

THE SOCIETY

Membership

The Society learnt with regret during 1986 of the deaths of Lady (Evelyn) Duncombe, Mrs Kate White, E. Muir-Smith, D. E. North, F. Peers, and Alan Ruse.

At 31 December 1986, paid-up membership comprised 396 ordinary members, 133 family memberships, 3 juniors (exclusive of those in family memberships) and 16 affiliated societies.

Council

Council met five times during the year, under the chairmanship of Dr A. H. J. Baines, FSA. With great regret Council accepted the resignation for reasons of ill health of Mrs E. M. Elvey, for many years the Hon. Archivist, and wishes to express its sincere thanks for the great contributions made to the work of the Society by both Mrs Elvey and her late husband, G. R. Elvey, FSA. Mrs L. M. Head undertook to double the job of Hon. Archivist with that of Hon. Librarian and Publications Officer. Co-opted to Council were Miss M. E. Devereux (Membership Secretary), E. J. Bull (Newsletter Editor and Meeting Organizer), A. F. Elcoate (Hon. Secretary, Natural History Section), Mrs

Sue Gill (who assists the Hon. Archivist), and G. N. Gowing, MA, FMA (Museum Curator). Miss M. M. T. Gornall assists the Hon. Librarian.

Thanks were expressed to Mrs Elvey for the bequest of £100 received under the will of the late Gerald Elvey.

The Liberty Trust was thanked for a grant of £150 towards rebinding of books in the Society Library and for the gift to the Museum of a John Schorne pilgrim medallion.

Council elected Miss T. E. Vernon, now the senior member of the Society, having joined in 1921, an Honorary Member.

A grant of £10 was made to the Buckinghamshire Council for Voluntary Service.

Bucks County Council

Library & Museum Sub-Committee

Society representatives were Elliott Viney, FSA, Dr A. H. J. Baines, FSA and Dr R. P. Hagerty.

Financial stringency has hit projects that the County Council had been planning relating to the establishment of Museum services outside Aylesbury. Thus the County Council has had to withdraw from the joint scheme with Wycombe District Council to build a High Wycombe Arts Centre and Library and also to postpone plans for extension of the library at Milton Keynes also to include museum space.

Most worrying for the Society has been the discovery of structural defects in the County Museum. Rectification by the lessees, the County Council, will require considerable work, of which only the most vital can be carried out in the present financial climate.

Careful planning is needed to ensure that essential repairs can be done with least disruption to the opening and usual Museum activities. Heavy items (e.g. filing cabinets) have had to be removed from the second and top floors, a considerable inconvenience for staff and creating further pressure on already inadequate storage space.

It can at least be reported that refurbishment is said to be in hand of a building in Great Missenden as Museum store to replace the store on land in Walton, planned to be sold by the County Council.

Cicely Baker Prize for Historical Research

Nine entries were received for the third competition. Their high standard posed a difficult problem for the judging committee (Elliott Viney, Mrs Jean Davis, Hugh Hanley and John Chenevix Trench), but the prize was finally awarded to Mrs Jo French, for a paper published in the present volume.

Lecture Series

Six lectures were organized by Ted Bull and were held generally on Saturday afternoons, usually at the County Museum:

- 18 January: Churches of Buckinghamshire, by Elliott Viney, FSA.
- 8 February: Bancroft—Pre-historic Farm to Roman Villa, by Bob Williams.
- 8 March: Buckinghamshire Medieval Wall

Paintings, by Dr E. Clive Rouse, FSA.

- 16 April: In conjunction with Bucks Historical Association, 1066 and all that—Domesday Book and the Normans, by Professor R. Allen Brown.
- 10 May: At the Misbourne Centre and in conjunction with the Centre. Old Chiltern Maps, by Hugh Hanley, and Missenden Abbey, by Mike Farley.
- 8 November: At the Grange School, Aylesbury, in conjunction with the Bucks Historical Association. Manorial Records of Aylesbury, by Hugh Hanley, and The 1986 Excavations at Walton, by Hal Dalwood.
- 6 December: Viking Period London—the Making of a Capital, by Dr Pamela Nightingale.

