

Society for Co-operative Studies

REPORT OF THE SECRETARY FOR 1983-84

Officers

Keith Brading, Dr Margaret Digby, George Gay, Dr Lloyd Harrison, Lord Jacques, Dr Robert Marshall, Ted Stephenson, Will Watkins and Lord Young have continued to serve as Presidents. The chair this year has been occupied by Jack Prichard with Mike Gibson and Basil Loveridge as vice-chairmen. Brian Rose has been secretary and Dr Alex Wilson treasurer and membership secretary. Dr Robert Marshall and Professor Tom Carbery continued to act as joint editors of the Society's Bulletin.

National Meetings

The national officers met in November, February and May and will have a further meeting immediately before the AGM.

Membership

The paid-up members for the year ending 31 March 1984 (with the 1983 figures in brackets) are:

Region	Individuals	Organisations	Total
Metropolitan & Southern	69 (59)	27 (21)	96 (80)
Midland	27 (23)	11 (7)	38 (30)
North West	19 (17)	8 (9)	27 (26)
Yorkshire & Humberside	6 (5)	5 (4)	11 (9)
Northern	5 (2)	1 (1)	6 (3)
South West	4 (3)	2 (2)	6 (5)
Scottish	21 (26)	5 (5)	26 (31)
Overseas	7 (5)	7 (5)	14 (10)
	158 (140)	66 (54)	224 (194)

The total includes 39 new individual members and 16 new organisational members. Five members renewed and 20 did not renew their subscriptions.

The Bulletin

The Bulletins have appeared three times during the year, as regularly, if not as frequently, as the seasons. Their special features have been as follows:

No. 49 (December 1981): Co-operative Independent Commission – Revisited. Dear Will – in appreciation of W.P. Watkins.

No. 50 (April 1984): Workers' Co-operatives – Some Prospects. CWS/CRS

Merger? "Co-operation between Co-operatives". The Wider Search for Co-operation.

No. 51 (August 1984): Labour in Crisis? Workers' Co-operatives – Some Further Prospects. The Wider Search for Co-operation – Continued.

Peter Clarke, editor of the Newsletter, and Jonathan Hill, book reviewer, have been constant and valued contributors. Bulletin 50 saw something of a facelift for the Bulletin with a redesigned and glossier cover and a different method of typesetting. The latter had some teething troubles but the editors expect these to be overcome with experience.

The CWS have completed their third year of printing and distributing the Bulletin at a subsidised rate. The national officers' gratefulness for this service has been increased further by the CWS's offer to continue the service for a further two years.

Financial Position

The 1983/84 Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet prepared by Alex Wilson are appended along with the Auditor's Report. These show the Society in an unprecedentedly prosperous position thanks to the continuing support of the CWS in the printing and distribution of the Bulletin and to the grant of £4,250 from the Greater London Enterprise Board, reported at last year's AGM (see Bulletin 49). Members will also note that as a consequence of views expressed at last year's AGM, the Society's immediately surplus funds have been switched in the main to CRS.

Activities

Since the last AGM the Society has been active in a number of areas.

- (a) **Co-operative Forum.** It was reported to last year's AGM that the Society's syndicate on 'Co-operation between Co-operatives' had taken an initiative with the Co-operative Development Agency which led to the CDA calling a meeting in September 1983 of all the national Co-op federations to discuss a paper (written by Society member John Morley) advocating a central consultative council to deal with matters of general Co-operative interest. There was a second meeting of what became known as the Co-op Forum in January, at which the Society was represented. That meeting agreed that they did not want another organisation but that the Forum was a useful device to maintain contact between the various Co-op sectors.

The meeting further agreed to circulate a questionnaire to all organisations participating in the Forum to increase the store of knowledge about the content, performance and aspirations of each of the sectors. The first draft of this questionnaire was produced by the Society's officers and subsequently refined by a working party of the Forum. Unfortunately, industrial action in the Post Office seemed to disrupt the return of the questionnaires during early June and a meeting of the Forum scheduled for late June was postponed.

