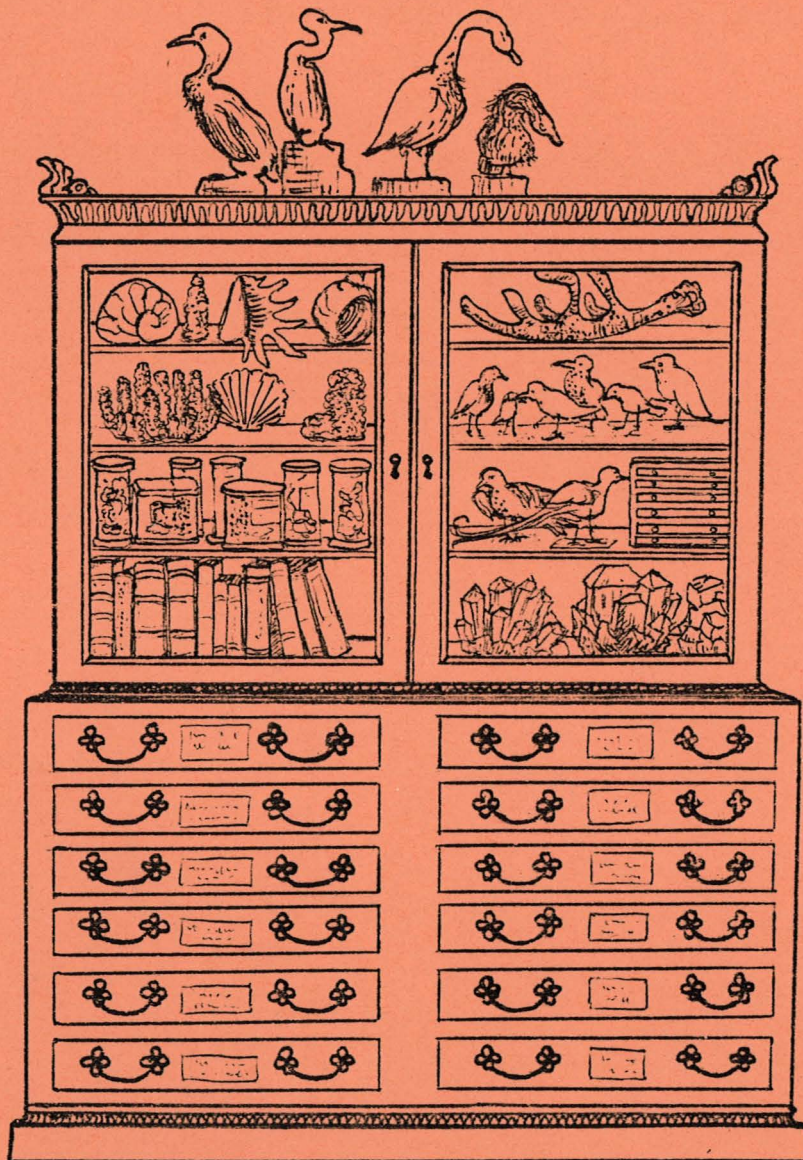


BCG

DECEMBER
1977

Newsletter No.7 of the Biology Curators Group



LIVERPOOL CONFERENCE
AND AGM REPORTS

C O N T E N T S

	<u>Page</u>
A.G.M. REPORTS CHAIRMAN AND SECRETARY (TREASURER'S TO BE INSERTED); COMMITTEE 1978; REPORT OF COMMITTEE MEETING; M.A. CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS.	2
LIVERPOOL CONFERENCE FOR THE OFFICIAL ACCOUNT SEE M.A. JOURNAL AND G.C.G. NEWSLETTER FOR DECEMBER. AFTER AN INTRODUCTION BY DR. TEBBLE, SOME PERSONAL VIEWS.	17
NORTH WEST COLLECTION RESEARCH UNIT A POSITIVE OUTCOME FROM THE STANDING COMMISSION SURVEY AND LIVERPOOL CONFERENCE.	24
SHORT NOTES BURNLEY EGGS; BM(NH) EXHIBITION REVIEW; EXPENSIVE SHELLS.	29
REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION.	34
INTERNATIONAL SECTION LETTERS SENT TO BCG INCLUDED FOR INFORMATION.	36
BCG MEMBERSHIP LIST. (BY INSTITUTION).	43

EDITOR'S NOTE

I have not included an Editor's Report here because it would mainly consist of apologies for shortcomings and repetitions of the Group's activities recorded elsewhere. As this Newsletter bears all the vices and virtues of my previous productions I can safely leave it to speak for itself. I now hand over the Editorship to Pete Davis in the hope that the breadth of interest reflected in past Newsletters will continue because this communication is not achieved anywhere else and is the strength of, and justification for, our curators' group.

REPORT OF THE CHAIRMAN, YEAR ENDING DECEMBER 1977

Two major projects have been achieved this year mainly due to the activities of the Secretary and the Committee representatives in the North West of England. This was accidental in that it was imperative that the BCG submit evidence to the Standing Commission concerning the National Plan for Museums and there was very little time to do so. Accordingly, questionnaires were sent out and analysed by the Secretary and Chairman within a short period of time at the beginning of the year. The results of this survey are shortly to be published as a finished document in the form in which it was submitted to the standing Commission, with some minor additional statistical analyses. (See note elsewhere).

Secondly, the arrangements for the major meeting of the year "The Function of Local Natural History Collections" which was held at Liverpool in September, naturally devolved upon the members there. This seminar, over a two day period, was very pertinent in every respect to the aims of the BCG. I believe that the demand for this group arose from a belief that natural historians as a part of the museums profession had not had the opportunity to meet and discuss common problems and that the concern for the importance of the collections of scientific and taxonomic value had been losing out to discussion on new display policies and other, outside the strict realms of curatorial, influences.

The Liverpool seminar brought together, as it has probably never done before, the provincial museum curator with others of similar interests, especially those employed in the Natural History Museum in London, on a level at which communication was not only possible but readily achieved. The meeting was attended by so many of the members and others in universities and other institutions that the BCG as a committee felt more than justified in organising the two days programme. The possible spin-off of related activities as a result of what was said and proposed is equally gratifying. The increased levels of communication between London and elsewhere, and the development of the North West Collection Research Unit (report elsewhere) have resulted directly from this meeting.

Concurrently with these activities concerned with collections, the BCG were invited to organise a specialist session at the Museums Association Annual Conference at Bradford. The subject of legislation on conservation as it related to museum activities was thought to be particularly interesting and had not been discussed in depth before.

Several members of the committee have been actively involved with the development of Record Centres in provincial museums and this is culminating in 1977 with a comprehensive meeting at Monkswood, headquarters of the Biological Records Centre, on this subject. The Professional Groups Committee (nee Professional Services) has met twice during this year and has been attended by BCG representatives. The Secretary's and Editor's report give all the details of these involvements and the outcomes of the discussions.

Finally, the AGM and session on biodeterioration on 3rd December 1977 should finish 1977 as the second year of an active Biology Curators' Group. As retiring Chairman I would like to think that the continued activities of BCG in the field of collection research and enlightenment would continue and that election to an ordinary committee member for 1978 should be an opportunity to pursue this policy.

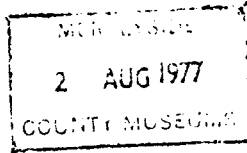
E.G. Hancock.



STANDING COMMISSION ON
MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES

2 Carlton Gardens, LONDON S.W.1

Telephone: 01-930 0995



1 August 1977

P J Morgan Esq BSc AMA MBOU
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Dear Morgan

WORKING PARTY ON A NATIONAL PLAN FOR MUSEUMS

This is to let you know that I have just received your letter of the 29 July with the copy of the survey of your Biology Curators' Group and I have also received today the other two copies.

This is very valuable information and I know that the Working Party will be most grateful to have it. I hope that you will be able to convey our thanks to the Group for taking this trouble to ascertain the resources of all the various centres.

Sincerely

Hugh Wakefield
Secretary to the Working Party

Biology Curators' Group. Secretary's Report for 1977.

The second full year of the B.C.G. has been busy and productive but its activities have stretched money and time to the limit. A fifty percent increase in membership has allowed the group to survive financially but available time of the officers and committee has been directed to liaison with other bodies, the preparation of reports and conferences and a full newsletter. Member liaison has therefore suffered to some extent for which I must apologise. An analysis of our involvement over the year and the appearing trends should allow some projection of the work involved during the forthcoming year. It has become apparent that workloads and projects need to be divided amongst more people and to this end the committee numbers have been increased and two new officer posts created. The latter posts of Membership Secretary/Treasurer and Assistant Editor should improve the groups personal contacts with individual members ensuring at the same time updated membership lists and a more regular supply of articles for the newsletter. Although membership has increased this year no concerted membership drive for more institutional members has been possible but this can be remedied next year. The new committee contains a biological curator from every Area Council region, hopefully each area will discuss issues leading to a more efficient structure for the group. A full discussion on future policy and projects should involve all members at the A.G.M. followed later by comments in the newsletter.

B.C.G. members are all heavily involved with their own collections and record centres, tasks which leave little free time for instant action often requested by other bodies with full time secretariats. This primary commitment to their own work by curators is the B.C.G.'s strength but is also its weakness, available time being restricted. It is encouraging to see that enthusiasm and spirit has not waned over the past year and that all members have responded well to any task allotted to them. This has been well reflected in the excellent response to the questionnaire on collections. Only three of the museums circulated did not submit returns and the depth of information contained in the returned questionnaires exceeded all possible expectations especially considering the

vital time factor.

