Honorary Membership Awarded

Dr. David W. Bierhorst, Professor Emeritus of Botany, University of Massachusetts, has been elected an Honorary Member of the American Fern Society in recognition of his lifelong contributions to fernology. Certainly, Prof. Bierhorst is one of the outstanding students of the morphology of the vascular cryptogams in this country. His precise and meticulous observations on the morphology of this group should serve as an example to others and are probably only paralleled in this country by those of Douglas Houghton Campbell, who was active in the late 19th century and the early part of this century. Although Prof. Bierhorst is primarily a morphologist, his contributions in systematic have also been significant, and his concepts provided the impetus for a symposium (see Brittonia 29(1): 1-68. 1977). His magnum opus is the Morphology of Vascular Plants (1971). This book contains many original observations by Prof. Bierhorst - and is encyclopedic. It is a must for those interested in the morphology and phylogeny of the pteridophytes and also the seed plants. It should be pointed out that Prof. Bierhorst's contributions to botany have not only been in the morphology, systematic, and phylogeny of the pteridophytes but also in other areas of vascular plant anatomy and morphology, such as the structure and evolution of tracheyce elements. -- DWS

A New Book on Trinidad Pteridophytes

As an outgrowth of two classes on tropical ferns at the Anna Wright Nature Centre in Trinidad (1984 and 1985), a small book has been published, Trinidad Pteridophytes, by John Nickel. It is paper-covered, spiral-bound, 8 1/2 X 11", with 62 pages of text and 49 pages of illustrations. The text includes a list of the species, ecological and distributional information, keys to all the nearly 300 species, and line drawings of 276 species. It is not a complete pteridophyte flora in that it lacks descriptions, synonyms and detailed distributional information on Trinidad itself. However, the usefulness of the book extends beyond the island of Trinidad since two-thirds of the species illustrated are widespread in tropical America. The book is available from Dr. John Nickel, New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, NY 10458, for $11.00. (Checks are to be made payable to The New York Botanical Garden).

New National Academy Member

Dr. Warren H. Wagner, Jr., Professor of Botany, University of Michigan, has been elected to the National Academy of Sciences in recognition of his contributions to pteridology and systematic. Prof. Wagner's enthusiasm for pteridology and botany in general is, of course, well known to the amateur and professional alike and has served as an inspiration for many of us. While he is often regarded as a fern systematist, it should be pointed out that he has also made numerous and significant contributions to our understanding of plant morphology. Moreover, his systematic contributions have not been limited to the ferns but have had a very significant influence on conceptual and theoretical systematic, particularly in recent years. No systematic should be ignorant of the Wagner Groundplan Divergence Method. While most systematists are assured of their place in history, if by nothing else than having a specific epithet based on their name, Wagner diagrams will be appearing in the systematic literature for many years to come, and I would hope that morphologists would begin to use this methodology in their analyses. -- DWS
The Great Valley Fern Society of Modesto, California

August 15, 1985

Our society will be celebrating our first anniversary this October. We have had a very busy year with field trips, plant shows, collecting trips, etc...

Our primary goal is to encourage the interest in ferns, and I truly believe we’re helping to attain this, what with all the publicity we’re attracting. Garden clubs are inviting us to lecture and even a radio show interviewed us. Some of the local nurseries have responded to our growing needs and have introduced larger numbers and types of ferns for sale. We entered three plant shows and scored three Firsts and two Bests of Show -- and now we’re preparing to have our first all Fern Plant Show to exhibit. Also, coming up is a California Native Fern Collection being donated to our local museum, and a herbarium collection of the same for our local college and university.

Our membership is 26 for now, but many inquiries are coming in, and we invite everyone to join LAFFS and AFS as well. Many already have.

Hope this little letter is of interest to your readers. Please feel free to write.

Respectfully,

Roger Sims
Founder/President '85.
Modesto, CA 95356

THREE OUT OF THREE FOR FERN SOCIETY

Two Best of Show awards and a first prize...

That’s the impressive record of the Great Valley Fern Society -- all the more impressive because the year-old group has entered only three shows, taking top honors at all of them.

