

The ELASHER

**FORESTRY
COMMISSION**
News & Views

Issued by
**INFORMATION
OFFICER**

No. 255

April/May 1969

PUBLIC RELATIONS

AN interesting and successful exercise in public relations was recently completed

by N.W.(E), when afforestation plans were explained on the ground to local public figures.

The last substantial area of land to be afforested by the Commission in Yorkshire is on the 3,200 acres of the Newton House Estate and contains one of the Whitby area's best known beauty spots. The Commission acquired the estate, surrounding the Falling Foss Valley, from the War Department, two or three years ago when Fylingdales Battle Training Area closed down.

At that time the prospect of the Commission coming into the area caused concern among landscape conscious people and organisations, but the Conservancy plans pay great regard to landscape and recreation and every effort is being made to meet the interests of local lovers of the countryside and the public at large. To ensure that their efforts to this end were properly appreciated, the Conservancy have kept the local council and other interested bodies in the picture throughout the planning stages.

Of the 3,200 acres taken over, 600 will be retained as well managed farmland, 300 acres of semi-natural broadleaved woodland will be kept more or less untouched and 1,800 acres of moorland will be afforested, leaving 500 acres of the highest land unplanted heather moorland. This will preserve the high moors in the interests of landscaping. The well known Falling Foss waterfall is down in the recreation area by the river. Newton House, headquarters of the battle training area, has been sold to the British Young Naturalists' Association and is now a field centre. Car parks have already been made and forest walks and nature trails are planned for later this year.

To mark the beginning of afforestation on this estate a tree planting ceremony was held there on 25th April. This was attended by people prominent in local authorities, natural history and other outdoor interests.

Three trees were planted at the ceremony by: Coun. S. H. Rowe, Chairman Whitby Rural Council (an English Oak); Ald. J. T. Fletcher, Chairman North Riding County Council (a Rowan tree) and Mr. W. Cowley, Chief Dirger, Lyke Wake Walk (a Deodar).

Others at the ceremony included:

Mr. Mervyn Edwards, Chairman, and Miss Catherine Elliott, Secretary of the Scarborough branch of the Council for the Preservation of Rural England; Dr. E.W. Taylor, President and Lieut/Col. J. Newman, Executive Officer of the Yorkshire Naturalist Trust; Mr. G.G. Watson, Manager of Newton House Field Centre; Mr. R.H.B. Hamersley, Agent, Duch of Lancaster, Cloughton and Pickering; Mr. Alec Wright, member North Riding Parks Planning Committee and of the Regional Advisory Committee of the Forestry Commission and Mr. A. Steniforth of the British Young Naturalists Association.

These important guests and members of the Press saw a view of the upper moorland where afforestation work is beginning and discussed our forestry plans which were explained by Mr. G. E. Godwin, Conservator N.E.(E), Mr. T. Dent (Assistant Conservator) Mr. Kellie (District Officer) and Head Forester Telford. Later they walked through a projected one mile nature trail to the Newton House Field Centre.

At the end of the day all the principal guests expressed their appreciation both of our plans and for the manner in which they had been consulted even when we have not been able to meet their desires 100%.

A COMPLIMENTARY INVITATION

DR. F. C. HUMMEL - and indeed the Commission itself - was honoured recently by an invitation to give the H. R. MacMillan Lecture in Vancouver, British Columbia, on technical and financial planning in forestry. Dr. Hummel's visit aroused considerable interest in Vancouver; he was asked to speak to the University and other bodies and his visit was well noticed by the Press. Dr. Hummel was also able to spend some time visiting the forests of British Columbia.

BRIDGING TRIAL

CIVIL Engineering Branch N.E.(E) will be building this summer the first highway bridge to be constructed in the United Kingdom using a "light weight" concrete, which is made by using an aggregate of pulverised fuel ash formed into nodules about the size of "Maltesers" in place of the conventional gravel or crushed stone aggregate.

This is a joint enterprise between us, the Road Research Laboratory and the Ministry of Transport; it will obviously be of considerable importance in establishing whether or not artificial aggregates will meet the structural requirements of concrete in those areas where natural aggregates are difficult to obtain.