Outings

Six outings were arranged by the President:

- 17 May: Kent. Rochester Cathedral and castle and Lullingstone Castle (G. Hart-Dyke).
- 14 June: Northants. Castle Ashby (Lord Northampton), Stanford Hall (Lady Braye), and Rugby.
- 19 July: Oxfordshire. Stanton Harcourt, house, garden and church (Hon. Mrs Gascoigne), and Pusey House gardens.
- 16 August: Perambulation of the bounds of Monks Risborough, led by Arnold Baines.
- 13 September: Warwickshire. Ragley Hall, Alcester (Lord Hertford), and Packwood House (National Trust) at Hockley Heath.
- 18 October: Bucks Church Crawl. Little Hampden, Great Hampden, Lacey Green, Bradenham, Hughenden, Radnage, Bledlow, and Horsenden.

Defending Our Monuments

In the course of the year, the Hon. Secretary, on behalf of the Society and the Council for British Archaeology, has dealt with some 90 planning applications. Objection was registered to four applications for listed Building Consent. These were for retrospective consent to demolition of the baldachino in the erstwhile chapel at Britwell House, Burnham (it turned out that the remains were not restorable), to demolition of a cottage at Stoke House, Stoke

Poges (consent believed refused), to conversion into offices of the Derby Arms, St Mary's Square, Aylesbury (refused), and to works proposed by the County Council at Huntercombe House, Burnham (not resolved).

Objection was also made to an application to demolish a building at the rear of 3 Market Square, Buckingham (refused and building now Listed).

The Hon. Secretary has also been involved in opposition to four applications to the Department of the Environment for Scheduled Monument Consent. These were two by the Milton Keynes Development Corporation, one to make a cricket pitch on top of earthworks of the Deserted Medieval Village at Woughton-on-the-Green (refused) and the other to build houses obliterating the earthworks of a monastic grange at Shenley Church End (undecided). Wycombe District Council were proposing to build old people's accommodation on the open space adjacent to and within the circuit of the pre-historic limits of Desborough Castle (refused). Another application might have resulted in damage to a mound, most probably a windmill mound, in Wavendon (refused but on other grounds).

Three other planning applications to build in areas of archaeological interest although not Scheduled were also opposed. One was to build a motel/filling station on a piece of land immediately outside the defence line of the Romano-British town of Magiovinium in Bow Brickhill between the old A5 and the new A5T (refused). Two others were concerned with

resiting a cafe/filling station alongside the A5/A5T just to the east of the proposed motel/filling station site (result not known).

As regards the proposed moving of the statue of John Hampden in the Market Square, Aylesbury, neither the Society nor the Aylesbury Society found any interest among members or others.

County Museum Archaeological Group

There has been no excavation in the county this year calling for major deployment of Group effort, but the Group has continued to give invaluable assistance to the County Field Archaeologist in, among other tasks, post-excavation work which is sometimes tedious and always time-consuming.

Publications

Records Volume 26 (1984) was available at the Annual General Meeting and distribution was completed during May. A Spring and Autumn Newsletter were also distributed to members. It is understood that some numbers of the Newsletter were donated to the Bodleian Library, since when the Society has been asked to supply to four of the six Copyright Libraries. The Society once again owes its thanks to John Chenevix Trench and Mike Farley, FSA, who edit *Records* and to Ted Bull who edits the Newsletters, as also to the Corps of Deliverers who help with distribution. The monograph on Roman Milton Keynes, published by the Society on behalf of the Milton Keynes Development Corporation, became available early in 1987.

NATURAL HISTORY SECTION

In 1986 the Section held monthly meetings, seven in the field and five indoors at the County Museum. The Committee met three times, at 13 Forest Close, Wendover, by kind permission of Mr and Mrs H. Bradburn. An outline of the monthly meetings is given below.

