

THE SOCIETY

Membership

The Society has learnt with regret of the deaths, during 1985, of L. L. Boyd, Miss Janet Easton, G. R. Elvey, FSA, W. George, Miss M. E. Lepper, Major-General R. C. Money, CB, MC, Mrs K. Paul, R. A. C. Small and, early in 1986, of that of Rex Wailes, OBE, FSA.

At 31 December 1985, paid-up membership comprised 421 ordinary members, 128 family memberships, 6 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. Co-opted to Council were Miss M. E. Devereux (Hon. Membership Secretary), E. J. Bull (Newsletter Editor and Meeting Organizer), A. F. Elcoate (Hon. Secretary, Natural History Section), and C. N. Gowing, MA, FMA (Curator, County Museum).

A gift of £100 from Albert S. Kerry of Seattle towards Society publications was gratefully received, adding to an earlier gift of a similar

sum, and Council decided to make Mr Kerry a life member.

Council made grants of £50 to the Amersham Society towards restoration of 49 High Street, Amersham, £25 to the appeal for the restoration and preservation of the monuments and font in the church of Clifton Reynes, and £20 to the Buckinghamshire Council for Voluntary Service.

Bucks County Council

Library & Museum Sub-Committee

Society representatives were Dr Baines, Max Davies, and Dr Hagerty. On the resignation of Mr Davies, Council appointed Elliott Viney, FSA as replacement.

A notable event was the opening in December of the Aylesbury Gallery in the County Museum by Wilfred Rooke, Chairman of the County Council. Host for the evening was Mrs Elizabeth Arkell, Chairman of the Library & Museum Sub-Committee, and guest of honour was Ernest Roblin, the Chairman of Trustees of the William Harding Charity which had provided £50,000 towards design and realization of the displays in the gallery, in what had been St Mary's Church House (purchased a year or two ago by the County Council).

Cicely Baker Prize for Historical Research

The £50 prize for the second Cicely Baker competition was awarded to a group from the Wendover WEA local history class for an essay on the people of Wendover during the 17th and 18th centuries, with population figures; it is intended to publish the essay in *Records*. The third competition was announced after the 1985 AGM; competing essays are due to be received by the end of 1986.

Lecture Series

These were held at the County Museum, on Saturday afternoons:

- 12 *January*: Buckinghamshire Houses and Famous Owners, by Elliott Viney, FSA.
- 9 *February*: Recent Excavations in Bucks, by Peter Yeoman, Assistant Field Archaeologist.
- 9 *March*: Bottles and Other Artefacts, by Mike Smith.

14 *December*: The Chiltern Chair-making Industry, by L. J. Mayes, formerly Curator of Wycombe Chair Museum.

16 *March*: At the Misbourne Centre, Great Missenden. Recent Excavations in Bucks, by Peter Yeoman.

9 *November*: At the Grange School, Aylesbury. The Early History of Aylesbury, by Mike Farley, County Field Archaeologist.

The last two lectures, held in venues with capacities much larger than that of the County Museum, were very well attended, the second attracting an audience of nearly 200 people.

Thanks are due to Ted Bull for organizing these meetings and to Mrs Joan Taylor for assistance at the meetings.

Outings

Six outings were arranged by the President; all were well-supported and, surprisingly in a rather dismal summer, fell on good days.

18 *May*: London. Marble Hill House, Twickenham. Kensington Palace. Kenwood (Iveagh Collection).

15 *June*: Herefordshire. Shobden church. Croft Castle. Leominster church and town.

13 *July*: Leicestershire. Prestwood Hall, Loughborough (S. J. Packe-Drury-Lowe). Leicester church and museums. Battlefield of Bosworth (battle 22nd August 1485).

10 *August*: Wiltshire. West Kennet Long Barrow. Avebury. Ashdown House (NT). Along the Ridgeway past Waylands Smithy to Uffington Castle and the White Horse.

7 *September*: Gloucestershire. Berkeley Castle (R. J. Berkeley). Churches at Daglingworth, North Cerney, and Cirencester.

12 *October*: Bucks Church Crawl. Tattenhoe, Shenley, Ravenstone, Olney, Clifton Reynes, Sherington, Chicheley, North Crawley.

Environmental

During the year, 122 applications for Listed Building Consent, one every two working days, were dealt with by the Hon. Secretary. Most of these were received either directly from the Planning Authorities concerned or through the Council for British Archaeology for which the Society acts as agent in the county; a few appli-

cations came to notice from other sources. Some comment was made on more than a quarter of the applications, but in only five cases was objection registered. Objections sustained by refusal of LBC were to demolition of a recently-listed early post-medieval building at Loudwater (refused by Wycombe DC) and to conversion into a dwelling of the Strict Baptist Chapel on Waddesdon Hill (refused by Aylesbury Vale DC). Applications effectively withdrawn were to demolish a portion of wall attached to Wendover House and of an old barn and sections of an old wall alongside Deanway, Chalfont St Giles (both dropped by the County Council). Permission to demolish the remainder of the wall facing the Oxford Road and enclosing the Prebendal, Aylesbury, was given by AVDC (the length of the wall facing Nelson Terrace is to remain).

