

## JANUARY 1997.

January began bitterly cold, the worst indeed since 1987, the maximum temperature on the 1<sup>st</sup> never rising above -1.8C at all during the day. Nights were also very cold with a low of -8.3C on the 2<sup>nd</sup> when the grass fell to -11.5C.

These conditions were brought about by a cold easterly Continental airflow with high pressure centred to the north of Scotland. This led to frequent, though not heavy, snow showers giving accumulations of 4cm over the first 3 days. This snow cover did not finally clear until the 11<sup>th</sup>, by which time a warm front introduced milder air with temperatures rising to 9.2C on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

High pressure became established to the SE from the 13<sup>th</sup>, and with clear skies there was a return to night frost as well as fog. The latter was particularly dense on the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>. With low pressure again becoming evident a more unsettled spell ensued with showers and longer spells of rain from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>. The wettest day occurred on the 21<sup>st</sup> with 3.0mm of rain.

Pressure rose gradually thence, with a more settled spell which brought fog on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>. The clear nights also reintroduced ground frost which was prevalent from the 24<sup>th</sup> to the 29<sup>th</sup>, though daytime maximums managed to peak at 11.9C on the 25<sup>th</sup>. Pressure then gradually rose to reach a peak of 1042.8mb (MSL) on the 29<sup>th</sup>.

It was the driest January here since records began in 1946 with a total of only 10.2mm of rain. It was also the coldest since 1987 with the mean daily temperature 1.4C down on the 30-year value.