

## Changes at the helm

As most of you will know from the 20 May email to all FR staff, about Jim Dewar's voluntary early retirement, I have taken over the role of FR's Chief Executive, until the post is permanently filled. Bill Mason (Silv N) will act as Head of Station at NRS and sit on the Research Management Board as part of these interim management arrangements.

I believe that FR is strongly placed for the future. It is not easy to produce good quality science, which is relevant to the fast-changing needs of the FC and wider forestry and rural industries. Nevertheless, FR has done well in the past few years. This is confirmed not only by the good customer satisfaction ratings received for the year ending April 2002 (well done, everyone!), but also by responses to the first phase of the Quinquennial Review consultation and reports of our scientific advisory groups and users.

I am also determined to ensure that we do not lose impetus on initiatives to further develop FR's professionalism, teamwork and leadership skills. Across the FC, there is a broadly based desire for a change of culture. FR initiatives to achieve this include Working Groups looking at the potential to improve FR's *Internal Organisation, Science Strategy, Image and Buildings & Facilities*. Coupled with the FC wide initiatives such as the CONNECT action plan and the Leadership events, there is already a considerable momentum for change. As we go into the new financial year, we look forward to bringing these initiatives to fruition.

Meanwhile, after the busy end of year and review period, we finish May with celebrations of the Queen's Golden Jubilee. In June, there will be opportunities for North and South to mark Jim's retirement from the FC and we look forward to the opportunity to express our thanks and good wishes to him.

Peter Freer-Smith

## People News

### Congratulations to:

- Mike Perks (Silv N) and his wife Karen on the arrival of their first baby Ella, who was born on 5 May, their wedding anniversary. What a great present!
- Mandy Sennett who has successfully completed the 'First Aid at Work' course.
- Gillian Bowden who has resigned from TSU (N). We wish her well for the future.
- John Langley who has been a sandwich student with (Silv N). We wish him the best of luck with his continued studies.

### Good luck to:

- Doug Nisbet (TSU AH) who is taking a years unpaid leave to travel to New Zealand. Anyone wishing to contact Doug may do so via Nick Tucker.

### Farewell to:

Jim Dewar who is retiring after 33 years with the FC/FR. Jim's illustrious career has been well documented by Ken in his recent email. It now remains for us to wish Jim well in the future, and we all have the opportunity to do so in person at the following times: 20 June at a dinner at 'Ye Olde Original' (please contact Esther Ker for details), 21 June at 10 am in the staff restaurant NRS and 27 June at 3 pm in the staff restaurant at Alice Holt.

## Science & Business News

### Madeira contract

Roger Trout has successfully negotiated a contract from the 'Natural Park of Madeira' worth £45K, for the eradication of rabbits and mice on an island off Madeira.

## It pays to advertise

TSU (N) have designed and produced a leaflet that describes the range of work they carry out and shows the locations and contact numbers of their main offices. It is hoped that the leaflet will provide useful information for FR, FE and FC staff and act as a marketing tool to attract new work to the unit. Work on producing a poster for display at talks and seminars is under way. You may access this leaflet through [http://forest/tsu/tsu\(n\).pdf](http://forest/tsu/tsu(n).pdf)

## Pension briefings

Ken Charles and Martin Abrahams thank all the staff who attended the recent pension briefings at Alice Holt and NRS, where they explained the various options; they hope that staff found these useful. Any one who has been unable to attend a briefing so far has a final chance to do so. Ken will run a briefing at Alice Holt on 10 June at 10.30 in the main conference room. Martin is planning one at NRS on 7 June, further details to be announced. Please contact Ken or Martin if you wish to attend.

## Visits & Conferences

David Rose has been invited by the French Ministry of Agriculture & the Regional Government of Aquitaine to attend the opening of FOREXPO 2002 in Bordeaux.

Ralph Harmer (SSRB) and Richard Thompson (Silv N) attended the IUFRO conference on Restoration of Boreal and Temperate Forests, in Bredsten, Denmark. Ralph presented a paper 'Great Britain – Conifers to Broadleaves' which highlighted our approach to restoration of planted ancient woodland sites. Richard unveiled a poster, which summarises the forest practice guide on restoration, due to be published later this year. Other themes of the conference were, use and adaptation of natural stand dynamics, recovery of forest in the Black Triangle (post-heavy industry), nature based forestry in Denmark and Germany, and conversion of Norway spruce stands to site native species and create new native woodlands.

Helen Armstrong (WEB) contributed to a public debate in Edinburgh with the title 'Land use or abuse? – a debate on managing the Scottish uplands.' The debate was one of three on contentious issues organised recently by the Natural Environment Research Council. Helen was part of a panel of six and gave a short presentation on the impacts of

grazing animals on upland landscapes and habitats.

## NRS Spring Golf Match

This prestigious event took place on 10 May at our regular venue of Braid Hills Golf Course, Edinburgh, a challenging course, beloved by rabbits due to its dense covering of gorse. Participants had a fine, windless day for the round and thus no excuses! Not that any were needed as everyone played above themselves. The winner of the NRS Trophy was David Anderson, who completed the course with a personal best net score of 71, level par. Alec Gaw produced the longest drive and Rob Sykes won the 'nearest the pin' having hit the green on the 17th.

The next match will be on 6 September, to which all are invited, north and south, regardless of ability.

## Forthcoming Events

**6 June - 8 Sept:** Westonbirt Festival of Gardens.

**13 June:** Deer Seminar at AH

**12/13 June:** Small Scale Harvesting Workshop at Luss Estates.

**28 June:** AH (10.30 staff restaurant) &

**4 July:** NRS (10.30 library): **'Introducing your\_Intranet'** a seminar led by Paul Subacchi.

**22 July:** AH (Conference room) &

**29 July:** NRS (Library) FTS Roadshow, **'What's new with the Internet, the Intranet and the next steps of Outlook'**. Please book through either Martin Abrahams or Janet Lacey.

**5 - 6 November:** Joint NRS/AH Heads of Branch meeting.

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## Next Newsletter

Deadline for contributions to the July Newsletter is Tuesday June 25.

