

SLASHER



Newspaper of the Forestry Commission

September 1992

No. 357



Top of the tree

Glenmore Forest Park has won the John Kennedy Memorial Trophy in the Class 1 category of the Scottish Woods & Forests Awards 1992.

The assessors noted that "management has responded with energy and imagination to the challenges of very high tourist and visitor pressure. This forest and its managers are worthy of the very highest praise

and the Forestry Commission is to be congratulated on its achievement."

Glenmore Forest Park lies in Inverness FD managed by Roger Muhl (centre). Highly commended in the same class was Mabie Forest, managed by Joe Meechan FDM, and Culbin Forest managed by Gordon Rae, District Forester (right).

Tracey takes over as our new editor



Slasher's new editor is Tracey Francis, who joined the Public Information Division in August. Tracey has worked on a number of staff magazines and newspapers, including publications for British Gas, the Clydesdale Bank and the Scottish Milk Marketing Board. She joins the Commission from Napier University in Edinburgh, where she set up and edited a magazine for former students. One of her first tasks will be to monitor the response to a readers' questionnaire included in this issue.

And when you turn to the back page, you'll find that we would also like to hear your views on a change of format for Slasher, involving a proposed new-look masthead. What's YOUR choice? is the question asked.

And also on the back page is a column of advice for would-be snappers. Read it, remember it . . . and it will improve your chances of seeing YOUR picture in our columns. Hence the inspiration for our cartoon below . . .

"Slasher is obviously a well-established and well-regarded newspaper," says Tracey. "I'm hoping it will be a publication that all its readers enjoy. It will be very interesting to see what people have to say about it through the questionnaire."

In the meantime, if you have any news, comments or suggestions she will be delighted to hear from you. Just drop a line to her at Headquarters.



"Stop fidgeting . . . stand still! You know that Slasher won't use blurred photos!"

Carol's on call



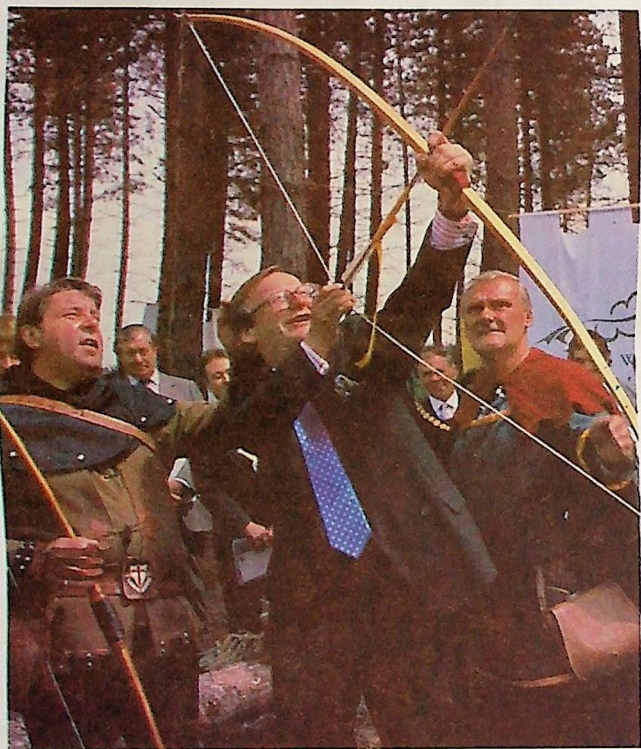
Carol Gill is one of our hardy breed of correspondents who give their time to seeing that you are well informed of various events up and down the country. Pencil in hand, here she is in action covering a sporting event for Slasher. You'll find her report with pictures on the back page.

Also inside you'll find Royal visits in our centre spread; Letters to the Editor on Page Six; Retirements on Pages Six and Seven. Owing to pressure of space other contributions have been held over. In our next issue, we'll have lots more news and pictures, including a personal report (with pictures) of a NRS scientist's cycle trip from Land's End to John o'Groats.

Copy deadline

And still talking of next issue, let us remind you that all news and photographs for the Christmas edition MUST be in our hands at Headquarters before November 20. So don't delay . . . keep your reports coming in. Send to: Tracey Francis, Editor, Slasher, FC Headquarters, Corstorphine, Edinburgh.

Forest initiative aims to lure film stars back



John Gummer does his Robin Hood act



Gerald Springthorpe in foreground explains a point as immediately behind him Lord Howe listens in. For more about Gerald, turn to centre pages.

Sherwood on target!

An arrow fired by Forestry Minister John Gummer launched an ambitious project in Sherwood Forest.

His Robin Hood act was not to determine his burial site, but to mark the spot in Clipstone where an oak was to be planted to mark the initiative to restore Sherwood to its former glory.

Then Mr Gummer took up spade and himself dug the hole where his arrow landed.

The Sherwood Initiative involves all arms of the Commission as well as local authorities, private companies, farmers, landowners and wildlife bodies.

The forest has suffered a decline over many years and has been under considerable pressure from industrial development with little now remaining of the ancient woodlands.

Despite this the area attracts more than one million visitors from around the world every year. This puts a great deal of pressure on the forest, and many visitors are disappointed at the difference between their expectations and the reality.

Mr Gummer said it was time to put that right: "We have exploited the land for many years and now it is time to put something back. We have a wonderful opportunity to recreate the original Sherwood Forest, the kind of place film crews will use to show the story of Robin Hood as it really was. At the moment they have to go elsewhere. I would like to think that when the next film is made it will be shot right here in Sherwood itself."

The Initiative will draw on the report of a feasibility study, "Bringing back the Sherwood Green," undertaken in 1988 by Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust, the Conservation Foundation and David Bellamy Associates, which studied the problem in some depth.

A BIG DAY FOR BAGOT

The combination of a Government Minister, a well-known TV star and a lovely Staffordshire woodland bathed in brilliant sun were ingredients for success at the launch of the Bagot's Wood Conservation management plan.

Lord Howe, our forestry Minister in England, told guests at the launch of the initiative: "The public in the 1990s has a far greater interest in, and depth of knowledge of wildlife and environmental matters in general. Places like Bagot's Wood and Phil Drabble's adjoining Goat Lodge Reserve do not happen by accident. They are the product of a great deal of care, hard work and planning by committed people over many years."

It was a day too for old friends and former colleagues to share a little nostalgia. As DG Robin Cutler said in his speech: "As our guests today we have a number of men who set the wheels in motion. Gerald Springthorpe, now retired Head Ranger, knows and loves this forest in which he spent so much time; Jack Chard, a former Conservator who initiated a lot of the Commission's early work on conservation; and John Fletcher, the most recent Conservator who, in retirement, has worked for Tree Aid and the Institute of Chartered Foresters."

"In this part of England, our staff were among the pioneers in practising their

skills in creating truly multi-purpose forestry. So we believe that this was an area where our forest managers were well ahead of the game for positive and imaginative wildlife management."

All three men have been honoured by the Queen for their services to forestry and wildlife.

Phil Drabble, whose "One Man and His Dog" television programme will soon be recording its 17th series, is our neighbour at Bagot's and his adjoining Goat Lodge nature reserve is a protected habitat for badger and heron as well as other wildlife.

His co-operation with the Commission has been one of the reasons Chris Robinson, Midlands FDM, was able to press forward his plans for Bagot's.

Robin Cutler said of Mr Drabble: "Phil's various books, newspaper and magazine articles and television programmes explain better than I can how he has devoted his life to the cause

"His ideas that the protection of a nucleus of pressured species can encourage their overspill into the surrounding countryside have received widespread support and Royal recognition."

"And now he has opened his reserve to the local Richard Clarke First School to give today's younger generation an opportunity to learn about nature as he did at their age."

Critics put in their place ...

