

Tree Scribe



No. 24

THE HOUSE JOURNAL OF TILHILL

NOVEMBER 1988

DAVID JOINS BOARD

DAVID GITTINS has joined the Tilhill board as marketing director.

Born in 1940, he was educated at Wellington College and Oxford, where he graduated with an MA in philosophy, politics and economics before embarking on a career in banking in London, New York and Nassau.

His interest in forestry began while working in investment promotion in the private sector and developed further while studying for his accountancy qualification with a City firm.

With expertise in the financial aspects of forestry firmly established, he subsequently founded and continues to run his own Gloucestershire-based chartered accountancy practice which specialises in personal tax, and forestry taxation in particular.

An affiliate member of the Institute of Chartered Foresters, he contributes the chapter annually on "Woodlands" in Tolley's Tax Planning and has written on forestry investment in publications such as Money Management, Estates Gazette and Investors Chronicle.

His contacts with Tilhill have grown over more than a decade, and before his appointment David Gittins was well known to Tilhill middle management as well as the directors.



DAVID GITTINS.



THE DAY dawned wet and overcast, but with a forecast to be bright with heavy showers later in the day.

And so, with this final uncertainty, July 1 came upon all those who had for many months prepared for the day. A large marquee carefully sited on the lawn first caught the eye.

Closer investigation revealed much careful preparation — wide, carefully cut grass on either side of the drive, extensive tree surgery to the fine, mature conifers that are such a feature of Greenhills, and newly painted signs at every turn.

By noon, the promised sunshine appeared, all was ready and we looked forward to receiving our 160 guests for lunch and afternoon tea. Tours of the pine woodlands surrounding Greenhills and Tilhill's extensive nurseries and cold stores beyond were set up as excursions during the afternoon. Nearer to the marquee and the bar, a Longly static demonstration and carefully arranged photographic display might attract the less adventurous.

Our first guests arrived promptly at mid-day to be welcomed warmly, firstly at the reception tent and then guided to the marquee area.

An hour later, an animated crowd were in happily discussive groups whilst efforts were made to entice guests to lunch.

At just the critical time, a sudden downpour had everyone scurrying inside and so, blessed by an accurate forecast, luncheon began in good time.

The highlight of the day came with the arrival after lunch of Archie Aitkins, our founder and former Chairman, accompanied by Margot.

Archie was to plant a Deodar and in his welcome speech Sandy Macpherson said, "We are delighted that so many of our friends can join us on this occasion and particularly delighted that our founder is here to plant a tree to mark the anniversary. I think it is because you planted us so well and nurtured us over so many years that we have carried on as well as we have since you left us."

Faced with a large heap of soil and a brand new spade, Archie could not resist the temptation — "Do I have to put all this back?" he asked. In his reply Archie said, "It was a great pleasure to come back to this lovely part of the land." He

● Above: Archie Aitkins plants a commemorative 40th anniversary tree.

A happy birthday

40th anniversary celebrations

added, "I must say that I am delighted to see the marvellous results that Tilhill have produced in the last 10 to 20 years. Thank you very much to you all for coming to join me."

The ceremony was watched with pleasure by the guests and Tilhill staff, many of whom remember Archie well and have lively stories to tell — of his ebullient character, his irrepressible humour and the dynamic effect he seemed to have on all who worked with him.

On behalf of the guests, who included Sir Michael Caine, chairman of Booker plc, his wife, Emma Nicholson MP, Mrs Virginia Bottomley MP and many other representatives of forestry and landscaping bodies, Mr Alan Palgrave-Brown, a Tilhill client of long standing, congratulated Tilhill.

"It is particularly pleasing for us all that Archie should be here to plant the tree," he said. "I think we are all agreed that Tilhill and Archie could not have found a better headquarters for a forestry company than Greenhills."

The afternoon tours proved to be a great success with much interest generated during trailer rides through the Greenhills pine woodlands and in the management of the nursery, one of the largest and most efficient forest tree

nurseries in Europe. Guests and hosts both had much to learn and the events of the day provided stimulating interests.

As day time gave way to evening, parties began to gather at the marquee to exchange impressions of the day's events. Slight farce was provided at 6.30 when all tours had long since finished, by the late arrival of a guest enquiring when the next tour might be leaving!

To those involved with the preparation of this event there are innumerable reminiscences — of hilarity, of crises and imminent disaster. One remembers Robin's wine tasting one late afternoon, repeated the next day... and the next...! Of the loss of mounts for Murray's photographs, of the last minute receipt of a Sitka spruce disc requiring detailed chronology. Finally, who can forget the endless doubts concerning the numbers who might attend.

In the end the event seems to have been a great success and is, of course, a tribute to that wonderful spirit of teamwork that affected all who became involved in Tilhill's 40th.

Our thanks are particularly due to the caterers whose excellent menu and delicious food was matched by helpful and friendly service throughout the day.

A growing interest in the future

CWM MYNACH ESTATE lies in the Snowdonia National Park near Dolgellau in the valley cut by the Afon Cwm Mynach.

Llyn Cwm Mynach forms a magnificent feature at the head of the valley while the slopes are tree covered either with young coniferous plantation or with indigenous oak woodland which adjoins flat pastures. The total area of the estate is 445.6 ha, 176.1 ha of which was recently acquired from the Forestry Commission.

The climate and soils are ideally suited to tree growth and a wide variety of conifers were planted between 1955 and 1971. Species include Sitka spruce, Norway spruce, Japanese larch, lodgepole pine and western hemlock. The broadleaved woodland dates from before 1900; oak is the principal species but beech, birch and rowan are also found.

A five-year management plan was prepared by Tihill: the area is managed in two "working circles." The first is the Production Working Circle with priority for timber production; this comprises most of the conifer areas. The second is the Amenity Working Circle with main objectives conservation and regeneration of the mature broadleaved woodland.