The society’s most recent award was Best of Show in garden design at the Stanislaus County Fair. Other top prizes were at this year’s Vintage Fair and Modesto Garden Club competitions.

The society now has more than 25 members, and meets at 7 p.m. the second Monday of each month at 600 E. Union Ave., Modesto. Annual dues of $7 for individuals or $10 per couple includes a newsletter subscription.

Reprinted with permission from the Modesto Bee, Friday, August 9, 1985.

AFS Secretary

The American Fern Society has a new secretary - Dr. W. Carl Taylor, Milwaukee Public Museum, 800 West Wells Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53233. Actually, the position is not that new for Carl as he has been holding this office for about one year now. -- DNB

Report of the President for 1985

I am happy to report that The American Fern Society continues to thrive, with a membership of over 500, including domestic and foreign members. This year our society met jointly with the Pteridological Section of the Botanical Society of America at the University of Florida, Gainesville. Meeting among palm trees and balmy Florida weather, we were treated to 30 papers on various aspects of pteridophyte biology. In addition, a symposium entitled "Modes and Mechanisms of Sporulation in Pteridophytes" presented a synthesis of ideas on a theme of general interest. Christopher Haufler, who organized both the paper sessions and symposium is to be congratulated on a job well done. The increase in the number of papers presented compared to recent meetings attests to his fine effort. We can all look forward to next year’s meeting at the University of Massachusetts in Amherst.

Probably the most significant changes to take place during the past year concern our publications. Alan Smith and David Leffinger have exchanged editorships. Dr. Smith is now editor of the American Fern Journal and Dr. Leffinger editor of Pteridologia, the memoir series. I would like to take this opportunity to thank David Leffinger who faithfully served as editor of the Journal from 1966 to 1984. We are fortunate to retain his editorial expertise for Pteridologia. Another change is that the Journal is now published by Allen Press, publisher of several leading botanical journals. Thus 1985 finds our publications in able hands... I urge all pteridologists to publish the results of their research in the American Fern Journal or, for larger monographs, Pteridologia.

The continued increase in printing and mailing costs has necessitated the Council to implement a dues increase for 1986. It should be pointed out that there has been no dues increase for several years and that our membership fees remain extremely modest.

The Council of our Society has undergone some recent changes. David Barrington is now Records Treasurer and Carl Taylor is Secretary. Thanks are due to Les Hickok and Michael Cousans, past Records Treasurer and Secretary respectively, for their dedicated service to the Society. Finally, I wish to thank all the members of the Council with whom I have had the pleasure of serving for the past two years.

Sincerely,

Terry R. Webster
President
It was ninety two years ago that four members of the Agassiz Association of Advanced Science decided to form a fern society so that they could learn more about ferns. Since they lived in widely separated areas they determined that their common interest could be shared and furthered by correspondence. They little realized how effective and far reaching this decision would be.

The four, J. A. Graves, Mrs. A. B. Dean, Mrs. T. D. Dresherer, and Willard N. Clute were amateur botanists. Mr. Clute, the instigator, was an established publisher in Binghamton, NY. At his suggestion they decided to publish their fern correspondence. Their initial pamphlet, "The Linnaean Fern Bulletin" consisted of twelve 3 1/2" X 5 1/2" sheets priced at five cents.

This publication stimulated interest, and, by the end of the year 1893, twenty members signed the charter of the fern chapter. Though no general meetings were held for the next twelve years, the simple publication was the glue which held the fern group together. Fern observations and lessons stimulated interest and the pages grew larger in size. These publications proved to be in such demand that all supplies of back numbers were depleted.

The Fern Chapter had its first general gathering in Boston in 1898 in connection with a meeting of the Agassiz Association of Advanced Science. Seven papers on ferns were presented, and a display of potted ferns was exhibited.

Two years later a second meeting of the Linnaean Fern Chapter was held at the Bronx Botanical Garden, and Alvan Eaton asked that members donate fern specimens to establish a society herbarium. By 1903, the membership had grown to one hundred and twenty.

