

# THE SOCIETY

## *Membership*

After election of new members by Council in January 1985 and deletions for non-payment of subscriptions, membership was 646 adults (counting each of 117 family memberships as two), 14 juniors (exclusive of juniors in family membership), and 16 affiliated societies.

## *Council*

As usual, Council met five times, the Chairman being Dr Arnold Baines. Following the

resignation of Mrs Brenda Easterbrook, Council appointed Don Miller to fill the vacancy until the A.G.M. in 1985. Late in the year, Council co-optees Mrs Yvonne Parminter and Stan Cauvain resigned, as Publications Officer and Membership Secretary respectively. The Hon. Librarian, Mrs Lorna Head, now doubles as Publications Officer. County Council nominees on Council were Mrs E. M. Arkell and Mrs F. Shand Kydd.

Council wrote to the Secretary of State for

the Environment urging that the budget proposal to levy V.A.T. on buildings restoration should be modified to exempt Listed Buildings and buildings in Conservation Areas. As a result of many protests, work on Listed Buildings has been so exempted, but this does not extend to buildings in Conservation Areas.

A gift of £100 from Mrs T. E. Vernon, toward the purchase of old documents, was gratefully accepted by Council which awaits a suitable occasion to utilize this gift.

Mindful of the Society's interest in Natural History, Council made a grant to the Buckinghamshire Bird Club toward the preparation of its *Atlas of Breeding Birds in Buckinghamshire*.

#### *Bucks County Council*

##### *Library & Museum Sub-Committee*

Society representatives were Mrs Easterbrook, Max Davies and the Hon. Secretary.

In estimates presented to the Education Committee, provision was made for museum space in the projected new library at High Wycombe and in the planned extension of the library in Milton Keynes.

#### *County Archaeological Advisory Committee*

Society representative: the Hon. Secretary.

At the instance of the Committee, the County Council wrote to Lord Montagu, Chairman of the new Historic Buildings and Monuments Commission for England (short title English Heritage) seeking assistance in speeding up the process of scheduling monuments and drawing attention to the backlog of unactioned requests for scheduling specific monuments in the County. The reply stressed that better and quicker selection of monuments for scheduling was regarded as important and that more inspectors were being recruited to speed this and other tasks.

The Committee has also written to the local branches of the Country Landowners Association and the National Union of Farmers regarding the protection of buried archaeological sites from treasure-hunters.

#### *Liberty Trust*

A grant of £500 from the Trust toward the publication of *Records of Buckinghamshire* Volume 24 (1982) was gratefully received.

#### *Historic Buildings Trust for Buckinghamshire*

The President continues as a member of the governing board.

The Trust bought one of the oldest houses in Amersham, 49 High Street, as a holding action while the Amersham Society raised the purchase price. Late in the year, the Society was able to take over the property from the Trust. The appeal for funds toward restoration and equipment as a museum continues. Council intends to give a grant toward restoration.

#### *County Museum Archaeological Group*

The Group has received a letter from the County Council, through the Library & Museum Sub-Committee, formally recording appreciation of the Group's contribution during its first ten years to the Museum and to Buckinghamshire archaeology.

Members assisted as the County Archaeologists' third season of excavation of the Romano-British site on the line of the projected Amersham by-pass and continue, very actively, with post-excavation work relating to these and other excavations of recent years, as well as with other projects. A Group paper with a gazetteer of Buckinghamshire Windmills was published in *Records of Buckinghamshire* Volume 24 (1982).

#### *Milton Keynes Archaeological Unit*

The first of a series of monographs to be published under the imprint of the Society, *Roman Milton Keynes*, is in typescript and should be published in the first half of 1986.

#### *Cicely Baker Prize for Historical Research*

For the second biennial competition, with entries due at the end of 1984, six eligible papers were received. The prize was awarded to a group effort from Wendover.

#### *Meetings*

The Society in conjunction with the Oxford University Department for External Studies sponsored a dayschool on 31 March on 'Recent Work in Buckinghamshire History' at the Green Park Centre, Aston Clinton. The three excellent lectures were much appreciated by some seventy people.

After a lapse of many years, Council decided to organize a series of lectures, on Saturday afternoons in the County Museum, to be addressed by local experts on topics specific to the County. Both lectures falling within the period of this report were well supported. On 17 November, Mr Dennis Parkhouse gave an illustrated talk on 'Chiltern Canals and Water Supply', and on 15 December Dr Michael Reed summarized his recent research into 'Restoration Bucks: Social and Occupational Structures'. Thanks are due to Mrs Joan Taylor and Ted Bull for help with organization.

#### *Outings*

Six outings were arranged by the President and all were enjoyed by good attendances.

*19 May.* Oxfordshire. Kingston Bagpuize House (Lady Tweedsmuir). Kingstone Lisle House (Mrs Leopold Lonsdale), Uffington church.

*16 June.* Cambridgeshire. Elton Hall (Mr William Proby). Buckden palace and church. Anglesey Abbey (N. Trust).

