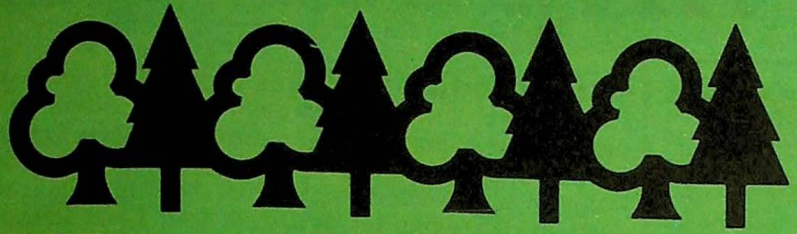


SLASHER



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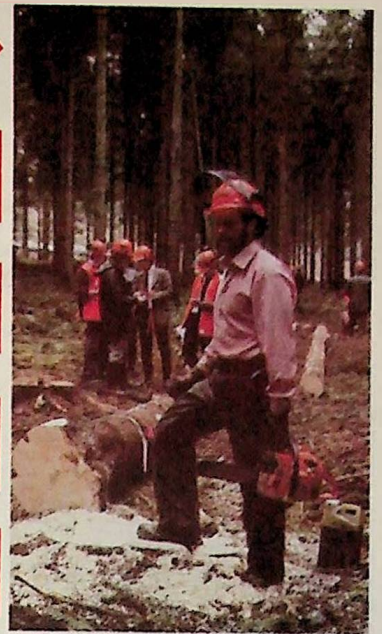
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Finns set sights on Scotland

A LEADING Finnish forest products company is investigating the feasibility of investing in an integrated pulp and paper mill in Scotland.

Kaukas were first approached two years ago by the Scottish Forest Products Development Group, of which the Forestry Commission is a member, as part of a general promotional campaign designed to attract wood using industries to Scotland to utilise the increasing supplies of wood becoming available in the future.

"It is good to see that Kaukas have responded and are taking their

interest further," said a Commission spokesman.

The feasibility study involves an investment in a lightweight coated paper mill integrated to a pressure groundwood pulp mill which would use about 200,000 cubic metres of spruce small round wood a year. Additional imported chemical pulp would be used.

The company are looking at a number of sites in Scotland and Europe and it is understood that a decision to proceed with the full feasibility study will be made soon. This project has been identified as being particularly suitable for this country in a number of strategic development studies

conducted for the Forestry Commission.

If the Kaukas project goes ahead the investment is likely to be around £150m and the integrated plant would employ some 500 people with a similar number of jobs in the timber service industries.

The move would be the second recent major investment by Finnish timber interests in Britain. United Paper Mills recently started production at their £135m pulp and paper mill at Shotton, North Wales. Timber producers in North Scotland have also benefited by the establishment of the Highland Forest Products construction board plant at Dalcross, Inverness, which went into production this summer.

Special study of our beech trees

COMMISSION plant pathologists have been keeping special watch over the health of Britain's beech woodlands this year and as yet the study has revealed no *prima facie* evidence for pollution damage.

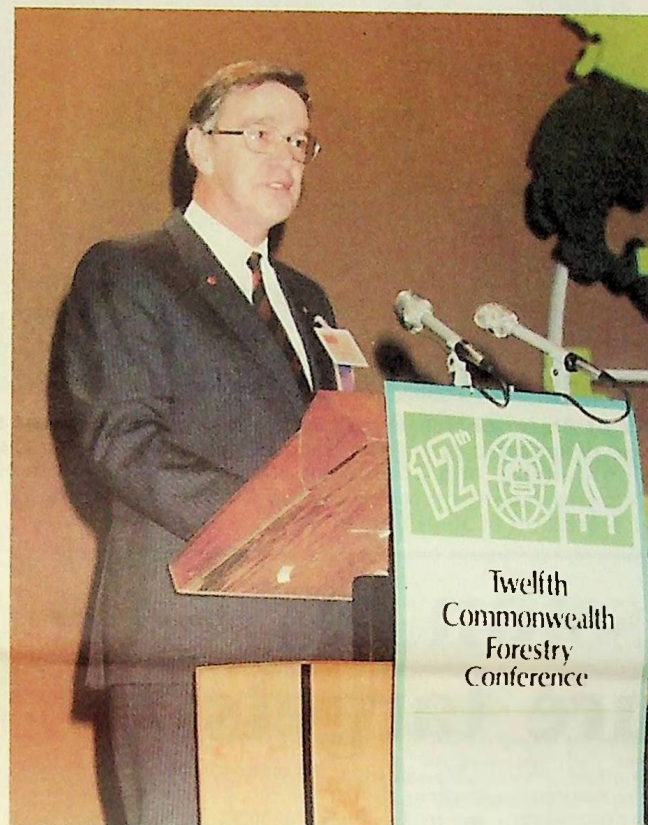
"Firm conclusions must await an analysis of leaf samples that have been collected and further investigations of the growth patterns of beech on different types of sites," said Dr David Lonsdale, who has been conducting research on disorders of beech since the mid-seventies.

His study this year covers the whole of Britain, from North East Scotland to South England and from West Wales to East Anglia.

"Beech certainly has its problems," said Dr Lonsdale. "Growth was still being affected long after the disastrous drought of 1975/76 and the hot dry summers of 1983 and 1984 also caused damage in some areas.

"In addition to the legacy of the past, beech foliage this year has suffered heavily from the feeding and tunnelling activities of an insect, the leaf miner, and has been further damaged by a fungus disease that is favoured by wet summers. Moreover, there was in August an unusual and quite widespread yellowing and bronzing of the leaves. We seem to be witnessing an exceptionally early autumn.

"In general, however, most forest beech, at least that below 120 years of age, is in reasonably good, and in some cases very good health. One can see a lot more ill-health among older trees in some areas, both within the forest and without, but this is expected since such trees often have chronic root problems which result in dieback and thinness in the crown, especially in combination with the effects of drought in past years."



Warning sounds about world forests

AFTER two weeks of deliberation, close to 200 delegates from 30 countries attending the Twelfth Commonwealth Forestry Conference in Victoria, BC Canada, have concluded that the depletion of forest resources in many parts of the world is a threat to the well-being, and often the survival, of large parts of the world's population.

The Food and Agricultural Organisation, (FAO), of the United Nations estimates that tropical forest is being cleared at some 11 million hectares each year and as much as 40 per cent may have been lost in the last 25 years. In Canada in 1983, it was estimated that coniferous forest lost to non-renewal, fire, pests and disease was about one million hectares per year. Between 1980 and 2025, the total number of people on earth is expected to double from 4.4 billion to 8.5 billion.

"It is essential that forests are managed more wisely and in a more integrated fashion, under policies that recognise the multiple benefits that forests can provide," said George Holmes, Director General of Britain's Forestry Commission, Chairman of the Standing Committee on Commonwealth Forestry, as he addressed the final meeting of the delegates. Forest renewal has been a dominant theme throughout the Conference. A vital question facing all the nations is how to conserve, and, where possible, renew the forest resource in a sustainable manner.

"For too long we have capitalised on, and drawn income from, the forest with inadequate re-investment," said Mr Holmes. "The concept of responsible stewardship of the forest resource is a key one."

Recommendations

Vigorous steps be taken immediately to raise the level of public awareness and broad spectrum of forestry, to encourage rational debate on management issues.

Forest policies be based on multiple-use principles with the appropriate balance of environmental and commercial objectives.

There is an urgent need for new initiatives to control the rapid rate of forest depletion and to improve the standard of regeneration after harvest.

There is a need to promote integrated rural development plans in tropical and sub-tropical countries to relieve pressures on natural forests.

In view of the crisis of forest and land degradation in many developing countries, governments should intensify current action programmes, and, in doing so, take as a guideline the doubling of international assistance called for by the FAO and World Resources Institute.

Forestry agencies actively promote the role of forestry as integral part of rural development, and in particular, to address the fuelwood crisis in developing countries.

