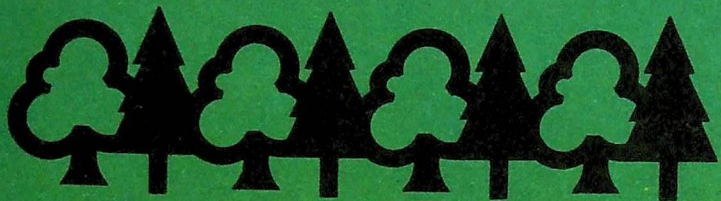


SLASHER



Newspaper of the Forestry Commission

No. 345

March 1990

HERE
AND
THERE

Page Two

★
GUIDE
CALL

Page Three

★
BY
GEORGE!

Page Six

BEAT
THIS
SUPER
RECORD
OF
SERVICE!

THREE generations of one family providing TWO centuries of service to forestry.

That's the proud boast of Bob Hendrie, retired chief forester (research), who has written from Ross-on-Wye wanting to know if this is a record of unparalleled service to the Forestry Commission.

Bob's father THOMAS joined the FC in February 1926 when he took charge of the Santon Downham area of Thetford Chase. This was just seven years after the establishment of the Commission. He retired in 1946.

Following him into service were his five sons...

HUGH served four years with FC: three years with the HGT department.

THOMAS became forester in charge of Buriton Forest (now Queen's Forest). After 12 years he moved into private forestry until retirement.

Bomb missions

BOB started as a nursery boy aged 14 on Thetford Chase, and retired as chief forester (research) at Alice Holt after 40 years' service.

ARTHUR served 41 years, retiring in the head forester grade at Marefield in Sussex.

REX worked for three years with the FC after leaving school, then served with Bomber Command throughout the Second World War (he had 30 operational flights over Europe). After demob he moved to Vancouver Island to work with a lumber firm.

Now on to the third generation...

Bob's son JOHN is forester in charge of Laughton Forest and has 23 years' service to his credit; and Arthur's sons are also in forestry — ROBIN is head forester in Private Woodlands based on Alice Holt (27 years' service), and DAVID is a grade III forest officer at Santon Downham (30 years' service).

Making a total of 199 years... In fact, Bob tells us, the record of service goes well beyond the 200 mark.

Castle worker

For his grandfather was a forester at Dalquharon Castle estate near Maybole, Ayrshire; and although HIS son Thomas had 20 years with the FC, he in fact worked for 55 years in the industry.

Some record... some family! Can ANYONE beat that? If so, let's enter your name in the record books. Write to The Slasher, FC, Corstorphine, Edinburgh. Pictures welcome, too.

● Bob's address, by the way, should you wish to renew old acquaintances, is 4 Vectis Close, Tudor Park, Ross-on-Wye, Herefordshire, HR9 5UL (phone Ross-on-Wye 67784).

● For more about long servers, turn to our retirement columns on pages 6 and 7.

DG at Palace



Director General Gwyn Francis at Buckingham Palace after receiving his award of the CBE from the Queen. He was accompanied by his wife Audrey and children David and Kate.

Carnage strikes again 5m trees feared lost



HERE'S a scene only too familiar to the industry. It indicates yet again the havoc that high winds have brought to forestry in recent years.

The 1987 storm provided enough headaches for the Forestry Commission, headaches that have not yet finally been cured. And on top of that disaster, 1990 has seen yet another windblow. Blow, indeed.

Work is still going on to assess the extent of damage, but it is estimated that up to FIVE MILLION trees have been affected in the first two months of this decade.

Worst hit were South-west England and Wales, and early indications were that more than three million trees had been felled in those two areas alone — but unlike the October '87 storm, this year has seen a prolonged and frequent recurrence of the high winds, which could bring the final tally up to the five million mark.

The scene above is one of about 300 victims at Westonbirt Arboretum in Gloucestershire, which included at least 50 specimen trees. One of them was an Algerian fir planted in 1853.

Because of the damage caused, the arboretum had to be closed for six weeks. Elsewhere, a 200-year-old beech was brought down at Savernake; bridges were swept away in Scotland; and flooding added to the chaotic conditions.

Workers in Perthshire forest district went to the rescue of a family of four trapped in their house in Dalguise, Dunkeld, by rising water.

Mike Cheeswright, the H&M District Forester in Perthshire, offered Tayside police the use of a Bruennet 678F Forwarder operated by Brian Graham and John Wilkinson.

A lorry carrying the Forwarder was used to rescue one family, and the Forwarder went on to rescue another, but one family still remained cut off when the water proved too deep and the current too strong for the forwarder to continue.

Brian Graham, the driver, said that it was his most unusual task in all his 25 years with the Commission in Perthshire.

Police wrote to the Conservation M(S) to thank the Commission workers for their help.

Reports are still coming in, and we will be able to give a clearer picture from around the country in the next edition of Slasher.

But Tony Russell, arboretum superintendent at Westonbirt, was able to give us a preliminary result.

He told Slasher: "It is estimated that approximately

Tree victim

A TRAGIC victim of the storm was retired Chief Forester George Cross, who was killed by a falling branch on January 25.

It was cruelly ironic that a man who had worked all his life with trees should be killed in such a way, said a former colleague.

George was born in Rhayader, Mid Wales, the son of a butcher. When his father died, the family moved to Micheldever, Arundel, Challock in Kent, Alice Holt, Bramshill in Hampshire, then he was promoted to Chief Forester and moved to the New Forest, from where he retired after 46 years' service.

In retirement George took an active part in the community as a parish councillor, chairman of the Non-Descripts and Conservative Clubs, and an active member of Probus.

He leaves three daughters and two sons.

250 trees have been lost, another 150 seriously damaged (some of which will undoubtedly go) and a further 150 with some damage, such as broken limbs and crown reduction."

Majority of trees blown down were large mature specimens, many in excess of 100 years.

Following the first of the storms on 25 January, a Forest Windblow Action Committee, similar to the one which operated so successfully after the 1987 storm, went in to action. It was set up by the Forestry Commission with the support of Timber Growers' United Kingdom, the British Timber Merchants' Association and the United Kingdom Wood Processors' Association.

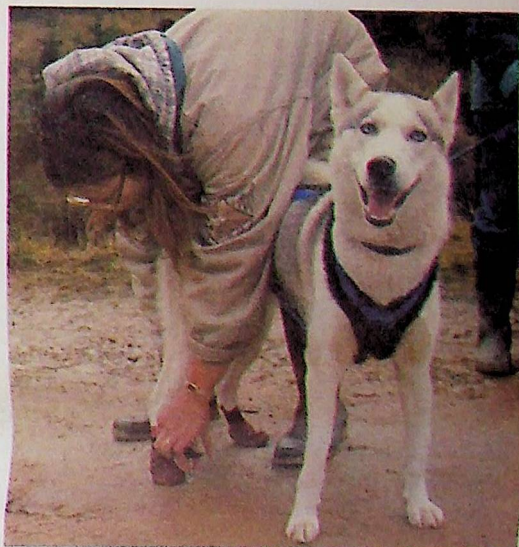
As in 1987 Commission staff in storm-hit areas were called on to help emergency services to clear roads, power supplies etc. This took priority over efforts to assess the number of trees blown.

