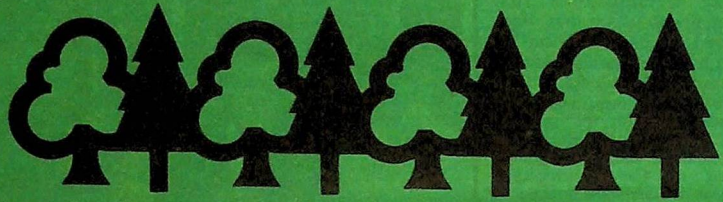


SLASHER



Newspaper of the Forestry Commission

Issue No. 336

August 1988

Woodland grants: quality is pledged

PRIVATE woodlands staff throughout the Forestry Commission are getting to grips with applications for the new Woodland Grant Scheme and are preparing for the 1 October start of the Farm Woodland Scheme.

In recent weeks seminars have been held in each Conservancy Office to explain the philosophy behind the Woodland Group Scheme and similar seminars on the Farm Woodland Scheme will follow.

The Woodland Grant Scheme could attract a new type of applicant for grant aid in establishing woodlands, particularly with forestry likely to expand on to better land. With its wider conservation targets including the creation of wildlife habitat, landscape enhancement, and increased emphasis on the protection of archaeological remains and sensitive treatment of water courses there is a clear need to ensure that the rules and regulations are interpreted in a consistent way in the wide ranging types of sites that will be eligible.

Improved internal communications should assist Forest District Managers and their staffs to be more aware of overall policy and of noteworthy cases, in other parts of the country. It has been emphasised that their will be no lowering of standards to help achieve the Government target of 33,000 hectares new planting.

"If anything their will be higher standards than before with the emphasis on sensitivity during the scrutiny of applications. The spotlight is on us to deliver quality as well as quantity in future woodlands," said Willie Sheridan, Secretariat.

Speaking at the Royal Show, Director General Gwyn Francis said: "The new Woodland Grant Scheme with increased rates of grant will create new opportunities with new incentives for planting on better land; with new incentives for encouraging the use of mixtures so essential to growing good quality broadleaves and with higher rates of grant which will appeal to a wide range of interests. It was a wide range of objectives and places emphasis on multi-purpose management."

North planting approved

The Secretary of State for Scotland has approved FC planting on 1059 hectares on four of five sites in Caithness and Sutherland "provided that certain areas of high conservation value (954 hectares) are left unplanted."

He said that while recognising that much of the two counties would need to be protected by an expanded SSSI network some new planting was needed to fulfill the national forestry planting programme, help local employment and feed future wood-processing industries with raw material. A fifth FC site of 472 hectares in the heart of the "flow country" in Caithness is to remain unplanted.

Full details of the Farm Woodland Scheme, to be operated jointly by Agriculture Departments and the FC will soon be published. This experimental scheme will be limited to 36,000 hectares over the first three years.

It is anticipated that the FWS will prove popular with farmers and landowners who see long term benefits in both cash and amenity values through the planting of small woodland areas.

Said Mr Francis: "I believe the expansion of forestry will be reinforced when the FWA comes into operation in October and there will also be provision for forestry in the Set-Aside Regulations."

"Planting under the FWS could lead to a third of all new planting being done by farmers. Farm forestry is certainly not a marginal or peripheral contribution to the total of new planting."

● The results of a major survey which involved 3620 members of FC staff have now been formulated, and in Page Five STEVE O'NEILL gives a comprehensive report on the steps taken and the final recommendations made.

What's drawing the curious to this scene?

NUTS! What clue is this?

You'll find both the answers in one special Wildlife Focus in centre pages.



Our magic forest attracts millionth visitor

THE Magical Forest at the Glasgow Garden Festival clocked up its one millionth visitor just as we went to Press.

Ian and Sally Wilson with 15-month-old Emily, from Forfar, were greeted by radio and TV personality Jimmie Macgregor and presented with a prize of a free cabin holiday for two weeks.

Daily, thousands upon thousands of people have visited our star attraction... locals, foreign parties, and many personalities.

One of our latest guests was the Scottish Office Minister of State for Agriculture, Lord Sanderson of Bowden.

He was eager to find out at first hand why the Forestry Commission's own exhibition is one of the Festival's top attractions.

Accompanied by Commissioner Roger Bradley, he mingled with the crowds making their way through the entire exhibit area.

"He was impressed with everything he saw," said Mr Bradley.

The Minister clearly enjoyed the audio-visual presentation before moving on to the badger sett and the "world of a tree" display, both of which he examined in detail.

Quiz sheet

After climbing to the top of the observation tower he made his way with Mr Bradley, together with the West Scotland assistant conservator, Dr Alan Low and Bill Blake, who is in charge of running the site, to the end of the area.

There he asked Andy Gallacher for a copy of the children's quiz sheet — and had to admit he would probably have answered only six of the eleven questions.

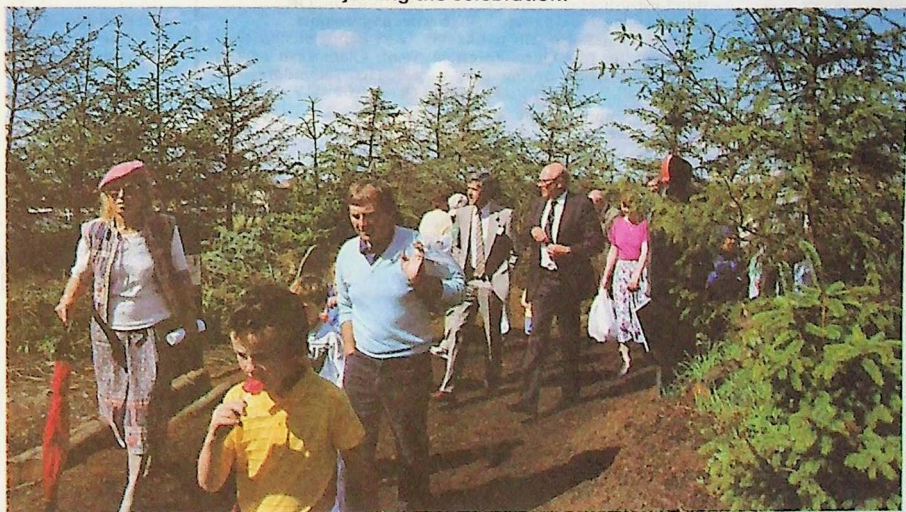
The Magical Forest has regularly been attracting 35 per cent of all visitors to the Festival and many have described it as "unique" ... "fascinating" ... "smells lovely."

Despite adverse weather conditions, including a scorching start to August, it will still look good when it closes on September 26.

Certainly, it has been voted the Commission's best-ever Garden Festival crowd-puller.



Jimmie Macgregor pours champagne for millionth visitor Ian Wilson and wife, Sally. Bill Blake supervises and Alison Perry presents the flowers with the Wilson's niece, Emma Bruce joining the celebration.



Lord Sanderson mingles with the sightseers on a pathway in the Magical Forest.



KEEP US IN THE PICTURE!

• Letters from old colleagues, and our recent appeal to retired staff and others to keep us posted of their activities and to pass on their news and views, have produced an encouraging response. Here, we publish two such letters . . . and hope that more will follow their example. Write to Roy Gregor, Editor, The Slasher, Forestry Commission, Corstorphine, Edinburgh. Keep us in the picture . . .

Be kinder to our visitors

A MAN who was involved in the training of 200 wildlife foresters and rangers (including Tony Hinde) has made an appeal on behalf of wildlife: Be kind to your visitors!

He is Mr P. J. Langley, who was involved in training after contracting multiple sclerosis in 1962. He writes to the editor from his home at 10 Plover's Down, Oliver's Battery, Winchester:

I was very interested to read the items on Red-backed shrike, harrier and osprey in the June issue of the Slasher. Before mentioning my own encounters with these species, I would like to ask your readers how they would persuade people to be rare visitors to their own homes. I suggest three useful rules:

1. Do not feed them properly or adequately.
2. Ensure that they are thoroughly uncomfortable.
3. Never supply a bed for any purpose.
4. Should all else fail, invest in and use, a good 12-bore DB shotgun.

Suddenly they will have rare visitors. Even theoretical mothers-in-law may be dissuaded!! Since these are the ways in which we have treated our visitors for the last 200 years, it is not surprising that they do not care to visit us too often.

Human "cop out"

In the late 1930s, before many readers of this had seen the light of day, I was living in Suffolk. The Red-backed shrike was a relatively common species and I could have shown a visitor six nest sites within four miles of where I lived in the suburbs of Ipswich. All these sites are now housing estates!!

There is no adequate food supply in Suffolk. Hedges are longer and more sparse. Fields are large, chemically controlled monocultures. I feel your writer's comments about the weather are a typical "human cop out." Weather has varied in Great Britain before now. Incidentally, normal clutch sizes in 1939 were 5-7. Birds seem to be rather better at family planning according to food supply than we are!!

In the early 1950s Arthur Bowns, a keen conservationist, and I used to see osprey migrating up and down the N. Tyne Valley. Arthur had a pair of talons that he obtained from a dead (how?) osprey that he found in the Warkburn. I was sorely tempted to make an artificial nest site on the Southern edge of Wark Forest where there is a large lake.

Cleaner river

Courage, lack of knowledge of the osprey and a transfer to York failed me. I only hope the Commission will be more ambitious at Kielder Reservoir. The Tyne is a cleaner river now, there are more salmon and FC will be helping with more food for fisher persons, both licensed and feathered!!

1959 found me in Northumberland again, where I found both the hen and Montagu harriers nesting on smales and clashetts (near Blankenburgh's cottage) in the young plantations. It is to be hoped that large-scale felling and replantings will solve the housing problem and that the absence of shotguns on large areas will make life more comfortable! Food is a major problem. Is it time for the return of the forester's friend, the rabbit!!?

The rule for the future? Be kind to your visitors.

P. J. LANGLEY.

• For more about wildlife, turn to centre pages.

A pen-pals' column?

FROM Talbot Green in Glamorgan has come a letter from the widow of a forest craftsman.

Mrs Doreen Holland puts forward an idea to readers of the Slasher: "May I suggest a Pen-friends' column?" she writes.

She adds that she looks forward to receiving the Slasher — its news, views and, above all, the beautiful colour wildlife photographs (there are more in our centre spread, Mrs Holland).

Our correspondent adds that her hobbies are in various crafts, and she gives talks and demonstrations. And in answer to our call for recipes, she suggests two "tried and simple" ones under the heading of Party Ideas . . .

Ham and Banana Rolls: Make a cheese or parsley sauce.

Peel bananas, roll each in a slice of ham, spread with little mustard, arrange in an ovenproof dish. Pour on sauce. Bake for 30 minutes at 180°C. Garnish with parsley.

Sweet: Slice a Jamaican ginger or chocolate cake. Place on stand with slices of orange between each portion; OR top with fondant icing and decorate with cherries and walnuts.

