



WOOD SCIENCE NEWSLETTER

Institute of Wood Science

September 1993

"THE INVASION OF YORK '93"

Our annual IWSc conference held this year at the Royal York Hotel on the weekend of 2nd-4th of April 1993, was a successful and certainly more friendly invasion of York than that by the Vikings or the Romans!

Doom and gloom over the state of the economy and other pressures facing our industry, such as the host of environmental issues currently being debated, did not dampen what was a most enjoyable conference, both from a professional point of view, and perhaps even more importantly in the current climate, from a social point of view.

The overwhelming consensus from delegates, and their partners was that the whole conference had been a welcome and informative break in the day to day battle for survival - a definite morale booster!

Delegates and partners were greeted on the Friday evening at the *President's Reception aboard the "RIVER PRINCESS"*, when our President Keith Purcell welcomed the delegates to the conference, and thanked our very generous and enthusiastic partners in the conference - *Howarth Timber Group Limited*. A six-piece Jazz band, beautiful early summer weather, river views of some of York's most historic buildings and an enthusiastic conference party, certainly got the proceedings off to a very promising start - aided by free lashings of "ships grogg"!

Our high-profile list of speakers at the conference was:

ESA MIKKONEN

MARKETING MANAGER

UNITED SAWMILLS LIMITED

JOHN WARD

CONSERVATION STUDIO CO-ORDINATOR

INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED ARCHITECTURAL STUDIES

RICHARD BURBIDGE

MANAGING DIRECTOR

RICHARD BURBIDGE LIMITED

RICHARD JEWSON

CHAIRMAN

MEYER INTERNATIONAL PLC

RICHARD BOLAND

HM INSPECTOR OF HEALTH & SAFETY

HEALTH & SAFETY EXECUTIVE

NEIL DONALDSON

MANAGING DIRECTOR

JAMES DONALDSON & SONS LIMITED

The comments from delegates during the conference, and the replies to our follow-up questionnaire, certainly backed-up the overall impressions that the conference was a great success and that it signalled an upturn in the prospects of the Institute.

To quote NEIL DONALDSON, one of our prominent speakers at YORK '93:

"IF YOU THINK TRAINING IS EXPENSIVE, TRY IGNORANCE" AND..... "SURVIVAL IS NOT COMPULSORY"

The venue of York, with a spring-time greeting of "*a host of yellow daffodils*" around the city walls, and in particular the luxuriant surroundings of the Royal York Hotel, provided a magnificent backdrop to the conference. Partners of the delegates enjoyed a comprehensive social programme which included visits to the unique *Jorvik Museum* of Viking history and culture, as well as the spectacular stately home - "*Castle Howard*" (the setting for the BBC production "*Brideshead Revisited*"). *CHESTER 1994* will certainly build on the social successes of YORK '93!

After the conference, the Institute of Wood Science gained significant and very much appreciated press coverage from the *Timber Trades Journal* whose editor, *Audrey Dixon*, was particularly impressed with the positive and forward looking nature of the conference:

Preparations for next year's conference: *CHESTER 1994* are already well under-way with the ever-enthusiastic conference committee, and we can confidently say that the 1994 annual conference at the *CHESTER GROSVENOR HOTEL (15th-17th APRIL 1994)*, will build and improve on the success of this year's conference.



Delegates & Partners board the "River Princess".



From left to right: Esa Mikkonen, Neil Donaldson, Geoff Bagnall (Chairman of Session), Richard Burbidge, Richard Jewson, Richard Boland.

CORPORATE MEMBERS

IWSc is delighted to welcome Boulton & Paul Ltd into Corporate Membership and thanks them and those listed below for their support.

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NEWS FROM THE PRESIDENT AND TRADA

FROM THE PRESIDENT

One thing to be said for mid-summer is the easing up of Institute activities as pleasant as they may be. After nearly twelve months of the presidency, these few quieter months come as a gentle relief after such a hectic, self-inflicted, time since last September. Aside from fulfilling my promise of branch visits and the regular Council meetings, I have been included on the Conference Committee also. This Committee, staffed by a select body of our membership, has collectively put scores of hours in presenting one of our "finest Conferences" earlier this year at York, with the conscious effort to improve the promotion and content which York '93 was able to demonstrate. The support of Howarth, as sponsor, without doubt contributed to the success. This merits much praise and appreciation of The Howarth Timber Group.

