

Royal Society of Tasmania

Annual Report for the Year 1970

The Council has the honour to present to members the following report on the activities of the Society during 1970.

PAPERS AND PROCEEDINGS.

Volume 104 of the Papers and Proceedings was printed and distributed. It is of interest to note that this volume is distributed to countries in various parts of the world, in all continents. Many exchanges are maintained, and in return we receive publications in the various disciplines. This method of exchange is of inestimable value to the Society's library as, through it, many of our valuable holdings have been built up over the years. It is interesting to note that in some subjects our holdings provide the most complete references in Australia, but it may be pertinent to add that each year more and more scientific institutions are notifying us that, because of increased costs, the free exchange can no longer continue. The Society has a real problem here, for if we are to continue some of the series we have had for scores of years, we will have to purchase. As is well known, our funds are limited, so some day not too far distant the Society as a whole may have to consider whether to continue the library series or to call a halt to some of the activities of the Society, or to increase subscriptions.

THE LIBRARY.

During the year the library was moved to the new quarters in the University. The accommodation is provided in secure quarters, and removes many of the hazards which faced it in the room in the museum building.

The shelving in the old library was removed and the room painted. It is proposed to continue to use the room for general meetings. The library has been associated with the Tasmanian Museum since 1863, when the Society moved into the building which is now the Museum and which was built through the instigation of the Royal Society itself. The Trustees of the Museum, and the Council of the Society expressed regret that the close association built up over the years was to be broken, but both groups are pleased to note that some real association will remain.

Six hundred volumes, chiefly journals, were added to the library during the year.

ANNUAL MEETING.

The Annual Meeting was held in March when the Annual Report and the Statements of Receipts and Payments were adopted.

At that meeting the vacant position of Vice-President was filled by the election of Mr E. C. Gifford, the positions of Councillors by the election of Dr D. Martin and Mr A. R. Neilson. The positions of Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Auditor and Honorary Secretary were filled by the re-election of those who held those positions the previous year.

LECTURES.

During the year another series of very interesting lectures was provided for members. It is of considerable benefit for members to be enabled to hear dissertations by specialists in the various fields of science and arts, and all are grateful to those people who are kind enough to accept our invitation to lecture.

The following lectures were given during the year:—

April: 'An Expedition across Central Australia in search of Aboriginal Rock Engravings.' By Mr J. B. Thwaites, Hobart.

May: 'Soils and Apple Trees.' By Mr K. D. Nichols, Division of Soils, C.S.I.R.O., Hobart.

June: 'Horticulture in an Industrial Nation.' By Professor G. Bunemann, Director of the Institute for Horticulture, Technical University of West Berlin.

July: 'Some Notes on the Life and Times of Captain James Kelly.' By Mr E. R. Pretyman, Hobart.

August: 'Charles Darwin in Hobart Town and Geological Work in Van Diemen's Land.' By Mr M. R. Banks, Department of Geology, University of Tasmania.

September: 'Man's Place in the Limitless Abyss of Space/Time'. By Dr John Morris, Launceston.

October: 'The Early Development of the East Coast (Cape Portland to Bicheno)'. By the Honourable Mr Justice Crawford, Launceston.

November: 'Geographical Contributions to Medicine'. By Dr N. D. McGlashan, Department of Geography, University of Tasmania.

ROYAL SOCIETY MEDAL.

The Council decided to recognise the work done by Dr D. L. Serventy in his researches on the Tasmanian Mutton Bird. It was agreed that Dr Serventy be invited to give a special lecture, and that he be awarded the Royal Society Medal. This was done at a special meeting held in the Town Hall, Hobart, on the 8th December last, when His Excellency the Governor of Tasmania, who is President of the Society, presented the medal to Dr Serventy.

NORTHERN BRANCH.

The Branch continued to act in the Northern part of the State and an interesting series of lectures was arranged.

MEMBERSHIP.

During the year the membership reached 552, a decline of 17. There are 4 Honorary Life Members and the membership of the Northern Branch totalled 228.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

The Council is most grateful for the help so generously given by many individuals and organisations, and particularly to the Government of Tasmania, the University of Tasmania, The Trustees of the Tasmania Museum and Art Gallery, the Queen Victoria Museum and Art Gallery, the Press, the Radio, and to the many individuals who have assisted during the year.

Royal Society of Tasmania—Northern Branch

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After elections at the Annual General Meeting of the Northern Branch on 5th March, 1970, the Branch Council comprised:

Chairman—Mr J. N. Gee.

Vice-Chairman—Mr D. Walter.

Honorary Secretary and Treasurer—Mr W. F. Ellis.

Past Chairman—Dr J. C. H. Morris.

Council—Mr H. W. Askeland, Mr R. S. Smith, Mrs M. Cameron, Mr Justice Crawford, Mr K. E. J. Robinson.

Honorary Auditor—Mr H. C. A. Pitt.

Mr Gee and Dr Morris were appointed delegates of the Northern Branch to the Council of the Society.

MEMBERSHIP.

On 31st December, 1970 there were 228 members of the Northern Branch.

ACTIVITIES.

Eleven general meetings were arranged, at which the following lectures were delivered:

- 6 February, 1970: 'An Introduction to Australian Butterflies', by Mr L. E. Couchman.
- 5 March, 1970: 'Evolution—Man's Place in the Limitless Abyss of Space/Time', by Dr J. C. H. Morris.
- 3 April, 1970: 'The History of Tamar Shipping', by Mr G. W. Cox.
- 1 May, 1970: 'An Expedition Across Central Australia in Search of Aboriginal Rock Carvings', by Mr J. B. Thwaites.
- 5 June, 1970: 'The History of the Launceston Artillery', by Hon. Lieut. Colonel G. H. Crawford.
- 3 July, 1970: 'Medieval Church Architecture', by Mr D. Walter.
- 7 August, 1970: 'Oceanography in Australia, with special reference to mineral resources', by Mr L. C. Noakes.
- 4 September, 1970: 'Australia, New Guinea and Melanesia in the current revolution in concepts of the evolution of the earth', by Professor S. W. Carey.

9 October, 1970: 'Charles Darwin in Hobart Town and Geological Work in Van Diemen's Land', by Mr M. R. Banks.

6 November, 1970: 'Game Reserves and Nature Conservation in South Africa', by Mr T. G. Cashion.

4 December, 1970: 'Members lectures—
'On the Milford Track, New Zealand', by Mr J. W. Twycross.

'Life 100 Years Ago', by Mr G. H. Stancombe.

'On the Thames', by Miss J. Craig.

'Views of Launceston, 1890', by Mr R. S. Smith.

'Conservation and Environmental Control' by Mr S. V. Tilley.

'Maria Island', by Mr N. R. Harvey.

'Fluorescent', by Mr J. J. Allchin.

An excursion to the Mersey Forth Hydro-Electric Semaphore Stations was held on 19 April, 1970 and, between 28 and 29 November, the study tour of the East Coast was extended to the areas around Swansea.

An excursion to the Mersey-Forth Hydro-Electric System was arranged for 29 August, but severe floods necessitated its cancellation.

The Branch Council met five times during the year.

The Committee led by Mr Stancombe surveying burial grounds for historical information prior to 1900 has continued its work. Catalogues of headstones in twelve more cemeteries were completed.

Work has continued with the monument to commemorate Matthew Flinders. Approval has been given to occupy a site overlooking the Tamar River at Batman Bridge and the design of the memorial is progressing.

The Branch Council has become deeply concerned about increases in expenditure for the activities of the Branch, for which no provision exists in the present means of allocating funds. Submissions have been presented to the Council of the Society for discussion but, as yet, no progress has been made in this vital matter.