



Tree Scribe

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The House Journal of Tilhill
Economic Forestry Limited
A member of Booker
Countryside

MANAGING DIRECTOR REPORTS INCREASE IN PROFITS FOR 1992

IT is a tribute to all associated with the company that we have been able to increase performance over the previous year.

The result for 1992 shows the following:

	1992 £000	1991 £000
Sales	16688	15369
Profit before Interest	1425	1234
Interest cost	(464)	(378)
Profit before Taxation	961	856

The business of the company has been sound during the year with some progress being made although the market has been flat. The underlying health of the business is good.

Special mention must be made of the excellent contribution made by the Wales/West England forestry team. Their sales increased by over £300K. In addition SW England, now merged with the Devon and Cornwall District to form the new Wessex District, won the Efficiency League outright in its inaugural year.

Nurseries Division continued their recovery with a particularly pleasing turnaround at Greenhills.

1993 started sluggishly because of work programme delays occasioned by inclement January weather. We have now caught up. There has also been a marked downturn in the Irish planting programme due largely to the very high interest rates imposed in Ireland because of the Government's decision to stay within the Exchange Rate Mechanism. In addition, rumour of higher grant aid is deferring planting until next year.

What of the path ahead? I am sure many of you will have noticed increasing column inches in the press devoted to forest strategy and performance. Much of this is fuelled by the belief, at long last, that we have in UK a very competitive forestry industry and that on the back of an increasing raw material supply the entire industry can expand and the country become more self-sufficient in timber and



Bob Shaw, TEF Managing Director

timber based products. This year alone the negative trade balance in timber has escalated through devaluation of sterling.

Treasury may ignore informed opinion regarding the desire for and upward review of financial incentive for new planting but there is evidence that they can no longer afford to ignore an increasing trade deficit - especially when the provision of new private planting at

*A Cut above
the rest*

— page 2

*All action on
Lethem project*
— Centre pages

*Triumph at
Lochlyoch*
—Page 8

one-third of the 1988 level is costing three times as much per hectare.

We continue to pursue the cause with vigour and expect to see recovery around the corner.

We salute the commitment of staff at all levels of the company. Without it we would not have done so well. Together we look forward confidently to a growing future.

... to assist group profits

The results of Booker plc for 1992 were announced at the end of last month.

The key points were:

- profit before tax £91M compared with £103.9M in 1991
- the operational analysis indicated for Agribusiness division that profit before tax was £20.3M compared with £20.7M in 1991
- earnings per share 30.4p compared with 36.3p in 1991
- recommended final dividend maintained at 14.25p making a total for the year of 21.75p
- substantial reorganisation and improved prospects in US Agribusinesses
- successful year for prepared foods and fish
- catering distribution was affected by the continuing recession
- reduced costs and improved productivity have provided a base for future growth

ENVIRONMENTAL COMPETITION 1993

The theme of the Booker Group Environmental Competition for 1993 is energy. There is wide recognition as a great deal can be achieved in reducing energy consumption and its inherent cost by greater efficiency in application and use.

At Group level the competition will provide Booker with information to enable other companies to derive the benefits of other entries. This could lead to an opportunity to reduce costs.

The Group has been extremely generous with the prizes – the winner receiving £5000 with £1000 going to five runners-up.

One entry is to be made per company. Entries submitted must prove that quantifiable improvements have been achieved. This will mean providing data on initial energy consumption, quantifying targets for saving and also quantifying the methodology for achieving targets.

The winners will be chosen according to the demonstration of energy savings in monetary terms, the degree of personnel involvement, innovative solutions and the applicability of the project elsewhere within the Group.

Chainsaw certification – Borders District a cut above the rest

With TEF following Forest Enterprise initiative, namely, that no uncertificated cutter will be permitted to work in the woods after 1993, Borders District already have 30 qualified woodcutters.

With funding from Scottish Borders Enterprise the woodcutters have only to sacrifice two working days to attend the courses which have been held on a local TEF managed property.

Funding for a further 20 men has been granted by SBE and this will enable certification of more cutters from Borders and Cheviot Districts.