Mrs Holland also tells us she has "very happy memories of her visits to Tair Onen Forest in South Glamorgan and of friendships made during that time." Her full address is, "Whitehall," Lanelay Road, Talbot Green CF7 8HY.

Editor's note: Thank you Mr Holland for your idea and certainly we would welcome further contributions. We hope that others might now follow your example.

Ray sends his thanks

RAY BRAINE, formerly forest district manager of Cornwall and North Devon district, has written to the editor of Slasher thus:—

Dear Sir,

May I through the wide circulation of The Slasher, thank all my friends and colleagues who came to my farewell celebration and contributed so generously to my presentation.

Both my wife and I greatly appreciated and enjoyed seeing so many old friends, many of whom had

already retired, and had travelled such great distances to be with us on our retirement.

I hope to be in contact over the next few months and hope those who are in this area will pay us a visit in this far distant corner of the Forestry Commission empire.

I am now in very good health and we are both thoroughly enjoying our retirement.

Yours Sincerely,
Ray Braine,
"Kestro",
Pyworthy,
Holsworthy,
EX22 6VQ.



Ray with Audrey.

Cheers, for Peter!

As cheerful a picture as anyone would want to see. It shows Peter Hermon with some of "his boys" — David Goldie, Derek Stephen, Keith Gliddon and Willie Prest — marking Peter's last day at the office. Peter, as we recorded in our last issue, retired on May 31 after 43 years' service, mainly in the audit and finance departments, and latterly as Controller of Finance. He received a stereo tape deck as a retirement gift.



HONOUR FOR DAME SYLVIA

THE woman who became the Forestry Commission's first landscape consultant has been honoured at a reception in Boston by the American Society of Landscape Architects.

Dame Sylvia Crowe, who is 86, was presented with the society's highest honour, the President's Medal, during the silver jubilee congress of the International Federation of Landscape Architects, of which she is a founder member.

The medal — given for extraordinary service to the profession — recognises the enormous contribution that Dame Sylvia has made to landscape architecture throughout the world.

In a career spanning nearly 60 years, Dame Sylvia is perhaps best



known for her work as the first landscape consultant to Forestry Commission.

Her appointment was made at a time when the Forestry Commission first began to be aware of their responsibilities to the landscape.

Of her work she says, "My object is to reconcile the needs and aspirations of man with the welfare of the natural order and to create beauty out of the fusion of the human spirit and the workings of nature. I try to enter into the spirit of each landscape and to express its individual character."

Dame Sylvia is only the second Briton to be awarded the ASLA Medal, the first being Sir Geoffrey Jellicoe in 1981.

New office opens in Buchan

IT'S not every day that the Forestry Commission open a new office with a flourish and a fanfare, but that is just what happened in a pine wood just a few miles north of Huntly, in Aberdeenshire.

Buchan Forest District, formed by the amalgamation of the forests of Huntly, Bennachie, Forest of Deer and Tornashean, had been run for about three years from a tiny office of just a few rooms up above a shoe shop in Huntly town.

Such is the spirit of the staff that there was not one word of complaint during their three years in their "garret" — not even about the toilet facilities which consisted of one house bathroom complete with bath!

"Friends of Buchan" gathered together on opening day to see the Lord Lieutenant of the county, Captain C. A. Farquharson, cut a ribbon held across the door by five glamorous members of the staff.

Captain Farquharson planted a Betula jacquemontii to mark the event.

Here and there

BEM for Bill



Friends and colleagues gathered in Dumfries to congratulate Bill Brack, a ganger at Nithsdale Forest District, (S) after he was presented with the British Empire Medal by the Lord Lieutenant, Captain J. G. Milne Home (above).

Bill started work with the FC in 1951 and has been active in trade union affairs for many years at local, regional and national level. He has been a member of the FC Industrial & Trade Council since 1979 and a member of the S(S) RAC since 1984.

In addition to bringing up five children of their own, Bill and his wife do sterling work in fostering children from broken homes placed in their care.

Early sales!

North York Moors forest district marketed over 37,000 Christmas trees last year — and have already made a start on this year's sales! Two trees were sold in July to be featured in a brochure promoting Christmas food hampers.

That's the Hansa!



In the swim . . . the N(E) Conservancy crew who entered a raft in the annual RNLA/Hansa Lager raft race at York. The intrepid quartet of Mike Lawrence, Julia Wright, Hazel Pearson and her daughter Linda, with Ernie Smith providing back-up, set forth on a two-mile course in a raft built by Dalby Workshops. In spite of being mistaken for ladies-only team (you'll have to stop shaving your legs Mike!) they won the mechanical section, returning with a shield and supply of the sponsor's product. N(E) Conservancy have the Hansa!

Fans flood in . . .

For two days the heavens opened over Harrogate during the Great Yorkshire Show in July. But keen show fans were not deterred by the sea of mud and attendance at the FC stand was high. Younger visitors enjoyed the play equipment in the picnic area while parents discussed woodland grants. Visitors to the exhibit included Professor Bell of ADAS and the Minister of Agriculture from Zambia.



Four members of the Forestry Commission who have won their first-aid instructors' certificates — Michael Strachan, Hugh Milner, Ian Temple and Andy Smith, pictured with Mrs Cathy Bryson who organised the course. They are now able to run first-aid courses, appointed person courses, and basic half-day courses for all industrial and non-industrial staff in their respective areas.



Kenny Clark, BEM, with his wife and Gordon Cowie, South Scotland Conservator. Kenny is now enjoying retirement after just short of 50 years' service . . . see Page 10 and 11 for more retirements.

Taking a day out

The Forestry Commission recently organised a four-day symposium on behalf of the International Union of Forestry Research Organisations (IUFRO). The symposium, entitled "A systems approach to forest operations planning and control," examined the application of computer systems to forest operations management. Based in Heriot Watt University, Edinburgh, it was formally opened by the director-general, Mr Gwyn Francis and FC speakers included Wilma Harper, Alan Betts and Eddie Arthurs.

Delegates (right) spent a day in Aberfoyle Forest District and visited restocking and harvesting sites and the David Marshall Lodge. A social programme, including a coach tour of Edinburgh and dinner, complete with haggis and piper, provided an enjoyable break from the technical session.

The proceedings of the symposium will be published later this year as a Forest Bulletin.



— ANOTHER ROLE FOR THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL —

FIT FOLK AMONG THE FESTIVAL FOLK

Yomping away, Kielder fashion

QUESTION: if a *Yuppie* is a young upwardly mobile person, then what's a *Yomper*?

Well if the 3rd Kielder Folk Festival is anything to go by, the answer is a youthful, obviously masochistic person! and very mobile!

Yomping gained in popularity after the Falklands conflict, writes James Ogilvie, management officer, Kielder Forest District.

For those in the dark, it consists of running / walking / stumbling over considerable distances with a 20 lb. pack on your back.

In the case of Kielder the eight stage course covered a total of 17 miles.

Competitors for the Yomp and the fell race came from far and wide. There was even an intrepid three-man FC team from Corris Forest District in Wales.

Age is less important than attitude and fitness where Yomping's concerned: the oldest competitor was 59!

For those slightly less masochistic runners, a fell-race also formed part of the morning's events.

One of the more unusual competitors was Sally — an English sheepdog — who seemed to enjoy every moment. She teamed up with her owner Wendy Dodds — well known in fell-running circles — to complete the 17-mile course in a time of 4 hr. 5 min.

Thanks to efforts by the Kielder Tourism Development Action Programme, media coverage of the festival was good.

The event attracted a film crew from Anglia TV who were compiling a national network series about holidays in Britain.

As well as filming more active forest pursuits like running and horse riding, the camera crew turned their attention to the folk events.

While informal, impromptu performances were being given by buskers outside the Community Centre, more serious competitions were being held inside for singers, accordionists and Northumbrian pipe players.

Ceilidh

During the evening, a folk concert attracted a large audience who were drawn by such names as Maire N'Chathasaigh and Chris Newman.

Their powerful combination of clarsach, guitar and vocals has been featured several times on national radio.

For devotees of folk music, the festival continued with a scheduled ceilidh in the Kielder Club.

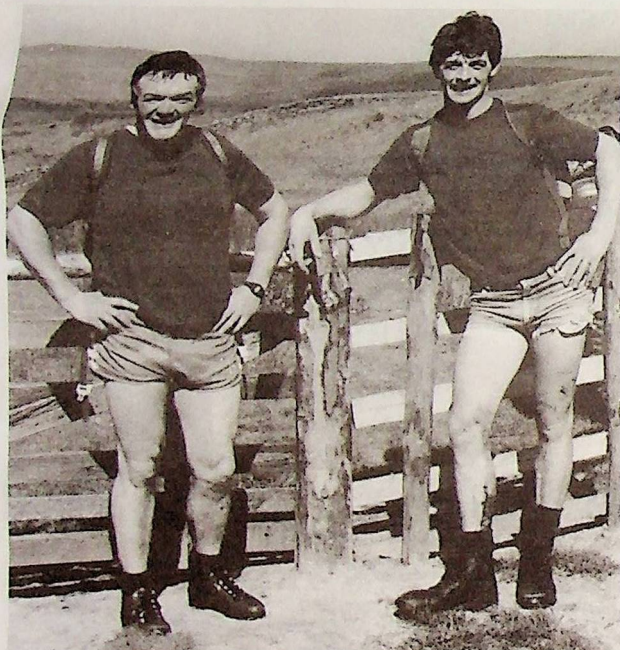
Among the players were two sisters aged 10 and 12 who charmed the gathering with a performance of gigs and reels played on fiddles made for them by their father.

Meantime, more energetic festivalers were indulging in Scottish country dancing at the Community Centre, to the sound of the Peter Wood Dance Band.

The efforts of local Forest District staff, spearheaded by Bill Burton, head forester (environment) all helped to make this year's Festival a great success.

NOTE THE DATE NOW!

Next year's event — the 4th Kielder Folk Festival — is scheduled for the weekend of 12/13 August. It is proposed to involve more in-house talent, so any of you "Slasher readers" who are also folk musicians, yompers or fell-runners should note the dates in your diaries now!



Off on a yomp ... Dai Thompson and Sinclair Carghill.

One that got away

THE HQ Angling Club, in the persons of Doug Goddard and Joe Russell took off to Badenloch in Dornoch Forest District, N(S) in June to sample the delights of fishing for wild brown trout.

Their base was the Gorvald Hotel — justifiably billed, writes Doug, as the remotest hotel in Britain.

Hopes of filling the hotel's freezer proved unjustified, however, as all the fish which gave themselves up seldom made ½ lb.

If the fishing was scarcely memorable the sight of a herd of some 200 deer on the way down to Loch Badenloch certainly was.

Equally memorable, in a different sense, was a wasted day in which our intrepid duo made heroic efforts to carry their hired outboard motor over three miles of bog in a vain effort to locate their boat.