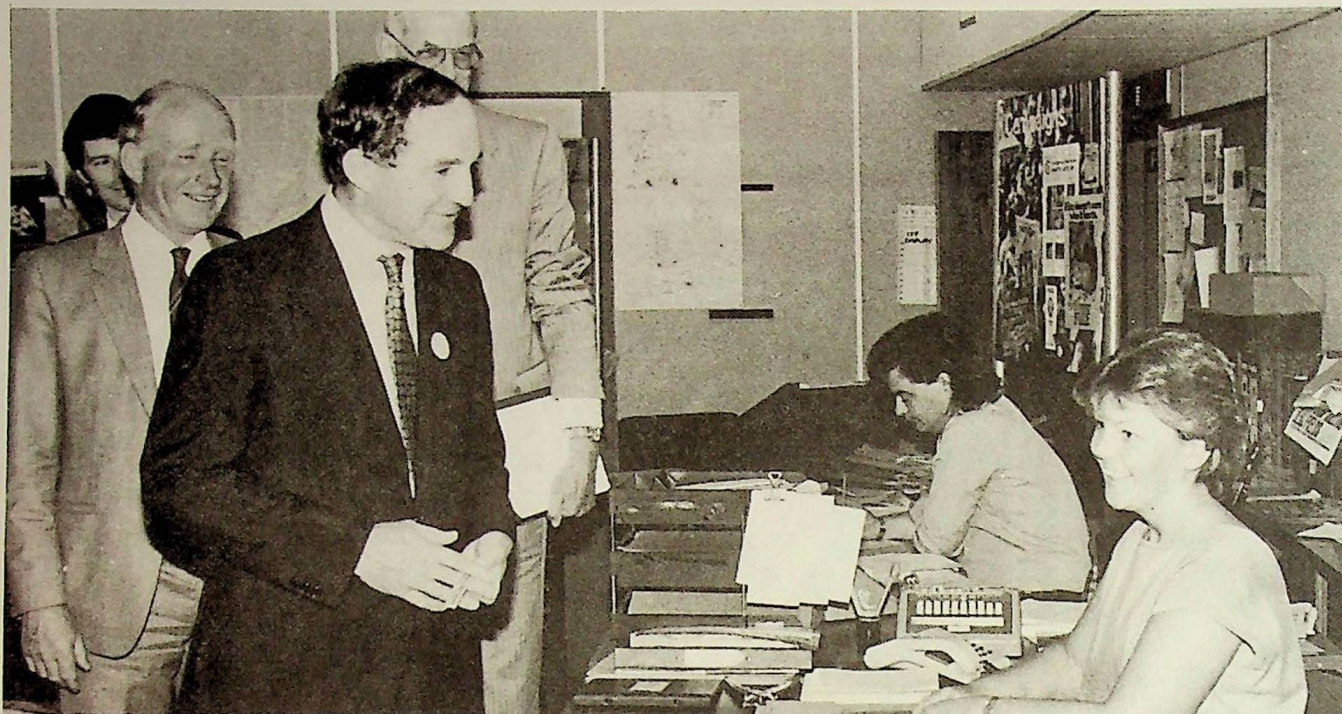
Existing training programmes be reviewed and that investments are made, to ensure an adequate number of professionals, technicians and forest workers are trained and that there are adequate career paths developed.

Priorities for research should take account of practical relevance and prospects for applications to ensure the most effective use of available funds.

Stumpage and wood pricing policies be reformed with the aim of increasing financial resources for forest renewal.

**Younger
pops in
for a
chat**

Forestry research helps cut Britain's import bill



SECRETARY of State for Scotland, George Younger, on a visit to FC headquarters, dropped in to Information Division along with Chairman, Sir David Montgomery, and Commissioner Derek Rutherford. He is pictured talking to recent recruit Suzanne Meikle (CA) while Drew Walker (EO) works on at planning foreign visits.

TECHNOLOGY developed by the Forestry Commission in the afforestation of infertile and unproductive upland areas has been one of the outstanding contributions of research and experimentation to modern forestry practice both in Britain and overseas, according to Mr David Seal, Chief Research Officer at the Forestry Commission Northern Research Station, Roslin, Midlothian.

At the BA conference, Mr Seal said: "Creating forests in poor soils on Britain's uplands, from new species and by novel methods, is now beginning to reduce our massive £3 billion plus bill for importing wood and wood products."

"While exporting countries rely mainly on existing forests and traditional tree species we in Britain have had to create productive forests on poor soils and this we have achieved by imaginative and vigorous research and prompt translation of research into practice."

PRODUCTIVITY

Techniques evolved by forestry research workers had helped extend the forest area in Britain to two million hectares, mainly by establishing exotic conifers on poor upland sites and the productivity of that area is now being reflected in rapidly rising sawlog production which averaged 1.6 million cubic metres in 1980, will reach 2.8 million cubic metres in 1990 and approach seven million cubic metres by 2025.

Among the recent successes attained by research workers are biological controls of pests such as the Great Spruce Bark Beetle and Pine Sawfly, and also a common fungal disease which causes stem rotting in conifers.

Mr Seal said: "Forest research contributes to practice by exploring possibilities and solving known problems with the overall purpose of securing the maximum return for the investment in forestry, whether by the nation or by the private investor. The investment objectives become, in turn, objectives of research. In the period of upland afforestation from 1919 until after the 1939-45 war, the main objective was to create a reserve of standing timber against national

Work on poor soils a winner

emergency. This was succeeded by economic objectives, especially that of replacing some of the massive imports of wood and wood-products by home-produced wood.

"This remains the central objective, but demands on the forests for additional benefits have rapidly grown in recent years."

LANDSCAPE

"Upland forests are increasingly required to provide reservoirs of wildlife and places of public recreation and to enhance the landscape, and foresters look to research to explore possibilities and solve problems in these activities also. Research in public preferences has been useful in locating and designing forest camp and picnic sites, holiday chalets and forest walks."

"Wildlife research has so far concentrated largely on monitoring changes resulting from afforestation, both in the encouragement of some plants and animals and the displacement of others, but there are clearly widening opportunities for increasing wildlife diversity through future research and management in upland forests."

"There is now active research into agro-forestry in Britain along lines similar to those in New Zealand but adapted to British needs and circumstances."

Commission meeting leisure targets

BRITAIN'S woodlands are playing a major role in meeting the growing demand for recreational facilities in the countryside and will be expected to absorb even more people seeking ways of utilising leisure time, according to Richard Toleman of the Forestry Commission.

Mr Toleman (Private Forestry and Environment Officer, Forestry Commission, Mid-Scotland Conservancy), speaking at the annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science in Glasgow, said: "A great many people are spending much of their leisure time in the countryside. The ability of the forests to absorb large numbers of people engaged in a considerable range of recreational activities, without detriment to the landscape, is widely appreciated by both the public and the planners, especially in respect of woodlands close to holiday centres and urban areas."

He said that the Forestry Commission, while pursuing its main objective of wood production, designed its forests to blend with the landscape as far as possible and to provide informal recreation facilities in harmony with the forest environment and wildlife conservation.

"The Forestry Commission is in a unique position to meet the strong demand for recreational facilities in the countryside," he said.

Provision for day visitors included car parks, picnic sites, viewpoints, forest walks and information centres. The Commission also operates 32 camping and caravan sites (with another 40 sites set aside for youth camping) and owns 194 forest cabins and holiday homes. Special facilities include fishing, shooting, riding, orienteering, boating and rallying.

On target

A .22 rifle shooting competition was held between N(E) Conservancy Office and North York Moors Forest District. The venue was a local rifle club where two teams of 15 people each competed for the "Forestry Commission Yorkshire Challenge Shield." The targets, which contrary to popular belief were not the opposing team, were set at a distance of 25 yards ... 25 yards has never seemed so far!

North York Moors won by 1080 points to 994. The highest individual scores were:—

LADIES: 1 Miss C. R. Tracey (NYM) 79, 2 Miss E. Stopani (York) 78, 3 Miss J. S. Wright (York) 77.

MEN: 1 Mr C. R. Griffin (NYM) 86, 2 Mr J. MacKenzie (NYM) 84, 3 Mr K. Dacker (York) 83.