Phil Drabble of TV's "One Man and His Dog," writing in the autumn issue of the RSPB magazine "Birds," says the Commission had "chipped in (at Bagot's Wood) with a contribution beyond price."

"It created a special conservation area next to my reserve, which the surplus wildlife my management produced, could use as a staging post from which to disperse gradually into the surroundings, where the public could enjoy it without putting my nucleus under unacceptable stress."

"As a Government body more used to kicks than ha'pence from environmentalists, the Commission put the critics in their place."

● At the Bagot launch, the DG paid tribute to our lessor at Bagot's, Mr Brian Dale. He said his friendly approach to the Commission had made our job of managing the woodland so much easier.

THREE MEN OF IDEAS . . . CENTRE PAGES

THREE TOP CENTRES NAMED

Centre of Excellence certificates have been presented to three woodlands in England in the first of a series of awards given by Forestry Authority Conservators.

Ron Melville, Thames and Chilterns, chose Burnham Beeches (owned by the Corporation of London); James Ogilvie, Northumberland & Durham, gave his vote to Blagden Estate, Northumberland (owner Viscount Ridley), and West Country Con-



RON MELVILLE

Gave his vote to Burnham Beeches.

servator, Ken Buswell, awarded his prize to the Harcombe Estate, Exeter (owned by the Fire Service National Benevolent Fund).

The awards recognise particularly outstanding examples of woods or forests which clearly demonstrate the widest possible range of benefits, and are shining examples to others of what multi-purpose forestry can achieve.

This includes: improvement to the quality of landscape; the creation of benefits to wildlife; the provision of public access; and the growth and management of trees in an environmentally sound way.

There is no limit to the area or type of site eligible. Awards will be made in each of the 11 Conservancies quarterly with a national winner selected from these every year.

The next awards will be announced in October.

LOW FELL JOINT RUNNER-UP

Low Fell in Grizedale, Lakes FD where Brian Mahony is manager, has won a second prize in a national scheme, the Duke of Cornwall's Award for Forestry and Conservation.

The scheme — run in a different region each year — was won jointly by Stenigot Estate in Lincolnshire, and St Giles Estate in Wiltshire.

Dinam Estate near Bulth Wells shared the second prize with Low Fell.

The award is administered by the Royal Forestry Society for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. This year's judges included former FC Conservator, Roderrick Hewitt.

HOW TO WOO THE VISITOR

Cannonball service!

Shout about it ... and if you're not heard, try a resounding cannon shot!

That's one way to attract attention to our forests in the drive to woo the visitor, which has seen many developments this year.

They have involved new centres, a new beginning for an ancient Scots forest, a safari drive, woodland trails, open days and a major new recreational area.

On and on go the efforts, involving forestry workers the length and breadth of these isles.

We haven't the space to report it all, but here's a round-up of some of the major additions to the scene ...

Let **THETFORD** lead the way ... there, building work at High Lodge has created a focal point for visitors on a piece of open land.

As there were no suitable redundant buildings anywhere in the forest, everything had to begin from scratch.

The new building is based on a traditional oak-framed barn, clad with weather boarding.

A team of craftsmen from Carpenter, Oak and Woodland of Wiltshire, spent 10 days assembling the 35 tonnes of English oak that form the frame. Although it appeared like the ultimate Lego kit all the lengths were pre-cut and numbered so that each was placed in the correct position.

Though Thetford could not provide the oak, the fast depleting wet log store at Lynford provided material for cladding, floor and ceiling boards. Six lorry loads of this pine stored since the 1987 gales was milled and machined locally, providing the link between the building and the forest.

The centre contains a forest shop and tea room and is a base from which visitors can explore walks and trails.

The High Lodge Forest Centre was officially opened by Chris Packham, a presenter of the BBC's Really Wild Show. Chris has a long association with Thetford, particularly in work involving the red-backed shrike.

In **TAY DISTRICT**, foresters made a lot of noise about their new plans for Craigvinean, Scotland's oldest continuously managed forest. A 19th century cannon, with cannon balls loaded with seeds, was fired in the forest by members of the Duke of Atholl's army wearing full highland regalia.

The cannon shots marked the new beginning for Craigvinean just as another did in the middle of the 18th century when John, 3rd Duke of Atholl, used it to plant larch by firing at Craig a Barns near Dunkeld.

The plans — which took two years to prepare — mean major improvements for the landscaping, recreation and conservation of the area. Charlie Taylor, Tay District Manager, has further details for anyone who wishes to follow his example!

Up at the **SPEY VALLEY** area, North Scotland's forest districts are currently

opening up to the public in several ways. A high elevation road on Ben Aigan, a prominent hill overlooking the lower Spey Valley, has opened for the public to drive through.

The response to try the Ben Aigan Safari drew around 70 cars, with almost 300 people taking up the invitation. Apart from some breathtaking views of the Spey Valley, various unusual activities were arranged en route such as the construction of an artificial osprey eyrie, and spear-throwing competitions.

Down to Northumberland ... and a new woodland trail specially designed for the less able has been opened at **KIELDER** by Baroness Masham, a life peer who has devoted her life to a variety of under-privileged causes. Starting and finishing at Kielder Castle visitors centre, the mile-long Duke's Trail allows all visitors the opportunity to venture into the forest.

"Not everyone can enjoy walking through forests," explained John Tewson, Forest Enterprise, Kielder. "Parents with young children in pushchairs, those who are just a bit unsteady on their feet or just want a reasonably short walk can use this trail."

The visitors centre used to be the shooting lodge of the Dukes of Northumberland, hence the trail's name.

Back north to **BUCHAN**, where more than 1000 people visited the Forest District on its open day. More than 300 cars drove through the Bin Forest where harvesting — using the latest computer-controlled harvesters, forwarding, manual felling, car rallying, planting, weeding, road-maintenance and construction — was demonstrated.

Another open day was held at **AE** to mark the creation of the Forest District and Forest Enterprise. It attracted hundreds of visitors.

Demonstrations included old and new harvesting techniques, conservation work and recreational improvements.

FDM Joe Meehan admitted to difficulties in finding volunteers to use the cross-cut saw and even managed to find himself otherwise engaged at the relevant times!

North again ... and a major new recreational area near **ABERDEEN** created by a co-operative partnership has been officially opened by Mr Roger Carr, chairman of Countryside Around Towns Forum.

The project links Kincardine FD's Kirkhill Forest with land owned by the Scottish Agricultural College, privately owned forest, and the District Council's Brimmond and Elick Hill, creating an opportunity for the people of Aberdeen to learn about the countryside.

In **INVERNESS**, North Scotland seized the opportunity to mount a window display in a recently vacated Tourist Board office just below their own offices.

● Many are the efforts made elsewhere ... we can't tell the readers about them unless YOU tell us. So let's have YOUR news for the next issue. Pictures, too, of course.



Visitors mill around the striking new centre at Thetford. Built from scratch, it once looked like the ultimate in Lego kits.



Still at Thetford ... and BBC presenter Chris Packham officially opens the High Lodge centre.

It's the big bang ... as Atholl Highlanders launch a cannon ball carrying seed into the old forest of Craigvinean.

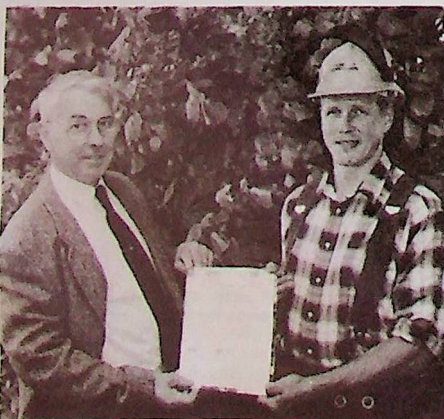


STRIKING A CHORD ... Lady Masham tries out a wooden xylophone on the Duke's Trail at Kielder.