To help woodland owners trying to find markets for the blown timber, the Commission has provided a series of fact sheets detailing possible buyers.

With the help of UK200 and the Groundwork Foundation it has created a series of 32 county directories, "Marketing for Small Woodlands" covering the counties south of the Mersey-Humber line detailing sawmills, timber merchants and contractors involved in harvesting, marketing and contracting.

More pictures in centre pages.

Paw thing!



... and you can say that again! Paw thing, indeed. Well, wouldn't YOU be foot-sore and weary after covering nearly 20 miles, and towing a sledge, to boot? So my winter booties — that's me being fitted above — were the order of the day after the second great Kielder husky race which attracted 250 other Siberian huskies like me from all over Britain, ranging from Scotland down to Norfolk.

No one could say we were bone idle that weekend in February... bone-hungry maybe, but again wouldn't you be after a four mile race followed by a demanding 13-mile event the very next day! And that bowl below... it looked appetising enough when it first appeared on the scene — a dog's breakfast perhaps —

Continued in centre pages



Future of the New Forest

MANAGEMENT of the New Forest is to remain with the organisations and local traditions that have helped to shape it over the centuries.

A New Forest Heritage Area Committee will be set up and the New Forest Consultative Panel will be reconstituted to represent all interests.

Recommendations in a new report by a review group, represent a clear vote of confidence in the traditional way the forest has been run and a

recognition of its unique importance.

The concept of a heritage area and the setting up of a committee should encourage new ideas with everyone pulling together.

The Commission accepts that the way forward would be for agreement, in consultation with the Countryside Commission, to be reached on revised boundaries to incorporate essential grazing land and the best of the landscape around the Forest's boundaries.

The Commission has set up a

working party in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food and the Department of the Environment to make recommendations as soon as possible.

Chairman of the Commission, Mr J. Raymond Johnstone CBE, said at the launch of the report that it represents a very considerable achievement — "it succeeds in reaching a balance between the needs of protecting the fabric and

Continued on page 2

APPOINTMENTS

David Grundy



MR DAVID S. GRUNDY has been named as the new Commissioner for Administration and Finance to succeed Derek T. J. Rutherford, who is retiring.

Educated at Cambridge where he read philosophy, mathematics and logic for his BA (Hons), Mr Grundy also obtained a M(Phil) degree in economics at Oxford.

He joined the FC in 1982 and is currently Director of Development Division, with 150 staff responsible for economic advice, education and training, work study, forest surveys and health and safety.

Other posts in the Civil Service have included periods with the Ministry of Fuel and Power, the Department of Trade and Industry, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department of the Environment. In 1979 he was appointed economic adviser to the Government of the New Hebrides during the run up to its independence, and later taught economics and planning at the Civil Service College. He is an associate member of the Institute of Chartered Foresters.

Mr Grundy (46), is married, with one son, and lives in Edinburgh.

COMMUNITY FORESTER

DAVID BELL has started work in the Midlands as the Commission's first Community Forester.

David will spend about half his time working with the newly-created Black Country Urban Forestry Unit and will help with the South Staffordshire Community Forest which the Forestry and Countryside Commissions are promoting in conjunction with local authorities.

He will give advice and assistance to landowners, schools and voluntary groups within the area to promote tree planting in built-up areas.

A forester for over 35 years, David has worked the length and breadth of Britain from Glen Affric in the Highlands, to the Lake District and Shropshire, with eight years also spent in forestry research.

New Forest

Continued from page 1

unique character, the well-being of those who live and work in it, and the interests of the 10 million people who visit it each year."

The Review Group was chaired by Mr David Perry, Deputy Surveyor, with membership from the Commission, the New Forest Verderers, Hampshire County Council, the New Forest District Council, the Nature Conservancy Council and the Countryside Commission.

Mr Johnstone referred to the decision — "which I know will be welcomed by many here but will possibly disappoint some" — not to designate the Forest as a National Park.

"The Review Group themselves rejected such a move as inappropriate and over-bureaucratic. Instead they recommended a Heritage Area Committee and this the Government has endorsed.

"The committee will not be just another 'talking shop'... I am sure it is keen to get on with the job."

He concluded that the recommendations "are not something to be put on the shelf and left for historians to mull over. They are a blue-print for the future. Let us work together in putting them into practice."

TUS DIARY

By Kenny Murray

Close liaison answers critics

THE House of Commons Select Committee on Agriculture published its report at the end of January and surprised many with its strong rebuke for the Government over their handling of forestry policy. Many good, strong points were made including a statement to the effect that disposals are contradictory to a positive forestry policy.

The use of contract labour and the issue of health and safety were also mentioned positively so far as the Unions are concerned and the importance of the Commission's social responsibility was also stressed.

One recommendation — which was not unexpected but with which we fundamentally disagree — proposes to separate the FC's Authority and Enterprise functions.

The unions are totally opposed to this proposal which is basically a caving in too pressure from certain anti-FC organisations and lobbyists.

I've yet to meet anybody in the FC who consciously works for either the Authority or Enterprise. The expertise gained through working in one function is invaluable when operating in the other and it is this close liaison and intermingling which is so obviously successful in times of crisis — whether within the FC itself or when weatherpeople get their forecast ever so slightly wrong.

Following the storm of 1987 the Forestry Commission swung into action. It was neither the Authority nor the Enterprise but both functions operating together as the effective team they are. The same applies for the recent gale damage.

If the two functions were separated, where would the Authority be based? What would the future hold for the Forestry Enterprise?

The Select Committee has not even attempted to answer these questions but we know perfectly well that the solution to the first problem would end up being the worst bureaucratic nightmare and the

CONGRATULATIONS...

... to North (England) Conservancy and in particular to Kielder FD on their success in the Laurent Perrier Awards. A great achievement for all staff concerned.

Shortly after the awards announcement, every bottle of Perrier disappeared from shelves worldwide. The staff were understandably relieved to discover however that Laurent Perrier produce champagne, NOT the non-alcoholic spring water, thus a sparkling bottle of bubbly found its way to them from the Conservator. Cheers!

second question's answer would be privatisation.

I can only hope that the Government will reject this recommendation as being totally against the interests of forestry. There are many sound and worthy recommendations in the Report — it is a shame that they may be forgotten about because of this one.

• • •

THE Forestry Unions Action Group (FUAG) came into being on 31 January, replacing the Forestry Commission Trades Unions Working Group on Privatisation and Disposals.

I may be stating the obvious when I say the reason was to give ourselves a slightly snappier, roll-off the tongue title.

The FUAG comprises CPSA, GMB, NUCPS and TGWU. These four unions will be launching a new publicity leaflet at a Press conference on 29 March in London. The return to an all-out disposals programme has necessitated this action and the FUAG are determined to promote and protect the interests of its members through a campaign of public awareness of what disposals means to the country and the FC.

Following the launch of the anti-disposals leaflet, the FUAG will be seeking meetings with other interested bodies, MPs, and ensuring that the public are aware of what can happen in their locality.

We, in the FC, has a good and positive story to tell and the FUAG feel that the work and achievements of its members should be publicised. We also know that jobs are going to be lost and posts will not be filled as a direct result of the disposals programme and the unions involved in the FUAG are not prepared to stand idly by while their members and the FC suffer.

