

4-1948

## The Academy in 1947-1948: The President's Address

Walter J. Breckenridge

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/jmas>

---

### Recommended Citation

Breckenridge, W. J. (1948). The Academy in 1947-1948: The President's Address. *Journal of the Minnesota Academy of Science, Vol. 16 No. 1*, 65-67.

Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/jmas/vol16/iss1/2>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Journals at University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. It has been accepted for inclusion in Journal of the Minnesota Academy of Science by an authorized editor of University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. For more information, please contact [skulann@morris.umn.edu](mailto:skulann@morris.umn.edu).

## THE ACADEMY IN 1947-1948: THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS

WALTER J. BRECKENRIDGE

By way of a brief report from the President, it might be valuable to first state that I consider the following as the objectives of our Academy: first, to promote social contacts between Minnesota science workers—to get them to know each other personally; second, to better acquaint the members with the work of others in their own chosen fields and in other related fields of science; third, to stimulate original thought among younger workers and to help them continue in scientific fields; fourth, to aid in carrying through to completion worthwhile scientific research projects.

From a meagre start, only 15 years ago in 1933, the Academy has increased its membership to nearly 600 and is definitely contributing toward acquainting its members with their colleagues. Extensive series of papers given at the various annual meetings have given members opportunities to let others know more about their work. Through the efforts of special committees, the Academy has acquired some 320 acres of land in the Cedar Creek Forest area and has turned this over to the University of Minnesota as the most logical supervisor of the area for preservation in its natural state and for study by qualified research workers. The Academy was active in sponsoring the acquisition of the Nerstrand Woods by the Federal government and in promoting the exchange of the area to the State of Minnesota as a State Park. A large portion of this has been assigned for permanent preservation and study purposes. As an intermediary between the A.A.A.S. and Minnesota science workers, the Academy has distributed several thousands of dollars in research grants to active workers in a number of science fields. In the field of interesting younger potential scientists, I think the Academy can be complimented on the success of the Junior Academy which it has sponsored and which, as you know, is meeting in a very active session with us here today. In reviewing these projects, I think the Academy, for a comparatively young organization, has certainly done outstanding work in the direction of attaining these particular objectives.

However, turning to the internal workings of our organization, our treasury should provide for the printing of our Proceedings; for the publication of special articles too extensive and specialized for the Proceedings; for scholarships to aid promising younger students; and for more extensive sponsoring of Minnesota scientists' research projects. In these activities we are woefully weak. Several possible moves seem to be in order to help this situation. First, a substantial endowment fund would give us a backlog to at least assist in the

publication of the proceedings. The difficulties and possibilities of this source of income will be discussed later by Dr. Sheard reporting for the Endowment Committee. A second possibility is that with the Academy's record of past accomplishments, it would seem that the time has come when we can reasonably seek some outside financial assistance to continue our work on a somewhat expanded scale. Many State Academies of Science receive state funds through legislative appropriations or otherwise, and it seems that one of the first major moves for the incoming officers of the Minnesota Academy might be to take vigorous action in this direction. During the past year a committee has begun investigating this source of possible aid and Dr. Thiel, its chairman, will report later on its findings.

Another activity in which the Academy could well be far more active, is in assisting high school students with definite scientific promise to continue their schooling. In this we have taken some steps during the past year which are already securing results. Mr. Nelson, Chairman of the Science Talent Search Committee, will report on this later. Steps have further been taken to secure some really substantial scholarships for these outstanding youngsters from some of the larger more forward looking commercial concerns of the state. The results of this spade work will be turned over to the incoming officers for their vigorous prosecution during the coming year.

In this report I want to call the attention of a large majority of Academy members to the fact that on last August 30 all but about 60 Academy members missed out on a very pleasant and profitable summer field meeting at the Nerstrand Woods under Dr. Stork's leadership. The weatherman provided us with a very pleasant day and Dr. Moore arranged for an excellent box lunch for the occasion. A short talk on the history of the Nerstrand Woods was given by Dr. Stork of Carleton and some remarks on the foresters' possible uses of the woods in research were made by Dr. Henry Hanson of the University Forestry Department. The major part of the day, however, was devoted to a leisurely field trip along Prairie Creek, examination of the beaver colony's work and quizzing the specialists about plants, birds, and insects, encountered.

Among the very important happenings in the life of the Academy during the past year has been the serious illness which we hope has only temporarily relieved our friend, Dr. John Moore, of his duties as secretary and treasurer. He has so carefully and conscientiously carried out these duties for so long that I, as a brand new, uninitiated Academy president, felt I had a real bulwark to support me in carrying on my duties which I knew so little about. Just as preparations began for this annual meeting, Dr. Moore was sent to the hospital and his duties have been carried on by Mrs. Moore with the help of Mr. Donald Lewis of our Museum staff who was asked

to help fill the gap. I want to take this opportunity to publicly thank both Mrs. Moore and Mr. Lewis for stepping in and assuming this very considerable burden at this crucial time. We, as an organization, certainly owe a debt of gratitude to Dr. Moore whose past services we appreciate even more under these circumstances. I am sure the entire membership of the Academy joins me in wishing him a complete and rapid recovery from his illness.

The difficulty which we find in securing even a temporary secretary-treasurer impresses us with one more fact about the Academy and that is that the organization is now at the betwixt and between stage where it is too large to have its business carried on by a volunteer secretary and not large enough to support a paid one. The matter of \$100 or \$200 paid for such services still leaves it a job to be done during one's spare time and few are able or willing to devote this much spare time to such a task. Perhaps the solution is to split the position into two—a secretary and a treasurer. Probably the report of the Nominating Committee will further discuss this point. While dealing with technicalities, may I suggest that the custom be established that the vice-president be regularly elevated to the presidency. The Academy functions are of such worthwhile proportions now and should and will become greater as the years pass that the incoming president should have had some experience in Academy business prior to his taking office.

Actually, in surveying the year's accomplishments, I feel that they have not been very extensive, but I have tried to carry on in the face of difficulties and am very glad to have been of some service to the organization.

## REPORT FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE FOR CONSULTATION ON THE CEDAR CREEK FOREST PROJECT

O. T. WALTER

*Macalester College, St. Paul*

### ABSTRACT

The committee is now devising ways and means of making this area readily available for scientific study and research. The committee has: provided entrance signs, completed an aerial survey and stereoscopic mapping of the region, and has made arrangements for the establishment of a ten feet by fourteen feet shelter building. Visitors and research workers can obtain admission cards from Dr. A. N. Wilcox, Horticulture Division 306, University of Minnesota, St. Paul Campus.