

**REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR 1957**

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The report and the audited accounts printed below cover the period from 1st January to 31st December 1957. Comparative figures for 1956 are given in brackets.

During the year 209 (200) new members joined the Society and we lost 67 (42) by reason of death, resignation and the operation of Rule 6 (e). The net increase in membership was 142 (158) and the total membership at the end of the year was 1,332 (1,190). A second drive for new members who have helped with the Distribution Maps Scheme yielded 58 new members.

It became evident during the year that the Society's expenditure was tending to exceed its revenue. The situation was aggravated by the increase in cost of printing, the unexpected rise in postage rates, and by the decision of the Commissioners of Inland Revenue that the Society was not entitled to repayment of tax on covenanted subscriptions. The position was to some extent relieved by another large increase in membership and by members responding to our appeal to pay their subscriptions promptly. We end the year with a debit balance of £443 in the General Fund which is offset by larger balances in the Journal Fund of £568 and the Proceedings Fund of £250. The net balance of these funds of £375 would appear not unfavourable compared with the balance of £391 a year ago. It was, however, achieved only because one part of *Watsonia* was issued and not two parts as had been intended. The balance in the Publications Fund of £1,096 (£1,071) appears favourable, as the 1956 Conference Report was published during the year. It will, however, be seriously diminished when bills for the *List of British Vascular Plants* (which we are publishing jointly with the British Museum (Natural History)) and *British Herbaria* become due. During the year 500 National Savings Certificates which had appeared in our balance-sheet at their cost of £400 were realised for £932; this was re-invested in a new issue of National Savings Certificates and 4½% Defence Bonds to gain more interest. The net gain of £532 from the sale of the certificates has been set aside as a Reserve Fund.

In view of the serious financial position, the Council called a Special General Meeting of members on 30th November, when it was decided to raise the subscription for Ordinary Members from one guinea to thirty shillings. The Officers and Council regret the necessity for this, but the steady rise in costs over the ten years since subscription rates were last reviewed renders it inevitable if the activities of the Society are to continue at their present level.

The activities of the Society have once again been centred largely on the **Distribution Maps Scheme**, the progress of which in its fourth year is the subject of a separate report by the Director. The accounts of the Scheme, which are kept separately from the Society's ordinary accounts are similarly shown elsewhere. The **Maps Committee** (Secretary, Professor A. R. Clapham) has had an especially full and useful year.

Because of the great growth of the Society in recent years the Council has been considering the possibility of further decentralisation. Encouraged by the success of the Committee for the Study of the Scottish Flora the **Development and Rules Committee** (Secretary, Mr. D. E. Allen) has drawn up a plan to organise much of our work on a regional basis, which, it is hoped, will be put into operation in the coming three years.

In its third year the **Committee for the Study of the Scottish Flora** (Secretary, Mr. B. W. Ribbons), a joint committee of the Society and the Botanical Society of Edinburgh, has been especially active. During the year it has organised six field meetings with a total attendance of 109 (87) made up as follows: Callander 6, Hunter's Quay 9, Linlithgow (intended for juniors) 30, Oban 26, Fort William 11, Aberdeen 12, Moffat 15. The main object of these very successful meetings was to obtain more records for the Distribution Maps Scheme. An Exhibition Meeting attended by 70 was held on 9th March at Oban High School, by kind permission of the Rector. We are grateful to Mr. A. H. Davidson who arranged this meeting and provided tea. A similar meeting was held on 9th November at the Royal Botanic Garden, Edinburgh, and was attended by 80 persons. During the year Miss M. S. Campbell left the committee upon becoming resident abroad but as her services during the past two years have been much appreciated it was decided to invite her to attend its meetings when she is in Britain. A fuller account of the Committee's work and of the meetings organised by it will appear in *Proceedings*.

Meetings in the rest of the British Isles were organised by the **Meetings Committee** (Secretary, Dr. H. J. M. Bowen). The advertised programme of field meetings was carried out with a much better attendance of 180 (105) than in recent years. The attendance at individual meetings was Winchester 39, Sudbury 35, Hereford 18, Launceston 19, Woodhall Spa 16, Tunbridge Wells 53. The object of all of the meetings except the last was to collect records for the Distribution Maps Scheme and it is gratifying that, having constructive work as their basis, they have been so popular. We are indebted to Mr. P. C. Hall, our Field Secretary, for the large amount of work he has put into organising the summer programme.

History for the Society was made on 13th April when the Annual General Meeting was held at the Botany School, Cambridge, by kind permission of Professor G. E. Briggs, for this was the first meeting of its kind to be held outside London. Papers were read before the business meeting, and following it a large proportion of the numerous members present visited the Distribution Maps Scheme and the University Botanic Garden. A *conversazione* was held in the evening, and on the following day some well-known Cambridgeshire plant localities were visited. We give our thanks to Drs. F. H. Perring and S. M. Walters for making the excellent arrangements for the week-end. In September a very successful one-day conference having as its theme recent work on critical groups was held at the Department of Botany, Birmingham University, by kind permission of Professor E. J. Maskell. This was followed by a *conversazione* and, on the following day, a field meeting at Sutton Park. We are grateful to Dr. J. G. Hawkes and other Birmingham members for the organisation of a most enjoyable week-end. The Annual Exhibition Meeting was held on 30th November in the Lecture Hall of the British Museum (Natural History). It was attended by 360 (350) members and visitors and there were 59 (45) exhibits. It was followed by a *conversazione* at Crosby Hall, Chelsea, at which there was an attendance of 89 (87).