A report of fifty four pages was submitted to the Standing Commission's Working Party on a National Plan. It was an objective assessment of holdings with no recommendations thus allowing a direct comparison with geological holdings submitted by the G.C.G. The report has been well received and because of the interest shown, not only by the Commission, a proper report on the Zoological and Botanical holdings based upon the report will be published by the B.C.G. during the forthcoming year. The report, apart from a numerical table of holdings, also contained the lists of material in eighty zoological groups and seven botanical groups, many of which are more comprehensive than anything previously published or available. The numerical holdings have been broken down into County, British and Foreign with an indication of Type, Figured and Voucher material held. The report has illustrated well the interest and dedication of all biological curators in their work and without the group it is likely that this project would never have been attempted let alone finalised in time. In this work alone the B.C.G. has justified its formation and role in museums throughout the country.

This last activity linked well with the major conference of the year at Liverpool on the Function of Local Natural History collections. The conference actually dealt with the importance of provincial natural history collections and in doing so brought together the Systematics Association, who also sponsored and arranged it, the British Museum(Natural History) and provincial museum curators. This conference enabled each to assess the others problems but more importantly a baseline for future cooperation was developed. This meeting was a springboard for future development which will be of benefit to all curators and taxonomists whether in provincial, national or university museums. The work involved in maintaining communication and improving contacts will be high, but it is apparent from past experience that this must be done and that the B.C.G. has established itself as the group to do it. The interest of members made the conference the success it undoubtedly was with no less than fifty one members, one third of the total B.C.G. membership attending from all over the country. At another level it is encouraging to see more of the curators from national museums joining thus making the B.C.G.

a truly comprehensive body. It is a development which can only lead to greater involvement and strength. If this trend continues there may yet be an intergrated and common approach to biological collections in Britain. The B.C.G's involvement in these developments has come quickly after the B.C.G's formation but the demands upon it must be met for there appears to be no other body established to carry out the task. In order to develop after the conference and questionnaire and to continue the momentum will require the B.C.G. to adopt more detailed policies. These will have to be based upon data not yet available and the B.C.G. will have to instigate other surveys obtaining financial assistance from elsewhere. We have proved over the past year that the expertise is available within our ranks to undertake such work but the full burden of finance as well as time should not fall solely on the group when the results are of such value and so essential to a wider audience.

The two main activities related to collections have occupied a large proportion of B.C.G's time but the group has been very active in another major field during the year. Record Centres, their formulation, running and development have seen members involvement in museums, in committees, and conferences. The newsletter content alone attests to the degree of committment in this area. Stephen Flood represented B.C.G. on the Museums Association Working Party on Record Centres in Museums with another of our members, Eric Greenwood, invited to attend. The B.C.G. Committee early in the year supported the production of a guidebook on the establishment and running of Record Centres. An outline draft was included in the newsletter and the full draft is now available for comment. The B.C.G. has paid for this but after discussion and amendments the final version will probably be published by the N.C.C. The discussion and involvement continues with a meeting at Monks Wood where members are speaking and contributing to discussions concerning the future. The guidebook itself will probably be used by the M.A's working Party as a basis for other disciplines not so well advanced in terms of national cooperation. The vital ingredient is still the individual emphasis shown by each record centre, often dependent upon resources and staff, but still within an overall policy,

which is linked closely with other organisations in many fields.

The B.C.G. has over the past year, kept contact with many organisations. Affiliation has been maintained with the American Association of Systematic Collections whilst exchanges are made with the Fauna Preservation Society and the Geological Curators' Group. The group has now taken over the liaison with the Council for Nature's Natural History Societies Committee from the Museums Association and an application to affiliate to the Biological Council of the Institute of Biology is still pending. The most recent development will be close liaison with I.C.O.M. on their proposed natural history newsletter and survey of world natural history museums.

The links with the Museums' Association continue to be maintained at several levels. The specialist session of the M.A.'s annual conference at Bradford was organised by the B.C.G. who took the opportunity to invite a speaker from the Fauna Preservation Society and the I.U.C.N. Committee on Trade in Wildlife. This session along with those of other disciplinary groups were generally agreed to have contributed to a successful conference, with the result that groups have been invited to arrange next year's session. Geoff Stansfield our M.A. liaison officer reported details of the session back to the main conference with three recommendations to be considered by Council.

The B.C.G. has been asked for its views on all Museums Association surveys and requests during the year but it has not been possible to put forward a B.C.G. line. Time has not been available to gather information and it has been thought best for B.C.G. to concentrate upon those issues only it was undertaking and to allow curators to submit their own views through the normal channels. There may be more time through newsletters next year to obtain information on Volunteers etc. than previously, and members' comments would be appreciated.

The ad hoc Professional Services Committee became the Professional Groups Committee of the Museums' Association following a motion passed at the Bradford Conference. This committee has provoked a lot of debate within B.C.G. and is not without controversy. The committee is a consultative one composed at the moment

primarily of disciplinary groups. The B.C.G. has resisted any direct affiliation to the Association, as have other groups, and the whole question of affiliation and the relationship of each group within the P.G.C. and the Association is still being discussed. Strictly speaking affiliation is not possible as under fifty percent of the B.C.G. are members of the Association, and for a new type of affiliation to be instigated the Association may have to change their statutes or rules relating to the differing types of affiliation. The composition of the committee is still under consideration and the B.C.G. has maintained that to be of real value membership of the P.G.C. should be restricted to disciplinary groups and not widened. This would also be in accordance with the original feelings and aims in establishing the Professional Services Committee. The group is still evolving and its strength lies in the direct contact of the B.C.G. with the President of the Association who is Chairman and with the Chairman of other M.A. committees who also attend. These links must be retained and in return for calling the meetings the B.C.G. offer the Association free reports, newsletters and advice on matters at a disciplinary level which hopefully contribute to an overall picture. It is unlikely as the years go on that this information freely given would be available from elsewhere; the B.C.G. contributes financially already by using its membership fees and time to obtain the required information. It is hoped that B.C.G. can continue to contribute to the Committee and is pleased that such a forum exists to discuss issues such as reserve collections, record centres, and museum policy.

The organisation of meetings and conferences this year have brought curators together and it is difficult to envisage more meetings per year given the shortage of funds for travel and subsistence. The B.C.G. may serve as a forum at a regional level in the future, placing links between curators on a more regular basis at a local as well as the more infrequent national level. It is essential that members, as they have done this year continually raise points to be discussed and decided upon. Technical aspects of natural history work have been raised less this year but groups of curators together can easily remedy this.

The next conference is the Society for the Bibliography of Natural History. G.C.G. , B.C.G. one in April 1979 and thought should be given now to a possible conference in 1980 which would attract more European Biologists and university biologists especially following the success both academically and financially of the Liverpool Conference. Summaries of the papers from the latter conference are being included in the December Museums Journal and perhaps some longer articles from Biology curators could be submitted in the future raising points to be discussed by other curators and directors in museums. The newsletter is achieving a balance but more articles are needed both to stimulate and to increase debate about the role of the B.C.G. and areas which it should be examining. The past year has been a demanding but fruitful one and the next year must see a period of consolidation as well as development, the aims of the group as originally proposed are being fulfilled but events often overtake us. It is necessary to take stock after this year and plan, the better organised we are and the more we all contribute the less chance we have of being swamped by unexpected demands. There appears no shortage of work for the group to do! and on the evidence of the past year I have no doubt that the continued spirit and zeal of members will achieve all that is required.

Peter Morgan,

Hon.Secretary.

25th November 1977.

Biology Curators Group Committee. 1978.

Nominations were received for the five officer posts and six committee posts, No voting procedure is required this year therefore and the following will serve for the next year. Each Area Service region is represented by a member which should improve communication on both a local and a national level.

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Minutes of the Biology Curators' Group Committee Meeting, Wednesday,
23rd November, 1977. at Merseyside County Museums. Liverpool.

Apologies for absence were received from Jim Bateman, Dave Erwin, Reg Harris, Mike Hounsome and Geoff Stansfield. Apologies were also received from members of next years committee who had been invited.

Members present Geoff Hancock, Peter Morgan, Stephen Flood, Eric Greenwood and Peter Davis.

Minutes of the previous meeting committee meeting held, Tuesday 5th April were approved and signed.

Matters arising.

1. S.A., B.C.G., G.C.G. Liverpool Conference.

Eric Greenwood reported a profit of £151.02 . This was due to the good attendance, the steady rate of V.A.T. and a lower inflation rate than anticipated. Factors had remained in our favour otherwise a small loss could easily have occurred. Agreed that EFG should return to the original working party to discuss allocation of the profit. One suggestion forwarded was the establishment of a fund which the BCG could keep as a conference sponsorship fund, if the SA were agreeable. The Systematics Association were taking 500 offprints from the Museums Association, summaries of the Conference being published in the December Museums Journal. EFG to finalise the accounts and to contact SA and GCG.

Action
EFG

The committee expressed on behalf of the membership sincere thanks to EFG for the organisation of the conference which had fallen almost entirely on his shoulders. The smooth running and success was very pleasing in this the first major B.C.G. Conference, details of which will appear in the B.C.G. January Newsletter.

