

# THE Irish Forester

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SOCIETY OF IRISH FORESTERS

WINTER 2012

## ASH DIEBACK A MAJOR CONCERN

Ash dieback has now been discovered in young ash plantations in counties Antrim, Down, Galway, Leitrim, Meath and Monaghan. This disease, which is caused by the fungus *Chalara fraxinea*, is a serious threat to ash.

Ash dieback has the potential to wipe out our ash trees in hedgerows, forests and parklands. Given the enormity of the threat, Ireland needs a national campaign to minimise the risk of this deadly disease. The Forest Service has destroyed all infected plants and imported stock that were part of the infected batch.

The Forest Service has also put legislation in place to ensure that ash plants are now imported only from areas, which are known to be free of the disease. Similar legislation is in place for the importation of ash timber,

which can be imported only in plank form without bark and with a moisture content below 20%. In addition, there continues to be excellent co-operation between the Departments of Agriculture, north and south.

Combating the threat posed by ash dieback will require a major campaign by the Forest Service in partnership with the public but especially key stakeholders including nurseries, woodland owners, farmers with plantations and ash in hedgerows, and parkland managers with specimen ash trees. The rapid spread of the disease in Britain suggests that the British Government and the various State agencies have not been able to contain the disease. To avoid dieback spread in Ireland, an aggressive approach at government level is required if we are to have any chance of controlling this disease.

## Michael McNamara celebrates his 100th birthday



Michael McNamara, honorary member and twice President of the Society, celebrated his 100th birthday with his wife Marie and friends in Little Island Golf Club last July. Birthday wishes for Michael were broadcast around the world on the weekend of his birthday. He received birthday wishes from Peter Alliss during the British Open on BBC 2 and Donal Magner broadcast a piece on his life on the RTE Radio 1 programme Sunday Miscellany. Pictured with Michael and Marie are foresters Pat Lebane, Michael Doyle who presented Michael with the IMPACT Distinguished Service Award, Sean McNamara (nephew of Michael), Tim Crowley, Michael O'Donovan, Donal Magner and Kevin Hutchinson.



Society President John Mc Loughlin presents the 2012 Augustine Henry medal to Brian Shaw, the UCD winner.

## Message from the President

The Society enjoyed a successful year during 2012, with four well-attended field days and two indoor lectures. The annual study tour to Estonia was a great success. Members learned how the Estonians have managed and maintained their native forests over the centuries despite their turbulent history. We will round off the year with the publication before Christmas of Irish Forestry, Volume 69 and the Winter 2012 edition of our newsletter The Irish Forester.

This year the Society celebrated its 70th anniversary and we marked the occasion appropriately with the publication of a facsimile edition of *The Trees of Great Britain and Ireland* by Henry John Elwes and Augustine Henry. This magnificent work was originally published in eight volumes between 1906 and 1913. Many foresters are familiar with the title of these books but very few have seen a set as only 300 were published. Sets of *The Trees of Great Britain and Ireland* are currently available from the Society (email: [sif@eircom.net](mailto:sif@eircom.net)).

We have prepared a very wide ranging and exciting programme for 2013 and we hope to see as many members as possible attending our various events. The annual study tour will visit Sweden in June and will include a visit to the Elmia Wood Show, the world's largest forestry show which is held every fourth year near the city of Jönköping in southern Sweden.

I wish all members and their families a very Happy Christmas and every best wish for 2013.