*15 July.* Leicestershire & Lincolnshire. Belvoir Castle (Duke of Rutland). Doddington Hall (Mr Anthony Jarvis).

*11 August.* Perambulation of the bounds of Granborough. Led by Dr Baines.

*8 September.* Wiltshire. Wilton House (Earl of Pembroke). Salisbury: city, cathedral and museum.

*13 October.* Church crawl. Wingrave, Wing, Stewkley, Soulbury, Leighton Buzzard, Edlesborough, Ivinghoe, Pitstone and Drayton Beauchamp.

#### *Listed Buildings*

The Society acts as agent in Bucks for the Council for British Archaeology which is one of the national bodies that must by statute be notified by the appropriate Planning Authority of any application to demolish a Listed Building. During the eight months of 1984 since the A.G.M., the Hon. Secretary dealt with some thirty applications, ranging from an application to demolish mid-18th century Loakes House at High Wycombe (refused by Wycombe D.C.) to one for part-demolition and subsequent reconstitution of a wicket wall in Haddenham (approved, I hope, by A.V.D.C.).

#### *Publications*

*Records of Buckinghamshire* Volume 23 (1981) was distributed around the turn of 1983/4 and Volume 24 (1982) in August. A Spring and Autumn Newsletter were produced, edited by Ted Bull as since the inception of Newsletters nine years ago. For distribution of the great majority of copies, we continue to rely on the volunteers of the 'Corps of Deliverers'. With the continual rise of postal charges, the efforts of the 'Corps' become ever more valuable and our appreciation all the greater.

## NATURAL HISTORY SECTION

As in previous years, a programme of field visits and indoor lectures was arranged for 1984. We are grateful for the use of the Education Room at the County Museum for our lectures. A brief summary of all the meetings is given below.

*7th January:* A BBONT film show arranged by Mrs Susan Cowdy, M.B.E., and Mr Arthur Mount was held at Aylesbury Grammar School.

*11th February:* On a warm February afternoon Mrs Cowdy led a party which visited

the Central Electricity Generating Board Reserve at Mop End.

*10th March:* We had the pleasure of a visit from a world authority on lichens, Mr Peter James of the British Museum of Natural History. What might seem to be a subject of limited interest was given life by Mr James, whose work takes him to many countries.

*7th April:* After the Section's Annual General Meeting Miss Jill Royston, B.Sc., gave a very interesting talk on the subject of Gardens as Nature Reserves.

*19th May:* The Rev. Peter Bugg, a BBONT warden, conducted the party on a visit to Rushbeds Wood and explained the management of this reserve.

*30th June:* Pitstone Fen is part of the old workings of the cement works and the resulting conditions produce a wonderful showing of orchids. We are grateful to Mr Graham Atkins, the warden, for explaining how he looks after the reserve.

*21st July:* Mr Missin of Milton Keynes Development Corporation described the recreational activities and wildlife conservation measures being undertaken at Willen Lake. Among various water birds seen was a young snow goose.

*5th August:* Mr Aubrey Woodward was the leader on a warm, sunny afternoon which brought out many butterflies, sixteen species being noted: White Admiral, Large Skipper, Hedge Brown, Ringlet, Wall Brown, Small Tortoiseshell, Small White, Small Copper, Green Veined White, Purple Hairstreak, Marbled White, Small Skipper, Meadow Brown, Common Blue, Peacock, and Large White.

*15th September:* Miss Jill Royston and a party of thirteen members had a particularly interesting and enjoyable outing looking at life in a section of the Wendover Branch Canal.

*6th October:* Our annual fungus foray was led by Mr Victor Scott and took place at Common Wood, Tylers Green. Among the thirty-five species found were: *Boletus edulis*, *Amanita rubescens*, *Amanita muscaria*, *Amanita fulva*, *Amanita citrina*, and *Lactarius deliciosus*.

*10th November:* Members brought along their own slides and an enjoyable afternoon was spent looking at various aspects of natural history in the West of Ireland, Brittany, Spain, Kenya, Western Australia and China, as well as in our own locality.

*8th December:* Dr Peter Bond entertained a large gathering with an excellent lecture about painting and photographing butterflies.

The Hon. Recording Secretary, Mr A. Woodward, mentions the following as being among the most important of the year: the appearance of a Sea Eagle that took up residence for some weeks early in the year near Brill; this attracted bird watchers from all over the country. It was a good year for butterflies, especially Holly Blues; and there were many reports of the large Elephant Hawk Moth larvae in the Stone area.

## OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

(as at 31st December 1984)

### *President*

ELLIOTT VINEY, F.S.A.

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### *Council*

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(CC: Nominated by the County Council)

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*Hon. Archivist*  
MRS E. M. ELVEY

*Hon. Librarian*  
MRS L. M. HEAD

*Hon. Secretary (Natural History Section)*  
MRS H. M. KENT

*Society's Representatives on the County Library & Museum Sub-Committee*  
MAX DAVIES    MRS B. D. EASTERBROOK    DR R. P. HAGERTY

### *Headquarters*

THE COUNTY MUSEUM, CHURCH STREET, AYLESBURY HP20 2QP

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