

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

It is a pleasure to be writing my first presidential address to all Members of the Institute of Wood Science. A great deal has happened since the AGM in September and I want to take this opportunity to outline my personal view of the Institute and the professional services that it provides.

The IWSc is a committee-driven organisation which first and foremost supports the educational requirements of professional individuals working in the timber trades and in the fields of wood science and technology. Those needs are underpinned by the Certificated and Associate Membership categories which can be attained by the study of modules at colleges or by distance learning within the new streamlined framework.

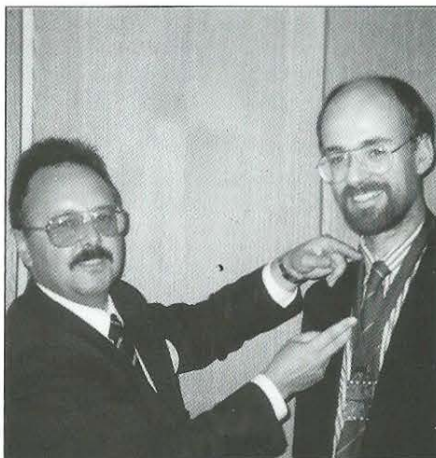
The strength of the Institute depends on the energetic contributions of key individuals and I have no hesitation in mentioning just a few of the people who make the IWSc tick. On the education front Dr. John Brazier is Chairman of the Education Committee. He and his colleagues are concerned with the development of new course modules, the improvement of existing modules and all aspects of examinations. It is not surprising that members of the committee include representatives from institutions of higher education, including Buckinghamshire College and Mid-Warwickshire College.

Applications for membership are carefully scrutinised by the Membership Committee in the capable hands of its Chairman, Tony Hall, and a sub-committee is currently looking at the status of all membership grades. Financial and general strategy matters are addressed by the Finance and General Purposes Committee, now under the Chairmanship of Peter Latham, Senior Vice-President, who works closely with the Treasurer, John Perry.

All these Committees meet quarterly and our Director, Maurice Holloway, and Secretary, Freda Robinson attend these meetings and provide essential continuity. The business of the three Committees is reported to Council which also meets quarterly under the chairmanship of the President. Council members are elected annually at the AGM which precedes the September Council meeting. In addition the views of Past Presidents are aired at their meetings, usually held annually.

Branch Chairmen meet at least once a year to discuss progress at regional level. Participation in Branch activities will from now on be seen as part of the process of Continuing Professional Development under the guidance of David

Woodbridge, our newly appointed CPD Officer, who is also Editor of the Journal. I am seeking a serious revision of attitudes towards continuing education from individual Members and employers alike. If we are to hold up our heads and promote the timber industry effectively we need to understand our products, new technology, marketing opportunities and so on. This can be achieved by attending seminars, conferences and Branch Meetings. I applaud the efforts of all Branch Chairmen and their hard-working Committees for organising their annual programme of meetings and the enlightened attitude of our Corporate Members. In future a firm commitment from Associates to CPD activities may be rewarded by elevation to an enhanced grade of Membership. It is appropriate here to acknowledge the value and energy of our active Branches outside the UK, in particular Australia and Ireland. There is scope for further, fruitful expansion in Canada, Malaysia and elsewhere.



*Keith Purcell hands over the badge of office to Martin Ansell at the AGM.*

It will not have escaped your attention that we are holding our Annual Conference in Bristol this year when we celebrate the fortieth anniversary of the IWSc. Steven Orley of BPIB has organised a superb flagship event and I urge you to attend this pleasurable and valuable CPD opportunity. The conference literature is headed up by our excellent new logo which is the first element in the improved marketing of the Institute which David Carney is processing in conjunction with Council.

I am very proud of the Institute and its aims. Please write to the Editor of the Newsletter, Maurice Holloway, if you wish to contribute ideas which will promote the future success of the Institute. I look forward to your contributions and to meeting you at our conference in April.

**Martin Ansell FIWSc**

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| S.E. Orley       | Conference                 |
| D.E. Woodbridge  | Editorial                  |



# THE FIRST FORTY YEARS 1955-1995

The story of the Institute of Wood Science really began with young men returning from the 1939/1945 war, some to resume interrupted careers in the timber trade, and some to start a new career. Everyone had an urge to catch up on lost time, resulting in a demand for training.