This is now well behind us and the spring is now being wound up for the 1994 Conference at the Chester Grosvenor Hotel, Friday, April 15th to Sunday, 17th. I should like to say at this stage that I believe our Conference will be held at its grandest venue yet. The Grosvenor has been awarded the Egon Ronay "hotel of the year award" for 1993, and yet we have been able to negotiate a most competitive and attractive package considering the prestige of the hotel and its international reputation. The 1994 Conference will be hosted by my own Liverpool and District Branch, a fitting tribute for me in my last year of the presidency. I should mention, however, that we still have the support in all the arrangements of two colleagues from our Tyne-Tees and Leeds & Sheffield Branches who served so well on the York '93 committee.

One of the nicest courtesies extended to us is about to take place this year. We have been granted a bursary by United Sawmills of Finland to send a student on a study of the timber activities of USM, one of Finland's major groups. This is a most generous gesture which we are obviously so supportive of and perhaps illustrates what can come out of a successful conference - you may recall that Esa Mikkonen of USM was one of our speakers at York.

One of the most involved Branch visits I took upon myself ended up in me singing for my supper and acting as Chairman at the Scottish Branch meeting in June. I expected to have been in for a roasting trying to keep apart representatives of our industry and the environmental element for W.W.F. (Scotland) and Friends of the Earth. However, it turned out to be a splendid evening of lively debate and erudition, with all speakers and audience making a most valuable contribution to the evening's event. My congratulations to the Scottish Branch for arranging such a challenging evening, and also the President's thanks go to the sponsors of the meeting, James Donaldson, John Fleming and Sinclair Lang. Such gestures are becoming necessary to keep the profile of our charitable Institute uppermost in our industry, and it is most re-assuring that companies are prepared to give us their support for the sake of education and awareness.

My thanks to those hospitable Branches and their officers I have met on my visits, the splendid Conference Committee I have worked with, the staff at H.Q. and the Chairmen of our various Committees. These people are the cornerstones of our Institute and deserve our appreciation which, as President, I convey on your behalf.

Keith Purcell AIWSc

TRADA SEEKS NEW FINANCIAL BASIS

The Board of TRADA is undertaking a far-reaching review of operating structures to secure the Research Association's future following a serious decline in membership subscriptions. At an Extraordinary General Meeting on 14 September, members will be asked to empower the Board to consider various options and to amend the Memorandum of Association whereby TRADA's undertakings, including its subsidiary companies, may be transferred into private ownership.

While demand for TRADA's research, information and technical services is undiminished, the timber trade's ability to fund the programmes adequately has been eroded by changes in the structure of the industry, a situation exacerbated by the recession.

As a research association, TRADA is compelled to spend at least 50% of its income on research in order to obtain Section 508 tax exemption. The reconstruction in 1990 safeguarded this situation, with the increasingly important commercial services housed in two arm's length but wholly-owned subsidiaries - TRADA Technology Ltd (TTL) and TRADA Certification Ltd (TCL).

TTL acts as sub-contractor for the membership programme of the Research Association and undertakes commercial work; TCL provides product and management systems certification.

The Research Association has also been successful, with Department of the Environment co-sponsorship increasing significantly this year. In addition, important contracts have continued to be won from EC funding bodies.

In 1992, £1.85 was spent on membership programmes for every £1 of membership subscription received.

Nevertheless, the erosion in both Ordinary and Associate membership will necessitate the use of up to £100,000 of reserves this year in order to maintain contracted levels of research and information activity, despite a programme of tight controls on expenditure and a reduction in staff numbers.

TTL and TCL operate in a commercial market place and require additional investment for the future growth and expansion necessary for their long term success. This can, effectively, only be secured if the companies are in private ownership.

"The preferred option to safeguard the future of the Research Association and ensure a centre of excellence available to the timber industry, may be to transfer ownership of TTL and TCL to the existing management and staff," states TRADA chairman Ian Campbell.

"Such a move not only protects the Research Association but also the on-going provision of commercial services geared specifically to the needs of the timber industry."

To progress the changes, the Board of TRADA has sought advice from a merchant bank, James Finlay, which has extensive experience in advising research associations on financial restructuring.

TRADA members will have received a letter from the bank accompanying a notice of the Extraordinary General Meeting on 14 September. This has explained that a vote in favour of the resolution to change the Memorandum of Association does not commit members or TRADA to any specific action: proposals will be brought back to members for approval.