A programme including seven field meetings and a regional meeting at Liverpool has been arranged for 1958.

A number of successful meetings intended for younger botanists were organised by the **Junior Activities Committee** (Secretary, Mr. A. W. Westrup). There were seven one-day field meetings for fifth and sixth form pupils in grammar schools attended by 346 (259). The attendance at individual meetings was Hartlebury Common 75, Cassop, Co. Durham 60, Mickleham 39, Dartford Marshes 36, Lyndhurst 80, Hatchmere 23, Ruislip Common 31. The continued popularity of these meetings is evidence that the Society is catering for a much-felt need in schools. The residential meeting this year was at Kenmare in the Republic of Ireland, and was attended by 18 (39). We are grateful to senior members who attended this meeting, which did much useful work for the Distribution Maps Scheme.

It was unfortunate that a visit to the Rooms of the Linnean Society in January, during the schools' vacation, was attended by only 35. The President of the Linnean Society, Dr. H. Hamshaw Thomas, gave an instructive address on the life and work of Linnaeus. Mr. N. Y. Sandwith spoke on the Linnean Herbarium and Dr. C. R. Metcalfe conducted a tour of the Library.

A full programme, including a residential meeting in the Pyrenees and a visit to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, has been arranged for 1958. The Junior Activities Committee regrets that it has not been able to make any progress with the compilation of a panel of lecturers for schools and the preparation of a cinematograph film.

The Council records with pleasure an active year during which one part of *Watsonia*, 50 pages, and two parts of *Proceedings*, totalling 470 pages, have been issued. It was hoped that a second part of *Watsonia* would be issued but it is delayed to the early days of 1958. The report of the 1956 conference, *Progress in the Study of the British Flora*, edited by Mr. J. E. Lousley, has been published. Two works long awaited by members, *British Herbaria*, compiled by Mr. D. H. Kent, and the *List of British Vascular Plants*, by Mr. J. E. Dandy, which the Society is publishing jointly with the British Museum (Natural History), are expected shortly. The remaining work to which the Society is committed for publication is Mr. J. E. Lousley's *Flora of the Isles of Scilly* which it is expected will reach an advanced stage in the coming year. The Council has decided to sponsor the publication of a bibliography of the British Flora, a work which is the result of the researches of our member Mr. N. Douglas Simpson over a number of years and which will undoubtedly prove to be exceedingly useful.

Our thanks are once again due to Mr. E. B. Bangerter for his efficient handling of orders for our publications and to the Trustees of the British Museum (Natural History) for allowing their storage at the museum. The **Publications Committee** (Secretary, Mr. P. J. Wanstall), which has indeed had a fruitful year, wishes to thank Professor W. H. Pearsall and Professor D. Lewis for the use of the Library of the Department of Botany, University College, for its meetings.

Not the least important of the Society's activities is the consideration of problems affecting wild-plant conservation. The **Conservation Committee** (Secretary, Mr. J. E. Lousley) has twice met representatives of the Nature Conservancy. The Society was also represented at meetings convened by the Conservancy to consider problems arising from fires on heaths and commons, and the use of toxic chemicals in agriculture. A list of rare species for which data should be treated as strictly confidential has been prepared for the Conservancy.

By far the most serious threat to a district of outstanding importance under consideration during the year has been the proposal of the Tees Valley Water Board to construct a reservoir near Dine Holm Scar. In addition to the area to be submerged, this threatens unique plant communities on shingle banks, slopes of eroding moraine, and wet rocks along the Tees and its tributaries far downstream. The construction of a reservoir anywhere in the upper dale involves severe damage to this district of unparalleled scientific importance and the Society is committed to opposing any such proposals to the utmost. Of other threats to particular areas under consideration during the year mention must be made of Roydon Common, West Norfolk, with its valuable bog flora, where the Forestry Commission have plans for extensive afforestation.

During the year reports of severe damage from the spraying of roadside verges in Gloucestershire, Wiltshire and Staffordshire were received. It had been hoped that observance of the conditions set out in the circular sent to highway authorities by the Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation in 1955 would leave botanists with little cause for complaint, but it seems that, after a welcome respite in 1956, this threat must still be regarded as a serious one.

Support has been given to the Montgomeryshire Field Society's effort to conserve the Montgomeryshire branch of the Shropshire Union Canal, and to a movement organised by the Portsmouth and District Natural History Society to press for the declaration of Langstone and Farlington Marshes as a Local Nature Reserve.