These young men were prepared to attend evening classes on two nights a week for three hours. The demand was there, and it was satisfied all over the country, particularly in those centres where the trade was strong, i.e. London, Birmingham, Liverpool, Scotland, Hull and even as far south as Brighton. Classes were started in 1945, and by 1947 there were 53 courses being run, attended by 1,781 students. By 1951 there were 1,052 students taking the first year course, 525 taking the second year and 334 the third year.

In order to improve the quality of teaching, the Timber Development Association (the forerunner of TRADA) under its technical director, E.H.B. Boulton, assisted by Dr. F.W. Jane of the University of London, together with a wonderful staff, Bernard Alwyn Jay and Bob Woods, also T.J. Price, lecturer at the City of London College, organised a five-day annual course, the first of which was held in the School of Forestry, Oxford, in the summer of 1945. Subsequent courses were held at St. Catherine's College, Cambridge, resulting in the trade's close association with that foundation.

In 1948, TDA commenced examinations for a certificate, and in 1950, for a higher certificate: the way was open for the formation of an Institute giving a qualification in wood technology.

The Institute of Wood Science was formed by several leading members of the timber trade far-sighted enough to envisage the advantages for the trade of such qualifications. The signatories to the Memorandum on November 30, 1955 were Alistair John McIntosh, Joseph Cecil Walton, Alan Robertson Gemmel, E. Bryan Latham (uncle to Peter Latham, Vice President), David Burdett Irvin, David Walker Robinson and Rodney Russell Perry (father of John Perry, Hon Treasurer).

The presidents in chronological order have been: 1955-58 E.B. Latham; 1958-60 H.A. Cox; 1960-62 E.H.B. Boulton; 1962-64 Dr. W.P.K. Findlay; 1964-66 R.R. Perry (died in office July 1966); 1966-69 B. Eagle; 1969-70 J.E. Walton; 1970-71 G.G. Garlick (died in office January 1971); 1971-73 Dr. J.F. Levy (now Professor Levy); 1973-75 Dr. D.S. Belford; 1975-77 F.S. Palmer; 1977-79 C. G. Latham; 1979-81 Dr. D.J.B. White; 1981-83 C.C. Lorenzen; 1983-85 Dr. G.K. Elliott; 1985-86 T.S. Mallinson; 1986-88 Jean M. Taylor; 1988-90 Dr. J.D. Brazier; 1990-92 R.G. Venables; 1992-1994 K. Purcell; 1994 -present Dr. M.P. Ansell.

The Institute started with 351 members, but in 1963, Brookie Boulton organised a recruiting drive, resulting in a membership of about 900, and by 1966 membership had risen to 1,262. Now in our 40th year we have a membership in the United Kingdom of 83 Fellows, 469 Associates, 121 Members, 375 Certificated Members, 32 Ordinary Members and 136 Students. Overseas there are 64 Fellows, 173 Associates, 10 Members, 38 Certificated Members, 48 Ordinary Members and 24 Students, a total of 1573.

The Institute's Journal, which was first published in March 1958, has become our shop window to the world, and has always been subscribed to by the leading forest products laboratories. This has, perhaps unfortunately, resulted in an esoteric publication. Although various attempts have been made by successive Editors to obtain articles of a more general nature they have met with little success, although the introduction of papers from the National Conference and a more open approach by our present Editor has helped to make the Journal more widely read. The need for a more general publication was recognised in 1989 which gave birth to the Newsletter which Jean Taylor (then immediate Past President) launched in March of that year.

The first IWSc Conference, on 'Hardwoods today', was held at Attingham Park, near Shrewsbury, on November 11-13 1966, and was organised by the Midlands Branch. The first National Conference was held in Brighton on April 5-7, 1968. Some 180 members of the IWSc and the trade attended making today's conference attendances look small in numbers (although Bristol '95 might match those figures.) Since then conferences have been held in Brighton, Banbury, Harrogate, London, Lytham St. Anne's, Southport, Stratford-upon-Avon, Cheltenham, Bath, York and Chester. All in their way have been successful despite trade recessions.