2. Record Centre Guidelines.

SF reported that the draft guidelines had been published and circulated. Comments had been invited and the draft was also to be discussed at the Monks Wood Conference next week. It is hoped that the N.C.C. will publish the final guide next year which will then be of benefit to the Museums' Association Working Party on Record Centres. Discussion then centred around the proposed single environmental cards but it was thought that more detailed discussion would occur elsewhere and that the matter could be raised again and in the newsletter. The importance of obtaining information from existing collections in museums was discussed. The Liverpool Conference had proved this point and it was felt that more should be done to combine both current site data and collection data.

EFG felt that not enough thought had been given to the level of data required by different users and that a more thorough investigation of users needs was essential. Agreed that EFG and SF prepare a statement for discussion on these issues relating level of recording and users requirements.

Action
EFG & SF

Matters arising.

3. Museums Association Bradford Conference.

PJM reported that the specialist session although attended by only twenty one people had been judged very successful by all and that it was felt by the conference generally that specialist sessions should be continued. G. Stansfield had reported back to main conference with three recommendations for the Museums Association one of which suggested affiliation to the I.U.C.N.

Action PJM As far as PJM was aware this had not be discussed at Council but this was to be checked. SF reported that it was uncertain whether the specialist session summaries were to be included in the M.A.'s Conference publication although the two speakers had submitted papers. PJM to check. Details were not to be included in the B.C.G. newsletter as JABurton had reported that a recent conference in Geneva had altered some of the legislation. He was therefore writing a new report for BCG including the amendments.

Officers and Committee 1978

PJM reported details of the new committee, the required number of nominations having been received for places available. Details of the committee would be contained in the annual report. Every Area Council region now had a curator on the committee but shortage of expertise was felt in two areas, Botany, and Technical/Taxidermy. Agreed to suggest to AGM that Peter Lambley and Eric Greenwood be coopted and Ray Ingle of the B.M.(NH) who had been suggested by Reg Harris during the previous week. It was felt that close links should be maintained with the Taxidermists Guild. R. Hendry to be approached to serve on committee. It was generally felt that the new committee would allow far more work to be dealt with and improve the efficiency of the BCG.

Newsletter production and content.

Agreed that it was essential that the newsletter should be produced by offset litho giving a more professional aspect with good quality. It was felt that only by this means would more advertising be attracted adding to the groups funds. Although a risk was recognised it was decided that it must be taken but that the AGM would decide. M. Hounsome had reported a price of £6 per 1,000 sheets for a questionnaire, full details to be obtained by the AGM.

It was felt that with an Editor and Assistant Editor more articles would be forthcoming, but that next year every committee member should guarantee articles from regions allowing time for refereeing and editing.

Subscription

PJM reported that the group was still in credit but that if all outstanding bills due were paid the group would be in debt. Newsletters were costing £55 each in production and postage allowing little for surveys and other costs. Hidden subsidies had helped a great deal during the year but that next year we should plan to cover all costs. Agreed that it be recommended

to the AGM that the subscription be increased to £2. PJM reported that it would be essential to obtain more advertising revenue and assistance with surveys to balance the accounts in 1978. Agreed to recommend that Institutional subscription be £3. It was hoped that the new Treasurer could obtain more Institutional memberships especially from museums without natural history curators but with collections during the forthcoming year.

Action
K.Boot.

Standing Commission Report.

PJM reported that the report had been favourably received. A great deal of interest had been shown in the findings and agreed that the BCG should produce a report for publication and Sale. Full details of costs to be obtained after PJM, EGH and EFG had produced the manuscript. The probability of a loan to assist in production to be investigated. Agreed to publish by June with MSS ready by the end of January. Dept of Museum Studies to be approached to ascertain their degree of interest in this project.

ACTION
PJM, EGH,
EFG, MH.

EGH reported that following this report and the Liverpool Conference a collection research unit had been established in the North West the Area Service acting as a secretariat with a copy of all information. Agreed that details should be published in the newsletter and recommended that ad hoc groups be established in each of the area service regions to provide detailed information on collections in their area.

Action
PJM

Details of information required would include numerical assessment, assessment of condition and conservation needs, assessment of importance especially of the smaller collections and origin of collections i.e. collectors.

PJM had reported an interest of several groups in university material which had both taxonomic and museum importance, a subject dealt with at the Liverpool Conference. Agreed that the BCG should undertake a survey of research and Museum material held in Zoology and Botany depts of Universities in Great Britain. Details to be determined by M. Hounsome, P.J. Morgan. E.F. Greenwood and other parties which could contribute.

Action.
MH, PJM
EFG.

Professional Groups Committee of the Museums Association

PJM & SF reported details of the last meeting which differed in some respects from the official minutes. Agreed PJM write to Brenda Capstick outlining the areas of difference. Agreed to suggest full M.A. Conference on reserve collections not only one day M.A.G. meeting, This would ensure discussion amongst Directors and Councillors of collections in several disciplines.

Action
PJM

M.A. Edinburgh Conference

The BCG had agreed to arrange the specialist session which would be a full day in 1978. EGH to organise and contact Ian Lyster and Geoff Swinney to arrange the programme. BCG to reinforce view that day attendance fee for conference be waived allowing more curators to attend.

Action
EGH
Action
PJM

Council for Nature.

PJM reported that the BCG had taken over liaison with the Council for Nature's Natural History Societies Committee following the introduction of membership

fees. Janet Chamberlain to continue to represent BCG whilst preparing a section on the use of museums by societies. Agreed to publicise. PJM

ACTION reported a membership fee of £7. Instructed to approach M.A. with a view to
PJM obtaining some assistance or full payment if possible.

BIB.SOC./G.C.G./ B.C.G. Conference 1979

Action PJM to write and ascertain exact state of preparations. Agreed S. Flood
PJM represent BCG at any coordinating meetings.

A.O.B.

a. Job Creation Personell

EGH reported that some concern had been expressed at the first meeting of the North West Collection Research Unit that Job Creation personnel were being employed to work on museum collections in natural history when no curator of natural history was employed there. It was regarded as potentially dangerous in the light of discussions held at the Liverpool Conference and it was thought advisable that the JCP people should spend some time being trained in natural history curation before working on collections. The separating of specimens and data or even of moving specimens had been causing trouble in many collections over the past few years to historical and taxonomic researchers.

Action
EGH.

Agreed to contact MA.

b. Central Register of Type Specimens in Provincial Museums.

Graham Walley had raised this point for committee discussion but unfortunately time was too short to consider all the ramifications. Agreed that the issue
Action PJM be fully discussed at the AGM on 3rd December.

Peter Morgan

Hon Secretary.

24th November 1977

REPORT OF THE SPECIALIST GROUP MEETING ARRANGED BY THE BIOLOGY
CURATORS GROUP AT THE MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE AT BRADFORD
JULY, 1977.

There has been some confusion over publication of the two main papers presented at the specialist session. It had been hoped to publish details of the endangered species legislation but this has recently been the subject of revision; details should be in the next Newsletter. Ian Evans hopes to prepare a version of his paper on Parish natural histories for inclusion in the "Museums Journal".

The following is the report read by Geoff Stansfield to the general Forum at Conference:

General conclusions

That museums are now inextricably tied up with the movement for the conservation of wild life. This involvement falls under three main heading:-

Research and recording see the B.C.G. Newsletter for the list of museum based recording centres.

Planning and management as seen by museum involvement in providing evidence for natural history conservation strategies in County Structure Plans.

Education the meeting identified a shortfall in conservation orientated exhibits.

Recommendations

1. The Museums Association considers affiliation to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature in order that British provincial museums should have a voice in the drafting of international policy, international agreements and conventions.
2. To further the role of museums in the conservation of wild life it is essential that they be given the staff and facilities to undertake the necessary research.
3. Museums should give attention to the production of indices of endangered and recently extinct species.

THE LIVERPOOL CONFERENCE

THE FUNCTION OF LOCAL NATURAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS

INTRODUCTION

United Kingdom museums contain a great wealth of Natural History material, including many specimens upon which our system of biological nomenclature is based. The controversial works of Darwin and the earlier publications by Linnaeus of a rational system of nomenclature did much to revive and encourage an interest in collecting natural history specimens during the latter half of the 18th and throughout the 19th centuries, and because of Britain's extensive commercial interests overseas British collectors were particularly well placed to collect not only locally but to enrich their collections with exotic material.

Originally the majority of Natural History collections were in private hands and these collections grew to reflect the particular specialist interests of the collector. Only comparatively recently have these collections been transferred to public ownership. Collectors, because of regional affinities or personal loyalties, frequently offered their collections to local museums: or, more often, collections were disposed of by relatives of deceased collectors who did not appreciate the importance of the material. As a result the museum curator might have received into his care collections of quite diverse groups many of which were outside his own field of expertise, and might not have been informed of the full importance of the material he was receiving. Consequently important Natural History material is dispersed throughout a wide variety of museums in Britain. In general, where their importance is realised these collections are well cared for, regardless of whether the institution housing them is large or small. It is the unrecognised historically important material which might currently be at risk, and there is an urgent need to locate and document these collections before they are allowed to deteriorate or become irretrievably separated from their associated documentation. Many of these collections may contain type material, the importance of which to taxonomic research cannot be overestimated, and all such historical collections must be regarded as the property of science.

It is hoped that by drawing together museum professionals and museum users, this conference will stimulate both these groups to renewed efforts to locate these "lost" collections and make them available for research.