Here's how to pick up a super camera

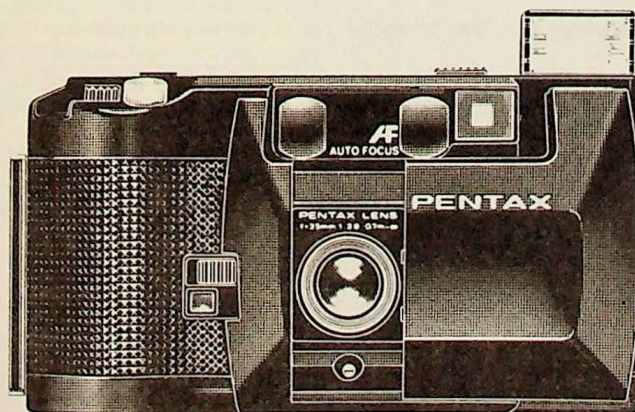
AS PART of its campaign to increase public awareness that 1985 is "International Year of the Forest," the Forestry Commission has combined with "Amateur Photographer" magazine and Pentax in a special forest photographic competition with prizes worth more than £2000.

And "AP" and Pentax have agreed to sponsor a special section for readers of "Slasher" — current and retired employees of the Commission. The prize — a super Pentax Auto-Focus Camera.

Backing for the Forests in Focus Competition has come from David Bellamy who said:

"Trees are of key importance to all our environments. Properly planned and managed forests are a vital resource for the future of ourselves and our country's abundant wildlife. For the photographer, forests are a wonderland of opportunity."

We want you to show us your recent images of forests or woodlands that you have visited in Britain. We want to see all aspects of the wildlife which can be found in and around some



of Britain's picturesque forest areas — the animals, birds and plants — as well as forest scenes. All photographs must have been taken in 1985.

The competition is open to 35mm transparencies only, and a set of three make up an entry. They will be judged as a portfolio and not as individual pictures. You can cover one aspect of forest life in your set, or a selection — it's up to you. But remember that as your photographs are being judged as a set, they should complement each other and hold together as a portfolio.

The competition closes on November 25 and no entries will be accepted after that date.

RULES OF ENTRY

1. This competition is open to Forestry Commission employees and retired employees who are bona fide amateur photographers only, ie. those who do not make their living as a photographer.

2. All entries must reflect the theme "Forests in Focus" and must have been taken in Britain between January 1, 1985, and the closing date of this competition.

3. An entry must be made up of three 35mm slides, which will be judged as a set. Do not send glass-mounted slides.

4. Copyright of all entries remains the property of the photographer. AP/The Forestry Commission and Pentax reserve the right to publish any prize-winning entry free of charge. If any non-prize-winning material is

used, a standard reproduction fee will be paid.

5. Material will be returned only if accompanied by a stamped addressed envelope. Proof of postage will not be accepted as proof of receipt. If entrants are thinking of submitting original material, it is probably better to send good quality duplicates. The organisers cannot be held responsible for loss or damage.

6. Prizes will be as stated and no cash alternatives will be offered.

7. Entries should be sent to The Editor "Slasher Section," Forest in Focus, Information Division, The Forestry Commission, 231 Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh EH12 7AT.

8. Closing date is November 25 and no entries will be accepted after this date.

ONE HUNDRED and ninety participants from 30 Commonwealth countries attended the Twelfth Commonwealth Forestry Conference in Victoria, British Columbia, in September 1985.

On the theme "Investment in Forestry — the Needs and Opportunities," the conference was mounted to discuss what needs to be done to secure the social, economic and environmental benefits of forestry by well-planned investment, using available land, labour, skills and scientific knowledge.

Dr John Spears, forestry advisor to the World Bank, judged that the climate for investment in the Third World was improving. "Millions of people in these countries whose lives are adversely affected by deforestation are doing something about it themselves. Increasing scarcity of fuel-wood, rising prices and growing awareness that forests and trees are fast disappearing, have triggered a spontaneous response."

The challenge for both national governments and the international aid community is, how most effectively to support these spontaneous initiatives and to help accelerate the process of developing country forest protection and reforestation. Conference supported an accelerated action programme being proposed by the World Resources Institute which would double the current level of forest conservation investment over the next five years.

CANADIAN FOREST LOSSES

THE Honourable Donald S. MacDonald, Chairman of the Royal Commission on the Economic Union and Development Prospects for Canada, asserted in his opening address that the history of forest exploitation in Canada had been more like that of mining than of careful husbandry of a renewable resource.

The Canadian Institute of Forestry has estimated that Canada is losing coniferous forest to non-renewal, fire and disease at the rate of about one million hectares per year. Worldwide, it was becoming clear that the increasing inaccessibility of natural wood supplies and environmental pressures would lead to a shortage of economically available industrial wood and that increasingly there would be an advantage to intensively managed man-made and natural forests well-sited in relation to processing capacity and end markets.

The multiple-use concept was seen as of growing importance. Foresters must keep in touch with the changing aspirations of society and be ready to manage the forest resource for whatever objective society dictates. Country reports indicate the growing environmental pressures across the Commonwealth. Most Commonwealth countries have reviewed their forest policy or logging regulations over the past five years because of growing pressures from environmental interests and growing awareness of the depletion of indigenous resources.

HIGH-TECH PLANNING

DELEGATES were shown exciting developments at the planning and inventory branch of the provincial government of British Columbia. Inventory and planning systems have been radically overhauled since 1978 in a £1.5 million computer-assisted mapping and planning system. So far, about half the forest landbase of 56 million hectares has been digitised, and the latest innovation is the linking of the system with satellite imagery to produce rapid information on changes, for example logging, fire damage, etc. This

THE FUTURE AND ITS PRIORITIES

uses the US land satellite which passes over British Columbia every 16 days.

Delegates agreed that major changes in the needs and opportunities in the forestry sector necessitate reviews of policy in research, education and training. The common heritage of many Commonwealth countries provides a basis for review and planning, assisted where necessary by bilateral aid. Co-ordination of these activities could lead to more effective technical co-operation between Commonwealth countries, making better use of resources and perhaps acting as a catalyst to broader international co-ordination.

Conference made the following recommendations to Commonwealth governments:

● PUBLIC AWARENESS

That vigorous steps be taken immediately to raise the level of public awareness and comprehension of the broad spectrum of forestry to encourage well-informed and rational debate on forest management issues. Forest managers should ensure integration of timber production, environmental responsibilities and the varied needs of society. They should become involved in the process of land use planning and take full account of the social needs of the people they serve.

● THE ENVIRONMENT

That public awareness and the political significance of environmental issues, notably landscape, recreation and nature conservation are now major factors to be considered. If forestry policies are to reflect the changing needs and aspirations of society, they must be based on multiple-use principles with the appropriate balance of environmental and financial objectives. To achieve this requires employment of a wide range of disciplines and investment in improved communications and skills both in environmental and financial management.

● FOREST REGENERATION AND MANAGEMENT

That there is an urgent need for new initiatives to control the rapid rate of forest depletion in many countries and to improve the standard of regeneration and protection of forests after harvest.

The most urgent requirements are to:

- Reform stumpage and wood pricing policies with the aim of increasing financial resources for forest renewal;
- Require investors and users to meet specified forest management objectives in exchange for security of tenure.

● PRESSURE ON TROPICAL FORESTS

That pressure on natural forests in tropical and sub-tropical countries be relieved by promoting rural development plans including:—

- Establishment of new plantations to increase supplies of timber for industrial use, fuelwood and other purposes.
- More efficient and sustainable systems of agriculture including agro-forestry.

● Land degradation

That in view of the rapidly deteriorating condition of forests, soil and water resources and the widespread land degradation and desertification in many developing countries that current action programmes be expanded, and that the socio-economic and ecological consequences of failing to take urgent action be evaluated and publicised. The guidelines for increased investment should follow the FAO five-point action programme for tropical forests and the report of the World Resources Institute, which call for doubling of international assistance in the next five years.

● RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FUELWOOD

That forestry agencies actively promote the role of forestry as an integral part of rural development and convince their Governments to accord high priority to forestry projects including small enterprises and in particular to address the fuelwood crisis in developing countries.

● FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMIC ANALYSIS

That forest enterprises adopt and further develop appropriate management tools of a financial and economic nature, including methods of investment appraisal and accounting, that present a true and realistic picture of forestry investments.

● TRAINING NEEDS

That Governments, international aid agencies and forestry training institutions review their existing training programmes and invest as necessary to ensure that an adequate number of professionals, technicians and forest workers are trained and that there are satisfactory career paths developed. Special attention should be given to adapting the scope of training to the changing needs of forestry.

