I am afraid it is becoming a cliché with me when giving my Review of the Year to compare our Society to a smoothly-functioning machine, but that remains as true of this year, as it was of the last two years. Of course, the credit for that belongs entirely to your officers and Council.

First of all I would like to thank our Secretary, Peter Preston-Morley, who continues to be a tower of strength to me and who conducts the business of meetings and Council with great efficiency. The Society is greatly in his debt. Thanks too to our Membership Secretary, Philip Skingley of Spink’s, not only for looking after our members so well, but also for generously enabling us to meet here. Spink’s have provided a wonderful venue for our November and May meetings and we will be holding a third meeting here next February. I’d like to repeat our great thanks to Philip for arranging this – and also for so unobtrusively and efficiently organising our parties.

Our membership now stands at 543 (13 Honorary; 73 Institutional; 447 Ordinary and 10 Student), 20 fewer than last year: so our gradual decline is continuing.

Last year I reported that we wanted to attract more members, particularly younger members, and we established a subcommittee on membership to look at how we might do this. That subcommittee met twice and came up with a number of suggestions which were debated in Council and at its meeting in November it was agreed to put some proposals on membership to an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Society (see below).

In addition we want to revamp the Society’s website, as this is increasingly becoming the public face of the Society. We are extremely grateful to Andy Woods, our Website officer, for all his work on keeping it up to date, besides of course the great achievement that he and Rory Naismith completed of making all the back numbers of the Journal available, but we need to commission a professional to do a complete redesign. Once that is done, then there will be many possibilities of adding extra content to attract more visitors to it and thereby gain more members for the Society. Thirdly, we will approach the leading UK auction houses to see whether they would carry small advertisements for the Society in their catalogues. We have also set a goal of having three younger members (under the age of 35) on Council by 2017, although that is proving challenging. Lastly, we have considered a number of ideas for changes to the current lecture programme: these include members’ evenings, having a meeting set aside for papers from younger scholars, holding more meetings outside London and/or at Spink’s and having one meeting a year on a topic of wider interest in one of the lecture theatres at the British Museum, in conjunction with our sister Society. We have made a start by increasing the number of lectures we have at Spink’s, as everyone has agreed that this makes an excellent venue, from two to three a year, so that in addition to the Anniversary and May meetings, which are followed by parties, we will also hold our February meeting here. Council will of course monitor progress on these initiatives, and I will report again next year.

As we have heard, our Treasurer continues to ensure that the Society remains in good financial health but he has had struggle hard to find financial institutions where we can safely deposit our reserve. We are extremely grateful, as ever, to our Honorary Auditor, Tony Merson, for his hard work on the accounts. Thanks to our Treasurer’s careful management we have been able to hold our subscription level for twelve years now while our reserves have been steadily growing, so that they now exceed £210,000. Our income comfortably exceeds our outgoings. The Society does from time to time receive requests for financial help from good numismatic causes and indeed it is important that we do give grants in order to justify our charitable status, but without a budget set aside for such requests, it can be difficult to know how much we can offer. A case in point was an appeal we received in February from Philip...
Attwood, Keeper of Coins and Medals at the British Museum, to raise £22,500 for the Money & Medals network (whose newsletter is circulated to all members three times a year) in order to complete the process of researching and mapping public collections of coins and medals on their website: this was a good cause that we wanted to support, but how much could we offer? In February our Finance Committee met to look at the Society's income and expenditure over the last four years and concluded we could set aside a total of some £5,000 a year for such requests, and Council agreed to offer £3,000 to the network. Thanks to this and other contributions, Philip has been able to keep the project running this year and we are glad to see that he has been able to bid to the Arts Council to extend this project for a further three years and we wish him success in this. In addition we have given £750 to an initiative by Tony Abramson to develop a new numismatic font to reproduce the main varieties of letter form that occur on British coins, which will be freely downloadable on the web, and we continue to support three bursaries at a cost of £350 each. I would like to thank my predecessor and newly-elected Vice President, Robin Eaglen, for his help on budget-setting.