Bored by the slow pace their dogs, Gemma and Scratch, decided to set off in hot pursuit of a duck. It ended with Scratch, Joe's six-month-old pup, swimming across the loch and disappearing over the Caithness border in a brave attempt to put



Doug pictured with the day's catch on Loch Badenloch.

something bigger than ½ lb. in the 'pot'!

Only Joe's welfare officer background and sheer exhaustion (on both our parts) prevented disciplinary action being taken when Scratch's returned an hour later!

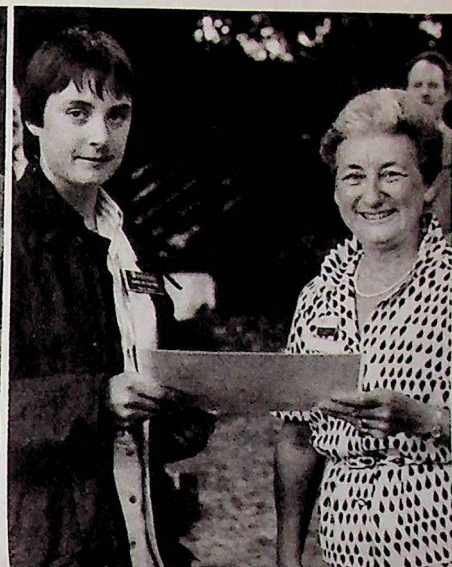


Special deer trophy for Fred

Special presentations were made by the director-general, Gwyn Francis, and his wife Audrey at the Royal Show at Stoneleigh, Warwickshire.

Above: A special award for skill in deer management was made to Fred Courtier, who recently retired after 40 years in the industry. Mr Courtier (age 60) from Ashurst, Hampshire, received the Balfour-Browne Trophy from Mr Francis. This award is administered by the Forestry Commission and the British Deer Society.

For 18 years Mr Courtier had been responsible for



managing the deer herds that roam the New Forest, and since 1976 held the post of head forester, wildlife, for the Commission's East England conservancy. His first major responsibility was establishing a mammals section at Alice Holt research station, and this was followed by promotion to game warden, HQ, and the training of Commission staff in deer management.

Right: Mrs Audrey Francis, presents Carolyn Potter with the Moxon Silver Medal certificate awarded for the "farm woodland and forestry area exhibit of most interest to the professional visitor."

Vince goes on trail of gold

Just as we went to Press, Vince Thurkettle, training officer, Ae, was heading for Foix in the South of France to take part in the world goldpanning championships.

Vince, who lives near Dumfries, has travelled all over Britain panning for gold and has also been to Ireland and Finland.

"This is my first championship attempt," he said. "I should learn quite a lot from meeting other competitors from all over the world."



How to get a kick out of life . . . get out there and win, girls!



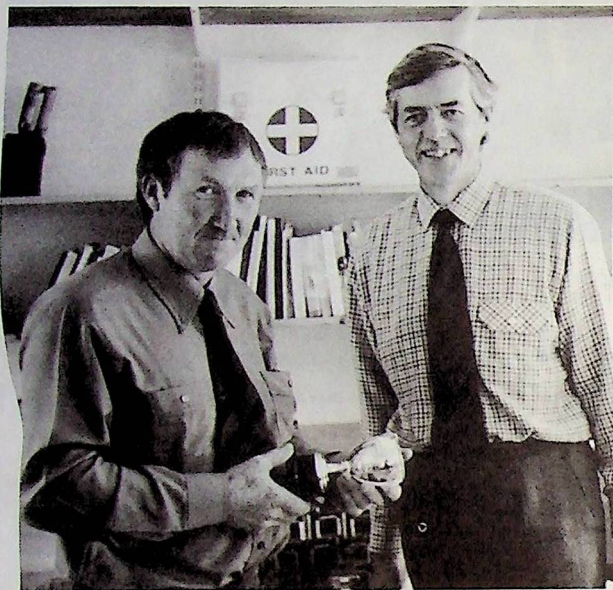
The sexy sextet of Corstorphine.



Pool . . . David Goldie, Isobel Cameron, Iain Agnew and Elaine McPhail.

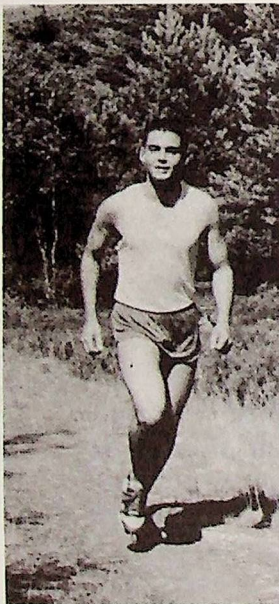


Mid Scotland celebrate a basket, but not a kiss in sight.



Perfect score

Vic Pardy, senior ranger 1 at Ringwood (Dorset FD), won the Kings Cup at the W(E) Rangers training day and shooting test in July with a perfect score of 90 out of 90. This is the first time the maximum has been achieved in the history of the competition and, understandably, Vic was delighted to receive the Kings Cup from Mr Roger Bradley (Commissioner), when he visited Dorset FD. Vic explained the secret of his success: "I went for all neck shots. It is always chancy. If you miss the target area narrowly you incur a penalty, or get not score at all. It is everything or nothing, and this year it paid dividends."



These sporty types!

JOLLY good sporting types, what? Of course we are!

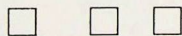
You name it, we'll do it . . . football, running, shooting, golfing, pool, basketball. And hunting the haggis. Do we read right . . . haggis hunting?

Yes, that's right, as you'll learn when you read on, but first let's concentrate on LES GIRLS!

The collection of lovelies at top left, for instance. They represented the FC at the Edinburgh area Civil Service Sports Association big sports day at Muirhouse — and so keen have they become on football that they later organised a challenge match against a side from the Dept. of Agriculture for Scotland, then went into merger talks with a view to forming a Civil Service team and getting involved in regular competition in a women's football league. Obviously, they are getting a kick out of it . . .

The six are (back) Lesley Smallman, Mary Irvine, Sharon O'Neill, Katherine Dewar; (front) Pam Leitch and Joanne McAuley. Lovely lasses . . . lovely sports!

Not to be outdone, other members of the fair sex got themselves involved in pool, basketball, added their shapely muscles to the tug o' war team, and used their brain power to get among the winners of the Question of Sport quiz (in which David Niven took over the role of David Vine).



Running mate

Another success (left) . . . by Chris Allwald on his way to success in the Galloway Fun Run. We hope to have more about the event in our next issue.



Commissioner Derek Rutherford (admin and finance) checks up on his team's fitness.



David Niven with quiz queens and kings.



Mid Scotland take a breather.



Twenty-one FC golfing enthusiasts from throughout Southern Scotland and Northern England gathered at Lockerbie for the annual medal play competition for the Fotheringham Challenge Cup, now in its 56th year. It was won by David Gilmour (with cup), harvesting forester at Peebles, with a 2 under par 65. Second was Fergus Patterson from Hawick Workshops (66) and third Rob Swailes, forestry contractor from Newcastleton (69). Jimmy Carruthers, president and organiser of the competition, is at back left.

And what was that we were saying about haggis hunting?

Some considerable miles away from the Civil Service sports, other sporty types joined in the open meet of the Grampian Haggis Society at Leith Hall, near Huntly in Aberdeenshire.

Our reporter tells us it was a beautiful day, perfect for bringing the haggis to the surface and encouraging them to "run" (usually in ever-decreasing circles).

The FC team — of Bob Cartledge, Cecilia Cartledge and Ray Batham — were out to aid "Telethon '88" in an event with the aim of catching ten haggis in the shortest possible time. The Highland Haggis Hunters — as they called themselves — bagged their limit in 20 minutes and gained second place. More importantly, they won a bottle of Glenfiddich and raised almost £70 in sponsorship.

It was all the more creditable since Bob was the only experienced haggis hunter in the team, having gained his experience hunting wallabies in the moorlands of North Staffordshire before joining the FC.

Two of the haggis took to the water to escape our team, all to no avail. They were fished out by Ray Batham who went into the pond up to his waist. This is where the Highland Haggis Hunters made up a lot of time, the other teams being somewhat reluctant to take a dip!

It was very tempting to chase some of the competitors rather than the haggis, especially one shapely young huntress in micro skirt . . .



Heave there . . . HEAVE!

STEVE O'NEILL reports on a massive survey that involved juggling with 3620 questionnaires

Getting the message across

A major survey on "how to get the message across" more clearly has now been completed.

The task involved every area of the Forestry Commission — and 3620 questionnaires were returned.

They showed some interesting results, as Steve O'Neill reports ...

The Commission's survey into "Improving Internal Communications with Staff," begun early last year in response to a request from the director of personnel, Charles Simmonds, is now complete.

A survey team, consisting of Doug Goddard from personnel division and myself (of the Commission's public information division), were charged with the task of making recommendations to improve the way that information is passed around the Commission.

The first step, canvassing views in the form of an all-staff questionnaire, will by now be no more than a dim memory for many people.

Briefings

All the key recommendations of the survey were endorsed by the executive board at a special meeting held at headquarters in July to consider the final report.

The board also considered a separate report from Bill MacLachlan, management training officer, on how the survey team's main proposal, regular verbal "team briefings," might operate in practice in the Commission.

Now that the recommendations have the backing of the Commission's senior management, a consultation exercise to examine how they might work in practice is already well underway with all heads of division, conservators and forest district managers.

Trades unions are also being consulted under this exercise.

Each conservancy office and forest district has been sent copies of the full report.

In addition, a brief summary of the main recommendations has been sent to all staff — in recognition of the fact that a survey of an internal communications that failed to communicate what it had said would be somewhat lacking.

Delighted

The survey team are delighted with the response from both staff and management.

"We took a great deal of time and care to ensure that the final report would be an accurate reflection of what as many people as possible in the Commission felt were the problem areas," they say.

"With well over three and a half thousand surveys returned — that's nearly two-thirds of the Commission's total workforce — and full and lively meetings at every conservancy and forest district we visited, we are happy that we achieved this.

"It was always very important that we reported on the basis of what the staff thought, not what Doug or I thought!"

Conducting the survey in a scientific and rigorous way, and consulting outside experts and other organisations from both Government and private firms, meant that the whole job took far longer than they anticipated, but was well worth it, we feel.

"After over a year surveying all staff; analysing the full results of every single response on the Commission's computer; and visiting both conservancy offices and forest districts to discuss our ideas, we had assembled a huge mass of data.

"The net result was probably more information about what the staff in the Commission thought than had ever been collected before."

The huge response to the survey delighted the team but created its own problems.

Headquarters data processing division staff had the tortuous task of keying in every single answer on each one of the 3620 forms.

"In the end there were over three hundred thousand responses to key



Two men faced with the major task of collating masses of information ... Steve O'Neill (right) and Doug Goddard.

into the computer," said Doug Goddard. "We are extremely grateful to the data processing staff who helped us.

"This data formed the basis of our recommendations: as detailed an analysis as we could achieve of what the survey told us, leading to proposed solutions that we then took considerable time to discuss with staff at all levels, before making our final recommendations to the

executive board.