Thinning is the major operation underway in the coniferous woodland and this is undertaken as a Tihill Contract Marketing Operation whereby timber is cut and hauled under contract to local markets, fencing and pulp being principal outlets.

Closely supervised worker-selection is employed, access racks being cut at wide intervals with trees selected for removal within the remaining lines. Experience suggests that this method improves the quality and stability of the stand compared with simple 1:3 or 1:4 line removals at first thinning. Much of the terrain is steep and rocky requiring skyline extraction, although ground skidding is used wherever possible.

Part of the oak woodland was underplanted with conifers in the 1960s and shade-bearing species such as western hemlock have grown so well that they were competing strongly with the oak. The decision was taken to remove the conifer understorey which had been shading out the rich and varied ground flora and to improve such areas as wildlife habitats. The Snowdonia National Park Authority approved the project and grant was made available from the Nature Conservancy Council.

Elsewhere, the broadleaved woodland appears to be regenerating naturally where sheep are excluded. Birch predominates as a pioneer species but young oak saplings may also be found and are encouraged by removal of competing birch and sallow. It is intended that enrichment planting of oak will take place in

Below: Roadside pond and bat box.



• The RSPB responded positively to the steps taken in the broadleaved woodland and have undertaken to monitor the bird species present and their population dynamics.

Buzzards are regular visitors to Cwm Mynach, and it is hoped that bird species diversity will increase as the broadleaved woodlands are rejuvenated. The RSPB itself will undertake further removal of the conifer understorey at no cost to the estate.

Bat boxes have been installed at various locations on the estate to encourage nesting by the pipistrelle bat. The boxes have not yet been used, the bats still appear to prefer the relative warmth and comfort of the house and outbuildings!

areas with few oak saplings and the trees will be protected by "tree shelters" which will also boost early growth by their "greenhouse" effect.

Fortunately, there is very little rhododendron at Cwm Mynach and isolated bushes are removed on discovery. Rhododendron has taken over hillsides elsewhere in the national park and is considered highly undesirable by all foresters and conservationists.

Access to and within Cwm Mynach was very poor two years ago and wholly unsuited for haulage of timber. An ambitious roading scheme was prepared by Tihill which involved upgrading 6000m of existing tracks and construction of



• Removal of conifer understorey to conserve semi-mature oaks.

4200m of new roading. Roading stone was quarried from the estate to meet the specification for an all-weather surface easily maintained by periodic regrading and rolling and capable of bearing 38-tonne articulated lorries. The works were put out to tender and the successful contractor completed the programme in stages over a two-year period.

The public road access to the south of the estate is via a narrow, steep and winding unclassified road serving a village settlement — a quite unsuitable route for sustained timber haulage.

An alternative route was found to the north by linking up with Forestry Commission roads in Coed-y-Brenin Forest. Negotiations with the Forestry Commission were protracted but settlement was eventually reached and right of way granted. Thus private and public sector forestry interests co-operated to mutual advantage and to minimise disturbance of life in a village community.

The link road between Cwm Mynach and Coed-y-Brenin crosses open moorland and liaison was maintained with the Snowdonia National Park Authority in respect of the exact route and specification of the works. An inconspicuous route was chosen to pass along the contour below the horizon, and the angle of roadside banks was reduced wherever possible to allow their rapid recolonisation by ground vegetation.

Part of the road within Cwm Mynach is an unclassified county road and the specification and timing of the works was agreed with the county highways department in advance. The county council could not contribute to the cost of the capital works but will take on subsequent routine maintenance of their section.

Great care was taken during road construction to preserve sites of historic interest such as the remains of the monastery, the tramway leading to disused mines on Diffwys and a goldmine tunnel entrance, all of which can now be seen at a safe distance from the road.

Quarries from which roadstone has been taken have been landscaped by gentle contouring and replacement of topsoil. Ponds have been dug and are fed by natural drainage or existing watercourses and will be allowed to develop as aquatic animal and plant life habitats. These have already been colonised by frogs and newts and the margins by herbaceous plants.

Where the quarry is exhausted, indigenous trees such as oak, birch, hawthorn and blackthorn have been planted to restore the site and the planting and protective fencing works were grant-aided by the Countryside Commission.

All in all, Cwm Mynach is a forward-looking and environmentally-aware estate on which commercial timber production, although important, is not the sole object of management and very positive steps have been taken, often with grant aid, to improve the amenity and wildlife conservation aspects of the property.

NEW BRANCH FORMED

ON July 1, 1988, the Kent branch of Southern Division was formed from the split of Southwest Forestry. The new branch is based at Whitstable on the north Kent coast and, apart from the obvious coastal boundaries of this part of the country, extends west as far as a line from Gravesend in the north through Maidstone to Tenterden in the south.

In 1982, Southeast branch set up an outlying office based at Canterbury, with Dick Hoare as forester, in response to an upturn in volume of

work on newly acquired managed estates. Three years later the office, still going strong and with Dick Hoare by this time an assistant branch manager, was moved from the busy streets of Canterbury to the quieter coastal port of Whitstable — well known for its oysters.

The formation of a new branch is in response to the growing number of clients and increased volume of work which has occurred generally over the last six years, but also as a result of the storm of October 1987.