M. A. B. B.
7.8.77.

A FOREIGNER'S LOOK AT THE LIVERPOOL CONFERENCE

As I was the only foreigner participating at the Liverpool Conference I have been asked to write some words about my impressions.

The papers presented at the Conference showed many similarities between local museums in Great Britain and Norway, but also clear differences.

Concerning local natural history collections you have longer traditions in Great Britain. We have in fact relatively few natural history collections in Norway, - and to tell the truth, - some of them are very old fashioned! I think one reason is that from every town in Norway you could until recently reach fairly undisturbed nature in a few minutes. Therefore exhibitions of for example plants have been of limited interest. Now the situation is changing rapidly. In the neighbourhood of Stavanger nature is to an increasing extent being destroyed due to agriculture, new roads, - and not to forget, - the oil industry!

Many vegetation types were formerly abundant, but now in danger. For instance bogs, heathlands, and oakwood. In this situation the local museum has got many important tasks; taking care of collections from areas now covered by asphalt and concrete, doing fieldwork in areas which might be destroyed in future, and to give the collected information to the government, the public, school classes etc.

I noticed that many speakers stressed the importance of old collections. In fact I felt that they talked too much about the history of the collections, and too little about the function, but I was happy to get an invitation to go back to London by car. The 5 hour drive on the motorway clearly showed me that the history is important. It is no longer possible to do field investigations where the cars are running, and I am afraid the "development" will go on in my country too.

In Spring 1976 I began as the first curator in Botany and Pedology at the cross-scientific Arkelogisk museum i Stavanger. At that time the museum had got 3 private herbariums from the country

of Rogaland in SW Norway. In total about 1000 sheets of vascular plants.

Due to collections from my colleagues my own fieldwork, and several private donations the herbarium now consists of 3,000 sheets of vascular plants, and collections of bryophytes and algae. Our main interest is plants used by man, and anthropochorus plants (Ed. I do not know what this is either).

Speakers at the Liverpool Conference claimed collections from 18th century to still be very valuable. Let us hope that the curators at Stavanger in say 2200 will consider the work done in 1977 as valuable and well curated!

Together with a visit to the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, British Museum, and Butser Ancient Farm, in Petersfield, the Liverpool Conference made my 1 week stay in Great Britain a very successful one. I have learned a lot and should be pleased to welcome to Stavanger any British Curators.

Sverre Bakkevig,
Arkeologisk Museum,
i Stavanger, Norway.

A SNAILMAN'S IMPRESSIONS OF THE LIVERPOOL CONFERENCE

Natural History is a diverse subject, and museums are a pretty heterogeneous collection of Institutions; small wonder then that natural historians in museums tend to be a motley crew! But at Liverpool in September representatives of many different aspects of our profession came together intellectually as well as physically. Between the National and the large Regional museums cooperation, not confrontation, was the keynote; and both these groups were made aware of the importance of the smaller local museums, and their collections.

Indeed, one of the most valuable results of this meeting was to illustrate how pointless was the "them, them and us" attitude often found among museum natural historians. We all have the same problems it transpired, whether we be a specialist in the largest or a lone worker in the smallest museum, and the curator of

the latter is quite as likely as anyone to be able to supply the missing piece that makes sense of someone else's jigsaw. Lone workers some may be but after Liverpool none can again feel alone.

Another major lesson from this Conference was that between us we guard a huge national (and international) resource, and we must all look to our collections, cataloguing these and, most important, disseminating the results of our work; probably the job of most immediate and most lasting use we can do. But also speaker after speaker gave examples at once both hilarious and horrific of apparent rubbish, found in such unlikely sites as old air-raid shelters or embedded in barn walls, that proved on research to have great historical and/or scientific importance. So we must get out into the area around actively to track down and document the multitude of collections in nearby institutions languishing for lack of expert curatorial attention; such collections are often in imminent danger of destruction following the recent upheaval of local government reorganisation. The present chaotic situation is probably historically unique, for most collections of note still in private hands should now end up in a reputable institution, but rescuing the casualties from past beneficence is a task we, the current generation of natural history curators, must not shirk. I am happy to report action is already underway in the North West region, about which more details appear elsewhere.

Maybe its just because I had more to learn than most, but I consider this was probably the most stimulating and fruitful meeting I have attended in the past decade.

Charles Pettitt,
Manchester Museum.
(via RRS "Challenger",
Ardossan).

MY IMPRESSIONS OF THE BIOLOGICAL CURATORS GROUP LIVERPOOL CONFERENCE.
(or, 'A Pilgrim's Progress', Part 1).

The impressions of a newcomer, - I nearly wrote, "a late comer" -, because that is what I was on Wednesday 21st September, are inevitably somewhat confused. Mine are particularly so because I was really rather lucky to get there at all; and it is not like me to be late for dinner!

"Dinner from 6.30 p.m.", it said with, "registration from 5.00 p.m.". No mention of when either of these activities cease you will notice, but no matter. By setting out from London at 9.00 a.m. in my rusty Renault, "Rocinante", I should be able to enjoy a leisurely trip to Liverpool with a few rest stops on the way. Now, although I pride myself on punctuality, I did begin to question my avowed scepticism concerning the general subject of superstition as I struggled with the complex mechanical problem of replacing one of the two rubber bands which separately drive the fan and dynamo of all Renault 4s, and which had curiously decided to drop off mine somewhere near Junction 13 on the M1.

Then I got hopelessly lost in limbo at Litherland. The forlorn souls of my trusty steed and I might still be there to this day were it not for a kindly inhabitant of those nether regions who guided us out of the maze with his Police car and set us on the road to Carnatic Hall.

But now we come to the meat of this piece, (Editor, please note), for as John Heywoodes observed in Chapter X of Part I of his, "Woorkes - a Dialogue conteyning the number in effect of all the proverbes in the English tounge, compact in a matter concernynge two maner of Maryages etc.", dated 1546,

"POTIUS SERO QUAM NUNQUAM",*

although some say Livy would be livid since he coined the phrase sometime between 59 B.C. and A.D. 17.

"What", you may ask, "has all this got to do with, 'The Function of Local Natural History Collections', as discussed by Members the Biological Curators Group at Liverpool last September?". A fair question, I freely admit, and one which deserves a

comprehensive answer. I only wish that the Editor would allow me enough space to give one, and that libel proceedings would not be brought if I did. Be that as it may, I hope the fore-going may have proved the point made by one speaker at the Conference concerning the general level of education enjoyed by provincial museums curatorial staff, and that the gentlemen in the British Museum who want any of our type specimens, beware!

To sum up, (only 70 words of my quota left now), I thoroughly enjoyed the Liverpool Conference and found it to be an extremely useful introduction to the professional world of museum curation. It is a world with which my contacts prior to June of this year have only been an occasional visitor, but which I am happy to explore. At last I have come home and am among friends.

Arthur N. Watson,
Assistant Curator,
Natural Sciences (Biology),
Passmore Edwards Museum,
London E15 4LZ.

*"Better late than never".

HAVE MERSEY ON THE SMALL MUSEUMS

As a relatively junior member of the museum's profession with a training in geology and archaeology, the Liverpool Conference was a good opportunity for me to meet some new faces known to me before only by reputation, of one sort or another, as well as a break-out from the ivory tower.

I left the meeting feeling somewhat dissatisfied, not because the draught Guinness was off (far from it - in fact I was suprised at the high porportion of boozers among us, disillusioning my convictions that only geologists and archaeologists were bar-proppers) - but more from the feeling that there was a lack of overall coherence in the meeting.

Perhaps this was due to the small representation from the insignificant end of the BCG survey - our problems and aims are necessarily different from those of our colleagues in larger establishments.

Working in a small district museum with a somewhat unsympathetic council we are not likely ever to see the money to carry out our ideals. With small collections curated by the minimum of staff, our priorities lie in trying to keep abreast with accessioning and serving the users (in our case mostly students, teachers and artists). Our time for research is practically non-existent. Despite this it seems to me unreasonable that we should be totally robbed of our type specimens and important collections to the National Institutions unless there is a real lack of qualified staff.

One aspect of function which was not touched upon, as we were more involved with important collections, is that of the white elephant or duplicate and undocumented material, which most of us have inherited in varying proportions. Aside from the schools loan service, I feel that this part of the collection should not be neglected as it often is. Although there may be questionable ethics involved, for example in removing loaned material, specimens festering away in museum cupboards and drawers looked at once a decade are surely of greater value loaned out to further knowledge and conservation awareness in public education.

Most of our museums are theoretically a public service; how far are we prepared to bother to do this? - especially now as many of us are faced with having to justify ourselves to our Councils.

Finally, an echoing plea from the back row: from the suggestion made on several occasions during the Conference that our brothers with the expertise in the National Museums should come out to help those of us without it in the small understaffed backwaters, can we hope something will come of this now that we have broken the barriers through the various discipline groups?

June Roberts
St. Albans Museums.

North West Collection Research Unit

At the two day meeting in Liverpool, "The Function of Local Natural History Collections" in September, it was proposed by Bill Pettit of Manchester Museum, that the Curators of Zoological material in the area get together. The pursuance of the present location, condition and importance of named collections in museums was seen as of primary interest to museum curators, even when these collections were not in manned institutions. It is a collective responsibility which could not be ignored. As this was endorsed by others present at that gathering, arrangements were made and an ad hoc meeting was arranged in Manchester, on 13 October 1977 to which 14 natural history curators were invited from nine institutions.