Our thanks are due to everyone who helped us at the purely voluntary, but very well attended, staff meetings in Bristol, in Lochgilphead, in Glasgow and in Crondal(!).

These occasions were not only lively and enjoyable from our point of view but invaluable, indeed essential, for what we were trying to achieve.

Final recommendations

The report contains ninety paragraphs, thirty-five detailed recommendations and, complete with appendices, runs to some 128 pages of A4! Copies are held by each conservancy, forest district, and HQ division. The main points from the recommendations are:

TEAM BRIEFINGS: The survey indicated there was considerable scope for improving the way that management communicates verbally with staff.

Therefore, an organised system of cascading information by a series of regular verbal briefings, known as "team briefings," is proposed.

This system, proved in use in the private sector and recommended by the Civil Service's management and personnel office, ensures that national, conservancy and local information reaches ALL staff. It also provides for feedback of staff views to those making decisions at both local and national level.

Education and training branch at HQ have looked into the practicalities of introducing team briefings in the Commission, in conjunction with personnel division, and are also considering what sort of staff training will be required to make it work. More details will follow this exercise.

MANAGEMENT STYLE: This, the team felt, was a sensitive area and one about which it is all too easy to make glib recommendations. However, the survey showed that most people were happy with their relationship with their immediate boss, but that a bit more "openness" beyond that would help.

There is no excuse, say the team, for the "knowledge is power" approach to management in the Commission. The report recommends that all managers in the Commission consider more face-to-face contact with those under their command at all levels; and make arrangements to pass on information that is relevant to the jobs people are doing, even if such information is not actually needed to do the job itself.

WORK-RELATED SEMINARS: The report also looks at the value to staff at all levels of having the chance to get together with others doing the same job, to explore common problems and possible solutions.

There are several areas where this happens successfully now, usually at a fairly senior level, and the team recommends that there is scope for the Commission to extend this practice. The

AT A GLANCE ...

- The main recommended improvements are, at a glance: Introduce verbal team briefings throughout the Commission; adopt more open management style; more work-related seminars; introduce a personnel bulletin; adopt colour-coded summary sheets for all formal instructions; and improve distribution.

value of appropriate HQ or conservancy staff attending should also be considered.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS: Existing system of codes and memoranda was generally supported by staff and will be retained but enhanced by improvements to their distribution and targeting. Colour-coded summaries should identify exactly who needs to read, and to act upon, each notice while a more organised central distribution system will tighten up on and clarify who gets what. A nominated officer at HQ will oversee the quality and relevance of all material distributed to staff.

HOUSE JOURNALS: "Slasher" will continue much as before but with enhanced systems for gathering contributions from the field and a greater emphasis on staff views. A new "Personnel Bulletin" will attempt to discharge the duty of the Commission's management to inform all staff of management news and views, thus helping to ensure that there is no pressure for "Slasher" to be used for this purpose.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITY: Responsibility for implementing the recommendations in the report will fall to conservators and forest district managers, following HQ instructions from the DG via the director personnel.

TRAINING: Education and training branch are considering the levels and kinds of staff briefing and training required to make the recommendations effective, in particular with respect to "team briefing."

FOLLOW-UP: The Director-General will nominate an officer in HQ who will be responsible directly to him for monitoring the implementation of the recommendations in the report. A limited re-survey will follow, after two years, in an attempt to gauge staff views of any improvements (or otherwise!) and review whether the new systems are working or not.

What you said ...

When the team first sat down to discuss the brief given by the director of personnel, Charles Simmonds — to suggest ways of improving staff / management communications in the Commission within six months — they foresaw no problems.

"I remember saying to Doug: 'We could write this report now; we know what's wrong as well as anyone!' We were to have our preconceptions rudely shattered," said Steve O'Neill.

Eighty-one percent of all staff in the Forestry Commission feel that they are doing something really worthwhile in their jobs, while 79 percent have a perfectly satisfactory relationship with their immediate boss. That IS good news!

The survey revealed an overwhelming response to the idea that verbal briefings — or even "the Grapevine" — were by far and away the most useful and effective form of receiving information. That's not always the way it happens now, however.

	%
Senior management too detached	79
The grapevine is useful	71
Face to face briefing is useful	69
I don't see the conservator often enough	59
I don't see a board member often enough	73
Verbal briefings are regularly held	18

This was substantially re-inforced at the Survey Team's field meetings where the idea of a more structured approach to verbal briefings was roundly endorsed, and so this forms the bedrock of the Team's recommendations for improvements.

Somewhat to the team's surprise, however, was the vote of confidence for the Commission's codes, memoranda and other forms of formal written communication. "Don't change it!" was the basic response from most people.

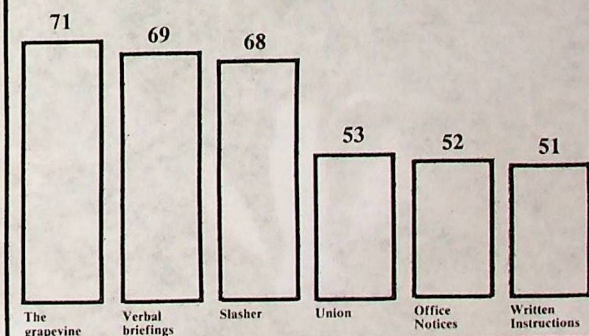
However, problems with the lines of communication in both directions between Headquarters, Conservancies and Forest Districts were a major bone of contention. The "team briefing" system, better summarising and distribution of written material, and encouraging a more "open" management style where information is made available on more than a purely "need-to-know" basis, all attempt to address these issues.

Topic	Not Satisfactorily Informed	%
On major policy decisions	75	75
On reasons for organisational change	78	78
The success (lack of success) of their section, branch or squad	62	62
The success (lack of success) of the forestry commission	73	73
Forthcoming sports and social events	68	68
Training opportunities	68	68
Career development	77	77

Most people are happy enough that they get adequate instruction on HOW to do their own jobs — for example, nearly seventy percent feel satisfactorily informed on health and safety issues — but many feel less happy that no-one tells them in what context they are operating. The report's recommendations, therefore, go into some detail on the responsibility of ALL managers to use the "team briefing" system to ensure that two-way, relevant and comprehensive communication is structured and regular.

The "forestry family" is not entirely unhappy, however, according to the survey. Eighty percent are happy to speak their minds to their bosses and feel they are making a worthwhile contribution at work.

A clean breakdown of staff reaction (in percentage terms) to the question concerning their most useful sources of information is shown below ...



Come on you artists

THE first Forestry Commission staff art competition last year was, we believe, a modest success, and the judges were very impressed by the quality shown in paintings, drawings, woodwork and sculpture.

A number of items were offered for sale and there was one which was in great demand from potential purchasers. Two pictures were donated for display in FC premises.

The competition is to be repeated this year and the same rules will apply (Copy on application to the Editor).

There was a demand last year that the categories of entry should offer more opportunity for craftwork and we are happy to oblige. To ensure we get it right, would those who wish to enter their work, please state what they intend to submit and we shall see whether there is sufficient support for additional classes.

WILDLIFE
SPECIAL

HEN HARRIERS

OTTERS

BADGERS

DORMICE

ADDERS

FALCONS

In its supreme position in many areas of Britain, the Forestry Commission has the unique advantage of being in the forefront of the fight to preserve our wildlife. In this special feature, we bring together many examples of our efforts to safeguard wildlife, and to attract even more of the various species back to their habitat.



Taking a peek... and there on your left is the answer to our Page One puzzle.

Yes, tourists and ornithologists have been flocking to a Forestry Commission hide for a unique chance to spot a family of hen harriers at close range.

Their discovery led to a major combined operation to safeguard the parents and their chicks while at the same time affording the sight-seer a splendid view of a rare sight.

One prime example of the lengths the FC goes to in its efforts to preserve — and to attract — wildlife.

The hide is at Strathory, Easter Ross, in North Scotland.

The hide nestled beside a new FC car park and viewpoint overlooking a spectacular series of meltwater channels, and their presence was discovered during the final stages of the car park's construction.

The facility was quickly sealed off and the location of the nest was kept very quiet while advice was sought from the RSPB and the NCC on the possibility of opening the site to the public. Both organisations were enthusiastic, and gave much help.

Four of the five eggs hatched in early June (three male, one female) and as soon as the chicks were old enough to regulate their own

body temperature, FC staff began their delicate task in earnest.

A detailed log was kept, and other species of birds sighted from an observatory, long and low, and a cuckoo and sparrowhawk were seen there. A 24-hour watch was kept on the site for the duration of the bird's stay and the hide was manned by FC staff and volunteers from the MCC, RSPB, and the local Club, and increased members of the public.

By late July the birds had dispersed but many sightings of both adult and young are still being reported.

The car park has a purpose, which was formed 15-18 thousand years ago by meltwater rivers in and around the area.

• The pair of red-backed shrikes which nested in a bush FC carpark successfully reared two young in the Fyne. So far as is known this is the only breeding pair in Britain.

Both sexes have a prominent white marking on their rump.

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OTTER HAVEN DRAWS THOUSANDS OF VISITORS TO ISLAND

Skye-high spot!

THE otter haven and observation hide created by the FC on the Isle of Skye is living up to its expectations as a tourist attraction.

In the past two months, thousands of visitors have made their way to Kylerhea in the south in the hope of seeing these delightful creatures.

And on the day when the observation hide was officially opened by Dr J. Morton Boyd, the Commission's conservation consultant, invited guests and media representatives saw SIX of them turn up on one just as he cut the ceremonial ribbon.

Dr Boyd said, "This is a great example of how the Commission is opening up its forest and facilities and creating and maintaining wildlife habitats."

"The public are becoming more aware of the wildlife and recreation resources that the FC provides and I hope that more of the land area it manages will be developed for outdoor enthusiasts, possibly with the introduction of more forest parks."

"Praising the work of staff to create the new otter ponds and build the observation hide, Wester Ross Forest district manager,



Dr J. Morton-Boyd (FC conservation consultant), Ron Johnston (forestry district manager) and Rosemary Green (Vincent Wildlife Trust)

Ron Johnston said, "We are delighted the haven has already proved so popular. Apart from anything else it will help the tourist industry on Skye."

"Throughout Wester Ross there is a need

to provide recreational facilities for the visitors and I believe that what we are doing on our Balmacara estate is an example of how we can

HOW YOU CAN HELP THE BADGER TO SURVIVE

Stop this badgering!

SCHOOL groups visiting the Forest classroom at Haldon are asked to suggest animals that may live in our forests.

One which crops up immediately is the badger, so typical is it of Britain's woodlands. When the children are asked how many have ever seen one, the number of raised hands takes a steep decline!

This is not only true of children; young adults have never seen them, other than perhaps dead at a roadside.

Maybe this is because it takes special effort to watch nocturnal animals. For those who do go to the trouble, it is well worth while, especially if you see them behaving quite naturally, oblivious of your presence, playing or feeding together.