JOHN Mc LOUGHLIN

## Honorary membership awarded to Dr. Jack Durand



Honorary membership was recently awarded to Dr. Jack Durand for his services to Irish forestry and the Society of Irish Foresters during the course of a distinguished career, which has continued long after he officially retired from the Forest Service. Not many know that Jack began his career as an engineer but transferred to forestry to play a major role in developing Ireland's open forest policy. His groundbreaking PhD thesis *The Evolution of State Forestry in Ireland* influenced forest policy in Ireland. His visionary work was recalled by John Mc Loughlin, President of the Society, when he proposed the motion to award honorary membership to Jack and Donal Magner who seconded the motion. Jack recently presented all his copies of *Irish Forestry*, the Society's journal to the University of Limerick. While the journal is now available in digitised format, third level colleges and other institutes always welcome the opportunity to have the original hard copies in their collections. Gonnait O'Riordan, Director of Library and Information Services at the University of Limerick was delighted to receive all copies of the journal dating back to the first edition published in 1943, from Jack. Also in attendance were: Pat O'Sullivan, John Mc Loughlin and George Cunningham, University of Limerick.

# Historic forestry journals preserved



*Minister of State Shane McEntee who launched the Society of Irish Foresters' digitised archive of journals receives a first edition of Irish Forestry from John Mc Loughlin, President of the Society with Liz Breen, Miriam Breen, Datagroup and Brendan Ennis, Innovation Wexford.*

Shane McEntee, Minister of State with responsibility for forestry launched the newly preserved and digitised Irish Forestry journals on June 25. He commended the Society of Irish Foresters for this initiative, which marks its 70th anniversary. "The Society is committed to making this important store of forestry knowledge more accessible to a wider audience of students, researchers and the general public," said John Mc Loughlin, President of the Society.

Minister McEntee congratulated the Society "on its proactive approach and foresight by

utilising technology to secure and ensure online access to these national forestry archives".

Over one hundred newly scanned and digitised journals are posted on the Society's website: [www.societyofirishforesters.ie](http://www.societyofirishforesters.ie). These journals are now available to download free of charge and can be searched under date, topic or author. The scanning project, part funded by the Forest Service, was carried out by Datagroup, a social enterprise division of Innovation Wexford.



*Gonnait O'Riordan, Director of Library and Information Services at the University of Limerick receives copies of Irish Forestry, dating to the first edition published in 1943, from Dr. Jack Durand. Also in attendance: Pat O'Sullivan, John Mc Loughlin and George Cunningham, University of Limerick*

# 2012 Study Tour to Estonia

This year's tour visited Estonia – a small, sparsely populated country which has a forested area of 2.24 million ha (51% of the land area) and an annual harvest of almost 8 million m<sup>3</sup>. Beginning in Tallinn, with an introductory lecture on Estonian forestry, the tour headed south to the university city of Tartu, stopping at several well managed forests en route. The tour also visited a variety of wood using industries, from the giant UPM-Kymmene owned plywood mill near Otepää to the Strauss family's small, wood-craft "factory" at Avinurme which relies on traditional wood working skills to produce an astonishing range of wooden toys, kitchen utensils and small furniture for export. In summary, it was a memorable tour. We are deeply indebted to the hard working staff at Fest-Forest who organised, guided and educated us during our short visit to their beautiful country.



*Marcus Hanbidge, WIT winner of the Society's inaugural study tour bursary, with Izabela Witkowska, one of the Coillte bursary winners. The other winners of Coillte's 2012 bursaries were Benny O'Brien, and Richard Whelan.*

## The Society on tour

The Society's study tour has been an annual event since 1943, the year after the Society was founded. With the exception of 1944, when fuel rationing during the WW II caused it to be cancelled, the Society has diligently fulfilled this important function every year.

For many years, the late Dermot Mangan held the record for the best attendance at study tours, but in recent years that mantle has passed to Michael O'Brien who can boast a virtually unbroken attendance sheet since 1973 when the tour visited Belgium.



*Michael O'Brien, proud holder of the "best attendance record" at Society study tours.*

## Sean Mac Bride lecture: private forestry in Ontario



Dr. Peter Schleifenbaum, owner of Haliburton Forest and Wildlife Reserve, a 40,000ha commercial forest and recreation centre in central Ontario, outlined his unique forest management practices, which are rooted in the philosophy that well-managed forests can satisfy the needs of commercial forestry and conservation. John Mc Loughlin made a presentation to Peter after his Sean Mac Bride lecture in November.