Various gauges are to be incorporated into the structure so as to enable regular checks to be made on condition and performance, and the Ministry of Transport's juggernaut vehicle for testing HB loadings is to test the bridge on completion.

VERMIN RETURN 30th MARCH, 1969

FORESTER DUNCAN HAMILTON, Cumbernauld Forest W.(S), was responsible for the snaring of 72 foxes in the period 1st October 1967 to 31st March, 1969. This number of foxes snared appears to be in the record class, especially when trapping is only carried out on one day every week. Over the 18 month period Mr. Hamilton's average is nearly 1 fox per week.

DOWN WITH JARGON

"LET'S BE FORESTERS. We are very business-like nowadays and use the jargon of business. This is often necessary to get us in the right frame of mind to manage our enterprise. However, there are two bits of jargon which we could drop with benefit to our own efforts at clear thought. Why must we talk about units when they are forests? Let's call them forests - we all know what they imply (SM 142 is about this) and the public does to. And why do we go to the field for information, or just go into the field, or come from the field to offices? Surely, we should work in, come from and go to forests. There is no need to go into the field and look at a unit - it conjures up pictures of a poultry shed in a meadow. It implies we aren't as foresters "thinking forestry", we go to a forest to work in it or we ask for information from it."

These thoughts are those of M. J. PENISTAN and we gladly find space for them as, from our neck of the woods we shall be delighted the more the words "forest" or "woods" are used. As an example the term "Forest Trail" automatically connects our own work with us; the term "Nature Trail" is asking the credit to be given to other worthy bodies and not to us.

F.C. TIE

WE have recently received suggestions that the new F.C. symbol should be incorporated into a new tie design. This has been considered but it has been decided not to pursue this further as the present tie is well known and is very individual so that members of the Commission are instantly identifiable by it. A new or second tie would not improve on this - in fact it might be confusing.

SPORTING (UP)RIGHTS

THE following item is reprinted from The Northern Daily Mail of the 27th March. A similar piece appeared in two other widely read N.E. England newspapers. This successful dissemination of a slight news-story was the result of co-operation between N.E.(E) Conservancy and the Regional Office of the Central Office of Information and, is typical of many which these joint efforts have produced over the past few months. The Daily Express also covered the story in a very shortened form - although it broadened the size of Kielder Forest to "72,000 square miles"!

"The last thing you would expect to find in the heart of a forest is a rugby club. But right in the middle of Kielder Forest, the largest man-made forest in Europe extending

more than 72,000 acres of Northumberland you will find the Border Park rugby club.

"Situated two miles south-east of Kielder Village at Gowanburn, the club is the most isolated rugby club in England, and, with a playing membership of 25, certainly one of the smallest. The members are mostly employees of the Forestry Commission, farmers and shepherds, some living across the Scottish border, and many having to travel at least 15 miles for a home game at Gowanburn. Their nearest away fixture is 35 miles away at Langholm or Hexham.

"Since its formation in 1961 by a band of rugger enthusiasts, some of whom had not played the game before, the club has won increasing popularity among the third and junior teams of such well-known clubs as Tynedale, Gosforth, Hawick, Galashiels and Langholm. Their fully-booked fixture list covers Northumberland, Cumberland Durham and the Scottish Borders.

"The members themselves are largely responsible for the success of the club. They converted two old railway cottages offered to them at a very low rent by the Forestry Commission. Apart from the plumbing and electrical work - the cottages had only one cold water tap and no electricity - all the renovations were done by the players. Today their clubhouse has a large communal bath, lavatories, a tea-room, a kitchen and a comfortably licensed bar.

"The playing field itself is enhanced by the goalposts which were actually felled in the forest by the players.

"Many thousands of visitors will have a chance to see the club and the forest when Kielder opens to the public from June 10th to 15th to mark the Forestry Commission's 50th Jubilee.

"Kielder Forest will be one of several forests selected to show the public not only the forestry side of the Commission's activities but also the facilities for public recreation and enjoyment.