The objectives were that a list of all the Zoological collections in the North West be prepared and published. It was hoped that this would be a lead to other regions in the country and be the forerunner of a national scheme. Support to this idea was solicited from the North Western Art Gallery and Museum Service and this was granted. They were able to provide assistance in printing standardised forms for recording data and had contact with all the likely institutions which house material of potential interest.

The method was adopted whereby a two stage approach could be made to achieving full data. Firstly, a survey to establish the whereabouts of collections, and secondly a detailed assessment of them. The chairman, elected from those present, Geoff Hancock, had a manuscript giving details of several institutions and some of the named collections contained in them, this being the paper read at the Liverpool meeting. Using this as a basis, with some additions, the members present agreed to visit all the museums in the area at least once before the end of February.

The editing of the final work would be done at Bolton, with considerable assistance, probably by discipline, from others. It was thought that this would be a complete work, in that it would not require up-dating to any great extent. Information is requested from anyone in possession of material they know to be of relevance or to originate in the north west. It may be, for example, that a small undocumented collection of shells is housed in the north west, and that a large herbarium is elsewhere by the same collector with complete field note books or a catalogue delineating the facts pertaining to the former. Please contact the Chairman if you possess any collections of possible relevance, or better still, form your own regional collection research unit.

E. Geoffrey Hancock.

- 25 -

North Western Museum and Art Gallery Service

Director Marian M Kershaw FMA



MBD/JBD

The North Western Museum and Art Gallery Service has recently agreed to give help and support to the North West Collections Research Unit, a working group made up of natural historians employed in museums within the North West area.

The group, under the Chairmanship of Mr. G. Hancock of Bolton Museum, aims, within the next two years or so, to complete a full catalogue of the Natural History collections within the area. As so many museums have no specialist Natural History Departments in this field, we hope that an initial step can be made in carrying out a survey of all existing collections within museums and you will be contacted directly in the near future. We hope that this knowledge will then enable us to ask appropriate subject specialists to look at the relevant collections.

As nothing of this kind has ever been undertaken in the past, we hope that you will give us, and the Unit, every support in making this a successful venture.

Director.

NORTH WEST COLLECTION RESEARCH UNIT
(NUMERICAL ASSESSMENT FORM)

Institution _____

Address _____ Tel. No: _____

Curator or person in charge to contact for future visits _____

Compiler(s) _____ Date _____

	British	Foreign	Figured & Cited	Types	TOTALS
1. Protozoa (Foraminifera, etc.)					
2. Parazoa (Sponges)					
3. Coelenterata					
4. Platyhelminthes, Nematodes, etc.					
5. Annelids					
6. Crustacea (itemize orders if necessary)					Crustacea subtotal
7. Myriapods (Centipedes, Millipedes)					
8. Insects:					
Orthoptera _____					
Coleoptera _____					
Lepidoptera _____					
Diptera _____					
Hymenoptera _____					
Ephemeroptera _____					
Odonata _____					
Plecoptera _____					
Dermoptera _____					
Neuroptera _____					
Trichoptera _____					
Siphonaptera _____					
Mallophaga _____					
Hemiptera _____					
other orders (specify)					Insect subtotal

	British	Foreign	Figured & Cited	Types	TOTALS
9. Arachnida					
Spiders _____					
Mites _____					
Opiliones _____					
Scorpions _____					
others _____					
10. Mollusca					
Gasteropods _____					
Lamellibranchs _____					
Cephalopods _____					
others (specify) _____					
11. Brachiopods					
12. Bryozoa (Polyzoa)					
13. Echinoderms					
Asteroids _____					
Echinoids _____					
Ophiuroids _____					
others (specify) _____					
14. Fish					
15. Amphibians					
16. Reptiles					
17. Birds					
Skins _____					
Mounts _____					
Eggs _____					
Nests _____					
18. Mammals					
Mounts _____					
Skins _____					
(itemize if necessary)					
TOTAL					

Manuscript/Archival sources available? Yes/No if so, where? _____

Accession Register/Stock books present Yes/No if so, where? _____ What date periods do they cover? _____

Donor Index Yes/No if so, where? _____

Published References to collections Yes/No (list separately or obtain copies) _____

Is there material elsewhere? _____

Has material been disposed of in the past? Yes/No if so, how _____ (exchange, removal to other museums, destruction, etc.)

Any other information of relevance _____

NORTH WEST COLLECTION RESEARCH UNIT
(INDIVIDUAL COLLECTION FORM)

MUSEUM, INSTITUTION, etc. _____

IRGMA Code _____

Name of Individual supplying information _____

1. Name of COLLECTOR COLLECTION EXPEDITION	
2. PERIOD collection formed or Biographical dates	
3. SUBJECT of Collection	
4. GEOGRAPHICAL Region	
5. Approximate NUMBER of Specimens or Drawers	
6. Information on Collection &/or Present Location	
7. Method of Acquisition	
8. Collection maintained separately? YES/NO	
9. MSS material etc. available? YES/NO	
10. LITERATURE REFERENCE to Collection	
11. BIOGRAPHICAL Reference to Collector (e.g. obituary, biography, etc.)	
12. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	

Please use reverse side of this form if there is not enough space available in any one category.

Please complete a SEPARATE form for EACH COLLECTION of importance.

Return forms to: North Western Museum & Art Gallery Service,
Griffin Lodge,
Griffin Park,
Cavendish Place,
BLACKBURN.
BB2 2PN

EGG COLLECTIONS AT TOWNELEY HALL ART GALLERY AND MUSEUMS, BURNLEY.

Brief notes on the collectors/dealers represented in the two larger collections at Towneley Hall appear below. Unfortunately, no data books or correspondence were acquired with the collections and consequently the names below are taken from the clutch labels which do not differentiate in most cases between field collector, dealer or later vendor. The number of extant clutches assigned to each dealer/collector is certainly on the low side as many labels have been re-written with the collectors' names omitted and, of course, many clutches were collected personally by the owners of the two collections. However, it is hoped that the lists may prove useful to anyone wishing to trace the work of a particular dealer/collector.

BOOTH collection. George Albert Booth F.E.S. (d.11.8.1924) of Kirkham and Grange-over-Sands. Cabinet of 24 drawers (app. 566 clutches) purchased 28.3.1925 for £58. The majority of the clutches appear to have been purchased.

Sources of clutches:-

Bunyard P.	8 *	Herbert J.	1
Buyard Wm.	1	Jefferys C.	6 *
Calvert R.W.	8	Kennedy R.	1
Clarke W.J.	6 =	Morley T.	5
Copeland A.T.	8 *	Murray H.	7 =
Cumming R. Gordon	1 *	Palmer -	1
Davis J.	2	Potter E.G.	2
Dean J.	1	Richards H.	1
Dugdale R.D.	10	Schmitz Rev.E.	1
Ellis J.	1	Somerville H.	1
Farren	3 (* ?)	Tait B.	1
Feast A.	1	Wallis S.H.	4 *
Fernil J.	1	Ware H.	2
Gregson C.S.	7	Watson E.F.	1
Gunn J.R.	1	Williams D.	2
Hardacre J.	1	Wrigley R.H.	9

* sale in "Natural History Auctions" under this name

= entry in "British Taxidermists"

JACKSON collection. J. Jackson of Burnley. 2 cabinets of 8 and 29 drawers (app. 510 clutches). Bequest 6.5.1941.

Sources of clutches:-

Abbot G.A.	1 (U.S.A.)	Norgate F.	10 *
Asley Dr.M.	1	Noble H.	1 *
Atkinson J.	1	Ogden E.	1
Banks J.	1	Ormeroyd A.	1 (Canada)
Bingham H.P.	1	Palmer J.	1
Bromley H.	1	Plumb R.	7
Collier M.	1 (U.S.A.)	Proctor Maj.F.W.	1 *
Dueg H.	6	Proctor H.	3
Ellis E.	1	Rackford R.E.	1 (U.S.A.)
Fleming J.M.	1 *	Raine W.	3 (Canada)
Gorton H.	1	Ramberg J.	5
Graham S.	1	Skinner E.R.	2 *
Gregory D.G.Dexter	2 (U.S.A.)	Smith G.	1
Hargreaves H.D.	1	Schulter -	2
Harlow Rich.C.	1 (U.S.A.)	Thompson C.H.	1 (U.S.A.)
Hatherton C.E.	1	Tooner Dr.	1
Haugh H.B.	1	Turnbull J.W.	1
Ingraham Capt.D.P.	1	Tuck Rev.J.G.	1
Jancre` H.	5	Walton -	1
Johnson J.	1	Welburn D.	2
Kirke-Swann H.	1	Whitehouse -	1
Knieper -	4	Winter J.	1
Marsden H.W.	1 *	Wolley J.	1 *
McQueen D.	1	Wrigley R.H.	4

Some were certainly purchased via Stevens - The Whitehouse clutch bears the annotation "Stevens sale 1915".

FOOTNOTE: The BOOTH collection contains, in a glass topped black card box, an egg bearing the following label: "249 Swallow tailed Kite (sent by J.J. Audubon from Texas in 1842 to a correspondent in Paris)". On the underside of the box is pencilled "159" which may be a lot number, and 1887 has been written on the egg itself. Also in the collection in identical boxes are single eggs of the Iceland and Greenland Falcons, one of which bears the label "Lot 424". Any information from members having nineteenth century sale catalogues which may help to trace the sources of these eggs will be most welcome.

