



Secretary of State finds for forestry in test case

AN IMPORTANT planning appeal decision by the Secretary of State for Scotland has established that timber haulage does not constitute "extraordinary traffic" such as would affect the planning merits of an application for access to the public highway.

In preparation for the start of thinning operations on a 570-acre plantation in Galloway, Tilhill applied in 1981 for four new bellmouth accesses on to a minor "C" class public road. These were to supplement two existing accesses.

After asking for and being given two extensions of time to allow full consideration, Dumfries and Galloway Regional Council refused the applications in March 1983. Their reasons were that the accesses would result in timber haulage traffic causing damage to the highway and be likely to give rise to excessive unprogrammed expenditure by the Regional Council to upgrade the minor public road.

They had earlier indicated that, if the applicant undertook at his sole cost to pay for certain improvements to the public road, estimated at some £90,000, they would be prepared to grant planning permission for the four new accesses.

Tilhill appealed against the decision, and the Regional Council requested that the appeal be dealt with by public local inquiry.

The main grounds of appeal were that, since the forest already had two usable accesses and the new ones would merely facilitate extraction and safety, the grounds of refusal were irrelevant, that the increase in traffic arising from timber haulage was more modest than the Council supposed, and that the suggested precondition to undertake major highway improvements was both absurd and unreasonable.

The Council, it is supposed, requested a public local inquiry to establish issues of principle on timber traffic.

The Secretary of State in turn decided that the appeals should be determined by him rather than by a person appointed by him because "these appeals raise an important issue of principle concerning responsibility for upgrading public roads to cope with the traffic generated by the harvesting of timber and the decisions on these appeals are likely to be cited as precedents in any similar cases which might arise in the future."

The Inquiry was held in Dumfries in October 1984 by Principal Reporter Mr G. W. Maycock. Tilhill's client was represented by Mr Ian Kirkwood, QC, instructed by Messrs J. & F. Anderson WS.

APPEAL VERDICT

Tilhill's Scottish Division general manager Peter Sloan and Solway branch manager Colin Forsyth gave evidence for the appellant, together with Roger Hay, the Forestry Commission's chief engineer, Tom Taylor of consultant engineers Crouch and Hogg, and Tom Bruce Jones, joint managing director of sawmillers James Jones & Sons Ltd.

On 18th April this year the Secretary of State for Scotland upheld the appeals and granted planning permission for the four new accesses. This was in accord with the Reporter's conclusion that there was "an overwhelming case for sustaining all four appeals."

The Secretary of State expressed himself in

agreement with the Reporter's reasoning and recommendations, notable amongst which were:

- The fundamental issue at the heart of the planning authority's decisions and subsequent appeals was the provision of funds for the improvement of public roads to be used in connection with the harvesting of timber.
- The stance of the Forestry Commission was upheld that forestry is a rural industry with the traffic it generates making a normal use of public roads and as such it should not be treated differently from agriculture in being allowed to use the highway system.
- The heavy goods vehicle movements generated by the timber cropping at the site will not represent an unacceptable increase or constitute "extraordinary traffic" such as to affect the planning merits of these appeals.
- It would be most invidious if the Council insisted on recouping the costs of upgrading a public road along its entire length from the owners of a modest and long-established tree plantation which happens to flank that road, before they can be permitted to harvest the timber crop.
- The planning authority had no technical planning objections to the proposed four new accesses or to their configuration.

This decision clearly indicates the importance attached by Government to the efficient extraction of timber as an essential rural resource and as a vital raw material for industry.

Timber production generates employment both in the rural areas in which it is grown and harvested and in the urban areas in which much of it is processed for sawn lumber, pulp and particleboard.

Taking timber to its markets is as legitimate a use of the public roads as agricultural produce.



Photograph reproduced by kind permission of Bracknell News.

• HRH the Princess Anne formally opens the new Bracknell shopping centre where Tilhill undertook a big design and build landscape scheme. Full story in contracts news, page 7.

Flight control!



• A helicopter prepares to spread young crops with phosphate fertiliser at the Daililongart North Estate in Argyll — just one of many different types of operation which take place in Tilhill's Cowal and Bute branch. Turn to the centre pages for the full coverage of the branch.

ECE TIMBER COMMITTEE TOUR OF SWITZERLAND

IN OCTOBER last year it was my privilege and pleasure to be one of the party making a study tour of Swiss Forestry and Forest Industries under the auspices of the ECE Timber Committee.

The tour arrangements were made by the Zurich Office of Messrs Lignum, who are a small private company funded by the Swiss Government, woodland owners and wood processors by a levy system and whose function is to promote the use of timber and, particularly, Swiss-grown timber in Switzerland. Lignum comprises a small but very enthusiastic and efficient team of foresters, or people with related qualifications, headed by Peter Hofer.

The party, which besides a few of us British included representatives from the United States, Germany, Russia, France, Belgium, Holland, Finland, Sweden, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Turkey and Portugal, foregathered in Geneva on October 12 on a fine day with bright sunshine and from whence we were transported speedily and comfortably by coach to Berne and installed in the excellent Hotel Kruez.

Saturday dawned bright and clear — a weather pattern that was to endure throughout most of our visit — and we made our way to the sawmill of Brand AG, at Zollbrück which is in the Canton of Berne.

This is a long established family business in an area with a long tradition of timber processing. The original sawmill on the site was totally destroyed by fire in 1981 and the present modern set-up had risen Phoenix-like from the ashes.

The sawmill has a softwood roundwood intake of between 25,000m³ and 30,000m³ of high quality sawlogs per annum and an output of between 15,000m³ and 20,000m³ of sawn material.

The sawmill is very highly mechanised and very efficiently run and achieves this level of production with a staff of only 12 workers, albeit the total labour force is 60 to 70 people, most of whom are engaged in further processing of the timber for sale eg. planing, tongue-and-grooving boards, timber drying etc.