The most important and lasting benefit that members receive from the Society is of course the Journal and this year Martin Allen has nobly held the fort as our sole editor, responsible both for the Journal and for Special Publications. The Journal is printed so regularly every year and to such a high standard that it is easy to forget all the work that Martin puts into editing it and seeing it through the press with typesetters and printers and we congratulate him on producing yet another excellent volume, 84. Turning to Special Publications, The Diaries of Leonard Wyon, edited by Philip Attwood, were published early this year and our thanks to Philip Skingley for his work on that volume, the longest of the Society’s SPs. Tonight we are delighted to be able to launch Robin Eaglen’s The Abbey and Mint of Bury St Edmunds from 1279, completing his monumental study of Bury, and Robin would like to thank Martin very warmly for all his help on this book. Two SPs in one year, but there is a third volume that is in preparation now and which will appear very early in the New Year, Philip de Jersey’s Coin Hoards in Iron Age Britain, a definitive corpus of all Iron Age coin hoards from Britain which weighs in at 512 pages long: we look forward to seeing copies. Further in the future lies the publication of Richard Kelleher’s PhD thesis on medieval coins and monetisation in England and Wales, 1066–1540. Lastly, I mention another book which, while not published by this Society, is one with which we would want to be very closely associated: this is Mark Blackburn’s festschrift, Early Medieval Monetary History, edited by Rory Naismith, Martin Allen and Elina Screen, which will be published by Ashgate on 5 December and we congratulate Martin on this: a flier will be circulated to members.

Turning to our meetings, we thank our Director, Ian Leins, for organizing another varied programme of meetings this year and thanks to our speakers Barrie Cook, Julian Bowsher, Robert Rock, Rory Naismith, David Dykes, Joseph Payne, our Editor, Martin Allen, and our Secretary, Peter Preston-Morley who stepped into the breach at short notice when my colleague John Naylor was indisposed – don’t worry he won’t be able to escape so easily, we will be inviting him back next year. Our Joint Summer Meeting with the Royal Numismatic Society was held this year in Reading, in celebration of Reading Coin Club’s 50th anniversary. We are very grateful to them, especially to Gavin Scott for putting together the programme, and to Peter Hall and John Quinn for their help on the day and not least to the volunteers of Reading Baptist Church for a lavish lunch! Tickets were priced at a very reasonable £15 and it attracted 47 people and broke even financially. The theme of the day was ‘Thames Valley numismatics in the national context’ and the speakers included Sam Moorhead, John Naylor, Robert Thompson, Maurice Bull, Paul Withers and our Secretary. It was an excellent day and our thanks to them all. Andy Woods has kindly agreed to host next year’s joint meeting in York, where we held our very well-attended meeting in 2013, and the date is likely to be 11 July, although this is subject to confirmation. Details will be circulated in due course.

Our Director has put together another excellent programme of talks for next year, but has noted that finding enough speakers to fill the Society’s programme is not easy and would like, through me, to appeal to everyone here to contact him if you would like to give a paper in the future. We also thank Robert Thompson for looking after that very important asset, the joint
library which we share with the Royal Numismatic Society. The Warburg Institute informed us last year that they would need to charge the full costs for the housing the library, and their fees this year are £1,944 (in 2012 the cost was £400), while the two societies also pay £2,040 to insure the library. We are liable for one third of these costs, £1,328. The library is only open to members one day a week with the help of a dedicated band of volunteers, and is not very busy then, and the question must arise whether the two societies are really getting the best out of this very important but increasingly expensive asset or whether there might be other solutions that would save us costs and enable it to be more widely used. Andrew Burnett, President of the Royal Numismatic Society, has started a review of the options and has talked to other libraries in London, such as the Institute of Classical Studies, to see whether they might be willing to take it on, while giving access to members of our societies. It is early days yet in these discussions and members will be informed if there is a concrete proposal to put on the table.

I now come to the awards the Society has made this year: the Blunt prize, the Medal and the Book Prize which both bear Jeffrey North’s name and the Sanford Saltus Medal. The Blunt Prize is awarded every three years to an individual, preferably under 35 years of age, who has made a significant recent contribution to the study of numismatics which falls within the Society’s remit and we are very grateful to Christopher Blunt’s son, Simon Blunt, for continuing to support this prize and to Martin Allen for chairing a panel to make recommendations to Council. This year the panel could not decide between two very worthy candidates and we give a double award to Dr Richard Kelleher of the Fitzwilliam Museum and Dr Philippa Walton of the Ashmolean Museum. Two very worthy winners.