• • •

BY the time "Slasher" hits your desks you should have received your first Team Briefing.

I have received conflicting views on how it has fared but what bothered me was a conversation during which a member stated that the "briefer" would not allow any feedback as the system was a cascade i.e. information going one way.

We discussed this some time ago at departmental level and there was agreement that if the system was to be respected and ultimately successful, "briefer" must allow staff the opportunity of raising questions on the briefing.

If this is not happening then please let your union representative know.

On a final note, I'm sure the Editor of "Slasher" would like to receive more letters from staff and the subject of Team Briefing may be an ideal subject. So if you have a couple of minutes to spare...

MARATHON MAN COLIN RUNS FOR TREE AID

COLIN SAUNDERS of Sherwood is hoping for a big boost towards Tree Aid funds when he runs in the London Marathon on April 22.

An industrial foreman who was formerly with Lockerbie FD, Colin will be wearing a Tree Aid T-shirt on the big day; meantime, he is looking for sponsors so if you can help in any way contact him at Sherwood FD.

Support

Tree Aid itself, a registered charity, is spreading its branches (so to speak) far and wide.

Liaison with Voluntary Service Overseas is reaping benefits with sponsored planting projects in Africa and elsewhere; groups of

"Friends of Tree Aid" are being set up in various areas in Britain; the charity is using major shows such as the Royal Bath to spread the message; and individual efforts like that of Colin Saunders also help to raise funds.

A message of support for "an exciting potential" has been received from the Princess Royal, and Bob Geldof is one of many other personalities to give encouragement.

Contributions can be made by individuals under a payroll-giving scheme, or by covenant, so if you are interested you can get fuller information from The Director, Tree Aid, Mayfield, The Street, Farmborough, Bath, Avon BA3 1AL. Or cheques can be sent direct to that address, payable to Trustees of Tree Aid.

Help to make Tree Aid grow and grow...

FDM John retires

FDM at Culloden, John Keenleyside, has retired after 36 years' service.

More than 40 colleagues from the FC and the nursery trade met at Forres to pay tribute to the big man, best known for his major contributions to research, particularly vegetative propagation of conifers.

CRO(N) Calvin Booth told of the difficulty of making FC's tailor believe the measurements for a forester's uniform to fit John's large frame and long arms! John had a lifetime habit of "all hours worked" but on one occasion he returned late to his lodgings in darkness unaware that his room had been switched and two females now occupied it. Subsequent events are clouded in rumour.

Later on, Hell's Angels were no match for John at Ardgartan camp site and they were seen off smartly. No High Court order was needed.

In the world of horticulture John always excels and the town of Forres and his kirk have benefited from his

generosity. Those who worked with him invariably recall the warmth of his personality and the nursery trade acknowledged his assistant given during their ventures.

Jim Atterson, Conservator N(S), presented John with a carousel projector and cheque and Tony Sharpe gifted a spruce timber section of a graft made by John in 1972 at Drumtochty, prepared and inscribed with the name of his house by the workers at Newton. Tony Sharpe also presented Margaret Keenleyside with a brooch and flowers.

The occasion was also a reunion for retired researchers, among them David Seal, George Taylor, Jim Ogilvie, Ted Baldwin and David Coutts.

John recalled his career, starting at Coldstream, through Forestry School with spells at Wykeham, Ardross, Lairg and Newton as well as in West Scotland Conservancy at Ardgartan.

More retirements: Pages 6 & 7.



John, right, with his wife Margaret and Calvin Booth.

Here and there

MP opens walks



Mr Ian Lang MP is seen on a "test run" after opening two forest walks for the disabled in Mabie Forest, Dumfriesshire. Constructed under the first scheme of its kind in Britain, "Paths for Easy Ways" were designed by the Forestry Commission with advice from Dumfries Council on Disability.

Funded by the local authority, 12 mentally handicapped young men started work with the FC undertaking minor clearance and "tidying up" tasks and helping to build a bridge at a picnic site.

The scheme was designed to offer the youths the chance to acquire new skills and self-confidence as well as develop their physical fitness, and as a result several obtained full-time employment.

Yomp challenge

All right, you yomping enthusiasts. Coed y Brenin has thrown out a challenge for its eighth annual yomp on Saturday, 2 June. This test of fitness, limited to people of 17 and over, involves a 10 to 15 mile route over forest tracks, tarmac road, open hill, bog and rock terrain. There is an inter-FC Forest Challenge Cup for the fastest FC finisher.

For entry details (individuals or teams), sponsorship forms or for ordering T-shirts, contact Mike Yorke, Manager, Government Buildings, Dolgellau, Gwynedd LL40 1LW, who can help to organise camping facilities.

Leg work!



Among phone calls to Dumfries office in South Scotland following the recent gales was one from a worried house-owner. Her concern was whether a large tree in her garden would damage her house if it fell. What was the best method of measuring its height? She had been told to stand facing her front door and observe the tree from between her legs. If she could see the top, all was well — or so the advice had it!

If the method gains credibility, Forest Surveys should go into training.

Motorway trees

National Tree Week was celebrated in Somerset and South Devon Forest District by a combined planting of motorway trees to launch a major scheme to plant thousands of trees alongside roads in the South-west. The first of the trees was planted above the M5 at Sandgates interchange.



Alice Holt cleans up!

No washday blues at Alice Holt... more washday cheers. For the Sandwich student body at the centre, with not a little help from their friends, raised £330 for the TV Children in Need Appeal by holding a sponsored car wash.

Private cars, Commission cars (and other vehicles) all got the treatment with money being extorted (?) from all sides, from ASO to the Director. David Burdakin sponsored the washing of all pool vehicles at Alice Holt; and Paul Ives and the nursery boys helped with buckets, hoses, sponges, etc. — and even washed a tractor!

Conservation and you . . .

WANTED: 16 guides

Sixteen vacancies exist this year for retired foresters, or any available for part-time work, to "help to sell" our woodlands to the public.

The vacancies are available in 10 areas of England and Wales, stretching from Hampshire up to West Yorkshire. Travel expenses are paid.

The idea is that of the Forestry Trust for Conservation and Education, which was registered as a charity just over two years ago to promote a better understanding of productive forestry and to show how it is compatible with conservation.

Communication

The key is to get the public (teachers, children, organised groups, or even individuals) to visit a working forest guided by a qualified forester who would try to dispel some of the misinformation circulating about forestry generally.

Communication skills training, and other course assistance if necessary, would be provided for recruited Trust Foresters by the Commission.

These Foresters are required in Berkshire, West Yorkshire, Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire (one each); and two in each of the following areas: Gwent, Hampshire, Northamptonshire, Surrey, West Midlands and West Sussex.

While experience in forestry operations is preferred, a strong commitment to conservation and a willingness to work with adults (especially teachers) and children is necessary.