To me, one of the most striking features of the whole operation was the high degree of cleanliness in and around the sawmill. Hand brooms are much in evidence and are wielded by the workers at shift-end to clean up their work places.

We then moved on to Dürsrüti Wood at Langau in the Emmental and this, for me, was the highlight of the whole tour.

Dürsrüti Wood itself is managed as selection forest with all ages represented on every hectare, and regeneration, cultivation and harvesting is a continuing process throughout. The species mix is European silver fir, Norway spruce and beech and the soil is a Brown Earth with ample rooting depth. This particular wood, our guide told us, has been under continuous management for some 800 years.

Trees are judged to be ready for felling when they are 300 or more years old and the conifer specimens in this category stretched skywards

by **Scottish
Division general
manager
Peter Sloan**

• The open-air farm museum



ALPINE HIGHLIGHTS

for 50m or more and the silver fir that was felled for our benefit had an estimated volume of 7m³.

When asked if there were any problems with windthrow the forester feigned blank incomprehension of what was being asked about and, having had his chuckle at the questioner's expense, assured us that windthrow was virtually unknown in selection forest.

Sunday broke clear and calm and we started the day with a visit to the Ballenberg Open Air Museum. The museum was founded in 1969 with the purpose of preserving examples of traditional Swiss buildings for posterity.

Farm buildings threatened with demolition — mostly of timber construction — from all parts of Switzerland have been dismantled into their component parts and faithfully re-erected in the 50ha park that comprises the museum. The buildings are grouped according to their regional provenance and are furnished in the style appropriate to their period.

We moved next on to the Canton Obwalden where we viewed forest roads and avalanche protection measures. In this area very great emphasis is placed on the forest's protective role in stabilising slopes prone to avalanche, stabilising water catchment areas and gentling the flow of mountain torrents.

The expenditure on these measures is quite enormous: comprehensive avalanche protection measures costing, we were told, some 1 million Swiss francs (£300,000) per hectare. Forest road construction is very expensive by UK standards, some of the cost-conscious amongst us working out that it averaged about £70,000/kilometre.

The party then moved to the foot of Stanserhorn, which rises to a modest (by Alps standard) 6300 feet elevation and we ascended to its top by funicular railway and cable car. The cable car journey was quite fascinating as it provided a bird's eye view of a transect of the tree crop that extended well up the slope and with a significant fall-off in growth only becoming apparent, I judged, at about 4500 feet elevation.

Towards the tree line the slopes were precipitous and it was quite astonishing to see that trees could establish a roothold and grow to sizeable dimensions in such a situation.

On the top of the mountain, but sheltered in the restaurant at the cable car terminal, we were given a talk by one of the staff of the Swiss Federal Institute of Forestry Research on the methods being employed to complete the National Forest Inventory which is in progress.

The fieldwork was started in 1983 and the first phase is scheduled to be completed in 1985.

On Monday, we started the day by visiting a recently-completed indoor skating rink in Lucerne where the roof was constructed of glulam timber and has a clear span of 74.6m.

Our next stop was at the sawmill of Ernst Schillinger A.G., at Küssnacht in Canton

Schwyz. This is one of the biggest sawmills in Switzerland and has a throughput of some 70,000m³ of round timber per annum and employs 75 people.

We then moved on to Pavatex A.G., a fibre-board factory at Cham in Canton Sug. Pavatex is the only manufacturer of fibreboard in Switzerland and has another factory at Fribourg.

The production capacity of the Cham works is about 50,000 tonnes per annum and alongside the traditional hard and soft fibre board it produces insulation and acoustic board and non-flammable minerable fibre board. The Cham factory employs 110 people.

Finally, that day, we visited Bachman A.G., in Hochdorf, who are mainly manufacturers of windows, but who also produce doors and other interior household fittings.

Our first stop of the day on Tuesday was at the plywood and veneer mill of Franz Hess A.G., in Döttingen. This firm specialises in producing goods for the leisure market, employs 65 people and handles some 15,000m³ of logs each year, a significant proportion of which are exotic timbers.

To the inexpert but critical eye the quality of the products was of impressively high quality.

We then moved on to the factory of Novopan-Keller A.G., in Bottstein. Novopan-Keller A.G., is the biggest wood-working industrial concern in Switzerland and employs 540 people. Their main product is chipboard, but they also produce decorative layered "paper" board manufactured in multi-layer presses, and veneers.

The excursions culminated in a short visit to the forest owned by the Commune of Baden. Baden owns some 673ha of forest and their forestry staff manages a further 190ha belonging to surrounding communes and other bodies. Baden Forestry Administration consists of a forest manager, two foresters and seven forest workers. The woods are managed on a group selection system and the current annual cut is some 7750m³.

We were taken to two areas which had been group felled and restocked with a variety of species, predominantly hardwoods, and the forest manager gave us — in Swiss-German which, I am sure, lost much in translation — a long peroration on his management plans and problems and the methods he was adopting. He gave us as his two main problems tree die-back and vermin.

It was interesting to learn that he did not unreservedly ascribe the die-back to the effect of acid rain, albeit he recognised it as being probably at least a contributory cause and he cited the fact that the last two summers had been exceptionally dry and speculated whether at least some amount of the damage was due to water table fluctuations.

We then moved on to Zurich and that same evening made our way to the Zumfthaus Zur Zinnerleuten for dinner and the final summing-up session that brought a most enjoyable and interesting tour to a close.



• View of plantations next to Dürsrüti Wood.

PROFILE

John Simmons

HAPPY is the man who can look out of his office window and reflect on the results of his own handiwork spanning a third of a century.

John Simmons is such a man. With his own hands, he has helped to give Greenhills its present form and has thus made a unique and valuable contribution to Tilhill's development.

A nurseryman by training, John is also a builder with the ability to turn his hand to almost any skill — a veritable Jack of all trades. But to infer, therefore, that he is master of none would, indeed, be misleading.