REFERENCES: Chalmers-Hunt, J.E. 1976 "Natural History Auctions: 1700-1972. A register of sales in the British Isles". Sotheby Parke Bernet.
Herriot, S. (Ed.) 1968 "British Taxidermists, a historical directory". Leicester Museums.

M.A. Taylor
Towneley Hall Art Gallery &
Museums. Burnley.

MAKING AN EXHIBITION OF OURSELVES AT THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM,
SOUTH KENSINGTON

An early review by SF.

Despite the rumours there are specimens in the Human Biology exhibition just opened at the British Museum (Natural History) after all - 6 caterpillars, a dried twig and a spirit preparation of a brain with spinal cord. Admittedly they do look rather self-conscious amidst the high technology of this new exhibition, which occupies the former fish gallery. Oh yes, and there is a potted palm and an (empty) beer tankard. You see how easy it is to dismiss this exhibition in flippant terms. Yet somehow the atmosphere in the gallery, the noise and the expressions on people's faces were something I had never seen in museums before.

I do not intend to review the biological content in detail because clearly a museum biologist is not the target of the exhibition. The only way I could make any judgements at this stage was by watching other people and even in this I am only an amateur; the Public Services Department employs psychologists to mingle with the visitors and assess their reactions. (Perhaps the BCG could run a 'spot the Psychologist' competition?). I could not help wondering what they thought of my progress round the machines, only taking notes when they were unfinished or broken (four more failed as I was going round). However I hope they did have time to notice that perhaps it had been unwise to connect a lever to a bottle of crystals (representing smelling salts) to move it to a model nose to light up a sensory pathway; skilfull eight year olds could scatter the crystals most satisfactorily.

The educational impact of the exhibition is obviously of prime importance whatever the sugaring of the pill by games and films. In fact the design brief contained specific facts or ideas which were to be communicated to visitors, something too rarely done by museums. Some of the spectacular images do communicate.

But in many ways the games communicated better simply because choices had to be made and effort put into the process. Also there is the the beginnings of an attempt at second tier display techniques;

this is mainly characterised by changes in typeface, more complex games or rather repetitive graphic images. There is, too, less of a lead into these areas from curiosity about knowledge than from merely stylistic differences. Or voyeurism. Yes, whisper it not in Kensington, the Natural History Museum has discovered sex. Plastic sex it must be admitted, but nonetheless fully revealed, as it were. Sensitive readers will be relieved to know that the coition model does not move and is even in the 'missionary' position. In fact I was pleased to see that there was a marked absence of schoolboy sniggers, and as this was the introduction to the exhibition that was quite an achievement.

In all events the concept and the novelty appear to have subordinated much of the traditional specimen-based approach without replacing it with sufficiently clear images. I fear the same thing seemed to me to be the fault with the new Norwich Ecology gallery so it will be interesting to see how the B.M. approach the Ecology phase of their display development programme, after the lessons and analyses of the current exhibition. Because, make no mistake, some of it does work very well and is worth continuing (though I hope no provincial museum could afford or would want to copy) and even the disasters show that there are some museum staff willing to take risks rather than forming committees.

NOTE

This review was written about one week after the opening of the Exhibition in June (and just before I was to be interviewed for a job with the Exhibition Unit). Now, in November, it could be expected that time and the bitterness of rejection(!) would affect my views. However on a recent visit (with a group of Art/History orientated curators) I could find no reason to alter my original statements - I still have mixed feelings, there are still broken machines and it still is not finished. From discussions with the exhibition staff it is clear that many lessons have been learned about the unreliability of audio-visual aids but informed reaction from museums has not been great. The BCG Newsletter would seem to be an ideal forum for discussing this matter, and I would imagine that, given sufficient provocation by BCG members, some response from the Public Services Department will be forthcoming.

Members of B.C.G. may be interested (or amazed) by the following price list received from an antique dealer in Castleton in November 1977:-

<u>NATURAL HISTORY SPECIMENS.</u>	In tubes with the original labels, showing date.	
<u>Zonites crystallinus.</u>	Four specimens from near Blackwell Mill, Derbyshire, 4/8/1891.	£2.00
<u>Cochlicopa lubrica.</u>	Four specimens from Chee Dale, Derbyshire, 26/4/1889.	£2.00
<u>Cochlicopa tridens.</u>	Three specimens from Chee Dale, Derbyshire, 26/4/1889.	£3.00
<u>Helix arbustorum.</u>	Three specimens variety. Flavescene, from Millers Dale, Derbys. September 1889.	£3.00
<u>Bythinia tentaculata.</u>	Four specimens from Canal, Bolton, 4/8/1890.	£3.00
<u>Planorbis contortus.</u>	Eight specimens from Urmston Meadows. 27/10/1888.	£3.00
<u>Vitrina pelucida.</u>	Four specimens from Chee Dale, Derbyshire. April 1889.	£2.50
<u>Vertigo edentula.</u>	Three specimens from Monsal Dale, Derbyshire, 5/8/1891.	£3.00
<u>Zonites cellarius.</u>	One specimen, variety Complana. Warrenpoint, Down. 29/5/1890.	£1.00
<u>Clausilia liminata.</u>	Eight specimens, Cressbrook Dale, Derbyshire, 3/9/1899.	£4.50
<u>Helix rufescens.</u>	Eight specimens from near Warrenpoint. Down. 29/3/1890.	£3.00

Increase your collection's insurance immediately!

M. A. Taylor,
Towneley Hall Art Gallery & Museums,
Burnley.

As part of our exchange arrangements with the Smithsonian Institution Libraries the Editor has received the following:-
Smithsonian Contributions to Paleobiology No. 33.

"Evolution of Oblitacythereis from Paleocosta (Ostracoda: Trachyleberididae) during the Cenozoic in the Mediterranean and Atlantic". by Richard H. Benson.

BIRD AND MAMMAL LICE WANTED

Christopher Lyal, of the Department of Entomology, British Museum, (Natural History), Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD, is attempting to build up a more comprehensive representation of British mammal and bird lice in the National collection. It is expected that a number of species remain to be added to the British List.

Lice are frequently to be seen on the surface of the pelage shortly after the host has died. The lice may be killed by placing the dead host in a plastic bag and adding a few drops of ether or chloroform; the animal can then be removed and the fur or feathers rubbed against the lay over a large sheet of paper. The body may also be researched directly, particular attention being paid to the back of the neck, rump and groin. The lice should be preserved in 80% alcohol, together with a record of the host species, locality (including grid ref. if possible) and date.

Anyone who feels that me may be able to supply Mr Lyal with lice from named hosts as they become available is asked to contact him at the B.M. (N.H.). Any other insect ectoparasites would be welcomed by Tony Hutson of the same address.

WHERE IS THE...GASKOIN SHELL... COLLECTION?

I am anxious to trace specimens which originally belonged to the shell collection of Dr. John Samuel Gaskoin (1790-1858) especially any which might have been part of his "Pathological collection" which is now in Merseyside County Museum. It was purchased, by the

museums, from Lvell Reeve (1814-1865), in 1860, but the stock book entry suggests that it was part of a larger collection of deformed shells, which since Reeve was a dealer, has probably been dispersed. Another part of Gaskoin's Collection was purchased by the Reverend Thomas Lombe Taylor (1802-1874), whose collection was disposed of by gift and sale in 1879/80. Part of this collection still containing some Gaskoin types, was acquired by James Cosmo Melville (1845-1929) whose collection went to John Read le Brockton Tomlin (1864-1954) and eventually to the National Museum of Wales.

I would be most grateful for any further information that might enable me to locate other specimens.

Dr. Peter Lingwood,
Merseyside County Museum,
Liverpool.

REQUEST FOR DATA AND SPECIMENS

Ricinuleids (Arachnida): I would be grateful for any information concerning collections of specimens of these animals. I would also be particularly interested in examining any specimens that are available and I can offer an identification service. As an arachnologists who is particularly interested in these strange arachnids I am trying to obtain as much data as possible. Any help would be more than welcome.

Dr. G. Legg,
The Booth Museum of Natural History,
194, Dyke Road,
Brighton BN1 5AA.

President: John H. Loudon
Chairman: Sir Peter Scott
Executive Vice-President: Dr Luc Hoffmann
Treasurer: Louis Franck
Directors-General: Charles de Haes
Dr Fritz Vollmar



1110 Morges, Switzerland
Telephone: 021/71 96 11
Telegrams: Panda, Morges
Telex: 25 999, panda ch

World Wildlife Fund

Project Coordinator
Udo Hirsch
Th. Brauerstr. 35
5 Köln 80
Germany

Köln, August 1977
UH/mp

Re: Waldrapp (Geronticus eremita)

The "Waldrapp" (*Geronticus eremita*) is a very endangered species (IUCN Red Data Book Code No. B/27/GERON/ERE 1970). Up to the beginning of the 17th century, this bird also occurred in some countries of central and south-eastern Europe.

Today the only known breeding colony of the eastern population is located at Birecik on the Euphrates, in south-eastern Turkey. The population declined from 1000 birds to only 34 in 1977. Disturbance at breeding places and use of insecticides are responsible for this decline.

Several breeding colonies of the western population exist in Morocco. In 1975 the number was estimated at 200 - 250 breeding pairs. Poaching, cultivation of formerly semi-arid feeding places, and disturbance by tourists have led to a decimation of the birds in Morocco.