Local Branches of the Institute were formed in Birmingham, East Midlands, Edinburgh, Glasgow, High Wycombe, Hull, Leeds, Liverpool, Manchester, Tyne-Tees, Western Counties plus overseas Branches in Australia and Ireland, and in March this year an East Anglian Branch will be launched. Unfortunately, not all have been successful for various reasons, in many cases travelling distance being the problem.

The examination syllabus has been reviewed from time to time. Originally the Certificate Examination in technology was a two-year course, followed by a further two years for the Final Associateship Examination. Later a working party, mainly of trade members but with some academics, changed the emphasis by including 50% trade practice and administration, whilst the Final Examination course was reduced to one year. This virtually halved the time allowed for the study of wood as a material. Since then in 1993 the course has again been updated under the direction of the Chairman of the Education Committee, Dr. John Brazier, embracing a work book concept. The Certificate Course which is in modular form has five compulsory workbooks which can be completed in one year, although there is no time constraint, and the Associate Course has two compulsory modules and a number of optional modules with a similar study time. This new course structure has been widely acclaimed, giving the students flexibility in their study. Both courses over the years have slowly moved away from the laboratory in answer to the present needs of the trade.

In 1988, after certain amendments were made to our Articles of Association, the IWSc was accepted and became registered as a Charity with its ensuing benefits, and a year later the introduction of Corporate Membership was approved. We now have some 35 Corporate Members who contribute almost 25% to our total income and without them one shudders to think of the consequences. But despite this financial support from the trade and the intake of trainee managers to our courses, one still senses that there is no real recognition by the trade of the benefits that a recognised professional body such as ours has to offer them. Only once in the past many years has the writer seen a vacancy advert in the TTJ for a sales person suggesting that the successful applicant should have an IWSc qualification.

Dr. John Brazier, in the September 1989 issue of this Newsletter wrote "The IWSc has 1026 members in the United Kingdom and yet there are probably some 50,000 people whose livelihood involved the handling or use of wood. Where are they and why aren't they members of the IWSc?" Our aim now must be to answer that question to get the trade as a whole to recognise the importance of education and the benefits to them, and we in turn, must make sure that education in the form of our courses is easily and readily available.

We now have a new logo and our marketing friends tell us this will give us the right image to carry us into the future. We have forty years of sound, solid progress, on that we must continue to build.

M.W. Holloway AIWSc.



# THE 40TH ANNIVERSARY CONFERENCE

## THE CHANGING FACE OF THE INSTITUTE OF WOOD SCIENCE

Many of you will now have received your conference brochure and booking form for what promises to be the best National Institute conference to date. You will have noticed a rather different IWSc logo, and hopefully some of you at least will be asking the question why? what for? or possibly ... what is going on??

In answer to the last question, actually quite a lot is going on !! As the conference brochure pointed out, this year is our 40th anniversary year! and the Institute has come a long way in that time to become the premier professional body for the timber industries.

The last two years or so in particular have seen some major strides forward with a whole new redevelopment and re-vitalisation of the education programme tailored to meet the needs of our ever faster changing timber industry, two very successful National conferences at York and Chester and a re-vitalisation of the branch network (with some branches recording attendances of 50 !).

Over the last two years this atmosphere of action, change and development led to realisation that we should address in a serious way, our image and whether it accurately portrayed the dynamic developments and improvements within the Institute. This was part of a wider move to improve the way we related to, communicated with and presented ourselves to not only our existing membership, but perhaps more importantly, to potential new members, students and corporate members.

Mike Cooper and Andrew Williams of the Cooper Design Group, a leading design group based in Penrith, were contacted in order to give us high quality, independent, professional advice on the way forward. Cooper Design Group have wide experience at a high level, of a variety of industries including previous work for such well known timber industry companies as Iggesund of Sweden (now part of the MODO group).

The first step was to redesign the logo and then incorporate this into a new stationery design for the Institute. This initial stage in the process was completed after a long consultative process at the end of 1994, and the next step in the programme of improving our presentation and communication.

