

Report by the Secretary

Keith Brading, George Gay, Dr. Lloyd Harrison, Lord Jacques, Dr. Robert Marshall, Ted Stephenson, Will Watkins and Lord Young have continued to serve as Presidents. Dr. Alex Wilson, who has been active in the Society since its inception and who has served in most other positions, was elected as an additional President at last year's Annual General Meeting. The national officers, and members generally, were said to learn of the death during the year of a long standing President, Dr. Margaret Digby, whose contribution to Co-operative scholarship had been outstanding.

The chair this year has been occupied by Basil Loveridge with Joan Straker and Johnston Birchall as vice-chairmen. Brian Rose has been secretary, Alan Rhodes treasurer and John Brown membership secretary. Dr. Robert Marshall and Professor Tom Carbery continued to act as joint editors of the Society's Bulletin.

Officers' Meetings

The national officers met in November, March and May and will have a further meeting immediately before the AGM. At the three meetings, attendance of officers has been as follows:

| | | | |
|-------------------|---|--------------|---|
| Johnston Birchall | 3 | Bob Marshall | 3 |
| John Brown | 2 | Alan Rhodes | 1 |
| Tom Carbery | 0 | Brian Rose | 3 |
| Basil Loveridge | 2 | Joan Straker | 2 |

In addition, some Presidents together with the immediate past chairman and the secretary of the Metropolitan and Southern region, have attended meetings.

Membership

The paid-up members for the year ending 31 March 1985 (with the 1984 figures in brackets) are:

| Region | Individuals | Organisations | Total |
|---------------------------|------------------|----------------|------------------|
| Metropolitan and Southern | 63 (69) | 24 (27) | 87 (96) |
| Midland | 21 (27) | 11 (11) | 32 (38) |
| North West | 17 (19) | 8 (8) | 25 (27) |
| Yorkshire and Humberside | 6 (6) | 7 (5) | 13 (11) |
| Northern | 5 (5) | 1 (1) | 6 (6) |
| South West | 4 (4) | 2 (2) | 6 (6) |
| Scottish | 19 (21) | 5 (5) | 24 (26) |
| Overseas | 8 (7) | 5 (7) | 13 (14) |
| | <u>143 (158)</u> | <u>63 (66)</u> | <u>206 (224)</u> |

The reduction in membership from 1983-84 is thought to be mainly due to the continuing reduction in the number of societies and the retirement of officials.

At 18 May, 1985, 42 members (33 individuals, 9 organisations) have paid their 1985-86 subscriptions.

The Bulletin

The Bulletin has been published regularly as is now customary: three times during the year. The special features have been as follows:

No.52 (December 1984): Consumer Co-operatives – Towards Success; The Law on Shop Hours; Co-operative Housing; The Wider Search for Co-operation; Labour in Crisis?.

No.53 (April 1985): Co-operation Internationally; Consumer Co-operatives – Towards Success; Co-operative Housing; Labour in Crisis?.

No.54 (August 1985): Retail Co-operatives – Local Innovation; Consumer Movement – National Shape?; Forty Years On.

Peter Clarke has contributed his Newsletter to each edition and Jonathan Hill has contributed books reviews to two of the three issues.

Despite continuing improvements in the appearance of the Bulletin, the editors and national officers are still not completely satisfied. The Bulletin as the primary product of the Society for its membership and for the outside world should be of the best quality and possibilities of improving the format and reproduction – and the cost of doing so – are being explored. Nevertheless, the national officers continue to be grateful to the CWS for their generosity in printing and distributing the Bulletin.

Financial Position

The 1984/85 Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet prepared by Alan Rhodes are appended along with the Auditor's Report. These continue to show a healthy financial position which, at the time of writing, looks likely to be further improved by another grant from the Greater London Enterprise Board. In the current financial year, a grant of £250 has been paid to the Housing Research Group of the City University as a contribution to a survey of housing Co-op tenants.

Activities

Since the last AGM, the Society's main activities has been concentrated in the following areas:

- (a) **Researchers' Seminar on Worker Co-operatives.** A highly successful day seminar, organised in association with the Co-operative Research Unit of the Open University, was held in London in January. Over

sixty people attended, mainly from universities and colleges, to hear and discuss the following papers: "The Role of Local CDAs in Promoting Workers Co-operatives" Chris Cornforth (Open University); "Legal Structures and Democratic Control in Workers' Co-operatives" Ian Snaith (University of Leicester); "Co-operative Development in Practice: An Initial Analysis of Success and Failure" Greater London Enterprise Board; "Alternative Modes of Co-operative Production" Tom Clarke (Trent Polytechnic); "The Economic Performance of Clothing, Textiles and Footwear Co-operatives in the UK, 1975-84" Alan Thomas (Open University); "Worker Participation and Influence in Worker Co-operatives" Saul Estrin (London School of Economics). The occasion was judged a considerable success and it is hoped to repeat the event later in the year.