In conclusion, the Council wishes to thank the many members and friends who have assisted the Society by leading field meetings, reading papers at meetings and working on the various committees of the Society. The lack of permanent premises adds greatly to the work of the voluntary officers, many of whom do work of a dull routine nature. On these workers much of the success of the Society depends and the Council appeals to members to do all they can to lighten their labours.

T. G. TUTIN (President).

J. G. DONY (Secretary).

6th February 1958.

## GENERAL FUND.

1956			1956		
£34	To Balance from 1956	... £174 19 9	£250	By Transfers to Journal Fund	... £750 0 0
1119	„ Subscriptions received	... 1288 19 2	400	„ Transfers to Proceedings Fund	... 750 0 0
9	„ Receipts from Advertisements	... 2 10 0	10	„ Transfers to Meetings Committee Fund	... 25 0 0
47	„ Income Tax recovered	... 0 0 0	50	„ Grant to Maps Scheme (1956/57)	... 100 0 0
34	„ Interest on Post Office Savings Account	... 15 1 0	25	„ Notional Interest to Publications Fund	... 32 2 0
—	„ Interest on 4½% Defence Bonds	... 12 10 10	11	„ Hire of Rooms for Council and Committee Meetings	... 4 7 6
15	„ Interest on 4% Defence Bonds	... 20 0 0	1	„ Cheque Book	... 0 10 0
—	„ Donation	... 1 1 0	14	„ Duplicating Minutes of Meetings	... 14 1 10
—	„ Sales of old Reports	... 6 6 6	15	„ Officers' Expenses	... 6 15 4
—	„ Balance	... 443 5 5	1	„ Fire Insurance	... 1 2 6
			—	„ Advertising Expenses	... 1 5 0
			4	„ Telephones	... 3 10 9
			20	„ Committee Secretaries' Expenses	... 31 18 4
			50	„ General Printing and Stationery	... 39 16 5
			131	„ Printing Notices of Meetings	... 132 7 11
			—	„ Affiliation Fee to Biological Council	... 2 0 0
			3	„ Foreign Exhibition Expenses	... —
			27	„ Recruiting Drive Expenses	... —
			—	„ Subscription to George Don's Memorial Repair Fund	... 2 2 0
				„ Postages and Petty Expenses:—	
				Hon. General Secretary	... £12 18 1
				Hon. Treasurer	... 11 6 0
				Hon. Assistant Secretary	... 24 0 0
				Hon. Assistant Treasurer	... 8 0 0
				Parcelling Publications at Nat. History Museum	... 11 10 0
			71		67 14 1
			175	„ Balance	... —
<u>£1258</u>		<u>£1964 13 8</u>	<u>£1258</u>		<u>£1964 13 8</u>

## JOURNAL FUND

1956			1956	
£193	To Balance from 1956	... £126 14 11		By Printing <i>Watsonia</i> and
250	„ Transfers from General			postages :—
	Fund	... 750 0 0		Vol. III, part 6
128	„ Sales of <i>Watsonia</i>	... 113 0 6		(to complete
				payment) ... £63 17 10
				Vol. IV, part 1 358 2 5
			£445	£422 0 3
			126	„ Balance
				... 567 15 2
£571		£989 15 5	£571	£989 15 5

## PROCEEDINGS FUND

1956			1956	
£121	To Balance from 1956	... £88 18 10		By Printing <i>Proceedings</i> and
400	„ Transfers from General			postages thereon :—
	Fund	... 750 0 0		Vol II, part 3 £412 14 9
32	„ Sales of <i>Proceedings</i>	... 63 15 1		Vol. II, part 4 238 10 10
			465	651 5 7
			—	„ Refund on Reprints
			88	... 1 3 0
				„ Balance
				... 250 5 4
£553		£902 13 11	£553	£902 13 11

## PUBLICATIONS FUND

1956			1956	
£1000	To Balance from 1956	... £1070 16 3		By Printing 1956 Conference
25	„ Interest for year on			Report ... .. £306 2 9
	initial balance at 3%			„ Balance of cost of 1954
	(per General Fund)	... 32 2 0	£78	Conference Report
10	„ Sales of 1948 Conference			... .. 0 18 9
	Report	... 9 4 7	1	„ Editorial Expenses
10	„ Sales of 1950 Conference			... .. —
	Report	... 7 3 6	1070	„ Balance
22	„ Sales of 1952 Conference			... .. 1096 6 5
	Report	... 10 17 11		
66	„ Sales of 1954 Conference			
	Report	... 36 16 2		
—	„ Sales of 1956 Conference			
	Report	... 165 13 6		
3	„ Sales of <i>Flora of Buck-</i>			
	<i>inghamshire</i>	... 5 8 6		
1	„ Sales of <i>Flora of North-</i>			
	<i>amptonshire</i>	... 3 15 1		
—	„ Sales of <i>Flora of West</i>			
	<i>Ross</i>	... 1 7 3		
12	„ Sales of <i>Comital Flora</i>	... 7 6 2		
—	„ Advance Sales of <i>British</i>			
	<i>Herbaria</i>	... 52 17 0		
£1149		£1403 7 11	£1149	£1403 7 11