WELCOME ... Regional Director Graham Hamilton, District Forester John Weir and other Buchan FD staff greet visitors to a preview

Champ sets example



Champion woodcutter of Britain, **Duncan Gillies** of Lorne, has set an example to all chainsaw operators. He now holds his Certificate of Competence in Chainsaw Operations — soon to be a must for all such operators.

Duncan is seen receiving his award from North Region's training officer, Roy Harvey, at the Royal Highland Show in June.

Many Commission operators already have the certificate, which will be essential from January. Non-Commission staff will need it by January 1994.

Lough site is nature reserve

Greenlaw Lough in Northumberland, an important wetland site which supports more than 50 species of aquatic plants, has been declared a National Nature Reserve by Lord Cranbrook, chairman of English Nature.

Greenlaw Lough, on the edge of Kielder Forest, is jointly owned and managed by Forest Enterprise, Northumberland National Park and the Northumberland Wildlife Trust as a nature reserve.

VIPs at the declaration ceremony included Lord Cranbrook and Dr Kevin Charman (English Nature), Bob McIntosh (FDM, Kielder), Dr Angus Lunn (Northumberland Wildlife Trust) and Councillor Eddie Teasdale (chairman, Northumberland National Park Committee).

MORE MEMORIES FROM JOCK LOW

Gold in them thar hills

Stories of gold mining in the Welsh valleys abound, as Jock Low relates . . .

Many have heard of the gold mine in Coed Y Brenin, the source of gold in the Queen's wedding ring.

In the 50s one or two of the old miners were still about, and I have been lectured in one of the shafts on the fact that the lode faulted, but the gold is still there if anyone can locate which direction the fault took.

There have been a number of failed commercial attempts.

In those days, in the summer, one could always find one or two young men panning gold in the nearby stream.

Two students said they would make enough to get them through another year.

I have seen the specks in the bottom of a small jam jar — so little for a lot of wet, cold, hard work.

Road mining in the gold mine area or anywhere near it had its moments. Blasting through hard

rock off the Ganllwyd road, we heard the gang's warning whistle, took cover and waited for the blast. After the explosion a few seconds later we heard yells. Fearing an accident we ran to the site to find that the gang thought they had struck gold: they had uncovered a seam of pyrites, gold coloured and very striking in the sun. Some of the pyrites was in the form of perfect 1" cubes. I understand they are now on view in Cardiff museum.

In Abbeycwmhir (or near there in Coed Sarnau Forest) we started to plough an area when an agitated owner pointed out we were on his land. The site maps were incorrect.

While this was being sorted out another man wanted an assurance that we would not interfere with his gold mine — but all we ever saw was a depression in the ground where digging had obviously taken place. Locals said there had been a mine but very long ago.

* Jock, a veteran who regularly contributes to these columns, lives in Holly Drive, Wick, Littlehampton, West Surrey.

The joys of being your link with Slasher . . .

By BRINA EVANS

You know you have been doing the job too long when you get asked to write about it! It's nine years since the previous incumbent asked me to take over.

"All you have to do," she said, "is bung the articles in an envelope as they come in and send them to HQ."

Famous last words! She was up-to-date, nothing seemed to be coming in and, fired with enthusiasm and determined "not to let Wales down," I decided to rally around everyone and try to get them to write.

This was not an instant success — there were lots of grumbles about articles not being used or photos not being returned.

So I moaned long and hard at the next Slasher liaison meeting and lots of photos suddenly appeared on my desk, some many years old, which I duly returned to the originators with an apology. Since then hardly a photo has been mislaid! Perhaps reassured by this, I received one or two articles.

Then I decided to try to cover every presentation of a long-service certificate. As Personal Secretary I know when the Conservator is doing a presentation, but Personnel will give you this information as well. You just have to contact the Forest District Manager and make sure someone takes a photo and writes a short piece for Slasher. All of a sudden Wales had quite a big portion of the finished newspaper. Offers of articles started coming.

Chivvying

Being a correspondent is not hard, it's just being conscientious and finding the time to gather the bits together plus any photos. Official time is allowed for this — five per cent — although putting it on the Job Description and actually finding the time to do the job never is the same thing! I wonder why? I still blow my top from time to time with Headquarters. It's annoying when you have spent time getting together an article and the Editor doesn't want to print it or doesn't have room.

There aren't many perks! On TV the reporter is out every day catching the news, but that doesn't happen in the FC. I rely on my contributors, as my job doesn't take me out, and they need chivvying from time to time.

If you feel you would like to have a go and there's a vacancy in your area — you don't need any literary skill, it doesn't matter what grade you are or where you are geographically — it could be your chance to get your area on the map.

Bonjour Sabine!



Poised for action is 19-year-old Sabine Sabatier from Provence, who spent six weeks on placement at Headquarters this summer.

Sabine, studying to become a bilingual personal executive secretary, found herself shadowing Anne Stohlner (right), personal assistant to the Chairman and DG, and Stella Simpson.

The placement was arranged through links between Northern Research Station and the French research institutes.

Sitting pretty



Carpet underfelt and wire netting have swans sitting pretty thanks to Aberfoyle Forest Enterprise and a local Scout group.

Mute swans have nested on Loch Lubnaig, near Callander, for years, but fluctuating water levels regularly flooded the nests before eggs could hatch. The solution? A floating island, built with an environmental grant from Stirling District Council.

The Scouts and foresters joined forces to build the 8 ft. by 12 ft. structure, topped with turf and rushes. Buoyant enough to support the whole Scout troop, the island rises with the water — keeping the eggs high and dry.

Get on yer bikes, lads

Two FE Recreation Rangers at Moors Valley Country Park, Dorset, now have mountain bikes to get them around.

Stephen Shipp and Philip Clague can cover large areas looking for lost children, collecting litter and checking paths, signs and gates.

"Mountain bikes offer a cheap and effective alternative to driving or walking around," said Kate Haine, FE Leading Ranger. "They are easy to maintain and environmentally friendly in the right areas."

RETIREMENT ASSOCIATION TWO-DAY JOINT TRIP PLANNED

Edinburgh HQ branch of the Retirement Association are having an active year . . . and a two-day outing is next on their programme in the second week of October.

It's a joint exercise with South Scotland pensioners involving a forest visit, informal talks, red deer and other wildlife topics.

Starting from the Murray Arms Hotel, Gatehouse, at 2 pm on Thursday, 8 October, there will be a short visit to items of local and forest interest, including oakwoods and regeneration of broadleaves in Fleet Forest.

In the evening there will be dinner, a get-together and informal talks.

On Friday, 9 October, the guided tour will leave the hotel at 10.30 am to consider red deer matters, forest landscaping and conservation with a lunch stop at Walkingshaws Wildlife Centre.

On the Raiders Road, Forest Drive, topics will include road design, otter population, modern felling and restocking methods; and the party will see Charlie Parley's memorial and a prize stand of timber before returning to the hotel at 4 pm.

Any retired person wishing to join in either or both days' programmes, should contact Bill Sutherland at 20 Cairnmuir Road, Edinburgh EH12 6LP (tel. 031 334 6898). Overnight accommodation will be at £30 per person and dinner £10.

Several new members have joined the HQ group this session. In July they lunched at South Queensferry, before sailing to Inchcolm to visit the abbey and explore the island.

In August they visited Mellerstain House, and on 16 September visited Cluny Gardens and Birks o' Aberfeldy.

Other events planned . . . 17 November — Visit Crabbies Ginger, 108 Great Junction Street, Leith. Meet there at 10.30 am.

16 December — Christmas lunch at Waterside Inn, Haddington. Details later.

• Any inquiries to the secretary, Miss I. Milne (657 2395).

THE DIRECT APPROACH

Many Commission staff have found that in communicating the story of forestry there is no substitute for personal contact, especially with politicians.

