

British Sundial Society

Registrar's Report - Council Meeting, 27th September 1997

1. The Registry and all records have been successfully transferred and are operational on the ex-IW PC with connexion to my monitor, keyboard and mouse.
2. The backup process developed by Ian is being maintained with a supplementary copy of the database as it was at the time of my take over also being stored on the system. The preparation and maintenance of an off-site back up will be commenced shortly.
3. The annual meeting appears to have triggered an upsurge in the activity of our Recorders for I now have a sizeable backlog of entries to make. When these have been entered, I estimate that the number of recorded fixed dials will have risen to around 3600 from a total of some 4050 reports.
4. The number of reports now means that we have enough material for a 16th volume of the Records and after verification and other necessary housekeeping I hope to take up Ian Wooton's kind offer to bind the latest volume for us.
5. I have not as yet submitted any photographs to our archive because it is still my intention to scan all print images for computer storage (I do not have the equipment to scan slides although such is technically available if needed) before submission in order that we might experiment with this approach. A recent dispute with the supplier of my Pentium has held up such work but I expect to be able to do this shortly.
6. Ian Wooton and I plan to meet shortly in order to resolve a few queries regarding the operation of the Register, the application of conventions in certain unusual circumstances and ways in which we might adjust the numbering scheme to account for the recent changes in Counties in the UK.
7. Some contributors, notably Chris Daniel, have submitted their photographs in the form of colour photocopies on an A4 sheet and this is particularly suitable for binding within the volumes of record forms - along with any other submitted material such as diagrams etc. As far as I know we have not alerted the membership to this concept and we perhaps should now do so.
8. Chris Daniel has sent me some further dial reports one of which refers to a British made dial for use in New Zealand. He proposes that we should extend the Register to include such dials 'made for export' and I have done this. It occurs to me that we might also wish to record examples of British dials that may have been purchased and taken abroad too. If it is the feeling of the Committee that we should do this I propose that I add a further 'County' to cover all such overseas dials. If the number of such dials turned out to be significant we could always adopt a different approach.
9. I have had a request from a member for summaries of dials in a particular area (in the case in question it was the London area) and I have of course obliged. Having regard to the risks associated with theft from a wider circulation of such data, it occurs to me that the Society should perhaps claim copyright on such information as a matter of course and perhaps additionally should make it clear that the information is being supplied for the member's private use. If this is thought sensible I could easily develop a report format which would insert such statements automatically.
10. I have been contacted by Tony Wood with a suggestion that we might perhaps establish a policy of recording Saxon dials in both registers. We already appear to have ten Saxon dials in the Fixed Dial Register and I don't think there is a serious risk of overloading our database since there only appear to be relatively few of them around. However, Tony's own Group now seem to feel that they should maintain the status quo. I would be interested in the Council's views on this matter.