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# Society Affairs

## HONOURARY MEMBERSHIP FOR D. M. CRAIG

The following motion from Council was put to the general meeting on 14 February 1975: *That Mr. Duncan Craig be elected an honorary member of the Society.*

In introducing the motion to the meeting Mr. O. V. Mooney, President, said that it arose from the last Annual General Meeting, where it had been strongly supported.

The citation was as follows: Mr. Craig was Honourary Auditor of the Society from its foundation in 1942, until his retirement in 1973. During his thirty-one years he gave generous and efficient service and particularly in the formative years his support and wise advice was a significant contribution to the well-being and survival of the Society.

Commenting further Mr. Mooney said that the citation, while fully accurate, might be somewhat economical and would bear a little elaboration for those who were not familiar with the part that Mr. Craig had played in the affairs of the Society.

“For justification of honorary membership (he continued) our Constitution requires ‘notable services to the advancement of forestry or persons who may be deemed to be worthy of such recognition for any other reason consistent with the object of the Society.’

“If to keep alive the Society and nurture it during its delicate infancy is consistent with the object, then, for this reason alone, although there are others, Duncan Craig’s contribution deserves our highest honour. But I think the first reason might be thrown in too—i.e. the advancement of forestry, because, with a small group of foresters he supported and contributed to a policy which

enabled the Society to survive. During the early years of the Society's life he instilled into the basic management of our affairs an orthodox and conservative approach to our financial business which guided us safely through times when there was more enthusiasm than money or members, to the happy situation we have in 1975 when we have a comfortable credit balance and the highest membership ever. A quiet unassuming man of few words and great integrity, he nevertheless spoke with decisiveness and authority as custodian of our financial welfare from beside the presidential chair at our Council Meetings of those times, and guided us with his wisdom in many other aspects of our work too.

"I suppose there were not many of those who served on the Council of those days, when he was so very much more involved in our affairs than of recent times, who ever fully realised that the Society had the services of a top class professional accountant without charge. As a fully qualified accountant he gave his services to us for nothing, together with, for a period, secretarial services and the use of his boardroom for nominal fees. All this must have been a big financial help to the Society at the time, even though perhaps we may not have fully appreciated it then. With hindsight, in the present, we have now made our appraisal of his contribution over thirty one years to the affairs and management of the Society that we propose the motion this evening."

*The motion was passed with acclamation.*

## OUTDOOR MEETING

### **West Fermanagh**

A whole-day meeting, organised by the Northern Region, was held on Wednesday, 30 April 1975. The day began in Belmore Forest on the question of fertilisation of gleyed soils, led by Dr. D. A. Dickson. This was followed by a demonstration of helicopter fertilising of young plantations in Ballintempo Forest, led by Mr. T. Wilson.

The afternoon was devoted to a visit to Florencecourt Estate, where Messrs. J. C. L. Phillips and W. J. Wright led a discussion on planned development of a new forest park.

## INDOOR MEETINGS

### **Decomposition of Peat**

On 24 January 1975, in the R.D.S. Science Room, Dr. John J. Gardiner, Forestry Department, University College, Dublin,

gave a paper entitled "The Influence of Fertilisers on the Microbial Decomposition of Peat." The revised text of the paper is printed elsewhere in this issue.

### **Land Use Before the Peat**

Mr. Seamus Caulfield, Archaeology Department, University College, Dublin, delivered a lecture in Dublin entitled "Forest Clearance and Land Use before the Peat." This lecture, fully illustrated with slides, was a detailed description and discussion of the excavations at Belderg, Co Mayo, demonstrated by Mr. Caulfield to the 1974 annual study tour, which demonstrated human habitation and agricultural development in north west Mayo about five thousand years ago, before the development of the blanket bog cover. It is hoped that it will be possible to publish the text of this lecture later.