DG Robin Cutler played host to Liberal Democrat MPs Charles Kennedy and Sir Russell Johnston in July.

Writing in his local paper, the *Ross-shire Journal*, Mr Kennedy notes: "In politics you can, as in most other walks of life, achieve a lot more and come away with a better understanding of an issue as a result of face-to-face contact — rather than relying on the still life of the printed page or the distance of the telephone."

"So it proved with this encounter. There are a wide range of forestry issues all relevant to the future of the Highlands — from disposal policy to rights of access, from the balance of planting to commercial sector development and the related tax structure. Both Russell and myself now have a much fresher, up-to-date picture to work with in the coming months."

PROFITS UP AGAIN

Customers of the Commission's forest holidays enjoy their breaks in our cabins, cottages and campsites. We know because they keep coming back year after year — despite the midges.

Financial results for 91/92 show that we had a fantastic year with a 12.8 per cent return on capital and a turnover of £3.5 million.

West England and the New Forest led the way, but *Slasher* congratulates everyone involved in marketing our holidays. Who wants to go to Greece anyway?

Here and there

Mike's medal



NOW in retirement after 48 years' service, Senior Ranger Michael Stacey is congratulated by the Lord-Lieutenant for Wiltshire, Field Marshal Sir Roland Gibbs, after receiving his BEM. Mike, who retired last December from Wilts & Avon FD, is a recognised expert in the identification and breeding of butterflies and moths.

He joined the FC in 1943, aged 15. Starting as a Forest Worker, he became Forest Craftsman in 1975, then a Senior Ranger.

25-YEAR VIGIL

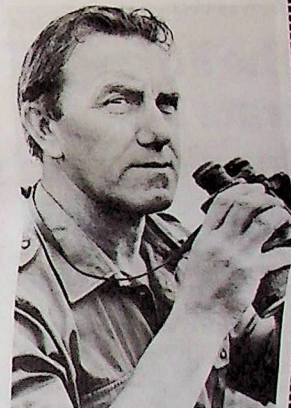
LUDLOW'S lone Ranger has celebrated 25 years on the range.

Since 1967 Wildlife Ranger John Speed (52) had kept watch over more than 18,000 acres in Shropshire, Hereford and Worcester, and is to receive a special FE commendation. He is on call all year round, ready for any emergency. Much of his work is at night, often in appalling weather. As well as stalking poachers, he makes regular patrols in search of injured and lost animals.

Managing the deer herds is a round-the-clock job.

The ranger's traditional role is changing fast, John told us. "We spend more and more time explaining to visitors the ways of the forest. We cover a wide range of subjects from keeping pets under control to talks on wildlife."

"We also cater for the increasing number of leisure activities. Mountain bikers,



riders and walkers are only a small percentage of sportspeople now using our woods."

John, married with two children, also finds time to act as the Retained Station Officer in charge of Ludlow Fire Station.

FDM Ian Hickman, said: "John's experience is invaluable."

Trophy winners

Cornwall & North Devon FD have received the Longhurst Trophy, awarded by the Royal Agricultural Society each year for the best entry in the pure conifer class over 40 years of age. The stand is a 2ha. block of Western Hemlock in North Cornwall in the river Camel Valley. District Forester David Pedler attended the Royal show in July to receive the trophy.

Kielder goes to Rio

KIELDER FOREST featured in a film commissioned by the Foreign Office for screening at the Earth Summit in Rio. The 27-minute film also featured climate change, water purification, car recycling, conservation of the barn owl, and the reintroduction of trams in Manchester.



PAUL DUNSMORE, well-known Forestry Authority Conservator, when asked why he was seen knocking back his drink during the Royal toast, replied: "When that very good friend of mine said 'The Queen,' I thought he said cheers!" The Prince, in full highland dress (Paul in borrowed sports jacket and horizontally creased cords), was slightly taken aback when commenting on Paul's "short arms." Paul screamed, "Don't talk to me about Forest Farms!"

Bright ideas brigade

Two men of Loch Awe FDM and the staff in Kinross FDM have won awards of £600 and £500 respectively.

The Central Committee of the Staff Suggestion Scheme announced their decision after their meeting in July.

The full list of awards are as follows:

- £600 — Work method — Forwarders — Timber Extraction Uphill: W. MacPherson and I. Wilson, Loch Awe.
- £500 — Control of Run-Off from Forwarder extracted Harvesting Sites: J. Ree and staff, Kinross.
- £76 — Dummy run daks for industrial payroll: Mrs E. Hopkins, North Wales Coast.
- £50 — Aid kit pouch: C. Webb, Midlands FDM.
- £60 — Ready reckoner charts WGS and FWS: J. Lindsay, Strathclyde Conservancy, and S. Cooper, Wye and Avon Conservancy.
- £48 — Revision of PW Forms: Mrs J. McGinley, Lakes FDM.
- £48 — Forest sign maintenance: B. L. Jones, South-east Wales FDM.

The little brats hit Rendlesham

Pine weevil damage has caused a 30% area of redwood forest in Suffolk FDM.

Paula Keen, FDM, Slasher, says: "If the loss of 15 years' production in the 1987 site were not enough, a legacy of insect damage has been caused by the vigorous small-headed pine weevil (*Pissodes castaneus*), in a seven-year-old crop.

"Almost every tree over 30 has been found to be infected with larvae, pupae or emerging adults, with 15 ha less severely affected.

"Drastic action was required, so despite extreme fire danger during the heatwave of late May / early June, staff set about cutting and burning 30 ha within 10 days.

"With three supervisory staff and a rickety Hathaway pump working round the clock and all time industrial on daytime duties, the operation was completed on time without incident."

The attack is thought to be due to a combination of a series of dry summers, stress due to breeding Pine Shoot moth and Pine Shoot beetle attacks, and the presence of undernourished pole stage crops (neglected due to the demands of window clearance), which provided the original significant breeding site.

Bird watch at Dornoch

Her Harrier chicks at Forest Enterprise's Strathroy forest near Inverness. A national bird attracted about 5000 visitors before it closed when the chicks were old enough to fly.

FDM Ian Forsyth and his Dornoch staff improved the viewing facilities with five telescopes and binoculars, and some local people gave expert information.

The local community provided 45 per cent of the warden assistance throughout the day and night, guided by the RSPB and Scottish Natural Heritage.



The crowd press around as the Duchess of Kent does her walk-about and (right), she meets flower girl Nicola Waycott and her mother, Roger Bushby, Charles Woosman and John Eversall look on.



Head Ranger John Gibson explains his duties at the new log lodge.

Surprise visitor!

THE QUEEN DROPS IN ON OUR MINI WALKWAY



The Forestry Commission scored a Royal double this summer with two visits — one of them totally unexpected, the other as planned.

The Queen caught staff by surprise when she made an unscheduled visit to the Commission exhibit at the Royal Highland Show in Edinburgh.

It was only a brief stop in her walk-about, but Perth Conservator Syd House told Slasher: "She showed interest in the Forestry Authority responsibility for instilling high environmental standards in forests."

"Our exhibit featured our role as stewards of the countryside and was demonstrated through extracts from the water, conservation, landscape and community woodland guidelines."

"The marquee display included a miniature woodland walk with stream and waterfall. We had a well-used picnic and play area outside the tent and our designer Howard Dixon spent two years' work for FE fees, the Duchess of Kent opened the new Lodge."

Set in the heart of the forest and boosted by a new Sculpture Trail, the Beechenbury picnic place was badly in need of a facelift. The new Lodge contains a tea room / shop, toilets, Rangers room and a nightwatchman's flat. The car park has moved into adjacent woodland and now caters for over 250 cars. Barbecue hearths, picnic tables, a children's play area and information boards are all provided.

The helicopters carrying the Duchess from London managed to find a gap in the hill to land and she was welcomed by Commissioner Charles Woosman, Regional Director Roger Bushby, and the Deputy Secretary John Eversall.

