

## **The Society for Co-operative Studies**

### **Report of Annual General Meeting**

The Society held its Annual General Meeting at the end of its highly successful Conference Weekend. Fifty two members were present in the Marshall Room at the College at 11.15am on Sunday September 15, 1996 and apologies for absence were received from Garth Pratt, Brian Rose, Lily Howe, Alex Wilson, Mervyn Wilson, Jean Gaffin, Graham Melmoth, Alan Gill, David Allonby, George Cunningham, David Rushton, Peter Clarke, Tom Carbery, Bob Marshall, Kathryn Smith, Roger Spear and Alan Harvey.

#### **Minutes of previous meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on October 1 1995 were approved as a correct record.

#### **Annual review by Chairman**

Following a short analysis of the modern fashion for assuming that "change" and "new" necessarily meant "better", and while pointing out that "good" and "bad" could not be replaced with "new" and "old", the Chairman noted however that in his short year as Chairman of the Society just about everything of any consequence had changed, with many new features being adopted.

It was the first year operating under the new constitution. The first year operating with a new charitable status. The first year with a new Secretary - and after very many years, the first year with a new Editor of the journal. After an equally long number of years the journal had also got a new format and that was only the beginning of further improvements and even the age-old logo had been changed. Equally for the first time in many years there was a proposal to increase the subscription - another change, which needed to be seen as an improvement!

In particular during the year, the Committee had strengthened relationships with other organisations. The relationship with the Co-op College had improved after many years, with a member

of the college staff co-opted onto the committee. Reciprocal representational arrangements were underway between ourselves and the Plunkett Foundation. Arrangements for the joint exchange and circularisation of information and minutes with the UKCC had been developed; and equally a closer association, and developing joint approaches, were underway with the Open University.

The Congress fringe meeting had been the best ever. The Secretary's printed report showed in more detail the full extent of the year's progress, and that was due to the contributions that all the officers were making, voluntarily, in giving their time and efforts on the Society's behalf - and to whom all members were grateful, and expressed thanks.

### **Secretary's report**

The Secretary's report had been included in Journal No 87, September 1996. Areas covered in the report were - Committee Meetings; New Society Logo; Journal Editor; The Journal; Financial Position; Fringe Meeting; Internet Developments; Membership Subscriptions; Registration of New Constitution; Mutuality; Developing Closer Links with the Co-operative College and The Society's External Relations. The report described a year of steady progress for the Society. It was agreed that in next year's report the attendance figures of Executive Committee members would be included and that the first names of the Executive Committee would also be included.

### **Treasurer and Membership Secretary**

The Treasurer and Membership Secretary's report had been included in Journal No 87, September 1996. It was noted with pleasure that 37 new members had recently joined the society and 14 new subscriptions had been received from overseas. The content of the Accounts were noted and approved. The meeting expressed their thanks to the Society's Auditor for his work on behalf of the Society.

### **Editor**

Johnston Birchall reported upon his first full year as Journal

Editor. The year started with a retrospective look at the College and members expressed their appreciation to Len Burch for his excellent article included in that issue (No 85). The new Journal format had been introduced in Journal No 86 (May 1996) and No 87 (September 1996) and had been well received. The Editor asked members to let him know if they had any criticisms regarding the new format as he greatly valued the opinions of readers. Johnston Birchall made specific reference to the establishment of an Academic Advisory Board, the appointment of a Production Editor, the recent publication of a News Letter and the greater emphasis being placed on marketing the Journal.

Members commented upon the improved layout and content and the need for the Journal to retain a proper balance and always mindful of who pays the bulk of the subscription income.

### **Regional reports**

A letter from Alan Harvey was read out by the Chairman requesting that consideration be given to resurrecting the London meetings of the Society. After careful consideration Fred Broughton agreed to arrange a London Conference.

Consideration would also be given by the Executive Committee to sponsor regional meetings and possibly link with other events taking place. Alan Wilkins indicated the plans that were in hand to hold Society meetings in the Midlands.

### **Election of Honorary Officers and Executive Committee 1996/97**

Members expressed the need for Committee members to attend meetings on a regular basis and then the meeting proceeded to appoint the following officers and committee members for 1996/97 -

- |                                       |                              |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Chair                               | Len Burch                    |
| • Vice-Chairs                         | Peter Davis and Rowland Dale |
| • Secretary                           | John Butler                  |
| • Journal Editor                      | Johnston Birchall            |
| • Treasurer & Membership<br>Secretary | Frank Dent                   |

- Additional Committee Members
 

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|---------------|
| James Bell    |
| Rita Rhodes   |
| Jim Craigen   |
| Martin Stears |
- Immediate Past Chair
 

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| Peter Clarke |
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- Auditor
 

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| Peter Roscoe |
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## **Presidents**

The existing Presidents of the Society, Professor Tony Eccles, Dr Robert Marshall, John Morley, Dr Alex Wilson, Lord Young of Dartington, Graham Melmoth and Professor Tom Carbery were re-elected.

## **Subscriptions**

The Treasurer reported upon the proposed rate of subscriptions for year ended March 31 1998. After careful consideration it was agreed that the basic and sponsorship waged rates both be increased by £2 to £9 and £14 respectively and the unwaged and organisation rates remain unchanged.

## **Conference/Annual General Meeting 1997**

The meeting agreed that the 1997 Conference and Annual General Meeting would be held at Stanford Hall during the weekend September 20/21 1997.

## **Appreciation**

Len Burch was thanked for his successful year as Chairman and the way he had conducted the Weekend Conference and Annual General Meeting. The Secretary was also thanked for the hard work undertaken in organising the Annual Conference and his efforts during a very busy and eventful year for the Society.

September 1996

John Butler: Secretary