As someone heavily involved with the process from the very beginning, I can safely say that it has been both a demanding and enjoyable process for all those involved ... we hope you like the results and will support us in our on-going campaign.

Obviously, there is tremendous loyalty and affection with the old IWSc logo. Personal opinions on design matters can be intense and very individual, with a variety of arguments for and against change, or the choice of one design over another. After all, we are a very broad church spanning a wide range of backgrounds, professional disciplines, ages, and industry types.

The most important point to come out of this debate is that we have to appeal to a wider and new audience. As a result of this, many of the people involved in the decision to develop a new image had to put aside personal preferences in order to take on board objective advice from a leading professional design company.

So, the new image of the Institute has been launched, there is still a long way to go, but the initial reaction has so far proved that we have made the right decision - a step in the right direction!

Here's to the next forty years and a period of growth, increased membership and prosperity which will take us into the 21st Century!

Dave Carney AIWSC

## TTJ INVITES YOU TO CONTRIBUTE

The TTJ has a monthly column devoted to environmental issues for which the World Wide Fund for Nature is the contributor and which I am sure readers have found most interesting. TTJ intend now to widen that platform and are inviting contributions from IWSc members, along with those from industry and environmental groups.

Topics can be anything from specific issues, such as CITES, Brazilian mahogany or spotted owls and more efficient use of timber through value-adding, to more general opinions on a way forward for the timber industry in dealing with its environmental image. All they ask is that contributors are named, preferably submitting a head and shoulders photograph and signature with their copy.

If you wish to air an issue which might be a suitable subject for one of these monthly columns, please contact TTJ's editor, Audrey Dixon, on 01732 377530, or fax 01732 361534 with your ideas, with copy please to the office at Hughtenden Valley.

## CPD OFFICER APPOINTED

At the Council Meeting held on 3 December it was agreed that to further the drive towards Continuing Professional Development (CPD) within the IWSc it was necessary to appoint a CPD Officer to co-ordinate and promote this initiative. To that end, David Woodbridge, FIWSC, has been appointed our first CPD Officer.

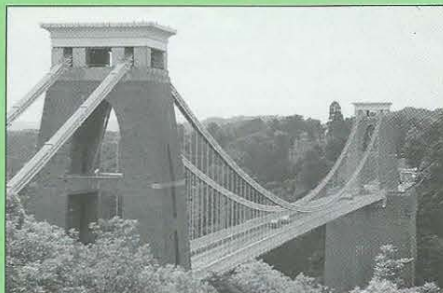
This appointment will share common ground with David's existing role of Editor of the Journal.

## THE INSTITUTE OF WOOD SCIENCE 40TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE.

The Western Counties branch of the Institute of Wood Science is proud to host the 40th Anniversary Conference at the Swallow Hotel in Bristol from 28th-30th April 1995.

The IWSc National Conference is a prestigious event which attracts professionals from all avenues of the industry to listen to the world's leading experts in various sectors of the timber industry. This often leads to a lively exchange of ideas.

This year's Conference has seven speakers who will be presenting papers on Forestry (Dr. Hamish Kimmins - University of British Columbia), European Standards (John Park - COFI), Timber Frame Buildings (Geoff Pitts - TRADA), OSB (John Anderson - Norbord Industries (UK)), Dry Graded Structural Timber (John Haynes - NHBC), Environmentally Friendly Timber Finishes (Peter Coventry - Granite Woodfinishes (which will be the Leslie Boustead Memorial Lecture) and the Structural Timber Engineering Programme (Dr. Luke Whale - Gang Nail Systems, and Andrew Abbot - TRADA). In addition to this there will be about a dozen exhibits from various timber and timber associated companies.



*Clifton Suspension Bridge*

*The scene of many suicides without your support Steve Orley could be next!! Ed.*

In the last few years the Conference has not only been educational, but socially enjoyable for the delegates and their partners. This year's Conference is in an excellent four star hotel (The Swallow Royal Hotel) in the centre of Bristol, near the waterfront. The social programme includes a tour of Harvey's Wine Museum, a visit to the SS Great Britain, and a visit to Stourhead Gardens in the Wiltshire countryside. There will also be opportunity to take advantage of the hotel's heated swimming pool, sauna, steam room and for those who would like to keep fit, there is a fitness room.