After receiving a bouquet from Friedricha Alasia sufferer, Nicola Waycott, the Duchess met members of the Project Team: John Anderson, James Swaby, Brian Kedward and Mike Schiller — and representatives of the architect and builder. During a tour of the ground floor she also met Mr and Mrs Brian Rowe who hold the franchise for the shop, Head Ranger John Gibson, and Publicity Officer Val Long.

AUSTIN WRITES HISTORY OF THE 'SHIRE WOOD'

Austin Brady, the Sherwood FDM, has written a fascinating history of the forest for the journal of the Royal Forestry Society, to coincide with the RFS visit in September.

Slasher is indebted to Austin for permission to print the following much-edited extract from his article. The full text can be read in the RFS journal.

Of all the "named" forests and forest areas throughout the world, the name of Sherwood Forest is probably the most widely known, due principally to the legend of Robin Hood, and eight centuries of folklore, art, literature and cinema.

The name of the forest to be derived from "shere wood", applied to most of Nottinghamshire north of the Trent in references in the Domesday Book.

This was reduced by the early 13th century to an area 20 miles long and eight miles wide running north from Nottingham.

The forest landscape was a varied one of scattered woodland and trees, heathland and open land, in various forms of cultivation.

In common with many other Forest Rules and regulations in the forest, the forest was used for farming, and fives for deer hunting. The forest was a means of generating income from the forest and not as a means of protection.

The process of continued reclamation and protection, and term cultivation meant that the woodland was continually degraded, being further accelerated by the dissolution of the monasteries.

Sold off

By the end of the 18th century the Crown had sold off its last remaining land holdings. Large estates in the north of the forest area known as The Dukeries (Wellsbeck, Clumber, Woodhouse, Manor, Rufford and Thoresby) emerged in the 17th and 18th centuries as the major force to reshape land use with a new impetus to tree planting.

Beyond the ornamental parkland of the great houses grew new and valuable forests for timber. In the rest of Nottinghamshire, in common with much of lowland England, woodland continued to be lost to the expansion of agriculture.

About 60 per cent of all forests and woodlands in Nottinghamshire are within the old Sherwood Forest, which Bagnall and sycamore are the commonest broadleaved tree species, Scots pine and Corsican pine are the most common conifer trees.

Relatively large areas of FC woods are reaching rotation age at the same time. Landscaping and other management is allowing a phased restructuring of the forest, surviving fragments of heathland flora, and the dormant undergrowth and scrub banks are expected to form some significant areas of woodland as trees are selectively cleared.

The Commission is playing an active part in the development of a heathland strategy in association with the County Council, English Nature and other landowners.

As the forest is re-designed to produce improved ecological benefits, the forest is a new arrival of the population of native birds: bird ringing by local naturalists showed that 24 pairs were breeding in Clifton Forest alone in 1991.

SPOTLIGHT ON THREE MEN OF IDEAS

How sandy had Sherwood dream

Sponsorship will be provided funding and services for the Sherwood Initiative.

Forestry Minister John Gummer said that the plan was "a romantic concept," adding: "Local people will want to get involved and to put something into the forest, for the changes we start today will create a place that is worthy of a story that has so many enthused writers for hundreds of years."

"There has already been great co-operation and enthusiasm and we expect that industry, local authorities, individuals and business organisations will want to give not just money but other help as well. British BGC has already planted thousands of trees on its own land and this is fine example of others."

The next stage will be the appointment of a steering group and a project director from within the Commission to oversee its day to day running. If the initiative is as successful as both the Minister and the Commission expect, the theory may be put into practice in other areas.

Recognised name

The idea to reverse the centuries of decline and depletion of Sherwood Forest emerged in 1987 when Sandy Greig FDM there. Now at the Forest HQ of the Forestry Authority, England, he has seen obvious satisfaction in seeing the launch of an idea in which he had invested his personal commitment.

"Sandy told Slasher: 'The seed was sown in my mind when I worked with David Bellamy on two projects in Sherwood. I also remember Acorn Green and the Oaktree Map of N. England'."

"David was keen in Sherwood because he was concerned nationally and internationally: anything happening in Sherwood will likely to attract media and public attention. Why not use the name raise fund for a conservation."

oriented tree-planting programme, we asked ourselves.

"It fairly quickly became apparent that the FC couldn't take on this alone so we developed the idea of a Sherwood Forest Project Trust which would raise money and co-ordinate a tree-planting campaign."

"This idea attracted enthusiastic support... and things started to move quickly. The Conservation Foundation found a sponsor willing to pay for a feasibility study: the resulting report, Bringing back the Sherwood Green, emerged in autumn 1988."

There was a delay while the Countryside Commission developed other ideas... but by 1991 "the groundwork had been done, everywhere was likely to be supportive and, quite coincidentally and valuably, Sherwood's star rating had risen even higher, thanks to Kevin Costner. It just needed someone to say 'let's do it' — and the Forestry Commission did."

A little pride

"The Sherwood Initiative is saying all the right things about the Forestry Commission. It's imaginative, it's about multi-purpose forestry and landscape enhancement for public benefit and enjoyment and it involves working with other organisations. I will watch the initiative develop with great interest and a little pride."

Forestry Commissioner David Grundy said: "It's a great project, combining action by the Forestry Authority and Forest Enterprise with local initiative. I hope it will be a model for similar projects elsewhere."

Forest Enterprise has already started to improve the 4000-hectare FC estate in the forest, including provision of new visitor facilities.

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Forest Enterprise has already started to improve the 4000-hectare FC estate in the forest, including provision of new visitor facilities.

The idea is to expand the forest as an area more akin to its original size.

How Gerald and Phil lead the way

Wildlife conservationists owe a great deal to the forethought of men like TV's Phil Drabble and Gerald Springthorpe, the former adviser at Cannock.

The DG, Robin Cutler, paid tribute to both men at the Bageat launch (see Page One).

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Phil Drabble enjoys a stroll in Bageat's wood with regional advisory committee chairman Rachel Thomas.



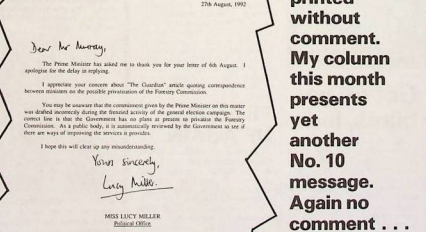
Lord Howe quizes Richard Smith, Chief Counsellor, Enfield and Roger Bushby, Regional Director South West England. Patrick Cornock, FSA MP, listens in.

an official visit for Kingfishers bore into a sandy bank which has been used regularly for the past five years and when Edith and Gerald visited the Mill House, it was to find Gerald busy laying a random oak floor in the dining room which will overlook the pool. Norf said:

Friends and former colleagues can contact Gerald at Mill House, Walsley Bridge, SDG 2000. "A copy was presented by Gerald as a memento of Bageat's big day."

TUS DIARY by KENNY MURRAY

You recall the letter from No. 10 in our last issue printed without comment. My column this month presents yet another No. 10 message. Again no comment... need I say more?



Director General Robin Cutler at his alma mater, Aberdeen University, after receiving his honorary degree of Doctor of Science.

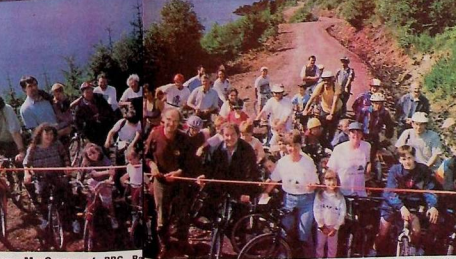
Doctor Cutler



Director General Robin Cutler at his alma mater, Aberdeen University, after receiving his honorary degree of Doctor of Science.