### Society of Irish Foresters - annual study tours 1943-2013

1943	Clonmel
1945	Aughrim
1946	Killarney
1947	Portlaoise
1948	Sligo
1949	Wales
1950	Wicklow
1951	Scotland
1952	Northern Ireland
1953	Suir Valley
1954	England – Lake District
1955	Galway
1956	Germany – Black Forest
1957	Clare & Galway
1958	Wexford
1959	Denmark
1960	West of Ireland
1961	Cork & Kerry
1962	Roscommon
1963	Midlands
1964	Brittany
1965	Cavan
1966	Derry & Antrim
1967	Tipperary
1968	Donegal
1969	North Wales
1970	Wexford
1971	Fermanagh & Tyrone
1972	West Cork
1973	Belgium
1974	Mayo
1975	Ennis
1976	Waterford & Kilkenny
1977	Killarney
1978	Donegal & Tyrone
1979	Scotland
1980	Westmeath, Laois & Offaly
1981	Sligo, Fermanagh & Leitrim
1982	Kilkenny
1983	Arklow
1984	Wales
1985	North Cork
1986	Galway
1987	Southern England
1988	North Tipperary
1989	Belgium
1990	Southern Scotland
1991	France
1992	USA – Oregon & Washington
1993	Germany – Black Forest
1994	England – Lake District & Yorkshire
1995	Poland
1996	Northern Ireland
1997	Czech Republic
1998	Finland
1999	Northern Scotland
2000	Canada – Alberta & Br. Columbia
2001	Hungary
2002	South Africa
2003	Romania
2004	New England
2005	Scotland
2006	Spain – Galicia
2007	Norway
2008	USA – California
2009	Croatia
2010	Germany – Bavaria
2011	Canada – Ontario
2012	Estonia
2013	Sweden

# Society 2012 summer and autumn field days

The Society held two field days during the summer and autumn period - one in the unique beech forest of Mullaghmeen, Co. Westmeath and the other in Killarney National Park, Co. Kerry.

The Mullaghmeen field day also included a guided tour of the nearby Tullynally Estate which was led by Thomas Pakenham, the estate owner and the author of several books on history and on trees.

*Discussing deer management at the Killarney field day: Steve Eubanks, US Forest Service (retired); Declan Little, Woodlands of Ireland; and Tim Burkett, National Parks and Wildlife Service, Killarney*



*Ciarán Nugent, who organised the Killarney field day, discussing the effectiveness of various types of deer fencing.*



*PJ Fitzpatrick, Pat Brady and Padraig O'Tuama of Coillte who organised the Mullaghmeen field day*

The Killarney field day, led by Ciarán Nugent (Forest Service) and Frank McMahon (National Parks and Wildlife Service), show-cased the ongoing deer management programme on Muckcross peninsula.

This is an area of particular interest due to the wide range of habitat types on the peninsula (including the unique Reenadonna Yew Woodland) which are affected by the large population of Sika deer. The numerous stops and demonstrations on this field day were designed to highlight the main elements of successful deer management in modern Irish forestry and agriculture.



*Thomas Pakenham lectures on the benefits of beech conservation from the shelter of his lofty bower in Tullynally Estate.*

# Launch of Forestry Services Ltd



Shane McEntee, Minister of State with responsibility for forestry, opened the new headquarters of Forestry Services Ltd in Kilkenny recently with John Bryan, President IFA and Paddy Bruton, MD, Forestry Services Ltd.

# Forest Enterprises Ltd. wins National Business Award



Congratulations to Daragh Little, Forest Enterprises Ltd (FEL) on winning the Leadership Award at the Action COACH Business Excellence Awards 2012, together with a merit in the Best Team category. With Daragh are Marina Bleahen – Managing Director of ActionCOACH Ireland, Richard Cullen, Business Coach, ActionCOACH Ireland and Vivian Peelo, Business Banking AIB and member of ActionCOACH's independent panel of judges.