District Manager Bryson Middleton commented that, come January 1994, we need to be in a position to supply a marketplace with timber and, therefore, it is imperative that TEF have enough trained men to produce the timber.

Additionally, it is an excellent opportunity to ensure that all woodcutters wear the full protective clothing and carry first aid kits. This is a mandatory requirement before training and testing begins.

An added bonus has been the favourable publicity received in the local press and an on-site interview with Bryson shown on Border Television News.



*Sandy Macpherson presents
Bill Dorrington with his
retirement gift*

More time to listen to opera

Bill Dorrington has taken early retirement effective from the end of 1992. A small ceremony was held in the Portway Hotel at Frome at which Bill, in the company of his wife Audrey, was given a rousing send-off by his colleagues.

Sandy Macpherson spoke of Bill's 32-year career with the company, originally at Hereford and, latterly, in the South West at Frome. Through that time, Bill had brought a blend of professionalism and commercial expertise to play which had produced happy clients and contented shareholders.

After numerous reminiscences, Sandy presented Bill with a cheque and a state of the art personal CD player, on which we hope Bill will spend many happy hours listening to his favourite opera recordings.

Bill responded with his own memories of his career, including the story of the suit of armour which greeted visitors to his first office in Frome. He paid tribute to the support that Audrey had given him over the years and to Ann Greenman who had run his office for the past eight years. Audrey was presented with a dried flower arrangement by Ian Ledgard acknowledging the team effort.

We all wish Bill a happy and rewarding retirement in the knowledge that we shall still see him in action as he retains a tie with TEF on a part-time consultancy basis.



*Ronnie Rose
out in the forests with the Chinese group*

Is Ronnie now fluent in Tibetan?

Deep in the heart of Eskdalemuir is the Samye-Ling Centre. Over 40 people started the Retreat at the Centre, the idea being to help others by perfecting oneself.

Yeshe Losal, the Retreat master, said that the materialistic Western philosophy leads to suffering and to people feeding on ego and greed.

Children are being pushed to the limit. If they do not achieve, they are looked upon as failures.

In March this year, a link was finally forged between

the Tibetan exiles in Europe and the Chinese Government thanks to the director at the Samye-Ling Centre and a delegation of officials from Sichuan, a Tibetan-speaking province of China, came on a fact-finding mission to develop their understanding of reforestation, land reclamation and other conservation issues.

The group was taken on a guided tour of the TEF-managed forests by senior wildlife manager, Ronnie Rose. Ronnie has the added distinction of being the first non-Buddhist visitor allowed in the sacred temple!



*Ronnie Rose
(second left)
meets up with
the Tibetan
delegation
outside the
Samye-Ling
Centre*

All action on Lethem project

FROM a hand held spade to a computer selected automatic timber processor, TEF's Lethem project for a major pension fund client is now in full swing.