Willard Clute took over publication of the Linnaean Fern Bulletin as a personal venture when the group found its maintenance more than they could manage. The name was changed to the Fern Bulletin in Volume V and continued on until 1910 when Clute ceased publishing.

Due to various controversies over nomenclature and other matters the members at this time decided that the society be called The American Fern Society and should be fully responsible for its own publication with a central editorial department. Seven members underwrote the new American Fern Journal. It was the start of a new era in the society with a new publication, Volume I, No. 1. A full account of this new venture was written in the 50th Anniversary issue of the American Fern Journal in 1960 by Dr. Ralph Benedict. The journal format remained the same from 1910-1972, when larger pages and the CBE style manual — Vol. 62 appeared.

Reading through old volumes one meets botanists whom we know today by their namesake ferns or works. For instance: Vol VIII pictures John Goldie from Ayrshire, Scotland. Beautiful Dryopteris goldiana is a fitting memorial.

Frances Theodora Parsons, eminent fern authorress of How to Know the Ferns nearly always finds a spot on popular fern book lists. Cyrus Pringle, the unriveting botanist, contributed 100,000 sheets to the University of Vermont Herbarium.

John Wilkinson, author of Ferns of Kentucky, the first volume on ferns in this country published in 1878 was born in Scotland and came to Louisville, Kentucky where he established a wood carving business and later a brass factory. He spent all his spare time in nature study and especially enjoyed the beauty of ferns. His talents combined to create the beautiful etchings which appear as lithographed reproductions in his book.

In Vol IV is a report that George Davenport, a student of ferns of Medford, Mass. gave its important herbarium to the Massachusetts Horticultural Society and his botanizing friend, E. H. Hutchings presented his herbarium to the Appalachian Mountain Club.

Raynal Dodge, the botanist who first identified Thelypteris simulata, the Massachusetts fern, was said by A. C. Eaton to be such a keen observer of ferns that the fern really should be called Dodge's fern. However, Editor Clute inserted in his twenties that he actually first found the fern in New Hampshire, and though Dodge resided in Massachusetts, the name was inappropriate.

Throughout the volumes many conflicts and disagreements over nomenclature occurred and were discussed.

Ferns from the whole wide world have been dealt with in the journals, as can be realized by looking through the Index of Vol 1-23 compiled by Edgar Wherry (under W.P.A. and N.Y.A. in 1929).

One group picture of a fern foray to the New Jersey Pine Barrens appears in Vol. XXI - 1932. A trip there to finally find the Schizaea pusilla has to be a highlight in every forner's life.

F. N. Irving described a trip to the famous Alabama Gorge 25 mi. S.W. of Tuscaloosa in Nov., 1945. A clear, small stream flowed through steeply sloping sides of huge conglomerate rocks. There, in small crevices, Asplenium ceteroides grew.

Dr. Ralph Benedict, the kindly professor and leader of many fern groups, advised a mark that Dodge actually first found the fern in New Hampshire, and through Dodge resided in Massachusetts, the name was inappropriate.

When the president read his annual report in 1949, there were four hundred thirty-nine members. His plea was for more local study groups and in-depth study.

Now in 1985, the American Fern Society has about twelve hundred members and various chapters throughout our country — among them Delaware Valley, Upper Ohio, SW Texas, Tennessee, Southern New England, New York. The latter was started 12 years ago under the guidance of Dr. John Mickel of the New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, NY and has been one of the largest and most active groups.

As Campbell Waters wrote at the time of the 40th Anniversary of the founding of the American Fern Society "the veriest greenhorn and the highest authority have always been on equal footing as members" and that sums up a remarkably unique and noteworthy characteristic of the society.

This barely scans the activity of the American Fern Society 1893-1985, nor does it give adequate tribute to the many professionals and amateurs who have contributed their scholarship, talents, and zeal.

The organization has expanded as does a full grown sporophyte which casts its spores. May its fruits be bountiful and may multitudes of prothallia inherit the earth.