## Augustine Henry Memorial

The stone at the Augustine Henry Memorial Grove, Avondale following cleaning and remedial work by the Society this summer. This grove was established by the Society in 1951 using species which had an association with Henry. A full report is available in Irish Forestry, (Volume 27, No. 2). In addition, Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council carried out substantial refurbishment work on the headstone and grave in Deansgrange cemetery where Augustine Henry and his wife Elsie (who was an Honorary member of the Society) are buried.

## Budget proposal from IFFPA to Minister McEntee

AIFC – the forestry consultants' arm of the Society – has been at the core of developing forestry policy in Ireland through its work with the Irish Forestry and Forest Product Association (IFFPA). Sean Lenihan and Daragh Little of AIFC along with Trevor McHugh recently made a budget submission to Shane McEntee, Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine, which covers a number of key proposals including afforestation, premium payments, investment in infrastructure (especially in roads), broadleaf thinning and woodland improvement.

"As a nation we are in the process of creating a world class forestry and timber sector populated by highly motivated entrepreneurs, working in sectors ranging from technology to timber processing, who see the true potential of Irish forestry," said Sean. "It is imperative at this time that the government continues to support this sector allowing it to fulfil its potential and promise for the Irish economy."

# Northern Ireland students dominate wood awards

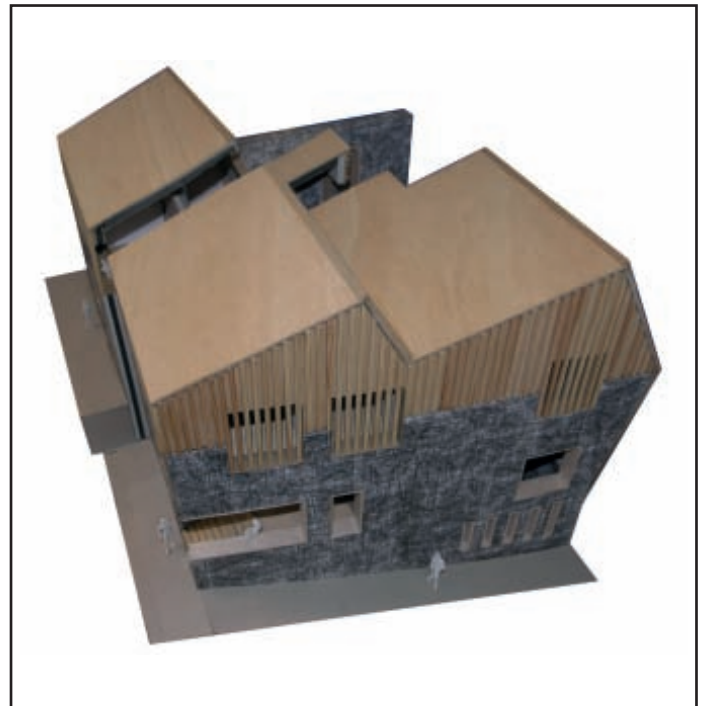


*At the Third Level Student Wood Awards in Farmleigh House, presented by Shane McEntee Minister of State with responsibility for forestry: Duncan Stewart, architect and chairman of judging panel; Paul Harvey, chairman, Wood Marketing Federation (WMF); Donal Magner, WMF; Richard Lowe, Coillte; Simon O'Driscoll, O'Driscoll Furniture; Craig Cox, Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology, winner of the Design Award; Fergal Rainey, University of Ulster, Architecture Award winner; Connor O'Higgins, represented the Queen's University team which won the Engineering Award; Maurice Brooks, Director Wood-ni; Minister McEntee; and Tara Ryan, Coillte and awards co-ordinator.*

For several years now the Wood Marketing Federation (WMF) has been promoting greater use and awareness of wood, especially in third level colleges, with its annual Third Level Student Wood Awards. As a result, there has been a significant increase in the curriculum content and time devoted to the study of timber in our universities and institutes of technology. In recent years the Society has supported this initiative that encourages students of architecture, engineering and design to use home-grown timber.

