

THE SOCIETY

Membership

The Society learnt with regret of the deaths of Mrs E. L. Baines, mother of our Vice-President Arnold Baines, Mrs Peggy Davies, wife of Max Davies, who gave much to the Society during the latter's time as Hon. Secretary, Miss G. M. De Fraine, C. W. Edmans, Mrs I. Trelawney-Irving, whose husband had been an active Vice-President after the war, Dr V. E. Lloyd-Hart, author of *Health in the Vale of Aylesbury* and *John Wilkes and The Foundling Hospital at Aylesbury 1759-68*, H. E. Waterton and Ted White.

On the books at the end of 1987, there were 367 ordinary members, 128 family memberships, 2 juniors (exclusive of those in family memberships) and 16 affiliated bodies.

Council

Council met five times. John Collier-Wright was elected chairman. Under the Rules as amended at the AGM 1987, Tony Elcoate (Natural History Section) and Christopher Gowing (Museum Curator) became members of

Council ex-officio. Co-opted was Ted Bull (Newsletter Editor and Meeting Organizer). The President made a presentation, at the AGM party, to Colin Briggs on his resignation after assisting no fewer than five of the Society's Hon. Treasurers in looking after the Society finances over more than a quarter of a century. His place has been taken by Charles Morland, also of the County Treasurer's Department.

We thank Miss Marjorie Devereux for her many services to the Society over many years on her relinquishing the job of Hon. Membership Secretary.

Bucks County Council

Library & Museum Sub-Committee

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

With current financial stringency, it is necessary to space out work to palliate structural problems in the Museum building. Meanwhile, with the shutting of parts of the building, there are

severe shortages of work and storage spaces. The loss of storage places elsewhere will be only partially compensated by occupation of the building at Great Missenden. In consequence, the Museum, with the consent of the Society where appropriate, is giving or loaning various large items that it could not display, such as agricultural implements and structural timbers, to other museums in the county.

Financial stringency also means that no improvement is likely in the near future in the present arrangements for rescue archaeology in the county. That these arrangements are inadequate has been shown by the County Field Archaeologist's inability, due to lack of qualified long-term assistance, to cover watching briefs on several development sites, some of which would have been aided financially by grants from the developers. The Liberty Trust made a grant of £180 to the Museum for dating of material from the excavation of a kiln at Ley Hill, Chesham.

Christopher Gowing, after 27 years as Curator of the County Museum, retired at the end of the year. The President on behalf of the Society presented him with a framed Duncan map, showing Bucks constituencies after the 1832 Reform Acts, in appreciation of the way he has improved the Museum and ensured the friendly operation of the 1957 agreement between the Society and the County Council.

We thank Miss Jill Royston, who retired from the post of Keeper of Biology and Geology in the Museum, for her help to the Natural History Section over many years. We welcome Mrs Kate Rowland, her successor.

Cicely Baker Prize for Historical Research

Four proposals have been accepted for the current competition, for which completed entries must be received by the end of 1988.

Lecture Series

Seven lectures were organized by Ted Bull and were held on Saturday afternoons, usually at the County Museum.

17 January: At the Middleton Centre, Newport Pagnell, in conjunction with the Newport

Pagnell Historical Society, Dr Arnold Baines, FSA outlined the results of his recent research into 'The Origins of Newport Pagnell'.

31 January: David Allen, native of Wolverton and archaeologist formerly at the Museum, talked about his other long-standing interest 'The Railway Network of Buckinghamshire'.

28 February: Christopher Stell, a leading expert on the Non-conformist movement, spoke about 'Buckinghamshire Meeting Houses'.

14 March: Dr D.F. Renn, one of the foremost authorities, lectured on 'English Castles'.

9 May: At the Misbourne Centre, Elliott Viney, FSA gave a talk on 'The Church Monuments of Bucks'.

14 November: Brian Simmonds talked about his study of local industries in 'From Ducks and Lace to Boots and Rivets'.

5 December: Alan Raistrick described his interest in 'Tanning—the Unknown Industry'.

Outings

Six outings were arranged by the President.

16 May: Lincoln. Cathedral and Castle. Belton House, Grantham (NT). Sunny.

20 June: Derbyshire. Melbourne Hall and garden (Marquess of Lothian), church and vestiges of castle. Hardwick Hall (NT). Sunny.

18 July: Kent. Knole House (NT) Penshurst Place (Lord de L'Isle). Torrential rain.

15 August: Dorset. Maiden Castle by Dorchester. Sherborne Castle (S. Wingfield-Digby). Warm and sunny.

19 September: Winchester. Cathedral and city. Wet.

10 October: Bucks Church Crawl. Haddenham, Nether Winchendon, Cheersley, Chilton, Long Crendon, Ickford, Upper Winchendon, Quainton. Cold and wet, but a good day nevertheless.

Environmental

During the year, 141 planning applications were dealt with, the great majority for consent to demolish, alter, or change the use of a Listed Building or its ancillary buildings.

