past 30 being spent at Radnor. A very large and jovial gathering was held at Norton Mannor, Presteigne, to bid farewell to Paul. He and his wife were presented with a framed picture and winemaking kit.

Mr F. A. Williams, Ganger on Tarenig Beat of Ystwyth Forest, retired after 32 years service — all at Tarenig. Fred was presented with his Long Service Certificate by Forest Officer J. W. Henderson at a quiet ceremony attended by his fellow workmen.

IT'S BACK TO WARK FOR TOM

Tom Johnstone, Chief Forester at Wark Forest, retired after 37 years service, nearly all of it in North-east England. A farewell get-together was held at Stonehaugh Social Club in the heart of Wark Forest, where Tom had been Chief Forester for more than 12 years. He was presented with a cheque from his many friends and colleagues and the men of Wark Forest presented Tom with their own gift — a tape recorder.

No one who knows Tom would have expected his

retirement to be a quiet affair, but few could have been prepared for Tom's reply to his presentation. For 15 minutes he recounted experiences and jokes in the Geordie style, many of which left the audience helpless with laughter.

Perhaps the last laugh was that Tom was, in a sense, not retiring — for he has been taken on by Field Surveys as an assistant in a survey of part of the new Kielder Forest District. The area he will be surveying used to be . . . Wark Forest!

Forest Craftsman John M. Jones retired after 34 years service at Ystwyth forest. His colleagues wished him farewell at a party held in the church hall where he was presented with a watch. Forest Officer J. W. Henderson also handed John his Long Service Certificate.

Mr E. Elvin Thomas retired recently from Dyfi Forest after 37 years. His leaving was marked by a quiet dinner at the Wynnstay Hotel, Machynlleth. He was presented with his Long Service Certificate by Chief Forester J. B. Davenport.

Mr W. Dan Davies retired after 47 years at Gwydyr. He was presented with his Long Service Certificate and collection from his friends and colleagues at his home.

Mr Clifford Berry NE(E) retired under the Job Release Scheme after nearly 31 years service, most of which was spent at Dalby Engineers. Cliff will be missed by his many friends and colleagues, who gave him an engraved tankard. He also received a Long Service Certificate.

Head Forester Hugh Gwynant Jones retired after 38 years with the Commission, all of which were served in the North Wales Conservancy. Hugh has not been well for some time but happily was able to travel from his retirement home in Anglesey to the Aeron Forest Office where the Conservator presented him with a cheque from his colleagues.

Cyril Staines, who was a Ganger at Challock Forest, retired because of ill health. He joined the Commission in September 1975 and was involved in all aspects of forest work.

Three men retired at Bedgebury Forest in one week — and their total service amounted to 110 years.

Arthur Puxty, Arthur Haynes and Bill Hickmott all joined the Commission within months of one another in 1947. Between them it is estimated that they planted over 2 million trees and felled over 35,000 cubic metres of timber. Together these three and their like were responsible for establishing many of the post-war plantations in Kent and East Sussex which are now yielding such rich rewards.

G. O. Williams, South Wales Conservancy Land Agent, has retired after almost 35 years service all of which, except for a spell in North Wales in 1964/65 as Acting Conservancy Land Agent, had been in South Wales. "GO" transferred to the Commission from the Ministry of Works in August 1949, was promoted to Dist. Officer (Grade I) in 1956 and became Conservancy Land Agent in 1970.

Roy Davies, Administration and Finance Officer, who served with "GO" in the Estates Branch for many years, related many humorous incidents and recalled some of the notable characters of their early days together, at a farewell party.

"GO" received a cheque from his colleagues.

Bob Latter, Forest Craftsman at Arundel, retired after 38 years. He joined in 1947 in Kent as a Mobile Bulldozer Operator and moved to Slindon, as it then was, in 1955. As well as general forestry work, Bob handled most of the tractor driving on the unit.

At a retirement party, Bob was presented with a pocket watch, gardening manual and DIY book.

Chief Forester W. E. (Sandy) Powell, Forest District Manager, Llanwynno, retired after more than 36 years. He joined the Commission as a forest worker at Kershope, Cumbria, in 1947. After the Gwydyr Forest Training School, he spent the rest of his career in South Wales, the first nine at Rheola and then on to St Gwynno in 1960 where he stayed for the remaining 24 years as Forester, Head Forester, Chief Forester and, latterly, as Forest District Manager.

Many colleagues and friends gathered at the farewell party held at Treforest Inn, Treforest.

