

# IRISH FORESTRY

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## *Editorial*

**T**WENTY-ONE years of Irish forestry were reviewed. Not only that, but they have, to a large extent, been synthesised in "the book". In the context of organised forestry in Ireland those twenty one years (from 1942 to 1963) have shown the most spectacular growth and expansion of forestry. That was at our Twenty First birthday.

Now the Society is passing another milestone, our Silver Jubilee. The four intervening years have not only produced something new in the Society (lest you forget: "The Forests of Ireland"! ) but have also shown a new feeling in the field of forestry in Ireland. The horizons are broadening. The man with the planting spade begins to see over the brow of the hill where increased use of native timber lies. Already over 3,000 tons of pulpwood are used weekly in this country, and the value of timber in the building industry (especially in system building) is being appreciated.

To further the proper utilisation of our timber, a programme of research into the properties of Irish-grown softwoods is under way at the Institute for Industrial Research and Standards. So far we have been planting trees, now the demands of modern technology require that we inform the users of the potential of the timber produced from these trees. At a series of Open Days recently held at the Institute many visitors found that the research into timber properties was a development of which they were not aware. Following those Open Days, officers of the Forestry Division had their own look at the timber research work. To culminate these revelations of the field of timber research, there was a Timber Seminar, in October, at which foresters, wood scientists, engineers and architects expanded on the subject to the better understanding of this versatile material.

These developments show that our eyes are turning towards the next step in forestry—the use of our forests.

To this end there was also, in the autumn, the opening of Gougane Barra Forest Park; from the appreciation of cold engineering facts to the warm concept of recreation and leisure—another most valuable step.

These trends show, as we move into our jubilee year, that forestry also has reached milestones. Even in the short period of four years the visible changes and developments are significant—and those quoted are by no means all the changes that have occurred. The challenge to answer the demands of modern society and technology is stronger now than ever it was—and the glove must be picked up.