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Biology Curators Group Newsletter

Title: Coming Events: Life After Death, The Practical Conservation of Natural History Collections

Author(s): Not Listed.

Source: Not Listed. (1991). Coming Events: Life After Death, The Practical Conservation of Natural History Collections. *Biology Curators Group Newsletter*, Vol 5 No 7, 84.

URL: <http://www.natsca.org/article/993>

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Coming Events

Life After Death The Practical Conservation of Natural History Collections

A one day UKIC Conference to be held at the Ipswich Museums, and Ipswich School, Suffolk, on 27th February 1992

A note from the prospectus:

'In April 1990, Ipswich Museum opened its fully restored "Victorian Natural History Gallery". For this to be possible the conservation section had to conserve nearly 400 specimens, most of them dating to the 19th or early 20th century. The exhibits included mammals, reptiles, fish, crustaceans, shells and birds. There are many local museums with huge natural history collections which will at some time need conserving and yet there are hardly any specialist natural history conservators. Often it is conservators with other specialisms that have to cope. It is hoped that the conference will concentrate on the practical rather than the theoretical, and will appeal to general conservators and specialist natural history conservators alike.'

Call for papers

If you wish to present a paper at this conference, or if you want more information, contact:

Bob Entwistle, Ipswich Museum, High Street, Ipswich, Suffolk. Tel 0473 - 213761 or UKIC 071 - 603 - 5643.

The History of Ornithology Joint Meeting of the British Ornithologists' Union, The Society for the History of Natural History and the Biology Curators' Group

Thursday 17th - Sunday 20th September 1992
University of Liverpool, South Liverpool
Conference Centre

Programme:

Thursday 17th September

Visits to two libraries not normally open to the public:

The Oak Room, Liverpool City Libraries. Original drawings (eg by Edward Lear), copy of Audubon and other fine books.

Knowsley Library, Knowsley Hall, Prescot, East Liverpool.

We have special permission from the XVIII Earl of Derby to view his priceless collection of original drawings and fine bird books at this private library. The XIIIth Earl of Derby was at the centre of the bird world in the early 19th century; friend and sponsor to such important characters as John Gould, Edward Lear and John MacGillivray. The Earl's collection of birds was bequeathed to the City of Liverpool and founded the institution now known as the Liverpool Museum, part of the National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside. His books, original drawings and manuscripts remain at Knowsley.

There will also be a linked exhibition at the Liverpool Museum, re-uniting some of the specimens with their original drawings and fine published plates. This will be open for three months around the time of the conference and may be viewed at any time during normal museum opening times. We are hoping, however, to arrange a reception at the museum on one of the evenings (probably Thursday) during the conference, during which this exhibition can be viewed. This will also give delegates a chance to see the Natural History Gallery and the award-winning Natural History Centre, where many specimens from the reserve collections are now being made accessible to the public by demonstrator staff.

The bird collections at the Liverpool Museums are the second largest in number in the country and of extreme taxonomic and historical importance; they include many types and specimens from such luminaries as Cook, Gould and Hodgson. We suggest anyone wishing to take the opportunity to look at the collections should come a day earlier; we are setting aside Wednesday 16th September for this purpose - although visitors are of course welcome at any time. Please let us know if you would like to book early for this purpose.

Friday, 18th - Saturday 19th September

Two days of talks on ornithological history. We are still open to offers of papers but already have a substantial programme.

International History

Bill Deiss (Archives Department, Smithsonian Institution, Washington). The History of Oology in America.

Alan Tye (British Ornithologists' Union) and Adam Jones (Ethnologist). Birds in 17th century West Africa.