

Tree Scribe

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Squeeze means grants freeze

A REVIEW of all forestry grants was due on October 1, 1982. Only now has the outcome of this review been announced by the Forestry Commission with no increase being made in the level of any forestry grants. (The Commission's announcement is reproduced alongside).

It seems strange that, with a Government which has pledged its support for an expansion of private forestry, the private sector of the industry should have been kept waiting for a year after the promised review date to learn the result. That there should then be

no increase (and therefore a decrease when inflation is taken into account) only compounds the sense of dissatisfaction with the present arrangements.

Since the previous revision of grants for Dedication Basis II and III was effective on October 1, 1980 and there can now be no further review effective before October 1, 1984, growers are being asked to bear the effects of four years' inflation without any grant adjustment. In the case of the new Forestry Grant scheme, the period of lapse will be three years. The outcome will surely be judged as unfair by the smaller owner and those with planting schemes of

less than 10 hectares. For them, there are no opportunities for economies of scale.

It is difficult to comment on the references to the University survey data until these findings are published. It seems likely, however, that the survey on Dedication Basis II estates, which compares both income and expenditure, will indicate no more than that owners and managers adjust activity to cash flow.

The survey data for costs on Dedication Basis III estates and Forestry Grant Schemes have only recently begun and, if the sample has thrown up inconsistencies, it

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FOLLOWING the forestry grant review effective from October 1, 1982, it has been decided that the present rates of grant will continue without adjustment for a further period. The next review falls on October 1, 1984.

The decision was taken against the background of the continuing need to exercise restraint in public expenditure, and in the light of the following considerations:

i. The data received from the University surveys, which show that grants have been making a relatively uniform contribution to the net expenditure of the sample estates, provide no support for an adjustment in Dedication Basis II grant levels. Similarly, the University data on the average costs per hectare of establishing plantations provide no evidence of a significant or consistent movement in such costs as would justify an adjustment in grants under Dedication Basis III or the Forestry Grant Scheme.

ii. There is no evidence to suggest that the present grants are failing to provide an adequate incentive to private participation in forestry. New planting by private owners in the year ended March 31, 1982 rose by some 50 per cent over the previous year and the higher planting level has been sustained for the year up to March 31, 1983. Moreover, applications to join the Forestry Grant Scheme have been running at a very encouraging level (in the 18 months up to March 31, 1983, over 3,000 applications were received covering some 112,500 hectares) which provides no indication that the grant rates are not proving attractive.

Forestry Ministers realise that the decision not to increase the grants on this occasion will come as a disappointment to private growers, and they have given a reassurance that the continued expansion of forestry, with the private sector taking a larger share, is a firm objective of the Government's forestry policy and that the decision to hold the grants at their present level in no way detracts from that objective.

DELEGATES TAKE THE HIGH ROAD



Sandy Macpherson describes to ECE Timber Committee delegates the employment created and the future timber production on the large upland planting project at Aberfeldy.

HEAVY rain and high winds greeted the 40 delegates from the Timber Committee of the UN Economic Commission for Europe during their visit to Griffin Forest in Perthshire on the first day of their week-long study tour of Scotland and northern England.

This was the first time the UK had acted as host for the tour which is organised annually by a member Government to present aspects of forestry and the wood-processing industries in its country to ECE Timber Committee members.

The theme of this year's tour was "The opportunity and challenge of an increasing forest resource in an import-dominated market" and it was attended by delegates from Austria, Finland, France, Hungary, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the USA.

After a welcoming reception the previous evening in Edinburgh, a coach took the delegates to the 3,000

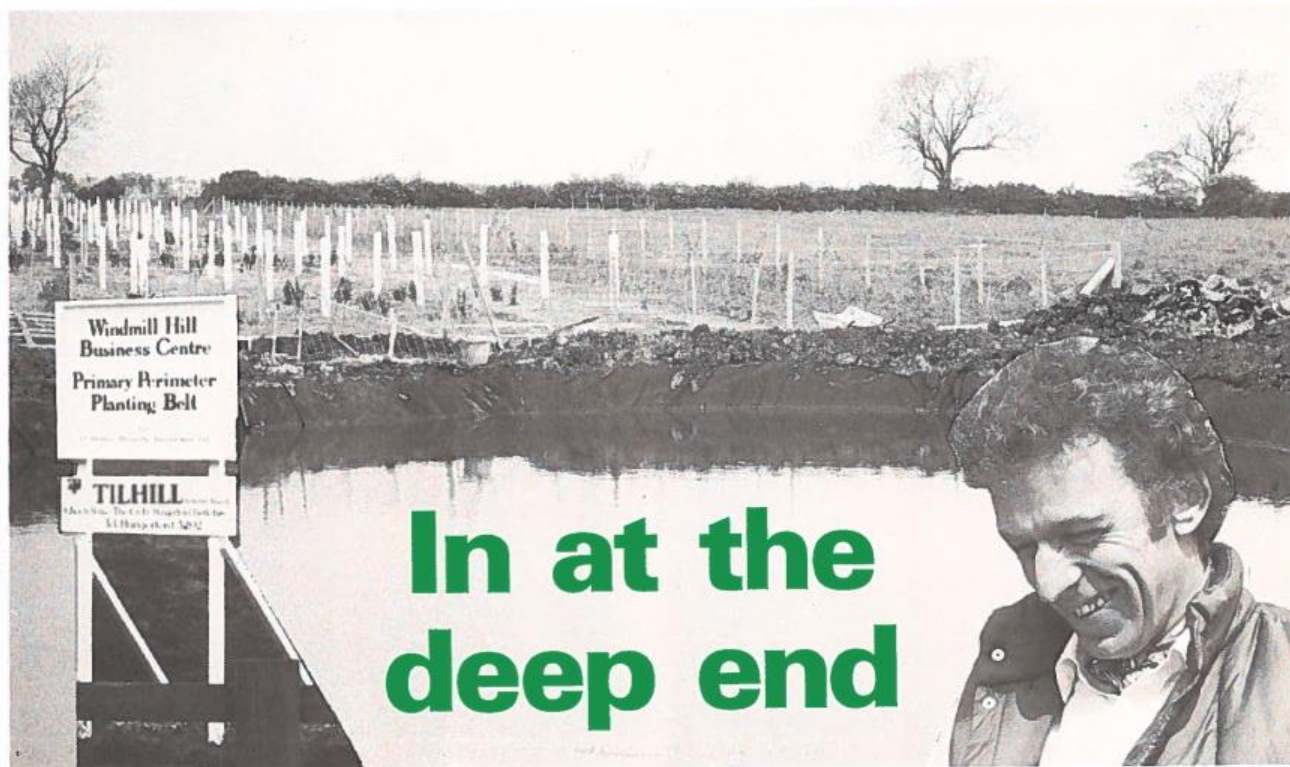
ha. upland planting project near Aberfeldy which Tilhill manages on behalf of a major pension fund.