Virginia D. Otto
Westborough, Mass 01581
August 17, 1985
Treasurer's Report for 1984

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I have the pleasure of presenting you a report on the financial condition of The American Fern Society, Inc. for the year 1984.

Total receipts amounted to $16,127.21. With $440.59 in my checking account and $3,985.11 in the Records Treasurer's savings account at the beginning of the year, the grand total of receipts was $20,522.91. The Records Treasurer's savings account earned $172.72. The Money Market Certificate earned $2,319.72. The Treasurer's savings account, which holds the certificate interest, earned interest of $227.35. The balance of this savings account was $3,774.71 on December 31, 1984. This year, it was necessary to transfer $2,000.00 from this account to the Treasurer's checking account for disbursements. There was one life membership this year. Total receipts from memberships and subscriptions were $11,602.20. Gifts amounted to $560.50. The net income from the spore exchange was $439.74. Of this figure $248.52 is the net income for 1983, and $191.22 is the net figure for 1984. As I explained in last year's report, the check for the 1983 net income was received after the books for 1983 were closed. Therefore, both figures were recorded in the books for 1984.

Total disbursements amounted to $15,642.71. Journal printing costs this year are lower than those of last year but the situation is misleading. We normally receive statements for four numbers each year. This year, we only received three. The statements for Issue No. 3 of Volume 74 were received in January of 1985 and thus will appear in the 1985 disbursements. With $1,581.76 in my checking account and $3,291.17 in the Records Treasurer's savings account at the end of the year, the grand total of $20,522.91 balances with the grand total of receipts. The society continues to be in very good financial condition.

As you may know by now, we have a new Records Treasurer, Dr. David S. Barrington, as of September 1, 1984. Thus, I wish to thank both Dr. Barrington and Dr. Leslie G. Hirkok for their excellent cooperation in maintaining the treasury. I also wish to thank the Journal Editor and Pteridologia Business Manager, Dr. David B. Lallinger, the Newsletter Editor, Dr. Dennis Wm. Stevenson, and the Board Issues Curator, Dr. James D. Montgomery, for their help in keeping the books accurate.

Respectfully submitted,

James D. Caponetti
Treasurer

Regular Memberships
Renewal ...............$1,097.00
New .................. 237.00
Advances ............. 146.00
Total ................ $1,480.00

Journal Memberships
Renewal ...............$5,411.10
New .................. 822.50
Advances ............. 57.52
Total ................ $6,291.12

Subscriptions
Renewal ...............$3,195.50
New .................. 119.00
Advances ............. 49.50
To Treasurer ........ 12.50
Total ................ $3,376.50

Sale of Back Issues of Journal
Treasurer .............. $611.09
Records Treasurer .... 110.29
Total ................ $621.38

Sales of Pteridologia
Treasurer .............. $85.00
Records Treasurer .... 10.00
Total ................ $95.00

Sale of Author's Reprints
Treasurer .............. $518.53
Records Treasurer .... 44.62
Total ................ $563.15

Page and Plate Charges .......... $145.00

Gifts
Treasurer .............. $0
Records Treasurer .... 560.50
Total ................ $560.50

A.I.B.S. Insurance Dividend ........ $23.00
Advertising in Journal ........ $104.00

Spore Exchange, Net
Treasurer, 1983 .......... $248.52
Treasurer, 1984 ......... 191.22
Records Treasurer .... 0
Total ................ $439.74

Life Memberships ................ $160.00
Interest from Third National
and Howard Books ............. 172.72
Transfer from Treasurer's Savings
 to Checking Account .......... 2,000.00
British Pteridological
Society Dues ................ 152.10
Checks Outstanding .......... 57.52

Total Receipts ................ $16,127.21
Grand Total ................ $20,522.91

REPORT OF THE AUDITOR

I hereby certify that I have seen the books and accounts of James D. Caponetti, Treasurer of the American Fern Society, Inc. and have obtained confirmation of the correctness of the Society's balance on hand as set forth in detail in the accompanying report of the Treasurer.