● RESEARCH

That to ensure the most effective use of available funds, priorities for research should take account of practical relevance and prospects for application. Particular attention should be paid to those activities where expanded investment is required, notably forest renewal and forestry in relation to agriculture and rural development, especially for dry lands.

● USE OF INFORMATION

That, in view of the widespread failure of land-use managers to make use of available scientific and technical information, they should review the extent of this failure and invest as necessary in approved information systems.

● HIGH TECHNOLOGY LAND-USE PLANNING

That forest administrations examine the use of satellite imagery and other remote sensing information and, subject to cost-effectiveness, consider using this in planning, mapping and monitoring.

● COMMONWEALTH CO-OPERATION

That Ministers responsible for forestry in Commonwealth countries should take appropriate action to support and strengthen co-operation in forestry, particularly relating to research, training and information exchange.

● COMMONWEALTH INSTITUTIONS

That the future of Commonwealth Forestry Conferences and of the activities of Commonwealth Institutions be reviewed and strengthened in the light of the changing needs of member countries.

ROGER'S PIPE DREAM COME TRUE

ROGER LARSEN, a former head of Conservation and Recreation Branch has embarked on his own Conservation Plan involving the reclamation of eight acres of rough pastureland, including one acre of woodland, at his retirement home at Glendarroch, Ardrishaig, Argyll.

Roger, who retired from his post as Assistant Conservator, East Scotland in January after 32 years with the Commission had hinted at plans for "the good life" at his farewell dinner in Aberdeen attended by friends and colleagues from all parts.

By an incredible stroke of luck Roger and his wife Shell have bought the house they first fell in love with when they rented it when he was District Officer, Lochgilphead, fifteen years ago!

Much needed to be done however and the Conservation proposals are far-reaching and varied including the drainage and re-seeding of pasture, the rehabilitation of the kitchen garden, repairing dykes and restoring buildings, a small poplar plantation in a bog, 20 larches in one of the fields and



200 Christmas trees in the paddock in front of the house.

In inimitable Larsen style he has pioneered new concepts in weeding and maintenance.

The two ponies graze the fields, two goats eat their way through the willow scrub and the Christmas tree plantation is most economically and

efficiently weeded by three geese! The geese don't eat the trees. (Work Study please note!).

Colleagues will be pleased to know that his retirement gift has been well spent on plants and shrubs which have played an important part in beautifying the garden.

Roger, one of the Commission's most respected and well-known figures worked in North, East and West Scotland conservancies as well as in Headquarters in Edinburgh and Basingstoke. He was awarded the Balfour-Browne Trophy for services to deer management in 1979.

Sika deer and the problem of expansion

Expert warns of threat to red deer

SIKA DEER were introduced to Great Britain from the Far East about 100 years ago and were subsequently translocated to many estates in England and Scotland. During the early part of this century many deer escaped and free-living populations were established. With the expansion of commercial forestry, ideal environments have been created, especially in upland areas, where Sika are increasing their range dramatically. The addition of a new deer species to our fauna has met with some favour from both naturalists and sportsmen, but as with many introduced species, problems have arisen. Sika deer are capable of inflicting severe damage to trees and bark-stripping has become a problem in north Scotland. Probably the most important aspect of the expansion of Sika deer in Great Britain, however, is the threat which it poses to the genetic conservation of our native Red deer. This threat has arisen through their increasing hybridisation with Red deer, which although



● A HYBRID RED AND SIKA HYND.

By PHILIP RATCLIFFE

recorded last century has been considered to be of only minor importance. The problems caused by expanding populations of Sika deer were the subject of a recent lecture to the British Association for the Advancement of Science by Philip Ratcliffe of the Wildlife Research Branch.

A population in the Lake District has hybridised to such an extent that it is now considered to be composed entirely of hybrid individuals, and similarly a population in Co. Wicklow, Ireland, is also composed entirely of hybrids.

Size difference between Red and Sika deer usually reduce the probabilities of the two species inter-breeding, but these do not prevent it completely. When either species is colonising new areas occupied by the other, it is usually the males which arrive first, perhaps up to ten years before females, and this

presents the danger. Sika to be found in areas without females of their own species and inter-breeding becomes more likely. Once the initial hybrid generation has been produced then the likelihood of further inter-breeding by the hybrids becomes much greater and rapid introgression can occur.

The increasing appearance of hybrids in populations throughout Scotland is a real cause for concern and it may be that many of our native Red deer populations are doomed to become hybrids.

Sika deer should be ruthlessly shot where they are colonising Reds only areas, but perhaps the only real solution to the problem is to create sanctuaries where forestry is restricted; particularly favourable places would be off-shore islands with only Red deer. It is currently permissible to translocate Sika deer anywhere in Britain and some restriction on the movement outwith their normal range would appear to be desirable.

Solution could be sanctuaries

● TREE SHOWING DAMAGE DONE BY SIKA DEER.



● RED STAGS GATHER AMONG THE ROCKS AND BRACKEN.



● A LIVELY SIKA STAG.



● THE MAGNIFICENT SIGHT OF A RED STAG.



● A SIKA STAG STEPS FROM THE TREES AND (below) A RED AND SIKA HYBRID FEMALE.



Yorkshire show display by FC

AT the 128th Great Yorkshire Show at Harrogate in July, Mr A. A. Speer, Conservator of the Forest, welcomed Mr Pegg, Secretary of the Ministry of Agriculture, to the Forestry Commission display area.

One of the unusual exhibits at the Commission's stand was a demonstration of foam fire-fighting equipment. Other exhibits included the Great Spruce Bark Beetle with information on other pests and diseases affecting Britain's trees.

Guided tours of Hookstone Wood by Forest Rangers again proved popular with the general public and school parties. Younger visitors particularly enjoyed the junior forestry quiz which had been organised to raise interest in the Year of the Forest, with prizes for all entrants.

The information and publications stand provided details about grant-aid, forestry problems and management and felling licences.

Open day was a success

As part of the International Year of the Forest, Aberdeenshire District Forest held an open day on Sunday, August 11th. Based on memories of Peter Head, B. Simons, "Down the Water" on the Clyde, five minutes at the David Marshall Lodge and three at Strathgry provided a choice of tours to different parts of the forest covering a range of interests.

Despite a soggy day, 200 to 250 people took a total of 22 buses and many of them were shouting for more and suggesting the Forestry Commission put this on a regular basis.

A Scottish touch was given at Strathgry by the excellent piping of Chief Forester J. McKinn's son.

At the end of the day queues of clients had to be turned away — a measure of the success of the event.

Royal green light

THE Queen has approved the re-appointment for additional terms of two part-time Forestry Commissioners. They are Mr John D. Pulluck and Mr Geoffrey D. Hutchison.

Mr Pulluck (58) is General Secretary of the Educational Institute of Scotland and a former Chairman of the General Council of the Scottish Trades Union Congress. He has been a Forestry Commissioner since 1978. Mr Hutchison (51) is Managing Director of Calders and Grandridge Ltd, timber merchants, at Boston, Lincolnshire.

He was the first Chairman of the Timber Research and Development Association's stress Grading Committee, which has been responsible for developing practical systems of grading timber quality. He has been a Forestry Commissioner since 1981. Both appointments were effective from 1st October.

Third time lucky for a feller called David

IT WAS third time lucky for 31-year-old David Grieve at the 1985 National Tree Felling Contest at Dalbeattie Forest in South-West Scotland.

The Royal Scottish Forestry Society competition, sponsored and organised for the first time by the Forestry Commission, attracted 47 entrants from as far apart as Devon, Morayshire and the island of Mull.

Working in almost "home ground" conditions, David, who has been with the Commission for 14 years and at present works in Bannan Forest, just a few miles from Dalbeattie, came from behind to take the championship and the prizes that went with it. These included the RSFS Trophy, the Economic Forestry Group Cup, the Oregon Rose Bowl plus a new Husquarna 154 saw, safety clothing and boots, and a tankard.

At the end of the first round, David was lying in third place among the five contestants whose lowest score took them into the afternoon final.

"Using the short bar on the second tree seemed to take up time and it was nervewracking," he said. "The first time I completed I was 15th and last year I was 9th,

but things went my way eventually."