Life

on the

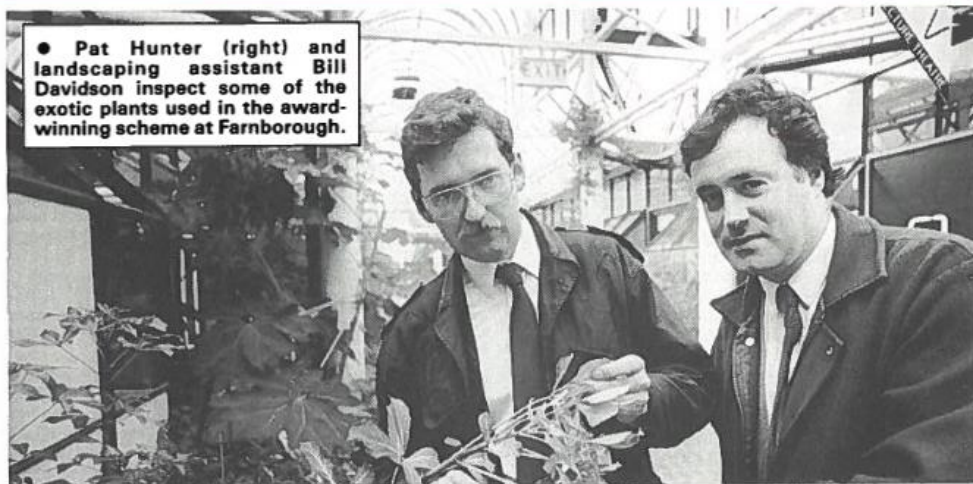
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side

of the

fence

● Pat Hunter (right) and landscaping assistant Bill Davidson inspect some of the exotic plants used in the award-winning scheme at Farnborough.



PAT HUNTER spent four years as a landscape assistant in the Northern Ireland Civil Service and a further ten working his way up through the ranks to become senior development officer at Bristol City Council Parks Department.

Tilhill was a company he had not heard a lot about when he applied for the position at Greenhills; in those days sending jobs out to tender was frowned on, mostly for political reasons.

Thus, although bringing with him a great deal of knowledge and experience, Pat found himself on a steep learning curve as the newly-appointed manager of a key branch in one of the private sector's biggest landscaping operations.

In the public sector, Pat's responsibility was more specific, not often being deeply involved with staffing or detailed administrative matters.

Now, in addition to the application of the landscaping skills for which he was primarily trained, he has direct financial control over

● This issue, *Tree Scribe* departs from its usual page three profile formula and takes a look instead at a relative newcomer to the Tilhill scene. Pat Hunter became manager of what was then Southern Division's Central Landscaping branch at Greenhills in 1986 after many years in the public sector. Here are his impressions of professional life on the other side of the fence.

all branch matters, takes responsibility for the motivation of his clerical and technical staff and, perhaps most difficult of all, he had to adjust to a different set of priorities.

Not only was he responsible for organising the work, but he was required to ensure that strict financial control did not conflict with the important aspect of client satisfaction.

Pat spent the early weeks of his appointment familiarising himself with a new system and getting to know his staff and current contracts. Here, he freely acknowledges the debt to his clerical staff and to his area manager Andrew Binmore for invaluable guidance and assistance at a time

when Pat found himself having to absorb new information simultaneously on all fronts.

He was most impressed with the high quality of work the branch was undertaking. "It was refreshing to visit such prestigious schemes as RHM Windsor and Farnborough College of Technology, for which Tilhill has won a BALI award," said Pat.

"Both staff and labour show such an obvious interest in and commitment to ensuring the success of the schemes, which I found a marked contrast to my experiences in the previous decade."

There was also another major on-going prestige scheme at the Clore Gallery — the extension to the Tate on London's Embankment, which required the use of very high quality specially-grown turf, new hedging, a picnic area, pond planting and extensive use of *fatsia* and other specially selected shrubs — all exceedingly high quality work carried out in very difficult conditions.

Pat had his work cut out keeping pace with the scale and scope of his new responsibilities. He describes his first two branch managers' meetings as "possibly the most nerve-racking" events he has ever experienced. Among a sea of new faces, he had to produce information on his branch's financial performance — questions which were then, for him, difficult to handle.

In his first full year, despite a number of difficult contracts, the branch won jobs and returned acceptable figures. Two years on, Pat is well versed in running a busy landscaping branch, the hard work has paid off and he handles matters which once perplexed him with more confidence.

A new challenge came in 1988 with the formation of the new Landscaping Division and Pat now has growing confidence in the way his staff are pulling together as a team. Next year, he looks forward to building on his teamwork and is very hopeful of winning further prestigious contracts for the branch.

As for himself and the benefit accrued from being thrown in at the deep end of the private sector, Pat has had a valuable opportunity to sharpen his managerial skills and put them effectively to the test.

Landscaping scheme earns award

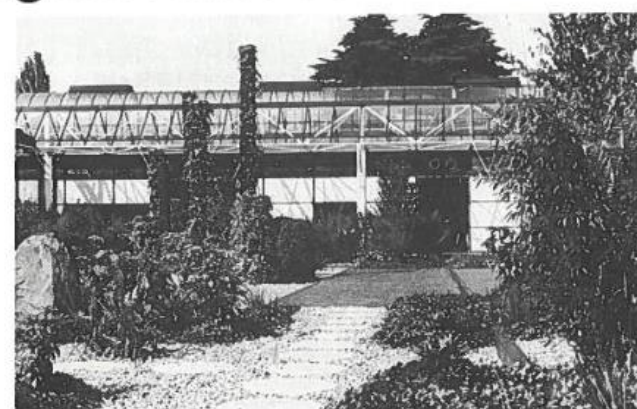
TILHILL has won a BALI award for its landscaping scheme at the Farnborough College of Technology's building in Hampshire. The work was carried out by Landscaping Division's southern central branch.

The architectural concept of the building contains specific integral elements of planted malls and courtyards where emphasis is particularly given to the interior landscaping, designed by Jakobsen Landscape Architects.

The building design relies on the circulatory mall routing through the building, creating a therapeutic effect, with the soft landscaping in the immediate vicinity of the classrooms.

Planting with cool conservatory temperate plants, which can be grown both inside and outside, was successfully achieved, and the scheme features shrubs such as bamboos and phormiums with evergreen groundcover and scented climbers such as wisteria and evergreen clematis.

BALI awards are made annually to encourage high standards of landscape contracting by its members and this is the second major award Southern Centre branch has won. The first, in 1986, was for its maintenance of the grounds at the prestigious RHM Centre in Windsor.



