

THE SOCIETY

At the annual general meeting in April, E. Clive Rouse, M.B.E., F.S.A., M.A. retired from the Presidency after 10 years, and from the Council after an astonishing 44 years — exactly one third of the Society's existence. A presentation of an engraved glass chalice was made by J. F. Head, F.S.A., on behalf of members of Council and the Society.

Elliott Viney, F.S.A. succeeded Clive Rouse as President, retiring from the office of Hon. Secretary after a no less astonishing 25 years in office. The adult membership of the Society at the end of the year was 683 with 14 corporate members.

Council

Five meetings were held during the year. Councillor A. H. J. Baines was elected Chairman. This is the first time that a County Council appointee to our Council has held this office. Council decided to appoint an Hon. Associate Editor of the *Records of Buckinghamshire* to work with the Hon. Editor, one being always historically and the other archaeologically orientated. Council were grateful to M. E. Farley for accepting appointment as the first Hon. Associate Editor.

A Grants Sub-Committee of Council was appointed to administer such sums as might be available to support projects which further the objects of the Society. Grants were seen mainly as modest support for historical, archaeological or natural history projects and educational initiatives such as public lectures and day schools.

The Society itself acknowledges with gratitude the following donations towards the production of the *Records of Buckinghamshire*: from the Liberty Trust, £400; from Mr. A. S. Kerry of Seattle, U.S.A., £100.

Buildings

About 100 planning applications concerning listed buildings were considered. Among them was a proposal to demolish a small pump house on the Grand Union Canal at Fenny Stratford, one of a group of buildings typical of canal development in the 18th century. At the year end there was still a possibility that the Bletchley Archaeological & Historical Society would be able to take over the little building themselves. The condition of the Chequers building in High Wycombe was clearly desperate. Council arranged for a survey by Clive Rouse and the Curator of the County Museum of the first floor wall paintings. A photographic record was made. Council made observations on archaeological or historical aspects of proposals for the Fulmer and Wingrave conservation areas and on a policy document on the High Wycombe Area District Plan.

Metal Detectors

The Society supported the County Archaeological Advisory Committee's urgent submission to the Bucks. County Council, asking that the County Council should prohibit the use of metal detectors on County owned land, as neighbouring and other county councils have already done. Regrettably, the County Council refused the request. The Society's Council noted with satisfaction the firm stance taken on this matter by the National Trust.

Outings

Six outings were arranged; they were all well supported and blessed by good weather.

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| May 12 | Gloucester Cathedral, the restored 17th century garden at Westbury Court, Hidcote garden. |
| July 8 | Thame Park (by invitation of Sir Frank Bowden). |
| July 16 | Eastnor Castle (Hereford & Worcester), Sezincote (Gloucestershire), by invitation of Mrs. D. Peake. |
| August 4 | Perambulation of the Parish Boundaries of Olney. |
| August 25 | Rushton Hall and the Triangular Lodge (Northamptonshire), Wimpole Hall (Cambridgeshire). |
| September 15 | Bucks. Churches: Nether Winchenon, Chearsley, Chilton, Long Crendon, Boarstall (and Boarstall Tower, by invitation of Dr. S. Hall), Ickford and Haddenham. |

Structure Plan

The County Structure Plan as modified by the Secretary for the Environment was promulgated and became operative. The weak treatment of archaeological conservation in the policy statement remained unaltered, but the report of the Panel which heard the Examination in Public commented on the terms which this Society had repeatedly urged during the months of preparation of the Plan, and stated that these should be communicated by the County to the District Councils as strong recommendations to be observed during the implementation of the plan. The County complied with this recommendation.

NATURAL HISTORY SECTION

This year, 1979, saw the establishment of a system of voluntary wardens under Reserve Manager Mr. Victor Scott to assist with the BBONT Nature Reserves at Chequers, the Rifle Range, Pulpit Hill and Grange Lands, Great Kimble.

With regret we have to report the death of Mrs. Howard Grimmitt who, like her late husband, gave so much of her time to the work of the Natural History Section as a member of the committee for very many years.

Our Field Visits and Lectures have continued and are briefly listed as follows:

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| January 6 | Members attended the BBONT film show at Aylesbury Grammar School, welcomed by Mrs. Susan Cowdy. |
| February 10 | Mr. James Crowden gave a very exciting talk on his expedition to Ladaq in the Himalayas, illustrated with superb slides. |
| March 10 | The A.G.M. was followed by a film 'Farming with Wildlife', introduced by the President, Sir Thomas Barlow. |
| April 21 | Mr. J. Worgan welcomed us at the Duck Decoy at Boarstall giving a very informative opening talk and demonstration. |
| May 5 | Joint meeting with the British Naturalists' Association, South Bucks. Branch, at Cricklade North Meadow Nature Reserve and on to the Pasque Flower Reserve (<i>Anemone pulsatilla</i>), both near Cirencester, Glos. |
| June 16 | A very rewarding outing with Mr. Roy Maycock to Aston Hill, Aston Clinton, for grasses as some 22 species were found. Miss Dunbar kindly entertained a large party to tea at 'The Chalet'. |
| July 7 | Mr. Aubrey Woodward took a party to Dry Sandford Pit Nature Reserve at Cothill, Abingdon, Oxon. The speciality here was Marsh Helleborine (<i>Epipactis palustris</i>). The Bee Orchids (<i>Ophrys apifera</i>) were particularly fine. |
| September 1 | Visit to the Old Slade Nature Reserve where Little Grebe, Great Crested Grebe, Tufted Duck, Mallard and Pochard were sighted. |
| October 6 | Our annual Fungus Foray with Mr. Victor Scott to Ashridge this year, and a joint meeting with the West Herts. Natural History Society and Miss Margaret Holden. Some 80 species were collected and identified. |
| November 3 | Another splendid lecture by Mr. Victor Scott with his fine colour slides of the 'Spring Flowers of Majorca', showing us some of the 1500 or so species found in the island, including some of the endemics. |
| December 1 | An interesting lecture by Mr. Mike Towns on 'Spiders of Buckinghamshire', showing slides of some of the 280 species found in the County. Burnham Beeches, Bucks., is so far the only recorded habitat in the British Isles of the rare 'Four-spot Spider'. |

Grasses identified at Aston Hill: Hairy or Wood Brome; Barren Brome; Smooth Brome; False Oat Grass; Wood Brachypodium; Rough Meadow Grass; Cock's-foot Grass; Annual Meadow Grass; Giant Fescue; Rye Grass; Red Fescue; Tall Fescue; Quaking Grass; Yellow Oat Grass; Hairy Oat Grass; Upright Brome; Smooth Meadow Grass; Crested Dog's-tail Grass; Wood Meadow Grass; Sheep's Fescue; Timothy Grass; Yorkshire Fog.

Miss Janet Easton reports the existence of a new colony of Marbled White Butterflies in Thirteen Acres Field, Peterley.

Mr. Aubry Woodward writes: 'During the summer of 1979 a largish bird of prey was reported seen by three people near the River Thame at Eythrope. I was fortunate in observing the bird and, although not close enough to be positively sure, was convinced it was a Hen Harrier.'

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

(as at 31st December, 1979)

President

ELLIOTT VINEY, F.S.A.

Vice Presidents

MISS CICELY BAKER, F.S.A.
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E. CLIVE ROUSE, M.B.E., F.S.A.
MAJOR J. D. YOUNG, Lord Lieutenant and Custos Rotulorum

Council

MRS. E. M. ARKELL*	A. H. J. BAINES,* (<i>Chairman</i>)	
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**nominated by the County Council*

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

MRS. P. NIGHTINGALE, Ph.D	MRS. M. FARNELL	MAX DAVIES
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MAX DAVIES

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Hon. Archivist
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Hon. Librarian
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Hon. Secretary (Natural History Section)
MRS. J. A. COLMER

Headquarters

THE COUNTY MUSEUM, CHURCH STREET, AYLESBURY HP20 2QP

CONTENTS

A Base-Cruck Hall in Denham <i>John Chenevix-Trench and Pauline Fenley</i>	3
Stone Weights from the Rivers Great Ouse, Ouzel, Nene and Tove <i>Dennis C. Mynard</i>	11
Two Roman Cremation Burials from Great Brickhill <i>David Allen</i>	29
A Roman Patera from Olney <i>M. R. Petchey</i>	35
Rescue Excavation of a Medieval House at Whaddon, Buckinghamshire <i>Richard Griffiths with contributions from R. A. Croft, D. C. Mynard, S. E. Rigold, P. A. Stamper and P. Woodfield</i>	40
An Annotated List of the Buckinghamshire Carabidae (Coleoptera) Including Twenty Species Not Previously Recorded <i>C. Reid</i>	77
An Early Romano-British Inhumation Cemetery at West Wycombe, Bucks. <i>Michael Farley and Richard Wright</i>	81
The Products of a Post-Medieval Pottery Kiln from Excavations at Emmanuel Church, Chesham <i>Stan and Pauline Cauvain</i>	90
A Medieval Homestead at Park Wood, Bradenham, Bucks. <i>Anne Cookson</i>	98
Burials in Aylesbury and the Early History of the Town <i>Michael Farley</i>	116
The Remains of a Seventeenth-Century Clay Pipe Kiln at 13 Castle Street, Aylesbury, and the Pipes from a Probable Kiln Site at Whitehall Street. <i>John Moore</i>	123
An Annotated List of Species of the Genus <i>Stenus</i> (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae) in Buckinghamshire Including Two New to the County <i>C. Reid</i>	133
A Bell-Pit or Chalk Well at Lane End <i>Michael Farley</i>	135
The Boundaries of Wotton Underwood <i>A. H. J. Baines</i>	141
The Olney Charter of 979 <i>A. H. J. Baines</i>	154
Archaeological Notes from the Buckinghamshire County Museum	185
Notes	194
The Museum.	195
Reviews	195
Obituary	200
The Society	200
Natural History Section	202
Officers of the Society	203

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