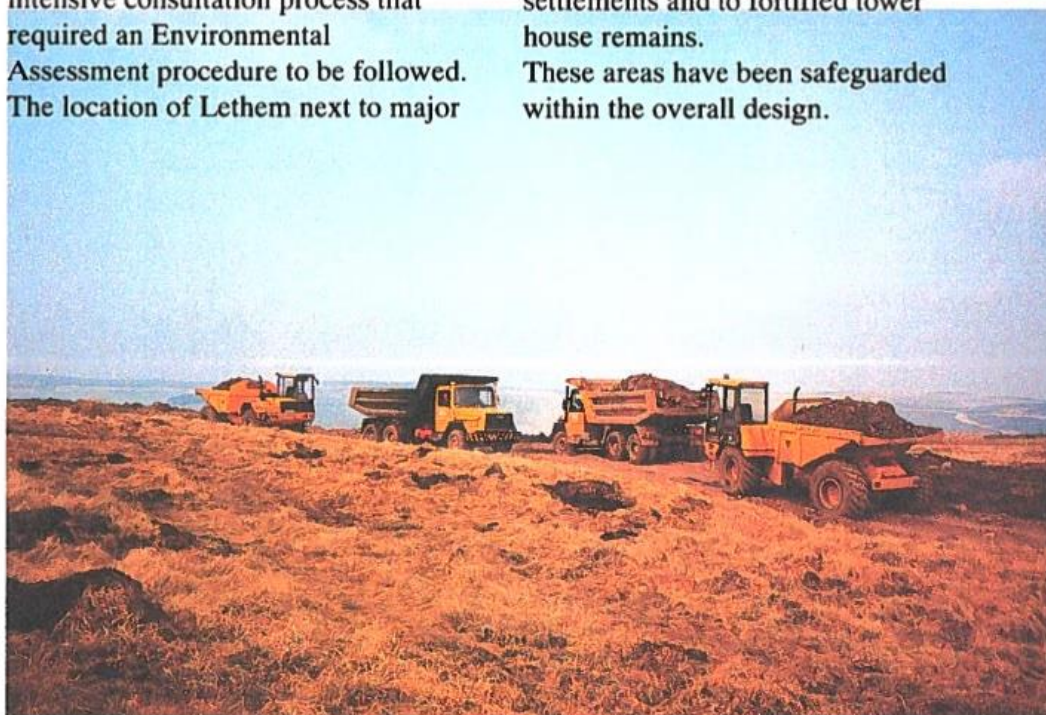
Lethem is adjacent to an existing property of the fund and the new planting land areas combine to give a very significant forest total of some 1600 acres, about 630 hectares.

Lethem estate, extending to 1912 acres, was bought by TEF in 1991. Acquisition was followed by an intensive consultation process that required an Environmental Assessment procedure to be followed. The location of Lethem next to major

roads crossing the border at the Carter Bar in an area of great landscape value meant that considerable forest design input was necessary.

Significant areas were set aside for continued use in agriculture and the whole of the property was thoroughly surveyed by a professional team of archaeologists. Maps were prepared of areas of archaeological significance, demonstrating a sequence of site occupation from prehistoric days evidenced by Iron Age hut circles through to medieval cultivation settlements and to fortified tower house remains.

These areas have been safeguarded within the overall design.





A number of old estate shelterbelts on the property are being removed to be replanted within the new forest design. Work on felling has started with a Scandinavian Valmet timber processor which fells the tree, sneds off all the branches and crosscuts the tree into pre-selected length and log diameter settings to suit the requirements of the various timber purchasers.

A hive of activity at the present time and for some time to come, the Lethem project is great fillip to TEF staff now able to implement the work and to put on the ground the future forest to which so much design effort has been given.

In late 1992, the final proposals were approved for what represents a state-of-the-art forest design in which the management team were able to draw heavily on the computer design and mapping capabilities of TEF's Survey Department, the most advanced facility of its kind in Britain.

Work is now going ahead on all fronts on the forestry areas with 890 acres to be planted this Spring. Some five and a half kilometres of internal forestry road is under construction. The ground preparation is being carried out according to soil types with a mixture of ploughing and a newly-developed continuous moulder which digs out and lays down an inverted turf and soil planting position.



National Game Fair

TEF will be represented at the National Game Fair in Edinburgh as a part of the Booker Countryside display. The main theme will be the company's services in forestry and farming with a special emphasis on wildlife management and conservation.

It is hoped that company staff will be able to meet and entertain clients and potential investors at the event on July 22-24. Anyone interested in obtaining further details please contact Tim Kirk at the Church Stretton office.

Carmarthen office moves ... and districts merge

TEF's regional office in Carmarthen closed its doors in March and, with the South Wales District Office, moved to new accommodation in the grandly-titled Lloyds Bank Chambers, a few miles along the A40 in Llandovery.

The move went without a hitch, staff being only too keen to help out with packing and unpacking, relishing the thought of umbrella-free offices (Carmarthen office roof leaked a bit!) and plenty of open space.

Along with the new offices came two new members of administrative staff, Gail Roberts and Meleri Jones, to whom we give a warm welcome. Meleri is fluent in Welsh, and may greet you on the telephone with the words, "Bore Da!"