Following the fire which completely destroyed the interior of Missenden Abbey, thanks are due to the County Council which, through the County Architect, is enabling the County Museum to carry out a watching brief during digging of the foundations for structural framework in the interior.

Chesham Town Council enlisted Society support in expressing disquiet at the destruction of an ancient hedgerow forming a length of parish and town boundary. Following a meeting on the site, those concerned were assured that the damage had been done in ignorance and that remaining lengths of the boundary hedge would be maintained.

As regards Scheduled Sites, the hoped-for increase in the rate of scheduling by the Department of the Environment has not been realized, due to monetary and staff constraints affecting English Heritage which is responsible for investigating applications for scheduling and then advising the DOE. It is understood that

two sites already scheduled may shortly be under threat in Milton Keynes.

County Museum Archaeological Group

The Group has continued to contribute substantially to the work of the County Museum. In the field, the Group strongly supported the three-month excavation at the Prebendal, Aylesbury and provided vital assistance in the final two-week extension enabling examination of an important Iron Age ritual deposit. Due to poor weather and other factors, only one field-walk took place during the year; however, help was given to several in-service students on fieldwork projects. Continuing post-excavation back-up has included washing, sorting, and recording on computer mounds of pottery, animal bone, and other finds from the digs at Amersham, Brill, and the Prebendal. Long-term projects include a study of turnpike roads in the county, work on aerial photographs, cataloguing ironwork from the Romano-British villa at Hambleden, and a search of occupational records with archaeological significance.

Publications

Records Volume 25 (1983) was distributed in July. A Spring and an Autumn Newsletter were also distributed. The Society owes its sincere thanks to John Chenevix Trench and Mike Farley, FSA, who edit *Records*, and to Ted Bull who looks after the Newsletters, and, once again, to the 'Corps of Deliverers'.

Printing difficulties have delayed the appearance of the first of the series of monographs being published under the aegis of the Society on behalf of the Milton Keynes Archaeology Unit, that on Romano-British discoveries in Milton Keynes. When available in 1987, it is intended to offer Society members a privilege price as compared with both the pre-publication and retail prices.

NATURAL HISTORY SECTION

1985 did not have an auspicious start as the first programmed event, the annual film show arranged in conjunction with BBONT for

1 January, had to be cancelled because the Education Authority required too large a sum for the hire of Aylesbury Grammar School hall.

During the year seven field visits took place and four events were held at the County Museum.

13 July: The late hour set for the meeting (9 p.m.) and holidays combined to make a small turn-out to observe moths at Coombe Hill, Wendover. Mr M. Albertini and Mr Peter Hall were the joint leaders.

3 August: Mr Aubrey Woodward led a party of 13 members to Waterperry Wood to see butterflies; on a cool, windy day the following were noted: White Admiral, Comma, Red Admiral, Tortoiseshell, Common Blue, Hedge Brown, Ringlet, Large Skipper, Small Skipper, Large White, Green Veined White, Small White, Purple Hairstreak, Small Brown.

14 September: A very interesting visit to the ARC Wildfowl Centre at Great Linford which is managed by the Game Conservancy (access is by invitation only). Mike Street, the warden, explained how by habitat management a rich flora and fauna can be quickly developed around the man-made gravel pits. Water birds seen: Mallard, Great Crested Grebe, Tufted Duck, Teal, Heron, Swan and Green Sandpiper.

19 October: Mr Victor Scott and Mr Aubrey Woodward led the Section's annual hunt for fungi, this year at Coombe Hill.

16 November: Mrs F. J. Hulbert spoke about 'The Deserts and Canyons in Arizona' and with the help of excellent slides showed some of the wild life and plants of that region.

7 December: A full house for an excellent

lecture on Badgers by an authority on the subject, Mr A. Killingley.

17 February: A winter bird watch at Calvert Jubilee Reserve set for 10.30 a.m. on a Sunday was not well-attended.

2 March: Mr Victor Scott gave a very interesting lecture with slides entitled 'A Botanical Excursion in the Chimgan Mountains'.

13 April: After the Section's annual general meeting Mr Lawrie Webb spoke about some aspects of conservation.

25 May: By kind permission of Mrs Brunner a visit was made to Wotton Underwood lakes with Mr Aubrey Woodward leading a party of 11 members. On a warm day forty different plants were identified and the following birds seen or heard: Blackcap, Robin, Chaffinch, Song Thrush, Blackbird, Wren, Jackdaw, Carrion Crow, Rook, Pochard, Moorhen, Great Crested Grebe, Tufted Duck, Heron (young were heard nesting on Sawmills Island), Canada Geese (large flock), Mallard, Coot, Swan, Chiffchaff, Swallow, Swift, House Martin, Dunnock, Wood Pigeon, Willow Warbler, House Sparrow, Linnet, Blue Tit, Great Tit.

22 June: Mr Nigel Phillips, BBONT warden, conducted a party of 15 around the reserve on a cool damp day. Among the many plants seen were Orchids—Greater Butterfly, Lesser Butterfly, Spotted and Twayblade—as well as White and Common Helleborine, Heath Speedwell, Milkwort, Wild Carrot, Wild Parsnip, Mignonette, Marjoram, Salad Burnet and Agrimony.

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(as at 31st December 1985)

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MAX DAVIES MRS B. D. EASTERBROOK DR R. P. HAGERTY

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