John's expertise has been channelled over the 33 years that he has been with Tilhill into clearing and planting, building cold stores for the nurseries, renovating and building offices, installing plumbing for the irrigation reservoirs and looking after successive generations of machinery.

John's tiny office is situated right in the heart of Nurseries Division's cold store area.

When John first arrived at Greenhills, all that existed were a run-down main house, neglected gardens and grounds, and an old pig sty. Today, he can look out on a neat complex of workshops, four cold stores, purpose-built offices and, on the horizon, trees which John helped to plant as shelter belts for what has become the largest private forestry nursery in the country.

John's first association with Tilhill was in Archie Aitkins' day, when he was hired as a nursery worker in 1952 shortly after leaving the armed forces. The company was then based at Tilhill House in the village of Tilford.

His first main job was to help with the expansion project to create the company's first big nursery at Tankersford Common — the one at Tilhill House had been a mere two acres. When the move to Greenhills followed in the late fifties, John moved too, and has remained ever since.

John recalls the hard physical labour that went into the first year at Greenhills to lick the place into shape by clearing neglected ground of heather, winching out scrub and blasting out roots with explosives to clear and lay out the new nurseries area.

"We got through 200 lb. of dynamite a day," he said. "It was real seat of the pants stuff as none of us had ever used explosives before. Someone told us how to put in a fuse and we just took it from there!"

Then followed intensive ploughing, rotavating and planting of shelter belts and the first crops in a growth programme which has continued throughout John's career.

There was much to be done in the early years. Greenhills House consisted then of six disused flats with a hole in the roof. John renovated the whole building — half of it for Archie Aitkins' residence and the other half for offices, in between demands on his time from the nurseries and the need to start building other working premises.



A Jack of all trades...

● Val Pettit meets a Tilhill stalwart, maintenance foreman John Simmons, and describes his skilful application in making Greenhills the place it is today.

In those years of development, he also built offices for the Nurseries Division, took apart and re-assembled at Greenhills ex-Army huts to provide urgently-needed office space for Central and Landscape branches, and adapted Greenhills House yet again to provide further office accommodation.

Landscape branch has recently moved to superb new offices which John's skill and ingenuity have fashioned from disused squash courts in the grounds of the main house.

John remembers an amusing problem when the first cold store was built in 1965. "It was a Danish-designed store," he said, "and all the assembly instructions were provided in Danish only. With the help of a young Danish girl who was working here at the time, we managed to work out a rough

translation, but we were working in the dark for most of the time. It must have been accurate enough, however, because when we switched on, everything worked first time."

The provision of two five-million gallon capacity reservoirs for the nurseries' irrigation system were major projects of which John is particularly proud. He installed all the necessary underground piping, measured out the reservoir area and supervised excavation.

"Before the Butyl lining went in," he said, "we used to enjoy a game of football in the bottom at lunchtimes."

At that time John lived in one of a pair of cottages at Greenhills and used the reservoir for a cooling swim on hot summer evenings. He also stocked it with carp, tench, roach and bream and although the fishing club he started no longer

operates, he still fishes there himself from time to time.

Although attached to Nurseries Division, John's maintenance responsibility encompasses the whole of Greenhills and when he's not occupied looking after the reservoirs which are so essential to the well-being of the nurseries, he is to be found somewhere on the premises wielding a paintbrush, hammer, saw or spanner, driving a tractor, helping with seed sowing during Nurseries Division's spring rush or in the workshops renovating a piece of machinery.

And, if there isn't the right piece of equipment for the job in hand, he will set to and make one — the vibrating sieve used to retrieve seed from sand and peat after stratification in the cold store is John's invention.

Even in his off-duty hours, he's never happier than when he's working with his hands. He finds wood-turning especially relaxing and has made a fully-functional spinning wheel just for the fun of it.

At home, as well as at work, he's obviously a very useful pair of hands to have around the place and he has recently completed a large extension to his house.

His wife, however, draws the line at letting John near the garden. Trained nurseryman or no, he evidently isn't to be trusted with growing the family fruit and vegetables!

Longlyf looks forward

THE Longlyf Timber Treatment Plant is now 10 years old — and business is looking good!

The Longlyf plant manufactures timber products for use in agriculture and the landscaping industry. Fencing products and tree stakes are the main business, but an ever-growing sector is in specialist timbers for hop gardens, vineyards, play areas and game pens.

Demand for Longlyf's products has remained strong despite cutbacks in dairy farming and in local authority budgets, and despite the miners' strike which forced many sawmills to divert into fencing work. The plant is now one of the foremost suppliers of treated roundwood in the South of England.

Sales run at around 50 transactions a week, ranging in value from £1 to £4000. On average, three lorry-loads a week carrying a total of 40 tonnes of timber leave the Longlyf yard. This season's record week yielded sales of 10,631 pieces with a value of over £10,000.

The aim is to process and sell 208,000 pieces (or 2550 m³) of timber, during the year and over the past two years the total annual sales have more than doubled in value.

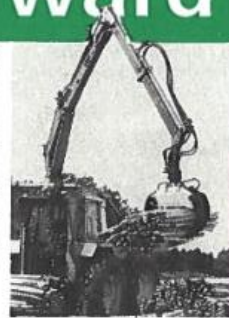
Longlyf products are manufactured from first and second thinnings taken from within 75 miles of Greenhills. To ensure the best results, stocks of over 70,000 pieces are held for air drying, before preservative treatment with copper chrome arsenic salts.

In addition to the main business, which accounts for 80 per cent of turnover, the plant also treats sawn timber belonging to local builders, sells wire products and gates and also the residues from processing such as bark peelings and firewood.

To support the continued growth of business, Longlyf has recently invested in two major pieces of equipment — a new 3-tonne Coventry Climax



● In action — the new forklift truck (above) and the new tractor-mounted grab.



forklift truck and a new 3½-tonne FMV crane and grapple on a County 1164 4-wheel drive tractor.