If TRADA is restructured along the proposed lines, the effect would be:

- ★ Continued existence of TRADA as the party responsible for research and information contracts on behalf of members.
- ★ Independently owned operating companies conducting work under contract for TRADA but also seeking additional markets for their skills to gain substantial new business and become more commercially successful.
- ★ A transfer of specific assets and the goodwill of the operating companies to new ownership at a value to be determined by independent valuers. The land and buildings to remain the property of TRADA.
- ★ Very close contractual ties between TRADA and the operating companies to ensure TRADA receives value for money in the work it requires to be performed on behalf of members.
- ★ If management and staff are successful in a bid to acquire these companies, there are potential benefits in increased motivation and operational efficiencies arising from involvement in the ownership.

"Increased commercialism and new business developments possible under private ownership, will allow enhanced support for membership programmes," says Ian Campbell. "We wish to emphasise that the Research Association will continue and be responsible for research and information contracts on behalf of TRADA members. Continuing close contractual ties between the RA and the operating companies under their new ownership will protect members' interests."

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

OVER 100 CANDIDATES FOR IWSc EXAMS

For the first time since 1987, over 100 candidates sat the Institute's examinations this year. At a time of reduced trading and cut-backs in recruitment, this points to an investment in training by the trade and the introduction of the Institute's new Certificate course in September 1992 has widened the scope for this. More than 70 candidates enrolled for the Certificate course at five centres at Leamington Spa, Leeds, High Wycombe, Liverpool and Reading, some by block release, others at day class or evening classes. More than 50 took the Certificate examination in June of this year when they were joined by a similar number taking the 'old' Associateship exam. For the coming year, it is hoped still more will enrol with additional centres at Guildford and in Northern Ireland and Dublin interested in offering the course. TRADA has prepared a distance learning programme to support the course and the first recruits for this have been enrolled. The outstanding feature of the Certificate course is its use of 'work books', designed to provide some information but also to present a challenge to candidates to seek out and record technical information, under the guidance of a training agency. Work books covering ten topics, presented as five modules, were prepared within the year, thanks to the efforts of Peter Condon, Barry Matthews, Tom Shaw and Erle Smith.

The challenge now is to provide an opportunity to Associateship in a similar way. Preparation for this is well advanced and the course will be on offer in the coming year. Again, structured on a modular basis, the course will seek to meet individual's needs. A compulsory core technology module will be supported by optional modules and a project, of a practical nature, undertaken by agreement between the candidate, his or her employer and the training agency.

For further information on any of the Institute's courses, contact Freda Robinson at the Institute's office in Hughtenden Valley.

Dr. J.D. Brazier FIWSc - Chairman Education Committee

INNOVATIONS IN THE APPLICATIONS FOR WOOD

With the approach of the proposed VAT on heating bills many of us will no doubt be looking to ways in which to further reduce heat loss. Equally we have all experienced the irritation of draughts, which whilst perhaps acceptable in the summer are certainly undesirable in winter. Nevertheless some circulation of air has to be maintained. The problem lies largely in how this is achieved and how well it can be controlled. When air change and movement is controlled it tends to be described as ventilation rather than a draught.

The following extract might give a "new" dimension to ventilating one's home, plus winning support for suspended timber ground floors and striking a goal for the use of timber skirtings rather than plastic/PVCU alternatives.

"If air is admitted from an external grating or flu, it can be conveyed by a pipe or channel under the floor to the opposite side of the room, where it can be carried *behind the skirting*. Where doors occur, the pipe can pass beneath them and up again into the skirting. Holes should be formed in this pipe for the escape of air, and at the point where the pipe is first carried up behind the skirting, and where the air pressure is consequently greatest, these holes may be 6" to 9" apart and about 1" in diameter. Their inter-spacing should rapidly diminish to about 2" as they pass to adjacent sides of the room. The object is to equalize the velocity of inflow. *Ornamental perforations* should be placed in the skirting, and filled with perforated zinc. By these means, inflow is sub-divided into minute streams, and mingles with the air in the room, becoming warmed by it and thus causing no violent change in temperature.

From *Ventilation of private dwellings* printed in the Building News Supplement of December 19 1886.

Watch this space for further innovations from the past!

David Woodbridge FIWSc

WIDENING THE ENTRY POTENTIAL FOR THE INSTITUTE'S COURSES

Now that the Open Learning Course leading to the IWSc Preliminary examination has ceased to be part of the Institute's remit this is perhaps the moment to reflect on the particular virtues that the course had as an introduction to the Institute's full course structure.

Apart from the unquestionable value of the Open Learning Course as a foundation in basic timber technology it had considerable value in guiding the younger student, often fairly fresh from school, into the anatomy of wood and the terminology and functions of the timber trade.