If you would like to help the Trust to get across a better understanding of forestry's role in tomorrow's world, get in touch with:

**C. R. L. Gray,
The Forestry Trust for Conservation and Education,
The Old Estate Office,
Englefield Road,
Theale, Reading, Berks RG7 5DZ.**

Charles Gray writes: Forestry in the twentieth century has reflected both the varying policies of successive governments and objectives set by landowners, forest managers and the Forestry Commission. These objectives have increasingly broadened beyond purely timber production to the enhancement and renewal of landscapes, the provision of screening and shelter, the conservation of wildlife, the protection of water catchments and, where appropriate, public recreation and enjoyment.

Visible results

The length of time that trees take to grow, and hence the duration of the forest cycle, does not permit rapid changes in forest management and appearance. Consequently, there is a lengthy period between a

decision to diversify the aims of forest management and the appearance of visible results.

Scope for multi-purpose forestry is least during the first rotation, particularly on inhospitable ground where choice of tree species is limited. This is where most productive forests are concentrated, as the land is too infertile for profitable farming. Many of Britain's forests are still in this first phase.

Limitations

Public perception of productive forests varies from acceptance, even mild enthusiasm, to highly vocal opposition. These antagonistic to forestry frequently fail to recognise the practical limitations mentioned above, nor the sharp contrast between the much-publicised farm surpluses and the serious deficit of home-grown timber, resulting in 86 per cent of UK needs long being imported at great cost.

One reaction to seemingly unsympathetic modern forestry, and loss of traditional woodland cover, has been the movement to save old broadleaved woodlands, designating them as nature reserves, and reviving traditional management practices such as coppicing. These conservation and amenity woods will always be a small proportion of the total forest area of the country, valuable though they are.

Hand-in-hand

Great scope lies in promoting nature conservation and good landscape design in what will be increasingly diverse and uneven-aged productive forests across the nation.

Much is already being done in this direction. The techniques are increasingly being practised, both in public and privately owned forests.

They demonstrate that production and wildlife conservation can go hand-in-hand. As forests become more attractive, many can be enjoyed by visitors for whom facilities are increasingly provided, while others provide income and recreation from sporting use.

The Trust's purposes are to promote this wide-ranging view of the roles of forestry, through practical demonstration of enlightened forest management, showing how timber production and nature conservation can be reconciled in a network of link woods, and to educate both groups and individuals, especially young people, to a fuller understanding and appreciation of the value of forestry.

Factual information

Good intentions for the environment abound. Sentiment is rife, factual information is not.

But while no subject should be left exclusively to the domain of experts, forestry's role in conservation needs foresters every bit as much as it needs conservationists.

So if you can help, study the list of areas above where Trust Foresters are required, and contact me as soon as possible (address also above).

Please help us, so that tomorrow's generations can learn from your triumphs and failures and not just from wishful thinking and nostalgia.

AND THAT'S SNOW-BIZ!



Dreaming of a white Christmas? Well, we were all disappointed . . . although since that festive period there has been an abundance of the stuff.

But Christmas being Christmas, SNOW just had to be provided. And forest staff in the Chilterns came up with the answer: Call in the firemen!

And there, almost hidden under an avalanche of snow, and flanked by two suitable snowmen, are two favourites of children's television.

Yes . . . that's them come out from under the foam but still sheltering under umbrellas. None other than Sarah Green and Philip Schofield, of "Going Live," the Saturday morning TV programme.

They had been called upon to sing "I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas" in a snowy forest setting.

This proved difficult to find in one of the mildest Decembers in memory, but staff at Chilterns FD found the location in Wendover Woods and the local RAF fire tender provided snow in the form of foam.

Watching the transmission the following Saturday it was difficult to tell from the real thing.

The two stars did well to hide the agony of getting very wet and cold. That's Snow-biz!



Sawlog grading in Red and Green

A new system of sawlog classification will be introduced in April for log sales in all seven Conservancies.

The new grading rules, which have been devised by a working party of representatives of the Commission, the British Timber Merchants' Association (England and Wales) and the UK Softwood Sawmillers' Association, will replace the system described in the "Brown Book."

The old classification offered three log grades (select, standard and merchantable) plus an unclassified option. In the new system the unclassified option has been dropped and there is a choice of only two categories (designed Green and Red).

M. F. Gale of Harvesting and Marketing Division told Slasher: "The increasing sawlog supply which will occur over the next 10-15

year has strongly influenced the new rules. It is a commonly held view in the industry that the only market capable of absorbing the greater part of the increase in sawlogs is in sawnwood for the construction industry.

"That means more head-on competition with imported timber than has been the case to date.

"The displacement of imported sawnwood will require comparable standards of quality, specified by the construction industry, and efficient sawmills able to supply the sawnwood at prices competitive with imported costs.

"It is quite clear that for British sawmills competing in this market, the emphasis must be on straightness. Straightness improves both sawn recovery very significantly, and is also closely linked to aspects of quality, including the expected yield out-turn of machine stress graded construction timber.

STRAIGHT

"The specification for the Green category has been drawn up to assist this aim, and the definition of straightness has been selected to meet the requirements of the sawmilling industry, but is one that can be realistically achieved in the forest.

The Red category provides a less exacting standard of straightness and knot size and frequency, accommodating material which fails to meet the Green specification. The Red category will also contain longer length material produced in pole length harvesting, where subsequent cross-cutting at the sawmill is a normal requirement.

The new system will bring further rationalisation to the range of grading practices still evident throughout the country. In addition the system will be used by the industry to influence proceedings associated with the Single European Market and the harmonisation of sawlog grading rules in Europe, due by 1992.

The rules were introduced to FC field staff and trade customers through a series of seminars and courses during November, December and January. Full details are published in FC Field Book No. 9, titled "Classification and Presentation of Softwood Sawlogs."

POACHERS ARE FINED £2500

Two men tracked by Forestry Commission wardens as they attempted to shoot deer in Kirtlington Forest, Newton Stewart, were each fined £1250 when they pleaded guilty at Stranraer Sheriff Court.

The wardens, alerted by series of incidents, were watching the road last October when they saw someone using a handlamp from a car and heard a single shot. They radioed police but before they arrived they traced the car to a layby where again they saw a handlamp being used.

Police arrested driver Colin McCleary of Newton Stewart who could not explain the lamps in the vehicle. Nearby they found John Watson of Creetown hiding in a ditch with a rifle.

Watson was fined £250 for possessing a rifle in a public place, and the rifle and other equipment were confiscated by the court.

Sheriff James Smith told them: "These are serious offences and it is one that would normally attract a prison sentence."

The poachers, who had failed to hit a deer, were warned that failure to pay the fines would lead to 90 days in jail.

Conservation and you New courses

A course in forest operations and conservation for supervisors was launched in December, and four more are already planned for this year, each to last one week.

Dr Richard Britton, wildlife and conservation officer, told Slasher:

"The development of this course during 1989 reflects the overall trend in the Commission's conservation policy to shift the emphasis from protection of special sites to ensuring conservation is considered throughout the wider forest.

"Opportunities for taking conservation into account in all our 'bread and butter' activities must be given an increasingly higher priority.

"The week-long course, initially targeted at Forest Officer III/IV grades with forest enterprise responsibilities, emphasises the need to consider forest management and conservation in terms of habitat types rather than attempting to consider the individual needs of the thousands of different plant and animal species found throughout Britain's forests.