In spite of the inclement weather, more appropriate to midwinter than the onset of autumn, the delegates left the shelter of the bus between squally showers to hear managing director David Brierton, Scottish division director Sandy Macpherson and Central branch manager Tom McLellan outline Tilhill's services and explain the technical aspects of this major planting project, which was formerly the site of a neglected grouse moor.

The tour, which was organised by the Forestry Commission, continued with visits to other private and state forests, wood-processing plants and the Forestry Commission's Northern Research Station.

At the end of the tour, the overseas experts came to the conclusion that Britain should do even more than at present to grow its own timber and manufacture more of its requirements for timber products in order to reduce the massive import bill.

Irrigation pond at Marsh Farm and (inset) Tilhill's roadside sign at the edge of the development.



In at the deep end

A 'PHONE call from Area Manager Arnold Beaton on Martin Giles' birthday a year ago set in motion a hectic few months with the announcement of promotion to Branch Manager and the creation of the new Berkshire branch.

The search for suitable premises and staff, together with the award of a large contract in addition to normal business, made a busy two months.

The new Berkshire branch was created mainly from territory previously covered by Bill Dorrington's South West branch based in Frome, and Martin, as assistant branch manager, was already spending most of his time in the area managing privately-owned woodland for long-standing Tilhill clients.

To maximise the potential which was felt to exist in Berkshire, northwest Hampshire and Oxfordshire, it seemed a logical move to divide the South West branch area and create an entirely new branch with the ability to expand northwards.

As an added bonus, Martin was already living in Berkshire — in fact, as a tenant on an estate where he manages the woodlands for Lord Porchester. One of the first benefits of the change which Martin felt was the absence of a time-consuming weekly drive to the Frome office and a reduction in the amount of work he had to do at home.

Hungerford was chosen as a strategic location for the branch office because of its proximity to the M4, the "high-technology corridor" linking London and Wales and now proving very attractive to companies being forced out of the capital by high rents.

Indeed, it was the existence of this high-speed road network which gave Martin the first of his serious challenges to tackle. No sooner had he moved himself, files and secretary into his new office than an important contract at Marsh Farm, Swindon, of which Martin had had only an inkling until then, began to firm up. Suddenly Tilhill's new baby was not only born but on its way to maturity with gathering momentum.

So, instead of having a few weeks' grace in which to settle into new premises, Martin found his time fully stretched handling

important new work at Marsh Farm while, at the same time, attending to the interests of the long-standing clients who form the backbone of the branch's business.

"I knew straightaway that it would impose formidable strains on the resources of the new branch," said Martin, "but it was a tremendous fillip to win the contract."

Handling everything at once was a complex juggling act, relieved only by the arrival of a new foreman, Richard Boles, to assist with much of the routine work.

Marsh Farm provided Tilhill with several very large contracts, two for Martin's branch and another for Southern Division's Landscape branch. Martin's contracts totalled £113,815 in value, the first one for draining, fencing, irrigating, planting and then maintaining for five years a 4.5 ha. tree belt, and the second one for carrying out further planting and tree surgery work.

Almost overnight, the branch's order book had virtually doubled. And, as a result of Martin's original tender, the Landscape branch were also brought into the picture to handle a further £62,000 contract for planting and seeding.

The Swindon project is an industrial development of exactly the type which will tempt companies to move out of London. The aim of the company developing Marsh Farm is to present their clients with attractively laid-out premises, fully-serviced and ready to move into.

Such a project near a busy motorway on the outskirts of a large industrial town could hardly be in sharper contrast to the surroundings where Martin traditionally spends his time in managing clients' private estate woodlands.

The large private estates in this sought-after part of Berkshire and Hampshire are mostly owner-occupied and, though there is an increasing awareness of the commercial value of timber production, farming and shooting have for long been the main concerns.

Martin therefore finds himself at times more in the role of land manager than forest manager in the traditional sense, and consideration for the primary objectives frequently dictate his decisions on forestry matters.

One of the biggest problems is the restocking of old and often derelict broad-leaved woodland without resort to clear felling which would adversely affect both the estates' appearance and usually the shooting potential as well. This can be overcome by small-scale group felling and restocking and by maintaining close liaison with owners, estate managers and keepers.

"Working within these constraints can make woodland management more difficult," said Martin, "but also much more interesting and rewarding."

Martin manages five major estates, including Gatcombe Park, and carries out regular work on several smaller estates, normally on a contract basis. He's a familiar face on them all and sometimes tends to be looked upon as part of the estate staff rather than an outsider — an attitude which is pleasing to Martin.

A relationship based on a dual responsibility between client on the one hand and Tilhill on the other suits Martin's temperament. "It should work to everyone's benefit," said Martin. "What an owner, who cannot justify having a full-time forester on his books, is looking for is a part-time forester with a personal touch and a keen interest in his woodland."

Giving good service to managed estate clients AND coping with extra new business at the same time is a healthy challenge for someone new to the responsibilities of branch managership.

Martin is looking forward to sharing this responsibility with newly appointed assistant branch manager, Christopher Walmsley. An added bonus has been the arrival of Mrs Jenny O'Dell in the office. Jenny worked at Tilhill's Frome branch for several years until a change of job for her husband brought them close to Hungerford.

When he was still with South West branch, Martin combined a full-time job and a lot of travelling with studying intensively for his National Diploma in Forestry. "Passing that exam, and the subsequent promotion, give me great pleasure," said Martin.

"It is doubtful if Berkshire branch would exist today but for the support and encouragement of my wife and my colleagues in Tilhill."