There have been staff changes too. Plant foreman Tony Harrison has been joined by Jim Castley, who will help to organise yard operations, and there are now three full-time processors — Raiffe Le-Grys, Malcolm Crowston and Peter Smith. Extra administration is being handled by full-time secretary Yvonne Griffiths, who also gets involved in some of the selling.

Longlyf manager Oliver Barnsley also wants to move into new sectors of the market which are best served by the raw material available in the local woods. Sawn fencing timbers and larger post material for deer fencing, play areas, wooden barriers, animal pens and the like are all growing markets offering opportunities for continued expansion of the Longlyf operations.

A recent enquiry of special interest came in March for 3000 six foot tree stakes to go to Somalia as part of a US AID programme to plant trees and stabilise eroding soils. Longlyf was approached because it was the only plant able to offer 100 per cent pine CCA treated to the very high standard required in an area where stakes must be termite-proof.

BOARDING the Dunoon ferry at the Clyde coast port of Gourrock gives the illusion of travelling to an island, an illusion which is strengthened by the stark contrast between the shipyards and tenements of Lower Clydeside and the spectacularly beautiful scenery of the densely-wooded Cowal peninsula.

The Cowal peninsula forms part of Scotland's deeply-indented west coast, a fat tongue of mountainous land sandwiched between Loch Fyne on the west and the Clyde and Loch Long on the east and split into three prongs by two further sea lochs. Nowhere in Cowal are you ever very far from salt water.

Dunoon is the headquarters of Tihill's Cowal and Bute branch. Considering its geography, it is a surprisingly compact branch — until the recent acquisition of Bannachra Muir on Loch Lomondside, branch manager Colin Blyth never had to travel more than 30 miles to reach a property under his management.

The branch was formed in 1978 on the strength of several major purchases by one of the two major institutional clients on the branch's books. In Colin's time with the branch, six important new acquisitions have been added to the branch's management schedule.

The branch's biggest single estate is on the island of Bute, an hour away by ferry and road. It is a well-established farming and forestry estate owned by the Marquis of Bute, the woodlands on which Tihill has managed continuously since 1973. The older blocks are mainly of Scots pine and larch, with spruce dominating the younger plantations.

Recommendations contained in a Tihill management plan at the time involved harvesting proposals for the more mature blocks, the rehabilitation of hardwood shelter belts which had become moribund and the establishment of new blocks of conifer woodland. Now, a re-survey of the woodlands has been completed and a revised operational programme drawn up.

NEW ACQUISITIONS

But back to the main purpose of the *Tree Scribe* visit, which was to take a look at some of the branch's newer acquisition, in particular Bannachra Muir where road-building was in full swing and planting was about to start, and to talk to Colin about his own style of management.

Tree Scribe's arrival coincided with a hectic time for the branch. Only that day, a delivery of 150,000 transplants had arrived from Tihill's nursery and Colin was concerned to see the plants were distributed to advantage on site and carefully handled in the process, prior to their being planted.

Bannachra Muir was acquired by an institutional client of Tihill's in 1984. It is situated above the western flanks of Loch Lomond and is the biggest single afforestation project the branch has undertaken so far. Until last year, the property was a bare hillside grazed by sheep. Now, 220 of its 232 ha are being ploughed ready for planting this season and four-and-a-half kilometres of roads are being built to facilitate establishment and eventual extraction of timber.

The fertile soils and the local climate — mild and wet without extremes of temperature — make the area, in common with the whole of Cowal and Bute, particularly suited to the rapid growth of coniferous forests.

As Bannachra Muir is in a region of high landscape value, detailed consultations with the local planning authority were necessary as part of the terms of its acceptance into the Forestry Grant Scheme. As a result, some hill-tops, including the 313m high summit of Ben Bowie, are being left bare, and larch and hardwood planting is being carried out to soften the impact of the plantation. Stone for the roads is being quarried from a hillside screened from the public view.

The whole of the Cowal peninsula is very heavily afforested with some 40 per cent of the



• Tree planting, fencing and footpath construction for Irvine Development Corporation.



• Controlled heather burning

Val Pettit travels

Scenic for a rapid grow



• Timber harvesting at Glenkin.

land under commercial plantations, owned either by the state or private sector. The very compactness which enables Colin to get around his patch relatively easily brings its own problems. "With such a large proportion of the area already planted, there is now limited scope for expansion in this direction," said Colin.

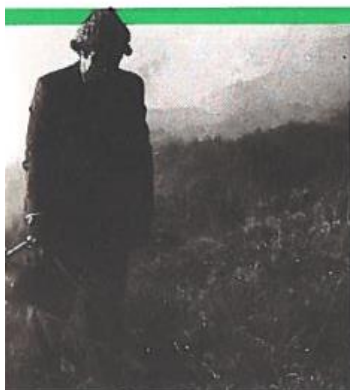
The branch handles its own harvesting and marketing activities, dominated this year by extensive clear felling proposed for Glenkin following the recent revision of the current management plan for the estate.

In recent years, the district has had to cope with the difficulty of finding economic markets for small roundwood, but things are changing for the better with a dramatic increase in demand for roundwood from new and upgraded processing plants.

"New plants at Shotton and Inverness are going to come on stream this year," said Colin. Existing plants at Workington and Hexham are increasing their intake. Caberboard is going strong. It all represents a complete reversal of the smallwood market situation two or three years ago. The only part of the jigsaw still missing is a major wood processing facility on the Scottish west coast, but this is getting the full attention of the Scottish Forest Products Development Group.

Glenkin, scene of clear-felling work in the coming months, extends to 427 ha and, with its Allt Mhor outlier of 67 ha, contains stands of prime quality Sitka and Norway spruce. A subsequent and extensive programme of thinning in the older compartments is scheduled to follow this year's clear fells.

The acquisition of Glenkin and Allt Mhor,



ing at Bannachra Muir.



• Ian Sword (left) of Henderson Brothers at the stone quarry on Bannachra Muir.

els to Scotland's west coast to profile Cowal and Bute branch

setting th point

together with 143 ha of bare, plantable land at St Catherines, prompted the setting up of the branch in 1978.

