



THE Irish Forester

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY OF IRISH FORESTERS

WINTER 2009

10,000 ha annual planting target in Programme for Government

The revised Programme for Government has been welcomed by the forestry sector. The forestry element of the programme agreed between the coalition partners addresses the following five issues:

- Review of state forestry policy.
- Overhaul of current programmes to achieve 17% forest cover.
- Promotion of a diverse forestry culture including 30% broadleaves.
- Increase annual afforestation to 10,000 ha.
- Diversion of funds allocated to purchase carbon credits abroad to domestic forestry investment

The first proposal calls for a review of the state forestry policy but the second, third and fourth proposals address tangible issues such as annual afforestation which will be increased to 10,000 ha per annum. While this target is only half the annual Government afforestation target of 20,000 ha, it is over 50% higher than the average planting of 7,000 ha achieved in recent years. The commitment therefore to a 10,000 ha planting programme in 2010 is a major undertaking.

The Government mathematics are suspect however in relation to achieving 17% forest cover by 2030. Based on annual afforestation levels of 10,000 ha, Ireland will achieve around 13% forest cover within this timeframe.

The third proposal aims to “promote a diverse forestry culture with an emphasis on native trees and ensure that a minimum of 30% broadleaf will be planted annually”. The sector is well prepared to achieve the broadleaf threshold as recent afforestation statistics show that private broadleaf planting is now close to 35%.

The final proposal states: “The Government will also work with the Irish forestry sector, including Coillte, to develop a scheme through which some of the monies currently set aside to purchase carbon credits abroad will be diverted for forestry investment in Ireland.”

There is little doubt that if the targets are achieved, the Programme for Government will be a major step forward for Irish forestry which is currently going through a period of uncertainty.

Message from the President



It gives me great pleasure, as your President, to welcome the publication of the winter edition of our newsletter, The Irish Forester. I hope you all enjoy the “newsy” content and coverage of our 2009 events. It is our intention to publish two editions each year and your contributions, comments and photographs are welcome for inclusion in future editions.

This year was a busy one for the Society of Irish Foresters with a very full programme of events which included a successful Study Tour to Croatia, field days and the National Forestry Conference. Plans for 2010 are already well advanced. It promises to be an interesting and varied programme.

As always, our objective is the promotion of forestry knowledge in support of our Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme.

Thank you for your continued support. I look forward to meeting you at our 2010 events.

Pat Farrington
President
Society of Irish Foresters

Society of Irish Foresters presents student awards



Kevin Hutchinson, outgoing President presented the Augustine Henry Memorial Awards to final year students of forestry at University College Dublin (UCD), Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT) and Galway Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT). Pictured at the presentation of awards: Alasdair Dunnnett, award winner, WIT; Kevin Hutchinson, President SIF; Kathy Hynes, award winner, GMIT; Ken Sweeney, award winner, UCD. The awards are presented to forestry students who gained the highest marks in their final year examinations.



This year's study tour visited the Republic of Croatia – a country which has 32% forest cover. Setting out from Zadar on the Adriatic coast, we travelled north to the beech forests of Plitvice Lakes National Park – a UNESCO World Natural Heritage site. Then through the oak and beech forests around Karlovac to Zagreb where the tour was hosted by the Society of Croatian Foresters. Here we visited Medvednica Urban Forest before heading southwest to the high elevation conifer forests of Delnice and on to Istria and Brijuni. Overall, a memorable tour of magnificent forests, spectacular scenery and great food.

Pictured at the Waterfall, Plitvice Lakes National Park. Front row: Tom McDonald, Liam O'Flanagan, Marie Aberne, Jim Crowley, Pat Farrington (President), PJ Bruton, Tim O'Regan, Richard Clear, John Mc Loughlin, Paddy O'Kelly. Second row: Kevin Kenny, Brigid Flynn, Liam Murphy, PJ Morrissey, John Connelly, Ken Ellis, Jerry Fleming, Willie McKenna. Third row: Trevor Wilson, Jim Neilan, Frank Nugent, PJ McElroy, John Conneff, Denis O'Sullivan. Back row: Pat O'Sullivan, Jim McHugh, Benny O'Brien, Michael O'Brien, Eugene Griffin, Tony Gallinagh.



Honorary membership for founding members

During the year, Honorary Membership of the Society was conferred on four founding members, Dinny Hayes, Mick McCarthy, Tom Briody and Michael McNamara. Clockwise from above are: Michael and Marie McNamara with nephew, Sean; Tom Briody and Pat O'Sullivan; Mick McCarthy and son, George; Kevin Hutchinson and Dinny Hayes. Sadly, Mick McCarthy passed away in April.



Two books by Society members

The Road to Avondale – the forestry life and times of Thomas Briody

Thomas Briody is the first Irish forester to commit his memoirs to paper: The first of two volumes – *The Road to Avondale: The Memoirs of an Irish Forester* – is published this month.

Born in Mullahoran, Co. Cavan, on 28th October 1913, Thomas was in his mid-twenties when he chose forestry as a career. The first volume describes the Cavan of his youth and early manhood as well as the harsh years of the Economic War in his home area.