"There will be a reception centre in Kielder Village and guides will take visitors through the forest by forest trails and drives, some of them opened for the first time."

STAFF DUTIES

THE following jocular description of the duties of a staff officer has long been current at the Army Staff College; whilst in no way suggesting that the Commission do not order things better, we thought it might amuse our readers.

"Staff Officers are a fortunate lot, for as everyone knows a Staff Officer has nothing to do, that is except:

To decide what is to be done, to tell somebody to do it, to listen to reasons why it should not be done, why it should be done by somebody else, or why it should be done in a different way; and to prepare arguments in rebuttal that shall be convincing and conclusive. To follow up to see if the thing has been done; to discover that it has not been done; to inquire why it has not been done; to listen to excuses from the person who did not do it; and to think up arguments to overcome the excuses.

To follow up a second time to see if the thing has been done; to discover that it has been done incorrectly; to point out how it should be done; to conclude that as long as it has been done it might as well be left as it is; to wonder if it is not time to get rid of the person who cannot do a thing correctly; to reflect that in all probability any successor would be just as bad or worse.

To consider how much more simply and better the thing would have been had he done it himself in the first place; to reflect satisfactorily that if he had done it himself he would have been able to do it right in twenty minutes and that as things turned out, he himself spent two days trying to find out why it has taken somebody else three weeks to do it wrong and to realise that such an idea would have a demoralising effect on the organisation, because it would strike at the very fountain of belief held by all other officers that a Staff Officer has nothing to do."

100 YEARS AGO

THE following extract from the Gardeners' Chronicle of 9th January 1869, was sent to us by Mr. R. W. H. Williams, E.(E) who comments:-

"It is a pity that the writer is not alive today to give his comments on the current situation, our own activities, and, further to his final sentence, the present adverse balance of payments of the country."

"Arboriculture. - It is really astonishing how few landed proprietors take the least interest in the management of their woodlands. The few who do so are well paid for the time spent in studying "arboriculture", not only in the pleasure they must derive from such study, but from the handsome profits realized out of their woods. It is true that timber does not now give such returns as it formerly did, which circumstance may to a certain extent, account for so many proprietors feeling indifferent on the subject.

"About sixteen years ago the writer could readily obtain 2s. 6d., per foot, cubic, for large oak wood, 1s. 8d. is now about the highest it will realise; larch which sold for 1s. 6d., now sells for 1s. and 1s. 2d.; Scotch fir sold for 10d. and 1s., present value 8d. or so. Notwithstanding these low prices, it is probable that three times the quantity then used is now consumed, and if it be so, it might reasonably be expected that the value of timber ought to be proportionately higher, but this is not so.

"Why has the value of home-grown wood fallen so much? There may be many causes at work tending to produce this result, but the main one, I believe, is the quantity of foreign timber imported into the country; and however disagreeable the fact, to those who are interested in the culture of home-grown wood, it is undeniable that free trade in timber has reduced the value to a minimum. And so long as we are not able to supply the increased consumption from our home woods it is certain that we must be dependent on foreign timber, for the payment of which money must be sent out of the country which should be spent in improving our own."

THE BUNIFA PINE

Faskally, "Daddy" STODDART, may be interested in some rather gruesome further information on the above tree species.

READERS of the interesting letter from the much-respected former 'father' of

In former times, the natives did travel long distances to collect the nuts, as was stated, but being very primitive, knew of only one way to deal with food in plentiful supply and that was to eat it. This they did to satiety and then required a change to meat. All animals having fled the area on the influx of the large numbers of humans, meat was not to be found, so the tribes formed teams of the young men to be initiated and they were set to fight in one glorious spearing and clubbing match. At the end of this entertainment, the bodies of the slain were eaten by the tribespeople to provide needed protein and to absorb the vigour and youth of the young men, then the tribes scattered to their own territories where 'game' would be found (anything from larvae to Kangaroo was bounty)

This account can be verified in histories of the early convict settlements where it is also recounted that the large numbers of aborigines (before the white man's bullets and diseases reduced them to the few surviving today) acted as deterrents to escape, for they much preferred a convict to a feed of 'witchetty' grubs.