Although they have few natural enemies, badgers are faced by persecution from man. Badger digging and baiting have been going on

for years, but has been on the increase, at the animal is no longer found in some former strongholds. It's a problem which should not be underestimated.

I recently went round some sites that I know well with an expert who pointed out the tell-tale signs of part digger what I had taken to be the un-touches. I was even shown a "baiting pit," into which the badger would be placed along with the dogs — for what some call "sport."

Anyone who knows of a badger set can help to stop this activity by simply being aware of

the things to look out for, and, if suspicious, call the police.

1. Men, singly or in groups, with spades and shovels.
2. Cars or vans parked in groups, with spades and shovels.
3. Unusual sounds of digging.

Signs of a digger's activity include: a sharp smell of ammonia or of the tell-tale signs of part digger what I had taken to be the un-touches. I was even shown a "baiting pit," into which the badger would be placed along with the dogs — for what some call "sport."

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Falcon finds new home

Visitors to Galloway Forest Park's Fun Week in early August had the rare opportunity of seeing a peregrine falcon at close hand.

Alan Mealey, recently appointed conservation ranger for the park, brought with him a two-year-old male he found with a broken wing in his previous post in Strathbury.

"He won't be able to fly again but I hope to get a female to mate with him next year," said Alan, a falconer since he was 14.

His seven-year-old daughter Jenny is also an enthusiast and with her is one of the many other visitors who showed a keen interest. It's none other than Tom Weir, the broadcaster well known for his outdoors programmes on radio and television, such as Weir's Way which took him (and his viewers) the length and breadth of Scotland.



SNAKES ALIVE!

A fear of snakes is believed to be the most common of phobias.

Unfortunately, snakes go off to a very bad start in life by receiving bad publicity within the first few days of the life cycle. They are born with a fear of snakes tend to pass their dislike on to their children.

"Boys Own Annual" invariably had a story about a giant python, with an illustration of a man named Caruthers bravely fighting off the monster reptile (100 ft. long) which had just attempted to swallow his horse.

These daring tales of bravery only helped to increase my interest in reptiles and, living as I did then in India, I was lucky enough to have a father who quickly saw to it that I was able to identify the poisonous from the non-poisonous varieties of snakes around our home and also how to catch them. He taught me also their importance in the food chain — particularly as a major predator of rats and mice.

I have, however, suffered a few mishaps in this country. Twice I have been bitten by adders through careless handling both bites being extremely painful.

An incident also took place in the unlikely setting of a fish and chip shop in Somerset in my last school year. While waiting for my order to be wrapped I put my hand in my pocket to find some loose change, only to discover that my "pet" female adder had crawled out of my pocket and vanished into the depths of a fish and chip shop without carrying pain and general uproar among the customers!

Dormice are protected species and need a specialised habitat of hazel, hawthorn, bramble, oak and ash. To encourage them the Commission is putting up action boxes and forming dormice "bridges" by training trees to meet over paths.

Apart from preserving the existing population it is hoped this may encourage them to spread.

Mr Ingram's study, carried out on behalf of the Commission and the Woodland Trust, is helped by the discovery of the distinctive method the dormouse has of eating hazelnuts.

The big clue

"It is different from the squirrel or the woodmouse because it makes a neat circular hole in the side of the shell that has a smooth inside edge."

"It is a foolproof" evidence of a dormouse population," said Mr Ingram, who is one of only a handful of licensed dormouse handlers.

"I studied dormice for two years in Leicestershire and came up with only one small population so I was thrilled to find one in Devon."

Northamptonshire. "It was a very old creature — about the size of a golf ball when I found it — and it was very old."

"I was a bit of a fool when I found it, but I was very lucky to find it. I was a bit of a fool when I found it, but I was very lucky to find it."

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The headline in the local paper next day read: "Battered Adder & Chip!"

Sadly, the snake was never found although the whole chip-frying operation had to be discontinued by pest control officers.

On a more serious note, adders are a most useful link in the food chain, feeding mainly on short-tailed voles and other small mammals.

Over the years I have marked many individual snakes on Commission land in order to discover the distances they travel, their length of life and more information about their prey.

Occasionally one may come across a melanistic adder as I did the other day on the Brendon Hills (see picture) in company with Eric Smith, senior ranger, Somerset and South Devon, and Derek Stocker (H.K.).

• Report by ROBIN KHAN, H.R. Conservation, West England Conservancy.

FOOTNOTE ON A MAN OF THE WILDLIFE



After our concentration on wildlife in this page, we need off to a rather nice place, a man whose working life has been almost entirely devoted to the study of wildlife.

We refer to Laurie Tre, who retired recently after 44 years' service. His robust character and individuality have made him well known throughout the Commission and a large number of friends and colleagues, past and

present, gathered together at Alice Holt to wish him and his wife Valerie, a long and happy retirement.

Arnold Grayson, director research, presented him with a cheque which Laurie said he intended to use to buy a computer work desk. Clearly he has been interested in computers in his life and in retirement.

Enjoy the days and years ahead, Laurie!

The badger... faced by persecution from man.

Let's speak out more forcibly

● **KENNY MURRAY** introduces his TUS column, the first of hopefully a regular series, and issues a challenge to the Commission . . .

IT seems rather appropriate, writing this article on the Glorious Twelfth, to comment on the recent vicious attacks on the Commission from professors, land-owners, conservationists, environmentalists and politicians.

Unlike the grouse, the Commission has not been flushed out by the aforementioned

beaters — it seems to many staff that we are nesting comfortably in the heather awaiting our punishment.

Forestry bashing is in season and many have found their latest cause célèbre. They may have a point; they may be correct.

But if they are not, *why does the Commission not put its views against the anti-forestry lobby forcibly forward?*

Forestry is an emotive issue and no organisation should be as emotive about itself as the Commission. Staff are asking, "What is going on?" and "why are we not saying more in our defence?"

What this organisation needs is a morale injection and nothing would be better than Forestry Ministers giving a positive statement of support to the Commission, expressing confidence in its future as an invaluable public asset.

I DO NOT WISH to say too much at the moment regarding the pay and conditions package for industrial staff, but suffice it to say the non-industrial unions wish the TGWU and GMB all the very best in their negotiations.

Sore point — NUCPS forest officers and IPCS — as unions representing the managers who will be dealing direct with colleagues in the industrial workforce — were promised sight of the report in order to make informed comment and submit proposals.

This did not happen and the unions feel they have been landed with a fait accompli while their members as managers are being instructed to "sell" the package.

NEGOTIATIONS on the car-leasing scheme continue, with the TUS attempting to condense the official side's proposal of a contract down to a simple agreement instead of what has been offered.

I have never seen the Treaty of Versailles but I imagine the proposed contract is quite close in terms of length and complication! Your union should keep you informed.

THE TUS has become concerned regarding the recent tendency to designate an increasing number of posts as "open opportunity."

The official side has also introduced prerequisites of qualifications to some posts thereby disqualifying many from applying.

An admin member summed up the feelings of many recently, when he said, "Aye, I can remember the days when Promotion Boards were open and competitive — in fact I almost remember when we had Promotion Boards!"

QUOTE OF THE QUARTER . . . "The line between industrial and non-industrial personnel is now clearly blurred" — Charles Simmonds (with kind permission).

FRAZER LINDSAY, Head of Information, writes:

As Kenny says, forestry has in recent years been in the forefront of public comment. The expansion of the forest area is central to the activities of the Forestry Commission. It is a force for change in the countryside where developments of any kind can be often controversial. So it is not surprising that it is under scrutiny and indeed it is proper that it should be.

Ask foresters in Sweden, Germany, Australia and India as I have done this year, and you will find that the debate is taking place world-wide. The topics may differ slightly, but the underlying issues are the same.

Some of the comment enters the political arena, and we cannot anticipate Ministerial decisions in public. Our job is to publicise and promote existing forestry policy. The Commission has not shrunk from publicly answering the often ill-informed attacks of conservationists and the environmental lobby, or seeking publicity for the "good news."



Can anyone out there help young Marcus?

IT'S all a question of, if you want to find out anything, then ASK. To be silent when needing help is to remain ignorant.

Here are two examples . . . ONE: Marcus Matthews (15) of Warminster is currently involved with writing a book on "Big Cats Loose in Britain."

He has seen a puma on Exmoor and a lynx on the Mendip Hills and suggests that Forestry Commission land provides ideal habitat for these secretive beasts due to the dense cover offered by many conifer plantations during the early growth stages.

Last year the "Beast of Exmoor" hit the headlines and during the 1970s there were reports of the "Surrey Puma" in both local and national newspapers.

If anyone has information regarding sightings of any "big-cats" in forests please could they forward details of date, location and species observed (if known) to Marcus at Horseshoe Cottage, Crockerton, Warminster, Wiltshire, 0985-212479.

From Sweden . . .

TWO: The Chilterns Forest District, situated as it is in an area of high population, receives many requests for information and assistance during the course of a year.

Recently they received an unusual request from a Swedish student at the Institute of Archaeology in London. She wanted to borrow an increment borer. Before agreeing to the loan we obviously wanted to know its purpose.

It turned out that some timbers had been recovered from the mud of the Thames when excavating a wharf which had been rebuilt following the Great Fire of London in 1666.

On inspection it was found that these timbers came originally from the upper deck of a sailing ship. Apparently such timbers are rarely found, not even in shipwrecks, as they usually break up quickly and are easily detached from the wreck.

The timbers are being conserved by controlled, slow air-drying and cores require to be removed from them every two months to estimate the rate of drying. The whole process should take 18 months to complete. Having found that this method of control was successful the institute have now bought their own borer!



Before the July meeting of the Industrial and Trades Council, Derek Rutherford (Commissioner, administration and finance), made a presentation to Arthur Mills to mark his retirement in September after 28 years as a full-time officer with the Transport and General Workers' Union. Arthur first became a member of the ITC in 1972; had been chairman of the Industrial TUS since 1976; and secretary since 1984.

Birthday Bill bows out with more laughter

COLLEAGUES and friends of Sherwood head forester Bill Bollard sat down to dinner on August 5, to celebrate his retirement.

The event coincided with Bill's 60th birthday and he was greeted with a hearty "Happy birthday to you."

Mr Norman Dannatt, AC operations E (E), recalled with humour highlights (and firelights) of Bill's career during which much of his time was successfully devoted to fire fighting.

On Bill's own admission he was to become known as the "Fire King" and he later captivated guests by recounting hilarious episodes of his exploits involving fires, reports Terry Birch.

Bill commenced working (and fishing) in 1949 at Kershope from where he progressed to Gwydyr and Benmore Forester Training Schools in 1950 and 51.

In 1952 and 53 he served as ex-school ganger at Wykeham and Dunnerdale.

During 1955 he was promoted to assistant forester at Dalton and took charge there from 1957 until 1959.