Irene Harb
Affiliate Broker
April 29, 1985

Receipts
Cash on Hand, January 1, 1984
Treasurer .................... $410.59
Records Treasurer .......... 3,985.11
Total ...................... $4,395.70
American Fern Journal
Vol. 73, No. 4  .... $2,454.57
Vol. 74, No. 1  .... 2,759.42
Vol. 74, No. 2  .... 2,801.06
Total  ............ $8,095.05

Brown Envelopes and Mailing  .... $1,204.94
Printing (Stationery, etc.)  .... 406.53
Reprints and Postage  .... 313.44
Treasurer's Expenses  .... 147.36
Treasurer's Fidelity Bond  .... 50.00
Records Treasurer's Expenses  .... 740.46
Records Treasurer's Fidelity Bond  .... 50.00
Secretary's Expenditures  .... 98.18
Back Issues Curator's Expenses  .... 740.29
Journal Editor's Expenses  .... 104.84
A.I.F.B. Subs  .... 116.00
Newsletter Editor  .... 2,000.00
Newsletter Printing  .... 980.00
Refunds to Agencies and Members  .... 66.02
Bank Charges
Treasurer  .... $0.08
Records Treasurer  .... 7.77
Total  .... $7.85

Bad Checks
Treasurer  .... $0
Records Treasurer  .... 74.00
Total  .... $74.00

1983 Outstanding Checks
Cashed  .... 234.80
Total Disbursements  .... $1,504.21

Cash on hand, January 1, 1985
Treasurer  .... $1,581.76
Records Treasurer  .... 3,291.17
Total  .... $4,872.93

STATEMENT, DECEMBER 31, 1984

Assets
Cash in Treasurer's Checking Account  .... $1,581.76
Cash in Records Treasurer's Savings Account  .... 3,291.17
Cash in Treasurer's Savings Account  .... 3,774.71
Savings Certificate in First TN Bank  .... 23,500.00
Accounts Receivable (Reprints and Back Issues)  .... 323.32
Inventory, Journal (3,398 at $1.25)  .... 4,247.50
Library  .... 396.00
Total  .... $37,114.46

Liabilities
Advance Memberships  .... $146.00
Advance Subscriptions  .... 49.50
Savings Certificate  .... 23,500.00
General Fund  .... 50,888.96
Total  .... $83,771.46

PTERIDIOLOGIA
Opening balance January 1, 1984  .... $463.72
Receipts from sale of Pteridologia  .... $8,000.00
Total  .... $8,463.72

Disbursements  .... 0
Closing balance December 31, 1983  .... $463.72

1 Not including $25.00 in accounts receivable, which is owed from foreign sources and is not likely to be collected.

NEW YORK OFFICE -- 1984

Balance on hand January 1, 1984  .... $3,034.36
Income (APS Check)  .... $2,000.00
Total assets for the year  .... $2,034.36

Disbursements:
Supplies  .... $26.21
Postal (Includes bulk & foreign mail, Reprints, etc.)  .... $1,290.87
Telephone  .... $20.34
Secretarial time (6 issues at $75.00 per issue)  .... $450.00
Total expenses  .... $1,787.42
Closing balance December 31, 1984  .... $246.94

Here's A Record

The Guinness Book of World Records (1979 edition) names as "Worst Weed" the "watertonging weed Salvinia auriculata, found in Africa." Apparently, it was first noticed in 1980 when Kariba Lake was filled in May, 1959. By April, 1960 (only 11 months later) it had choked an area of 77 sq. miles. By 1963, S. auriculata covered 387 sq. miles in Kariba Lake.

Guinness labels Salvinia auriculata "intransigent" -- which Webster says means "refusing compromise; uncompromising; irreconcilable." -- A radical (in politics).

--JGS

Still Available

The symposium entitled "Taxonomic and Morphological Relationships of the Pteridaceae" which was published as an issue of Brittonia (Vol. 29(1), 1-68, 1977) is still available from the New York Botanical Garden. The cost including postage is $5.00 for U.S.A. orders and $6.00 for foreign orders. Send payment with your request to: Scientific Publications Department, New York Botanical Garden, Bronx, NY 10458, U. S. A.