All available information is required to plan and carry out a conservation project for the last "Waldrapps". May I therefore ask you to complete and return the enclosed questionnaire.

Thank you very much in advance for your co-operation.

Yours sincerely,

Udo Hirsch

Enc. Questionnaire

Background information
for conservation of
Waldrapp

Waldrapp	Geronticus eremita
or: Crested Ibis	Geronticus comatus
Eremite Ibis	Comatibis eremita
<i>halcyon</i>	Comatibis comata

Address of Museum:	No.:
--------------------	------

- 37 -

A stuffed animals
or skins

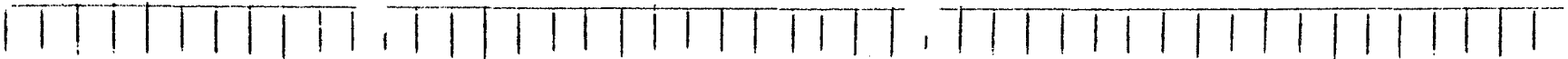
B skeletons or
parts of
skeletons

C eggs

D Data:
Diaries,
Travel notes,
Literature, etc.

Number	Exact location			Date	Name of Collector	intern. code
	♂	♀	?			A
						B
						C
						D
						Länder:
						Algerien
						Marokko
						Sahara
						Türkei
						Syrien
						Irak
						Israel
						Jordan.
						Saudi Arab.
						Aegypten
						Sudan
						Aethiop.

return to: Udo Hirsch Theodor Brauerstrasse 35 5 Köln 80



UNIwersytet Wrocławski ||| WROCLAW UNIVERSITY
MUZEUM PRZYRODNICZE ||| MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY
Sienkiewicza 21, 50-335 Wrocław, Poland

October 1977.

Dear Director,

At the Conference of the International Committee of Natural History Museums of the I.C.O.M., held in Leningrad in May 1977, it was unanimously decided to work out and to publish a new, complete edition of the "Directory of the Natural History Museums of the World". This job was conferred upon me.

The work on the first edition of the Directory (published in 1971 by the Rumanian National Committee of the I.C.O.M.) lasted ten years. This long period of time was due to the negligence of many museums which did not answer the questionnaires or sent incomplete or carelessly compiled data. This time we must accomplish the work quicker - it lies in our common interest that the new Directory should be as complete as possible and published without delay.

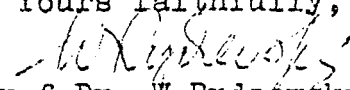
Enclosed please find: the basic questionnaire and instructions how to formulate your answers.

Your entries should reach me not later than 1st March 1978 this is the final closing time. But do not wait so long and send your entry as soon as possible. Prompt answers will greatly facilitate my editorial work and will result in the faster accomplishing of the publication.

You are also requested to add to your entry two Postal International Reply Coupons. This is not obligatory but the receipt of them would be appreciated.

Very important. Please kindly send the addresses of other museums (excluding the largests) in your country where our questionnaire should be sent. Please send this information at once and by air-mail. Thank you for your cooperation.

Please do not forget to attach the enclosed pre-order. We must know how many institutions are interested in having the Directory.

Yours faithfully,

Prof. Dr. W. Rydzewski
Editor

-----cut here and send with your entry-----

Museum of Natural History
Sienkiewicza 21
50-335 WROCLAW,
Poland.

We intend to purchase copy/copies of the "Directory of the Natural History Museums of the World" when published.

Institution:

Date:

Signature

Directory of the Natural History Museums of the World

Basic Questionnaire

This questionnaire should be answered in English on a separate sheet of paper, with great care and detail. Before completing it read carefully the instructions. It should be accompanied by sample copies of all publications mentioned under point 17.

Your answers should be returned to:

Prof. Dr. W. Rydzewski,
Museum of Natural History,
Sienkiewicza 21,
50-335 WROCLAW, Poland.

1. Name in English and your own language (transcription)
2. Address
3. Director
4. Year of founding
5. Belongs to
6. Building
7. Time open
8. Admission
9. Type of museum
10. Structure of the museum
11. Activities
12. Research collections
13. Exhibitions
14. Library
15. Technical facilities
16. Staff: scientific, technical, educational, other
17. Publications
18. Other information and remarks you may wish to add

Final closing time: 1st March 1978

Instructions - read and follow carefully

- 1,2 - no comments
- 3 - director's name or head of Natural History department if the museum has also other departments like anthropology, art, history, ethnography etc.
- 4 - no comments
- 5 - state the owner e.g. State, Municipality of, University of, Private; etc.
- 6 - state whether in a separate building or building is shared with ...

- 7 - state days and hours
- 8 - state whether admission is free or charged
- 9 - if the museum is devoted to natural history only (this term includes botany, geology, palaeontology, zoology) state "Natural History" or "Botany", "Mineralogy", "Zoology" etc. If the museum has also other departments like anthropology, ethnography, art, history, etc. state "Natural History" and in parentheses (also Anthropology, Ethnography, Art, History, etc.)
- 10 - state departments, divisions or sections of Natural History e.g. Dept. of Botany, Herbarium, Division of Mineralogy, Section of Ornithology, Field Station at, etc.
- 11 - state e.g.: research, expeditions, teaching, scientific and popular publications, etc.
- 12 - state the scope of your scientific collections e.g. world-wide, national, regional, local. State the most important collections you have e.g. molluscs, birds, herbarium, etc. State the number of types in individual groups.
- 13 - state the total exhibition surface in sq. meters. State the topics or titles of permanent exhibitions, state whether you have an aquarium, etc. State whether you organize temporary and mobile exhibitions.
- 14 - state the approximate number of volumes and periodicals
- 15 - state e.g. workshop, art atelier, taxidermy workshop, etc.
- 16 - state number of curators, scientific associates and assistants, number of technical staff, librarians, number of educational staff. Do not include the maintenance staff.
- 17 - state titles of serials, magazines, bulletins and other periodicals, scientific or popular. Each title must be provided with: number of issues per year, subscription price, whether obtainable on exchange. Sample copies of each title should accompany your entry. State also your other publications as books, guides, leaflets etc.
- 18 - add here all information not included in points 1-17 you consider important to your museum.

All correspondence by air-mail please.



Natural History Museums'

NEWSLETTER

Dear Director,

At the Conference of the International Committee of Natural History Museums of the I.C.O.M., held in Leningrad in May 1977, it was unanimously decided to publish a "Natural History Museums' Newsletter" under my editorship.

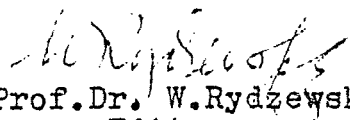
The aim of this new periodical, published in a simple modest mimeographed form, is to create a platform for discussions on important museological problems, quick exchange of information and experiences, and increase of mutual cooperation between natural history museums of the world. Current literature section will bring information on new books, magazines, articles, etc.

We all believe that such a Newsletter will be of great and valuable significance for all the museums. Its success, however, depends on the wide cooperation of all of you. We hope that you will contribute to the Newsletter and you will cooperate with it.

The price of the Newsletter will be probably 1 US \$ per issue post-free. But do not send money now. If necessary you will be invoiced in due course.

If you are interested in receiving the first issue, which will be published later this year, please return the form below to me as soon as possible. We must know how many institutions and people are interested in getting the Newsletter.

When returning this form to me do not forget to add addresses of the natural history museums to which our questionnaire should be sent. Thank you for your cooperation.


Prof. Dr. W. Rydzewski
Editor

-----Cut here. This form should be returned immediately by-----
air mail independently from your answer to the Questionnaire.

The Editor,
Natural History Museums' Newsletter,
Sienkiewicza 21,
50-335 WROCLAW, Poland.

I am interested in receiving the Natural History Museums' Newsletter.

Institution:
and address:

Date:

Signature:

BIOLOGICAL CURATORS GROUP MEMBERSHIP LIST BY INSTITUTION. DECEMBER
1977

BRITISH MUSEUMS

AYLESBURY: Bucks County Museum.

J. Royston.

BELFAST: Ulster Museum, Botanic Gardens.

D.G. Erwin.

O. Morton.

H.C.G. Ross.

BIRMINGHAM: Museums and Art Galleries.*

B.A. Seddon.

BRIGHTON: Booth Museum of Natural History.

J.A. Bardsley.

G. Legg.

C.A.B. Steel.

BRISTOL: Museum and Art Gallery.

C.J.T. Copp.

M.D. Crane.

A. Hollowell.

D.I. Steward.

BOLTON: Central Museum and Art Gallery*

K.M. Berry.

J.R.A. Gray.

E.G. Hancock.

BURNLEY: Towneley Hall Art Gallery and Museums.

M.A. Taylor.

CARDIFF: National Museum of Wales.

J.A. Bateman.

K. Ghani.

K.J. Rual.

A. Amsden.

CARISLE: Museum and Art Gallery.

D.J. Clarke.

CHESTER: Grosvenor Museum.

T.A. Hose.

COLCHESTER: Natural History Museum.

J.J. Heath.

COVENTRY: Herbert Art Gallery and Museum.

P. Wheatcroft.

CROYDON: Natural History and Scientific Society Limited.

J.A. Keefe.

DERBY: Museums and Art Gallery.

S.J. Patrick.

DORCHESTER: Dorset County Museum.

W.M. Grange.

DUNDEE: Museums and Art Galleries.