● A view of the refectory courtyard at Farnborough College of Technology. The contrasting shapes and textures of the hard landscaping are complemented by the exotic range of plant material: ground cover, herbaceous plants, bamboos and varieties of ivy growing in the specially-constructed "ivy towers" which have their own built-in irrigation system.

Commenting on this year's award, the Chairman of the Award Adjudicators, Wendy Powell, said, "The challenge here for installations was in the covered unheated malls. The planting is varied in colour and texture and growing well. The malls provide the students and staff with restful but stimulating and unusual circulation and gathering areas.

"I was particularly impressed with the obvious respect and care paid by the young people to the planting. There was absolutely no sign of damage, despite continuous movement by the students who obviously appreciate the beautiful environment which has been created for them."

Tree Scribe visits Thirsk, now Tilhill's biggest centre of operations outside Greet

BRANCH manager Steven Farnworth graduated with an honours degree in horticulture from Bath University.

He joined Tilhill at Thirsk in July 1985 as an assistant branch manager with specific responsibility for landscaping contracts.

His arrival marked another stage in the process of a conscious change to employing graduates qualified in disciplines other than forestry specifically to handle the growth in landscaping work.

Steven (25) comes from a background in dairy farming and his grandfather was a keen amateur horticulturist. His four-year sandwich course at Bath involved periods with the Ministry of Agriculture's experimental horticultural station in Yorkshire, a garden centre company in Bristol and with a nursery in the USA.



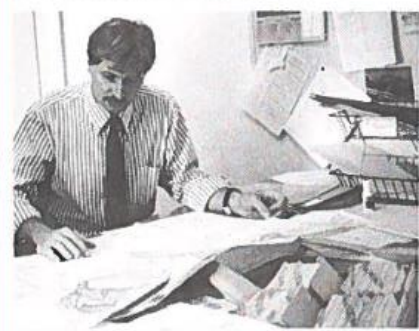
● Branch manager Steven Farnworth inspects top soil at ICI's Norton Hall in preparation for planting works.



● Andrew Blinks, as the branch's contracts manager, is Steven's second-in-command. When he joined Tilhill in 1987, he brought with him ten valuable years' experience in running his own landscape business. He holds an OND in nursery practice from Hadlow and also gained a certificate in management studies. Andrew is pictured above with landscape architect Alex Turner of AJT Landscapes at the recently completed scheme for Mono Containers in Durham.



● The office team is, from left, secretary Ann Cartwright, the longest-serving member of the quartet who has been with Tilhill since 1974, clerk / typist Lucy Alston who joined Tilhill two years ago, office junior Rosie Peacock who joined earlier this year, and office administrator Sheila Sells who managed a nursery for three years before joining Tilhill on the formation of the Yorkshire landscaping branch.



SUPERVISOR Mark Shaw joined the team's strength during the summer. He gained a DHE from Askam Bryan and also holds a certificate in management studies.

He spent eight years working in the Parks Department of Kirklees Metropolitan Borough District and three years on supervising community programmes.

Mark is pictured left busy at his desk with plans.

THE north-east of England is a place of unexpected contradictions.

In many ways, it is England in microcosm — there is wild moorland and lonely coastline, rolling agricultural land in gently-rolling valleys and popular traditional seaside resorts. Inland, bustling market towns and high property prices contrast sharply with places like Sunderland, only an hour's drive away, where unemployment and urban deprivation has attracted unwelcome attention to the area.

Such variety, however, provides fertile ground for the expansion of the Yorkshire Landscaping branch which is growing so rapidly since its formation in 1985 that both staff and turnover have doubled in the space of only a couple of years.

Based in Thirsk, a prosperous market town situated 25 miles north of Harrogate where the Yorkshire dales end and the North Yorkshire moors begin, it spreads its net far and wide in the quest for more business, usually in the face of stiff competition, and is forging ahead successfully in developing the design-and-build side of its operations.

Its boundaries extend north to Tyneside, south to Humberside, taking in Leeds, Sheffield, Hull and Doncaster, west to Skipton in limestone country, and east to the coastal strip where ICI's giant chemical complexes at Wilton and Billingham provide on-going contracts for the branch.

It's a stereotype of the industrial north-east which sits most in people's minds, decades of decline in traditional industries such as shipbuilding having led to a degree of dereliction which will take many years to reverse.

But a recent upturn in the construction industry and injections of Government money filtering through from local authorities into urban and industrial renewal schemes is providing a nudge in the right direction.

It was this type of contract which branch manager Steven Farnworth chose to illustrate an important aspect of the branch's work, and by way of introduction, took Tree Scribe to visit two industrial sites in County Durham and Sunderland where the planting of trees and shrubs on areas which were previously waste grassland has done much to enhance the appeal of the sites to prospective clients considering a move into the area.

The sites, at Dubmire Industrial Estate in Houghton-le-Spring and Pennywell in Sunderland, are among eleven which the branch has landscaped for English Industrial Estates North in conjunction with Durham-based landscape architects



● British Rail's car park site at A1 to work.

FERT FOR

Brian Clouston and Partners. At a value of just under £300,000, it provided the branch's largest single contract to date. Another of the sites, at Blyth in Northumberland, has been entered for a BALI award.

Driving south, we passed through the new town of Washington, site of the huge Nissan car plant, whose very evident success makes generalisation about the area's economic prosperity so tricky — and the contrast with its depressed neighbours so stark.

One of the last contracts awarded by the Washington Development Corporation before beginning the process of winding up, its job now complete, was to Tilhill for landscaping the link road with the A1 and providing roadside screening for the neat and well-kept houses along its route.

Much of the branch's repeat work comes from local authority sources. Cleveland County Council, with its heavy emphasis on urban regeneration, South Tyneside Borough Council, where there is still a great deal of renewal work to be tackled, and development corporations like the one which put Washington on its feet, are regular clients, providing a steady stream of



● Landscaping supervisor Brian Spencer checking plant growth.