In my view however there remains a strong case for what could be described as a *feeder course* into the Institute's mainstream examinations and awards. I would also like to suggest that there will be instances when the **Timber Trade Training Association's DIPLOMA Course** fulfills precisely this role.

This would be of special value to the young trainee who perhaps, on entry into the trade had not achieved the GCSE grades recommended for IWSc study, or who needs time to both settle into the timber industry as a career and to mature as a person.

The TTTA DIPLOMA has been written specifically for the industry with a wide range of individual modules designed to suit various training paths within the trade. At the core of the course are product modules on Timber and Boards together with Health and Safety. Thereafter the modules fan-out into occupational sectors like sales, yard operations, and woodmachining. All are supportive of NVQ performance criteria and final assessment is by submission of a project certificated by the TTTA and City and Guilds.

As a *feeder course*, successful completion of the Diploma should not only have raised the trainee's academic abilities well beyond the levels reached when he/she left school, but it should have enabled such recruits to have climbed those bottom rungs of the ladder towards entry onto the **IWSc Certificate Course** (a role that the Open Learning Course often accomplished in the past).

We need to catch these learners, potentially they could become new members of the Institute. Equally they should be made aware of the opportunities that the Institute's course structure offers towards career development and qualifications in the timber industry. I would suggest that the Institute might consider extending some sort of recognition of achievement to those trainees who successfully gain the TTTA Diploma, for example an endorsement, to the certificate.

There is an opportunity here to extend further the now well established links with the TTTA. It would also have the advantage of further identifying the training routes available within the timber industry together with the role of the IWSc as a major player in the system.

David Woodbridge BA, FIWSc, FETCert., Timber Tectonics Ltd and TTTA Regional Co-ordinator for the Midlands.

NEW IWSc CERTIFICATE COURSE

The cost of the five work books for students enrolling for the new Certificate Course is £175.00. This includes the annual student's subscription, the examination fee and VAT.

A NEW DEGREE COURSE IN FOREST PRODUCTS TECHNOLOGY?

Dr John Palfreyman, Senior Research director at the Scottish Institute of Wood Technology at Dundee is examining the need and scope for a degree course in wood technology in Scotland. Dr Palfreyman, a Fellow of the IWSc is keen that any such course should integrate with the Institute's examination and qualifications. The Institute welcomes this development and has given its support to the initiative underway in a part of the Kingdom where timber production and use is expected to make an increasing contribution to the national economy. With almost sixty per cent of the nation's productive softwood forests growing in Scotland and timber yields there expected to double in the next decade or so, there would appear to be scope for new educational initiatives for what must be an expanding industry.

BRANCH LINES

HIGH WYCOMBE AND LONDON BRANCH JOINT VISIT TO KEW GARDENS

The Summer of 1993 will not be remembered for its hot, lazy days but May 19th, to our astonishment was indeed a traditional early summer day, blue skies and fluffy white clouds. Just the day for Wycombe and London's joint visit to Kew Gardens.

A total of twenty-four interested persons were skilfully guided by Laura Ponsonby, one of Kew Gardens education staff, through rare and exotic tree species with lyrical names - *Liriodendron tulipifera*, *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*, *Sequoiadendron giganteum*.... we could reel off names for hours! It was interesting to note that the reason why the 'gardens' are so named is because there were originally two Royal estates which were combined in 1772 hence the use of 's' in the name and the 'royal' connection. In fact Kew is the only botanic garden which can boast royal ancestry. We started our tour at the Main gate and among the trees planted in this area are several remaining from Princess Augusta's original botanic garden, one notable example is the maidenhair tree (*Ginkgo biloba*).

Unfortunately, the Great Storm in October 1987 had a devastating effect on the Arboretum at Kew. Nearly 650 trees were lost in total, including a 200-year old Turkey oak (*Quercus ceris*) and many botanical rarities were also lost. Further damage also occurred in January 1990 and a total of 1000 trees were destroyed or damaged. But, even this has been used to good effect by the Kew custodians who have taken the opportunity to replan opened areas and replant with new species. One area of replanting that has recently taken place is the Magnolia Walk, which will lead from the Main Gate to the main magnolia collection. Wood taken from the storm damaged trees has been used to create a wall mural. This mural depicts Kew threatened by the wind and forms a focal point to the new Victoria Gate Visitors Centre. Many species have been used to show not only the colour but also the texture and grain, the effect was quite stunning.