Objection was again registered to change of use to offices of the Derby Arms in St Mary's Square, Aylesbury, an objection upheld by the Minister. Comment was made to the appropriate District Council in 25 other cases. It is good to record that Hartwell House has been leased for use as a hotel and that the renovation is in the hands of Eric Throssell, FRIBA who is a member of Council. He is also the architect responsible for the Waddesdon Hill Strict Baptist Chapel now in the care of the Friends of Friendless Churches.

County Museum Archaeological Group

The Group assisted in excavations at Desborough Castle, Ley Hill and Magiovinium (on the site where a motel/service station is to be built alongside the A5T).

The Group continues to meet on Tuesdays in the County Museum beavering away in its on-

going assistance to the County Field Archaeologist in post-excavation and other fascinating and useful tasks.

Publications

We congratulate the Hon. Editor, John Chenevix Trench, on being elected Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London (FSA).

Society Monograph No. 1 (1987), *Roman Milton Keynes. Excavations and Fieldwork 1971-82*, edited by Dennis Mynard, was published in April. To date around 200 copies have been sold.

Records of Buckinghamshire Volume 27 (1985) was distributed during May and Spring and Autumn Newsletters during the year with the help of the Corps of Deliverers whom we thank for continuing support.

NATURAL HISTORY SECTION

Our year has involved the usual pattern of indoor and outdoor meetings. Three Committee meetings have been held, at the home of Mr and Mrs H. Bradburn, and we are grateful to them for providing the rendezvous. A note of the year's programme is given below.

10 January: The first meeting of the year was a lecture at the County Museum given by Mr Victor Scott. His subject 'Wildlife in the Vardar River Valley', proved to be very interesting and as well as the natural aspect one's knowledge of geography of that part of the Balkans was improved.

21 February: Common, Black-headed and Lesser Black-backed Gulls; Shelduck, Gadwall, Widgeon, Pochard, Teal, Ruddy Duck, Goldeneye, Pintail, Mallard, Smew and Tufted Duck; Canada and Greylag Goose; Great Crested Grebe, Mute Swan and Heron were seen at Willen Lake, Milton Keynes, by the nine members present. Expert guidance was afforded by John Phillips and Ian Richardson of the Development Corporation.

21 March: Dr John Phillipson of Oxford gave

an appreciative audience at the Museum a talk with slide illustrations on small animals.

11 April: Following the Section's annual meeting, Mrs Rosemary Cashmore told how she recorded the flora in the parish of Haddenham and her excellent photography was evident by the slides shown.

23 May: Many hours of heavy rain ceased abruptly as the few members present, with Dr Keith Porter as leader, set off to learn about the rich flora of the Otmoor reserve. Additionally, a nightingale was heard and a cuckoo seen.

20 June: Warden Rodney Simms showed the ten members present the successive colonisation of the Pitstone Fen reserve by flora following quarrying operations. The party later visited the new College Lake reserve project due to be opened in 1988.

11 July: An 11 a.m. start proved fortunate for this visit to Bernwood Forest to see butterflies with Mrs Beryl Hulbert as guide. A number of sightings of the Purple Emperor, as well as White Admiral, Large Skipper, Ringlet, Mar-

ble White, Meadow Brown, Small Skipper, Speckled Wood, Large White, Common Blue and Small Tortoiseshell, made it a worthwhile visit.

22 August: Eight members went to Dinton Pastures Country Park, Hurst, near Reading, to see the wildflower nursery and to have a tour of the park conducted by Jo Fuller. The purpose of the nursery is to produce wild flowers that grow only within 10 miles' radius of the park.

5 September: Alan Cook, warden of Weston Turville reservoir reserve, as well as indicating the reserve's flora and explaining conservation measures, pointed out the recently uncovered run-off built in 1833 for a water level 12 feet higher than it is now.

3 October: The annual search for fungi took place in Halton Woods, Victor Scott leading the party. Very dry ground yielded only a few good specimens, but a large number was identified, including *Amanita rubescens*, *Armillaria mellea*, *Boletus chrysenteron*, *Bulgaria inquinans*,

Calocera viscosa, *Calvatia excipuliformis*, *Collybia maculata*, *C. peronata*, *Coprinus comatus*, *Cortinarius crocolitus*, *Fomes fomentarius*, *Hydnum repandum*, *Hypholoma fasciculare*, *H. sublateritium*, *Hypoxylon fragiforme*, *Laccaria amethystina*, *Lactarius rufus*, *Lycoperdon perlatum*, *L. pyriforme*, *Marasmius oreades*, *Phallus impudicus*, *Rhytisma*, *Russula mairei*, *R. ochroleuca*, *Trametes gibbosa*, *T. versicolor*, *Tremella encephala*, *Xylaria hypoxylon*.

7 November: Results of some excellent photography were seen by members when slides were shown to accompany a lecture on Dragonflies by Stephen Cham. Using the lap dissolve technique he was able to bring to those present every detail in the lives of these fascinating creatures.

12 December: A large audience was not disappointed when Victor Scott gave another of his high-standard talks, the subject being Mount Olympus in Greece and its flora.

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

(as at 31 December 1987)

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MRS L. M. MEAD

Hon. Secretary, Natural History Section

A. F. ELCOATE

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