

# Open days with Fuelwood and Logosol

**L**OGOSOL and Fuelwood Scotland combined forces at the premises of Abbey Timber to present a comprehensive package of forestry and timber processing equipment on the 6th and 7th of April. Recent forestry operations in the woodlands around the Berwickshire village of Abbey St Bathans have brought a considerable quantity of hardwood logs into the sawmill yard.

Machinery demonstrations were to concentrate on the beech that had been delivered in from the woodlands on the banks of the Whiteadder Water. The timber is eminently suitable for firewood production, of course, but Willie Dobie of Abbey Timber is well known for searching out innovative markets for his sawn timber. The Logosol sawmilling systems would be producing saleable produce.

The Logosol Wide Slabber was set to work on a very large butt that had been cut locally last year. The heartwood of such an old, open-grown beech was almost bound to show some discolouration. When the saw chain had done its work the 'spalting' revealed was judged by all present to enhance the appearance of the massive board produced. The timber will probably eventually be crafted into a fine tabletop.

The cutting process itself took slightly less

than nine minutes, although time needs to be taken to ensure that setup of the system is performed accurately. In this case a single 122 cc Stihl chainsaw was operating a 66-inch guide bar, although additional cutting power can be achieved by using two chainsaws. With the single saw, supplementary oil and water reservoirs can lubricate the end of the bar.

One hand of the saw operator controls the throttle while the other winds the lightweight tensioning device that ensures the cutting chain makes steady contact with the wood inside the kerf. Assisting Logosol's Per Karlsson with the milling was Duncan Cameron of Roybridge in Invernesshire. Duncan has spent considerable time in both Alaska and Sweden building cabins, but is also well experienced in boatbuilding and carpentry work.

While Duncan has often used the Norwood series of mobile sawmills supplied by Logosol, the company has now developed



its own Swedish-manufactured lightweight mobile bandmills. The Logosol B751 was in Abbey St Bathans to demonstrate its prowess while the first Logosol B1001 was expected to arrive at the Aylesbury depot within a few weeks to be available for demonstrations.

The B751 has a standard bed length of 4.8 m and a maximum log diameter capability of 75 cm. Fixed step adjustment assists in the manual setting of the sawhead, with a full turn of the crank equivalent to an adjustment of one inch. One further notch allows for the kerf and linkage is by chain so it can be expected to retain its accuracy after long hours of work. The minimum thickness of the final board cut is 25 mm.

The 50 cm bandwheel design incorporates fan vanes for clearing dust and debris from the sawhead. Exact blade guiding, hitherto exclusive to larger and more expensive bandmills, ensures that wavering of the 33 mm-wide blade is reduced to a minimum throughout the cutting process. Power options include 13 hp petrol and 4.6 kW or 8 kW electric engines.

The B1001 can cut logs up to 100 cm in diameter with its similar but more powerful motor options. The rail frame has been

adapted to cut directly on the ground if required and its tubular construction gives it the torsional rigidity necessary for supporting heavy timber. Both mills can be extended to cut longer logs by the addition of standard Logosol parts. The company offers a choice of tooth-tip-tempered, carbide and high-speed steel blades for both their own and other manufacturers' bandsawmills.

Alongside the Logosol planers and moulders used by Abbey Timber, the best-selling M8 chainsaw mill was in operation. The light and easy-to-assemble Farmer's Sawmill has recently been upgraded to the F2 model and was attracting considerable interest. Both the chainsaw mills can cope with longer than standard length timber by the addition of more log bed and extension units.

As ever, Fuelwood presented a huge range of forestry and firewood machines to the visitors arriving at Abbey Timber's yard. The 'British Racing Green' of the company's home-built machinery was there, of course, and the red livery of the Finnish Japa machines. The French manufacturer AMR is always keen to promote its red machines, too. The Alsace-based manufacturer sells to Central Europe as well as Scandinavia, so the range of equipment it supplies must be compatible with many differing long-held traditions in firewood processing and delivery.



After a requested demonstration of Fuelwood's own 400S splitter, the company's Danny Shepard was keen to show the potential of other systems that may prove suitable for the UK firewood merchant. AMR's powerful tractor-mounted HPF 28T horizontal logsplitter can break down even the toughest lengths of hardwood timber. A large and strong output table holds the cleft wood that can be drawn back into the knives for re-splitting if necessary.

Reduced to suitable dimensions - with a maximum cross section of 24 cm - the lengths can be dropped in to the chambers of the AMR Quatromat circular drum saw. The dimensions of the logs cut by the rotating sawblade can be adjusted, without needing tools, to between 20 cm and 40 cm. In many parts of Europe, it is traditional to split the cut lengths when green. Exposing the fibres of the wood accelerates seasoning in the stack and the lengths are often reduced for the fire or wood-burner with a circular saw after drying. Safety of the operation is significantly enhanced by using a machine with a totally enclosed blade such as the Quadromat.

