

Botanical Society of America, Historical Section Report for 2005-2006 [Botany 2007]

Lee Kass, Chair of the Historical Section, was our representative on the Centennial Planning Committee. Kass attended Botany 2006 in Chico, California, and gave a paper on the contributions of Cornell to American Botany (Travel funds for Kass to attend the meeting were provided by the Cornell Department of Plant Biology). Carol Kelloff, Secretary/Treasurer of the Historical Section presented a talk in the Tropical Biology Section. Larry Davenport, our Vice Chair did not attend the Centennial in Chico.

Lee Kass was planning to step down as Chair of the Historical Section this year. Unfortunately, Larry Davenport was not able to succeed her as provided in our by-laws. Had Larry succeeded Lee, a new Vice-Chair should have been elected at our Annual Business Meeting. Lee Kass, therefore, continued to assume responsibility of Chair of the Historical Section. Carol Kelloff offered to continue as Secretary/Treasurer of the Historical Section. At the Annual Business meeting in Chico, she was elected and has accepted a second term as the Secretary/Treasurer.

In the 2004-2005 report, the section suggested using some of the Historical Sections funds to support the archival research of Dr. Betty Smocovitis for her project on writing a history of the Botanical Society of America in honor of its Centennial Year. In 2005-2006, the historical section provided Dr Smocovitis with an honorarium to conduct research for her project. Dr. Smocovitis, a member of the Historical Section, was the Keynote speaker for the Botany 2006 Centennial Meeting.

The section sponsored 2 papers for Botany 2006; one was scheduled for the Historical Section contributed papers and the other was placed in contributed papers for the Economic Botany Section.

Lee Kass presided at the Historical Section annual meeting on 1 August 2006, at the University of California, Chico. It was suggested at the meeting that the Historical section sponsor a symposium and/or invite a prominent scientist from the area, museum or institution to present a paper on a historical topic of choice. Kass followed up on this suggestion and has organized a symposium for Botany 2007, "A historical perspective on Chicago Area Botany."

Also at the annual meeting in 2006, a new award was established for the best student paper on a historical subject in botany. The section planned that the first award would be given at Botany 2007 in Chicago, Illinois. The award is titled the Emanuel D. Rudolph Award for the History of Botany. The new award was announced in the *Plant Science Bulletin* (October 2006) and colleagues were invited to encourage undergraduate and graduate students to consider presenting a paper on a historical subject in Botany to be eligible for this honor.

Members of the Historical Section also discussed the possibilities for a reliable forum for brief articles on botanical history. Several journals were suggested: *Baileya*, *Endeavor* (British), *Huntea*, and the Tri-Beta Society publication, *BIOS*. Papers presented in the section or symposium can be compiled for a volume of a journal. Initiation for the publication of historical papers could be scheduled for the 2008 botany meetings. Kass pursued the question of such publications in *Baileya*, but the editors did not think it an appropriate venue at this time.

Another topic for consideration for a volume of papers was the presentations given at the symposium titled "Liberty Hyde Bailey's Legacy of Scientific Outreach," hosted by the Historical Section at the Agricultural History Society Symposium, at Cornell University, September 2004. The problem of the cost of publishing such a volume appears to be prohibitive.

Respectfully submitted,

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