SUPERVISOR Brian Spencer joined Tilhill just after the completion of his Diploma in Landscape Construction at Wood Agriculture. During his course he gained experience for a private landscape company in Gillingham. He also holds a Diploma in Business Studies.

enhills and Old Sauchie, and charts the progress of the Yorkshire Landscaping Branch.



Middlesbrough before Tilhill set
rk...



... and after the landscape scheme was completed.

TILE GROUND GROWTH...

contracts. There is the potential for much more.

Middlesbrough, for example, has just completed a survey of all its trees and urban green space with a view to developing a long-term strategy for environmental works in the whole of Cleveland.

Evidence already of a new mood in Middlesbrough can be seen from a contract which the branch completed for British Rail at its high-speed rail network car park where commuters now use a pleasantly landscaped pathway to reach the station instead of the rubbish-strewn wasteland of previous years.

In common with most landscaping branches, it's the accumulation of many medium-sized contracts, around £30-40,000, which contributes most to overall turnover, but Steven has detected a trend for the average value to rise in recent years with an increasing number of contracts approaching the £70,000 mark.

The determination of local authorities to improve the environment has resulted in acceptable landscape schemes being a condition of planning permission for many new industrial projects — a development which can only gladden

the hearts of professional landscapers as well as those who live and work in these previously blighted areas.

Industry itself is setting higher standards and at ICI's Chemicals and Polymers Plants on Teesside, there are typical examples of successful reclamation work.

A long-standing client of Tilhill, ICI has called in the company to clean up and enhance small areas within its Billingham and Wilton complexes where redundant plant has been demolished, and smarten up various areas with trees and shrubs. Small examples, perhaps, but significant in their implications.

The branch has recently embarked on the highly unusual project of garden management for the same client. A ten-minute drive from Billingham takes employees into a different world where they can relax and unwind. A charming 17th century country house set in a beautiful conservation village, Norton Hall staff club provides first class recreation, leisure, dining and bar facilities in extensive mature grounds.

Now that the original complement of full-time gardeners is down to one man approaching retirement age, ICI asked Tilhill to undertake restoration

work and garden maintenance. Tilhill's response was to produce a full management plan of short, medium and long-term proposals to meet the company's requirements of reduced maintenance costs while restoring the grounds, as far as possible, to their original design.

It was the type of challenge Steven Farnworth relished and work on the first stage of the plan — replacing the smaller areas of grass with easily-maintained shrub species — is beginning to take shape.

Over on the other side of the Tees estuary, ICI's Wilton Castle, different in style from Norton Hall but equally impressive, is also the subject of a Tilhill management plan. The castle provides executive dining and conference facilities and has formal gardens modelled on Capability Brown lines backed by historic woodlands.

Work at both these unique settings provides a contrast to the more usual tasks undertaken for ICI over a long period at their extensive industrial and office complexes although here, too, new challenges are never far away — the branch won a £30,000 design-and-

build contract for the company's new £6 million data base facility on Teesside.

Design-and-build is an area where Steven Farnworth sees a great deal of potential. A breakthrough came two years ago when the branch was invited to undertake design work for Tarmac Homes in Sheffield and Hull, including liaison with the local authority for approval.

The branch also designed and built the landscaping at the second phase of the award-winning Cadcam Centre on Teesside where the Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher formally opened an enterprise development of small industrial units in 1987. Now the branch is extending its contracts with architects and builders, especially in South Yorkshire, with a view to capitalising on these successes.

"We see design-and-build as a significant potential source of business for us," said Steven, "and we want to ensure that potential clients are aware of the benefits of using us to undertake the complete package."

To this end, Steven is also concentrating on the development of "seek-out" work. One of the branch's earliest priorities was to open up South and West Yorkshire and Humberside where, until Tilhill's landscaping activities split off from the parent branch, very few landscape contracts were won.

An important contract from the CEBG to landscape the Drax power station near Selby set the ball rolling and opened up the way for establishing vital contracts with labour and suppliers in this area. Further work followed, among them a contract in Wakefield at a major retail distribution centre for a leading supermarket group.

"Through seek-out work," said Steven, "we have gained the opportunity to tender for more design-and-build work than before, so it's definitely paying off. Tilhill has always been well-known among local authorities and landscape architects in the northern part of our area, but few had heard of us south of Thirsk. Pushing the seek-out side of our activities is changing that situation very quickly."

It's an exciting prospect for a young, energetic and highly-professional team working hard to achieve even greater expansion in an area of enormous potential. There's little doubt that they're well equipped to handle it in their stride.

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SUPERVISOR Phil Townsend has been with Tilhill for three years. He joined Scottish Division's Central Landscaping branch straight from Askam Bryan College where he gained a National Diploma in Horticulture and transferred to Thirsk shortly after the formation of the new landscaping branch. Phil is pictured left checking the growth of tree seeding at Drax Power Station.



• Wild flower seeding at Drax power station.

Congratulations to...

... Bob Stainton of Scottish Central Landscaping branch on his marriage to Mhairi Thomson on October 1 and to Simon Lord of Southern Division Central Landscaping branch on his marriage on May 14 to Catherine Hibbins...

... also to Pat Hunter, Southern Division Central Landscaping branch manager, and his wife Kate on the birth of their daughter, Francesca Ellen, on September 9, and the branch's contracts manager, Robin Davis, and his wife Elspeth on the arrival of baby daughter, Claire, on August 5...

... and to Clive Tanner, of Anglia Landscaping branch, and his wife Lesley on the birth of their first child, Esme Louise, on May 19...

People... and

... and to Peter Middleton, Landscaping Division's north England area manager, and his wife Shelagh on the birth of a third daughter, Alexis Monica, on August 28...