If Mr. Stoddart ever visits these noble trees, I hope that macabre thoughts of the annual blood baths that took place beneath them will neither spoil his pleasure at seeing them nor his appetite for any nuts that he may sample.

POET'S CORNER (3 IN THE RING?)

LINES composed to a Rusty Rutter after reading the latest Slasher (Jan/Feb 1969):

Oh Rutter, thou whose biting edge
Has cut through moorland peat,
And left the turves aheaving
In many a mould'ring heap,
Oh Rutter, on whose rusty shoulders
Many boots have trod,
For God's sake bury R. J. Jennings's
Pen beneath the sod.

ANON.

T.V. PROGRAMME

the title 'A Green and Pleasant Land' will be shown in colour on BBC-2 at 7.25 p.m. on June 22nd. It includes shots of some of our forests.

A B.B.C. T.V. programme on the Conservation of the Countryside under

RETIREMENTS

WITH the retirement of Assistant Conservator S. M. PETRIE on 19th April

1969 the Commission has lost not only a first class silviculturist but also one of these rare people - a character.

After graduating at Edinburgh Mr. Petrie commenced service with the Commission as a Forest Worker in North Scotland in 1931. In 1934 he decided to "emigrate" to Eire and served with the Irish Forest Service for twelve years attaining the rank of Acting Divisional Officer. He returned to the Commission in 1946 as a District Officer and was posted to West Scotland. On promotion to Divisional Officer in 1954 he moved to North East England and served there until 1958 when he came to Aberdeen.

As a forester of the old school and a disciple of the late Professor Mark Anderson he has firmly believed that good silviculture is synonymous with sound forest economics and he has therefore been inclined to view with some concern the more revolutionary of modern ideas. An advocate of caution in the use of Sitka Spruce in East Scotland, his description of this species on one memorable occasion as "that arrogant American weed" will long be remembered. His wise counsel and his delightful pawky humour will be missed.

A modest man and a vehement "anti retirement presentationist" he was nevertheless persuaded to attend a farewell luncheon given by colleagues and to accept as a token of their esteem and affection a H.M.V. transistor radio. We wish him a long and active retirement and many happy days on the links at Balgownie.

CHIEF FORESTER HUGH MACKINNON - Knapdale Forest, W.(S). Cairnbaan Forest said

"goodbye" to one of its best known foresters on 28th March when more than 200 friends and colleagues gathered in Cairnbaan Hotel to wish Hugh MacKinnon, who has been chief forester at Knapdale since 1946, a long and happy retirement.

Mr. MacKinnon, who was born at Strathaird on Skye, spent most of his youth on the island of Eigg, where he started work on the fishing boats on the island. After about seven years he came over to the mainland and started working at the hydro-electric scheme that was being built at Fort William, and it was in 1930 that he came to the Forestry Commission. He was one of the first students at the training school at Ben More.

His first posting was to Inverliever followed by a short spell at Newton Stewart, then in 1938 he came to Knapdale as a ganger. With the outbreak of war he was transferred to Kincardine-on-Forth and then to Strathyre as forester, and in 1946 back to Knapdale as chief forester.

Mr. T. A. Robbie, Assistant Conservator W(S), presented Mr. MacKinnon with a cheque from his many friends in the Commission, and Mr. C. Fitzpatrick wished him a happy retirement on behalf of the workers in Knapdale. Miss Bell presented Miss MacKinnon with a bouquet.

At the ceilidh which followed the fear an tighe was Donald Stewart, and Fraser McGlynn and his Band provided the music for dancing. The artistes were Carradale Gaelic Choir, D. MacKellar, T. MacIntosh, H. Graham and A. Bond.

Mr. MacKinnon's successor is Mr. Robert Johnstone, who is at present at Eredine.