Safety first in the Glen

The resat-spectacular views of Loch Ness, magnificent forests, open glades and dramatic waterfalls.



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Director General Robin Cutler at his alma mater, Aberdeen University, after receiving his honorary degree of Doctor of Science.

Maurice (83) is Mr Weatherman

A veteran from Christchurch in Dorset, L.A. Howe, H/F retired, has written to the editor drawing our attention to the achievements of 83-year-old former Research Officer Maurice Nimmo.

Mr Howe writes: "Mr Nimmo was one of the very first Research Foresters in the South of England very much concerned with the early work of establishing trees on difficult sites, mainly the southern heathlands, and also involved in setting up nutrition experiments in heathland nurseries."

"Maurice was promoted to District Officer class in the 1950s and spent many years at Alice Holt Research Station."

"I'm sure many older members in retirement will be very pleased to know of Maurice's continued very valuable assistance to the community."

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mr Lowe then refers to an article in a local newspaper which reveals that Maurice Nimmo was awarded the BEM earlier this year for 60 years of voluntary work for the Met. Office.

The article goes on: "The work... aids river authorities and weather men to analyse weather patterns and help to predict the weather."

Mr Nimmo started his hobby at Thetford in East Anglia and has been monitoring the signs ever since, including the last 19 years in Pembrokeshire, where he lives at Pen y Cefn, Hayscastle.

The article goes on: Instruments had to be monitored twice a day and Mr Nimmo modestly maintains that the only reason why he did it was that nobody else wanted to.

After moving from East Anglia he kept his links with the Met. Office and kept records of rainfall and ground temperatures. His fascinating records stretch back over most of this century and even take in the ferocious winter of 1929 when there were ice flows on the Wye and the temperature dropped to 44°F below freezing.

Another particularly harsh winter that Mr Nimmo recorded was 1963 when we had almost three months of snow. But amid all the raging snow storms, floods and blizzards, he can remember only three white Christmases. "The notion of a white Christmas as being traditional is just a myth," he says.

Interesting, when weather records are checked, whatever is currently stated about global warming and greenhouse effects the weather doesn't seem to change in general from year to year.

"Although we can get dry summers, wet springs and snowy winters, the whole thing tends to average itself out over the year," he says.

"There was one particularly stormy month I remember in East Anglia," Mr Nimmo says, "when people can start to think the weather is changing for the worse, and that was when we had eleven and a half inches of rain. To put this in context, when it floods in Whitland we get about three inches."

The UK record for rainfall is 11 inches in 24 hours in Dorset at Mayfiest.

Mr Nimmo hopes to continue collecting statistics for the Met. Office for very many more years.

Man at ease



Dennis Gosden (call sign Tango 14) has notched up FIFTY YEARS of service... but is he sitting back? Not likely!

Dennis may well be at ease here at Grizedale, Lakes FD, but in retirement he has bought himself a mountain bike to get around the forests of his beloved Grizedale Valley, where he has worked all his life.

Dennis was five when he moved to the area with his father, a gamekeeper employed by Harold Brocklebank, then owner of Grizedale.

When he left school at 14 he immediately joined the Commission and initially spent a lot of time on prep ground, assisting a crawler driver to remove coppice stumps. He acquired all the traditional forest skills, felling with axe and crosscut, planting, draining, brashing, nurseryman, chokerman, maker of recreational furniture and latterly was the forests' fencing expert, being responsible for the erection of deer fences around Grizedale's restock sites.

He is pictured above on a suitably inscribed bench of Grizedale Oak erected on the site of his last day's work where colleagues, friends and relatives gathered to wish him well.

The Regional Director, Geoff Hatfield, presented Dennis with his service certificate and colleagues gave him an electric strimmer and a thumb-stick.

Double farewell



With 37 years' service, Conservator Andy Neustein has retired from the Commission.

Along with Geoff Haw (Operations Support Officer), who has 42 years' service behind him, Andy was treated to a buffet supper attended by more than 80 friends and colleagues in North and East England Region.

Andy (above) was presented

with a cheque by Robin Cutler to go towards a greenhouse, and wife Ella received a bouquet from Audrey Teasdale, personal secretary.

Geoff received his cheque towards a camera from namesake Geoff Hatfield, Regional Director, and his wife Marion was presented with a bouquet by Judy Rogers (EO Operations).

Tree Aid look to expand

Dear Editor: I hope readers will be interested in learning of our continued progress over the last 12 months. We continue to fund well-founded projects in the Sahel where tree cover has been so devastated over the last 50 years or so.

Your support of Tree Aid has been invaluable (our income in 1991/92 was over £50,000) and we are grateful for your help in ensuring that once more this last year has been one of expansion.

Our latest Newsletter notes that because of the amount of work falling on our entirely volunteer staff we consider it necessary to employ a salaried director so that we can continue

Have you seen this model?

Dear Editor: A visitor to Alice Holt Open Day wants to trace a model presented to his father. It shows fencing, made in wood and brass, and is dated 1933. The name of the forester was Anthony Simpson, who worked in forestry from 1906 to 1933. The model has his name inscribed on it.

If anyone knows the whereabouts of his

model, please contact: Mrs Jenkins at 2 Hinton House, Jubilee Road, Waterloo, Hampshire PO7.

Mr Simpson seems to have been based locally in Hampshire in the 1920s and early 1930s. — Dr John Parker, Communications Officer, Research Division.

Dressing

Dear Editor: Tree Dressing Day, a festival taking place over the first weekend of December, is a tradition going back centuries in many countries.

Common Ground is reviving it to encourage the celebration of local trees and to remind people of the cultural significance of trees as well as their environmental importance.

Last year many schools, community groups and local authorities took part in Tree Dressing Day and this year we are expecting even greater involvement. Further information from me. — Gerard Darby, Common Ground, 45 Shelton Street, Covent Garden, London WC2H 9HS.

Curling

Dear Editor: I am writing to complain about the choice of heading for the draft article I provided on curling.

To describe the performance of the curlers within and without HQ as a flop is hardly likely to encourage staff to use the "Slasher" to publicise their achievements. Had the Editor had a better understanding of the sport it might have been appreciated that the success of the Dumfries and Perthshire rinks in reaching the High Road finals was something of an achievement in itself, while the HQ rink were delighted to come so close to winning the "Haddie's" final. — Doug Goddard, secretary, HQ Curling Club.

New trail

The recently completed nature trail in Chalkney Wood Forest Nature Reserve (and SSSI) was launched by Dr Oliver Rackham. An authority on ancient woodlands and one-time Forestry Commission critic, he praised the work of naturalists and the "new generation of foresters."

A walk led by Dr Rackham focused on its historic features, such as the woodbank, gravel pit, ponds and pre-Roman hollow way.

Jim Davidson, OBE

OBITUARIES

Teak harvesting in Burma began a distinguished forestry career for James Davidson, who died earlier this year, aged 76.

Joining the Glasgow firm TD Findlay & Sons, Jim was based at Mong Pan, near the Siamese and Chinese borders, when the Chinese moved in to defend the area from the invading Japanese army in 1942.

Fluent in Shan, the local language, he acted as liaison officer to the Chinese before leading a gruelling 800-mile march eastwards to escape the Japanese. After training in India Jim returned to Burma as captain in the 14th Army and served in some of the most strenuous fighting of the campaign. He was mentioned in Despatches.

After the war Jim returned to Mong Pan to restart teak extraction, but the operation folded and in 1948 he joined the FC as District Officer in East England.

