

control, and business management; and (6) enterprise development — to generate an operational business plan.

To date, we have received magnificent help from the British Government, the private sector, companies, trusts, and individuals. Just under half of the £2.5 millions necessary has already been received or promised. Donors include government agencies such as the Countryside Commission and the Forestry Commission, and large companies such as BP and Legal & General.

By showing that the produce can be utilized in production, and at the same time improving the quality of the remaining crop, we aspire to encourage others to follow suit. By converting as much of some 750 tonnes of timber annually — harvested from the woodland at Hooke Park — into buildings and consumer products, we are seeking to show how commercial enterprise linked to timber-growing can promote improved standards of resource management, generate local employment, and substitute for imports.

Hooke Park College offers twelve places a year on its two-years' course, from which the first students graduated in December 1990. There is also a programme of short courses. The College buildings are revolutionary structures constructed from thinnings taken from the surrounding forest. They serve as striking models of the Hooke Park philosophy, bear witness to a project of world-wide significance seeking international support, and offer prospects of an exciting future for the woodlands of tomorrow.

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'Men of The Trees' in Western Australia

Introduction

'Men of The Trees' in Western Australia is alive and well! So much so, in fact, that it is 'bursting at the seams' with projects, ideas, and a vision of the future — 'enough to take your breath away'.

The Western Australian branch of Men of The Trees was founded in 1979, shortly after a visit to Perth of Richard St Barbe Baker*, by Charles Peaty. Peaty went on to establish branches of Men of The Trees in all the other states of Australia, but Western Australia is one of the most active branches.

In the manner of most societies, the branch founded by Charles Peaty started tenuously, with a small membership; but in the last eleven years its membership has grown to almost 1,000. About one-quarter of these members are scattered around the countryside in Western Australia and the remainder live in the suburbs of Perth. A point worth noting is that, with only two exceptions, none of the members are professional foresters or horticulturists — we are a group of amateurs, all working towards a common goal of getting trees into the ground and seeing our environment and Nature benefit accordingly. We are a 'doing' group, 'with a spade in our hands and mud on our boots.'

Give-away Plantings of Seedlings

The range of activities in which Men of The Trees get involved is wide and varied. The focal point of its operations is a tree-seedling nursery called 'St Barbe Grove' situated 18 kilometres north-east of Perth where, on leased land, Men of The Trees established a nursery in 1987. After a tentative start with rather primitive facilities, the operation has grown to the extent that now almost 200,000 seedlings are reared annually from seed. The nursery is now well equipped with tunnel houses in which the seed is propagated, a sprinkler system, and steel trestles on which the tiny seedlings are placed in trays to grow. A nursery manager's office is the nerve-centre of the nursery.

* See the illustrated account of 'St Barbe Baker, Far-sighted Pioneer', by James M. Fitzwilliams, published in *Environmental Conservation*, Vol. 14, No 2, pp. 164–8, 1987. — Ed.

Most seedlings are of native species — eucalypts, acacias, melaleucas, and callistemons, to name the most common — particularly those which we have found the easiest to propagate and to thrive best in the dry climate here. Carobs, tagasaste, and a few oaks, are also grown, and all these are destined to be planted either in country areas or around the city. During the winter months plantings are scheduled for every weekend. These are either on public or shire land† in a country town, or perhaps in one of the numerous parks and reserves in the city, all of which are 'crying out' for more trees. A coordinator supervises the entire planting, being responsible for ensuring that sufficient people turn up to plant, and also that the seedlings get to the planting fully viable and in a suitable state. For this we have a trailer capable of carrying 4,000 seedlings at a time. We do not charge for the seedlings which we grow and plant — we only give them away, merely asking for a donation to help to defray costs.

Arbor Day and 'Children of The Trees'

Another activity in which Men of The Trees takes a leading role is on Arbor Day every June, when the growing of seedlings by a city school — for planting in the country in conjunction with a school situated there — culminates in a grand planting at a country centre.

In this and other ways there is quite a close involvement by Men of The Trees with schools, and we are constantly addressing school groups, spreading the message about trees among the young. Last year a 'Children of The Trees' group was started to encourage interest in trees among children, and their first major project was to visit an Aboriginal reserve, 450 kilometres north-east of Perth, for a week of tree planting. During school vacations these children always have some activity going on at St Barbe Grove.