11 January: On a fine but cold and windy day Mr David Roberts led a party of 17 to

Foxcote Reservoir to see wintering birds and also to Buckingham Canal where he explained the management of this BBONT reserve.

15 February: Mr Brian Williamson of BBONT and leader of the Oxfordshire Bat Group gave a very interesting talk on 'Bats' to a large and enthusiastic audience.

15 March: With his subject 'Caterpillars',

Mr Victor Scott entertained us with another of his interesting talks.

5 April: The Section held its annual general meeting, which was followed by a talk on 'Wildlife in The Lee village' by Mrs Susan Cowdy, MBE.

30 May: A small garden party, guided by Mr Victor Scott as night drew in, saw badgers at their setts.

28 June: The warden, Mr John Phillips, explained to the 17 members present the management of Aston Clinton Ragpits reserve and pointed out the rich flora it possesses.

26 July: A periodic visit to Bledlow Cop, by kind permission of Lord Carrington. The site is now much overgrown and Mr Victor Scott verified the plants seen, the details being passed to the County Museum's Keeper of Biology who, over the years, has kept a record of plants identified.

30 August: Mrs Susan Cowdy on a cool, cloudy afternoon led the party at Wilstone and Marsworth reservoirs when the following birds were observed: Mute Swan, Coot, Mallard, Pochard, Ruddy Duck, Great Crested Grebe, Little Grebe, Moorhen, Tufted Duck, Green Sandpiper as well as House Martins and a young Cuckoo.

20 September: The following were noted at Rushbeds Wood when Mr Aubrey Woodward was our guide: Ragged Robin, Wood Sorrel, Spindle, Opposite-leaved Golden Saxifrage, Water Starwort, Dogwood, Honeysuckle, Great Valerian, Devilsbit Scabious, Fleabane, Great Burdock, Hemp Agrimony, Yellow Pim-

pernel, Creeping Jenny, Red Bartsia, Figwort, Foxglove, Gypsywort, Yellow Archangel, Aspen, Jointed Rush, Wall-rue Spleenwort and Male Fern (*Dryopteris filix-mas*).

11 October: With Mr Victor Scott leading the fungus foray at Stockgrove Park when ground conditions were very dry, 21 species were identified: *Amanita citrina*, *A. muscaria*, *A. pantherina*, *A. rubescens*, *Amanitopsis fulva*, *Armillariella mellea*, *Boletus aereus*, *Collybia maculata*, *Hygrophoropsis aurantiaca*, *Hypholoma fasciculare*, *Laccaria loccata*, *L. turpis*, *Mycena galericulata*, *M. polygramma*, *Paxillus involutus*, *Piptoporus betulinus*, *Russula cyanoxantha*, *R. emetica*, *R. nigrans*, *R. ochroleuca*, *Scleroderma citrinum*.

22 November: Our member, Dr May Reed, have a very interesting talk and showed many slides of her recent travels in the countryside of China.

13 December: A pleasant afternoon was spent looking at slides on natural history subjects presented by members of the Section.

Our Recording Secretary reports that 1986, with its dull, damp summer, was a lean year for butterflies—a great drop was noted from the usual numbers. Several reports of sightings were received of Hummingbird Hawkmoths, two being observed at Chiltern Close, Stone. It was a poor breeding season for many birds, such as Swallows and Warblers and, especially in the Aylesbury area, Whitethroats and Spotted Flycatchers.

A. F. Elcoate

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

(as at 31 December 1986)

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ELLIOTT VINEY, FSA

Vice-Presidents

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DR E. CLIVE ROUSE, MBE, FSA
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Hon. Archivist & Librarian

MRS L. M. HEAD

Hon. Secretary (Natural History Section)

A. F. ELCOATE

The Society's Representatives on the County Library and Museum Sub-Committee

ELLIOTT VINEY, FSA DR A. H. J. BAINES, FSA DR R. P. HAGERTY

Headquarters

THE COUNTY MUSEUM, CHURCH STREET, AYLESBURY HP20 2QP

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