Sandy received a cheque from his colleagues. His wife, Nora, and daughter, Margeurite, were presented with bouquets.

Forest Craftsman R. O. Morris retired after 37 years service in Gwydyr forest. Chief Forester Bill Taylor and Head Forester Bill Jones visited Dick at his home to present him with his Long Service Certificate and a cheque from his friends and colleagues.

Obituaries

Conservator Charles Begley OBE died only a few weeks before his retirement.

After war service in the Fleet Air Arm, he joined the Commission as a District Officer at Carlisle in 1950, moving to London in 1954, and in 1960 he took charge of the Surrey District.

Between 1965 and 1970 he was Education and Training Officer, being responsible for developing training systems at a time of major expansion in the forestry industry.

Ian Skinner writes: "Charles Begley was not only a professional forester of repute and a very able administrator, but also a very warm human being. He will be remembered for his sound judgement, his loyalty and regard for all his staff, his flashes of humour even in times of crisis and for his very real sense of fun on off-duty occasions."

It is distressing to write that Mrs Patricia Begley did not long survive her husband and all sympathies go to their sons Michael and Patrick.

After a short illness, John Arundel, Ganger at Reiddals Forest District, died, aged 58.

John Armstrong, Forest Craftsman at Blengdale Forest until his retirement three years ago, has died.

Angus Sinclair died at the age of 73. He started at Glenbranter Forest soon after the estate was purchased from Sir Harry Lauder and was involved in the early planting, much of which he later helped to harvest. He joined the "Argylls" in 1939 and suffered a serious leg injury in France in 1940. He spent nine months in hospital and after the war obtained a driving job in Glasgow for seven years but his leg never fully recovered.

He returned to Glenbranter in 1952 and was the Ganger in charge of horses before becoming lorry driver in 1965 and finally forest tractorman in 1971. He retired in 1978 after nearly 40 years with the FC, the last two part-time.

Former Chief Forester at Glenlivet Forest from 1972 until retirement in 1981, Donald McGregor died at his Tomintoul home. His main service was at Strathgry in W(S) being involved in the holiday village there, until he transferred to E(S) on recreational projects. He was a man of many talents including painting, drawing, music and poetry. Although a sight defect prevented him from qualifying as a Fleet Air Arm pilot on the war, his love of aircraft continued and he gained his private pilot's licence a year before he retired.

It was with regret that the staff of Challock office heard of the death of Mr Frederick Allen, aged 66. Fred, a craftsman, joined the Forestry Commission in 1954, a disabled ex-serviceman after being interred in a POW camp in Germany. He left the Commission in 1979 on Job Release but continued working around his home village of Mersham.

HUGH McMILLAN, MBE, former head forester, Kirroghtree Forest, S(S), died at a nursing home at York, aged 85. He was awarded the MBE in 1963 when he retired after 40 years' service with the Commission. In his 27 years at Kirroghtrees, he developed the nursery there from one acre to 58 acres, and the forest from 600 acres to 6500 acres.

We record the death at the age of 76 of William Fairbairn, MBE. From Beaulieu FTS, he served at various forests before moving to Devilla in 1944 where he gained a reputation as a nursery forester. He was an active secretary of the Foresters Section of the SCU. He was awarded the MBE in 1968, a year before retiring.

Danny Urquhart will be best known for his time at the Bin Forest (now part of Huntly) as forester i/c where he served for many long years until his retirement early in 1970. He was an energetic and conscientious officer who was involved in the large afforestation programmes of his day. Our sympathies are extended to his widow and family.

Former District Officer J. A. M. Kennedy was District Officer Moray District for a long time until his retirement in the early 1960s. He was well known in his area and could rightly be described as something of a "character." Jimmy was brusque and outspoken but he was also a kindly man when the occasion called for this quality. A bachelor, he retired to live in Edinburgh and recently died at the age of 83.

Victor Masson saw service at the old-style Durris, Blackcraig, Kemnay and Craigellachie Forests. He became well known in the Conservancy during a spell as Training Forester towards the end of his service. Unfortunately, Victor did not enjoy the best of health before he left the Commission but was happily settled in Rothies, Morayshire, until he died suddenly on February 12.

Albert William Smith, a ganger at Aldewood Forest E(E) who retired in November 1979, has died.