Murray maps out investment strategy

MMURRAY URE has already covered a broad range of work experience during his forestry career and taking up the appointment as Investment Manager for Tilhill presents a new and invigorating challenge.

The new job is far removed from those first early days with the Bombay Burmah Trading Corporation in Malaysia as a Forest Assistant, setting up a logging camp in the virgin jungle and supervising and administering the operation from its inception by survey and enumeration on through to felling, log extraction and raft construction for towing the logs down river to the Company's shipping point.

There are changes, too, from his previous Tilhill post, with the informal garb of the field forester being exchanged for a business suit, and the drive to the forest gate replaced by the sprint to the 'plane for a flight to the Company's HQ at Greenhills or to prospective clients' offices in London or elsewhere in the UK.

Opportunities

Tilhill's decision to create the new post stems from an awareness that there are particular opportunities now for investment in forestry, both by private individuals and the institutions, not least because of the present Government's policy for an increasing role by the private sector and in relation to the programme of sales of Forestry Commission holdings. Also it is the aim to improve further the quality of service provided both to potential new clients and to existing clients who have an ongoing acquisition programme.

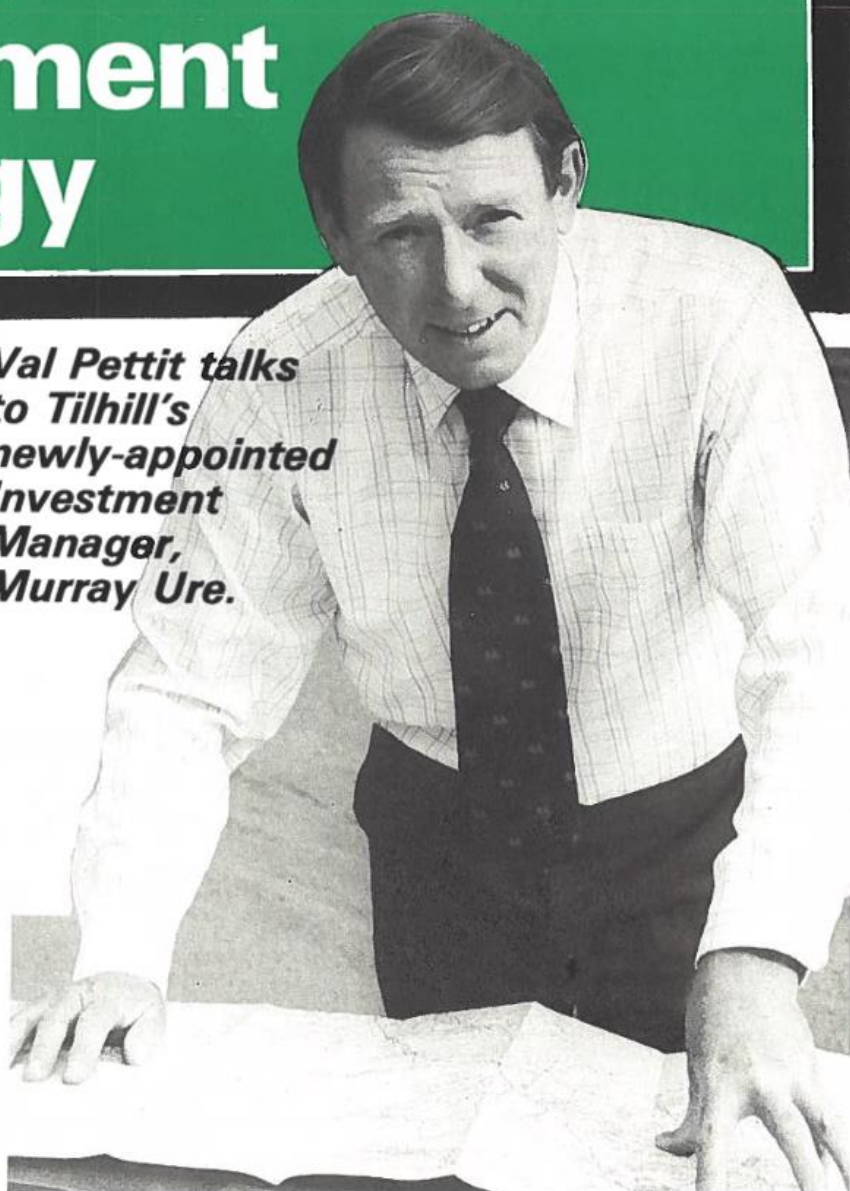
While establishing and maintaining personal contact with investors, Murray will also have close liaison with the Southern and Scottish forestry Divisions of the Company, so that fresh market information is disseminated quickly and effectively, enabling the requirements of both small and large investors to be speedily matched with suitable properties for sale.

Although Tilhill is already well established in the field of pension fund investment in forestry, the opportunities for attracting institutional investors are far from exhausted and the message of the importance and value of forestry investment as part of a total portfolio has to be taken to a yet wider audience.

A further facet of Murray's work will be to keep existing clients abreast of developments not only within Tilhill but also in the wider context of the forestry industry as a whole.

Murray Ure's combination of wide forestry experience and the right kind of

Val Pettit talks to Tilhill's newly-appointed Investment Manager, Murray Ure.



personality for talking authoritatively to investors are considered to qualify him ideally for the work.

A graduate of Aberdeen University, he first joined Tilhill in 1970 after a ten-year spell in Malaysia. While on National Service immediately after graduating he was commissioned in the Royal Engineers and served in a field survey squadron in Malaya, where he fell in love with the Far East and decided to stay. He met his wife Maryanne there; she was teaching English to Chinese children while with the American Peace Corps. Two of his three children were born in Malaysia.

His Tilhill career began with six months as an assistant branch manager in Jedburgh, before moving to Old Sauchie as manager of the Central Branch. He was there until 1974 when itchy feet took him back to the Far East to work as a Forest Manager for the United Africa Company in Indonesian Borneo.

His return to the UK was prompted by an offer from Tilhill, made while he was home

on leave in Callander, to join the Harvesting and Marketing Division as area manager for Scotland and North England. He accepted, spent four years in that post and then accepted a transfer to the Scottish Division as northern area manager.