Congratulations also go to Steve Deas of Scottish Central Landscaping branch on the successful completion of a Diploma course in Landscape Construction at Merrist Wood Agricultural College, and to Robert McDougall of Southern Division Central forestry branch for gaining his National Diploma in Forestry.

Aid project under way

IN THE last edition of Tree Scribe, details were given of the woodlot project in Sudan being financed by a recent donation from Tihill through the newly-formed charity Tree Aid.

The project is in a village called Misiktab, on the east bank of the Nile in Sudan's Nile Province. The woodlot will meet the villagers' desperate requirement for fuel and house building timber.

Progress has been made but the recent floods have caused delay. Also, the villagers have had to concentrate first on rebuilding their houses and attend to other items affected by the flooding.

Further progress will be reported in later editions of Tree Scribe.

Landscaping Division

Jeremy Seeger joined Anglia Landscaping branch in July as a landscaping assistant immediately after graduating from Heriot-Watt University with a B.A. Hons in Landscape Architecture. Jeremy comes from Ripon in Yorkshire.

Mark Savory joined Southeast Landscaping branch as contracts manager in May. Mark has had eight years' experience in the landscape trade after completing an OND in Landscape Construction, and before starting with Tihill, was a partner in a landscape contracting business in North London.

Stephen Walsh joined the same branch in August as a landscape assistant. He graduated in Landscape Horticulture from University College Dublin in the summer and his course involved a year's practical experience in amenity horticulture in Somerset.

Stuart Gray joined Wilts and West branch as contracts manager in August following a four-year spell with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, where he had responsibility for servicing maintenance agreements throughout Africa (a total of some 33 countries).

Stuart started his horticultural career in his native city of Glasgow as an assistant gardener with the City Parks Department before taking a three-year landscape architecture course at Manchester and spending a further three years at the Royal Botanic Gardens in Edinburgh studying for his Diploma in Horticulture.

Tony McGowan joined Scottish Central Landscaping branch as a supervisor on July 4, bringing with him nine years' experience in grounds maintenance.

Sue Shepherd joined Southern Central Landscaping branch as branch secretary after a period working for the branch as a temporary clerkess.

We welcome back to Tihill Jean Simpson who is now working as secretary to the two Northern branches. Jean had previously worked for Argyll branch before leaving Tihill to move to Elgin when her husband transferred there.

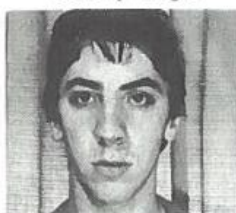
At Wilts and West branch Linda Sturt has recently joined the office staff to ease the administrative burden on this expanding branch.



Jeremy Seeger



Mark Savory



Stephen Walsh



Stuart Gray

CONTRACTS

● SOUTHERN CENTRAL has been awarded contracts to the value of £80,000, including a large soiling, seeding planting job for Taylor Woodrow at John Lewis Park Western.

● SCOTTISH CENTRAL has secured a maintenance contract worth in excess of £100,000 for Lothian Regional Council at the new Edinburgh City by-pass, and a £15,000 contract for Strathclyde Regional Council for work at Peaton Service Reservation.

The branch has continued its association with Tesco by securing a further year's maintenance at stores in Stirling, Perth and Edinburgh — worth some £6000 — and has also been awarded a £27,000 contract by Lovell Lawrence Homes for landscaping at one of their developments in Glasgow.

● NORTHERN branch has won two contracts, value £22,000, for Morrison's Construction for work at the Dornoch Bridge and at a new factory in Inverness, a £9000 sub-contract from Robertson Contracting for planting and seeding at a site near Nairn, an £8000 addition to an existing contract for planting and seeding at Coulardbank, Lossiemouth for Wimpey Homes, and a £7876

Landscaping Division

contract for planting and seeding for Keith Housing in Banffshire.

● SOUTHEAST branch has collected an impressive range of contracts, totalling some £126,000. The largest, worth £54,000, is for turfing, trees and shrub planting for Heron Homes in the London Docklands. Other contracts include soiling, seeding and planting for Wimpey Construction, maintenance work for Blue Circle, and planting trees and shrubs for Croudace Construction, both at Dartford, and landscaping a housing scheme at Bexhill for East Sussex County Council.

● YORKSHIRE branch, however, has the best success rate with a total of £273,000-worth of contracts awarded. These include contracts from ICI for perimeter fencing at their Wilton site, and additional works at Norton Hall, where the branch is involved in restoring the grounds to their former glory.

Other major contracts are for Morrisons for a new superstore in Wakefield, for the CEBG at Hartlepool, two design-and-build schemes for Haven Leisure at Bridlington and for Martin Joyce Associates at Rotherham, and a

further years' maintenance at Boldon Business Park for South Tyneside Borough Council, where Tihill has been involved since 1984.

● WILTS AND WEST branch has won two contracts in Swindon to add to its current programme in this developing town. A £13,000 maintenance contract at Westlea Campus is being supervised by agents Debenham, Tewson and Chinnocks and, in addition, the branch has received a £27,000 landscaping contract for Nationwide Anglia at Swindon Technology Centre.

● Last, but by no means least, Anglia branch is continuing its very successful run with a further ten contracts awarded, valued at £166,000. These include two contracts for the Royal Society of Chemistry at Cambridge, through William Mason & Partners, London, a £36,000 contract for Peterborough Development Corporation, contracts for soiling, seeding and planting from Breckland District Council and Thurrock Borough Council, landscaping work for Hunting Gate Properties, Countryside Properties, the Department of the Environment and Center Parcs Ltd., and for J. A. Elliot Ltd., at a new Tesco store at Hertford.

Accounts department

JENNY FRANKLIN left Greenhills in March and we were delighted to hear of the birth of her son in June. Her place at the typewriter in the accounts department has been taken by Lesley Figulla and Dianne Scott, who share the invoice and accounts typing.