My sincere thanks go to our main sponsors the Bureau de Promotion des Industries du Bois, Canadian High Commission and Council of Forest Industries. Their sponsorship has made it possible to have two overseas speakers and offer a weekend which will be excellent value for money. I would also like to thank the Timber Trades Journal, The American Hardwood Export Council, The Bristol Port Company, Norbord Industries (UK), Taylor Maxwell Timber Ltd and Harveys of Bristol for their kind contributions.

For more information, please contact Maurice Holloway or Freda Robinson at the Institute of Wood Science.

Steve Orley AIWSC  
Conference Chairman



# SIDE LINES

## A MEETING WITH THE PRIME MINISTER, THE RT. HON. JOHN MAJOR.

Charles Jones a member of our Education Committee, attended the 50th anniversary commemoration parade held on Southsea Common on the 5th June last year to mark the achievement of invading France on the 6th June 1944 successfully against the forces of Nazi Germany.

On that day, as a young Sub Lieutenant in the Royal Navy, he celebrated his birthday, landing units of the 3rd British Infantry Division on Queen Red Beach in the extreme easterly sector of the Sword Area, from his Tank Landing Craft (LCT 649). Very few returned to UK completely unscathed to reload and return to the beaches on the evening of D-Day +1. However, LCT 649 Jones did and was thereafter commandeered to remain off the beaches for the next 10 weeks to unload vehicles and supplies from Merchant Ships anchored off the beachhead. Within the next few weeks, the beachheads experienced most violent storms and general weather conditions, requiring constant steaming and anchor watches during the dark hours. At the same time, everybody had to be alert to attack by sea and air forces in lightning strikes.

LCT 649 Jones was ordered back to the UK only when the breakout from Normandy was accomplished. The craft was by then in need of considerable and urgent repair in the London Docks which were under constant bombardment by doodlebugs.

When Charles Jones related some of his experiences to John Major and his wife in front of the television cameras, he was viewed receiving a very sympathetic, kind hand as the occasion had invoked considerable emotion.

A memorable occasion, crowned with a marvellous spectacle and an unexpected reward.

C. Jones AIWSc

## JOINT MEETING WITH RIBA

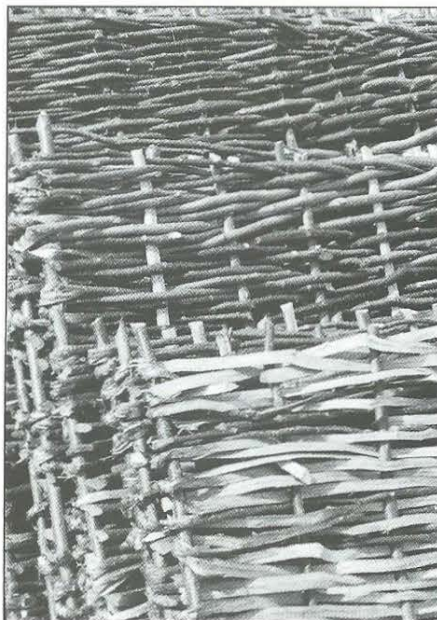
Discussions have been taking place with the Royal Institute of British Architects to introduce joint meetings during 1995/96. The aim is to support their need to undertake CPD and for us to encourage architects to a better understanding of timber and wood based materials and their uses, and perhaps to anticipate our own CPD requirement. To date, five venues have been selected: Knutsford, Birmingham, London, Bath and Sheffield, which are suited to RIBA's regional centres. IWSc Branches covering these venues will be kept informed of the progress being made as it will be important for the dates of the meetings to be agreed by them and to marry in with Branch Diaries.

It is envisaged that these evening meetings will be of a two hour duration with no branch matters discussed, either by RIBA or ourselves, and that there will be two speakers, each giving a forty minute paper and allowing plenty of time for questions. Speakers will be arranged by H.O. and it is hoped that they will be the same for each venue with a topic of factual and practical interest to architects and, of course, to our members.

