

Chapter 4

The Beatles, the Swinging Sixties, and the XII International Congress of Entomology, London, 17–25 August 1964

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At the International Congress of Entomology (XI ICE) held in Vienna, Austria, on August 17–25, 1960 (Chapter 3), there was only one application to host the next congress in 1964; it was from the Royal Entomological Society (RES) in London. The Permanent Committee of ICE gratefully accepted this proposal.

XII ICE would be hosted by the RES, whose headquarters were then based in South Kensington and almost next door to the British Museum (Natural History; BMNH), now the Natural History Museum, London. The RES headquarters housed the society's administrators, library, and meeting rooms for mainly professional entomologists from around the world and the Natural History Museum, many of the United Kingdom's leading entomologists. Close by were the Commonwealth Institute of Entomology and the Anti-Locust Research Centre. The Imperial College of Science and Technology, a college of the University of London at this time, with a large contingent of entomologists in its Department of Zoology and Applied Entomology, and the Royal Albert Hall were also close, both to be essential venues for the congress. The setting provided a critical local caucus of entomologists and an attractive location for attendees. This was to be the second ICE held in the United Kingdom; II ICE took place in Oxford in 1912 (Chapter 1) and the tenth to be held in Europe.

The Council and Fellows of the RES were then tasked with the reality of organizing an event much larger than they were used to. There were some very eminent entomologists amongst this group; and three RES presidents oversaw developments leading up to the congress: Boris Uvarov (1959–1960), George Varley (1961–1962), and Vincent Wigglesworth (1963–1964).

The first meeting at the RES to discuss the task ahead was held just three months after the Vienna congress, on November 23, 1960. This meeting comprised mainly the RES Council members and set about selecting a venue—Imperial College—and selecting the officers of the local organizing/advisory committee. Owain Richards (Imperial College) was elected organizing committee president with Boris Uvarov (Anti-Locust Research Centre) and Vincent Wigglesworth (Cambridge University) as vice presidents (Fig. 4.1). Later, George Varley (Oxford University) joined as a third vice president (Fig. 4.1). William Harris (BMNH) became the honorary treasurer, Paul Freeman (BMNH) honorary secretary with Gareth Davies (Imperial College) assistant