Sarah Deedman is a welcome addition to the staff, helping with wages and the cashier. She joins Tihill from a clearing bank. Jean Gorrings is the latest voice on the switchboard, sharing the position with Christine. The computer department is now back at full strength with two new arrivals, Doug Macdonnell and Cathy Haworth.

places

Scottish Division

CHARLIE FULTON has taken over as branch manager of Solway branch.

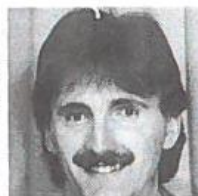
Having previously served as forester, then assistant branch manager at Lothians branch for six years from 1978 where he was involved in a very broad range of forestry and landscaping operations, Charlie has spent the last four years at Stirling as Central Regional Manager with Harvesting & Marketing Division.

This recent experience will find application immediately, as timber production from the branch's managed area is about to exceed 20,000 tonnes per annum in 1989.

Charlie's career in forestry began in 1973 on a private estate in Wigtownshire and, having worked elsewhere in private forestry, the Forestry Commission and local authorities in north, south and central Scotland respectively before obtaining his OND at Cumbria College of Agriculture and Forestry (Newton Rigg) in 1978,



Charlie Fulton



John McGlade

the Solway branch area is already familiar territory to him.

Charlie, who obtained his NDF in 1982, is a member of the Institute of Chartered Foresters and has recently been invited to serve on his local TGUK Committee.

● **David Leslie** has joined Lothian's branch as forester. He recently successfully completed the SCOTVEC course at Inverness Technical College.

● **John McGlade** joined Northern branch in May. He has worked in British forestry since returning in 1983 from Canada where he studied for three years. His main task since joining the branch has been to develop the farm woodlands market in northeast Scotland.

● An omission from the last Tree Scribe requires two events to be reported. First, the appointment of **Fiona Donaldson** as clerkess/typist to Scottish Division's Central Forestry branch in November 1987 and, second, Fiona's marriage in September to Richard Clark.



● The lamb is ceremonially piped in to dinner.

Northern highlight

TILHILL'S Northern dinner dance at the Coylumbidge Hotel in Aviemore proved to be another resounding success, with many families taking advantage of the opportunity to stay on and make a weekend of it in spectacular surroundings.

Chairman Ed Robinson congratulated everyone on the year's team effort. The challenges now facing Tilhill in the years ahead, he said,

were to adapt to forestry's changing circumstances and to go out and actively seek new work.

Guest speaker John Firn, a partner in forestry consultants Firn, Crichton, Roberts Limited, took Beyond 2000 as the theme for his speech and treated the assembly to a light-hearted countdown to the turn of the century and the self-imposed tasks the industry has set itself for those crucial years.

CONTRACTS

Harvesting and Marketing

Sawlog purchase

HIGH QUALITY Douglas Fir and Sitka Spruce sawlogs were the main produce from Harvesting & Marketing, YORKSHIRE Region's, recent standing purchase from the **Wykeham Estates Ltd.**, close to Scarborough.

The purchase of 1,630m³ consisted of 229 Douglas Fir averaging 2.6m³ per tree and 613

Sitka Spruce averaging 1.8m³ per tree.

Felling and extraction of the parcel was expertly carried out by long serving Tilhill contractor, Kevin Ward. With an order from Scotland for forty foot Douglas Fir Sawlogs, great care was required in the felling of the trees, which were growing on a steep sided valley, to avoid splitting or damaging the produce.

Once at roadside, where space was minimal, fast despatch of the logs was vital to ensure continuity of progress and a clear site for stacking logs.

With many of the 40' sawlogs weighing close on 3 tonnes each, a heavy duty loader was required to facilitate in lifting produce. The services of haulier A. Ferguson, Spean Bridge, Invernesshire, were called upon and an independent loader, with 9 tonne capacity crane, was sent to the site to facilitate loading of the larger of the logs.

The parcel was successfully worked in a period of six weeks with around 150 tonnes Douglas Fir and Sitka Spruce sawlogs heading northwards each week.

The remainder of the timber was despatched to local sawmills.

Southern Division

Dick to manage new branch



THE manager of the new Kent branch is **Dick Hoare**, who joined Tilhill in 1981 as a forester at Anglia branch following four years with the Tasmanian Forestry Commission, and in 1982, he moved to Kent to set up the Southeast branch outlier.

Dick believes the new branch will be better equipped to handle the increased number of enquiries which have resulted from the last year's October storm, and also the new Farm Woodland Scheme.

Forestry assistant Noel Kennedy graduated from University College Dublin in 1986 and, after consultancy work in Eire, joined Tilhill in March.

Branch secretary Diane Brown is originally from Newcastle-upon-Tyne, but has spent many years in the south and is now getting to grips with running the administration of Tilhill's newest branch.

Time honoured!



● **Buster (left)** at his retirement presentation.

ARCHIE (BUSTER) FIELDWICK completed 25 years' service with the Company on September 1. Throughout his 25 years, Buster has worked on Southeast branch managed estates, where he was in great demand due to his highly-developed forestry skills.

Buster and his wife, Jean, were entertained to lunch at a local tavern where Peter Sloan presented him with an engraved wristwatch and a cheque to mark the happy occasion.



Eoin O'Driscoll



Niel Nicholson

EOIN O'DRISCOLL has joined Southeast branch as a forestry assistant. Eoin is from Dublin and has worked in an Irish sawmill since graduating from University College Dublin in May.

NIEL NICHOLSON has joined Anglia branch as a forestry assistant after graduating from Edinburgh University.

Southern

● **CENTRAL** branch has won a contract worth £12,873 from **Ready Mix Concrete (UK) Ltd.** for planting of two sites at Poyle in Middlesex and, from **Horsham District Council**, a contract worth £8,538 for clearing and replanting 35 acres of wind-damaged timber at a site near Pulborough, West Sussex.

● **KENT** branch has won a £7,023 contract from a private client for replanting storm-damaged woodland with mixed broadleaves at **Doddington Place**, Kent.