Elsewhere, TEF has merged the

Devon and Cornwall district with South West England, the new area to be known as Wessex District. Premises at Frome and Moretonhampstead have been vacated in favour of new offices

at Collumpton near Exeter. Manager of the new district is Roger Lewis of Devon and Cornwall. Bill Dorrington, of South West England, retired at the end of 1992 (see page 2).

Appointment of Highland Region director

Matthew Rivers, BSc, MICFor, was recently appointed to the position of Highland Regional Director, and joined the TEF at Old Sauchie on March 1 this year.

A graduate of Aberdeen University, where he gained a blue in hockey, his working career has spanned forestry management and timber processing, mainly in Scotland. His most recent role, however, was general manager of EFG's landscaping and nurseries businesses.

Married with one son, Matthew enjoys sailing, mountain biking, walking and gardening in what little spare time he'll have with his new responsibility!!!

OBITUARY

Tree Scribe is saddened to report the untimely death of Anthony John Lambert, John to his many friends and colleagues, in June 1992.

John graduated from Bangor University in 1953, followed by 31/2 years with Bryant & May's Scottish outpost at Ballochyle in Cowal and 5 years on the Atholl Estate. Prior to and during his university course John spent time with the mensuration branch of the FC, as it was then, in NE Scotland. In 1962 he joined Tilhill Forestry to open the Company's Northern Branch at Lhanbryde near Elgin, where he remained until leaving the Company and

becoming a consultant in 1990. He established a particular interest in the silviculture of Scots pine and plantations throughout the north east of Scotland bearing testament to his skills.

John's Northern Branch acted as a professional training ground for a large number of TEF staff, many of whom remain with the Company in senior positions. Tom McLellan, Colin Blyth, Colin Calvert, John McGlade and Martin Wilkinson can all reflect with considerable satisfaction that they benefited from John's guidance.

In many ways John was a private man but willing to share his love of

forestry with all and his dry and intelligent sense of humour with those whom he got to know. He was afforded great respect by all sectors of the forest industry for his straight dealing.

Despite his busy professional career, John found time for his hobbies of archery, hillwalking and gliding. He had a keen interest in conservation and became thoroughly and understandably attached to living and working in the north of Scotland.

John is survived by his wife Chris and son Ian. He will be missed by both and by those who knew him during his long career in forestry.

A. J. LAMBERT

Putting our shirt on this team



About 10 years ago, some Forfar parents decided it was time there were some sort of activities for the younger boys of the area, and Forfar Boys Club was formed.

The club is very well supported by local businesses, with sponsorship providing facilities, strips and even trips abroad for the boys to play football against European teams!

They have also been invited to compete in this year's International Festival at Perth, where they will play against teams from all over the world.

There are five teams on the go, with ages ranging from 11 to 15 years. This season, the under 12s are wearing the TEF shirts, and we look forward to hearing how their season has gone.



GUESS WHAT?

Guess What? puzzles are usually only of passing interest to Foresters, but try this one.

Small prize for a correct entry pulled from my new hard hat.

L.L. Yull

Branching out in Sweden!

Tilhill broke all records in 1992 for volume sales in taking coals to Newcastle, or, to put it more accurately, birch trees to Sweden – 1½ million of them! Possible because of the warmer climate and the ability to produce plants with a particularly fibrous root system with an exceptionally good take record, Tilhill Nurseries' Greenhills site in Surrey has become one of Sweden's more favoured suppliers for the sensitive birch tree.

The Swedish Forestry Service will be planting mainly on farmland funded by grants similar to the Farm Woodland Scheme.

Do cowslips like chemicals?

On a Farm Woodland Scheme on Normanton Airfield in Lincolnshire, we have found considerable regeneration of cowslips in association with ground treated with herbicides.

In brief, the planting is entering its second growing season, established on heavy clay. The ground had been in arable use for living memory.

A coarse grass sward had established between final cropping and planting which was treated with kerb flowable in metre wide strips and ground ripped. Subsequently, spot treatments of Roundup and Holtox have been applied.