The 2012 awards were presented by Shane McEntee, Minister of State at the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine. Once again, Northern Ireland colleges dominated the awards. University of Ulster and Queen's University Belfast won the top architecture and engineering prizes while the award for best design project went west, to Letterfrack College in Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology.

Fergal Rainey, University of Ulster (UU) won the Architecture Award for his project entitled 'Making Space, Werburgh Street'. He designed a house and workshop for a guitar maker and his family in Werburgh Street, Dublin. The key to the project was the student's response to the existing buildings and his sensitive selection of building materials. He chose Dublin calp limestone and Irish grown spruce to ensure that the building is compatible with the existing streetscape. The Queen's University project presented by Connor O'Higgins involved the construction of a flexible dome, which has commercial potential. The winning design student, Craig Cox of Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology produced a video booth, incorporating reconstituted wood such as MDF, for recording "special moments at weddings and parties".



*A model of the winning project at the Third Level Student Wood Awards by Fergal Rainey, University of Ulster. The structure plans to use home-grown spruce combined with Dublin calp limestone.*

## In the Service of the State by Tom Briody



At the launch of *In the Service of the State* by Tom Briody. Back row: Pat O'Sullivan, Dan Dineen, Con Doyle, Sean Galvin, Donal Magner, John Howell, Mícheál Briody, Pacelli Breathnach, John Mc Loughlin and Michael O'Sullivan. Front row: Michael O'Donovan, John Healy, Richard Delahunty and Kevin Hutchinson.

Tom Briody sadly passed away on November 24 in his 100th year, a few weeks after his second volume of memoirs was published. *In the Service of the State* is the follow up to *The Road to Avondale* which was an account of his early life. True to his promise at the end of the first volume he has delivered "an account of my life with Nora and my years as a forester in the service of the State and our struggle together to cope against the odds and to win through".

This volume begins 70 years ago in the early 1940s. By then Tom was an experienced and highly regarded forester. He was a founder member of the Society of Irish Foresters in 1942. His role in this key event was acknowledged when the President of the Society presented him with a specially minted medal at the book launch. Tom was also an Honorary Member of the Society.

Tom has managed to interweave the various strands of his

life – family, the role of the forester along with social and political aspects – that provide a fascinating glimpse of a time now almost unrecognisable. While his life as a forester dominates much of the book, it is all the better for his generous account of how Nora, his wife, coped with transfers and living conditions. His family were uprooted at short notice and transferred across the country, to all four provinces.

*In the Service of the State* will be read with relish by foresters, but it deserves a much wider audience as it is also a social history which is well told with passion and humour. His son Mícheál also deserves credit for making recordings of Tom's life and editing the book. Mícheál, a lecture in folklore in Helsinki University also benefited from the project. He discusses how he drew from his father's life and advice in writing his own tome *The Irish Folklore Commission 1935-1970* published in 2007.

This book is also relevant to our times, especially now when a proposal to sell our State forests is being discussed. Decision makers would do well to read how this great resource was created and nurtured in more difficult times and they too might do well to consider their own roles *In the Service of the State*.

*In the Service of the State* by Tom Briody, published in association with Choice Publishing, Drogheda. Price €20 available from the Society of Irish Foresters.

## 2012 RDS-Forest Service awards announced

Colm Foy of Ferefad, Longford won the Farm Forestry Award this year for his forest property at Ballymacleavy, near Ballynacarrigy in Co Westmeath. Coillte won the Bio-Diverse Forestry/Woodlands Award for its environmentally sensitive approach in managing Clonbur Wood a 292 ha forest located between the villages of Clonbur, Co Galway and Cong, Co. Mayo. The RDS-Forest Service Judges Special Award was presented to Society member Donal Magner, for his contribution to forestry in Ireland.