At St Catherines, Colin Blyth showed *Tree Scribe* 23 ha of new planting carried out last year alongside the original 1978 planting. Here, three hectares of oak woodlands have been retained for their amenity and nature conservation value. St Catherines has been mostly planted up with Sitka spruce, but there is also Douglas fir, Hybrid larch and a small area of *Nothofagus procera* (South American beech). The higher, unplanted ground above the plantations aids deer control on the property.

STRICT CONTROL

"Although the population of red deer in Cowal is quite high, it tends to be scattered," said Colin. "We don't experience the devastation which would be caused by large, marauding herds of deer and so we can establish our plantations without costly deer fences. However, strict control of deer numbers is still necessary to protect young and pole stage plantations."

At Ardgaddan Barr, a 137 ha privately owned estate on the shores of Loch Fyne, the list of mammals known to visit the property includes seals which have been seen basking in the furrows. First planted by Tilhill in 1978, this plantation is now well established. A programme of heather control and fertiliser application is currently being drawn up.

The whole subject of wildlife and conservation is of great concern to Colin, an enthusiastic but pragmatic conservationist who firmly believes that the care of the countryside and economic vitality are by no means mutually exclusive.

"Current research supports the theory that multi-structured forests such as the ones we have in Cowal can, and do, provide a habitat for wildlife, especially for birds and insects, richer than the previous land use regime of hill grazing," said Colin.

"If I didn't believe that commercial forestry was good for both the economy of the country and for nature conservation, I wouldn't be in this job."

BRANCH manager Colin Blyth first came to Cowal and Bute in 1978 as assistant branch manager. He joined Tilhill four years earlier after graduating from Aberdeen University and worked at Northern and Argyll branches before being transferred to Dunoon when the branch was formed.

Following the departure of the branch's first manager, Colin ran Cowal and Bute single-handedly as the new manager until Oliver Barnsley joined him as abm. There followed another spell of holding the fort alone when Oliver left to go to the Longlyf treatment plant until the present abm, Gordon Stewart, joined him in August last year.

Colin's pastimes include photography, mountaineering, cross-country skiing, sea canoeing and a keen interest in natural history.

LIKE Colin, assistant branch manager Gordon Stewart had a spell in Northern branch before moving to Dunoon. Before that, he'd worked with Scottish Division Central branch where he was involved in the large Glenample afforestation project. At Dunoon, his main responsibility at the moment is supervision at the Bannachra Muir afforestation project.

In his spare time, Gordon enjoys skiing during the winter months and sailing during the summer, making Dunoon an ideal location for him.

AILSA STEWART is one of Tilhill's longest serving secretaries. She spent eight years at the Jedburgh Office before leaving the company briefly. Then, when the Cowal and Bute branch was being set up, she was invited to take the job in Dunoon and her long experience of Tilhill's way of doing things has been invaluable ever since.

Six-and-a-half years later she is settled in Dunoon.

Designs on landscaping

LANDSCAPING plays a modest part in the branch's activities.

Contracts in recent years include two planting schemes executed for the Irvine Development Corporation.

A landscaping advisory service is a recent development. London and Clydeside Estates, a quality home construction company, commissioned Colin to prepare a tree survey

report on an area of former policy woodlands in Ayrshire which they were planning to develop.

The report, which formed part of L & C's planning submission, involved inspecting each of 577 trees individually to assess health and aesthetic value and drawing up a schedule of treatment.

As a follow-up, L & C asked Colin to prepare a landscape design plan covering the entire site.

CHIPPING IN...



• Branch manager Colin Blyth.



• Assistant branch manager Gordon Stewart working on plant layout for Bannachra Muir.

ASPELL of sick leave caused by a broken leg in a skiing accident was put to good use by Colin.

To combat the long hours of boredom and enforced inactivity, he bought a micro-computer and taught himself programming.

One of the programmes he wrote is now in regular use by the branch for investment analysis and carrying out property evaluations.



• Branch secretary Ailsa Stewart.

People and places



Rachel Anderson



Mike Ogden



Bill Davidson

● Rachel Anderson joined Landscape branch in October as an assistant contracts manager after previous experience with the branch during university vacations.

She graduated with a BSc in geography and geology from London University in 1980, followed by a Diploma in Landscape Design from Sheffield University in 1984.

Her interests include ski-ing, swimming and travel.

SOUTHERN



Peter Watson

● Peter Watson has joined Anglia North branch as a forester. He gained his OND at Newton Rigg and immediately before joining Tilhill in February, worked as a YTS supervisor in Doncaster.

In his spare time, he enjoys football and photography.

● Christopher Marrow has joined Central branch as an assistant branch manager.

● Congratulations to Dick Hoare who has gained his National Diploma in Forestry and been promoted to assistant branch manager in South-East branch.

Dick joined Anglia branch in 1981 after four years' service with the Tasmanian Forestry Commission.

● Yvonne Griffiths has joined Longlyf as a full-time secretary, replacing Carole Monk.

● Jim Castley has joined Longlyf as an assistant plant operator with a view



Christopher Marrow



Dick Hoare

to learning all aspects of work at the plant.

● David Cox has been transferred from Central Landscape branch to South West branch on promotion to assistant contracts manager. David is a graduate in Landscape Architecture from Manchester.

● Richard Sochacki has been promoted to manager of the Marches branch. He gained an honours degree in Agriculture and Forest Sciences at Oxford in 1978 and, before joining Tilhill's Central branch the following year, held temporary posts with Norfolk County Council and the Forestry Commission in field survey work.

His hobbies include jogging, cycling, reading, DIY and gardening. On May 4, Richard married Nicola Cottrell at All Saints Church, Weston, Bath.

● Rob McDougall has joined Marches branch as a forester.