David's final tally was 83 penalty points and congratulating him Dallas Milne said: "You did well in a gruelling contest that brings together many forestry interests."

Runner-up in the final five was Donald McLennan, a 24-year-old from Mull who worked with FC until the spring of this year when he joined Killichronan Estate on the island. It was also his third attempt with his previous best placing being 8th in 1984. His score was 85.

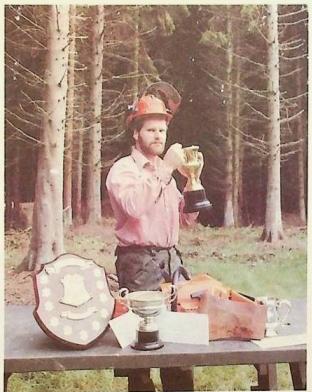
Donald was the winner of a Silver Medal presented by the Forestry Commission for the finalist with the lowest score on penalty points for safety technique. He scored nil.

"The safety aspect is something you learn with the Commission and even in a competition you don't forget it," he said.

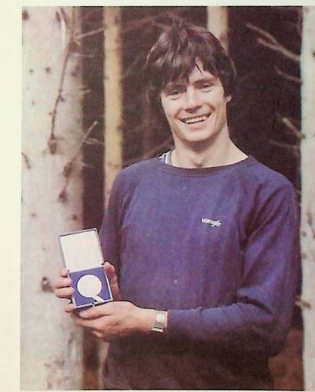
The 1984 champion, Hugh Duffy, FC, Mull, narrowly missed getting into the final five with a first round score of 58. Ernest Michie, EDM Castle Douglas, did an excellent job in selecting the site for the competition and organising special grassed catering areas, car parks and stewarding.



● McLENNAN'S TREE ABOUT TO GO DOWN



● DAVID GRIEVE WITH THE SPOILS



● DONALD McLENNAN WITH MEDAL

Keeping in touch thanks to hitech in the forest

By D. J. Amer, Chief Forester.

LORNE Forest District in Mid-Scotland Conservancy was created from the four forests of Barcaldine, Fearnoch, Glencoe and part of Glenorchy. Glenorchy was the only area with an established radio network. There was also an FC radio repeater station on the slopes of Ben Cruachan serving Loch Awe Forest District providing some radio coverage of Fearnoch Beat which, prior to reorganisation, did not have any radio equipment.

The control system employed at Lorne Forest District is unique on two counts: it was designed and built by our own staff; and it is the only system of its kind in use in the Forestry Commission.

The requirement, as presented to the Radio and

Electronics Branch, was to provide full radio coverage for the new forest district and for the network to be controlled from the new office to be built in Oban.

A survey showed that two additional radio repeater stations would be required. The first of these was installed on the Isle of Mull, eight miles from Oban. This station provides radio coverage for the Fearnoch Beat (inland from Oban) and Barcaldine Beat, ten miles up the coast.

The second station was installed at a disused BBC TV transmitting station at Ardour, 22 miles north of Oban, providing radio coverage for Glen Duror and Glencoe beats.

In normal radio networks, the controlling radio set or "trigger station" is installed in the forest district office, with its own aerial which can "see" the appropriate repeater station. In the case of Lorne Forest District, however, only the Mull repeater station can be "seen." The trigger station and aerial were subsequently installed at the BBC TV transmitting station which overlooks the town and Oban Bay. The extra height gained

now allows the trigger station aerial to "see" the aerials of the four repeater stations. The trigger station is connected back to the office via a pair of telephone lines rented from British Telecom.

Four control desk units are installed at the office to allow control of the radio network from four locations within the building. The control circuitry which allows for automatic switching of the trigger station to whichever repeater station is being used, was designed and built at the Radio & Electronics Branch workshop at Dunkeld. Visual indication of the repeater station being used is displayed on each of the control desks.

With 22 mobile radio sets and four hand-portable radio sets now in operation, more than 92 per cent of the area has been provided with good radio coverage — no mean feat in such a mountainous region, which includes seven peaks over 900 metres. Limited radio coverage is to be provided in the 1500 hectares not covered by the main network in the Glen Etive area, by the use of a mobile radio set specially modified to operate in that area.

Day out for the unfit, lame and geriatric

PUCK'S GLEN is a steep silvan pathway winding its ferny way o'er rocky knolls by sparkling waterfalls, with shafts of sunlight piercing the tree-tops and mellifluous bird songs enchanting the listening lughole. There, one would not have been surprised to trip over Titania, queen of the fairies, or bump into Oberon.

The magic of this elfin spot was somewhat fractured when the Glasgow mob descended upon it as the first compulsory stage of the annual obstacle course which is euphemistically called the Office Educational Outing.

The joyful thrush was drowned out by the grunts and groans of the city's unfit, lame and geriatric as they clambered resolutely over the trail, placing their "recommended stout footwear" with such care and precision that many failed to look up long enough to view the idyllic surroundings.

This indeed was an exceptional excursion — it was dry! Two years' ago I wrote of our soggy safari to Barcaldine and last year we sallied forth to Strathgryne in a September monsoon — the first rain to fall after two months' of drought. But now the sun was shining as we ventured into Cowal Forest District, enjoying the hospitality of District Manager Bob Selmes and his team of stalwarts. (Have you noticed — everyone's a stalwart out in the field!)

Cowal is an area of ben and glen around and to the west of the lovely peaceful Holy Loch . . . which houses the Polaris Submarine Base.

HAUT HORTICULTURE

Thankfully leaving the glen to Puck, we moved a couple of miles up the A815 to the Younger Benmore Gardens once managed by the Commission but now under the control of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries. It provides a fitting setting for Benmore House, a mansion in the Scottish baronial style, well-known to many of the FC field staff who passed through its stately portals in the days when it was a training school full of foresters and dry rot.

The gardens were magnificent with the "roddies" and azaleas at their technicolour best. The avenue *Sequoiadendron giganteum* rising to around 150 feet is justly world-famous.

After a bite of lunch it was off round Loch Striven and Loch Riddon to one of the stopping points high up on the Tighnabruaich road. This afforded a panoramic view of the Kyles of Bute — a patchwork of lochs, inlets, bays, islands, narrows, sea and sky.

A rumoured encounter in the woods at Glendaruel with a fast-working brunette in a mini brought disillusionment when it turned out to be a deft demonstration of timber extraction by a Mini Brunetti 678T Forwarder.

AMENITY PLANTING

We were running late when we crossed into Ardgartan FD to find its boss-man, Bill Blake, patiently waiting. Another wee scramble up a grassy hillock, overlooking the aptly-named Rest and Be Thankful road, to a spot where Bill had set up some fast-fading dyeline prints. These purported to show, as William succinctly explained, how the unsightly rectangular blocks of mature Sitka and the equally grotty battlefields of felled devastation in Glen Croe would blossom forth in 20 years' time to produce a landscape worthy of the canvas of a budding Landseer. We all make a note to return in the year 2005 to admire Bill's silvicultural brush-work.

Having engendered healthy appetites from our exertions we descended locus-like on the normally dour Tarbert Hotel, a mere chuckie's throw from the oft-time charmed bonnie banks of Loch Lomond. After dinner the company adjourned for a modest liquid refreshment to find a solitary accordian virtuoso in full highland clobber sedately entertaining visiting Americans who had, by sheer chance, arrived on a day when they could actually see the loch.

Soon the joint was jumpin' as our lot took over and expertly whirled, hooched and sweated their way thro' "Strip The Willow," "Eightsome Reel," "Dashing White Sergeant" etc.

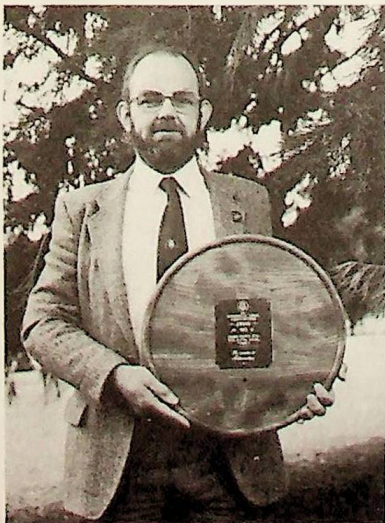
Silence, and the bar takings, fell when we had reluctantly to leave and rejoin our bus which sang its way back to Glasgow. In the rosy glow of partial inebriation it was enthusiastically voted to hold an annual outing once a month.