He approaches his new job positively and with the same degree of enthusiasm which made him a successful logging manager out east, where commanding 200 men and starting a logging operation from scratch in the middle of nowhere called for qualities of self-reliance and leadership which have stood him in good stead ever since.

The post of investment manager will bring him into more contact with people than ever before, as well as much more travelling in England, Wales and Scotland. He's hopeful however that, by retaining his family base in rural Perthshire, he won't lose sight of the lifestyle which attracted him to forestry in the first place — nor indeed of Callander golf course or the Stirling curling rink, since he is an active competitor in both these sports.

THERE was a distinct note of regret in Andrew Binmore's voice as he paused to admire a larch in the cool depths of Sproxton Wood.

"I shall miss this wood," he said and then smiled as he realised how attached he'd become to the magnificent mixed coniferous woodland which surrounded us.

Andrew's remark was made just a few weeks before his departure from East Yorks branch to Southern Division and, while relishing the challenge of pastures new, the prospect of severing his links with Yorkshire and the north-east was obviously tinged with a little sadness.

Tenfold increase

Understandably so. When Andrew first arrived in Thirsk eight years ago, the branch was at a very low ebb. In the intervening years, East Yorks has been transformed from little more than a one-man band into a bustling, thriving branch with a staff of six and a steadily increasing turnover — up tenfold since 1975.

When the time comes to move on, therefore, it is almost inevitable that the man mainly responsible for its recovery should feel that he is leaving behind a small part of himself.

East Yorks is one of Tilhill's larger branches, both in terms of geographical spread and in turnover. The wood in which Andrew feels such a personal involvement is one of Tilhill's prize charges — 167 acres of prime woodland managed by Tilhill on behalf of the Rolls-Royce Pension Trust.

It's a comparatively recent acquisition, purchased on Tilhill's recommendation in 1980 in the face of keen competition from other buyers anxious to own such a prestigious parcel of first-rate woodland.

Sproxton's excellent quality of fine, straight-boled larch trees should make it a prime source of timber for specialist boat-building. It is distinguished, too, for its unusually wide age range (from new plantings right up to 78-year-old trees) and its stands of majestic European larch, soon to be registered as a seed stand.

The territory covered by East Yorks branch extends from Lincoln in the south to Tyneside in the north, half way across the Pennines to Skipton and includes the fertile Vale of York. The upland countryside close to the market town of Thirsk, where the branch office is situated, is vintage "James Herriot" landscape — gently undulating hills criss-crossed with neat lines of dry-stone walls.

In fact, Thirsk is where the real

● **Peter Middleton (left) new manager of East Yorks branch is introduced to Sproxton Wood**
by Andrew Binmore.



James Herriot, more commonly known to locals as veterinary surgeon Alf Wight, has his practice, the exploits of which are widely known through books and television.

To the west, the branch's territory climbs up into the Pennines and to the north, there is the greatest contrast of all — the urban and industrial sprawls of Tyneside and Tees-side, known more for their shipyards, petrochemical complexes and a characteristically tenacious hold on economic survival in spite of recurring recessions.

Hard on the eye after the softer scenery which surrounds it, a visitor's first impression of the harsh industrial landscape is tempered only by the knowledge that the local authorities are now currently involved in rectifying decades of decay and neglect by embarking on large-scale renewal projects — and a good bit of that business is coming Tilhill's way.

● **Assistant branch manager Tim Liddon checks shrub beds at the new Guide Dogs for the Blind centre borough.**



Val Pettit visits 'Herriot c

Contract and s

Landscape work now accounts for two-thirds of the branch's total turnover — up from a year ago when the division between landscaping and traditional silvicultural work was evenly split.

Ironically, though the city of Newcastle-upon-Tyne is on the north bank of the river and technically outside the branch's boundaries, it is the source of much of the major landscape projects in the surrounding industrial belt and members of the branch regularly cross the famous swing bridge to talk to the various planning departments.

Geordieland was also the start of *Tree Scribe's* visit to the branch which took the form of a whirlwind tour of places like Jarrow, Sunderland, Blaydon and South Shields — towns which, to a stranger, merged into one vast conglomerate of houses, shipyards, factories and roads, but which still retain their own separate identities to those who live there.

I was in the company of assistant branch manager Tim Liddon, who has handled many of the landscape projects and who was thus on familiar ground as we threaded our way through spaghetti-like urban highway networks, the roadsides dotted here and there with evidence of earlier Tilhill tree-planting schemes.

Our first stops were on the Gateshead Western by-pass, where the branch has undertaken a tree-planting programme for Tyne and Wear County Council, and at South Shields, where a four-and-a-half mile stretch of disused railway line was removed from the landscape ready for Tilhill Cleveland County Council but one which makes a big impact by providing motorists with a glorious splash of colour in the spring.

to carry out top-soiling, grass-seeding and tree planting.

There's a lot of money around for urban renewal schemes," said Tim, "either from the Department of the Environment, the EEC or from the local authorities themselves and Tyne and Wear, in particular, are a very important client for us."

On next to River Drive in South Shields where Tilhill has transformed a former scrubland eyesore overlooking the docks into a pleasant area of newly-planted shrubs, grass and trees. Tilhill's labour squad had to dig 16,000 holes, each a foot deep by a foot square, much of it on brick rubble, on a 40 degree slope where a special fence had to be erected to prevent debris from crashing down on to the road below. "It was so steep," said Tim, "that we had to do most of it by hand and with buckets."

Tim hadn't anticipated such a deep involvement in urban rehabilitation work when he first qualified as a forester, but now finds he enjoys the wider spectrum that landscaping has added to his forestry work. "I like the variety," he said, "up on the moors one day, down to dockland the next."

For today, however, it was on to another roadside site in Sunderland where a spade carried in the boot of his car helped Tim to dig a hole and assess the soil quality before tendering for a contract which involves felling existing trees and preparing the ground for 14,500 new ones.

The branch is kept busy on this type of roadside enhancement work. On our way to Middlesbrough on the A19 dual carriageway to Tees-side, we passed the site where Tilhill planted 15,000 daffodil bulbs — a small project in terms of financial layout for

Our next port of call was a



● **Mark Hudson (right) sets a weeding squad to work.**

progress in the
centre in Middles-

● Dave Houldershaw examines young trees in a
plantation belonging to ICI overlooking their giant petro-
chemicals complex at Wilton.



country' to profile East Yorks branch.

acts great mall...

sewage works where the £50,000 contract for grass-seeding and tree and shrub planting is being funded by the European Regional Development Fund. Middlesborough is also the site of another of the branch's prestige jobs at the newly-opened £2 million Guide Dogs for the Blind training centre.

