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Biology Curators Group Newsletter

Title: Minutes of the Committee Meeting of the Biology Curators Group held at the British Museum (Natural History) on Tuesday 30th November 1982

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Minutes of the Committee meeting of the Biology Curators Group held at the British Museum (Natural History) on Tuesday 30th November 1982.

Members present Eric Greenwood (chair), G. Stansfield, P. Lambley, R. Cleeveley, S. Garland, J. Mathias, C. Steele, P. Morgan (from item 4)

- 1 Apologies were received from H. Mendel, P. Davis and G. Hancock.
- 2 Welcome Charles Steele was welcomed to his first meeting as liaison officer with the Museums Association.
- 3 Minutes of the meeting held 10th August 1982 were approved and signed.
- 4 Matters arising
 - a) Tax allowance John Mathias reported that he was looking into this.
 - b) Conservation of natural history collections It was agreed to remind Mr. Howie that he had promised an article on this subject for the Newsletter.
 - c) Chester Museum Mr. Greenwood reported that the possibility of making a short term appointment to effect the dispersal of collections was under consideration.
 - d) Manual of curatorship Mr. Steele gave a short progress report on the Manual which was on target.
 - e) CoEnCo Mr. Stansfield reported that the subscription had not been paid because no decision had been received from the Museums Association on whether they would pay half the subscription. Mr. Steele agreed to pursue this. Mr. Stansfield also reported that at a meeting to take place on 16th December it was planned to dissolve the Wildlife Link Committee and to reform it as an independent, unincorporated association. This was a result of the severe financial problems of CoEnCo.
 - f) Wildlife and Countryside Act Seminar Report Mr. Stansfield reported that he was waiting for replies from Peter Morgan and Mike Hounsome. Some changes were needed in Mike Hounsome's paper because of the Modification Order made by the Secretary of State with respect to the import and export of endangered species and effective from 4th October 1982. It was agreed to publish the report of the Seminar together with the appendices as a separate BCG publication, as soon as possible. Pricing and marketing was left to G. Stansfield, John Mathias and Steve Garland.
 - g) H.M. Customs In the absence of Mike Hounsome there was nothing to report. It was agreed to ask Mike whether he would be able to provide the paper, and if not, to look for another contributor.

h) Burton on Trent Museum John Mathias reported that he had heard that The Staffordshire County Service had advised on the dispersal of collections which were being offered on a ten year loan. It was thought that problems could arise with material covered by the terms of a bequest. No mention had been made of the entomological collections. It was agreed that a letter should be sent to the Chief Executive of the Head of Leisure Services, expressing concern that the Museum was being wound up and the collections dispersed. Information should be sought on the plans for other collections and for the bird cases. The Group should offer advice.

i) Consultations with NERC No consultations had taken place since the Cardiff meeting.

5 Cardiff Conference Peter Morgan reported on progress with the Proceedings of the Conference. It was hoped that publication would be in the early New Year. He agreed to look into the possibilities of joint publication by the National Museum and the Group.

6 Future programme

a) AGM 1983 This had been arranged to take place at the Hancock Museum on 25th March. It was hoped that it might be possible to arrange overnight accommodation in the University. A programme would be included in the next Newsletter.

b) Harrison Museum The visit had now been confirmed for Saturday 25th June. Articles about the museum and the nature reserve would be appearing in the Newsletter together with the programme. Lunch would be available at the 'Riverhead' at £1.10 per head.

c) ICOM 1983 Plans were progressing for a tour for the Natural History Committee of ICOM members prior to the ICOM General Conference in London.

d) Museums Association Conference 1983 It was agreed to write to Dr. Isaac about the possibility of a meeting for BCG members on Monday 20th September in Swansea.

7 Museums Association matters

a) Working party on Natural Science Collection Resources It appeared that Janet Chamberlain would be giving up the chairmanship of the working party. A new chairman had not been appointed. Some money had been found but the results of other applications was not yet known. It was thought unlikely that an appointment could be made in January.

b) Natural Sciences Diploma Course A meeting between BCG, GCG and the Department of Museum Studies was to take place on January 7th in Leicester.

- c) National Heritage Bill A copy of the relevant parts of the Bill had been received from the Association. It was not thought that any action from BCG was needed.
- d) Registration of Museums It was noted that the Association would be circulating a paper on this subject.
- e) Countywide Consultative Committees Although some members had not seen this report it was not thought that the Group would wish to respond as a Group.

Officers' reports

- a) Editor Steve Garland announced that there was ample material for the next issue. Possible contributions from the BMNH were discussed.
 - b) Treasurer John Mathias reported that the deposit account stood at £675 and the current account at £329. There were 168 personal members, 48 institutional and 4 complementary.
 - c) Secretary The Secretary reported on routine correspondence. The Chairman reported that the UK Group of IIC would welcome articles on the conservation of natural history collections for their Newsletter.
- 8 Reg Harris bibliography It was agreed that this be passed to John Mathias in order to obtain a quote for typing and publishing. The possibility of financial help from an Area Museum Service or from IICUKG was discussed.
- 9 Next meeting was arranged for 22nd February in the British Museum (Natural History), subject to a room being available.

G. Stansfield
1/12/1982