Further details can be obtained from David Woodbridge (CPD Officer) or the Director.

## WATTLE FENCING

One of the selling points often quoted for timber is that it has stood the test of time and experience of use. I came across an example of this recently that clearly demonstrates an application that remains unchanged for at least six hundred years and in all probability a lot longer.



(i) Wattle panels at a homegrown Oxfordshire timber merchant in the late 20th century.



(ii) Wattle panels as painted in a late 14th century Italian illuminated manuscript

Although wattle fencing may not be one of the more sophisticated uses for timber it is one that requires a low effort in terms of manufacture and is produced in such a way that the root stock is maintained as a continuing source of growth. Despite the advances in technology and, for example, the fast moving developments in the production of wood based sheet materials, there must be a message lurking here that has to do with not losing sight of the traditional and often very simple applications for wood.

David Woodbridge FIWSc

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

March 1 T.T.F. Dinner, London  
13 BWPDA/BRE Seminar, Garston  
15 East Anglia Branch Inaugural Meeting, Cambridge  
16 Daily Mail Ideal Home Exhibition, Earls Court  
20-21 C.S.R.T. Examination, Oldham  
28 Council Meeting, London  
28 IRTS National Conference, Liverpool

April 28-30 National Conference Bristol

May 9-10 C.S.R.T. Examination, Stirling  
23-24 Building Maintenance & Construction Exhibition, London  
23-25 Building Restoration & Refurbishment Exhibition, London  
24-30 Ligna - Hanover, Germany

June 16-17 I.R.G. - 26, Denmark

July 6 Council meeting, London.  
6-7 BWPDA Convention, Cambridge  
17-18 C.S.R.T. Examination Garston, Watford

Sept 26 IWSc AGM London

## CORPORATE MEMBERS

The Council of Management wish to record its thanks to those listed below for their support as Corporate Members.

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# MORE SIDE LINES

## ELIZABETH GILES OF HARCROS WINS USM BURSARY.

As one of the top four candidates in the Institute's Associateship examination, Elizabeth was selected to compete for the United Sawmills U.K. Ltd. Bursary. To do this, she had to submit a paper on one of two subjects offered and to be judged by USM.

Elizabeth chose 'The Changing Market for Finnish and Scandinavian Timber in the UK: The Next Ten Years' and her paper was selected as the winning entry.

The prize for the USM (UK) Ltd. Bursary is a one-week study tour of the sawmilling process in Finland and at this time Elizabeth is awaiting an indication of the dates when she will undertake the tour.

During her training period within Harcros, she studied for the Institute of Wood Science qualifications at the Mid-Warwickshire College of Further Education and obtained Certificate level in 1993 and Associateship level in 1994. During this period, she trained in various positions in the Western Region of Harcros, including an eight-

month attachment to the Regional Head Office. She is currently employed in the Marketing Department at the National Head Office in London and in December Elizabeth submitted her Associateship project paper 'Is Stock a Necessary Cost? - An Investigation of Stock Control Methods in Harcros'. As a result, Elizabeth has been successful in receiving the award of the Associateship of the Institute.

R. Carfile FIWSc.



Elizabeth Giles

## TRADA AND TTL CHILTERN:- THE PLAIN WOOD SCIENTIST'S GUIDE TO WHO OWNS WHO AND WHICH DOES WHAT.

It is now ten months since TRADA's operational companies were bought by TTL Chiltern, a holding company formed by TRADA's executive management. In spite of considerable communications' effort directed at TRADA Members and the timber industry in general, some confusion still exists regarding the prevailing arrangements. Institute members may find the summary below useful.

TRADA the Research Association most certainly continues to exist. It has a non-Executive Board and two Advisory Committees, one dealing with research and the other with information. The function of TRADA is

- to attract membership subscription
- to identify and agree programmes of research and information in the common interest of Members
- to fund those programmes.

TRADA does not employ any staff but retains ownership of the Hughenden Valley site, investments and cash reserves.

TRADA still maintains its Area Committees and these Committees continue to be a crucial point of contact with, and feedback from, TRADA's membership. A significant number of Institute members participate in these and some joint meetings are planned for 1995/96.