"Conservation policy and legislation are covered on Day 1, followed by two days of mainly fieldwork considering the different habitat types within a forest and how normal forest operations should safeguard these.

"On the final two days an intensive site management plan exercise is undertaken whereby course members survey several areas of forest and then prepare detailed planting and felling plans which incorporate conservation and production objectives.

"Throughout the course there is sufficient flexibility for individual members to research and discuss any areas of particular wildlife conservation interest. The course is run by Education and Training Branch with assistance from Environment Branch, Headquarters."

Courses will take place at both the Ae and Dean Centres but there will be no upland or lowland emphasis depending on location.

The intention is to eventually widen the target audience to include other forest supervisory grades.



Course members in December discussing (snowy) habitat types in a Welsh upland forest at Mynydd Du. From left to right, indicating the Commission-wide interest in this course, are Andrew Campbell (Wester Ross), Vince Thirkettle (E&T), Jim Ralph (North York Moors), Dave Lowe (Marches), Simon Leatherdale (Suffolk) and Bob Clark (Morgannwg).

FORESTS FOREVER

Campaign for wood launched

THE Forestry Commission is supporting a public awareness campaign, led by the Timber Trade Federation, entitled "Forests Forever — A Campaign for Wood."

TTF president, Mr Terence Mallinson, called together 150 people representing timber merchants, importers, joinery firms, furniture makers and other users to launch the campaign. He stressed that the role of the TTF was to act as a catalyst in promoting the case of timber on behalf of all processors and users.

The campaign organisers hope to raise £400,000 each year for the next three years and in the first three months the appeal reached £116,000 with pledges for similar amounts in the second and third years.

The Commission is not donating funds to the campaign, but has agreed to support it and its primary messages. The FC's Head of Information is also a member of the campaign steering committee.

One of the first publications as part of the campaign will be a Real Wood Guide.

For people in the timber industry, it will contain details of forests and timber resources in all major supplying countries — tropical, temperate and northern — and will give up-to-date information on forest management programmes and progress towards sustainability.

For members of the public the campaign organisers will produce a brochure which gives step by step guides to the forests of the world and describes the processes of timber production and wood processing. Its main



message will be that wood is man's most environmentally friendly material.

Mr Terence Mallinson writes in the sponsors' newsletter:

"THE FORESTS FOREVER Campaign has been launched to counter the increase in adverse criticism directed at every sector of the country's timber industry by the media and environmental groups."

"The aim of the Campaign is to tell the true story about timber so that all concerned can make a balanced judgement about the issues involved."

"We know that timber is the world's most renewable resource and environmentally friendly material."

"We also know of the huge steps which have been taken and which are being taken to achieve sustainably managed forests in tropical and temperate countries for future generations."

"And we also know of the major problems facing Governments in tropical forested countries which are seeking a compromise between the need for hard currency from their vital timber exports and the basic needs of their ever increasing populations in terms of land to grow crops and wood for fuel."

"It is not good enough for us to use funds for the FORESTS FOREVER Campaign only to defend the role of our business related to wood and to proclaim the benefits to mankind of continuing supplies to our markets. We must also take part in the vital task of encouraging good forest management, especially in



those regions of the world where public perception here in the UK regards the situation to be out of control.

"We must work with and help our trading partners, in those forest rich regions among the developing nations, to obtain and administer financial support for the development work for specific projects of forest management."

"In this activity, the FORESTS FOREVER Campaign will develop and maintain an ever increasing influence with our Government. The European Commission and Parliament and with the Government and trade delegations of all countries which supply the UK with wood in any form."

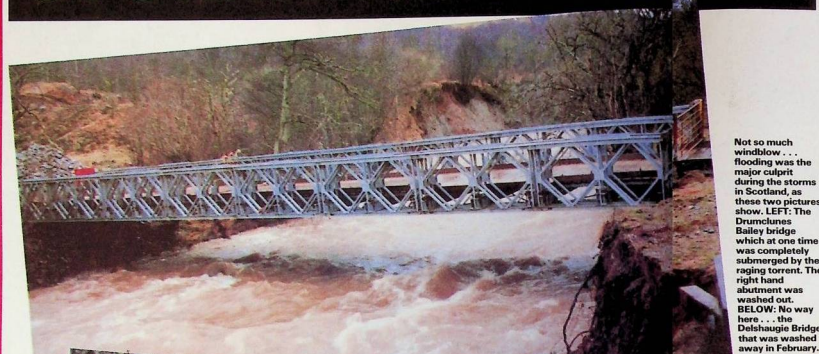
FACTS AND FIGURES

Handouts are already available at campaign headquarters giving information on wood and trees — an unbeatable combination, environmentally and economically — for the UK timber trade and the tropical rain forests, forest cover, utilisation and reforestation.

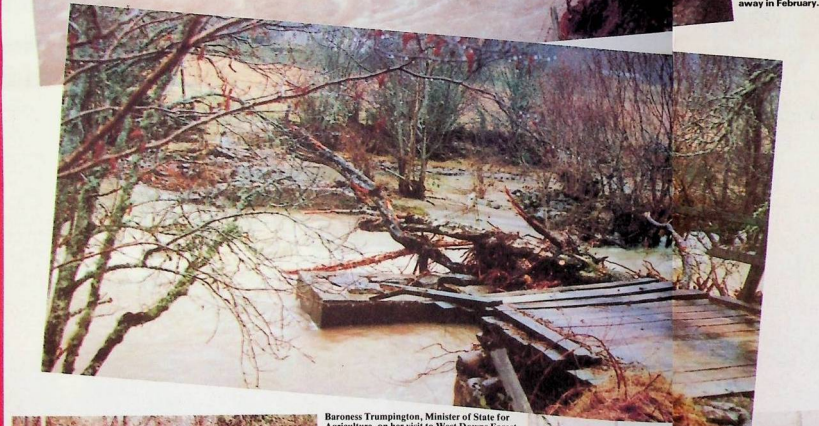
Copies are available from TTF, c/o The House, 26-27 Chesham Street, London SW1W 4EL. Phone (01 839 1891) or fax (01 730 0041). Up to 10 copies will be posted free of charge. For more than 10 copies there is a charge of 2p per sheet.

Trees down . . . and bridges swept away

STORMY HEADACHES



Not so much windblow . . . flooding was the major culprit during the storms in Scotland, as these two pictures show. LEFT: The Drumchurns Bailey bridge which at one time was completely submerged by the raging torrent. The right hand abutment was washed out. BELOW: No way here . . . the Delehaugie Bridge that was washed away in February.



Baroness Trumpington, Minister of State for Agriculture, on her visit to West Down Forest District and Alice Holt Research Station on Friday 16 February to inspect the storm damage at first hand. She met staff from E/E Conservancy and Research Division, and is pictured with Assistant Conservator G. Hatfield. She said she thought the damage in that part of the country compared with that of 1987.

No . . . this car was not a near victim of a falling tree. It helps to demonstrate the colossal size of the 200-year-old beech which fell across the Grand Avenue at Savernake.

GALES OR NO GALES, RAIN OR NO RAIN, SNOW OR NO SNOW THE SHOW MUST GO ON . . .

MUSH . . . MUSH!

