

The Society for Ecumenical Studies

Annual Report 2006

The Society's Statues & Objects

The Society was founded in 1995 and became a Registered Charity, Number 1096515, on 14 March 2003. Its objects as a registered charity are the advancement of religion and the education of the public by fostering as widely as possible the Christian Ecumenical Movement, in a way that combines practical experience in social, international and interfaith fields with theological reflection and exploration in regard to divisions between Christian denominations, in particular by providing occasions and a regular forum within which persons and groups of different backgrounds, races and theological convictions can meet for exchange of information, for discussion and to work together on study projects, where appropriate in collaboration with other groups or agencies.

Executive Committee (elected on 23 May 2006)

Dr Martin Conway	President (Chairman)
The Revd Mark Woodruff	Secretary
Mrs Hilary Martin	Treasurer
The Revd John Bradley	
Mr David Carter	
The Revd Maximos Lavriotes	
Mr Alan Rainer	

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Membership

The Society's membership at the end of 2006, including speakers who have been accorded honorary membership and certain associate bodies, now stands at 102.

Committee and Newsletter

During the year the Executive Committee met twice to conduct the Society's business. Very unfortunately, it was possible only to hold one meeting, the Annual General Meeting in May which included a Seminar involving Professor Paul Fiddes and Canon Paul Avis, on Anglican-Baptist dialogue. Plans for two autumn meetings had to be abandoned owing to the unavoidable and coincidental withdrawal of two speakers leaving insufficient time to make alternative arrangements. In these circumstances it was decided not to collect an annual subscription. But the Society was associated with a very successful event to commemorate the martyrs on all sides of the Church's divides, with London as a focus for those who offered their lives from the 1530s to the 1670s. Papers were delivered by Dr Peter Elvy (former rector of Chelsea Old Church, Thomas More's parish church), Cathy Corcoran OBE (director of the Cardinal Hume Centre), the Revd Bill Snelson (General Secretary of Churches Together in England) and the Revd Mark Woodruff (the secretary of the Society). These papers will shortly be available through the Society's website as part of a wider treatment of the martyr traditions as instances of *communio*. The Committee also took part in the meetings of Bodies in Association with Churches Together – the forum for the unofficial ecumenism on the ground – and also the important development in 'receptive ecumenism', the 'East-West Meetings' for encounter between Catholics, Anglicans and other traditions in the West with the Orthodox and Oriental Orthodox of the Eastern Churches. There were two mailings to members, each with a newsletter, reports on events with which the Society was involved, and the texts of related papers and reviews. These included:

- Sharing Communion in a Hungry World – report from Hilary Martin (treasurer of the Society) on the Churches Together study conference on Communion
- Catholic Learning - Part One Report from Mark Woodruff (secretary of the Society) on the January 2006 Receptive Ecumenism International Conference in Durham
- Lancelot Andrewes, Episcopacy and Orthodoxy, a paper by Professor Nicholas Lossky

We also placed comprehensive accounts and reports from our successful training week for young ecumenical leaders of the future, which took place on Iona in September 2005, on our website, alongside reports and news of other activities in which Committee members took part, such as the proceedings of Societas Oecumenica and studies of the recent ARCIC III report on *Mary: Grace and Hope in Christ*.

Website – www.ecumenicalstudies.org.uk

The website has been developed as a means to disseminate these and other papers to a much wider readership. It now constitutes as full as possible an archive of the Society's activities and studies since preliminary meetings in 1994. As not all contributions were from texts, in some circumstances a paper does not exist, but we hope to cover this with retrospective reports in due course. If members have in their possession papers which have not been preserved in our archive, the Committee would be grateful to have a copy. In 2006 the role of the website as a resource for ecumenical study was further extended, with material from other ecumenical societies or events, and book reviews.

Work for the Future

For the future, the Committee has kept a number of ideas for study, locally and nationally under review. Other than those already referred to, these include:

- Closer links with other ecumenical societies and Churches Together
- Ecumenical collaboration with reference to the environment and contemporary society
- The process of 'receptive ecumenical learning'
- Contribution to the East-West study encounters
- Preparations for the observance of the 2008 Centenary of the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity

Martin Conway, President & Chairman, 30 May 2007

On behalf of the Executive Committee: John Bradley, David Carter, Maximos Lavriotes, Hilary Martin (Treasurer), Alan Rainer, Mark Woodruff (Secretary)