TTL Chiltern Limited is the holding company formed by TRADA's executive management for the purpose of buying the two subsidiaries (TRADA Technology Limited and TRADA Certification Limited) from TRADA. TRADA has a redeemable preference share in Chiltern. Other shareholders are the management and staff.

There is a five year contract between TRADA and Chiltern, under which all TRADA programmes are executed by TRADA Technology. Chiltern guarantees to occupy 40% of the TRADA site at a commercial rental for the five year period and offers TRADA Members discounts off commercial services. Under the same contract, Chiltern supplies management and administrative services to the Association - Chris Gill is the contract Chief Executive, Ray Hobbs the contract Company Secretary and Pauline Gerrard the Membership Secretary. Chiltern undertakes promotion of TRADA membership and TRADA-funded activities.

TRADA Technology and TRADA Certification are both wholly owned by Chiltern but have the right to use TRADA name for the duration of the contract. TRADA Certification is not (under NACCB rules) allowed to offer discounts to anyone but is of course the Certification Body best able to respond to the timber industry's particular needs.

The efficacy and value-for-money of these arrangements are carefully monitored by the Board through its two Advisory Committees. These revised arrangements are already proving successful in allowing all concerned to focus more clearly on membership services on the one hand and commercial services on the other.

It is crucial that TRADA Members, many of whom are also Institute members, understand these arrangements and continue to support TRADA membership programmes through their subscription.

C.J. Gill FIWSc

## GEORGE WHITE WRITES:

Dear Mr. Holloway,

I am writing to express my thanks to yourself and the Institute of Wood Science for your interest and financial support of the BSc Forest Products Technology course at the Buckinghamshire College.

I found it very poignant, or perhaps ironic, that I should be lucky enough to receive the Institute Prize because it was Associate membership of the Institute that initially allowed me to enter the course. Five years ago I completed three years of part time study at the Mid-Warwickshire College whilst an employee of the Charles Manson Group of timber merchants. This period of college whetted my appetite for further study and my Associate membership of the Institute allowed someone with very poor A-level results to be accepted on to an Honours Degree.

Now three years later, suitably armed with first class honours degree, and the Institutes prize (not to mention the Norbord prize), thermal underwear and compass, I am heading north to Dundee and the University of Abertay. I have been fortunate enough to be accepted (and financed) to study for a PhD in the Department of Molecular and Life Sciences. Over the next three years I will be investigating the possibilities of controlling several of the more common species of wood decaying fungi by utilising *Penicillium* type surface moulds.

I hope this news of my success will provide something of interest to your readers and look forward to continuing to benefit from Associateship of the Institute.

Your sincerely

George White



The Director congratulates George White, winner of the IWSc prize for his third year dissertation

## "TOUCH YOUR FORESTS" WILL BE AT THE BRISTOL '95 CONFERENCE.

This multimedia forestry information system was developed by the British Columbia Ministry of Forests to meet a need for credible, interactive and comprehensive forestry information. By using the touchscreen computer in the "Touch Your Forests" Kiosk, a user can spend anything up to two hours becoming more aware of B.C. Forestry, General Forest Issues, Reforestation and Voices of the Clearcut.

Delegates at the Conference will find it immensely interesting and informative and our sincere thanks to British Columbia Ministry of Forests for making this valuable advanced technology available to us.

Editor



# THE FOREST EDUCATION INITIATIVE

The Forest Education Initiative brings together the Forestry Authority, Timber Trade Federation, Forest Industry Committee of Great Britain and the Forest Trust for Conservation and Education. It aims to:

- involve schools and young people in forest education activities,
- present balanced information on trees, timber and forest matters,
- demonstrate sustainable management of woodlands, forests and timber as natural resource.

In October ecologist and broadcaster Prof. David Bellamy joined school children in Epping Forest to try woodland activities from two new environmental education books, one for primary and the other for secondary schools, as part of the Forest Education Initiative which aims to increase young people's understanding of forestry, the forest industry and the timber trade and their national and global importance. These two books, *The Wonder of Wood* and *Investigating Trees and Timber*, are available from Sue Gamsby, Forest Education Initiative, c/o Forest Authority, Great Eastern House, Tenison Road, Cambridge, CB1 2DU (01223) 314546.