This is his second spell with Tilhill. He worked with Borders branch as a forest worker for two years from 1977-1979 before studying for his OND at Newton Rigg and spent a sandwich year with the Forestry Commission at Brechfa Forest in South Wales.

Rob is the nephew of Bob McDougall, office manager at Old Sauchie, and his hobbies include hill-walking, ski-ing, reading, music and the Territorial Army, of which he has been a member for eight years.

● Peter Raines has re-joined Tilhill as assistant contracts manager with Marches branch. Peter had already worked for five-and-a-half years with Tilhill at Stirling and Culford when he left briefly to work for Brackenwood Nurseries.

● Elizabeth Bradbury has joined Marches branch as a part-time secretary. She worked previously with a local property developer.

● Mike Ogden joined Landscape branch last summer as a landscape supervisor, after working locally in the industry for four-and-a-half years.

He completed an OND in Arden Horticulture in 1980 at Ashham Bryan College near York.

In his spare time, Mike likes to play football and squash.

● Bill Davidson joined Landscape branch in March as a trainee landscape supervisor. He has had experience in various aspects of landscaping work and in 1983, he gained an HND in landscaping at Writtle Agricultural College, Essex.

Bill's interests include sports cars, photography, shooting and angling.



● Mr Harry Gisbourne, replying to the toast of the guests.

Paying tribute to firm's staff

GUEST of honour at the company's dinner dance in York's Viking Hotel at the end of March was Harry Gisbourne, manager of the Michelin Pensions Trust, who entertained guests with a lighthearted and witty speech describing his baptism into forestry.

He described the need to familiarise himself with a strange new jargon and

illustrated his point with examples like "brashing," "beating up," "calluna vulgaris," and "black friable amorphous peat," which had caused him amusement and bewilderment to begin with.

In the only serious moment of his speech, he paid tribute to Tilhill staff. "We are being superbly served by the company," he said. "We are sure that forestry will prove to be one of our better long-term investments and look forward to a thriving and equally long-term relationship with our Tilhill friends."

Earlier, Tilhill Chairman H. E. Trevan-Hawke, spoke briefly about the company's recent change of ownership and said he felt sure that it was the company's sheer professionalism which had brought Tilhill to the notice of Booker Agriculture International Limited.

Managing Director David Brierton had words of praise for everyone who had contributed to the company's improved profitability and spoke of the recent transformation in the timber market which had led to a new mood of optimism.

New offices for Landscaping branch

● The transformed squash court gives spacious working conditions for the staff.

PRIOR to the conversion of Greenhills house to offices in 1981, it was not uncommon for departments to move from one set of offices to another in a vain attempt to reconcile increases in staff with a fixed area of office space. One could have been forgiven for assuming that a new era of permanence had dawned when everyone had settled down in the fine new offices in Greenhills house but, by the autumn of 1984, the raucous cries of the landscapers for more office space could no longer be ignored.

It was to the old squash court, built in 1934, that all eyes turned for a solution. Awkwardly



sited between a busy driveway and the garden wall, not everyone would have recognised its potential but the conversion was planned with much flair and imagination and impeccably executed by John Simmons.

SCOTTISH



Graham Russell



Graeme Woods

● Steven Macpherson leaves Tilhill this summer because his wife, Freda, has been in poor health for some time and he has, reluctantly, come to the decision that he cannot continue to be away from home for periods of time to meet the demands of his post as Manager Landscaping Services.

His Tilhill friends and colleagues will be deprived of "Uncle" Steven's warmth of personality, humour and unfailing good sense in his approach to problems in a Tilhill career spanning 15 years. We wish Freda restored health and a happy future for both of them.

● Graham Russell has been promoted to the position of Area Manager, Landscaping, in the Scottish Division, with particular responsibility for fostering the

continued growth of landscaping.

Although qualified as a graduate ecologist with an honours degree in forestry from Edinburgh University, Graham's involvement in landscaping began shortly after joining Tilhill. After a brief spell as a labourer in Jedburgh, and a year as Assistant Branch Manager at Gifford, he joined Central Branch in Stirling where landscaping was becoming an increasingly important part of the Company's expansion programme. In February 1979, he was appointed Branch Manager of the newly formed Central Landscape Branch.

● Filling the vacant branch manager's position will be Graeme Woods, presently assistant branch manager.

Another forestry graduate, this time from Aberdeen, Graeme started his landscaping career as a sub-contractor to the Yorkshire branch before joining Central Landscape branch in 1982.



New turf at Windsor

LANDSCAPE branch has undertaken the re-turfing of the Dean's Cloister Garth at Windsor Castle.

The 13th-century cloister is used by HM the Queen when she walks from St George's Chapel to the Deanery at Christmas and Easter, and at other times is open to the public.

The contract involved stripping off the old, worn turf and fertilising and grading the soil before new Rolawn, a very high quality turf specially grown from seed, could be laid over the 190-square yard area.

Tilhill and the ancient woodlands of Hampshire

ANCIENT semi-natural woodlands are to be found on sites which have been continually wooded since before the year 1600 and are highly valued for the richness of their flora and fauna. The safeguarding of these ancient woodlands in order to perpetuate their unique features is one of the cornerstones of a new policy now being formulated by the Forestry Commission for broadleaved woodlands in Britain.

In Hampshire the importance of ancient woodlands has long been recognised, the County Council taking a leading role in promoting the management of the most important of the county's ancient woodlands by means of management agreements with the owners concerned.

Tilhill has been an equally active participant and over the past few years the company's expertise in the management of the ancient woodlands in Hampshire has come to be fully recognised.

In a report published in 1984 it was apparent that the company is involved in all the management agreements for ancient woodlands entered into with the County Council and it is likely that the company's involvement will increase further in the near future.

David Russell, who has been involved in negotiating management grants on behalf of a number of clients, comments that the constraints on management in ancient woodlands are by no means burdensome and that management objectives which conjoin conservation, recreation and visual amenity as well as wood production are achievable.