Danny Shepard is able to report that interest in Fuelwood's machinery has taken a new turn in the early months of 2018. Increased timber prices have seen forestry contractors and woodland owners prepared to make the financial investment needed to bring the valuable commodity to the

Far left: Dougie Beattie of Farm and Forestry Equipment now supplies the Polish-manufactured Alpha-Therm woodburning space heaters. For businesses that find that they generate a certain amount of waste wood in their production processes the systems are very economical. The STH50 model can produce 35kW of usable heat and is well suited for the kiln-drying of timber.

Left: The Logosol Wide Slabber has the accuracy to produce very high quality large boards from big logs.

Above top: Logosol's new Swedish-built bandsaws have incorporated features hitherto only seen in top-of-the-range sawmilling machinery. Saw band guidance and fan-assisted sawhead debris clearance are a couple of the new advances. Willie Dobie had requested that 1-inch boards be cut from the beech by the Logosol B751. Passed through Abbey Timber's US-built Baker resaw most of the material would be used by Scottish east coast fishermen for the construction of creels.

Above: Duncan Cameron (left) and Per Karlsson display the beech board produced by the Logosol Wide Slabber. Just less than nine minutes' hard work by the two operators and the big Stihl chainsaw was required to see the piece fashioned from the large butt. Duncan and Per can relax over a cup of tea as they reset the frame for the next cut; the Stihl's oil reservoir and fuel tank will also be refreshed before the next cut begins.

Laura Dobie will be returning to Abbey St Bathans in the summer to re-establish a sales and service centre for Logosol machinery in Scotland and the North of England. The introduction of the new Logosol bandsawmills is expected to significantly increase the Swedish company's market share. The Aylesbury depot will be remaining open for customers in the South.



# WOODFUEL

roadside.

The winter we in the UK have just gone through may have been the most severe for five years, but it is hard not to concede that the Midlands and Southern England have had a particularly tough time of it. The inhabitants of Wales, too, have been subjected to sub-zero temperatures far lower than average. Fuelwood suppliers have struggled to keep up with demand, as a short warm spell was succeeded by another heavy snowfall and another plunge in the thermometer's mercury.

Keen to supply loyal customers with the fuel they need, many firewood suppliers have been confined to their woodyards, feeding the seasoned wood through the processors until the roads are passable and deliveries can be resumed. Stocks may be low but turnover on the firewood sales has been correspondingly augmented. Now is the ideal time to upgrade and renew machinery and plant.

Introduced last year, the Japa 395 is equipped with a more powerful splitting ram (7T or 12T options) and a new electric 'joystick' control system. Safety upgrades have been made, too, with more interlocks ensuring that machine operation is halted if any protective cover is not securely positioned. A six-way splitting knife is supplied as standard, but two-way, four-way and eight-way options are available. The knife is hydraulically positioned from the operator's control panel.

The beech logs the Japa 395 was being asked to process were towards the upper limit of its capacity; 40 cm maximum diameter. Cutting the last butt end length of such material in firewood processors can be problematic; tipping of the short lengths of weighty wood can jam the cutting system or cut rounds can fall foul into the splitting chamber. The Japa's hydraulic log gripper seemed to cope with the material well. The 16-inch chainsaw had no difficulty cutting slightly misaligned raw material and all cut sections fell cleanly into the chamber to face the splitting knife.

AMR's towable logsplitters are popular on the Continent with small woodland owners, many of whom can only spend the weekend and their holidays in the woods producing firewood for the family home. The machines weigh less than 0.5 tonnes. A drawback with such smaller equipment in the UK has been that it is normally powered by petrol engines and in terms of fuel cost they have been expensive to operate. The machines offered by the Alsace manufacturer, however, have diesel-powered options and may be worthy of a second appraisal.

As usual, Dougie Beattie came down to Abbey St Bathans from the north of Scotland to assist with the machinery demonstrations. Dougie and his wife, Helen, run Farm and Forestry Equipment at Ardersier near Inverness. While Fuelwood and Logosol



products have been for many years part of the business portfolio, Farm and Forestry is prepared to work with any manufacturer who would like to see their equipment promoted in the far North. A sub-dealership selling and maintaining Timberwolf brush chippers is the next project in the pipeline.

As for Logosol UK, while the Aylesbury depot serving the south of England and the Midlands will continue in operation, Laura Dobie will be returning to Abbey St Bathans in the summer. After exhibiting at the Royal Highland Show, Abbey Timber's sawmill yard will become the focus for Logosol sales and service for Scotland and the north of England.

**H.C. Burke**

Above, top: Alan Dobson operates one of AMR's towable vertical logsplitters. The Alsace-based firewood machinery manufacturer offers diesel-powered versions of the towable splitters, thus allowing considerable fuel cost savings. Various splitting power options are also available.

Above, middle: Introduced last year, the Japa 395 has been designed with the latest safety measures in mind. The firewood processing machine's hydraulic log gripper ensures that the 16-inch chainsaw can always cut the raw material cleanly.

Above, bottom: Fuelwood's Danny Shepard feeds material he has cleft on the HPF28T horizontal logsplitter into AMR's Quadromat circular drum saw. Air seasoning of cleft firewood lengths is common in Central Europe and stacks are easily built and stable. The lengths are usually reduced into logs suitable for the hearth or woodburning stove when the firewood is dry. A rotating drum chopper is a very safe and efficient way to carry out the task.