We restrict our planting to public or shire land, the only exception being that on selected farms, where the farmer allocates to us two hectares of his land as an experimental plot, we plant fodder and nut trees. This year we have started a 'Farm Tree Help Scheme' whereby a gro-

† Signifying, in Australia, land in a rural area having its own elected council. — Ed.

wer in the city raises seedlings for a particular farmer, and then perhaps visits the farm and helps to plant the trees. Another facet of our rural activity is the regular planting and maintenance of an arboretum on sand-plain land in the 'wheatbelt' country north-east of Perth.

Use of Exhibitions

At the principal agricultural show each year in Perth, Men of The Trees has a high profile, with an exhibition illustrating what we do and how easy it is to rear and plant trees. At country shows and field-days, too, we 'show the flag' with a portable stall, from which we give out literature and seedlings.

Men of The Trees in Western Australia sees its role mainly as a catalyst, encouraging other people to plant trees, in the firm belief that eventually we will manage to convince people to care for this planet. After all, there is nowhere else to go!

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The Oleg Polunin Memorial Fund

Background

Oleg Polunin (1914–85) taught at Charterhouse for more than thirty years, inspiring many young biologists to undertake botanical and other scientific field-work. His own travels in Nepal and the Himalayas, as well as practically throughout Europe and in the Near and Far East, led to his great series of widely-reputed botanical field-guides. He recognized field-work as the key to his achievements, and was keen that Carthusians, after the completion of their schooling, should be able to continue with botanical studies in the field. The Fund has been established by his wife, family, and friends, both in his memory and to note the support given to him by the Governing Body of Charterhouse in his work.

Aims

The purpose of the Fund is to help those wishing to carry out work in the field of a botanical or general biological nature, either individually or as members of an organized expedition. Priority is given to those with Charterhouse connections, though others are also considered.

The Fund and Conservation

The Fund has been in operation since 1987 and there have been 11 beneficiaries to date, most of whom undertook field-work with a direct bearing on aspects of conservation.

In 1987, John Whitehead (Merrist Wood Agricultural College) went to Chile to collect natural-source conifer seed to secure genetic diversity to counteract the tendency to clone in commercial and private collections, to appraise the conservation status of these conifers in the wild, and to promote their cultivation to further their conservation.

In the following year 1988, Mark Nesbitt (the first Old Carthusian to receive a grant), of the British Institute of Archaeology at Ankara, studied archaic crop-plants — particularly the Emmer and Einkorn varieties of wheat — that were still in cultivation in remote areas of Anatolia, while in the same year, William Duckworth, of Cambridge University, received a share of the available grant to take part in an expedition to the Marojejy Reserve in Madagascar, recognized by IUCN and WWF as a particularly important area. This study sought to examine the distribution and abundance of mammals and birds in the

reserve, and also Papilionid butterflies. In its course the first sighting in 58 years of the Madagascar Serpent Eagle (*Eutriorchis astur*), thought by many to have been extinct, was made and subsequently confirmed. In addition the threat was assessed to this northeastern part of the ever-shrinking Madagascan rain-forest, posed by agriculture and other human interference.

Other expeditions sponsored by the Oleg Polunin Memorial Fund have included a study of altitudinal zonation on Sibuyan Island, south-east of Manila, by a group from Sheffield University (led by Leonard J. Thomas), with a view to advising the Philippines Government over its use of this montane rain-forest as a potentially renewable resource. A Cambridge University undergraduate expedition (including two Old Carthusians, Scott Akker and Rosalind Highstead) was part-funded to study 'islands' of upland tropical forest surrounded by dry lowland savanna in Tanzania, as well as areas of high conservation priority owing to their small size and possession of recently evolved, and often unique, collections of species. This expedition aimed, in consultation with local scientists, to provide useful conservation data for the Government of Tanzania regarding damage through logging and other clearance operations.

Less exotic projects (but no less valuable for that) supported by the Fund have included research by Paul Whitehead into the Oil Beetle, *Meloe rugosus* (Red Data Book-listed and first discovered, by Whitehead, in Britain in 1984), the taxonomy of the genus *Cotoneaster*, by Jeanette Fryer, the taxonomy of the Loganiaceae (to form part of the *Flora of Thailand* project) by Olwyn Griffin, of Trinity College, Dublin, the distribution of certain brown seaweeds on the coast of north-east Britain, by Gavin Hardy, and a survey of Nepalese Alpine plants, including sketches and water-colour studies by Kathryn Jenkins (Old Carthusian) of Nottingham University.

Future Funding and Applications

The basic aims of the Fund remain the same, but it does seem that most projects based on field-work at the very least have environmental implications, and that many have direct bearing on some of the most important conservation issues facing us today. Thus the Fund can be seen as one not only to encourage field-work as an essential means of study in young scientists, but also as a way to further the cause of conservation.