It turned out to be a job with a difference. Shrubs for the inner courtyard were specially chosen for their scent so that blind people attending courses could enjoy them and the puppyrun, which was cleared of builders' rubble and stone, had to be especially smooth so that the young animals stand no risk of injuring their delicate pads. Tilhill's involvement at the centre was initially very small, but one job well done led to another and the contract was eventually worth £16,000.

We drove next to ICI's giant petrochemicals complex at Wilton where filigree steel columns and massive cooling towers dominate the skyline. ICI, as well as owning woodland on Tees-side, has a continuing programme of landscape projects and is an important client of the branch.

When ICI bought the site, it also acquired the adjacent Wilton Castle and initiated an ambitious woodland planting programme on the estate. There are now more than 720 acres of mixed broad-leaved and softwood forest providing shelter for ICI's farm stock and considerable amenity for the population of Middlesborough.

The woodland is commercially productive and Tilhill is retained by ICI to manage it and also to undertake numerous landscape projects throughout the site,

including the eventual aim of surrounding most of the complex with contoured mounds. So far, this perimeter work is approximately half-way through.

The branch's biggest afforestation contract is, by contrast, up in the hills of Teesdale at Grassholme where County Durham meets North Yorkshire. It was here, two years ago, that Rolls-Royce bought 300 acres of hillside for Tilhill to plant for commercial timber production. The young trees, planted in the exceptionally dry spring of 1982 when the ground was like dust, are now firmly established.

The purchase of Grassholme brings Rolls-Royce woodland currently under East Yorks branch management to a total of 718 acres, all of which have been acquired in the past three years.

Prior to this important development, the branch's traditional forestry work was mainly with various small privately-owned woodlands like the one at Drewton Manor near Hull where Tilhill carries out a lot of intensive work for the client. Generally speaking, the fertile land produces both a high yield and good quality timber and frequent thinning is both necessary and profitable.

Climate and soil determine what grows well. Wind is not a problem but rainfall is low, favouring pine, larch, oak and sycamore.

That much is evident if the 110-foot-high larches of Sproxton Wood are anything to go by. In bidding farewell to Sproxton and all the other woodland which has become part of his life before handing over to Peter Middleton, Andrew Binmore has the satisfaction of knowing that during his eight-year sojourn, East Yorks branch has grown and prospered and become a respected force both in forestry and landscaping.

● Weeding transplants at River Drive, South Shields.



● Branch secretary Ann Cartwright mans the busy telephone.



● Sue Dennis makes a welcome cuppa.

□ ANDREW BINMORE graduated from Bangor University with an honours degree in forestry and he also holds a diploma in theology from London University (he is a local preacher in his spare time). He also completed a post-graduate course in tropical forestry at Oxford before spending five-and-a-half years in Zambia where he was first engaged in research on Eucalyptus and then later in lecturing at the forestry school.

He joined Tilhill on his return to the UK in 1975 becoming, briefly, abm in Jedburgh before moving to East Yorks as branch manager. He has now moved to Southern Division as Eastern Area Manager.

□ PETER MIDDLETON, who has now taken over as branch manager, graduated from Bangor with honours in 1974. Before joining Tilhill in 1981 as abm in Solway branch, he worked for four-and-a-half years with Norfolk County Council Planning Department and then as assistant manager and later manager of logging operations in Irian Jaya in Indonesia.

"The variety of work at East Yorks branch offers exciting prospects," he said. "It is clear that Andrew's success has been founded on his provision of good and valued service and I aim to ensure that this standard continues."

□ TIM LIDDON is the son of a Somerset forestry contractor and did casual forestry work in Germany and Holland before attending Aberdeen University where he graduated with honours. His first appointment with Tilhill was in Scottish Division central landscape branch in Stirling for six months before moving to East Yorks as abm in 1981.

□ MARK HUDSON, forester with East Yorks branch, worked for two-and-a-half years with South East branch in Crowborough before moving north earlier this year. He trained at Newton Rigg College of Agriculture and Forestry in Cumbria where he obtained an OND. Before joining Tilhill, Mark did farm work, spent 18 months on a private forestry estate in Lincolnshire and worked briefly for EFG in Scotland.

□ DAVE HOULDERSHAW obtained his degree at Aberdeen University after working in Wales for a year with the Forestry Commission. He joined East Yorks two years ago and now concentrates on handling the branch's contracts with ICI, Cleveland County Council and the National Trust.

□ Office stalwarts ANN CARTWRIGHT and SUE DENNIS have both been with the branch for a number of years.

Ann, who is the secretary, has been with Tilhill since 1974 when the office first moved to Thirsk from Ripon. To begin with, she worked only two afternoons a week; now she's there every day except Thursdays.

For Sue, the branch's clerk / typist, this was her first job after leaving school six years ago. She keeps close scrutiny on the records and computer print-outs and is well-known for her neat, copperscript handwriting.

SCOTTISH DIVISION

People and places

Simon Jacyna has joined Solway branch to take over from Peter Middleton on the latter's promotion to Branch Manager at Thirsk. After graduating from Aberdeen University in 1976, Simon worked for a year in Gambia for VSO and then, following a short period as lecturer in Mensuration at Aberdeen University, worked for the Forest Industries Development Company in Jamaica until joining Tilhill. Simon's interests include caving, scuba diving and bee-keeping.



John Cantrill

Margaret Henderson has been promoted to clerkess / typist in Scottish Division Central branch in succession to Lynn Telfer who left to have a baby. Margaret has been with Tilhill since 1980 when she joined the Scottish head office as an office junior. The new junior is **Deborah Ismay**.



Andrew Binmore (left) has handed over the running of East Yorks branch to **Peter Middleton** to move south on promotion to the job of Eastern Area Manager, Southern Division, based at Greenhills.



Sheanagh Noon has joined Lothians branch as secretary. Before coming to Tilhill, she worked in a bank in Haddington, followed by a year in America and twelve months at secretarial college. She is a keen squash player.