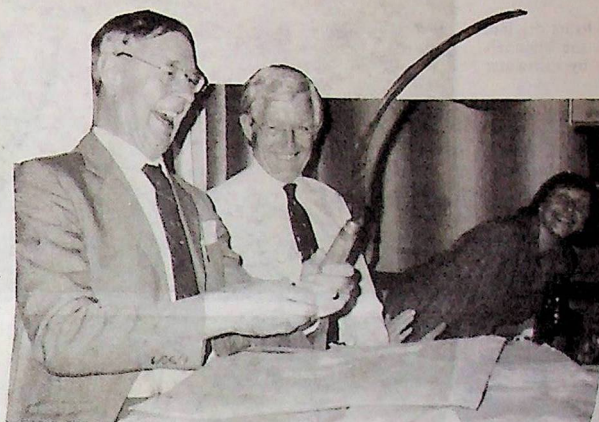
Bill's next move was to Foremark as assistant forester in charge and while there, he was promoted to forester.

Bill was transferred to Delamere in 1965, promoted to head forester in 1971 and moved back to Dunnerdale in charge.

In 1979 he took charge of Matlock, and finally arrived at Sherwood as district forester FM in 1982.

At Sherwood, Bill became somewhat of an expert in the use of chemical control and weed growth.

In recognition of this asset and his natural flair and to encourage him to



Laughing Bill . . . birthday Bill . . . or the Fire King. Call him what you will, here's a picture to sum up Bill Bollard's happy retirement party — complete with rusty sickle.

widen his horizons in the field (and his garden!) his colleagues and friends contributed to the appropriate armoury to do the job.

Mr Dannatt presented Bill with a rusty sickle, a bottle of Roundup and a large "hi tec" lawnmower.

Bill's wife, Winifred, received a basket of flowers, from Mavis Hinds, AO at Sherwood.

Bill's expertise in forestry, his cheerful humour and most of all the famous "Bollard laugh" will be missed greatly.

He will be living on the edge of Sherwood Forest for some time, so if conditions are right, it is hoped that the laugh may still be heard occasionally to remind us that he is not far away . . .

Another well-known character, from another area, has also retired — Ted Baldwin, regional FO II, research division.

D. B. PATERSON (P.Silv.N.) reports: A party of 66 past and present members of research division and wives, gathered in Castle Douglas for the dinner to recognise Ted Baldwin's retiral after 39 years' service, spanning sample plots and Silviculture North outstation and region work covering S(S) and N(E).

Calvin Booth conveyed the director's good wishes and John Keenleyside presented a large cheque from well-wishers but not before giving us an insight into life at the Forestry Schools and Ted's role as goalkeeper — a cherished photograph of those involved being presented also.

John McNeill then read the latest Silv(N) instruction which required Ted to account for having stayed 26 years at Mabie and for 3500 second-hand tatter flags and presented his famous measuring stick.

Bill Brown of tree improvement branch presented SS clone 492: the parent of which Ted had irretrievably lost.

Ted then made a valiant bid at the Guinness record for research retiral speeches, making reference to a tomato alarm clock from time to time and getting gold-wrapped mints confused with the butter.

Irene was not forgotten for her hospitality to researchers and was gifted a crystal rose vase.

We wish them both a very enjoyable time in retirement.

● Two more pages of retirement reports — Pages 10 and 11.



Brian in final again

BRIAN HAVILL, last year's winner of the Devon County Show felling competition, was again a finalist this year (in June) . . . but this time had to be content with fourth place.

The competition was held on FC land at Haldon Hill, Exeter, on what was described as "the last good day of summer!"

Out of about 25 entries, half of them were FC fellers or contractors. Scots pine were felled in the first round and the five finalists were tested by 2-3m Sitka spruce.

John Hunt (centre) FDM of Somerset and South Devon district, presented the prizes.

● The Page Nine Theme on **OPENING . . .** features a tribute to a forest ranger; a Royal opening for a museum and visitor centre; the inauguration of two parks — at Tummel Forest and Moors Valley; and an open day to mark 50 years in the Forest of Dean.

In memory of Roy . . .

A lifetime's links with forestry were marked in May with a special tribute to a ranger.

Roy Collings, who was at Amptill, part of Chilterns forest district, died last year after a long fight against cancer.

He had a long association with the Forestry Commission, having spent his childhood living in a house in a Commission wood in Norfolk.

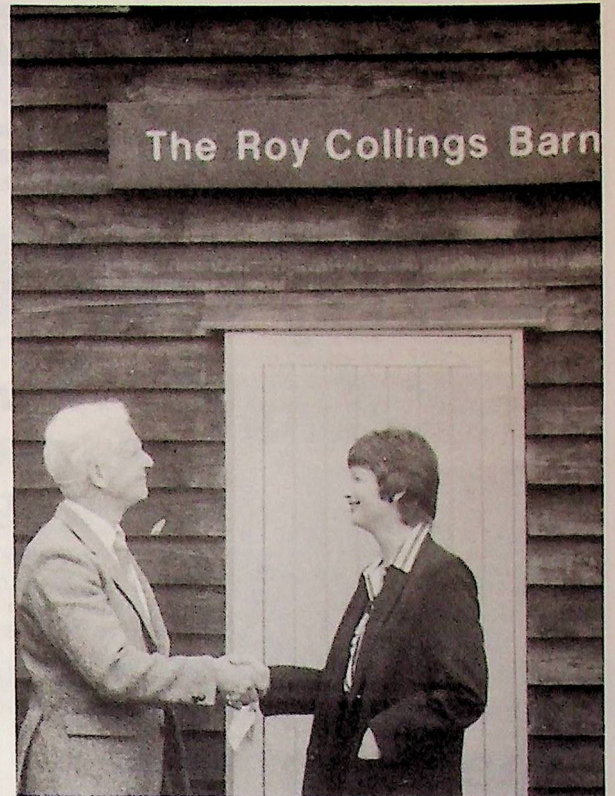
He joined the the FC in 1963 and moved down to Amptill in 1965. Although he had been a ranger for only a few years, he had for a long time had a great interest in wildlife and regularly hosted events with the local Natural History Society in a barn close to his house in Maulden Wood. In his memory the barn has now been re-named the 'Roy Collings Barn.'

Our photograph shows Mick Din-

ning, Conservator for East England, with Roy's widow, Lynn, following the naming of the barn.

Among those attending the ceremony were local forest staff both past and present and members of Bedfordshire Natural History Society.

It is intended to use the barn as an interpretative centre for the many school children who visit Maulden Woods.



Two new parks



Alistair Scott and Provost Alex Murray study the new Tummel Forest Park leaflet.

TWO new parks have been opened this summer, with the Tummel Forest Park becoming the fifth in Scotland and the twelfth in Britain.

The other was at Moors Valley which, although conceived by the East Dorset District Council, has strong links with the FC.

The Tummel project was inaugurated by Provost of Perth and Kinross District Council, Councillor Alex Murray.

The park incorporates almost 16,000 acres in Highland Perthshire with the main blocks being Craigvinean, Faskally, Allean, Glen Errochty, Drummond Hill and plantations on both sides of Loch Rannoch including the ancient Caledonian pines in the Black Wood.

Mr Murray told guest at the ceremony, "This is a development which in my view is long overdue and I am sure that Park status will attract many more visitors to the excellent facilities that already exist."

FC director (PF&S), Alistair Scott, said, "Plans are already being made to supplement these facilities without damaging the essential nature of some of Scotland's finest forest."

Tummel Forest Park woods are close to the tourist centres of Pitlochry, Dunkeld, Aberfeldy and Kinloch Rannoch and the focal point will be Queen's View which, with its associated visitor centre, draws more than 180,000 visitors a year.

The official opening of Moors Valley Country Park near Ringwood was carried out by Mr William Waldegrave, Secretary of State for the Environment, in July.

Paying tribute to the initiative and enterprise shown by East Dorset District Council in conceiving the project and seeing it to fruition, Mr Waldegrave complimented the Forestry Commission on playing their part.

The proximity of Ringwood Forest and the willingness of the FC to encourage its use by the public had given an exciting new dimension to the country park.

W (E) environment officer, Martin Orrom, who had agreed the initial FC involvement, attended the opening ceremony with Oliver Lucas, Dorset FDM.

Two weeks after the opening ceremony, Moors Valley was visited again — this time by Mr R. T. Bradley and Mr A. H. A. Scott on their tour of W (E) Conservancy.

The 300-space car park (all on FC land) was almost full, and the visitors were told that this is a normal occurrence.

Conservancy staff were able to discuss plans for development with Mr Bradley and Mr Scott, and several useful ideas came out of the visit.

GOLDEN OPEN DAYS

AN open day was held in the Forest of Dean in July to mark the golden jubilee of its existence as England's first National Park.

With up to 6000 visitors on the Sunday, it was decided to extend the exercise to the Monday so that schools could be invited.

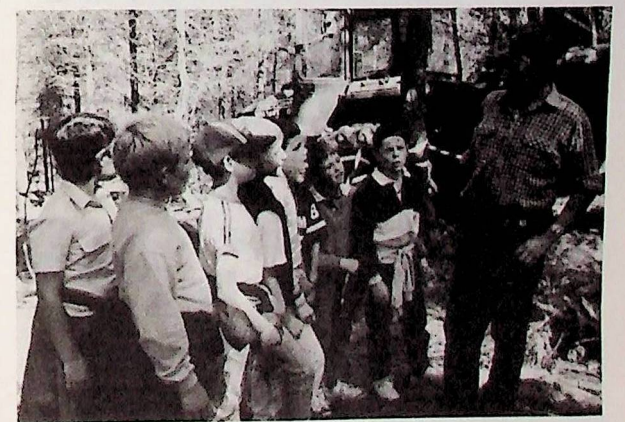
Object of the open days was to show the general public, not only FC work past and present, but also to give them an idea of the many and varied groups using the forest for their recreation.

All locations received their fair share of visitors, but the harvesting site, showing the contrast between one horse-power extraction and Forwarder

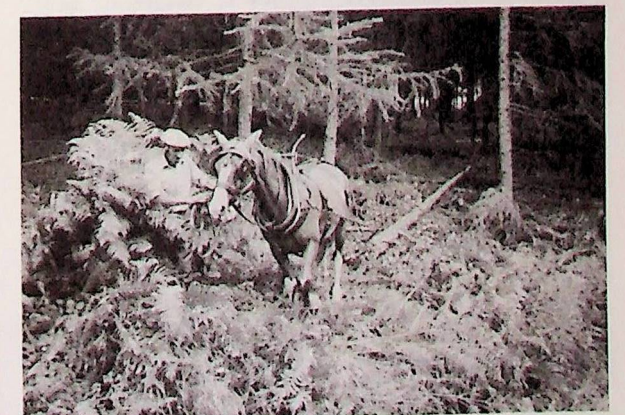
extraction, was popular as was the work of the rangers which gave visitors a rare chance to see snakes at close quarters.

Outside organisations ranged from a demonstrated rally car to the RSPB and the various events included orienteering, chair bodger, rustic work, tent peg-making, local History Society, Gloucestershire Trust for Nature Conservation, and others too numerous to mention.