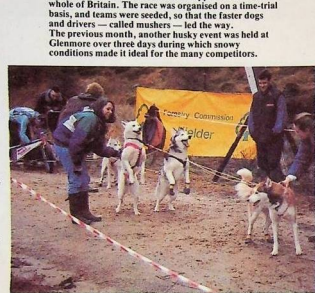
Continued from page 1

but it turned out to be a makeshift foot-bath. Gr . . . just like the thing. Who wants cleanliness when it's food we're barking for?

James Ogilvie, management officer of Kielder Forest, told Slasher that despite torrential rain, this year's event built on the success of last year's inaugural race and several hundred spectators ignored the downpour — or as much as it was possible to do — to see the teams in action. And what "a howling success," it turned out to be, pointed James.

Sponsored by Labatts Canadian Lager, the rally attracted international recognition from American magazine "The Racing Siberian Husky" which designated the Kielder event as the approved site for the whole of Britain. The race was organised on a time-trial basis, and teams were seeded, so that the faster dogs and drivers — called mushers — led the way.

The previous month, another husky event was held at Glenmore over three days during which snowy conditions made it ideal for the many competitors.



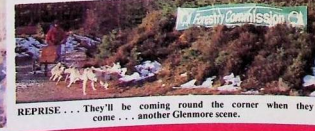
A-RARIN TO GO AT KIELDER . . . just one of the many teams that took part last month in the second great husky race in the North England forest.



ALTOGETHER NOW . . . They'll be coming round the corner when they come . . . they'll be coming round the corner when they come!



UP AT GLENMORE . . . where the combination of snow and huskies provided an appropriate setting.



REPRISE . . . They'll be coming round the corner when they come . . . another Glenmore scene.

Conservation and you . . .

BAT BOX POLICY GREAT SUCCESS

THE policy of encouraging bat population by providing bat boxes in FC forests throughout Britain is paying huge dividends.

From all parts of the country success stories featuring the bat boxes are coming in.

For instance, for the first time in a nine-mile box in Tennymer Forest near St Andrews in Fife, the Natter's bat Myotis natter, a native of Europe, has rarely been known to roost in a made-made box and has never, until now, been known in Britain to breed in a box anywhere in its range.

Careful management of surrounding woodland, involving the protection of trees containing bat roosts and the bats continuing to breed in the boxes, has been the key to success.

The bats usually find their way into a box's narrow entrance using a combination of visual and sonar detection. They feed by ponds, along stream sides and through the open corner of plantations.

Example

Syd House, FD manager for Aberystwyth, is delighted with the success of their bat box scheme and hopes this will encourage more woodland owners to follow their example. The boxes were mounted by members of Fife Bat Group who monitor the results to provide data for conservation measures.

In North Scotland, FC civil engineers and wildlife officers are safeguarding routes in bridges and developing methods of incorporating roost sites into new bridge construction.

Only this month the Commission published guidelines on the conservation of woodland bats. A new publication "Habitat Management for Woodland Bats" (Research Information Note No. 165), by Mrs Brenda Mayle, describes the identification and protection of natural roost sites, and the provision of artificial sites.

All is not lost . . . our forests still survive throughout the country new trees grow and thrive. Redwoods and cypresses from far afield grow in places that give higher yield timber for industry, pitwood for mines. Birch logs for turnery, sawn planks from trees.

Falcons and buzzards soar above the trees. Children at play still scamper through the leaves. Foresters and rangers now on duty maintain the trees and guard their pristine beauty. This message then to folk of every age. Help to preserve our FOREST HERITAGE.

Stone Lea, Rectory Road, Hampton Bishop, Hereford.

JACK JENNINGS.

TO THE RESCUE!

CAN ANYONE REPLACE JOHN'S STOLEN SPUDDER?

It was Land Agent FC in North Wales Conservancy who first told us.

You'll no doubt recall that headline from our last issue when John Hooper, retired FC land agent, of Shrewsbury appealed for the replacement of his old and trusty spudder which had been stolen from his car. John now writes to the Editor: "Thanks for your help . . . The action has been successful and I now have a spudder."

The Editor himself would like to thank the unknown forster who so speedily answered the appeal in our columns and helped out Mr Hooper. It just goes to show . . . Slasher is here to help in all fields.

THE HARD LIFE

The courses are split into six days in various activities like canoeing, caving, abseiling in Glasgow, and "wilderness" days where they camp or are centre based depending on the weather.

The idea is that the youngsters, from genuinely deprived homes, are given hope and the chance to see that there is something more to life than without heating, electricity, and crime.

The society makes a token charge of £20 to each child but their services are free to the district.

Peter Cooper, FDM in Loch Awe, said he was delighted to be able to reward the hardworking youngsters and underprivileged-city kids the opportunity to work. He hopes to between the ages of 13 and 25.

MEMORY TIME

A Christmas dinner in Aberystwyth was attended by 20 members of the Mid-Wales Group of the Kielder Association. An excellent meal provided the opportunity to cheer over old times with former colleagues and friends.

THE youngsters were from the Fairbridge FDM in Loch Awe, said he was delighted to be able to reward the hardworking youngsters and underprivileged-city kids the opportunity to work. He hopes to between the ages of 13 and 25.

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

BY GEORGE!

Here's a record hard to equal

There certainly are some long-servers in Wales, Boyyo! This page alone features seven retirements in the Principality with an average of almost FORTY YEARS of service — a total of 276 years, no less!

And leading the way by a long chalk is George Jones, mobile mechanic at Ceredigion FD, who retired in November after nearly 51 years. Some record!

George began work in Llanafan Nursery straight from school at the age of 14, and later became a lorry driver.

During the Second World War, he served in the Royal Tank Regiment and travelled through Europe. In 1947 he returned to the Commission, where he continued driving, which took him all over the country.

In 1972, George became a mobile mechanic, outstationed from Chirk Workshop. Then with only a few months before retirement, he was transferred to Crychan Workshop at Ceredigion FD (previously Ystwyth Forest).

George had two farewell parties. At the first, colleagues from Chirk and Crychan Workshops got together for an informal party and presented him with a clock (from Chirk) and a set of gardening tools and bottle of whisky (from Crychan).

The following evening at a dinner, the Conservator, John Morgan, thanked George for his many years of service, and Assistant Conservator, David Hughes, presented his long service certificate.

George received a Bosch hedge-trimmer, Bosch jigsaw, a silver tray, whisky glasses (and a bottle), plus a watch and some cash.

His wife Joan, was presented with a bouquet and chocolates by Mrs Mary Jones of Ceredigion.

George would like to thank everyone, through the Slasher, who donated to his retirement.

Our other Welsh farewells in the forests and valleys feature characters in Dolgellau FD, Llandovery, Llanwrst and Newtown...

DOLGELLAU: Just before Christmas, a small presentation was held at the old Corris FD office to mark the retirement of Elwyn Claude Thomas, better known as "Claudie." He has served the Commission for 42 years, having joined immediately following war service in the Navy. Latterly his duties had been those of a ganger.

John Morgan, Conservator Wales, presented his service certificate, and Mr P. R. Sherrington, District Forester FM at Dolgellau, presented a small gift from friends and colleagues.

LLANDOVERY: George Goulding, roads foreman at the civil engineering department, retired due to ill health, after more than 40 years' service.