We learn of the sudden death of Jim Bark at the age of 57. Jim was Senior Ranger II and had worked at Sherwood for almost 31 years. His death came only 13 months after the death of his wife and at first it was thought their children — Darren (18), Trudy (15), Heather (10) and Anthony (8) would have to be placed in care. However Darren decided to give up his apprenticeship to look after the younger members of the family and avoid any break-up.

Ex-Forest Clerk Allan Will, who served with Roads Branch at Drumtochty from 1947 until 1953, and then became forest clerk at Drumtochty Forest (laterally re-named Mearns Forest) from 1953 until medical retirement in 1975, died aged 72.

James Steele, formerly of Thornwaite Engineering Branch, died at the age of 63.

All who knew her will be sorry to hear of the death of Mrs Elizabeth Pettigrew. Betty was a draughtswoman at Edinburgh from 1949 until her retirement in 1976. She was renowned for her tremendous sense of humour, her artistic ability and her readiness to tackle any job.

Reg Withers-Lancashire, many people both within and outside the Forestry Commission have lost a good friend with the sad death in May of Reg Withers-Lancashire at the age of 70.

With his wife Joan, Reg joined as a campsite warden at Longbeech in the New Forest in 1974, later moving to Ashurst and Setthorns before retiring. Many thousands of campers have cause to remember with gratitude and affection Reg's friendly welcome. Many came to the funeral.

Reg's colleagues were represented by Recreation and Range Officer Roy Hughes, Head Forester Martin Fletcher and a large number of New Forest staff both past and present.

All our sympathy goes to Joan, who is now warden at Setthorns, and to their son Ian and daughter-in-law Lynne, wardens at Longbeech.

On yer bikes . . .

10-mile trail is a first

On your bikes! That was the order of the day when Scotland's first forest cycle trail was opened at Achray Forest, Aberfoyle.

The ten-mile trail through the forest provides some steep climbs and is routed through some of the most scenic parts of the Trossachs.

When Conservator W(S) Jim Atterson announced that a bike had been his mode of transport as a young forester, District Officer Brian Roebuck and Head Forester Ian Reid also admitted that they were once pedal power foresters.

So Sandy Gilchrist, one of Scotland's



foremost cycling stars, who performed the opening ceremony, challenged them to get back in the saddle.

Mr Atterson announced that the Achray trail could lead to new policies providing more access to forest roads for cyclists.

● In our picture: Among the cycling enthusiasts are front row, from right, Ian Reid, Jim Atterson, Brian Roebuck.

Wilderness — and it's by design!

The Forestry Commission has announced major developments in nature conservation in the 10,000 hectares Forest of Dean.

At a ceremony at the Speech House an agreement was signed over the future of Lady Park Wood, an internationally important ecological reserve since 1940 containing oaks more than 200 years old and parts of which have been untouched since the turn of the century.

Over 110 acres have now become a National Nature Reserve to be managed by the Forestry Commission in conjunction with the Nature Conservancy Council. Mr John Thompson, NCC Regional Officer for West Midlands, said: "This represents the culmination of years of efforts to find a lasting way of formalising this unique experiment. Nowhere else in Britain has a woodland of such size and intrinsic importance been deliberately encouraged to revert to wilderness."

PEREGRINE FALCONS

On the same day it was announced that the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds' Nagshead Reserve in Forest of Dean, which attracts thousands of ornithologists, is being extended with the FC to include another 165 hectares.

This year has seen the return of Peregrine falcons at Symonds Yat in another part of the forest and chicks were hatched. It was the first hatching of these falcons for 30 years in the Forest of Dean.

Visitors were also shown the successful reclamation and planting of a former opencast coal mine. The reclamation work incorporates a new feature, the Woorgreen Wetland, which has attracted a wide variety of wildlife including at least 25 species of dragonfly.

Mr John Fletcher, Conservator SW(E) said: "These recent developments in conservation are excellent examples of what can be achieved under the dynamic policies we are following in Dean which remains a working, productive forest."