JOHN WATSON

Camping capers at the carnival

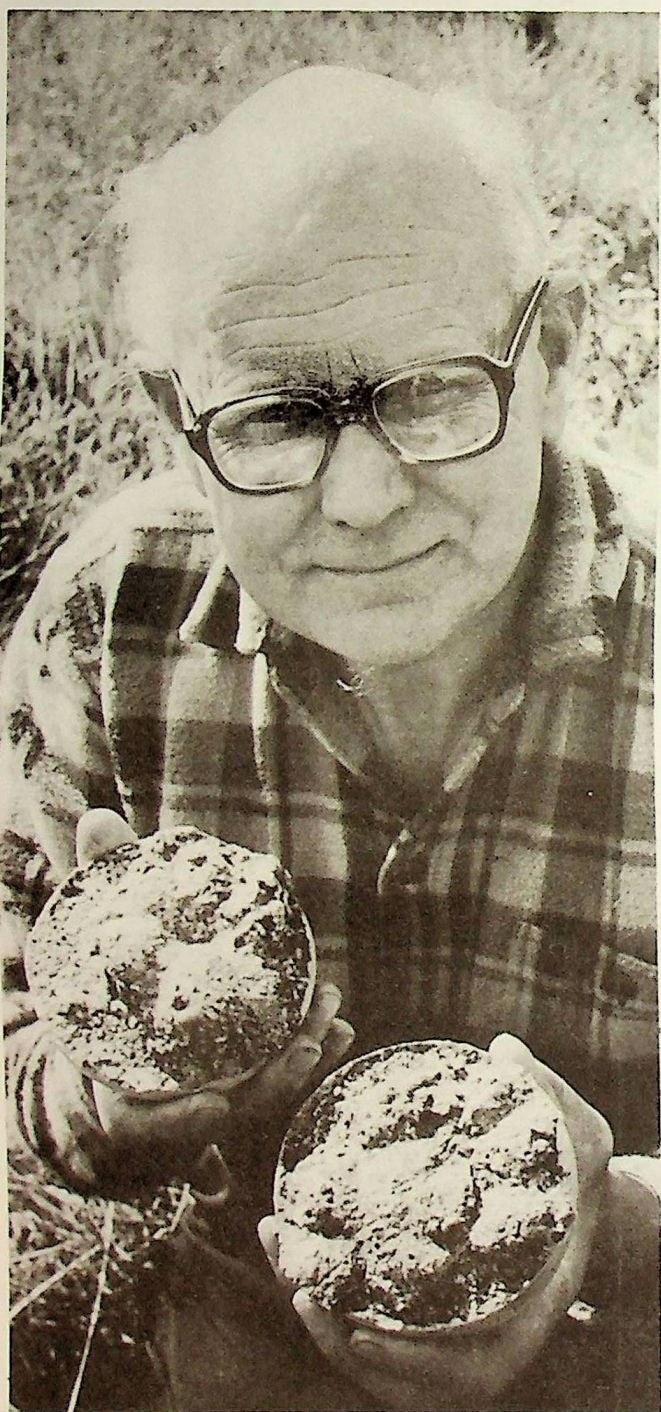


IF CAMPING was as much fun as this float in Aberystwyth's Carnival promises, I'm sure our camping sites would be booked solid from one year's end to the next. Winners of the third prize for the Most Humorous Tableau are, pictured from left to right: Gary Hopkins, Kay Williams, Sarah Poley, Susan Fuge, Sue Leather, and in front — ready to get on with the job of handing out FC leaflets — Margaret Taylor and Petra Lewis. All are staff in the Wales Conservancy office.



Derek's in good company

THE Arboricultural Association's award for outstanding services to arboriculture has been presented this year to Derek Patch, Head of the Arboricultural Advisory and Information Service at Alice Holt Lodge. He received the award at the Association's 19th National Conference held at Loughborough University of Technology on September 4. Previous recipients have included Hugh Insley and Alan Mitchell.



David has lions in his garden!

PROOF that mountain lions are roaming Margam Forest has come from Afan district FC recreation forester David Parnall. There have been a number of sightings of large cats from Neath to Bryn and David has taken plaster casts of two sets of paw prints found in his garden in Bryn.

"The animal came through on two successive nights and we believe there were two different ones. We were able to estimate the weight of one at 25 kilos and the other at 20 kilos." He believes the animals might have been bought as exotic pets and then illegally released when they became too difficult to handle.

RESEARCHER CALLS IT A DAY AFTER 34 YEARS

Here's to yew David!

DAVID SEAL retired in September after a career which spanned 34 years and included service as a District Officer in Fort Augustus and Dunkeld, Nursery Officer at Drumsheugh Gardens, Assistant Conservator in Inverness as well as Principal Silviculturist (N) and Chief Research Officer (N) for the past 11 years.

His retiral was celebrated firstly at an informal gathering of Research colleagues. Roy Falkner paid tribute to his enthusiastic contribution and recalled the highlights both serious and humorous. On behalf of many friends and colleagues, David Seal was presented with an exceedingly handsome yew writing desk. Beryl, his wife, who had provided home baked goodies for the entire station, was presented with a specially engraved crystal glass. The couple then planted a tree near the entrance gate.

Later a buffet was held at Bush House attended by more than 65 friends representing not only all parts of FC but also the private sector and other research organisations. Director Research, Arnold Grayson, presented David with a hand-turned walnut plate from colleagues at Alice Holt. The Director General, George Holmes, warmly voiced the universally high regard of all for David and Beryl and wished him well in retirement on his mini estate.



The Seals plant a tree — and are presented with a lovely desk.

AMONG retirements notified from West England is that of Head Forester **Mike Wilson** who served 39 years with the Commission. He worked at several forests in Somerset, Devon and Dorset and was latterly on private woodlands duties in Wiltshire. He was presented with a pair of binoculars, a cheque and a framed map of old Wiltshire.

When **Miss Helga Lane**, typist at Salisbury District Office, retired after 20 years she was presented with a staple gun (her own choice), a cheque and flowers.

John Piper, Conservancy Land Agent at Bristol for 15 years (previously at Cardiff and York) was presented with a voucher for a solo air flight (flying is one of his hobbies) and maps. Mrs Piper received a single red rose in a cut glass bud vase.

Forest Officer **Geoff Keighley** was presented with binoculars to mark his retirement after nine years at the Conservancy which he joined from being Safety Officer at headquarters.

Tony Curtis, of Torridge, retired due to ill health. He joined FC in 1951 and spent the past 20 years on chainsaw work, thinning and clear felling.

J. Johns, craftsman at Torridge, retired after 38 years and **Brian Angel** left the same district after 18 years.

Evald Teivas, who left Estonia in 1944 when the Russians took over the country and came to Britain via Germany, joining FC in 1953, retired as a ganger, Wareham Forest.

R. Vallis, who joined in 1947, retired from Savernake Forest. Since 1969 he had worked on motorway planting.



PETER CUMMING has joined the small group of men who have retired having completed 50 years service with the Forestry Commission. Peter, of Glenview, Dalmally, Argyll, started as a boy at Inverliver and went on to become a mobile plough operator working all over West Scotland. At a reception at the old Glenorchy forest office Peter was presented with his 60 year service certificate by Gordon Cowie Assistant Conservator, Operations (Mid Scotland) and on behalf of colleagues and friends, a cheque handed over by Dougie Boyd, Ploughing Head Forester.



MISS JANET CLARK, CO, Speyside, retired after 35 years and Jim Webster presented her with a travelling clock, an encyclopaedia of gardening and a cheque towards a microwave oven, subscribed to by friends and colleagues. FDM Ken Buswell looks on.



ROBERT ("Robin") David Roberts retired after 38 years with the FC, all spent working at Cynwyd Forest. At a small gathering at Ruthin Forest district office he was presented with a barometer by fellow worker Gil Williams and with a Long Service Certificate by Assistant Conservator A. H. A. Scott. Robin has two brothers, Celyn and Caradog, who still work for the FC and their combined service amounts to 100 years. His father and another brother both had 25 years service making a family total of 150 years. The photograph shows Celyn, Robin and Caradog Roberts, pictured on the day of Robin's retirement.

