

SURTSEY RESEARCH
PROGRESS REPORT

II.

The Surtsey Research Society
Reykjavik - Iceland

May 1966

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INTRODUCTION

The submarine eruption that began on the 14th of November, 1963, approximately 20 miles off the south coast of Iceland and the island that it created, Surtsey, have become well known both among scientists and the general public. The eruption on Surtsey ceased in May 1965, but a few days later another eruption started just off the shore of Surtsey. An island was also created there, but did not become permanent and washed away when this eruption stopped in November, 1965. In December the third eruption began on the other side of Surtsey and is still going strong and has formed quite a large island, but, as yet, only of loose material that would not last when the eruption ceases. Thus, although Surtsey itself has been quiet for over a year, it is still surrounded by volcanic activities.

Surtsey immediately caught the interest of scientists, who found there a unique opportunity to study both geology in the making and the settlement of life on a sterile rock out in the ocean. In order to coordinate this activity, the Surtsey Research Committee was formed shortly after the eruption started.

With the scientific interest increasing, the Surtsey Research Committee was changed into the Surtsey Research Society in May 1965. That same month the Society sponsored the Surtsey Biology conference which was held in Reykjavik with participation by scientists from Iceland and abroad, especially from the United States.

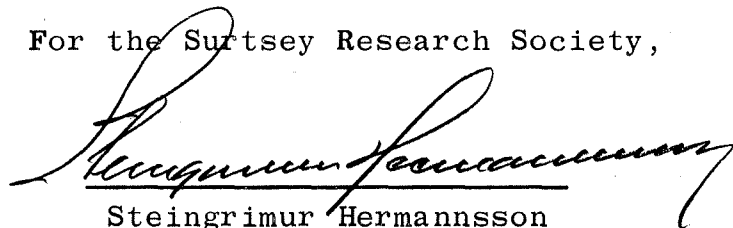
Scientists were quite active on and around Surtsey in 1964, and in February 1965 a collection of their progress reports was published by the Surtsey Research Committee.

The following progress reports are the second ones in that series published on Surtsey. They represent work of scientists in 1965, engaged in the Surtsey research projects. They are not,

in general, intended to show scientific conclusions. On some subjects scientific papers will soon follow and it is hoped that the program will continue and lead to many more publications of interest.

The Surtsey research program would not have been possible without strong support from several individuals and institutions. In this connection I would like to mention the National Research Council of Iceland, Icelandic research institutions and the Icelandic Coast Guard that have made scientists, equipment, funds and facilities available. The program has also been strongly supported by the United States Atomic Energy Commission, the Office of Naval Research in Washington D.C., and the Duke University in North Carolina. Finally, the program would never have become of the importance it now is without the many great contribution by the Bauer Scientific Trust and the untiring interest of Professor Paul S. Bauer of the American University, Washington D.C. To all of those and all the scientists working on the program we would like to express our thanks.

For the Surtsey Research Society,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Steingrímur Hermannsson', written over a horizontal line.

Steingrímur Hermannsson
Chairman