A farewell party was attended by many of his family and colleagues who saw him presented with his service certificate by the Conservancy Civil Engineer, David Killer.

George was also presented with a carriage clock and cheque by Colin David, Assistant Civil Engineer, Llandovery, and Mrs Goulding was presented with a bouquet by Mrs Ann Moses.

Also in Llandovery, Viv Williams was duly released from FM custody recently after a short period of sick leave. He had been with the FC for 38 years starting in 1951 at Crynant Forest

By SLASHER REPORTERS

before going to Gwydyr Forestry School in 1952.

Apart from post-school work at Alice Holt from 1954-61 he spent the rest of his time in South Wales beginning in Brechfa in 1963, Rheola in 1964, Work Study Brecon as Forester, and then promoted to Head Forester and team leader in 1971. His remaining years were spent back in Brechfa from 1974 where he managed FM work and was responsible for the Sign Unit and FC picnic furniture manufacture.

Mr David Hughes presented Viv with his service certificate and a substantial cheque from friends and colleagues. A bouquet was presented to Mrs Eirlys Williams, who prepared the beautiful buffet for the ceremony.

LLANRWST: T. Iorwerth Jones retired on December 28, after 36 years' service with the Commission.

At a short informal ceremony in the FD office at Gwydyr Uchaf, Paul Tabbush, FDM, presented Iorrie with an artist's easel and selection of oil paints, his favourite hobby.

In recent years "T.I." has been responsible for the repair and cleaning of picnic sites and other recreation facilities on the Gwydyr beat. The standard of his work was highlighted by the many complimentary letters received from the members of the public down the years.

His presence, together with his inseparable companion — his dog Jacko — will be missed by the many who work in or visit the forest.

NEWTOWN: Arthur Jones' 30 years of service began at Caio Forest in the old South Wales Conservancy in June 1959. He later transferred to work at Hafren and occupied a Commission house at what was then the Llwynydd Forest village where one of his first experiences was being cut off for 13 weeks by the snow in 1962. Most of his service was on FM, except for a spell on H&M when harvesting started at Hafren. Before joining the FC, Arthur was head cowman on a South Wales dairy farm.

He now lives in a milder climate at Llanidloes and pursues his DIY and gardening interests. Mrs Jones has for a number of years accommodated forestry students and she hopes to continue with the help of Arthur who will also inevitably be kept up to date with activities at Hafren.

At a small gathering of colleague, Arthur was presented with his service certificate by Bob Farmer, Forest Management Officer, while Forest Craftsman John Mills presented an inscribed tankard on behalf of colleagues. Forester Richard Siddons presented Mrs Jones with a bouquet.

And last but not least, yet another Welsh farewell was to John B. Davenport, FDM Ceredigion, whose retirement and picture are featured on the next page.



FIFTY YEARS ... George Jones receiving his long-service certificate from David Hughes.



FORTY-TWO YEARS ... and Claudie Thomas receives his certificate from John Morgan.



The Jones boys are, of course, in abundance in the Wales Conservancy ... and here are two more of the clan who have retired. Above, Iorrie (or T.I.) Jones with colleagues after receiving his certificate from David Hughes. Right, Arthur Jones receives a farewell handshake from Bob Farmer, Forest Management Officer.



Roads foreman George Goulding with David Killer, Civil Engineer, and (above) another Llandovery farewell, this time for Viv Williams, seen with David Hughes.

Come on ... where ARE all the recipes we asked for?

Remember our invitation to readers to let us have their favourite recipes so that others could enjoy them? It seemed to fall on deaf ears.

The idea stemmed from a letter from Joan Pascoe in Whitchurch, Hampshire, who writes to us again: "What HAS happened to recipe corner?"

Joan's plaintive cry is echoed by Slasher editor, Roy Gregor ... so come in, readers, let us have your contribution. DON'T hide your

lights under a bushel ... there must be other mouth-watering ideas out there somewhere!

Meantime, Joan has come up with another idea that might encourage you to follow suit. She writes:

If you can find a long established hedgerow, not sprayed with herbicides, there should be some well-laden bushes of elderberries. Also if you can stand your kitchen looking like Bluebeard's domain, here is a recipe to deal with winter colds and sneezes!!

ELDERBERRY SYRUP

Cover elderberries with water and leave for a few hours, then stew well. Strain and to every pint of juice add:

1 lb. sugar;
12 cloves;
a teaspoonful of ginger;
a teaspoonful of cinnamon.

Boil for half-an-hour. Bottle when cool. Dilute to taste in hot water.

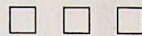
Best wishes: Joan Pascoe, 7 Grenage Bungalow, North Litchfield, Whitchurch, Hampshire RG28 7PT.



The yellow peril?

A bit o' Page Eight fun . . . and providing it are the formation dance team of Alice Holt!

Yes, they do have their moments down AH way . . . and the hilarity here pictured for posterity by Tim Porter of Stats and Computing Branch at Alice Holt was a highlight of the Christmas party there.



We'd like to identify them for you — especially our portly dream in yellow demonstrating his (her?) abilities on the floor — but names, it seems, have been kept firmly under wraps. Anyway, thanks Tim for your snappy snaps!



Spitfire link with forest workers

Memories of a great battle

This summer will see the 50th anniversary of the Battle of Britain, and one of the memories of that great struggle to save the country from the German peril now graces FC headquarters in Edinburgh.

Rescued from the depths of a drawer a few years ago, the small shield pictured here is now on display in the Public Information Division, but it is to be renovated and mounted in a more prominent position.

Tarnished it may be — and the polish of its wood fading — but it is a strong reminder of the part the Forestry Commission played in helping to secure these islands from possible invasion.

And now, as the golden anniversary nears, Slasher is looking for more memories of those dark days. But first, read on for the history of the small shield pictured here. It could jolt some memories . . .

In one of the darkest periods of modern history, the Second World War, a call went out to the workers of Britain to help the Royal Air Force who were to suffer losses defending the country in the summer of 1940 in the great air battle that became known as the "Battle of Britain."

Forestry Commission workers responded to the appeal from the Ministry of Aircraft Production to help to supply aircraft. Their generous donation of £5685 5s 10d helped to buy a Mark V (c) Spitfire aircraft which was ordered on July 19, 1940.

Tally Ho!

In November 1941, Spitfire aircraft number AB-188 rolled off the Vickers Armstrong production line at Eastleigh, near Southampton.

The aircraft was named "Forestry Commission" and entered service with 609 Squadron on December 11, 1941, under the command of Wing Commander M. L. Robinson, DSO, DFC. It had a short life.

The squadron itself, with the motto "Tally Ho," flew patrols over Dunkirk to cover the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force.