In 2008 thanks to a generous gift from him, the Jeffrey North Medal for exceptional services to British Numismatics was instituted. Our Vice-President Graham Dyer chaired a panel, also comprising the Secretary and John Rainey, which recommended that medals be awarded to Grenville Chamberlain, Gavin Scott and, jointly, to Noël and Alan Cox and this was agreed by Council: our congratulations to all of them.

The North Book Prize was established in 2006 with a generous donation by Jeffrey North and is awarded every two years for the best book on British Numismatics and we are grateful to Robert Thompson for chairing a panel to consider this and this year Council decided to award it to Martin Allen for his *Mints and Money in Medieval England*, published by Cambridge University Press in 2012 and an extremely important contribution to the monetary history of England in the medieval period.

Of course the Society’s premier award is the Sanford Saltus medal which you have just balloted on and I can announce that the winner is Professor Nicholas Mayhew. The medal will be awarded at the Society’s Summer Party next May.

Last year, thanks to a proposal from our Education Committee, we launched a new initiative, a programme of three bursaries to enable university students to gain work experience with a numismatic collection. Council established three bursaries of £350 each and we are grateful to the York Museums Trust and the Fitzwilliam Museum for hosting the interns this year and to Sam Moorhead for administering this scheme. It is very encouraging that 27 applications were received for the three places. Dominic Chorney was based at the Fitzwilliam Museum where he worked for a month and found it a ‘truly memorable experience’. He worked on Greek, Roman Provincial, third-century radiate and early medieval coins. He is now studying for an MA at Warwick, focussing on numismatics. Dakota Bagley-Sweet worked at the Yorkshire Museum, where he focussed on Roman coins from the 1958–59 excavations at Catterick, sorting the material and inputting into a database. He also helped with a major event at the Museum and the installation of a small temporary exhibition. He ‘gained a great deal from his internship’. Carl Savage was also based at the Yorkshire Museum and assisted with the sorting and databasing of the Bootham School medieval coin hoard. He gained valuable insights into the role of a numismatic curator and the internship has helped him think about his future PhD proposals.

I would lastly like to express my thanks to Peter Mitchell who is standing down after 23 years as Vice President – he has been a member for 60 years – and we welcome Robin Eaglen,
who is taking his place. We also thank Dr Paul Stevens who is standing down from Council by rotation. We are delighted that David Guest has agreed to take on the role of publicity officer and Sam Moorhead the role of Education Officer.

We welcome the three new members of Council who have been elected this evening: Dr Andrew Burnett, Tim Everson and Anthony Gilbert.

Lastly it is my sad duty to record the deaths of five members: Sir David Dupree, Bt, of Matlock, who died in June 2013 at the age of 83 and had been a member since 1962; Stephen Patrick Raeside of Glasgow, who had been a member for 11 years and died on 4 May this year at the age of 55; Yvonne Harvey of Durham, a member for 30 years, who died on 7 June at the age of 85; Gay van der Meer of the Netherlands, a member since 1958, who died on 9 August at the age of 90 and Frank Milward of Mortimer, a member since 1978, who died on 1 October at the age of 72. A memoir of Yvonne by Meryl Foster appeared in the Society of Antiquaries Online Newsletter, from which the following notes are taken; I have no doubt that fuller notices of her life will appear in print in due course. Yvonne worked in the Society of Antiquaries library in the 1950s and then at the British Museum, first in the Department of Manuscripts (now part of the British Library) and then, from 1964, in the Department of British and Medieval Antiquities, the forerunner of my own department. She married Paul Harvey a colleague at the British Museum, who subsequently took up a post at Southampton University and then became Professor of Medieval History at Durham University in 1978. Paul was an expert on manuscripts and seals, while Yvonne pursued numismatic studies and she will be remembered principally for her monumental catalogue of more than 5,000 coins from the Anglo-Saxon and post-Conquest mint at Winchester, which was published by Oxford University Press in 2012, the fruit of more than forty years work, which involved studying collections worldwide. Gay van der Meer was our longest-serving woman member. She was curator of medals at the Koninklijk Penningkabinet between 1959 and 1988, and between 1963 and 1987 was responsible for the remarkable Dutch contribution to FIDEM exhibitions. After her formal retirement she remained active in the medallic field and was always ready to share her extensive knowledge with scholars from all over the world.