Throughout its history, Kew has made important contributions to increasing the understanding of the plant kingdom with many benefits for mankind. Many species within the living collections are endangered in their natural habitats. Specimens of such plants are cultivated and propagated for distribution to other botanic gardens or, whenever possible returned to their natural habitats.



Giant Amazonian Water Lily

One of the delights of Kew is the Princess of Wales Conservatory opened in 1987. This is an innovative design which houses a series of ten different micro climates, cleverly maintained by today's computerised technology, ranging from moist tropical to arid desert zones. Within the hot and humid area, mangrove swamp and riverine habitats display typical vegetation, such as the giant Amazonian waterlily (*Victoria amazonica*) named in honour of Queen Victoria. It has enormous leaves over 2m in diameter which are supported below by a network of inflated ribs. A mature leaf can support 45 kg if the load is evenly distributed. Unfortunately we were unable to do any in-situ load testing, time did not allow! This waterlily grows at an amazing rate and is treated as an annual at Kew. The pollination is actually carried out by scarab beetles; Professor Prance, Kew's director, was the first to identify its pollinators. The modernism of this Conservatory contrasts with the Victorian splendour of the Palm House, which was completely restored between 1984 and 1989. A myriad of tropical palms, creepers and cycads fill this house. Cycads are amongst the world's rarest and most ancient plant species, many are on the verge of extinction in their natural habitats. Along with these rare species you can see commercially important plants displayed such as banana and rubber plants. Within Kew's glasshouses synthetic pesticides are being replaced by biological agents. We all searched in vain for a glance of the lizards that have been introduced, but perhaps they were watching us, the intruders into their homes. Until recently Kew was unable to display marine plants, but new techniques have been developed to enable the cultivation of this difficult plant group. A series of tanks beneath the Palm House displays plants from many habitats including tropical mangrove swamps and European rock pools.

Although a full day was spent at Kew, there were many parts of the Gardens which it was not possible to visit within the time. Hopefully, this can be rectified with a repeat visit in the near future. At the end of the day, over a welcome cup of tea, we all agreed that this Joint Meeting had been a definite success.

Jill Whitehead AIWSc - Carole Barfoot AIWSc

BRANCH LINES - WESTERN COUNTIES BRANCH

Institute of Wood Science activities have been most enjoyable in the last year at both local and national levels. The Western Counties Branch has run an excellent evening lecture programme culminating in a trip to Square Sail's shipyard at Canon's Marsh in Bristol. Robin Davies gave us a fascinating tour around two traditional sailing ships, above and below decks. For repair work, traditional species such as Douglas fir and larch are being replaced by opepe and iroko. The ships were constructed from Danish beech and oak and incorporate ash pulley blocks and greenheart and lignum vitae components. We learnt that fir trees are still held in reserve for masts in the Forest of Dean and that acid in oak is responsible for corroding wrought iron fastenings.

David King (Vice-Chairman) has continued to offer the Clarks Wood board for Western Counties meetings and his enthusiasm and hospitality is much appreciated. Members of the Committee who deserve special mention include Alan Meakin (Treasurer), Roland Adams (Secretary) and Terry Edgell (Publicity). Our major problem has been poor attendances, with often fewer than ten members at a meeting, although the Square Sail trip attracted some members out of the woodwork. Despite a comprehensive mail drop and the provision of a buffet supper less than 15 people came to meet our President, Keith Purcell, at an excellent talk given by Malcolm Oxford of STORA.

As well as the evening meetings hosted by our Vice Chairman, David King, at Clarks Wood, Bristol we are going to run two of our popular outside visits. New departures will be two joint meetings with the Joinery Managers Association and one with the West of England Metals and Materials Association, a thriving local branch of the Institute of Materials. The first meeting will be an outside visit to the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton on Sunday 19 September 1993, including a talk and guided tour. Other speakers include representatives from Jotun Surface Finishes, Cuprinol, the Building Research Establishment and Sampsons. The WEMMA meeting will welcome Dr David Robson from the BioComposites Centre, Bangor, who will speak on the potential of plant fibres for engineering composite materials. The final meeting in April will be a guided walk around Westonbirt Arboretum. Full details of venues will appear in the IWSc meetings listing.

We looked forward to improved attendances in 1993/94 and we can assure you of a warm welcome.

Martin Ansell, FIWSc, Western Counties Branch Chairman

A CHAIRMAN'S LAMENT

You've heard it all before, of course!

