



# 'Climb a Mile'

Charity event raises £2,000 for Help for Heroes



Organisers of the 'Climb a Mile' charity event, which took place at the recent Forest Festival at Scone Palace, have presented a cheque for £2,000 to Help for Heroes. Pictured are James McDougall, co-ordinator of the International Year of Forests for Forestry Commission Scotland (left) and Paul Hanson, Arboricultural Association Scotland (centre), presenting the fundraising cheque to Mike Dickinson, County Co-ordinator for Help for Heroes in Perthshire (right) at Scone Palace.



The challenge, never previously attempted, saw arborists from the Arboricultural Association Scottish Branch scale 30m of a 50m Douglas fir (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*) in the Palace grounds in relay, achieving a total height of some 1,650 metres – equivalent to just over a mile – a new, if unofficial, world record. The Scottish Branch took on the challenge in aid of and to commemorate the brave efforts of our UK military service personnel, and bring together the efforts of the tree world industry in raising much needed funds. *Tree surgery and forestry are both seen as tough and dangerous jobs; but not a patch on the global peace keeping operations our armed forces continue to be engaged in. Having given so much to enable us to practice our civilian trades it seems fitting that the tree care industries, who employ many ex-armed forces personnel, should support the **Help for Heroes** organisation by raising funds to assist those injured on our behalf.*”



A view from the top.



Despite the interesting conditions of a typical Scottish summer (torrential rain on the Saturday with bright sunshine followed by heavy showers later on Sunday) the team soldiered on managing just over 800m on day one in the worst of the weather. Day two saw the old lags back from day one with some fresh faces turning up to help out, and the marvellous ‘Boyle Bar-B-Q’ back again to keep spirits raised, even the chef managed 60m of the climb in between peeling onions and flipping burgers. I’m not sure if keeping moral high with steak sandwiches, chicken tikka and gallons of tea was conducive to climbing high, however we did manage to complete the 30m climb 55 times! Andrew Jenkins made the most number of individual climbs with a total of 7 (210m).

The charity climb and Forest Festival were part of a series of events taking place to celebrate the International Year of Forests 2011, which aims to raise awareness of sustainable management, conservation, and development of all types of forests. Of course not everyone was able to make a physical contribution; we are helping to raise funds for Help for Heroes and supporting the climbers in doing that is vitally important. For those who missed the Scone event, or for who this is news please visit our web site [www.climbamile.com](http://www.climbamile.com) to get involved and/or to donate on-line.

Thanks to Kevin Wholey and Richard and Matthew Light for cleaning the tree prior to the climb, to Elspeth and Margo at Scone Palace for all their help, to James McDougall at Forestry Commission Scotland without whom we would not have a web site, to Richard Bryant for securing and paying for the event insurance, to Brenda, Eric, Keith, Lomond and Margo for collecting money and keeping count during the event, to Mike Dickinson from H4H, to Stephen Burgess for creating and continuing to provide support for the Climbamile website, to Andy Burgess for his advice with event publicity, to Jamie Boyle, our own catering hero (ex parachute regiment) and of course many thanks to the guys who climbed the mile: Ali Baxter, Jamie Boyle, Mike Charkow, Ron Clowes, Mark Foster, Joe Fulton, Paul Hanson, Andrew Jenkins, Craig Knellar, Euan Maccormick, Alan MacTaggart, Mark McKenzie, Charlie Matthieson, Adam Reidi and Chris Simpson.

**Paul Hanson**

**AA Scottish Branch Chairman**

