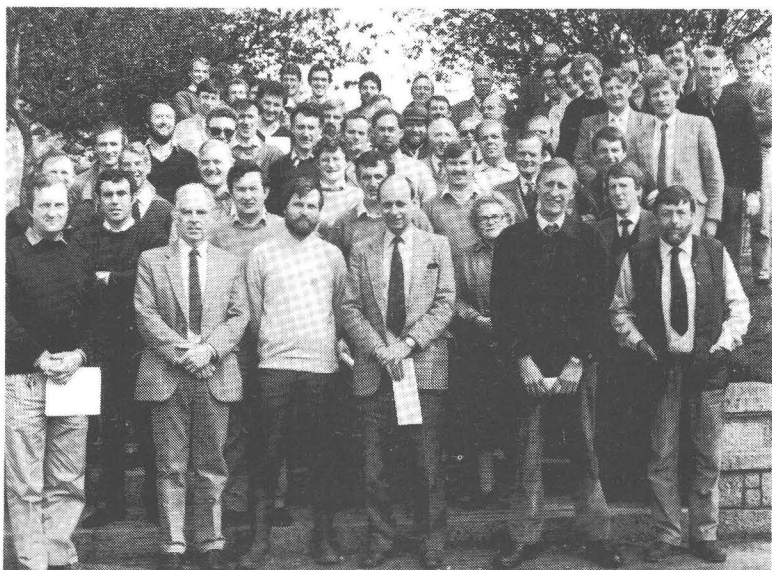


Society Activities

DAY STUDY TOUR : 23rd APRIL 1987

This one-day meeting took place at Tollymore Forest, Co. Down. Fifty five members attended and were welcomed by Mr. Forbes, Chief Forest Officer, Northern Ireland Forest Service. Leader for the day was Mr. W. J. Wright, Forest Management Officer. Local hosts were: M. H. Beatty, District Forest Office, Down/Armagh; A. J. Clark, Senior Head Forester, Harvesting; D. Fitzpatrick, Head Forester, Tollymore; J. Mooney, Forester, Tollymore; K. Elliss, Forest Engineer H.Q.; J. McQuillan, Work Study Officer H.Q.; R. Boyd, Research Head Forester H.Q.; J. McCurdy, Conservation and Wildlife Head Forester.

The forest is located on the eastern foothills of the Mourne Mountains within a recently designated area of outstanding natural beauty. It comprises four management units. Planting began in the mid-twenties and at present the felling of mature stands is taking place. Because of the high aesthetic value of the forest and surrounding area a landscape plan has been prepared. Felling and replanting must conform to this plan. The use of broadleaves is an important element of the plan.



Harvesting techniques were demonstrated at first thinning and clearfell sites. A Norcar forwarder was used in the thinning situation and a Gremo forwarder in the clearfell area where it performed well on a fairly steep gradient. The Forest Park, with its old estate features and national beauty, keep it to the forefront in forest recreation. Visitor usage of the park was described in detail. At present, 200,000 visitors use the facilities each year including a large number of students on educational visits. Problems associated with rank growth of rhododendron and laurel at the later thinning, clearfell and replanting stages were highlighted and methods to overcome them were discussed. The current practice is to cut growth back using brushcutters and treat the regrowth with herbicides. Staff are paid on a payment-by-results system which was described in detail. A selection of tree shelters on display in a felled area created considerable interest. A discussion about fallow deer management — the park has about fifty — emphasised the variety of topics encountered on this one-day visit. The President, Mr. Prior, thanked the leaders and the members who participated in the tour.

D. Fitzpatrick.