Iain Mackenzie has joined Lothians branch as a forester on successful completion of the SCOTEC Forestry Diploma Course at Inverness College. Before going to Inverness, Iain worked for five years with the Forestry Commission. He is a keen footballer and climber.

Catriona MacLellan has joined Argyll branch as secretary. Born in South Uist, Catriona attended Inverness College before moving to Oban.

Gordon Stewart, formerly abm at Scottish Division Central branch, has been transferred to Northern branch as abm.



Simon Jacyna



Iain Mackenzie



Sheanagh Noon



Catriona MacLellan

JOHN CANTRILL has been promoted to the new post of H&M Regional Manager for Yorkshire, based in Thirsk, on the re-opening of this region. Immediately after leaving school in 1972, John spent three years with Southern Division Central branch gaining pre-college experience before embarking on the three-year OND course at Cumbria College of Agriculture and Forestry. In the middle "sandwich" year, he worked with Scottish Division's Central branch and, after leaving college, joined Solway branch as a forester from 1978-81. He then spent nine months travelling and working in the USA before re-joining Scottish Division as abm in Northern branch and, while in Elgin, gained his National Diploma in Forestry with distinction in all papers.

COLIN BLYTH, branch manager in Cowal and Bute reports that he is now fighting fit again after spending 13 weeks in plaster as the result of a complicated leg break sustained in a skiing accident in the Cairngorms last winter.

Thanks to co-operative colleagues and friends, Colin was able to keep his time away from the Dunoon office to a minimum and though hampered by awkward wooden crutches, was off work for only five weeks.

STEVEN'S ROVING COMMISSION



• **Steven Macpherson's** area of responsibility as manager of landscape services has been extended to include Southern

Division. This move reflects the continuing growth in landscape sales turnover — in Scottish Division alone, up by 50 per cent in the past year.

"These are very heartening figures," says Steven, "especially during a period of continuing recession."

It is intended that Steven's extended "roving commission" covering the whole of Great Britain will result in similar benefits to Southern Division.

SCOTTISH

• **CENTRAL LANDSCAPE** branch has won a £60,000 contract from **Lothian Regional Council** for maintenance work on six sites around the Bathgate area. This follows an earlier contract for £13,000 awarded in August for similar work at two other sites.

The branch has also been awarded a £22,000 contract for soiling and seeding for **A. Monk & Co.** at the Mariner Leisure Centre in Falkirk. Included in the contract is an element of interior landscaping which is a new venture for the branch.

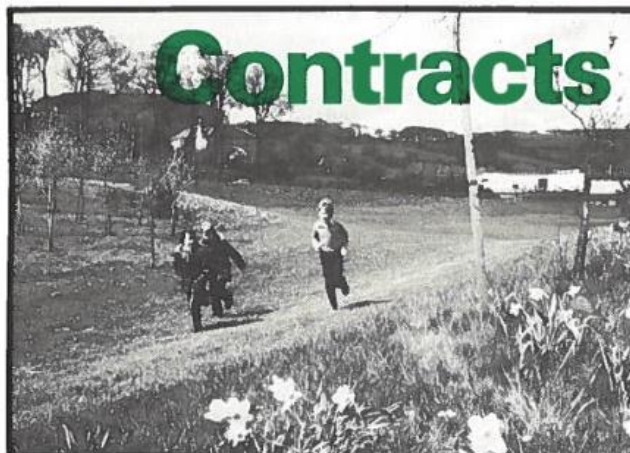
A further maintenance contract, worth £5200, has come from the **British Gas Corporation**.

• **BORDERS** branch has won two contracts with a combined value of £12,614. The first, for £7134, is for the **Northumbrian Water Authority** at Riding Mill Phase II and involves the planting of 1100 trees and shrubs, rabbit net fencing and a year's maintenance.

The second, worth £5480, is for grass-seeding and associated works over an area of 1500 square metres for the **Norwich Union Insurance Group** at Tynepoint Industrial Estate.

• **SOLWAY** branch has won a £41,500 tree planting and maintenance contract from **British Nuclear Fuels**.

• **NORTHERN** branch has won contracts totalling £51,800. The largest, worth £40,000, is for a two-year maintenance programme for the **British Gas Corporation** and the others, worth £6000 and £5800 respectively, are for fencing



Children play in part of the newly-landscaped Balbardie Park.

and seeding for **Moray District Council** and for planting and seeding for **Scottish Malt Distillers Ltd.**

• **HIGHLAND** branch has won an £11,800 contract for landscape maintenance at Nigg Oil Terminal and an £8700 contract from **Gordon District Council** for grass seeding.

• **LOTHIANS** branch has been awarded a £5200 contract by **Norwest Holst** for shrub planting at St Margaret's House, Edinburgh.

and shrub planting, tree surgery and fencing at **HM Prison, Wayland**.

The branch is also busy on a £14,700 contract from **French Kier Construction Limited** for soiling, seeding and tree and shrub planting at **Lister Hospital, Stevenage**, and another for **Waltham Forest BC**, value £13,300, for similar work at a new housing scheme.

• **BERKSHIRE** branch has been awarded a contract valued at £9128 by the **Department of the Environment and Transport** for landscaping the entrance to the **Greenham Common Air Base**. The land is currently occupied by the well-known peace ladies of **Greenham Common** and until such time as they move, it is unlikely that the branch will be able to complete the contract which is for

SOUTHERN

• **ANGLIA** (South) branch has won an £83,000 contract from **R. G. Carter Limited** for soiling, tree



Martin Wilkinson, Southern Division's Northern Area Manager based at Culford for the past three years has succeeded Murray Ure as Northern Area Manager in Scottish Division based at Old Sauchie.



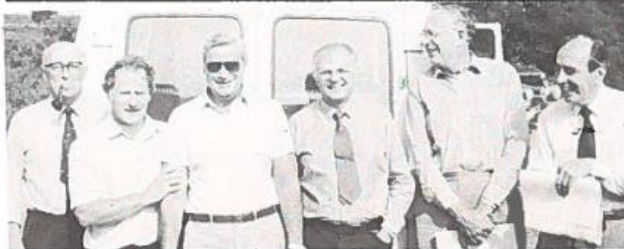
Fred Crozier has been promoted to manager of the newly-created branch of Anglia (North), based at Culford. **Philip Hymers** continues as branch manager of the new branch, Anglia (South), also based at Culford.