SOUTHERN

ANGLIA NORTH branch is involved in two major contracts. Planting has been completed at the vast sand quarries owned by British Industrial Sand Limited at King's Lynn. This contract, which includes two extensions, now amounts to £100,962. At the branch's other main contract for Peterborough Development Corporation, value £76,680, progress is well up to schedule.

The branch also has an £11,103 contract for landscaping, tree and shrub planting for F. E. Peacock of Peterborough.

● ANGLIA SOUTH has recently won orders to the value of £43,478 for tree and shrub planting at Cambridge Science Park for NAPP Pharmaceuticals Ltd.

Among three contracts won from the London Borough of

HaVERING are one for £49,111 on the A12 trunk road and another for £8444 at the Dolphin Leisure Centre. The London Borough of Waltham Forest has awarded the branch a contract valued at £10,299 for landscaping.

● BERKSHIRE branch has won a £15,866 contract for spraying, planting and fitting tree shelters at Manton racing stables and another from the RAF for tree planting on a very exposed and compacted site at Upper Hayford, value £9970.

There was also a £7470 contract for landscape maintenance at Fawley power station and a £6728 contract for tree and shrub planting for IRAD at Compton.

● LANDSCAPE branch is working on contracts totalling £301,799.

The largest, for £73,029, is for the Barton Willmore Partnership for tree and shrub planting, grass-seeding and the construction of paths and a play area. Kyle Stewart Ltd. awarded a £65,000 landscape contract and Thorn EMI awarded one for £28,000 for work at a prestigious office building.

J. Laing Construction Ltd. awarded a contract worth £27,211 for work at Digital Equipment Ltd. in Reading and a contract worth £19,752 came from Surrey County Council for landscape work at Yeoveney gravel pit.

PSA awarded a £19,180 contract and Concor Projects Ltd. awarded a £16,383 contract for work at a new printing department at RAE in Farnborough.

Eastmanco (Brentford Dock) Ltd. and Wimpey Construction Ltd. awarded contracts worth £15,216 and £13,647 respectively for work at Brentford Dock and Post Office's mechanised parcel concentration office at Wokingham, Berkshire.

The major landscape scheme at RHM in Windsor has been followed by a £10,969 contract for a year's maintenance. Smaller contracts include one for £7285 from Travenol Laboratories Ltd. and another, value £6127, for Hunting Gate Construction Ltd. for landscape work at Farley Hall.

● SOUTH EAST branch has won contracts worth £35,200 from BCI plc for work at two separate sites. The first, for £18,900 was at the Northfleet landfill site and the second, worth £16,300, was at the company's Holborough site.

A £14,700 contract was awarded to the branch by Mid-Sussex District Council to design and construct a 100-metre long retaining wall at Victoria Park, Haywards Heath and a £7900 contract came from Wandsworth Borough Council for a street planting scheme.

● SOUTH WEST branch has won a £17,850 contract from Avon County Council for the planting of woodlands on agricultural land and another for £14,400 from Somerset County Council for roadside planting at Hatch Beauchamp.

Several smaller contracts include one for £8345 from the CEBB for rehabilitation of woodland at Cheddar, and planting at a quarry at Ringwood, value £4450, for Tarmac, and one worth £1230 for ARC for planting a tree screen on extractive works at Wareham.

Contracts

A £22,000 "design and build" contract handled by Southern Division's Central Landscape branch has put the finishing touches to a brand-new shopping complex which was opened by Princess Anne last autumn.

The Princess Square shopping complex is in Bracknell New Town in the heart of the so-called "Golden Triangle" of Berkshire which lies between the M3 and M4.

Tilhill's involvement dates back to the very start of the project in 1982 when Landscape branch was invited by the London-based architects Sheppard Robson to prepare a landscape design for the prestigious new covered shopping centre.

Planning approval was obtained by the branch later the same year

and Tilhill was then invited by Balfour Beatty to tender for the work which comprised interior planting, planting in raised beds on the car park terraces and turfing and planting around the perimeter of the building.

The contract also involved the selection of a range of plants to cascade over the interior mall balconies to provide vertical colour and texture. This was achieved by using variegated leaved Sansevieria and Grape Ivy.

For the outside planting scheme, the branch was given a brief to provide an immediate visual impact which would complement the new building. To do this the branch planted colourful Acers and Sorbus species together with a variety of shrubs specially selected for their flowers and foliage.

awarded the branch a £7000 contract for landscaping at a quarry site in Fife.

A £7000 contract is now nearing completion at the Edradour Distillery in Pitlochry. As the location for the television series Kings Royal, the distillery are developing the site as a tourist attraction and the branch was commissioned to design and build a landscape scheme.

● NORTHERN BRANCH has won a £37,000 contract for two years' grass cutting and land management for the British Gas Corporation at their St Fergus terminal, a contract worth £12,485 from L&C Estates in Aberdeen for tree-planting, fencing and grass-seeding and another worth £10,450 from Coulardbank Housing Development in Lossiemouth.

Smaller contracts totalling £28,978 have come from Stewart Milne Construction Ltd. at Inverurie (£7912), L&C Estates at Bridge of Don (£5783), Hanover (Scotland) Housing (£5575) for tree and shrub planting and arboriculture and maintenance work on nine sites (£4468), Chivas Brothers Ltd. (£2675) for landscape work at Glenlivet Distillery, and Stewart Milne Construction (£2565) at Mains of Kinmundy, Westhills.

● SOLWAY BRANCH recently secured two contracts, one for £20,543 for further fencing, planting and aftercare at the new waste treatment complex at Sellafeld for British Nuclear Fuels and another for British Gas, worth £13,719, for seeding and planting at six sites on the Lupton to Longtown pipeline.

● YORKSHIRE BRANCH has won contracts worth £88,734 from Tyne and Wear County Council. The larger, worth £64,234, is for shrub planting, fencing and maintenance at Bolden Business Park and the smaller, for £24,500, is for maintenance.