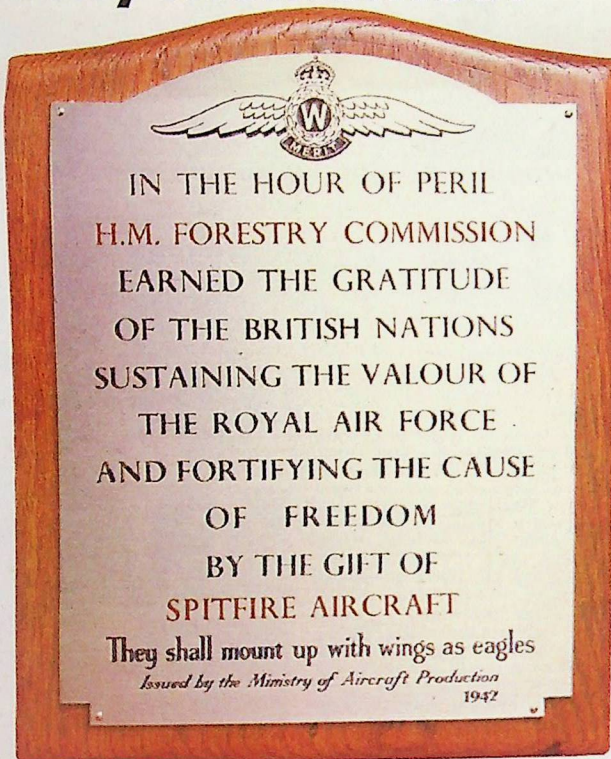
In 1944 the squadron moved to Normandy to provide the 21st Army Group with air support after D-Day, but by then AB-188 was no more.

Little can be traced about the history of Spitfire AB-188 — it is thought it possibly did take part in operations — but on January 22, 1942, just a few weeks after coming into service, "Forestry Commission" was involved in an air accident at Digby, the squadron's base near Lincoln, and was so severely damaged it never flew again.

Later that year the Ministry of Aircraft Production issued the shield of merit to the staff of the Forestry Commission. It reads:—

"In the hour of peril HM Forestry Commission earned the gratitude of the British nations sustaining the valour of the Royal Air Force and

Any mementos?



Battle of Britain memento . . . the shield in Headquarters. Any other information or photographs from former FC workers involved in any way with fund-raising or with Spitfire AB-188 in any form should be sent to the Editor, Slasher, Forestry Commission, Corstorphine Road, Edinburgh. All photographs will be returned on request.

fortifying the cause of freedom by the gift of Spitfire Aircraft. "They shall mount up with wings as eagles."

Our thanks go to the RAF for supplying the information about Spitfire aircraft "Forestry Commission." The Royal Air Force Association (RAFA) have published a book of the memoirs of celebrities who served in the RAF during the war. Proceeds from sales of "Against All Odds" (price £5) will go to the RAFA Battle of Britain 50th Anniversary Appeal.

During their research the RAF were able to trace an Eastleigh man who as a fourteen-year-old boy had had the job of painting our name on the aircraft fuselage.

IT'S THE PLACE TO BE TO SPOT BIRDS OF PREY

IN Haldon Forest near Exeter the Forestry Commission has provided bird-watchers and the general public with a viewpoint which allows them to see a minimum of seven different species of birds of prey — including the rare Honey Buzzard.

Since the site was opened last May, it has attracted approximately 200 visitors each week from as far away as Glasgow in the north, and many hundreds from the Midlands and London areas.

The venue has proved so popular that coaches and mini-buses — loaded with bird-watchers bristling with "scopes" and binoculars — have arrived weekend after weekend.

One small group flew from the Midlands to Exeter so that they could visit the viewpoint in the morning then scour the rest of Devon for other unusual bird species!

Robin Khan, heard ranger conservation, West England, told Slasher, "Individual bird watchers and country-bird societies have shown their appreciation of the work carried out by the Forestry Commission by sending in letters of thanks and contributions to help with the upkeep of the site."

The viewpoint itself is open from March until October each year and a fine interpretive board shows the identification features of birds which may be seen.

Robin advises that the best time to be on site is from 9 am until 1 pm on a fine, warm day when the rising thermals allow the raptors to display or soar above the hillside.

Common Buzzards, Honey Buzzard, Hobby, Goshawk, Sparrowhawk, Kestrel and an occasional Peregrine may all be seen and during the heights of migration — particularly in August and September — Osprey, Black Kite, Red Kite and Montagu's Harrier have all been recorded.

If there are no birds in the air the view is spectacular looking south-west over the Teign Valley and across to Dartmoor.

Above all, by watching from the viewpoint only, the birds of prey are not disturbed in any way," said Robin.

FROM DRAG TO THE REAL THING . . . AND SPOTLIGHT FALLS ON FIVE LASSES

Island challenge



Here's a challenge from the Isle of Lewis . . . is there an FC office in the land with such a bonny bunch of lasses?

This quintette are the clerical staff of Cowal Forest District (Rita, Jessie and Kate at back, with Margaret and Mary in front), and the challenge to match them is issued by Boyd Mackenzie, who took the picture on leaving the Commission a couple of months ago.

In a letter to the Editor of Slasher, Boyd, of Newton Street, Stornoway, Lewis, writes: "You may well want to put out a challenge to other forest districts to match the good looks of the ladies of Conall!"

● The Editor acknowledges that Slasher might be accused of sexism in printing such a challenge (just last year we were censured for what we would venture to suggest was a mild breach of the code), but he points out that this is YOUR paper, it is YOUR contributions which help to fill these columns and our columns are open to one and all.

First-class first aid from rescuer Robin

DAVE ROBINSON, a forester in Llanrwst FD, is a qualified instructor in first aid and nursing with the British Red Cross Society, with over 12 years experience of instructing.

As such, he was one of our "in house" instructors visiting Forest District in Wales Conservancy giving one-day first-aid courses to FC personnel.

In December, he was returning home after a course at Dolgellau FD, when he came across a four-vehicle "pile-up" on the Crmea Pass outside Blaenau Ffestiniog.

A driver with three passengers on board (1 adult and 2 young children) tried to overtake Dave's FC van, plus another car and an articulated lorry just before approaching a nasty bend and just as another car was coming from the opposite direction.

The two cars met head on, the overtaking car bounced back to be hit by the lorry, then another car came round the bend to hit the victim of the initial impact.

Dave radioed his district office for ambulances and police, then went to take charge of the situation — no one else was prepared to, he recalls.

He organised some by-standers to rescue trapped people in the cars, then treated the more seriously injured, especially one of the children.

Dave was surprised by the lack of first-aid equipment in the other cars, and also at the fact that people just stood around in a state of shock and with a complete lack of knowledge of what to do. However his experience came to the fore and, after talking about it all day, it really was a case of "practice what you preach."

A real gentleman

ASSISTANT Conservator Operations N(S) Alan Mackay retired earlier this year — and it was no surprise to those who knew him that he elected to leave with the minimum of fuss. To that end, the day was marked with an informal ceremony in the Conservancy office.

Alan spent 32 years in North Scotland out of a total service of 37 years. His particular forte was harvesting and marketing, having perhaps as long an experience and heavy involvement in this field as anyone in the FC, a point remarked

upon at his last and 21st H&M Conference by Mr S. Quigley, Director, H&M.

A correspondent writes: "Alan was a man of complete integrity, great honesty and kindness endowed with a willingness to help all colleagues whatever their problem, discipline or grade. As succinctly put by one of his colleagues at the ceremony, the Commission has lost "a real gentleman."

Alan is seen receiving his main retirement gift, a painting commissioned from a local wildlife artist.