Finally I would like to express our thanks to Robin Eaglen for sponsoring tonight’s party which is also celebrating the completion of his project on the Abbey and Mint of Bury St Edmunds, jointly with our Librarian, Robert Thompson, who is celebrating the 50th anniversary of his membership. We congratulate Robert who compiled the index to The A to Z of Charles II’s London 1682: London &c actually survey’d by William Morgan, which received a highly commended certificate from the Information Services Group of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals.

The North Book Prize, established in 2006, is awarded every two years for the best book on British numismatics published in the last three years. A subcommittee, under our Librarian, Robert Thompson, had a large number of books to review and it would be fair to say it is a hotly-contested prize. Council felt, however, that there was one outstanding candidate this year, Martin Allen’s Mints and Money in Medieval England, published by Cambridge University Press in 2012. This has quickly been recognised as the definitive study on its subject and I cannot sum it up better than Nick Mayhew in his review in the Journal of Economic History: the book ‘provides chapter and verse on everything the medieval historian is likely to want to know about our current knowledge of the organisation, administration and production of medieval English mints’. Martin, it is my great pleasure to award you with the North book prize.

The Jeffrey North Medal for Services to British Numismatics was established in 2008 with a generous donation from Mr Jeffrey North. The Medal is awarded to members of the Society or others in recognition of outstanding services to British numismatics, whether in the UK or overseas. Council has decided to make four awards this year, on the recommendation of a subcommittee chaired by our Vice-President Graham Dyer. He comments that ‘this medal is for the type of person who is always there at meetings, who is willing to organise congresses
and conferences, who supports local numismatic societies, or who in some other largely unsung way promotes interest in numismatics’.

**Grenville Chamberlain** has been a member of the Numismatic Society of Nottinghamshire in 1956 and has served on the organising committee for the BANS Congress since 1960, including two terms as President. In 1983 he co-ordinated the exhibition ‘1000 Years of English Coinage’ in Nottingham and he compiled *The Numismatic Society of Nottinghamshire 1948–1998*, published by the Society in their golden jubilee year. He has also written several other works on the paranumismatica and medals of Nottinghamshire. Grenville is a volunteer at the Museum of Nottingham Life, Brewhouse Yard.

Secondly we are making a joint award to **Alan and Noel Cox**. Alan has been a member of our Society for the past 14 years but for many more years than that Alan and Noel have been the mainstay of the South Wales and Monmouthshire Numismatic Society. They have always been aware of the wider numismatic world and they have been regular and popular attenders of BANS Congresses and on at least four occasions they organised those Congresses; on top of that they also organised the Token Congresses in Cardiff in 1987 and 2000. They are the leading authorities on the paranumismatica of Wales and are authors of *The Tokens, Checks, Metallic Tickets, Passes and Tallies of Wales, 1800–1993*, volume 1 being published in 1994 and volume 2 in 2012, while in 2005 they wrote *The Pub Checks of Wales*.

**Gavin Scott** has been a member of this Society for over 50 years and has served on Council on at least three occasions and is a regular attender of our meetings month in and month out, whatever the subject. He is generous with the help he gives to others and is the author of the pioneering book *British Countermarks on Copper and Bronze Coins*, published by Spink in 1975. He is a stalwart of the Reading Coin Club which recently hosted a very successful summer meeting of the British and Royal Numismatic Societies, and Gavin generously took charge of the programme for the day.

**Update, February 2015**

An Extraordinary General Meeting of the Society was held on 24 February 2015 and approved the following proposals:

(a) a reduced subscription rate of £15 for ordinary and student members for the year of their election and the following year, and

(b) extension of the age limit for student membership from age 21 to 25 and terminating the reduced subscription rate currently applying to those aged 26 and over in full-time education.

Council will review this after two years to see whether it has been successful.