

Editorial

The last issue of the *Nigerian Field* Volume 80 (2015) was a special one, dedicated to the arts. We planned to follow with another special issue devoted to hydrobiology. Water, with the environmental issues surrounding it – flooding, pollution and as agents of erosion, is an important component of contemporary African environments and deserves our attention. We could not process the papers satisfactorily and decided the journal should revert to its ‘usual’ mode. We will still publish a special hydrobiology issue. The current issue, Volume 81(2016) is a mixture of science and culture with diverse subjects treated under these two areas.

The first issue of the *Nigerian Field* was published in 1931. To mark the delayed celebration of the 85th anniversary of the journal (2016) the society decided to hold a lecture in honour of Rev. Fr. (Professor) Joseph Kenny (1936-2013) who was instrumental in preparing the articles for printing for many years, and acted as the editor just before his death. Dr Patricia Oyelola, current chairperson of the Editorial Board, presented the lecture titled: ‘Breaking the Mould: Priests Unlike Others’ which discusses the Catholic Church’s policy of “acculturation” which opened the door for the introduction of Nigerian art into the church by some innovative priests, ie, Rev. Frs Kenny, Carroll, Mahoney and Killy.

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the Dominican Community, Samonda, Ibadan for providing the venue, their hospitality and helping with the publicity. The lecture was well-attended and attracted many distinguished personalities. We also wish to especially thank Rev Fr. Iheanyi Emweren OP, who wrote a moving personal account of his interaction with Fr Kenny and the setting up of the Dominican Institute in Samonda.

Volume 81 has a variety of interesting papers. John Marsden Gill who worked in the colonial service in Cameroun in the 20th century, has enriched this issue with ‘Cast Metal Figures in 20th century West African Art’. The article is beautifully illustrated with many fine examples of cast metal figures.

Professor David Okali looks at the subject of “forestry education” and when it actually began in Nigeria. Did formal forestry education begin in 1964 with the establishment of the Department of Forestry? His answer is ‘No’—that informal traditional forestry practices should not be discounted but examined to raise the frontiers of forestry over the next fifty years.

M.E. Ajibola, T.O.Omoshehin and O. Elujulo provide an interesting study of the eating habits of cattle egret on Obafemi Awolowo campus when they do not follow cattle on whose exo-parasites they usually feed.

Embroidery is popular in many cultures in Nigeria, but it is a skill thought to be the preserve of men in northern Nigeria. Elisha Renne, in her article 'Queen Amina Embroidery: A Hausa Women's Embroidery in Zaria City' narrates how women have entered and are now flourishing in the trade.

The battle to curtail Lassa fever in Nigeria and other countries in West Africa has been an ongoing struggle for many decades. This deadly fever is transmitted by rats. The author of this article, Dr. Olayemi says, however, the indiscriminate killing all rats is not the answer, as those rats dwelling in the savanna and forests have an important ecological role to play.

We thank our subscribers for their patience and assure them that we have put a plan in place to curtail delays in publishing. We thank our contributors and reviewers many of whom we cannot name here. Again, we thank Chris Bankole for her painstaking effort in preparing this issue for press.

Augustine O. Isichei, *Editor*

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