Adrian Griffiths has been promoted to manager of Landscape branch following the early retirement, at the age of 60, of **David Eyton-Jones**. David served 13 years with Tilhill, the last three-and-a-half as branch manager.

• Congratulations, too, to Adrian on his recent marriage, in the cathedral of Old Aberdeen, to **Patricia Skipper**. The couple have now made their home in Alton.

SOUTHERN DIVISION



• **Representatives of the Rolls-Royce Pension Trust** recently visited their Dunster estate in South West branch.

The picture shows, from left: chairman **H. E. Trevan-Hawke**, branch manager **Bill Dorrington**, managing director **David Brierton**, **Jim Ives** (Pension Fund Trustee), Southern Division director **Bob Gray** and **Jim Drury**, Rolls Royce Pension Fund investment controller.



BERT GRIFFITHS, foreman on Dunster Estate, Minehead, in South West branch, retired on August 18 on his 65th birthday.

Bert has worked for Tilhill at Dunster since 1962, although his employment on the

property began with the previous managers in 1959. During this period, Bert has seen plantations which he helped establish reach the thinning stage and has tended the crops throughout their development. This long-term association with one property has produced a singular relationship — in the branch manager's view, Bert and Dunster were synonymous.

Being directly involved with the Dunster woodlands for 24 years bred an almost proprietorial feeling for the property which extended beyond the normal working day. Bert has always been a keen guardian of the woodlands and maintained good liaison with all the neighbours — a factor of immense value during high fire risk periods.

To remove Bert totally from the woodlands would be akin to amputation and it is pleasing to record that he will continue in a part-time capacity.

At an informal tea, Bert was presented with an inscribed tankard and a cheque by the company and a clock, hand-crafted in walnut, by the branch and headquarters management.

Christopher Walmsley has joined Berkshire branch as abm.

Chris (24), is a graduate of Aberdeen University and before joining Tilhill, was mainly self-employed, working on planting contracts in Scotland.

For relaxation, he enjoys swimming, hill-walking, sub-aqua and car mechanics.



Bob Lucas has retired as Southern Division's office manager after 12 years with Tilhill. He joined the company following distinguished war service with the RAF during which he was awarded the MBE.

Bob was given a good send-off at Greenhills when he received a camera from colleagues and a tankard and cheque from the company. We wish him a long and happy retirement.



Jim Craig is the new office manager at Southern Division headquarters following **Bob Lucas'** opting for retirement in July at the age of 62.

Mrs Ann Jacklin has joined Nurseries Division as administrative assistant in the nurseries office.

AFTER having been one of the Greenhills part-time switchboard operators for 14 years, **Ivy Hawes** retired in May on reaching the age of 60. To mark the occasion, Ivy hosted a luncheon party for her office colleagues. Parting gifts were presented both by the company and the Greenhills staff.

Branch's new address

SOUTH EAST branch is moving into new office accommodation following the purchase of a 4-bedroomed detached house, built in the mid-fifties, which occupies a prominent position in Crowborough Hill. The accommodation will enable the six members of the branch staff based at Crowborough each to have a separate office and will also provide a secure storage area. The new address is: **Waysbury House, Crowborough Hill, Crowborough, East Sussex.**



Adrian Norton has joined Landscape branch as assistant contracts manager. He graduated from Wye College in 1982 in landscape ecology, design and maintenance and recently completed a year with the North London Polytechnic as research assistant on a grazing management project on the North Downs.



Richard Carrick has joined South West branch as a forester, based at Frome, after obtaining his OND at **Newton Rigg**. Previously, he spent two years with the Forestry Commission.

TILHILL received a Civic Trust Commendation for its part in the conversion of an unsightly colliery tip near Bathgate into a parkland area with playing fields, mini golf course and extensive areas of tree planting.

At the award ceremony, the Director of the Scottish Civic Trust, **Dr Maurice Lindsay**, paid tribute to the people involved in the formation of **Balbardie Park** — the Scottish Development Agency who funded the project, **West Lothian District Council** who were the client, the architect, the engineer and the contractors involved.

Tilhill's contribution involved the supply and planting of more than 400 standard trees and 6000 smaller trees together with 1600m of fencing.

The job was completed in 1980, with a year's maintenance included in the contract.

topsoiling, seeding, tree planting and fencing.

• **LONGLYF** treatment plant has received a series of orders for pressure-treated fencing materials from **John Laing Industrial Engineering & Construction Limited**. The orders, totalling more than £15,000, were for the re-instatement of permanent fencing along the course of a new gas pipeline between Nuffield and Ascot in Berkshire, which Laing were constructing on a £3 million **British Gas Corporation** contract. The fencing supplied consisted of Tanalised round and sawn softwood, sawn oak and other hardwoods, all delivered within a period of nine weeks.

• **CENTRAL** branch was also able to secure a share of this business for its clients, having

previously supplied 15,500 temporary stakes, worth a further £5300, in the earlier stages of the contract.

• **LANDSCAPE** branch has won a prestigious design and build contract from **J. M. Jones**, the main contractor for the new £15 million **Rank Hovis McDougall** headquarters at Windsor, Berkshire.

The branch has also been awarded two further design and build contracts, total value £15,000, by **Woking Borough Council** and another £13,000 contract at **Mole Business Park, Leatherhead**.

• **SOUTH EAST** branch has won a £19,987 contract from the **South West Thames Regional Health Authority** for landscaping work at the **Croydon District General Hospital**. The architects are the **Percy Thomas Partnership**.

The branch has also been awarded another landscape contract, worth £15,300, at the **East Grinstead Safeway Superstore** for **Y. J. Lovell (Southern) Ltd.** and a £10,700 contract from **East Sussex County Council** for subsoiling, fencing, seeding and planting at **Lottbridge Drove** landfill site.

• **SOUTH WEST** branch has won two landscaping contracts. The first, for £13,935, is for landscaping the grounds following the extension of buildings at **Portland Modern School** in Dorset. The second, for £7500, was awarded by the **Wessex Health Authority** for landscaping grounds attached to a **Bournemouth** unit for the mentally handicapped. The contract specifies the removal of all species bearing thorns or prickles as being a potential hazard to patients.