After spells at the Directorate of Forestry for England and FC Headquarters, Jim joined the then Scottish Directorate in Edinburgh in 1960. As well as building markets for day-to-day sales of timber in Scotland, Jim's task was

DEATH ON ANNIVERSARY

Retired Ganger George "Dod" Scott of Buchan FD died on his 52nd wedding anniversary. He was 81. Dod worked for 25 years in the old Bennachie Forest. He lived in FC cottages at Donview, and leaves a wife Margaret and two daughters, Helen and Norma.

to make long-term production forecasts using methods new not only in Britain but also in European and Scandinavian forestry. He earned the respect of private growers, home timber merchants and Commission staff by the quiet and efficient way he achieved these objectives.

In 1970 Jim moved to London as Chief Marketing Officer for Britain, with a remit including timber research and utilisation development policy. In a period of rapid change his reputation for fair dealing, common sense and sound judgment helped to

establish confidence among British timber consumers.

Jim's contribution to forestry was recognised by the award of an OBE in 1976. He is survived by his wife Grace and daughter Avril.

Other deaths...

George Mackenzie, former Conservator at Aberdeen and Cardiff. He retired to the family home at Torridon, Wester Ross.

Arthur (Dickie) Churchill, Forest Craftsman based in the old Ebbw Beat of SE Wales FD from 1958 to retirement in 1988. In memory of "Dickie," friends and workmates donated a sum to cancer research at Velindre Hospital.

Annie (Nan) Eland, who retired in December 1983. She worked for genetics branch at Newton for 22 years and her late husband Tom worked for Conservancy at Newton Nursery.

Bob Gray of Kemnay, who was 80, started in 1946 in the Kemnay Forest and retired in 1976 after 30 years' service. He was a lorry driver until amalgamation of Kemnay with Bennachie. Bob leaves a wife, two daughters and a son.

40 years for Frank



Forest craftsmen Frank Roberts with FDM Austin Brady of Sherwood / Lincs and other colleagues. Frank received his service certificate marking 40 years with the FC and retirement gifts.

Tributes to Mike's loyalty

An informal lunch-time gathering marked the retirement of Forest Officer Mike Millman of Somerset and South Devon FD.

Mike is pictured right at the luncheon which was attended by many friends and colleagues.

Following the presentation of a book, a cheque and several cards, FDM John Hunt and District Forester H&M, Colin Fruen, paid tribute to Mike's dedication and loyalty over a long career.

Special mention was made of his intimate knowledge of the many diverse areas in which he



had served in the West Country. In retirement, Mike and Joyce intend to pursue their many interests which include cycling and campanology.

Pat sails into retirement

First and last Conservancy Civil Engineer, Mid Scotland, Pat Thomas is now planning more cruises with wife Ann now that he is retired.

Pat was born in Northamptonshire where he had his first experience of Commission plantations. He served two years as an engineer mechanic, then obtained his degree in Civil Engineering at King's College, London. The next six years were spent with consulting engineers and contractors.

When he joined the Commission in 1961 he covered the former Dolgellau and Dovey districts, but on reorganisation in 1965/66 moved to West Argyll.

In 1985 Pat became first and last Conservancy Civil Engineer for Mid Scotland Conservancy and spent his weeks in Glasgow and weekends back in Tarbert.

Pat and Ann own a Fisher 30 "Grey Gannet."

The Queen's forester

Forester Willie Grant, has retired after 37 years in North Scotland. He joined the Commission as a forest worker at The Queen's Forest, then progressed to the rank of ganger and then assistant forester at Farigaig Forest.

Periods of service at Leanaichan, Inchnacardoch, Morangie, Achnashellach and Strathmashie culminated in a return to The Queen's Forest where Willie spent the last eight years of his career.

North Scotland Regional Director, Graham Hamilton, paid tribute to Willie's outstanding loyalty before presenting him with a camera on behalf of colleagues. Mrs Grant received a bouquet and a tapestry.

Ian Mackintosh, Ganger at Moray FD has retired after 35 years. Ian was based at the old Craigellachie Forest office and



was heavily involved in the planting of Craigellachie Forest.

Ian is pictured above with his wife Betty.

Other retirements include: — W. C. Payne, (FOII), Northants, N&E(E); R. B. Collins, (FOIII), RD, Thetford; and H. C. Hilton, (FOIII), Dolgellau, Wales.

Roses for Agnes



Agnes Martin, telephonist / receptionist at NRS since it opened 22 years ago, has retired.

Agnes received a gold bracelet (above) from Calvin Booth CRO(N) which she promised to wear while working in her greenhouse, also presented to her by friends and colleagues in the FC. The roses, one for each year of her service, were presented by David Seal on behalf of the four CRO(N)s with whom Agnes worked.

Richard and all that jazz

CHIEF LAND AGENT RETIRES

Chief Land Agent Richard Illingworth was played out in style at his farewell gathering this summer. To mark his love of jazz, a quartet played some of his favourite numbers.

Richard's good-byes were said in the HQ staff restaurant in Edinburgh where more than 60 friends and colleagues past and present were gathered.

At a presentation, David Foot, Chief Executive Forest Enterprise, outlined Richard's career with the Commission which began in 1957 as a District Estate Officer first in Benmore and then Aberfoyle.

In 1968 he moved to the then HQ office in Basingstoke, where he was involved with the New Forest Recreation Report, and soon after to North Wales as Conservancy Land Agent.

In 1978 Richard moved into the Edinburgh HQ taking over the forest cabins development when he oversaw extensions to Deerpark and Keldy sites and the setting up of the Lochaweside site.

In the 1980s he implemented the Commission's plantation disposals programme, then in late 1985 he was appointed Chief Land Agent on the retirement of John Gwynn.

Lately Richard renewed his acquaintance with the New Forest — he was given the responsibility of producing a report to the Minister of Agriculture on grazing.

Director General Robin Cutler presented Richard with a cheque and bottle of a rare malt whisky and thanked him for his service.

All Land Agents are gentlemen but not all gentlemen are Land Agents, said Robin, and Richard was no exception.

Richard is succeeded as Chief Land Agent by Peter Ranken, formerly Conservancy Land Agent in East England.



The quartet of deputy surveyors are (from left), Past DS Donn Small with the new DS, Arthur Barlow, then there's David Perry and John Everard (DS, Dean). Below, it's David again, this time with Peter Clarke and the painting he received.



STILL IN THE NEW FOREST ...



A Barrell-full of laughs

Keeper Gerry Barrell has many a tale to tell ... and here he is in full flow at his retirement presentation.

Looking on at right is the new Deputy Surveyor, New Forest, Arthur Barlow, who presented Gerry with his service certificate marking 40 years' service.

Of the many gifts presented to Gerry, the most unusual was an FC sign engraved "Barrell's Pond."

This marked his victory in a dispute over the siting of a new pond in recent years. And now the pond will bear Gerry's name for ever more.

Head Keeper Michael Clarke paid tribute to Gerry's unstinted service, then Gerry gave the assembly his version of events. Tales of varying



credibility, raised much laughter.

The variety of gifts Gerry received reflected his popularity both in and outside the Commission. In particular, his Keeper colleagues gave him a superb set of salmon fishing tackle.

And a cake specially prepared (above) reflected the usual condition of Gerry's mud-splattered Land Rover.



A light-hearted moment for bearded Richard Illingworth at his farewell. He is flanked by Simon Hewitt, RLA (S and WE), and Geoff Hatfield, Regional Director (N and E(E)).

Surveyors bid David farewell

Deputy Surveyors in abundance ... or at least in a foursome. They came together when David Perry retired after seven years in that post in the New Forest.

As Eileen Tilling, reports, it was a unique assembly in the Venderers' Court.

In all, David served 37 years with the FC — working in SE England, E&T in Wales, Kielder, Thetford, E&T York and finally Dumfries before returning once more to the South of England for his last appointment.

David was quickly given the task of chairing the New Forest Review Group. The main recommendations of the Group's final report were implemented by Government; most importantly the New Forest Committee was set up on which David has since served as Commission representative.

His work was recognised by the award of an OBE in the last New Year Honours List.

