

PART I — PROCEEDINGS

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 1972

The meeting was held in the Somerset Room, Taunton Castle, on Saturday, 6th of May, 1972, at 2.15 p.m.

Mr. Grinsell introduced the new President, Mr. Hunt, as one who really needed no introduction after the valuable service he had given for many years as Chairman of Council. In his reply Mr. Hunt said he was very conscious of the honour being done to him. On taking the chair, Mr. Hunt outlined the aims of the Early Taunton Committee and told the meeting of the plans for improving Castle Green.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

On a proposal by Mr. Denton-Cox, the officers of the Society were re-elected. Mr. Hancock, seconded by Mr. Morton proposed the following, who were re-elected to the Council, to serve until 1975: Mr. Hunt, Mr. Naish, Mr. Morland, Mr. Poyntz Wright. Mr. Clements, already a co-opted member was also elected.

SUMMARY OF THE SECRETARY'S REPORT

There were 60 new members during the year, an increase of 8 over last year; deaths and resignations, however, were 107, as against 58. The higher subscription rate may have accounted for the drop, which might prove to be even larger since it might be assumed that some of the considerable number of members who had not paid this year may in fact be resigning.

After tax claims, Mrs. Gray's estate should produce about £15,000, which came at a most opportune moment; as will be gathered from the accounts, we should otherwise have faced serious problems this year. A small committee has been set up to consider finances generally.

Volume 115 has been sent to members, this contains part 2 of Mr. Grinsell's valuable work on Somerset Barrows. There is already ample material for Vol. 116, but ever-increasing production costs are a matter for grave concern; they already absorb a large part of the income from subscriptions.

The Newsletter, edited by Mr. Elkington and published twice a year, was a new venture; this was a speedier method of letting members know of archaeological activities than the *Proceedings*.

Council have authorised the setting up of an Archaeological and Historic Buildings Committee, of which Mrs. Langmaid is Chairman, to advise on policy and keep an eye on how development might affect these matters. Mr. Goodall has agreed to become Historic Buildings Secretary, to co-ordinate reports on threatened buildings and enter objections where necessary.

Excavations were continued at Norton Fitzwarren during September under Mrs. Langmaid's direction; a final excavation will take place this year. Notices have been sent to members enlisting their help. Financial help was given to Mr. Leech's excavation of the Catsgore site and to Mr. Coleman-Smith's Donyatt Pottery excavations. An active M5 group has been working along the line of the motorway.

A grant has been approved towards the cost of converting the old workroom into a local history library, to be staffed by the County Library Service. Everyone should gain from this arrangement; it has already involved a lot of work and thanks are due to a number of members who have been sorting papers and lugging books around. Particular thanks are due to Mr. Thompson, who has spent hours sorting out old slides and in many other ways.

Mrs. Hallam and Mr. Keylock attended a meeting of the National Parks Policies Committee and sent in a report.

It was not possible to arrange a four-day excursion last year, but day visits were made, on June 12th to Gaulden Manor, Nettlecombe Court, and Court House. We are grateful to Mr. and Mrs. Starkie, Mr. John Wolseley and Lt. Col. Luttrell for showing us these houses. On the 19th of August Mrs. Hallett kindly showed members Cothelney Manor and Mr. Mitchell came to talk at Woodspring Priory; Clevedon Court was visited in the afternoon.

Lectures included "Adaptation and Evolution in Flower Pollination", by Dr. M. C. F. Proctor; "Industrial Melanism in the Lepidoptera", by Professor E. B. Ford; "The Glaciation of Somerset", by Mr. G. A. Kellaway; "Close-up on Nature", by Mr. A. E. McR Pearce; "Cadbury-Congresbury", by Mr. P. J. Fowler; "Archaeology and the Sea", by Mr. D. J. Blackman.

The meeting of the Branch and Affiliated Societies was held this year at Bristol. In the morning Mrs. Neale conducted members around Bristol. In the afternoon a number of papers were read. After being entertained to tea by the Lord Mayor, Professor Charles Thomas gave a talk on the role of field survey in archaeology.

Archaeological Field Meetings were held at Ham Hill, Glastonbury, Cadbury-Congresbury and Norton Fitzwarren. The attendance at some of these was disappointing. This year's field meetings are shown in the programme sent out with *Proceedings*, along with the Natural History and Ornithological field meetings. The former had six field meetings in 1971 and also a successful social evening on October 18th.

In consideration of other commitments, Mr. Haldane had to resign the post of Secretary last March; this report is largely his and is an indication of the valuable service he gave.

Council decided that it was more appropriate for the Presidential Address to be given at the end of the presidential year rather than the beginning. Mr. Hunt's address will, therefore, be given at this time next year. In place of the address this year we have been fortunate enough to have Mr. Seaby, who will be talking to us after the interval on Saxon coins from the West Country.

Finally attention is drawn to the exhibition of members' work which is now on view in the school room, by kind permission of the County Museums Officer, Mr. Sansome, until May 20th.

ANNUAL ACCOUNTS

The Hon. Treasurer presented the annual accounts to the meeting and, on a proposal by Mr. Naish, seconded by Mr. Baker, these were adopted.

SOMERSET RECORD SOCIETY

The Hon. Secretary, Mrs. S. W. Rawlins, reported that Vols. 70 and 71 were both published at the end of 1971, Vol. 70 being the fifth instalment of the Bridgwater Borough Archives, published with the assistance of a generous grant from Bridgwater Borough Council, and Vol. 71, Assize Orders for Somerset, 1640-59, together with some of the papers of Robert Hunt, Sheriff of Somerset in 1655.

The Wells Cathedral Act Books, 1666-87, edited by Dr. D. S. Bailey would be published jointly with the Historical MSS. Commission which would contribute about half the cost; this would probably be the next volume. Dr. Brian Kemp of Reading University is editing the Cartulary of St. John's Hospital, Bath, with which will be included a calendar of the deeds of the Button family of North Somerset, now in the Somerset Record Office.

Members have been very good in accepting the increased rate of subscriptions, but new subscribers have not quite balanced the losses from death and resignation. New members will be very welcome as there are no lack of plans for the future, if the ever increasing costs of printing can be met.