

Annual Report for 1952

During the year there was a slight increase in the membership of the Society which now numbers well over 200. The Committee held eight meetings during the year and these were exceptionally well attended.

On Friday, February 8th. an illustrated lecture was given to members by Miss Margaret Harker, F.I.B.P., F.R.P.S. which was entitled "Architecture in Photographs". This was attended by about 100 members and friends who very much enjoyed the fine photographs many of which were of the beautiful churches and Cathedrals in various parts of the British Isles. It was unfortunate that the lecture was not better attended but this was probably due to the very recent death of our King, George VI and to the bad weather.

Towards the end of 1951 several members of the committee had, through illness or other unavoidable circumstances to resign, and several local societies were asked to nominate members for the Committee and these, together with new members from within the Society resulted in a very full and active Committee being formed.

In May a copy of the Ordnance Survey Map, Scale $2\frac{1}{2}$ " to the mile, was placed at the Station Booking Hall by the Society and it is hoped that this will prove useful to visitors.

During the year many representations and suggestions were made to the Hertfordshire County Council, Harpenden Urban District Council and several other bodies and individuals. All of these received every consideration and many resulted in suitable action being taken. The bus shelter at West Common Way was removed in the Spring for repairs and following enquiries and suggestions by the Committee that a new oak shelter should replace it, this type was erected in May. The appearance of new concrete lamp standards in several roads in Harpenden caused some concern and the Committee sort advice and information from the Council for The Preservation of Rural England and the Council of Industrial Design when it was learned that this body was giving careful thought to the subject and were compiling a booklet which would be distributed to local Councils and interested bodies in the near future, this information was passed to the H.U.D.C.

Communications were sent to the H.U.D.C. regarding the replacement of trees in the village as they became old and diseased which necessitated their being felled, and also on the subject of poster and advertisement hoardings being erected in such positions as to be detrimental to the amenities and a danger to traffic.

A letter was sent to the County Surveyor deprecating the erection of unsightly chain link fencing on their property in Sauncey Avenue and an assurance was given that a hedge would be placed there as soon as practicable.

Some 35 members and friends paid a visit to Ham House on May 24th. The weather was extremely kind on this occasion, being hot and sunny. The House, a former residence of Sir Lyonel Tollemarche, Bart., is now owned by the National Trust and contains many fine pieces of furniture and some interesting paintings. Afterwards tea was served at the Dysart Arms and the party returned via Buckinghamshire passing through Gerrards Cross and Stoke Poges.

The Harpenden Guide, text of which was compiled by the Committee of this Society was published during the year and is on sale at local bookshops.

The Society renewed its affiliation fees to the Hertfordshire Society, the Council of the Preservation of Rural England and the Commons, Open Spaces and Footpaths Reservation Society. During the year it was decided that an annual subscription be sent to the National Trust and this was done in September.

It was reported that the speed of traffic passing down Rothamsted Avenue to Church Green was constituting a danger especially in view of the fact that the Wheathampstead 'bus comes from Leyton Road to a blind corner at Church Green, that school children pass this point and also pedestrians cross from the Churchyard to Church Green. The Council was asked if the word "SLOW" could be painted on the carriageway at the foot of the hill and the Committee has been informed that this has been authorised.

At the Committee meeting held in July, Mr. H.D.A. Butcher, M.T.P.I., Divisional Planning Officer for the Central Division Hertfordshire County Council, spoke at great length on the County Development Plan when much useful information was obtained.

A very enjoyable evening took place in the Public Hall on Thursday, October 9th. when the President and Mrs. Peake were "At Home" to nearly 200 members and guests. An "Any Questions" programme was arranged with Captain Bond as Question Master and a team composed of Dr. F.C. Bawden; Messrs. R.D. Charques, M. Drake and Theo. Williams. A light orchestra played during the evening and refreshments were served. Mr. Kirby, the Librarian, arranged an exhibition of old Hertfordshire records and documents in conjunction with the County Records Office. The Society are very much indebted to Mr and Mrs W. O. Peake for their help in making the evening such a great success.

During the year the Societies to which we are affiliated have been helpful in giving any advice required and on several occasions have referred to this Society when information has been necessary on local problems. Relations with the Harpenden Urban District Council and the Society have been good throughout the year and the Council has always given careful consideration to any point which has been raised.

At the close of the year the Committee turned its attention to the Development of Batford District and a sub-committee was formed to consider the plans for future development in that area.