Cleveland County Council awarded a £62,778 contract for provision of picnic sites and maintenance at SW Ironmasters Phase Two.

SCOTTISH

CONTRACTS totalling £51,726 have been won by BORDERS branch from local authorities in the branch's area.

Tyne and Wear County Council awarded two contracts, worth £22,632 and £11,888, for maintenance along major highways, metro tracks and stations and at industrial units, and Lothian Regional Council awarded a £17,206 contract for cultivation, grass-seeding and tree planting around a recently-constructed flood control works.

● CENTRAL LANDSCAPE branch has been awarded the following contracts: £20,000 from the SDA for tree-planting and fencing at Stirling Science Park; Lothian Regional Council, through the Turnbull Jeffrey Partnership, have awarded a contract valued at more than £56,000 for planting and maintenance work on the Colinton by-pass; the Scottish Development Department (Ancient Monuments) have awarded two contracts totalling more than £6000 for replanting; also from the Scottish Development Department, two roadside planting contracts at Pitlochry and Perth, totalling some £15,000; £36,000 from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries for Scotland for hedge planting on a reclaimed open cast site; £6200 from Strathclyde Regional Council for planting and maintenance works at Croy; two contracts from Charles Gray Builders of Dundee for seeding and planting works at developments at Stirling, totalling more than £7000.

Following their successful completion of Phases 2A and 2C of the Brownsburn reclamation scheme in Monklands District, the branch has continued its involvement with a further £7000 contract for planting and maintenance works, this time as a sub-contract to Robert Paterson Construction; Kings & Co. have

Statement by the Chairman

THE following is Tilhill Chairman H. E. Trevan-Hawke's statement in the annual company report and accounts for the year ended September 30, 1984.

A year of solid achievements

PLANS made the previous year for continued expansion of the company's activities have led to further improvements in the results achieved for the year.

Turnover increased by eight per cent and pre-tax profit by 17.6 per cent, reflecting the enhancement of margins which we sought. Turnover in excess of £6 million and pre-tax profit in excess of £½ million are both new records for the company, and this increased activity has enabled us to increase direct employment by 10 per cent.

These solid achievements have been derived from progress in most aspects of the company's business.

The announcements made the previous year of the new pulpmill at Shotton and the new OSB plant at Inverness, both due to come on-stream in mid 1985, were followed by plans for further sawmill development on Speyside and in Southern Scotland and for a major particleboard expansion at Hexham after the takeover there of the old small factory by Messrs Egger of Austria.

For most parts of the country the immediate outlook for both sawlogs and small roundwood seems set fair. During the year under review the timber market continued to be reasonably healthy, despite local difficulties in marketing low grade hardwoods in the second half of the year, due to the miners' strike.

The total volume of timber marketed by the company increased by a substantial 17 per cent.

In landscaping, further growth was achieved, the main effort being, as planned, in our Southern Division where sales increased by 14 per cent.

Developers are beginning to appreciate our combined design and execution services, with the design provided by our in-house landscape architects.

Worthy of special mention is the very fine project carried out for Rank Hovis McDougall's new headquarters at Windsor.

Our Nurseries Division had a particularly successful year with combined sales of seedlings and transplants up by 25 per cent in number and 20 per cent in value, the increased sales being achieved while fixed costs were contained, enabling profit to be raised by an impressive 144 per cent.

Regrettably, however, as in the previous year, these increased sales were not matched by an increase in new planting undertaken by the company.

We hold fast to continuing to advise our planting clients to



● *New directors Ed Robinson (left) and Peter Johnson.*

restrict their activities to the more productive and accessible sites, and the total availability of such sites continues to be severely restricted under the Forestry Grant Scheme, due mainly to the artificial constraints imposed by the Department of Agriculture for Scotland.

These constraints of course are not peculiar to our company and protest has been made by Timber Growers UK to the appropriate Minister.

We remain confident that as agricultural support systems attune to overproduction in the EEC, land of the type we judge economically attractive to plant will become more readily available.

Meanwhile, the demand for investment in forestry remains strong amongst both private and institutional clients and several worthwhile acquisitions were made by our clients, purchasing from both the private and state sectors. Of particular note was a large forest area in Wales bought from the Forestry Commission by a pension fund client.

Partly as a result of these acquisitions and partly due to new instructions from existing estate owners, the area under manage-

ment by the company again increased.

The single most significant event since I last reported to you took place after our year-end when, after some months of negotiation, Booker Agriculture International Ltd. made a recommended and successful bid for 100 per cent of the shares of the company, completion taking place in November 1984.

My fellow directors and I have welcomed this development because we believe that it will result in a better future for the company and our staff than if we remained independent.

In the earlier part of the year Mr D. A. Mithen, who was formerly Commissioner for Harvesting and Marketing in the Forestry Commission, joined our board which has been further strengthened by the appointment as directors, after our year-end, of Mr E. C. Robinson, the managing director of Booker Agriculture International Ltd., and Mr C. P. Johnson, the managing director of Booker Farming Ltd.

Mr Mithen's appointment as a director puts the company in the unique position of having two of its directors occupying the two senior elected posts in the Institute

of Chartered Foresters: Mr Mithen is the current President and Mr Gray the Vice-President.

Our managing director has recently become a director of Wagner Woodlands Inc., an associated company of Booker Agriculture International Ltd., which provides forest management services in the USA.

We believe that there are considerable forestry opportunities in the United States and that this new linkage will provide the basis for an added investment channel which will be increasingly appreciated by present and future clients based in the UK.

The change in share control in our company means that we shall be changing our auditors and I take this opportunity to thank Messrs Barnes Roffe for their service and advice to us over many years.

It is fitting that their final year's audit should have coincided with trading results of new high standards. I pay tribute to all of our staff whose diligence and commitment have helped make these results possible.

We look forward now to building further on our strengths and to fashioning and seizing new opportunities where our skills can best be exploited and in which we are already being helped by our colleagues in Booker McConnell.