Charles MacMahon, PCE at HQ, retired recently after 38 years service and at a farewell gathering was presented with a cheque on behalf of colleagues and friends by Mr G. Francis, Commissioner. During his time with the Commission, Charles served in North Scotland, South Scotland, Wales, Basingstoke and Edinburgh.

"Mr Dalton Forest" **David Keens**, has retired. David was the first forester in charge there when it started in 1951. It later absorbed Lindale forest and became a 1600 ha forest most of it on Carboniferous limestone and David became one of the few experts in this country establishing trees on northern limestones. Conservator Mr J. A. Spencer presented him with a Lake District swill basket and two books on British and European raptors from his colleagues.

George Lamb retired in September after more than 37 years service at Grizedale. He had worked mainly with the felling gang, being an expert axeman and sawyer before "graduating" to chainsaws. In recent years, however, George worked in the sawmill making specialised timber constructions and picnic furniture. This work has found its way over the length and breadth of the country. The Grizedale workforce was at a small ceremony to wish George farewell, and a long, happy retirement. He was presented with a Zenith camera and an official FC tie from his workmates. Also "retired" and presented to George in a tastefully wrapped parcel, was the hammer he had used during his years in the sawmill — it having been declared "worn out."

Derek Jones, Cheshire Forest District, retired after 32 years service at Delamere Forest. Derek joined the Commission from school. His father was a ganger at Delamere and so Derek had first-hand knowledge of the area. He is considered to be an expert on Delamere Forest. Derek has had to retire owing to ill health and his friends at Cheshire Forest District presented him with a cheque.

Jim Roscoe, South Lakes Forest District, retired after 26 years service, all of which has been spent at Bowland. He is a self-taught drystone wall builder and built the Forestry Commission walls at the Liverpool Garden Exhibition in 1984.

Gwilym Davies has retired after serving 13 years in Ruthin Forest District during which time he covered most aspects of forest work, including harvesting where he was part of a forwarder team. Colleagues and friends gathered together to wish him well and good health in the future. They presented him with a watch.

Tom Jones has retired after serving 12 years in the Ruthin Forest District, all of which was spent on forest management doing hard draining, planting, weeding and brashing. At a gathering at the Forest Office he was presented with a cheque from friends and colleagues who wish him better health in the future.

RETIREMENTS



BOB CATHIE, Conservator (NS) retired at the end of July. Always very approachable and ready to discuss any problem, no-one could have done more to win the respect of his staff. A tangible form of their appreciation was a presentation to him of two paintings by Mary Wilson, the Nairn artist, and a Caithness glass bowl decorated with a forestry view.



RON ROBSON retired from the post of Silviculture (North) chief forester in Wales. Much of his 34 year career with the Commission was consumed with silvicultural research in upland forests, and his extensive knowledge of upland forestry spanned the range of conditions from north east Scotland to South Wales. David Seal, Chief Research Officer (North) wished Ron and his wife Blanche a long and happy retirement. He then presented Ron with a cheque and Blanche with a piece of Edinburgh crystal.



TOM MOULES, Head Forester, Private Woods and Plant Health in York Forest District, said farewell to his many friends and colleagues at a buffet supper in York. Conservator Tony Spencer recalled Tom's 32 years in the Commission, all of it in North East England, and presented Tom with a cheque. We wish Tom and his wife a long, happy and healthy retirement.



TWO East (Scotland) stalwarts retired in August, head forester Jim Allan who started at Glenbraanter in 1951 and finished at Kirkhill. Head forester George Stalwart began at Durris in 1948 and finished at Alltcaileach. Colleagues at Kincardine Forest District marked the occasion with a meal at Banchory British Legion Club where Jim and George were presented with books of their choice. Picture shows Jim (left) and George with Forest District staff.

A painting marks John's farewell



JOHN McHARRIE retired from Glentool after 31 years service as a forestry worker and was presented with a barometer and a painting by forester Angus Tait. He joined FC in 1949 at Kirroughtree and after a three-year break in dairy farming returned to Carsphairn in 1966, moving back to Glentool in 1978. He and his wife will continue to live in Glentool where he will keep busy in his garden and greenhouse.

Duncan's walking stick



DUNCAN CAMPBELL (District Forester, Private Woodlands, Lothian and Tweed) retired after 44 years' service. Friends and colleagues attended a supper dance to mark the occasion, and Duncan entertained the gathering on his accordion, accompanied by Ken Fryer (guitar) and Peter Edwards (vocal). Forest District Manager, Mike Garforth paid tribute to Duncan's conscientiousness and enthusiasm.

Looking back over his long service Duncan thanked the many characters who had made his career a happy one and those whose memory he will carry with him to the Campbell croft in Argyll.

Duncan was presented with a walking stick, a tie of the Scots Guards to replace the 40-year-old original, and a cheque.



MR HUGH JONES retired from the FC recently after nearly 28 years as a Forest Craftsman at Irfon Forest. Mr Dai Morris, District Forester FM, presented Hugh with a tankard and a cheque on behalf of colleagues. Also at the presentation was Mr Bert Bignall, formerly Head Forester in charge at Irfon Forest, who himself retired in December 1984.

One man and his collie



JIM PETRIE, tractor driver at Kincardine Forest District, retired after 31 years service mainly on harvesting. He began in 1954 using his own horse to extract thinnings at Blackhall. A suitable retiral gift can be a problem but one of Jim's workmates (Jim Taylor) came up with the idea of a collie to help out on the croft. Jim was delighted with his assistant "Queen" and we wish them many happy years together. The picture shows Jim receiving his gift from Head Forester Sandy Walker at Kincardine Forest District Office.

A tribute to the First Lady of wildlife

JUDY ROWE, one of the country's leading authorities on wildlife management and who was head of the Forestry Commission's Wildlife Branch at Alice Holt, died at her home on 1 September, after a two-year battle against cancer.

Harry Pepper writes: Born in 1938, Judy Rowe, BSc, Dip.Cons., MIBiol., had a long career with the Commission. She joined the Entomology Branch in 1961 as head of the Mammal Sub-section and in 1973 was appointed head of the newly-established Wildlife Branch and became one of the UK's leading experts in wildlife management research with specialist knowledge of roe deer and grey squirrels.

Her work on wildlife covered the entire spectrum of the forest rotation from the nursery to felling, timber utilisation and replanting. Her views on wildlife management influenced attitudes away from a previous emphasis on the extermination of "pests" towards professionally-planned management and conservation. This was exemplified in her thinking on grey squirrels which recognised the need for rigorous control measures in commercial beech woods, but also supported squirrel conservation in public parks where these animals can give countless hours of pleasure to visitors.

Similar Study

Judy's main objectives were that the Forestry Commission should be able to establish the status and performance of wildlife populations resident in forests, predict their impact on the forest and vice versa, and specify management regimes. During the 1960s her preliminary work on the red deer of Galloway led to large-scale research involving the Red Deer Commission, Institute of Terrestrial Ecology, as well as the Forestry Commission. By 1978, she had initiated a similar study on roe deer which regrettably she was not to complete. Judy's work on the use of warfarin for squirrel control and her concern for its effect on non-target species formed the basis of the 1973 legislation. The subsequent insistence on thorough training and the responsible use of warfarin is well known.

Under Judy's direction, the nationwide Mammal / Bird / Damage questionnaire was instigated and in 1975 was modified to make it compatible with the Biological Record Centre's survey, adding significantly to the knowledge on the distribution of wildlife in Great Britain.

She had recognised a need for the active conservation of rare species in our forests long before the recent surge of interest in this field, and her involvement with the conservation of smooth snakes and sand lizards in the forests of the Dorset heathlands bears tribute to this.

Captured deer

Judy Rowe will not only be remembered for her work, but for boundless enthusiasm for carrying it out. She was always eager to be actively involved in field work, whatever the weather, and could be found at the centre of any action — be it restraining a captured deer at the bottom of a drain or instructing rangers on a windswept hillside.

Judy also involved herself with the social life of Alice Holt. She played in both the Alice Holt cricket team and table tennis team, and served a term of office as treasurer of the Sports and Social Club.