A painting by local artist Alison Bolton was the main gift presented, but the Keepers handed over their traditional gift to retiring Deputy Surveyors — a hand-carved thumb stick.



Liz Broadley, EO, Estate Office, New Forest, was seen off in style at a French theme farewell party. Old friends and colleagues were there to wish her and husband, Brian, bon voyage. They are to settle in Southern France — hence the appearance of Roger "Johnny Onions" Newland!

THIS SPORTING LIFE . . . with FC staff showing they are no slouches when it comes to joining in. Play the part, goes the cry . . . so here on the back page, the traditional spot for sporting topics, we show how some of our colleagues have been faring . . .

Fun time for soccer girls



In some areas of sport, the fun has gone out of the game. Not so among FC lads and lasses.

And to prove it, here are two pictures from North Scotland and down to Dumfries.

Above are the winning team from Dumfries Regional Office staff after a friendly match with AeFD.

The basic rules of football were adapted slightly to allow four female and seven male players on the park at one time with as many substitutions as required.

It would be fair to say that some players were so far offside that they were eventually posted missing. The game itself was end to end with the Dumfries Office eventually winning 4-3 with the aid of a Graeme Muir hat-trick.

With one game played, the winners are flushed with success and have now thrown down a challenge to Dumfries & Galloway Regional Council's water and sewerage board.

Up at Inverness the first seeds of the North Scotland football team (below) were sown last summer and have now fully blossomed with their acceptance into the Inverness District Amateur League.

To date they have won five matches, drawn two and lost six. One epic struggle against the league leaders resulted in a victory for the team. Club president Donald Porter told *Slasher*, "I expect good things to come as we've been training hard . . . in the art of falling over dramatically in the penalty box!"

If any other district would like a 'friendly,' contact Inverness FD.



Ten knock-outs!

When S & W Regional Office were asked by Cadbury's to enter a charity 'It's a Knock-Out' event they fielded the ten fittest, keenest, sportiest people that could be conned into it. They put up an extremely consistent performance and managed to come LAST in every event, reports our correspondent Carol Gill.

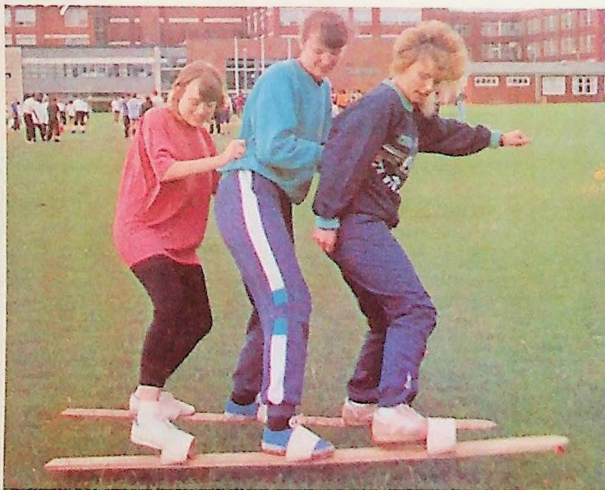
But it really took some concentrated effort to maintain their record, in fact they began to panic in the last race . . . for a while they almost looked like beating someone!

It was just as well that the three-girl team of Buddug Davies, Tracey Edmunds and Karen McKend had been practising on their communal wooden skis as they only managed to lose the race by demolishing a wooden hurdle they were supposed to negotiate.

At which point the commentator was heard to say "I thought you lot were supposed to conserve trees and the environment."

Still it was all in good fun . . . and Cadbury's must have been impressed. They have asked us to enter again or maybe they want a video for TV's 'You've been framed' programme.

For the record the team were: Ken Milsom, Karen Berry, Simon Angove, Rachel Moore, Nigel Streether, Sue Coventry, Tracey Edmunds, Dave Kingscott, Karen McKend and Buddug Davies.



GET IN THE PICTURE — SOME HELPFUL HINTS

You've taken your camera to an event in your own time and stood in the rain for half an hour waiting for the presentation. At last it happens — you get the picture and send it to *Slasher* — but it isn't used! Why not?

There could be a number of reasons. When the Editor tells you there isn't enough space, it's not just an excuse! So many items come in for *Slasher* it's impossible to use everything. Sadly, there is always a possibility that your story may be the one dropped this time. But you can lessen that chance if you send a really good photograph with your article. Usually, good photographs don't just happen — you need to plan them.

Remember . . . most prints are published smaller than their actual size, so it's a waste of time cramming in too many people or too much detail. It will be lost in printing, and the photograph will look cluttered.

Most readers look through *Slasher* to see names and faces they recognise, so photographs showing people are half way there. But for a picture that stands out from the rest you'll need to do something more than get your subjects to face the camera.

Remember it's nearly always more interesting to see people in action rather than posing for the camera; it makes them less self-conscious too.

If your photograph is well composed, well lit and amusing or original you automatically make it harder for the Editor to bypass the story — so you really can help yourself to get more space in *Slasher*!

What we're looking for:

Black and white or colour prints, slides or transparencies. Identify where and when the photograph was taken and the full names (not initials) and job titles of descriptions of the people in it.

DOs and DON'Ts . . .

DO make sure your photograph is in focus! Fuzzy snapshots look dreadful when they're printed.

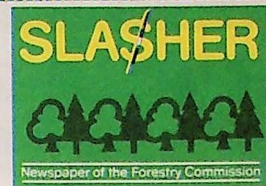
DO put people in the picture wherever possible — but avoid very large groups or people standing in a line.

DO remember to check the background — one newspaper (not *Slasher*!) showed a retiring museum staff member with a bayonet on the wall behind apparently passing through his head!

DON'T use ink or felt tip to identify your prints on the reverse unless you give it time to dry. It's impossible to remove ink from the surface of a print and it can't be used if it's marked this way.

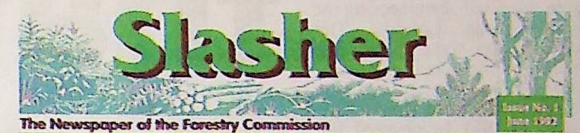
DON'T feel you have to fit everyone present into the photograph. If it will hurt anyone's feelings to be left out, take two snaps — one of the whole group, one of the main focus of attention.

DON'T let anyone tell you what to do — get the photograph YOU want!



DON'T SIT BACK — GIVE US YOUR OWN VIEWS

Ring the changes



HOW ABOUT THIS?



... OR THIS ONE:

Do you like any of these mastheads? All of them? Or none? The *Slasher* Editor has her favourite but so, probably, have you — and she'd like to hear your opinion. Use the questionnaire to let her know what you think.

Many thanks to those who replied to our request for your thoughts on the content and style of *Slasher*!

As you can see, we decided to make things a little more formal by asking all our readers to complete the questionnaire.

It shouldn't take more than a few minutes, and the information you give will be invaluable in helping us to judge how you regard *Slasher* now and what kind of articles or information you would like to see in the future.

It's easy to sit in Headquarters and speculate about what people want to see. This is an opportunity for ALL *Slasher* readers to have a say in what we publish, how we present it, and what changes, if any, are needed. **DON'T PASS IT BY!**



HERE'S ANOTHER CANDIDATE



AND A FOURTH CONTENDER

LONG SHOT PAYS OFF



You can scoff . . . a hole in 192! Richard Keddle, research industrial worker at Brecon, doesn't mind. For his mighty effort over 15½ miles helped to raise lots of lolly for local charities. He had answered the challenge of Mayor of Brecon, Caris Lewis to play the "hole," from the first tee of Builth Wells Golf Club to Brecon's 18th green. With him here are the Mayor and the Brecon captain, Mr R. Leakey (right).

In South Scotland, current and retired golfers competed at Thornhill for the Fotheringham Trophy. Henry Scott won with a superb 63.