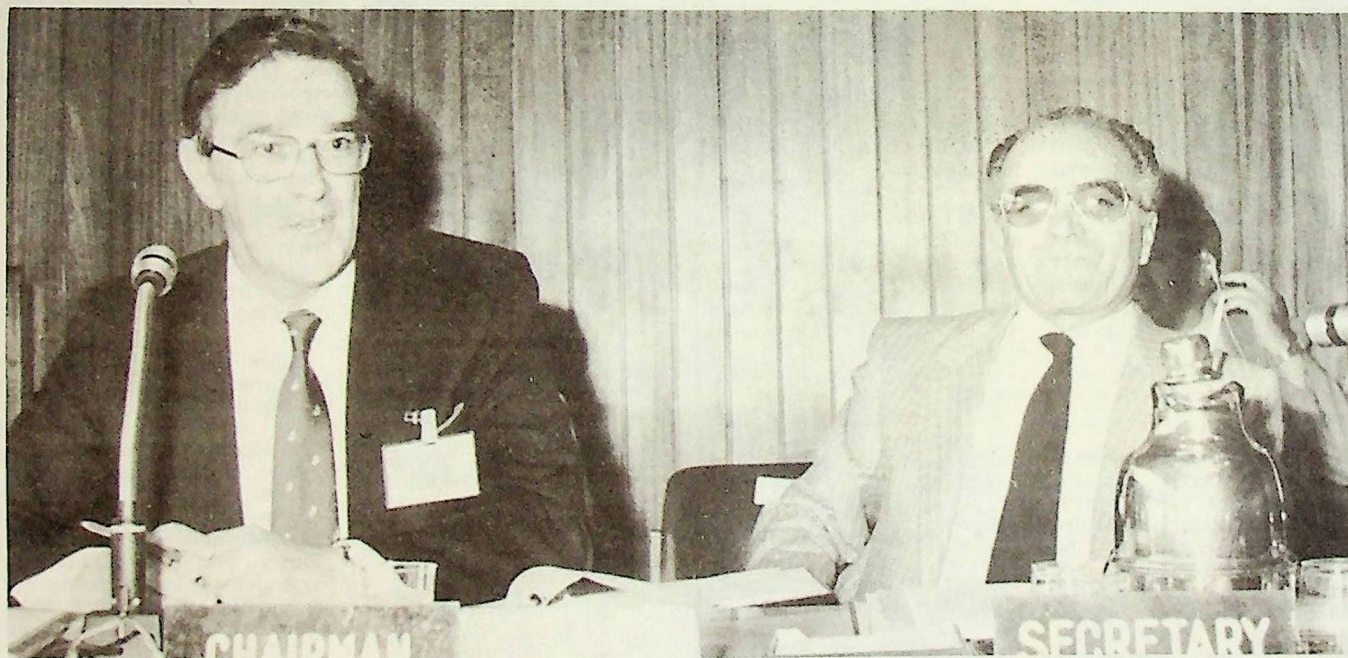
TEN REDUNDANT

It will be of melancholy interest to those who were associated in the past with the Yorkshire Forests of Jervaulx, Fountains and Knaresborough to hear that with disposal decreed for their final amalgamation as Dales Forest the remaining craftsmen became redundant on 30 March.

The 10 men concerned had a

combined service of 258 years and three narrowly emerged ahead of the others with 30 or more years' service. To these the Conservator Mr J. A. Spencer presented Long Service Awards.

They were Arthur Dickinson (32 years), Dennis Nicholson (31 years), Bob Longbottom (30 years). Well done, and thanks to all of you.



FORESTRY BEYOND THE YEAR 2000

"Forestry beyond 2000" was the theme of the biennial meeting of the FAO's World Committee on Forestry in Rome in May at which Forestry Commission Director General Mr George Holmes was elected

chairman for 1984-86.

The meeting, attended by delegates from 81 countries, heard that the forestry sector had been severely hit by the recent world crisis of high inflation and unemployment with the value of inter-

national trade in forest products dropping from 55.7 billion dollars in 1980 to 46.7 billion dollars in 1982.

A recently completed assessment of forest resources of tropical countries indicated an annual reduction of 11 million hectares, mainly through conversion to agricultural use. Land capability surveys and intensification of agriculture must be encouraged to take some of the pressure off the forest.

In temperate regions slow

rates of population growth and increasing emphasis on technically advanced products, together with reduced waste and improved recycling methods means the rate of increase in demand for wood raw materials could level off in many of these countries but the demand for recreation is likely to expand, and the greater public and political values attributed to environmental outputs would influence decisions on forest policy to an increasing extent.

MRS MARGARET ELLIOT, Forest Clerk Grade 1, retired after 18 years at Newcastleton. She plans to spend more time helping her husband Harry in his role as Secretary to the Elliot Clan Society through which she has become known to ex-patriot

Scots all over the world. She was presented with a silver Elliot Clan pendant, a silver rose holder and leather handbag and Friday, 13th superstition was banished from the social evening which developed into a lively ceilidh.