Her success in her work was reflected in her election to the Council of the British Mammal Society (1969), the Environment Division Committee of the Institute of Biology, as well as being a member of the Deer Liaison Committee, the Freshwater Biological Association, and the British Association for Nature Conservation. She received international acclaim as a result of her published work.

Defeat was not in Judy's vocabulary. Whether it was facing a wildlife problem, or on one of her many out-of-work pastimes, such as negotiating a difficult show jumping course, tackling a firing one-day event, or protecting our rights of way, Judy Rowe never gave up.

Despite knowing she was terminally ill, Judy continued to make a positive contribution to her work,



JUDY ROWE'S BOUNDLESS ENTHUSIASM AND GENEROSITY

her neighbourhood and her chosen sport. She served on the Ludshott Common's Committee of the National Trust, the Headley and District Bridleways Protection Group, the Hampshire Rural Riding Club, and the Wey Valley Riding Club where she also held the office of President.

One-day events

She was still working in May this year and in that month competed in two very tough one-day events, at Windsor Park and in West Sussex, finishing in the ribbons in both.

But it is not just for her work or her competitiveness that she'll be best remembered. It is for her unfailing generosity of spirit. It is for all the help she unstintingly gave to others, whether aiding her staff, encouraging post-graduate students with their

research, comforting nervous riders, clearing bridleways, serving Ludshott Common, organising cross country trials, or even playing the front legs of a pantomime horse for clarity. It is for her wholehearted involvement in everything she did.

Although she was warned on June 24, that she only had a few days left, Judy insisted on discharging herself from the MacMillan Unit to spend those last days at home, and it is typical of her indomitable courage that she refused to succumb and lived for another two months in the home she loved and which she had lived in for 14 years.

It is fitting to record that the help she so willingly gave to others came back tenfold in the care, love and affection she received from her two closest companions, Sue Henwood and Pam Kerr, her family and friends, who nursed her so devotedly during those last two months.

NOTE: Donations to the Judy Rowe Memorial Fund should be sent to Alice Holt.

HAROLD JOHN POUND

THE DEATH occurred of Harold Pound, aged 86, ex-Forest Worker of Radnor Forest. He started work in 1926 and was involved with the pioneer work of establishing Radnor Forest, though the bulk of his working life was spent with horses. Thousands of cubic metres of timber had been extracted by him, especially during the early post-war years. During this period the hills of Cwmgerwyn would echo with the voice of Harold giving instructions to "Lofty", a powerful black mare. He had a voice that many an army drill sergeant would be proud of. He is survived by his widow, six children, 14 grandchildren and one great-granddaughter.

STANLEY EDWARDS

HE WAS the Forestry Commission's first Chief Land Agent for England and Wales. Died at his home near Worcester in August, aged 84. Mr Edwards joined in 1936 and until his retirement in 1960, was largely responsible for the designing and building of many of the FC's earlier cottages and smallholdings and had a hand in creating forest villages. He leaves a widow, and a married daughter.

HAROLD BOWE

HE DIED in service in August. He had been a Tractor Driver at Thornthwaite Forest for 39 years. He was a keen gardener, and after the death of his wife, he started to help out at the Pheasant Inn in Thornthwaite. He lived so close to the Forest District Office he was always around to lock up gates or help out and will be greatly missed by his colleagues.

JACK TRUSSELL

EX-FORESTER, Mr Jack Trussell, died in September, aged 64. He had only retired from the Commission in June of last year.

JIM WALSH

JIM WALSH, former Head Forester at Hereford Forest (Dean and Three Counties), has died just two years after retiring. Following retirement he worked on the D. micans survey.

LEN NICOLLS

LEN NICHOLLS, a former Chief Conservator of Forests in Nigeria, who joined Charnouth Forest as a forest worker at the age of 60, and then became forest clerk, has died in his 95th year.

VERNON JOHN

WE REPORT with regret the sudden death of Forest Craftsman Vernon P. John, Brechfa Forest District, at the age of 63. Vernon John sampled the forestry life at an early age, joining the Pembrey Forest squad on leaving school. Soon afterwards he left to become a colliery electrician at nearby Pontyberem, but returned to forestry in 1961, and had served for 24 years. He leaves a wife, two daughters and a son.

DAVID GIGGAL

DAVID GIGGAL, Head Forester (FM) at Kielder, died suddenly at home in July, aged 45. After Forestry School training, David was posted to the Chirton beat of Wark Forest in 1962, and returned to Wark in 1976 after a period in Yorkshire.

KEN ELDERWICK

KEN ELDERWICK, late Manager of Chirk Mechanical Depot, died suddenly at home on July 29, aged 65. He had previously worked as Mechanical Engineer until he took early retirement in 1981. Ken had a long record of voluntary service with a large number of local organisations, and was a Councillor on South Shropshire District Council, representing Church Stretton where he lived most of his life. He is survived by his wife, a son and daughter.



MEMO TO ISOBEL: BELT UP!

BELT UP . . . sound words of advice for Information Division Photographer Isobel Cameron when she was covering a demonstration of the use of helicopters in forest fire control.

TRYING to secure herself in the open cabin with two safety belts and a rope without strapping in her cameras and headphone unit was quite a task.

AND LATER, back on the ground, she was almost in direct line for a bomb attack.



Nature study class 'in the wild'

BERKSHIRE school children are now able to enter a whole new world of nature study "in the wild," by following nature trails laid out for them by the Forestry Commission in a forest near Burchetts Green, Maidenhead.

The trails, the first-ever in Berkshire, are in Ashley Hill Woods, which is an area of working forest which the Commission leases from a private owner.

The Commission has established the trails in collaboration with the neighbouring Berkshire College of Agriculture, whose lecturer in environmental resources, Kim Steele, will organise visits and provide the specialist teaching.

With her colleagues from the Maidenhead Teaching Centre, Kim is developing a teacher's information pack, and her base at the College's Woolley Firs Environmental Studies Centre will also provide support, with classrooms, a natural history displays and a teachers' resource room.

PLANTATIONS

At Ashley Hill Woods, the Commission have created three trails, the longest being 2½ miles. These are laid out through contrasting areas of the forest, including dense conifer stands, broad-leaved plantations, mixtures of these, open rides and glades.

FRENCH CONNECTION

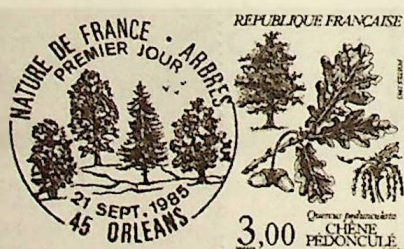
After highlighting "Sherlock Hewitt" (SLASHER, Summer '85, page 6), our French connection continues in this issue with a message from Francis Rinvile, Directeur des Forêts. He passes on a series of postcards issued by his department to mark the International Year of the Forest (one is the scene on the left).

CONNECTION TWO: John Everard says that in solving one problem, "Sherlock Hewitt" unwittingly created another, John says:

"While recently visiting the forest of Reno Valdicu I had assumed it was the HQ Social Club who had pinched the plaque that gives the trees' vital statistics." Obviously it was the "Slasher's French correspondent who had removed it from your photograph.

"Readers might be interested to see the tree that goes with the plaque (Right). For scale purposes, my day-bag and straw hat are at the foot of the tree.

"On the basis of current prices for oak in France, the tree is worth at least £8300 and probably nearer £10,000. Even this is overshadowed by the nearby Chêne de Aberdeen. This has a total value of 30 cubic metres, with 22 cubic metres in the stem, making it worth at least £12,000."



Laison meeting No. 80

A CELEBRATORY lunch marked the 80th meeting of the South Wales and South West England Timber Marketing Liaison Committee in Gwent in October, followed by a ceremonial tree-planting by the Committee's chairman, the Rt. Hon the Earl Bathurst.

Formed in Bristol in June 1963, the committee's main function is to facilitate consultations between the home timber trade, private growers and the Forestry Commission on local marketing and utilisation problems.

Chairmanship has alternated between participating organisations, and the committee includes representatives from the British Paper and Board Industry Federation, and from local regions of the Timber Growers UK and British Timber Merchants' Association.