During the same day more sculptures were shown to the public, an extension to the already well known Sculpture Trails, with environment officer, Mr M. H. Orrom, giving over 80 people a guided tour during the afternoon.



Above, Forwarder driver Glynn Williams chats to a group of children. Below, the contrast . . . a horse-extraction scene in the forest.



Edinburgh Oak presented

The New Forest Museum and Visitor Centre was opened by the Duke of Edinburgh in June.

FC deputy surveyor, David Perry, was a member of the welcoming party and New Forest keepers formed part of a guard of honour.

Our photograph shows the New Forest operations manager, Roger Newland, explaining a point to the Duke at the Commission's exhibit.

The Royal visitor was presented with an oak which has now been planted at Knightwood as the Edinburgh Oak.



Take a seat Jim, old boy!



SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO JIM

... from the tree
you planted
long ago

THERE cannot be many people who have a garden seat made of planks sawn from a tree they planted. **Jim Henderson** has — but it took 50 years to get it!

After more than 50 years with the FC in the Aberfoyle area, Jim has retired. At a ceremony at Aberfoyle, Dr Alan Low presented Jim with his "exceptionally long service certificate" and his colleagues and friends presented him with a magnificent garden seat, complete with brass plaque.

There cannot be much that Jim has not done or been involved with during his distinguished career.

He started at 14 years old in Loch Ard Forest in August 1937 where, with the exception of 4½ years' war service, he spent most of his early working life.

He was one of the original teams set up to supply material for the Fort William Pulp Mill.

He was not just a very capable feller, he was an accomplished winch operator too. In fact anything that Jim did was to a high standard of skill.

Jim was good with people too. From 1977 to 1984 he ran the Cobleland Campsite as warden. Right up to retirement he still assisted with "campsite problems," and will no doubt continue to do so as he lives right next to the site entrance.

In his latter years of service Jim became a familiar sight throughout the district in the summer months mowing grass on picnic sites, visitor centres, etc., etc.

At Christmas time he was often to be found at the David Marshall Lodge selling trees. His polite manner and efficient packing methods were recognised by many members of the public.

It is hoped that Jim and his wife, Muriel, have a long and happy retirement, with many hours of pleasure spent together looking over their immaculate garden from the seat made from the Scots pine that he planted all those years ago.



Jim and wife Muriel sit it out ... surrounded by old friends.

Two BEM's sign off ...

In our last issue, we briefly recorded the retirement of three valued colleagues in Scotland ... people like Valery Vasilieff, BEM, better known as Joe.

Here are further details of their service, together with pictures ...

Valery (Joe) had 37 years' service at Clatteringshaws in South-west Scotland.

A Ukrainian by birth, he suffered the typical privations of those who detested the Russian and German regimes of the war period.

He eventually arrived in South-west Scotland and joined the Forestry Commission, married a local lass, and his integrity led to promotion to Ganger. Thereafter whoever thought of Clatteringshaws Forest thought of Joe. His supervisors came and went but Joe knew his forest inside out.

At Joe's own request his departure was kept simple and at a small ceremony Peter Kelly, who has known him all those years, presented him on behalf of colleagues with

photographic equipment to assist with his main hobby of wildlife photography.

Brian Sturges presented some DIY equipment on behalf of all other FC colleagues past and present and Gordon Cowie, Conservator South Scotland, presented Joe's long service certificate and (much to his surprise) unveiled a seat in his honour to be set at the Deer Museum looking out over much of the scene of his working life.

Another holder of the BEM, **Kenny Clark**, head ranger, retired in March after 49 years' service.

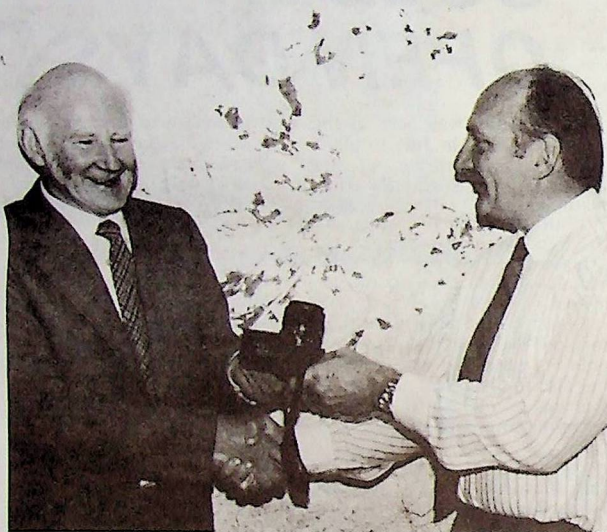
He worked throughout South Scotland including Changuie where his father was a forester, Fleet, Dalbeattie, Ae and Moffat forests.

In 1971, he was awarded the BEM and the Balfour Deer Trophy for his contribution to Wildlife Research knowledge.

At a dinner dance in the presence of a total of 90 of his family, friends and colleagues, Gordon Cowie thanked Kenny for his loyalty and priceless contribution and presented him with a model of a keeper and his dog, presentation malt whisky, the shotgun he had used for the last 40 years, and a cheque.

● See Kenny's picture on Page Two.

The last of the ploughing foresters ...



THE retirement of Dave Waugh, the last full-time ploughing forester in the Forestry Commission, co-incided with the end of large-scale new planting (and expansion) of the FC which required a full-time forester to plan and co-ordinate the ploughing programme.

During a career spanning 40 years starting in S(S) Dave moved on to NW(E), E(S) and finally N(S) in a variety of posts in forests, nurseries and E&T branch.

His wide knowledge and obliging nature involved him in much additional work including first aid training, plant health duties, school liaison and FC displays at agricultural shows.

Above, Dave (left) is presented with a camera from staff by Sandy Calder, PF&EO N(S).

Poet Arthur writes last line

A poet of the forests, **Arthur Frankland**, retired this month.

After 33 years keeping Cleveland Forest in order, Arthur, a senior ranger, bade his farewells to North York Moors Forest District on August 24.

His talents were employed to build roads and weld barriers, to clear snow and swipe rides as well as to carry out the more usual variety of ranger duties.

He says the FC always took first place ... now it is the turn of his wife Betty.

Arthur is a published poet and no doubt he will be composing some new verses in retirement.

Bob Kidd, ganger, retired in July at Ingleby Incline. As a fitting finale to 24 years' service based at Guisborough and in the presence of a rapidly diminishing band of colleagues, FDM John Mackenzie paid tribute to Bob's consistently valuable, though unsung work — like his knack of starting recalcitrant generators on dark and freezing winter mornings at the Christmas tree sales point.

Bob was presented with a mechanical weeder which, it is hoped, will be particularly useful since he is having to take premature retirement because of persistent back problems.

John Sivyer retired on May 6, after nearly 32 years with the Commission. John started as a driver at Caio Forest, South Wales, and later became foreman before transfer to South-east England. Then in August 1981 he became workshop manager at Glenbranter, West (now Mid) Scotland.

Mid Scotland, CME, Mike Compton paid tribute to John's special qualities and recalled a number of amusing incidents in his career.

John received retirement gifts of a shooting stick, a hip flask (suitably filled with John's favourite malt), tankards, and a sum of money. John's wife, Joan, received a bouquet of flowers presented by DCME Jim Mair's wife, Fiona.

John and Joan have moved to Doncaster to be near family and friends in Yorkshire.

OBITUARY

Executive officer

JOHN FYFE, a former executive officer with the Forestry Commission, has died suddenly at the age of 76.

John worked in the Glasgow and London offices before coming to Inverness in 1957 where he worked till retirement in 1976.

Mr Fyfe is survived by his wife, Anne and two sons.

BRYAN THOMAS CURTIS of Llandovery Forest District, Wales Conservancy, died on June 26, aged 62.

He was a skilled forest worker who began working for the FC at the old Talybont forest in 1951. He transferred to Crychan forest in 1966 and was medically retired in 1977.

Brian Curtis was a popular worker who was experienced in both FM and H&M working.



Joe and his wife sit it out ... on the seat presented by friends and colleagues seen gathered here.

Forrest of the forests

AT Glentress, many friends and colleagues gathered to mark the retirement of Craftsman **Dave Forrest** from Lothian and Tweed Forest District after 33 years service with the Forestry Commission, both with the forest management squad and the harvesting team in the Tweed Valley forests. His friendly manner and wide range of skills earned him great respect from workmates and foresters alike.

Presenting him with a long service certificate and the gift of money from his workmates, District Manager, **Roger Muir**, said that one of Dave's last major projects had been the building of a splendid footbridge on a forest walk in Glentress.

The bridge from now on will be known as **Dave's Bridge**.



Dave Forrest with some of his many friends and his retirement gifts.

Meetings of old friends

Plans are moving ahead to bring together retired staff of the Forestry Commission in local branches.

REPRESENTATIVES of retired staff from each Conservancy and Headquarters joined the steering committee at a meeting in May to discuss the setting up of branches of the FC Retirement Association throughout the Commission.

As a first step representatives are contacting the employees and retired staff who have already indicated an interest in joining the

association. They are being invited to a meeting to be held in each Conservancy and HQ to discuss the setting up of branches and local groups in their areas.

An official of the association told "Slasher": "It would be helpful if others interested in joining the association who have not yet replied to the circular letter sent out in February would do so as soon as possible."

It is hoped that as many employees and retired staff as possible will attend the meetings to enable the association to get off to a good start.

Just a few more coppers

THE Post Office & Civil Service Sanatorium Society have announced an increase in membership contribution rates from next October.

The rates will be:

- 42p a week / £1.82 a month for members;
- 21p a week / 91p a month for pensioners and beneficiaries.

This means an increase of 6p a week for members; 3p for pensioners and beneficiaries.

During 1987 over 28,000 members and their beneficiaries were helped by the society — the number of consultations increased by 19 per

cent and in-patients treated increased by 12 per cent. Major development work has begun at Benenden which will cost over £4 million.

Costs of the consultation service to members increased by nearly £300,000 and further increases in demand are anticipated during 1988 and 1989. However, the society are confident that the increases will allow help to a greater number of members.

• If not already a member of the society, you can find out more by contacting: PO & CSSS, 63 Catherine Place, London SW1 6HE. (Tel: 01-834-5022).

FORESTRY PEOPLE ... FORESTRY PEOPLE ... FORESTRY PEOPLE ... FORESTRY PEOPLE ...

Gwyn says his farewells



GWYN Hughes, Assistant Conservator Operations in Aberystwyth, has retired after several periods of ill health since his return to Wales.

At a gathering in the Aberystwyth office, Conservator John Morgan welcomed Gwyn and his wife Pat and outlined Gwyn's career since he joined us as assistant education officer at Gwydyr Forester Training School in 1958. (The education officer at the time was the DG!).

Gwyn subsequently held posts at Cambridge and Neath, then was for nine years district officer at Dolgellau including the forests of Dyfi and Coed-y-Brenin. He is better known to people throughout the FC and indeed other European Forest Services as a result of his appointment as chief work study officer.