- ★ Why don't we get more people to our Branch meetings?
- ★ Where are all the young IWSc entrants from the Timber Trade?
- ★ What can we do to spread the message that our Institute meetings are a great way of getting top quality information in a trade/social context?

These are the questions with which our Committee (and no doubt every other Committee in the IWSc!) belabour themselves every season. And, no matter how tightly we screw on our thinking caps, we never seem to come up with any valid answers!

So what's the problem? - Answers please to Jim Coulson AIWSc FFB - Chairman Tyne-Tees Branch

OVERVIEW OF THE B.C. TIMBER INDUSTRY

SUMMARY OF REMARKS MADE BY R.O. McRAE MIWSc TO THE TYNESIDE BRANCH OF THE INSTITUTE OF WOOD SCIENCE, GATESHEAD, THURSDAY, 17 NOVEMBER 1992

Mr. McRae outlined the geographical distribution of the forest types in British Columbia, with particular emphasis on the differences between the Coastal forests (Douglas Fir, Cedar, Hemlock and Spruce) and the dry belt Interior forests (Lodgepole Pine, Interior Fir, Larch and White Spruce).

He presented an overview of the BC timber industry, pointing out that the province of British Columbia contains some 7% of the world's softwood growing stock and is the world's largest single exporter of softwood forest products. In 1991 Canada produced 51 million cu.m of sawn timber and the province of British Columbia accounted for 31.5 million of this total. The United Kingdom is British Columbia's third biggest export market for sawn timber, ranking behind the US and Japan. It is the biggest export market for Canadian plywood.

Mr McRae stressed how important the forest industry is to the province of British Columbia. He explained that over 94% of the forest land is owned by the people of the province, and administered by the provincial government. This compares with approximately 30% publicly owned forest in the USA and 26% in Sweden. Consequently forest companies in BC must adhere to a rigorous set of government standards and regulations, designed to ensure that the forest resource will continue to be available for future generations.

He then turned to the main point for the evening - a summary of the plant health issue which, according to McRae, is the single biggest issue currently facing export producers in Western Canada. Uncertainties resulting from delays in decisions have already cost member companies in BC considerable lost business and, in some cases, caused producers who have traditionally supplied the UK and the Continental European markets, to focus their attentions elsewhere and look for new, less "difficult" markets.

The European plant health committee's concern over the risk to European forests from the importation of the Pinewood Nematode stems from the results of an EPPO study, carried out in Japan in 1987-88. The publication of the study results indicated that some species of Pine could be at risk under certain conditions. The study also indicated that one of the requirements to permit the establishment of Pine Wilt disease would be a mean average August isotherm of 24 degrees minimum - a level of temperature not found in either the forests of Western Canada or Northern Europe.

McRae explained how, as a result of this EPPO study, a joint research program for Canadian and European scientists was put together to consider the potential threat to European forests from Softwood species imported from North America. This work was begun in 1990 and the target for completion of their results was October 1991.

While the scientists were undertaking their research, timber from North America continued to enter the European Community under the mill certificate program - a system which excludes timber having any evidence of bark and/or grub holes. This system would virtually eliminate the possibility of timber containing the monochamus beetle entering the Community. This beetle is critical to the plant health issue as it is the only means of transport for the PWN itself. The PWN is a microscopic worm which cannot travel on its own and relies on the monochamus beetle for transport. Timber without bark and/or grub holes would, by extension, also be without the monochamus beetle and this means there could be no risk of nematodes.

The scientific teams were not able to complete their work by October '91 and in fact, as a result of requests from the European scientists for more information from North America, the joint report was not actually finalised until the end of June 1992. It was presented to the plant health committee in Brussels in early July '92. At this time Canada took the opportunity of proposing to the Europeans a solution to the perceived plant health problem, based on the analysis of risk from the various species normally supplied to the European markets. The Canadians agreed that any pines or species mixed with pine, (i.e. S-P-F) should be heat treated or kiln dried in line with the scientific team's findings.

Western Red Cedar should be exempt from any heat treatment as the scientists concluded that there was no risk of PWN infestation in this species. Finally, all other non-pine and non-cedar species should be allowed to enter the Community under the mill certificate program which would be further enhanced by an Agriculture Canada certificate to provide an additional level of comfort for the importing countries plant health and agriculture officials.

Since then, despite several more plant health committee meetings in Brussels, there is still no final decision on the Canadian proposal and the only certainties, as of this date, are that all pines will have to be heat treated or kiln dried and cedar will be exempt (although it will still require a mill certificate).