OBITUARY

THE death of District Officer

R. MACDONALD, Assistant Education Officer at Faskally F.T.S. was recorded in the March issue of "The Slasher".

Roddy MacDonald came from **crofting** stock and was born and brought up at Ardmail, near Ullapool in Wester Ross. He joined the Commission at Lael Forest where he worked prior to entry to Benmore F.T.S.

Soon after the outbreak of hostilities he joined the Forces was invalided out and at once entered Aberdeen University where he took a degree in Forestry in 1946.

Roddy MacDonald joined the Education Branch as Assistant Education Officer to the late Hector Cruickshank when this expanding Branch opened a school at New Park in the New Forest; the school subsequently moved to Gwydyr in North Wales where it has continued to the present time. He was transferred to take charge at Benmore F.T.S. on the retirement of Harry Watson in 1952. Despite indifferent health and a period of sick leave he stayed at Benmore until his transfer to Faskally F.T.S. where he remained until his untimely death.

The undermentioned Non-Industrial staff changes have been notified during the month of March, 1969.

NEW APPOINTMENTS

Name	Grade	Location	Remarks
Elderwick, K.L.	T.W.G.III(Mech.)	Chirk N.(W)	On Promotion from Foreman Mechanic.
Thackeray, Miss A.	Cart.Draughtswoman	N.E.(E)	Re-appointed from Land Commission.
Harling, D.J.	T/Cart.Draughtsman	H.Q.(B)	

TERMINATIONS

Fitzherbert, J.T.L.	Asst.Conservator	Cardiff S.(W)	Death
Hughes, J.W.	Head Forester	Ystwyth N.(W)	Death
Rose, W.	Foreman	Strathyre W.(S)	Retirement
Pritchard, R.W.	Supt.of Works T.W.G.III	Barcaldine W.(S)	Resignation

TRANSFERS

Name	Grade	Old	New
Cathie, R.G.	D.E.O. I	Edinburgh H.Q. (A & D)	Aberdeen E.(S) Promotion to Asst. Conservator w.e.f.1.4.69
Raban-Williams, R.	D.E.O. I	Widehaugh NE(E)	Bellingham NE(E)
Kirk, D.Mc.L.	T/Chief Forester	Dalbeattie S(S)	Mabie S(S) on reversion to Head Forester
James, A.L.	Head Forester	Broomy - New	Dean H.Q. (T.T.S.) Transfer on Promotion to Chief Forester
McLaren, A.R.	Head Forester	Glentrool S(S)	Dalbeattie S(S)
Parker, J.W.	Head Forester	Downham E(E)	Kesteven E(E)
Craze, D.T.	Forester	Newborough N(W)	Dyfnant N(W)
Edwards, B.F.	Forester	Neroche SW(E)	H.Q.(L) Information Branch (Agricultural Show Unit)
Evans, P.	Forester	Dyfnant N(W)	Newborough N(W)
Graver, A.J.A.	Forester	Alice Holt D(R)	Dean D(R)
Green, P.	Forester	Wykeham H.Q. (P & E)	H.Q.(L) Information Branch (Agricultural Show Unit)

Staff commencing or returning from service or official visits overseas

J.Q. Williamson	Director	F.A.O. ad hoc Committee meeting on forestry Rome, Italy. 25th-31st March.
A.J. Grayson	Asst.Conservator	I.L.O./E.C.E. Study Group on methods and organisation of forest work. Geneva, Switzerland. 10th-14th March.
F.A. Courtier	Head Forester	Discussion on deer and squirrel problems Southern Ireland 8th-31st March.

Staff commencing or returning from Extended Training Courses

R. W. Simpson	E.O.	Introduction to Management, Civil Service Department, Sunningdale Park College, 10th February - 7th March.
---------------	------	--

He was a quite, friendly individual with a dry sense of humour. He had varied interests which included wild life, photography and gardening. In the F.T.S. his subjects tended to be of the academic type and he was noted for his meticulous attention to detail in preparation. He was liked and respected by all who came in contact with him; he had two outstanding qualities, loyalty and integrity.

He was devoted to his wife Nancy, and their three children Neil, Fiona and Angus and it is to them that all his colleagues will express sympathy.