In this period Gwyn's judgement and his practical knowledge and mechanical expertise were evident in the lead given by Work Study on the major change to shortwood working and forwarders and subsequently the start of developments on mechanical processing and harvesting.

In making a presentation, Mr Morgan spoke of the high regard and warm feelings held by all staff with whom Gwyn had worked.

Gwyn thanked everybody for their support, for their good wishes and for the cheque which would be put to updating his photographic equipment.

Family links are to the fore in two other retirements...

Friends and colleagues gathered at Margam to mark the retirement of FOIV David Parnall after 39 years' service. The occasion was unique in the fact that four generations of Parnalls were represented — Dave's mother, daughters, and baby grand-daughter.

Dave, who commenced his career in the South-east, was a Dean Forestry Training School student. For 16 years he has been involved in forest management and recreation in South Wales at the former Margam Forest — currently Afan Forest District.

Mr D. M. Hughes, assistant conservator operations (W), presented Dave with a retirement gift that will enable him to use "hi-tech" methods in his main hobby of philately.

In reviewing Dave's career, Mr Hughes paid tribute to his enthusiasm and loyalty, and wished Dave, his wife Terri, and their family, a long and happy retirement at their new home in Plymouth.

MEURIG JONES, forest worker at Llandovery Forest District, retired after 40 years.

Meurig began work in 1948 in the old Cilgwyn Forest, was transferred to Crychan in 1948, to Tywi in 1953 (where he took part in the large plantings), then from 1975 to 1981 he was involved with ploughing and draining before transfer to Caeo in 1981.

For his last nine months he was back at Crychan where he restocked a clearfell site he originally planted in 1948.

Meurig is the last of his family to work for the Forestry Commission. His father served 4 years, brothers Tommy and Gilbert both 35 years, brother Morgan 7 years and brother Vernon 5 years. A total of 126 years for father and brothers.

With one exception, Meurig is the last to be employed by the FC in Upper Tywi Valley. Forty years ago, the FC employed someone from nearly every family in the valley.



Gwyn Hughes makes his farewells to John Morgan, Conservator.



David Parnall (left) receives his gift from Mr D. M. Hughes.



Meurig Jones with his long-service certificate and head forester Duncan Lee.

Len from Liverpool

Liverpudlian... but fluent Welsh speaker. That's Len Verdin, who has retired after 27 years' service.

An ENGLISHMAN... in WALES... and what's more he was an IRISH guardsman!

Len was evacuated to Llanddewi Brefi from Liverpool in 1941 when he began to learn to speak Welsh. He returned to Liverpool at the end of 1945, then joined the Irish Guards in 1948. His service took him to Tripoli, Germany and Egypt and he was also involved in ceremonial duties in London. There, in 1951, he met his wife who herself came from Llanddewi Brefi. They spent four years in Liverpool

before finally returning to Llanddewi Brefi in January 1961 when he joined the FC.

By now a fluent Welsh speaker, Len spent most of his service with the FC in Tywi Forest, where he was involved in both forest management and harvesting operations. His first job was screef planting in the Cwm Berwyn area.

At a presentation to mark Len's retirement, many friends and colleagues gathered to wish both Len and his wife a long and happy retirement. A cheque was presented by Mr Robert B. Donaldson, Forest District Manager, Llandovery (above).



HEAD forester Tom McGregor retired from Easter Ross FD after working for the FC since 1949, with only a short break in Rhodesia during the 50s. Most of his time was spent in North Scotland and he plans to retire to Morangie where he has lived and worked for the past 10 years.

Tom's cheerful and pleasant manner will be missed by friends and colleagues alike.

His departure was marked by two presentations and a farewell lunch at the Royal Hotel, Dingwall. He received a drill and a shaver from friends and workers at Ardross (he is pictured with them above), and was presented with a chiming carriage clock by Assistant Conservator Alan Mackay on behalf of colleagues past and present.

Duke visits forest display



Steve Scott (district forester FM) guiding the Duke of Edinburgh and John Selwyn-Gummer around part of the site.

AN ambitious effort to recreate Rendlesham Forest at the Suffolk Show ground was seen by the Duke of Edinburgh and Junior Minister for Agriculture, John Selwyn-Gummer.

Our stand, the biggest on the ground, was designed by Steve Scott, district forester (FM), to "show off" the effect of the storm damage on the forest and the subsequent operations to restock.

This was particularly pertinent with the imminent introduction of the Woodland Grant Scheme and the Farm Woodland Scheme.

Simon Hodge, FO II, recorded three interviews with local Radio Orwell on site. The stand was covered on both BBC and ITV. Special mention was made of the effort in local papers.



An aerial view of the Suffolk Show's FC stand, with windblow in foreground.

The Suffolk Show attracts over 100,000 people over two days, and many enquiries from farmers, landowners, conservationists and the public were met by an eager team of staff prepared to put in the extra work required for such an event.

"The Duke of Edinburgh was concerned in our efforts to make good the ravages of the gale," reports Steve Scott who took him

around the site during a five-hour tour. "He was particularly interested in our use of broadleaved species to increase the landscape and conservation value of the Sandlings forests."

In addition to static displays and exhibits based around the Conservancy display caravan, the site boasted an area of windblow trees, a demonstration of safety felling equipment, sawn logs and finished

wood products, replanting and weeding techniques, and a wildlife diorama.

The Suffolk Show is one of four events covered this year by Suffolk FD staff. As well as the smaller Essex Show, a joint ADAS / Forestry Commission farm woodlands events and Forestry Commission open day are being held over the summer months.

DEER WAS THE THEME . . . NOAH'S ARK MIGHT HAVE BEEN A BETTER BET

MUD — AND MORE MUD!

THERE's one memory of this year's Games Fair that everyone will carry for many a day . . . mud, mud, not so glorious mud!

Floors Castle in the Scottish Borders was the venue, and rain the night before opening, plus poor vehicle control on site, turned the place into a quagmire. Even Land Rovers were victims as car after car became bogged down.

The theme of our stand this year was deer — had we known how the weather would turn out, a veritable Noah's Ark scene might have been more appropriate!

OUR stand at first seemed rather out of it, perched on a ridge just below the castle.

We were in good company: Rolls-Royce cars were next door! However, as the scene below turned from green to brown we realised how lucky we were to be holding the high ground and more and more people came up to see us and get a rest from slogging through the slime. There was lots to see: our exhibits ranged from research on acid rain, through the management of small woodlands for pheasants, to a display of South Scotland deer trophies. The stand was set up and manned by staff from Borders forest district.

Foreign praise

The superb Galloway red deer heads attracted particular attention and praise from the many amateur and professional stalkers, including several foreign visitors, who visited the stand.

A new HQ exhibit on modern deer management in upland forests was also on show for the first time. Covering damage, fencing, forest design and population, it fits standard conservancy display frames and is available for loan to anyone staging a wildlife event.

There was also a lot of interest in the new schemes for Woodland Grants and Farm Woodlands Grants.

Of all the shows we attend, the Game Fair has the highest proportion of people directly involved in the countryside, including many farmers and landowners.

It was impossible to see everything in breaks from working on the FC stand. Falcons from the ring below came to us, and the lanner that refused to come down from the turrets of Floors Castle was one of the highlights of the show!

The Scottish Landowners Federation grouse moor demonstration was especially interesting. It showed the consequences of poor heather management and overgrazing and pointed out that the eventual consequence of this sort of

degradation was often sale for forestry.

This fair appraisal contrasted with the general attacks on forestry on the NCC and RSPB stands that are now all too familiar.

There was growing interest in forestry and woodlands throughout the show, a timely reminder of just how much forestry and game management can overlap in multi-purpose woods.

The Game Conservancy were as always at the heart of the fair. The close links we have built with them over the past few years were much in evidence.

woodlands for pheasants have shown that the ideal management for shooting is remarkably close to the sort of small scale, sensitive silviculture recommended in the FC broadleaved woodland guidelines.

An added bonus is the spectacular benefits to other wildlife, especially butterflies, that this project also showed. FC have also made a significant input on landscape, woodland grants and silvicultural management to Ian McCall's recently revised Game Conservancy guide, "Woodland for Pheasants."

At the newly instituted "Daily Telegraph" lecture tent, we heard how the Game Conservancy is enthusiastic about the potential of the Farm Woodland scheme for pheasants, but that "Set aside" proposals don't look like creating favourable habitat for partridges.

Just across a muddy track was the deer farming exhibit. We all thought it rather unfair to the two stags there that they were right next to the Veniburger barbecue!

TONY GOUGH, of Borders Forest District, writes: Despite the weather most people remained cheerful and courteous which greatly helped the staff manning the stand, since the thinking this year was that rather than have a large exhibition, we could go more for direct contact between staff and public.

With this in mind each day was staffed by a cross section of AO's, rangers, scientific officers and forest officers so we could have as large a spread of knowledge as possible by dint of reference to each other's particular field. This worked well, most people being satisfied by the discussion and advice received.

Each part of the exhibition, which contained reference to deer with very good examples of red, sika, fallow and roe heads, pollution (particularly acid rain), publications, layout of rangers' equipment (which included transport with communication and security gun cabinet, high seat, ATC cycle and trailer) generated interest. Visitors' own knowledge created other topics for discussion.

Friday and Saturday had a very high number of people coming through, with a fall off on Sunday caused mainly by that damned weather! But oh . . . how that magnificent backdrop of Floors Castle helped to compensate for some of the discomfort . . .



The Duchess of Roxburghe and a friend with the chairman of the Commission, Sir David Montgomery, at the Game Fair. At left is the District forest manager Peter Edwards.

Training in Kielder



OVER fifty people gathered at Kielder Forest in July for a one-day training workshop. Entitled "Forest 2000 — Training for Countryside Staff," the course was organised by local FC staff and it was designed to tailor the experience gained by FC foresters and rangers to the interests of members of the association of Countryside Rangers.

The gathering included rangers from several bodies; national parks, water authorities, the National Trust and forestry interests.

Through discussion and practical sessions, the workshop focussed on the delicate problem of how to maximise timber production while protecting the environment, an issue of key concern at Kielder, Britain's largest man-made forest.

Representing the ACR, national secretary Peter Holden introduced the association to the gathering, then Bill Burton, head forester (environment) Ltd gave

a presentation on "The changing forest — managing for timber production and nature conservation," which set the scene nationally and locally.

Topic of "The role of the forest ranger" was dealt with by head ranger Peter Eccles.

During the afternoon the group moved into the forest (above), braving the notorious Kielder midgets! Over 200 miles of watercourses are to be found within this forest and much has been done in recent years to improve the habitat for wildlife.

The experience of head ranger, Gordon McReddie was evident when he held a session dealing with deer management, the highlight of which was a "layman's guide to deer galloping!"

Peter Holden said later, "This was a worthwhile and stimulating exercise for all of us. We are pleased with the good working relationship that we and the Forestry Commission enjoy at Kielder."