This spring, there has been a tremendous showing of cowslips, as well as violets and ground ivy amongst others, almost exclusively in the kerb-treated bands, presumably benefiting from the relief of competition from coarse weed growth.

A case for Special Management Grant at year 2??!

CONGRATULATIONS

... to David and Regina Collender on the birth of their second child, a daughter, Maria Madeline, on April 20.

... to Donna and Alan Marshall whose first son, Christopher, was born on December 20.

... to Stuart and Dorothy Wilkie, whose second son, Euan, arrived on March 11.

Lochlyoch triumph

Eight months of commitment and dedication from the TEF team has culminated in the planting of a completely-new forest in south west Scotland covering three square miles – all within six weeks.

Space does not allow for the complete saga, but, suffice to say, that this unique planting scheme, the largest of its kind so far in the UK under the Farm Woodland Premium Scheme, tested the ingenuity and professional skills of TEF from the nurseries through to the forestry staff on the ground – and all came through with flying colours!

The company set new standards for project preparation, satisfying the most stringent scrutiny in terms of environmental acceptability, and we are delighted that Messrs. J. & A. Galloway, our farmer clients, have, as a result of the introduction of a forestry component into their business plan, been able to strengthen their financial base.

Although it is unfair to mention any of the team specifically, perhaps special thanks should be extended to District Manager Charlie Fulton's forester Paul Nolan, whose personal enthusiasm and long hours of working were a major contribution to the success of the whole operation. Organising the planting of 1.4 million trees involving 14 different species of broadleaves and five of conifers, with as many as 40 people and a complete range of machines operating at any one time is a severe test.

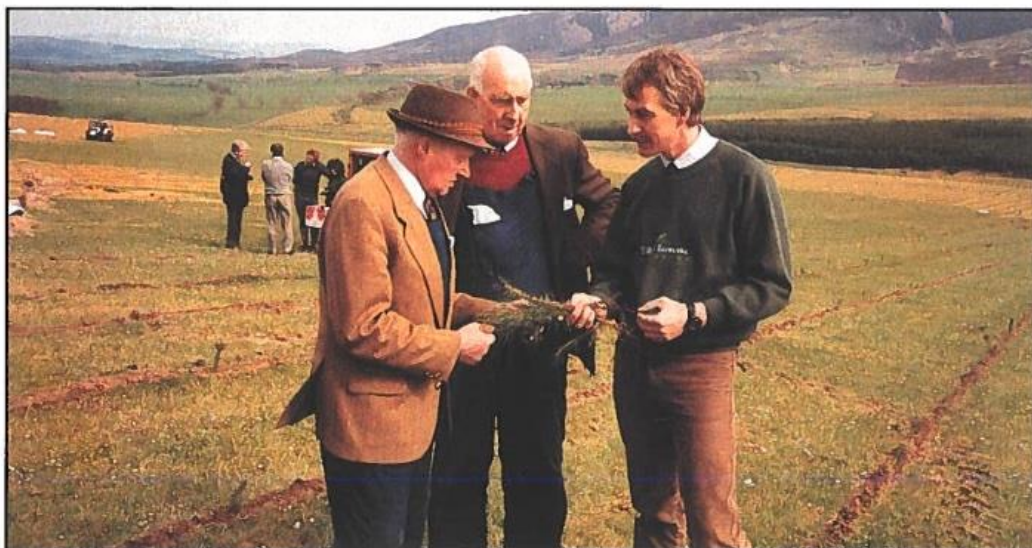
We should also express our gratitude to the people on the ground, who brought innovative forestry planning into reality, and these include Linda McGregor and Raymond Stronach who operated one of the planting machines on site



Record breaker?

which, in itself, had been developed from an imported American machine by our mechanical genius Nick Ananin. Incidentally, it transpired that Linda is a possible contender for an entry in the Guinness Book of Records – she has personally planted seven million trees over the last four years.

The whole operation has attracted a high level of attention from the agricultural community, and we are optimistic of being able to repeat the pattern many times over the next two or three years.



Alec and James Galloway discuss plant quality with Charlie Fulton