- (b) One of the uses that the national officers agreed for the GLEB grant was the organisation of a Co-op researchers' seminar in conjunction with the Open University's Co-operatives Research Unit, with an emphasis on research into workers' Co-ops. It is hoped that this will happen in the autumn.
- (c) A further project arising from the GLEB grant has been an investigation into the conditions in which it might be feasible to convert a store which is unprofitable for a retail society into either a workers or a community co-operative. It is envisaged that the Society's project will look into the general principles rather than be involved in a single scheme but it is hoped that the project will help with subsequent particular schemes. At the time of writing, discussions are taking place with potential consultants about the project.
- (d) It is worth noting that under the able leadership of Nancy Scott and David Hutton, the Metropolitan and Southern Region of the Society have held a very successful series of meetings on the theme of "Democracy and Structural Change" with speakers during the series including Bernard Rhodes, Malcolm Hornsby, Peter Bushell and Tony Raine.

Society for Co-operative Studies

1. INCOME & EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT

(for year ended 31st March 1984)

Income	Note	£	1983
Subscriptions	1	1,541	(1,351)
Sale of Bulletins	2	32	(85)
Bank Interest	3	126	(48)
Bank Commission	4	5	—
Gift		25	—
Grant from GLEB		4,250	—
Annual Conference	8	—	(256)
		<u>5,979</u>	<u>(1,740)</u>
Expenditure			
National Officers	5	251	(305)
Secretarial	6	100	(119)
Bulletin	7	703	(173)
Annual Conference	8	93	—
Bank Commission	4	—	(7)
Sundries		58	—
Excess of Income over Expenditure		<u>4,774</u>	<u>(1,136)</u>
		<u>5,979</u>	<u>(1,740)</u>

Notes on the Accounts

	£	1983
Note 1 Members' Subscriptions:		
Individuals	628	556
Co-op Organisations	775	705
Other Organisations	210	90
	<u>1,613</u>	<u>1,351</u>
Add opening creditor	51	—
Less closing creditor	(123)	—
	<u>1,541</u>	<u>1,351</u>

Note 2	Bulletin Sales:		
	Bulletin Sales	83	74
	Less postage	(40)	—
	Less opening debtor	(11)	11
		<u>32</u>	<u>85</u>
Note 3	Bank Interest:		
	Deposit Account	46	48
	NSB Investment A/c	80	—
		<u>126</u>	<u>48</u>
Note 4	Bank Commission		
	Adjustment by Bank	(42)	—
	Commission 1983	37	7
		<u>(5)</u>	<u>7</u>
Note 5	National Officers		
	Travel to meetings	220	217
	Other travel	31	78
	Telephone	—	5
	Accommodation	—	5
		<u>251</u>	<u>305</u>
Note 6	Secretarial		
	Travel	25	—
	Telephone	4	—
	Stationery	22	12
	Postage	47	107
	Creditors	2	—
		<u>100</u>	<u>119</u>
Note 7	Bulletin		
	Travel	55	—
	Stationery	20	7
	Telephone	33	21
	Printing and photos	125	40
	Postage	92	31
	Typing and artwork	189	94
	Sundry creditors	184	—
	Opening Stock	20	25
	Less closing stock	(15)	(20)
		<u>703</u>	<u>198</u>

Note 8 AGM and Conference

Income	1,321	(896)
Expenditure	1,413	640
	<u>92</u>	<u>(256)</u>

2. BALANCE SHEET

(as at 31st March 1984)

Use of Funds	£	(31.3.83)
Bank & Cash:		
Co-op Bank Current A/c	247	(239)
Co-op Bank Deposit A/c	312	(292)
National Savings Bank Investment A/c	80	(1,000)
Cash		(8)
Investments:		
CRS Development Bonds (Series 8)	3,000	—
CRS Unit Loans (Series 4)	2,000	—
CRS Investment A/c	1,000	—
	<u>6,639</u>	<u>(1,539)</u>
Stock of Bulletins	15	(20)
Debtors	—	(11)
	<u>6,654</u>	<u>(1,570)</u>
less:		
Creditors	187	(16)
Advance Subscriptions	123	(51)
	<u>6,344</u>	<u>(1,503)</u>
Financed by:	£	(31.3.83)
Fund brought forward	1,570	(434)
Excess of Income over Exp.	4,774	(1,136)
	<u>6,344</u>	<u>(1,570)</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, 1984. These have been audited and are in agreement with the records and explanations given to me.

A. Rhodes
Hon. Auditor
2nd July, 1984