

## Notes and News

### *Ceremony at Ballykelly Forest*

The birth of State Forestry in Northern Ireland took place at Ballykelly on December 1, 1910. A commemorative stone, on the site of the first planting in State hands, was unveiled at Ballykelly Forest on Wednesday, July 25, 1979. Mr. Mick Farren who for many years worked as foreman at Ballykelly Forest, performed the ceremony.

On the same day, Mary Peters, MBE, opened a new jogging trail in the forest. Following an approach from Limavady District Sports Advisory Council for facilities for jogging, the Forest Service waymarked two jogging trails, one of 1.20km and another of 2.00km. In addition an explanatory information point has been provided to illustrate to joggers the trails through the Forest. The trail, the first of its kind in Northern Ireland, follows forest roads and trails through the Forest. It passes close to a Heritage Stand of Sitka spruce planted in 1919. This grove of trees will be retained as some of the oldest planted trees in State Forests in Northern Ireland.

Ballykelly Forest, Walworth Wood or Caman Wood as it is locally known, was originally owned by the Fishmongers' Company of London. The wood consisted of oak, beech, birch and holly of which some was almost certainly primeval forest. It is said that some oak from Ballykelly was used in the construction of the Houses of Parliament at Westminster.

In 1886 the company sold their estates to occupying tenants and the wood was due to be sold to timber merchants for felling. However a Limavady corn miller, Mr. S. M. Macrory, "... thinking the absolute abolition of the wood would be not only an eye sore but a loss to the country ..." together with 5 others formed a syndicate and bought the wood from the company. They subsequently felled portions of it in 1893 and replanted with larch. In 1907 on hearing that the government were considering purchasing land for forestry purposes Mr. Macrory wrote to Dublin and offered the wood for sale. The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland finally acquired the Wood in 1910.

### *European Vegetation Map*

In the "Nature and Environment Series", the European Committee for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources

has recently published the "Vegetation Map of the Council of Europe Member States". This map provides a comprehensive, homogeneous picture of European vegetation. The scale selected — 1:3,000,000 — makes it possible to chart potential vegetation, i.e. climax communities, which are identified by the use of different colours and shading patterns on the map. In all, 96 vegetation units are represented: the map indicates the name of the principal community and the accompanying text identifies the following features for each unit, insofar as they are known:

- the environmental conditions;
- the type of primary vegetation (natural and semi-natural), when this has been studied;
- the geographical or ecological subdivisions;
- the main type of land-use (forestry or agriculture);
- the "locus typicus", i.e. one or more typical examples of European interest, for each unit; plus an indication of any conservation measures that have been, or ought soon to be, adopted.

Every description is followed by a list of the most comprehensive or most recent publications. A general bibliography is appended, together with a six-language glossary of the tree-names most frequently cited. (On sale from the Publications Service, Council of Europe, B.P. 431, F 67006 Strasbourg Cedex). (Council of Europe Newsletter).

### *Finland, increased efficiency through computerisation*

A country of forests and lakes, Finland has relied on computers for some years in managing its environment. The use of appropriate data-processing techniques makes it possible to manage woodland effectively and to rationalise forestry operations, since information is instantly available on suitable machinery, working methods, costs, the needs of young trees and the various uses of fertilisers. Once processed, this information also makes it possible to implement felling schemes more rapidly. As for water, paper-pulp factories are the main source of pollution, since cellulose reduces the oxygen content of the water. A simulation-model is now being devised. This is a mathematical model which can be used to analyse all the reactions possible to a certain number of polluting substances. It will be fully operational within a year. (Le Matin de Paris).

### *Co-ordination of Forestry Policies*

There have been proposals for a *Standing Consultative Forestry Committee* to be set up by the Commission of the European

Communities to achieve better co-ordination of national forestry policies. The Commission bases its proposals on the following facts:

- one fifth of the Community is covered by forest, and one third of world trade involves wood and wood products;
- the Community's balance of payments deficit in wood products is second only to its oil deficit.

Besides the fact that there are economic reasons for developing the sector, forests play an important role from the social, regional and ecological points of view (soil, water, flora, fauna and landscape conservation, as well as recreation for urban populations). (Council of Europe Newsletter).

### *Forestry Commission Census*

The Forestry Commission has started work on a census of all trees and woodlands in Great Britain. This is the first national assessment since 1965. The operation, which involves aerial photography and surveying techniques, started in mid-April and will continue until 1982. The aim is twofold: to produce a clear picture of the distribution of Britain's woodlands and to estimate the potential timber production of the existing forests.

### *Destruction of the World's Forests — Forests for People*

These were the central themes of the 8th World Forestry Congress held in Djakarta, Indonesia, on 16-18 October, 1978. The Director of FAO warned the 2,500 experts from 100 countries attending, of the growing seriousness of the problems of drought or flooding and over-exploitation of forests (1% of the world's tropical forest disappears each year!). Apart from regulating the climate, however, forests also represent the "poor man's energy" — especially in Asia and Africa, where the shortage of wood is so great that peasants are reduced to burning 400 million tons of straw and dung every year. Yet these natural fertilisers are essential for soil regeneration.

### *Annual Study Tour — Handouts*

On behalf of the Society, Councillor Eric Joyce is presently making a collection of handouts for all previous study tours for which they were available. If you can help fill some of the following gaps in his collection, please contact him directly at Glenealy, Co. Wicklow (0404-5701) or send what you have to any members of the Council of the Society. 1960 Ballina; 1961 Glengariff; 1962 Ballinasloe; 1963 South of Ireland; 1964 Brittany; 1965 Cavan; 1966 North Derry, Antrim; 1967 Cahir; 1968 Donegal; 1974 Mayo; 1975 Cavan.