R.K. Brinklow.

A.B. Ritchie.

EDINBURGH: Royal Scottish Museum.

G. Oliver.

G.N. Swinney.

N. Tabble.

EXETER: Royal Albert Memorial Museum.

K.J. Boot.

GLASGOW: Art Gallery and Museums, Kelvingrove.*

D.L. Burkel.

J. Cooter.

H. Galbraith.

R. Hendry.

G.L. Jones.

C.E. Palmar.

HITCHIN: North Herts. Museum Service.

T.J. James.

KEIGHLEY: Bradford Arts and Museum Service.

M.M. Hartley.

LEEDS: City Museum.

J.H. Nunney.

LEICESTER: Museums, Art Galleries and Records Service.

J.E. Dawson.

I.M. Evans.

J.H. Mathias.

H. Mendel.

C.N.G. Scotter.

LETCHWORTH: North Herts. Museum Service.

B.R. Sawford.

LIVERPOOL: Merseyside County Museums.

C.T. Fisher.

B.D. Greenwood.

E.F. Greenwood.

J.I. Harris.

S.D. Horne.

G.Y. McInnes.

N.F. McMillan.

P.J. Morgan.

M.D. Murphy.

P.W. Phillips.

I.D. Wallace.

LONDON: British Museum of Natural History.*

M.J. Brendell.

R.A. Hayman.

S.D. Chapman.

A.M. Hutson.

D. Claugher.

J.M. Ingles.

R.J. Cleevely.

J.R. Laundon.

D.W. Cooper.

S.J. Moore.

P.F.S. Cornelius.

K.G.V. Smith.

R.H. Harris.

C.A. Walker.

A.P. Harvey.

M.P. Walters (Sub.Dept.Orn.,Tring).

A. Wheeler.

LONDON: Horniman Museum and Library.

E.D. Goodhew.

LONDON: Passmore Edwards Museum, Stratford.

I.G. Robertson.

LUDLOW: Museum, Shropshire County Museum Service.

W.J. Norton.

LUTON: Museum and Art Gallery.

J.G. Dony.

NEWBURY: District Museum.

V. Field.

NEWPORT: Museum and Art Gallery.

B.A. Campbell.

NORWICH: Castle Museum, Norfolk Museums Service.

A.G. Irwin.

P.W. Lambley.

NOTTINGHAM: Wollaton Hall Natural History Museum.

J.R. Charter.

B.R.P. Playle.

D.P. Sharpe.

P.W. Simmonds.

G.P. Walley.

PLYMOUTH: City Museum.

D.A. Curry.

PORTSMOUTH: City Museums.

J.E. Chamberlain.

P.I.V. Sewell.

ROTHERHAM: Clifton Park Museum.

W.A. Ely.

SCUNTHORPE: Museum and Art Gallery.

B. Walker.

SEVENOAKS: The Harrison Zoological Museum Trust.*

SHEFFIELD: City Museum.*

T.H. Riley.

D. Whiteley.

SOUTHPORT: Botanic Gardens Museum.

I.O. Morrison.

SPALDING: Gentlemen's Society Museum.

E.J. Redshaw.

STOKE-ON-TRENT: City Museum and Art Gallery.

G. Halfpenny.

ST. ALBANS: City Museum.

S.W. Flood.

ST. HELIER: The Museum Societe Jersiaise.

F. Le Sueur.

SUNDERLAND: Museum, Tyne and Wear Museums Service.

P.S. Davis.

SWANSEA: University College and Royal Institution of South Wales Museum.

M.J. Isaac.

WARRINGTON: Museum and Art Gallery.

A. Leigh.

WARWICK: Warwickshire Museum Service.

P.J.E. Copson.

WOODSTOCK: Oxfordshire CC Dept., Mus.Services, Fletcher's House.

J.M. Campbell.

YORK: Castle Museum.

T.M. Clegg.

C. Simms.

UNIVERSITY MUSEUMS AND DEPARTMENTS.

ABERDEEN: Museum of the Department of Zoology.

K.R. Watt.

BANGOR: University College of North Wales, Dept., Applied Zoology.

M.J. Morgan.

LEICESTER: Department of Museum Studies.

C.R. Betteridge.

M.E. Lewis.

G. Stansfield.

LIVERPOOL: Polytechnic, Department of Biology.

S. Parkinson.

I.M. White.

LONDON: Gordon Museum, Guy's Hospital Medical School.

J.J. Daws.

: Hunterian Museum, Royal College of Surgeons.

E. Allen.

: Department of Anatomy, Royal College of Surgeons.

B.M. Logan.

: Imperial College, Dept. Zoology.

C.L. Meredith.

: Museum of Pathology, The Royal Free Hospital.

P.C. Bates.

LONDON: Department of Zoology, University College.

R.M. Down.

R. Mahoney.

MANCHESTER: University Museum.

R.C. Garner.

M.V. Hounsome.

C. Pettitt.

NEWCASTLE-ON-TYNE: Hancock Museum.

A. Garside.

A.G. Long.

NOTTINGHAM: University Department of Pathology.

A. Stevens.

READING: University Department of Botany.

S.L. Jury.

: Plant Science Laboratories.

S.E. Okeke.

FOREIGN MUSEUMS.

BERGEN, NORWAY: Univ. Zoological Museum.

O. Froiland.

DUBLIN: National Museum.

J.M.C. Holmes.

GIBRALTAR: Museum.

J. Bensusan.

KANSAS: University Museum of Natural History.

D. Gotta:(Complimentary).

OTTAWA: National Museums of Canada.*

STAVANGER, NORWAY: Arkeologisk Museum.

S. Bakkevig.

TORONTO: Royal Ontario Museum.

M. Crittenden.

OTHERS

AREA MUSEUMS SERVICE FOR SOUTH-EAST ENGLAND.*

S.J. Trodd.

THE COUNCIL FOR MUSEUMS AND GALLERIES IN SCOTLAND.*

THE MUSEUMS DOCUMENTATION ADVISORY UNIT, DUXFORD.*

PRIVATE MEMBERS:

J.G. Greenwood.

C. Grist.

S.J. Harrison.

P. Lingwood.

J. Metcalf.

T. Pain.

H.F. Steedman.

THE MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION.* (Complimentary).

THE UNIVERSITY OF KEELE.

B. Page. (In Exchange, Geological Curators Group).

THE FAUNA PRESERVATION SOCIETY. (Zoo.Soc.Lond.).

K. Gordon. (In Exchange).

* = Institutional Members.

Biology Curators Group: Membership List at 1st April, 1977

This membership list contains all members, including those unpaid for 1977= U and new members since December, 1976 =N to whom we extend a warm welcome. All unpaid members are asked to pay £1 as soon as possible.

A membership list of members by institution will be available soon and members are asked to recruit from those museums, universities and polytechnics with biological material but no members on a personal or institutional basis. The group will obviously obtain more members by their activities but the main increase is by personal contact, please push hard for more members and money.

- N Miss Elizabeth Allen, Hunterian Museum. London.
U Miss J.A. Bardsley, Booth Museum, Brighton.
Mr. J.A. Bateman, National Museum of Wales, Cardiff.
U Mr. P.C. Bates, Museum of Pathology, Royal Free Hospital, London.
Miss. K.M. Berry, Bolton Museum and Art Gallery, Bolton.
U Mr. C.R. Betteridge, Dept. of Museum Studies. Leicester.
N Mr. M.J.D. Brendell, Dept of Entom. Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.) London.
Mr. R.K. Brinklow, Dundee Museums and Art Galleries, Dundee.
U DR. D.L. Burkel, Glasgow Art Gallery and Museums, Glasgow.
U Mr. B.A. Campbell, Newport Museum and Art Gallery, Gwent.
U Mr. J.M. Campbell, Dept of Museum Services, Woodstock, Oxford.
U Mrs. J.E. Chamberlain, City Museum and Art Gallery, Portsmouth.
U Miss. S.D. Chapman, Palaeo. Dept. Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.) London.
U Mr. D.J. Clarke, Museum and Art Gallery, Carlisle.
N Mr. D. Claugher, Electron Micro. Unit. Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.) London.
U Mr. T.M. Clegg, Yorkshire Museum, York.
Mr. R.J. Cleevely, Palaeo. Dept. Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.) London.
N Mr. D.W. Cooper, Brit. Mus. (Nat. Hist.) London.
Mr. C.J.T. Copp, City Museum and Art Gallery, Bristol.
U Mrs. P.J.E. Copson, Warwickshire Museum Service, Warwick.
Dr. M.D. Crane, City Museum and Art Gallery, Bristol.
Mr. D.A. Curry, City Museum, Plymouth.
Mr. P.S. Davis, Sunderland Museum, Tyne and Wear. M.S. Sunderland.
U Mr. J.J. Daws, Gordon Museum, Guy's Hospital. London.
U Miss. J.A. Dawson, Museum and Art Gallery, Leicester.
Dr. J.E. Dony, Museum and Art Gallery, Luton.
Mrs. R.M. Down, University College, London.
U Mr. W.A. Ely, Clifton Park Museum, Rotherham.
Mr. D.G. Erwin, Ulster Museum, Belfast.
U Mr. I.M. Evans, Leicestershire Museums Service, Leicester.
Miss. V. Field, Newbury Museum, Newbury.
Miss. C.T. Fisher, Merseyside County Museums, Liverpool.
Mr. S.W. Flood, City Museums, St. Albans.