● **SOUTH WEST** branch has been awarded a £15,420 contract for planting work to improve sporting potential at **Moons Hill quarry**.

Scottish Division's Central Forestry branch manager Tom McLellan outlines the advantages to farmers of a new type of crop to grow on their land

DURING the last few years there has been considerable uncertainty among farmers because of food surpluses and the prospect of additional marketing constraints.

As a result, the merits of farm forestry have attracted renewed publicity and many farmers are now considering trees as an alternative crop.

The Farm Woodlands Scheme, which has recently come into force, together with the improved planting grants under the Woodland Grant Scheme, will provide further impetus and should encourage more farmers to plant trees themselves on productive ground where it will be possible to grow a wide range of species.

The benefits that forestry can confer on the farmer are widely recognised. Compared with the Set Aside Scheme, the Farm Woodlands Scheme has the advantage that, at the end of the day, the farmer is left with an appreciating capital asset rather than land which is still fallow.

Woodland can provide cash profit through use or sale of timber, fuel, animal bedding, Christmas trees and foliage.

Woodlands also provide cover for game, shelter for crops and livestock, soil stability in areas prone to erosion, and they greatly enhance amenity, all of which can add significantly to the capital value of a farm.

The objectives of farm-forestry can vary widely but can, of course, be tailored to meet the particular needs of the farmer. It can be planned on the lines of a small, integrated estate with blocks of production forestry sited so as to provide maximum benefit to the farm, consistent with sound silvicultural practice, or it can involve small-scale planting of awkward field corners for amenity or wildlife considerations.



Farmer MacEwan inspects new broadleaved planting and protective tree shelters

Forestry for farmers

One advantage a farm-forester has over a large-scale forest owner is that he can afford to manage his woods very intensively and to aim for more specialised markets.

During the last couple of years, Scottish Central branch at Stirling has been involved more and more with farmers, both in contracting and advisory work.

At Mount Farm, near Balfour, the farmer "Mac" McEwan, is planting about one-and-a-half acres of mixed broadleaves per year and, as the photograph illustrates, by using protective tree shelters and stout stakes, if he wishes, Mr McEwan will be able to continue grazing the area with sheep, thereby utilising feed that might otherwise go to waste,

while also keeping down weeds.

Crucial to the success of this scheme has been the co-operative effort between the farmer and Tilhill; Tilhill providing advice, dealing with the Forestry Commission on grants, as well as providing trees, stakes and tubes, while Mr McEwan had the task of fitting the grow tubes. He will also carry out any future maintenance work and in this regard his enthusiasm for his trees will surely be rewarded by vigorous young woodlands.

At Anniegathel Farm near Forfar, belonging to Andrew Lyell, Tilhill planted 31 acres of mixed broadleaves at an elevation of over 1000 feet. The new planting was protected by deer and rabbit fences and, despite the

difficulties encountered at such an elevation, the initial "take" has been excellent.

With his advisers, Arthur Young Estate Management and Tilhill's Fife and Angus branch, Mr Lyell is considering additional planting in future years. His plantings will make a valuable contribution to the landscape and will provide useful wildlife habitats in an area where there are few broadleaved woodlands.

These are two examples of current schemes illustrate how farmers with the necessary motivation and enthusiasm can be successful at growing trees. When the Farm Woodlands Scheme finally gets off the ground, it is hoped that many more farmers will consider trees as an alternative crop.

For the enthusiastic farm-forester who is happy to do the majority of the work himself, Tilhill will provide expert professional advice and supply top quality nursery stock if required.

Other farmers may require the whole package — drawing up a planting plan, negotiating for all available grants and carrying out all of the work.

It is important that a Farm Forestry Plan is designed to provide maximum benefit to the farm while still creating plantations of a sensible size and shape which will produce valuable timber.

Tilhill's expertise in farm-forestry will ensure that this optimum balance is achieved.

IRISH MINISTER VISITS NURSERY

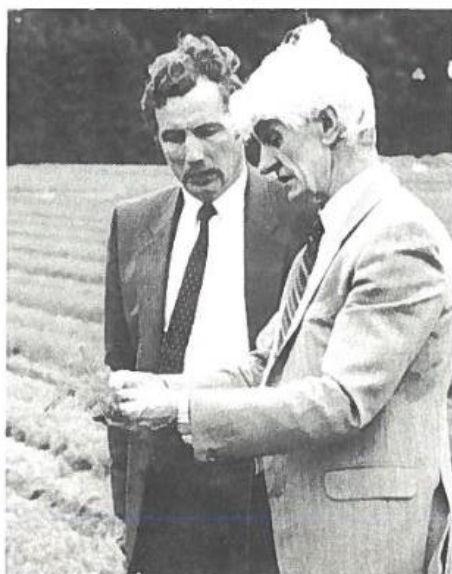
IN RECENT months the Irish Minister of State for Forestry, Mr Michael Smith, had expressed a wish to his department to visit a private nursery involved in large-scale forest tree production for Eire. The Department of Energy in Dublin contacted John White and arrangements were made for a visit which took place in late August.

The Minister was accompanied by Tommy Rae, an Assistant Secretary and Gerry de Brit, Inspector of Nurseries, both with the Department of Energy. They were conducted on the tour by John White, Robin Sym and Sandy Macpherson.

On arrival at the nursery the party saw the extensive cold storage facilities and the insulated transportation. Then followed an inspection of the improved Sitka spruce production and a discussion on its relative merits.

A tour of the nursery followed lunch, and the Ministerial party were impressed by the quality of the stocks and the production techniques involved.

The Department of Energy has been a major customer of the nursery in recent years and this is planned to continue.



Irish Forestry Minister Michael Smith inspects transplants with Nurseries Director John White.

Produced by Val Pettit for Tilhill, Greenhills, Tilford, Farnham, Surrey, and printed by the Dunfermline Press, Pitreavie Business Park, Dunfermline.