

THE SOCIETY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting was held on 27th March. There were no changes in the officers, apart from the resignation of Mr. E. K. Ingram, who had been Hon. Librarian for the past 7 years. Subsequently, Mrs. E. M. Elvey, the Assistant Archivist, was appointed Hon. Librarian by the Council; a considerable reorganisation of the Library is now in progress.

OBITUARY

We regret to report the deaths of the following: Mrs. W. N. Ewer, Mrs. M. E. T. Head, Mr. H. Stevens, Mr. P. E. Tyhurst and Miss M. F. Webb.

IVINGHOE

The third and final year of the Dig at the Iron Age Fort on Ivinghoe Beacon was carried out under the supervision of Professor S. S. Frere and Dr. M. Cotton last September. It will be recalled that Council made an appeal for funds towards the cost of this, and over £200 was raised from members. This gratifying response meant that the net cost to the Society was only £22. It is hoped to publish a full report on the Dig in the 1967 issue of *Records of Bucks*.

OUTINGS

Five outings, the largest number yet organised in one season, took place during the summer. These were:

1st May: Peterborough Cathedral; Milton, the home of Earl Fitzwilliam; and Fotheringhay Church. This was a very successful day, which drew the maximum permitted number to see this superb house which has equally important work, both of the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, and contains a magnificent collection of pictures and furniture. It is not normally open to the public.

29th May: The day was spent in Winchester, where the Cathedral, College, St. Cross Hospital and other places were visited.

26th June: There was a very good response to this outing to see two houses just over the Oxfordshire border: the Prebendal at Thame, which has a notable garden as well as an interesting house, and Thame Park which, like Milton, combines an eighteenth-century house with a sixteenth-century wing. We were indebted to Mrs. H. G. Keppel-Palmer and Sir Frank Bowden, Bart., respectively, for welcoming us on that afternoon.

24th July: The party spent some time in the morning at Oakham where they saw the mediaeval castle hall and the parish church. In the afternoon the interesting house of Stapleford Park, near Melton Mowbray, was viewed, together with the eighteenth-century church in the grounds. On the way to Oakham a visit was made to the Church of St. Mary's, Wellingborough, perhaps the finest example of the work of Sir Ninian Comper.

18th September: The last meeting was a walk along the line of Grimms Ditch from Wendover to near Wigginton in Hertfordshire. This was in conjunction with the Natural History Section. Not many took part, but those who did were surprised at the scale of some parts of the Ditch.

LECTURE

On 3rd April, a joint meeting with the Beaconsfield and District Historical Society was held, when a large audience heard Dr. W. O. Hassall give an inspiring illustrated talk on the village of Wheatley. E.V.

PARISH REGISTERS: The registers of the following parishes, beginning in the year indicated, have been deposited with the Society for safe custody:

Chalfont St. Giles, 1584.

Haddenham, 1653.

Padbury, 1538.

A.V.W.

NATURAL HISTORY SECTION

DURING the year just ended the Natural History Section has had twenty-five meetings. Two of these were weekends spent at Missenden Abbey, the first with the theme "Bird Numbers and Conservation" and the second, which was held in June, with the theme "Plants, Insects and Spiders; Causes of Frequency and Abundance". These weekends were very successful and well attended.

Early in the spring there was an outing to Wendover Forest. The leader, Mr. C. S. Christie of the Forestry Commission, had lined up for identification a number of very young trees of varieties which the Forestry Commission are now planting. He also demonstrated the damage glis glis had done to the tops of some of the forest trees.

During the summer there were five botanical outings. A visit was made to Kingston Blount, where Green Hellebore (*Helleborus viridis*) was found, also many orchids and an example of the false oxlip, the hybrid between the primrose and the cowslip. Cirl buntings were heard—birds which are largely confined to the slopes of the Chilterns. A walk along the canal bank between Halton and Aston Clinton was arranged by the Chesham Natural History Society. On another occasion there was a walk in the Wendover hills behind Boswells to look for the Chilton Gentian (*Gentiana germanica*). A good number of this beautiful flower was found; this plant is rare outside the Chilterns but is more frequent than the Autumn Gentian (*Gentiana amarella*). There was a very successful botany and conchology walk in Wotton Underwood. Among the plants seen were Great Mullein (*Verbascum thapsus*); Black Mullein (*Verbascum nigrum*); Grass Vetchling (*Lathyrus nissolia*); Dragons Teeth (*Tetragonolobus maritimus*); Great Burnet (*Sanguisorba officinalis*); Common Dodder (*Cuscuta epithimum*); Zigzag Clover (*Trifolium medium*); Amphibious Bistort (*Polygonum amphibium*); Great Reed Mace (*Typha latifolia*). Among the orchids seen the most notable was the Butterfly Orchid (*Platanthera chlorantha*). Fourteen different species of molluscs were seen and a record was made of the plants on which they were found.

A geological field meeting, arranged by the Hertfordshire Natural History Society, was held on Steps Hill in the Ivinghoe area and was on "The Formation of the Coombs in the Chilterns". This was a follow-up of the lecture during the previous year given by Dr. E. H. Brown.

Towards the end of September two very interesting archaeological meetings were arranged by Mr. Elliott Viney, which members of the Natural History Section attended. The first was a walk along Grim's Ditch between Wendover and Wigginton; the other was a meeting on the site of the Ivinghoe Dig when Professor S. S. Frere spoke on the results of the 1965 Dig.

In October there was a Fungus Foray in Cockshoot Wood near Gt. Missenden. Many species of fungi were found; most notable was a patch of seven or eight of one of our most poisonous fungi—the Destroying Angel (*Amanita virosa*). An unexpected find in this wood was a nest of dormice, revealed when a rotten tree stump was examined. One of these mice was accidentally taken home in the anorak of one of the members, and is being successfully reared by Mrs. Beer, who is making a photographic record of these little-known mammals.

During the winter there has been a wide variety of illustrated talks which have included “Marine Biology in Pembrokeshire” by Miss Jill Royston; “Work of the Water Research Board” by Mr. R. E. Youngman; “Life on the Shetlands” by Miss Dorothy Eyre; a talk on her Hellenic cruise by Miss D. M. Milnes and, the last meeting of the year, a talk on “Trees and Their Reproduction”, given by Lady Barlow, and illustrated with slides by Mr. Geoffrey Glover and Mr. Victor Scott. The attendance at these meetings held in the County Museum has been increasing.

One indoor meeting of note was held at Hampden Hall County Demonstration Farm; this was on “Reptiles and Amphibians”. There was an audience of 170, a large proportion of whom were young people of various ages. Captain J. E. Edwards introduced his talk with a film and followed it with a discussion on twenty or more live animals from all over the world, including a tame alligator.

Last year it was decided to make it clear on the programme that young people would be especially welcome at certain meetings, and this experiment has been very successful. The Society is glad to encourage young people to take an interest in Natural History, and it seems that parents appreciate being able to bring their children with them.

In the above report, Mr. Geoffrey Glover, who collated the list of plants for the 1964 *Records of Buckinghamshire*, has supplied the botanical information.

J.E.

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(as at 31st December, 1965)

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