The 2012 RDS-Forestry awards were presented by Shane McEntee, Minister of State (second from left, front row) in Castletown House, Celbridge recently. Back row: Lucy Tottenham (Best New Entrant Bio-Diverse Award); Victor Dunne (Leinster Award); Gerard Murphy, Coillte (Bio-diverse Award); Pat Walsh, McMahon Park (runner up, Bio-Diverse Award); P.J. Fitzpatrick, Coillte; Sean Heneghan, McMahon Park (runner up, Bio-Diverse Award); Frank Flanagan, Coillte; Joe Fenton, Coillte; Christy Tighe (Connaught winner); Colm Foy (winner Farm Forestry Award); Paddy O'Reilly (runner up Farm Forestry); John Keoghan (Best New Entrant Farm Forestry); Bill Murphy, Coillte; Breda Lyons, Coillte; and Tom Cannon, RDS. Front row: Geoffry Tottenham (Best New Entrant Bio-Diverse Award), Minister McEntee; Donal Magner (winner Judges Special Forestry Award) and Dr Austin Mescal, RDS.

## Are we there yet?



*John Phelan, Woodland Managers Ltd (sixth from left) trekking in Peru to raise funds for the Irish charity, Bóthar, with a group of hardy Bóthar supporters at Dead Woman's Pass recently. At 4,215m elevation, Dead Woman's Pass, is the highest point on the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu and is more than four times higher than Carrauntoohill, Co. Kerry.*

## WINDOW ON THE PAST Irish Forestry Society

The Annual Excursion of the Irish Forestry Society will take place at Avondale Forestry Station, Rathdrum by kind permission of the Department of Agriculture on Saturday, 26th June.

After visiting the Forestry Station, Luncheon will be served at the Grand Central Hotel, Rathdrum, following which the Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held.

All interested in the forestry question are invited to attend.  
Tickets, including rail and Luncheon:- Gentlemen, 7s. 6d; Ladies 6s. 6d.

*Irish Independent, 19 June 1909.*

## 2013 Programme of Events

7 March – Annual Augustine Henry Forestry Lecture,  
by Dr. Alistair McCracken, Agri-Food & Biosciences Institute, Belfast. Venue: RDS

12 April – AGM and Eastern Field Day. Venue: Enniskerry, Co. Wicklow

19 April – Western Field Day. Venue: Frenchpark, Co. Roscommon

17 May – Northern Field Day. Venue: Fivemiletown, Co. Tyrone.

5 – 9 June – Annual Study Tour to Sweden

27 September – Southern Field Day. Venue: Fermoy, Co. Cork

10 October – Annual Sean Mac Bride Forestry Lecture. Venue: UCD

*We hope to feature reports and photographs of past Society events in upcoming issues of the newsletter. If you have any suitable material, will you please scan them and forward to Pat O'Sullivan, Society of Irish Foresters, Glenealy, Co. Wicklow. Alternatively, we can scan the documents for you and return them.*

## Welcome

We are always pleased to welcome new members to the Society. Membership continues to grow and this is encouraging. We welcome the following new members to the Society of Irish Foresters:

### Technical

Christopher Butler  
Daniel Connaire  
Justin Good  
Luke Heffernan  
Richard Rommer  
Vincent Upton

### Associate

Mary Cass  
Michael Moore.

### Student

Zachary Campbell  
Emmet Cullen  
Simon McMenamin  
Ronnie Murphy  
Matt O'Rourke

*To all Society members,  
thanks for your support  
during the year*

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

*Happy Christmas and a  
prosperous New Year*



### EDITORIAL:

Donal Magner  
Pat O'Sullivan  
John Mc Loughlin

### PHOTOGRAPHY:

Donal Magner  
Neville Dukes  
Pacelli Breathnach  
Hugh Crawford  
Kevin Hutchinson

Society of Irish Foresters  
Glenealy, Co. Wicklow

E: [sif@eircom.net](mailto:sif@eircom.net)

W: [www.societyofirishforesters.ie](http://www.societyofirishforesters.ie)