He tells of his circuitous path to forestry via agriculture and horticulture to begin training as a forester at Avondale Forestry School. His early life as a forester, including the Emergency Fuel Scheme during the Second World War is covered. Volume one ends in spring 1943, some months before his marriage, and his transfer from Slievenamon to the Slieve Blooms.

Published by Choice Publishing, Drogheda.

If Trees Could Talk – a history of forestry in Co. Wicklow by Michael Carey

The woodland history and culture of Wicklow go back many centuries and are deeply embedded in rural areas throughout the county. Michael Carey explores the evidence of woodland cover and the various tree planting initiatives carried out in the county between the seventeenth and twentieth centuries in a new publication *If Trees Could Talk*. The utilisation of timber and the profitability of the industry during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries are discussed.

A review of documents relating to the old Watson-Wentworth-Fitzwilliam estate based at Coolattin near Shillelagh is also included. The progression of the industry over the period is referenced to the overall social and political evolution of the county and related issues.

Published by COFORD, *If Trees Could Talk* is available from COFORD.



Dr. Michael Carey (second from right), author, at the launch of *If Trees Could Talk – Wicklow's Trees and Woodlands over Four Centuries* with (from left) Dr. Eugene Hendrick, Director COFORD, Michael Lynn, Chairman, COFORD and Éamon de Buitléar, independent filmmaker and television presenter.

Irish timber creates huge impact at PlanExpo-EcoBuild show in RDS, Dublin

Tony Killeen, the Minister of State with responsibility for forestry, launched the Wood Marketing Federation (WMF) Woodspace exhibition at the recent PlanExpo-EcoBuild show in the RDS. Designed by the award-winning architect Ciaran O'Connor, Woodspace created a huge impact. It was commissioned by WMF to promote wood construction, preservation, furniture making and other uses of timber sourced in sustainably managed forests.

Woodspace combined home grown and American timbers. Built by Woodmarque, from Dungannon, Co. Tyrone, the timber for the exhibition included:

- Sitka spruce eased edged construction timber from the Murray Timber Group
- Irish grown decking timber from Glennon Brothers
- Oriented strand board (OSB) from SmartPly, the panel board division of Coillte
- Tulipwood and red oak promoted by the American Hardwood Export Council (AHEC)

Minister Killeen commended the WMF and its member organisations on their promotional work: "The work of the Wood Marketing Federation is vital in ensuring that markets exist for the timber produced in our forests. Successful markets are essential to encourage continuity of new planting so that we can enjoy both the highly visible output from the forests, including wood products for construction, wood energy and recreational facilities as well as the less obvious benefits such as forestry's contribution to climate change mitigation and the provision of recreational facilities."

Established in 1989, WMF's mission is to promote wood as a renewable, sustainable and versatile natural material.



At the launch of the Wood Marketing Federation Woodspace Pavilion on November 3: Denis Byrne, Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food; Gerry Britchfield, Coillte; Sean McNamara, Joinery Solutions; Paul Harvey, Arch Timber Protection; Dr. Mari de Meijer, Drywood Coatings; Mike Glennon, Glennon Brothers; Colin Molloy, Protim Osmose Ltd; Paddy Murray, Murray Timber Group; David Gunning, Coillte, Christy Conway, Wood Marketing Federation; Aimee Hartshorn, Tales of Design; Ciaran O'Connor, OPW, Minister Tony Killeen, Pat McCarthy, Sikkens-Akzo Nobel, Eugene Boyle, Wood Collective; Patrick Murray, Murray Timber Group; Valez Picardo, Enterprise Ireland; Donal Magner, Wood Marketing Federation.

Ireland hosts European Forest Institute international seminar



Ireland hosted the European Forest Institute (EFI) Conference and Seminar on September 3-4 in Dublin Castle. The three-day event included a conference, scientific seminar and field day. The Conference was launched by the Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Tony Killeen. The EFI seminar entitled "Forest Ecosystem Management in the 21st Century" featured Irish and international speakers.

Delegates also attended a field trip to Co. Wicklow which included a visit to Ballinastoe where Enda Keane, TreeMetrics Ltd (far right) described the use of 3-D laser scanning to measure standing trees. Fergal Mulloy and Dr. Ted Farrell, organisers of the event, are to the immediate left of Enda.

To all our readers

*Nollaig mhaith
is gach sonas
i gcomhair na
h-athbhliana*

Happy Christmas
and a prosperous
New Year

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2010 PROGRAMME OF EVENTS:

7-13 March	National Tree Week
11 March	Annual Augustine Henry Forestry Lecture – RDS
26 March	National Forestry Conference
23 April	Field Day – Kilkenny (including AGM)
14 May	Field Day – Co. Tyrone

2 July	Field Day – Larch Hill, Co. Dublin
13 - 18 September	Annual Study Tour – Germany
24 September	Field Day – Co. Galway
7 October	Annual Seán Mac Bride Forestry Lecture – UCD