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THE BRODIE CLUB

DATE OF NEXT MEETING : Tuesday, 19 January 1988

PLACE OF NEXT MEETING : Faunal Lab, South Borden Bld.

SPEAKER : Dr. Trudy Nicks,
Curator, Dept. of Ethnology, R. O. M.

SUBJECT : Indians, Animals and The Fur Trade.

MINUTES OF THE 836th MEETING OF THE BRODIE CLUB

Held 15 December 1987 in the Faunal Lab, University of Toronto.

Chairman : Bendell Secretary : Savage.

The meeting was called to order at 8.10 p.m. The roll was called and guests noted. Present were 10 members and 4 guests (Yvonne Bendell guest of Jim Bendell, Margaret Bodsworth guest of Fred Bodsworth, Heather Speakman guest of John Speakman, and Linda Watt guest of Savage. Bertin, Sherry and Ann Falls sent regrets.

The minutes of the 834th meeting of the Brodie Club were read, and after minor corrections, were declared adopted by the Chairman.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Aird proposed that the Secretary be changed at each monthly meeting as is done for the Chairman of each meeting, as a means of reducing the work-load of the Secretary; the latter's role would become more of a Corresponding Secretary. Carrick seconded the motion. After discussion, the motion was passed unanimously. The Recording Secretary for each meeting would take the minutes and forward a copy to the Corresponding Secretary at least two weeks before the next meeting for distribution along with the notice re Speaker and subject, through the good offices of Speakman's office staff. Alphabetical rotation of Recording Secretary indicated Auger as delegated for the 19 January 1988 meeting.

Norm Martin, as F.O.N. representative of the Brodie Club, noted the new Newsletter "Scales and Tales" of the Reptile Breeding Foundation, based in Picton, Ontario, as having interesting articles. He also announced a conference on the financial implications of Free Trade between Canada and the United States at York University on 16 January 1988.

SPEAKER OF THE EVENING

The Speaker of the Evening, Dr. John Morgan-Jones, was introduced by Savage as Professor Emeritus of Botany, University of Toronto. After receiving his Bachelor and Master of Science degrees at the University of Manitoba, he pursued graduate studies at the University of Uppsala, Sweden, where he became a Licentiate in Philosophy, the equivalent of a Ph.D. degree. After returning to Toronto, he became Associate Professor in the Department of Botany, and taught Medical Mycology in the Faculty of Medicine, U. of T. Dr. Morgan-Jones had addressed the Brodie Club in September 1983 on "Mushrooms, History and Crime". His subject this evening was "Penicillin : The First of the Miracle Drugs".

Dr. Morgan-Jones prefaced his address with remarks about a case of mushroom poisoning in September 1987 one week after eating a rare species of mushroom Lepiota helveola. A test for the toxic amanitins which this species contains, the Mixner test, is to squash a mushroom cap on newspaper and then add a little concentrated hydrochloric acid, to give a blue colour if aminitins are present. Dr. Morgan-Jones' advice to any one offered mushrooms picked by some one else was to develop suddenly an allergy to mushrooms.

The Speaker described the film "Penicillin : The First of the Miracle Drugs" as an educational film, a joint creation by himself and the Media Centre, of the University of Toronto. The historical background of penicillin as a chance discovery in 1928 at St. Mary's Hospital, London, England as having lysozymes capable of inhibiting the growth of Staphylococcus aureus and published on by Alexander Fleming in 1929, was described. Experimental work in 1938 - 1940 by Howard Florey and Ernst Chain at Oxford University showed its effectiveness against Streptococcus hemolyticus and many other highly pathogenic bacteria. For the wartime production of penicillin, the Connaught Laboratories of the University of Toronto was chosen. Large scale production at the old Knox College, at 1 Spadina Crescent, Toronto, under wartime conditions of urgency took place in April 1944, two months before "D-Day". Patenting of penicillin was completed by Mercks, an American drug firm.

During the 30 minute projection of the film, steps in the recognition of penicillin as a bactericide, problems in purifying and concentration of penicillin itself from cultures of the fungus Penicillium notatum chrysogenum and finally its large scale manufacture were vividly described and interspersed with film clips of Churchill, Hitler and Mussolini and war-time field actions and casualties.

After a question and answer period with a highly interested audience, the Speaker was thanked on behalf of the Brodie Club by Norm Martin for a well documented and educational film. Applause followed.

MEMBERS' NOTES AND OBSERVATIONS

Falls reported that he, Ann Falls and Tasker and Mrs. Tasker has returned one week ago from a two week stay in Costa Rica where they had been birding, photographing and making sound recordings.

Aird reported an epilogue to the reaction of Queen's Park pigeons to the field gun salute on 11 November last in which the pigeons had only appeared restless, having been made sick by poisons designed to reduce their numbers.

Meeting was adjourned at 10.20 p.m.

Howard Savage