Thus all other species, which include Hemlock, Douglas Fir, Hem-Fir and Spruce are still faced with the possibility of having to be kiln dried or heat treated in order to be allowed into the European market. This, despite solid evidence that there is virtually no risk of infestation through the importation of any of these species.

McRae emphasized that the Canadian government and Canadian plant health scientists will need to follow up very closely with their European counterparts in an attempt to get this situation clarified quickly in order that timber shipments from North America are not further disrupted. At the same time he urged importers, working through their various federations and associations, to remind the UK plant health delegates that a decision must be forthcoming that will clarify once and for all what is to be expected from the North American side. There is no shortage of kiln capacity in Western Canada and McRae stressed that the Canadian producers were probably more anxious than anyone else to resolve this problem. Suggestions that they were deliberately slowing the process because they do not have the existing kiln capacity, were completely without foundation.

In McRae's view the Canadians would be only too pleased to supply a kiln dried product to the European market place and in fact, had been prepared to do so for some time. Unfortunately the market does not seem willing to recognise that kiln dried timber demands a higher price than green. A number of importers in the UK were still bringing in significant quantities of green timber and this meant that companies offering kiln dried were not able to obtain the necessary price to justify the business. This problem is not unique to Western Canada and there have been numerous reports in the UK trade press of domestic producers who are also unable to obtain kiln dried price levels because of competition from unseasoned carcassing.

McRae concluded by hoping that the New Year would not only see a resolution of the PWN issue but would also see the establishment of a proper price level for kiln dried timber as this could only serve the best interests of all parties involved in the timber trade.

Since this paper was presented last November, there have been a number of subsequent plant health committee meetings in Brussels and considerable debate has ensued. Most recently, on 28 June, the European Commission acted on the recommendation of its plant health committee and revoked the derogation for softwood timber from Canada. (The derogation remains in effect for timber from the US, only through 30 September 1993). This decision was taken following the arrival at UK ports of two shipments from Eastern Canada which were found to contain grub holes and monochamus beetles. These findings constituted an infraction of the mill certificate program.

As a result of this decision all softwood timber from Canada except Western Red Cedar must now be either kiln dried or heat treated in line with EC regulations. This will result in increased costs which no doubt will be passed along to the buyer. It will also see the cessation of trade in certain grades and/or sizes where drying or heat treating is not possible or economically practical.

This decision is viewed by most Canadian shippers as an overreaction since the perceived risk of infestation from the non pine species is negligible. Canada will continue to argue its case through scientific channels under direction of the federal government. Meanwhile however the decision having been taken, it remains to be seen how shippers and suppliers will sort out future trade.

R.O. McRae MIWSc - Director European Operations C.O.F.I. (Council of Forest Industries Canada)

SIDE LINES

CRDS/CTIS EXAM FUTURE - UPDATE

A meeting between the examination working party of the BWPDA* and the IWSc in February agreed the following programme relating to these exams:

1. An integrated exam will be introduced in 1994. The IWSc will become the clearly independent examining body and moderator.
2. The IWSc will award the combined qualification as a separate independent body from the BWPDA.
3. The integrated exam will take the form of three modules, that is Health/Safety and Legal aspects, Damp and Timber. These modules would also incorporate oral sections.
4. The exams will be spread over a two day period to allow candidates to sit various modules or the whole exam.
5. The procedure for administration of the exams will be finalised once the IWSc and the BWPDA have carried out an evaluation of cost and staff involvement.
6. An integrated syllabus for the modules will be prepared by Dr. Janice Carey for the IWSc and Mr. Lewis Woodhouse on behalf of the BWPDA.

*British Wood Preserving and Damp-proofing Association

NEW BWPDA DIRECTOR

The British Wood Preserving & Damp-proofing Association has appointed Dr. Chris Coggins, Director of the Association as from 5th July.

Chris Coggins obtained his PhD at Liverpool University in 1974 for his work on the decay of timber in buildings. He was made a Fellow of IWSc in September 1980.

INSTITUTE JOURNAL

The present issue of the Institute's Journal will be the last for Dr. Anne Handley as its editor. She has now joined CAB International Forestry Bureau which leaves insufficient time for such an exacting task. She has both our thanks and good wishes for the future.

We are fortunate indeed to have been able to persuade David Woodbridge, FIWSc, to take over as editor with the knowledge that the Journal will continue to be in very capable hands.