- (b) **Conversion of uneconomic retail society stores.** The S.C.S. has continued its interest in the possibilities of converting uneconomic retail society stores into community or worker Co-operatives (see the Bulletin passim) but the national officers have been frustrated by the difficulties of putting together a project which is at the same time useful and capable of being done with the resources the Society has available. At the time of writing, there is the prospect of an exercise being done with the Harefield Community Co-operative which is hoping to take over a closed CRS shop in their village.
- (c) **Co-operative Forum.** Continuing pressure of work and staff shortage at the Co-operative Development Agency have prevented any further meetings of the Forum being called but there may be a meeting in September.
- (d) **Academic Institutions.** The Southampton Institute of Higher Education was the host in December for an exhibition of educational material available for use in schools and colleges. This event was organised by Geoff Wade and other members in the Central Southern area. Plans are also now well advanced for a "Conference Day" on Co-operatives at Leicester Polytechnic in November where the main audience will be business studies students. Peter Davies, a senior lecturer at the Polytechnic and a Society member, has been instrumental in setting this up. Bob Marshall will be providing a keynote speech.
- (e) **Regional Activity.** Once again, it is the Metropolitan and Southern Region that has provided the only active programme with a well attended series of meetings over the autumn and winter.

June 1985

Brian Rose

Accounts

1. Income and Expenditure for year to 31 March 1985

| | Note | £ | 1984 £ |
|--------------------------------------|------|--------------|--------------|
| Income | | | |
| Subscriptions | 1 | 1,581 | 1,541 |
| Sale of Bulletins | | 69 | 32 |
| Bank Interest | 2 | 510 | 126 |
| Conferences | 3 | 50 | — |
| Bank Commission | | — | 5 |
| Gift | | — | 25 |
| Grant from GLEB | | — | 4,250 |
| | | <u>2,210</u> | <u>5,979</u> |
| Expenditure | | | |
| National Officers and Others | 4 | 454 | 251 |
| Secretarial | 5 | 193 | 100 |
| Bulletin | 6 | 886 | 703 |
| Grant | 7 | 250 | — |
| Annual Conference | | — | 93 |
| Sundries | | — | 58 |
| Excess of Income over Expenditure | | 427 | 4,774 |
| | | <u>2,210</u> | <u>5,979</u> |

Notes on the Accounts

| | £ | 1984 £ |
|--------------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| Note 1 Members' Subscriptions | | |
| Individuals | 551 | 628 |
| Organisations | 942 | 985 |
| | <u>1,493</u> | <u>1,613</u> |
| Add opening creditor | 123 | 51 |
| Less closing creditor | (35) | (123) |
| | <u>1,581</u> | <u>1,541</u> |

| | £ | 1984 £ |
|--|------------|------------|
| Note 2 Bank Interest | | |
| C.R.S. Investment | 473 | — |
| Co-op Bank Deposit A/c | 30 | 46 |
| NSB Investment A/c (now closed) | 7 | 80 |
| | <u>510</u> | <u>126</u> |
| | | |
| Note 3 Conferences | | |
| AGM and Conference | | |
| Income | 946 | 1,321 |
| Expenditure | 1,046 | 1,413 |
| | <u>100</u> | <u>92</u> |
| | | |
| Research Seminar | | |
| Income | 202 | |
| Expenditure | 52 | |
| | <u>150</u> | |
| | | |
| Note 4 National Officers and Others | | |
| Travel to meetings | 361 | 220 |
| Other travel | 93 | 31 |
| | <u>454</u> | <u>251</u> |
| | | |
| Note 5 Secretarial | | |
| Travel | — | 25 |
| Telephone | 6 | 4 |
| Stationery | 78 | 22 |
| Postage | 111 | 47 |
| | <u>195</u> | |
| Less creditors b/f | 2 | 2 |
| | <u>193</u> | <u>100</u> |

| | | | |
|---------------|-------------------------|-------|-------|
| Note 6 | Bulletin | | |
| | Travel | — | 55 |
| | Telephone | 58 | 33 |
| | Stationery | 25 | 20 |
| | Postage | 62 | 92 |
| | Opening Stock | 15 | 20 |
| | Printing | 16 | 125 |
| | Typing and artwork | 894 | 189 |
| | | <hr/> | |
| | | 1,070 | |
| | Less creditors b/f | 184 | 184 |
| | Less closing stock | — | 15 |
| | | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| | | 886 | 703 |
| | | <hr/> | <hr/> |
| Note 7 | Grant | | |
| | City University Housing | | |
| | Research Group Grant | 250 | |

2. Balance Sheet at 31 March 1985

| | £ | 31.3.84 £ |
|--|--------------|--------------|
| Use of Funds | | |
| Bank and Cash — | | |
| Co-op Bank Current Account | 512 | 247 |
| Co-op Bank Deposit Account | 624 | 312 |
| National Savings Bank Investment Account | — | 80 |
| Investments — | | |
| CRS Development Bonds (Series 8) | 4,000 | 3,000 |
| CRS Unit Loans (Series 4) | 2,000 | 2,000 |
| CRS Investment Account | — | 1,000 |
| Stock of Bulletins | — | 15 |
| | <u>7,136</u> | <u>6,654</u> |
| Less — | | |
| Creditors | (330) | (187) |
| Advance Subscriptions | (35) | (123) |
| | <u>6,771</u> | <u>6,344</u> |
| Financed By — | | |
| Fund brought forward | 6,344 | 1,570 |
| Excess of Income over Expenditure | 427 | 4,774 |
| | <u>6,771</u> | <u>6,344</u> |

3. Auditor's Report

I have pleasure in returning the Accounts and Balance Sheet of the Society for Co-operative Studies for the year ended 31st March 1985. These have been audited and are in agreement with the records. I confirm that the Income and Expenditure Account is an accurate reflection of the conduct of the Society's Accounts during the year and that the Balance Sheet accurately states the balance of the funds as at 31st March 1985.

4 July 1985

Alex Wilson