## TWO TALES OF THE FOREST AND THE FOREST EDUCATION INITIATIVE

A "Supply Teacher" in a primary school in the East End of London, has been desperately and unsuccessfully searching for those dull but compulsory primary school books on Natural History, which he has been told are in short supply in that school. He now sits on top of a mildly warm radiator and studies the cover of a book about trees and things, which he was given by a friend, who makes furniture and is a member of the Institute of Wood Science.

"Silva", an owl, he reads, will tell children about trees and woodlands, forests and forest products. Do they really want to know? With the book, there is an invitation to contact several people, who live locally, who will come sometime and take children with him to Epping Forest, or to a furniture factory or a timber yard. He has only to ring them up.

He reads on. "The Wonder of Wood" suggests how he might go about interesting children in a subject which is so close to them they can't miss it. It is also about birds and animals and measuring things and finding out about nature. Why not ask the children to look around them and find all the things in the classroom made of wood? The teacher notes that he is actually sitting on a widowboard, with his feet on a wooden floor. The doors, the desks, the chairs, so much around is wood.

He sees the next "activity" is to find out the difference between hardwood and softwood, chipboard and plywood, and then to think where they all came from. What on earth does the owl have to do with that? The answer is on later pages, when the children will go out, encouraged by "Silva", to look at trees, and then to think about how they grew to be so fine and so completely beautiful.

In a glance, he realizes that the whole world of nature, and its meaning as a source of wonder, adventure, activity out of doors and eventually its resources to make things, lies in the forest, and there are people waiting to invite him to bring his children out there.

Before the doors burst open and his new charges come thundering in, he spots the vital cue, the programme is designed to meet the Key Stage 2, National Curriculum Syllabus, and has the blessing of The Forestry Commission, the Department for Education, and his local Authority Education Department.

Thank God for that, and for the trees and woodlands, and skills of man to work in the forest and with wood, which has given him such a subject, with which to stop the brats from forcing him to make a fool of himself. Welcome, "Silva"!



Silva, the friendly owl, introduces primary school children to *The Wonder of Wood*.

It's a funny thing, but one month later, the same teacher is in a school in a village in Essex, where parents drop off their children from the back of tractors, or land rovers. He has to teach them about the wide world, -- Geography, according to Key Stage 4 of the National Curriculum. Damn it, why do they ask a mathematician to teach these general subjects! He wishes he was back in his former Technical College, which now calls itself a University.

He looks up his subject areas, set out in notes from the School Inspector who last visited this remote Secondary School. Africa, France, and the way the lives of people in Country districts like, outer Essex can be compared. How on earth can he put anything together on that?

Wait a minute, he remembers that his friend in the Institute of Wood Science, the one who makes furniture, gave him another book, paid for by the Timber Trade fellow, which had a wonderful wall chart on France. Didn't it also have pictures and activities to do with Ghana as well? He digs in his satchel, and lo and behold there it is, with its pretty cover and determined title: "Investigating Trees and Timber." If it's as good as "The Wonder of Wood", which turned him into a star at the primary school in London, this might be worth trying out.

In next to no time, the ideas and activity sheets in "Investigating Trees and Timber" were being photocopied in preparation for the invasion of youngsters who would soon be clammering for knowledge. Once again there was a list of people who worked in tree nurseries, or in forestry, a sawmill, and wood turnery who invited him to give them a ring and bring the children round. All this well within distance of his current school.

What a find! The book was full of exercises, mathematical, practical, about nature and economics, and right down the prescribed path of Geography for the National Curriculum.

He sighs with relief, and brings to relish his new teaching task in this rural setting. He would soon have them thinking about Community Forests in France and the essential value of timber to the people in Ghana, let alone about the Forests of the Forest Enterprise nearby and the making of timber frame houses by one of the Companies which invited a school visit.

When he had really tried out the Forest Education Initiative programmes a little further, he was determined to come and talk to the Institute of Wood Science, as his friend had asked him to do, and he might even join this clearly excellent Institution.

Terence Mallinson FIWSc.