DIARIES

We have ordered a quantity of Diaries again as the 1993 ones proved very popular. Time has shown that they are well bound and the black leatherette cover with Institute of Wood Science and telephone number in gold has stood the test of eight months hard wear. You can place your order for 1994 with the Office. Price remains the same and at £4, including VAT and postage is very good value.

SENIOR LECTURER IN TIMBER ENGINEERING

The Buckinghamshire College Department of Timber and Construction has developed a unique partnership with advanced timber engineering groups worldwide to contribute to the demands of high-tech industrial applications in timber related technologies.

The programme now requires a dedicated professional to provide a competent and effective teaching service across a range of first and higher degree courses and undertake research and consultancy duties. In return the department offers support for continued scholarship and excellent research facilities.

To apply you must possess a first degree in an appropriate subject with suitable postgraduate and professional qualifications, plus experience of timber engineering and structural design in the educational and/or industrial sector.

For further details reply to: Peter Claydon (0992 643088)

NVQs LAUNCHED IN THE TIMBER TRADE

At a meeting hosted by the City and Guilds of London Institute and the Timber Trade Federation on the 28th July the WOODMACHINING (TIMBER TRADE) NATIONAL VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATION was launched.

The meeting was opened by Jim Lumsden of Meyer International and Chairman of the TTTA. He formally launched the NVQ and gave an overview of the Government's learning targets and the value of the NVQ framework as a system for achieving a better trained and qualified workforce.

The way in which the NVQ will be adopted and operated in the trade was explained by Helen King of City and Guilds and Joe Hickmott, Training Executive, TTF. It was also announced that further NVQs would be available later in the year and during 1994. These included Yard and Warehouse Operations and Sales.

Those attending the meeting, which was held at the City and Guilds Portland Place headquarters, included representatives from the timber trade, further education and TTTA regional co-ordinators.

CERTIFICATE COURSE AT GUILDFORD

After a gap of several years, Guildford College of Further and Higher Education will, from September 1993, be offering the new Certificate course on a part day and evening basis. In addition, distance learning with tutorials is also envisaged as an alternative method of study.

Guildford is one of a small group of Colleges, which includes South Kent College, Mid-Kent College and Buckinghamshire College, brought together by Nick Hurry of the Timber Trade Training Association to provide training support across the south-east of England.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

1993

- Sept. 16-19 **Self Build Houses Show** - Alexandra Palace
- Sept. 18-20 **Woodworking Industry Exhibition** - Wembley Conference & Exhibition Centre
- Sept. 23-26 **National Woodworker Show** - Sandown Exhibition Centre
- Sept. 28 **IWSc Annual General Meeting** - TTF Offices
- Oct. 5-7 **International Shopfitting & Design Week** - Business Design Centre
- Dec. 7 **IWSc Council Meeting** - TTF Offices

1994

- Feb. 22-24 **Construction Industry Computer Exhibition** - Barbican
- March 17 **Ideal Home Exhibition** - Earls Court
- April 15-17 **IWSc Conference** - Chester

IWSc 'CERTIFICATE COURSE' IN TIMBER TECHNOLOGY

LIST OF COURSE CENTRES

The Buckinghamshire College
High Wycombe, Bucks. HP11 2JZ
Contact: Mr. B. Matthews (Tel: 0494 522141)

Leeds College of Building
North Street, Leeds LS2 7QT
Contact: Mr. E. Cannell (Tel: 0532 430765)

Liverpool Community College
Clarence Street, Liverpool L3 5TP
Contact: Mr. K. Stout (Tel: 051 707 1515)

Mid Warwickshire College
Leamington Spa, Warwicks. CV32 5JE
Contact: Mr. P. Condon (Tel: 0926 311711)

Newtownabbey College of F.E.
Newtonabbey, Co. Antrim
N. Ireland BT37 9RS
Contact: Mr. T. McFadden (Tel: 0231 64331)

Reading College of Technology
Crescent Road, Reading RG1 5RQ
Contact: Mr. R. Wall (Tel: 0734 583501)

Guildford College of Technology
Faculty of Construction & Engineering
Stoke Park, Guildford, Surrey
Contact: Mr. D. Steel (Tel: 0483 31251)

TRADA
Stocking Lane, Hughenden Valley
High Wycombe, Bucks.
Contact: Mrs. Val Allcorn (Tel: 0494 563091)

Mr. D. Woolbridge
Training Consultant
Griff Cottage
Askett, Princes Risborough
Bucks. (Tel: 0865 875511 or 0844 343074)

*If
all the year
were playing
holidays
To Sport
would be as
ridiculous
as to
Work*