Continued from front page

would seem reasonable to have had regard for other evidence, such as the movement in the costs of labour and materials — or indeed the movement in the Forestry Commission's establishment costs.

While the Forestry Commission records that new private planting rose in the year ended March 31, 1982 by some 50 per cent (actually 48 per cent) over the previous year, this was from a very low base of activity. New private planting in the year to March 1981 was 8400 hectares. In 1973 new planting in the private sector was 20,021 hectares.

Grants freeze

When the Commission says that "the higher planting level (of 1982) has been sustained for the year up to March 31, 1983," it is safe to assume that already the achievement has levelled out.

As recently as December 1980, the Government's new statement on forestry policy called for new planting to continue in the immediate future at broadly the

rate of the past 25 years. That rate, by the state and private sectors combined, was some 30,000 hectares per annum. In the year to March 1982, the joint achievement was 23,440 hectares. With the Forestry Commission's share of new planting continuing to fall, there is considerable leeway still to be made up.

It is difficult to place too much store on the level of applications

for FGS. Grant-aided planting does not take place on the total area for which application is made: it takes place, if at all, on the area approved for grant — and publication of statistics for the latter would have been more revealing. Some of the land approved for grant is then purchased by the Forestry Commission for planting.

A significant proportion of land approved for planting grant is in the more remote and less fertile areas, exactly the type of land that the Government's policy statement foresaw as being more appropriate for planting by the Forestry Commission than by the private sector.

Implicit in the Government's policy statement was the expectation that the private sector would show a marked preference for undertaking new planting on the more accessible and better yield class land, and there is indeed a pent-up demand for planting land of this quality, because still insufficient quantities of the more productive hill ground are approved for grant.

It seems a tragedy that, in a country which is desperate for investment and job creation, and which suffers from a massive import bill for wood products, more is not done to capitalise on the capability and willingness of the private sector to invest in planting land of the quality it seeks.

The Forestry Ministers have reaffirmed the role they see for the expansion of private forestry while at the same time declining to foster that expansion with revised grants. The Government's overall policy for restraining public expenditure is well understood and indeed has been endorsed by the electorate. Is this a signal that investors in new planting should choose whether to seek grant aid at existing levels to plant land of the quality that is approved for grant or make their own land use decisions to plant without grant aid on land of their choice?

In the latter case, the planter would be free to back his commercial judgement and free of the cumbersome "clearance" procedures for grant aid; the Government for their part would save the planting grant and in most cases a displaced sheep subsidy as well. If more than lip service is to be paid to the spirit of free enterprise, no stigma should attach to the exercise of the choice outlined above.

If however, the planting grant is to remain the key ingredient in promoting private sector expansion, with all its associated bureaucratic checks and balances, then equitable revisions, will need to be made on the due date.

If the negotiations take a year to complete, the newly constituted Timber Growers UK Ltd. would be well advised to start the process now, so that on October 1, 1984 there is some rather more encouraging news for their members and prospective members.

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Protective measures



MACDONALD and Muir Limited, one of the few remaining independent whisky distillers in the country and producers of Glenmorangie, that well-known malt so beloved of Tilhill staff, have acquired 72 hectares of 30-year-old coniferous woodland near their Glenmorangie distillery at Tain in Ross-shire.

Within the woodlands, hard and mineral-rich spring water bubbles up from underground sources, is collected in small dams and piped to the distillery. The acquisition of Morangie Woodlands, 90 years after Macdonald and Muir Limited began distilling at Glenmorangie, ensures that the supply of this distinctive water is firmly under the distillery's control.

Tilhill's Highland branch manager Peter Fitch manages the Morangie Woodlands for Macdonald and Muir Limited and he has prepared a five-year management plan prescribing fellings, thinnings and replanting in the woodlands.

The springs have been fenced off to prevent any disturbance to the water supplies during forestry operations and, in every case, close consultation will be maintained with the distillery manager to ensure that the quality of the water takes precedence.

During their autumn meeting, Tilhill directors and Scottish Division managers visited the Morangie Woodlands and the Glenmorangie distillery. At the latter, it will come as little surprise to readers that the opportunity was taken to partake of the "water of life" so exquisitely and distinctively produced by Messrs Macdonald and Muir.

Tilhill joins ICF

PRIOR to gaining its Royal Charter, the Institute of Foresters introduced a new grade of membership of "Corporation Affiliate" with a higher rate of subscription for commercial limited companies. While financial support from members and wellwishers was being sought by the Institute to assist with the costs of the petition for the Charter, no active recruitment to the new grade of Corporation Affiliate was undertaken.

However, earlier this year the President of the Institute of Chartered Foresters invited Tilhill to apply for membership and the company is proud to record that in May the ICF welcomed Tilhill as its first commercial Corporation Affiliate member.

This is very much in keeping with Tilhill's continued support for the Institute and its objectives.

A visit or a pilgrimage? A Tilhill gathering at the entrance to the famous Glenmorangie distillery.

Scotland OSB-land!

AS *Tree Scribe* goes to press, an early announcement is expected from Highland Forest Products that they have concluded all their arrangements to finance and construct a new timber-processing plant at Inverness to manufacture Oriented Strand Board (OSB). This would be the first fruits of the work of the Scottish Forest Products Development Group.

Highland Forest Products already have outline planning permission for a site at Dalcross east of Inverness. When in production, the factory would have an annual intake of 150,000 tonnes of small roundwood and the product will compete directly with imported plywood. The new venture is led by John Godfrey, who has already been involved in setting up a similar plant in the USA.

Following the closure of the Fort William pulpmill, the north of Scotland has had an acute need for a processing plant using small roundwood, most of the production of which has had to be exported to Scandinavia in the absence of home demand.

Meanwhile, Caberboard at Stirling have announced that they, too, have plans to put in an OSB production line at their existing large chipboard and medium density fibreboard plant and have said they are seeking to raise the finance for this expansion probably outside the UK.

Once either or both the Inverness or Stirling production facilities are in being, Scotland will take the lead in Europe in OSB manufacture which has hitherto been developed commercially in North America.