

FEBRUARY 1997.

The first few days of February saw a gradual decline in pressure as a westerly airflow became established across the country, becoming brisk by the 3rd when gusts in excess of 28 knots were recorded. This relatively mild air brought rain and cloud, so night temperatures held up well after the 3rd. which saw a night minimum of -4.3C, the lowest of the month.

The next few days were mild and unsettled, rain occurring frequently, though it was not heavy. Winds gusted to 38 knots on the 10th with hail showers. By the 13th winds were from the NW and blustery. This settled down overnight when it became calm with a touch of ground frost.

A ridge became established on the 14th and continued until the 15th with night frost on the 15th the latter also producing 7.8 hours of bright sunshine. After some ground frost on the 19th winds again freshened from the SW peaking at 59 knots with heavy rain in the late afternoon.

A further deep low approached on the 23rd giving periods of heavy and continuous rain which proved the wettest day of the month with 10.6mm of rain. Winds were again strong gusting to 46 knots on the 24th.

These blustery conditions prevailed until the 27th by which time a ridge had become established quietening things down a little. After early rain on the 28th the weather became more settled with good sunny spells giving the warmest day of the month at 13.6C.

As a whole the month was wetter than average and relatively mild, mean temperatures being up on the 30-year means by as much as 3C.