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Natural Sciences Collections Association

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NSCG Newsletter

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- ensuring that a collective professional presence is maintained at the strategic discussions currently taking place in organisations such as *Re:source* and the Heritage Lottery Fund (regarding the stewardship, care and management of objects and collections; professional standards and advice; advocacy for all these activities), establishing our role and credentials.

The next immediate step is for the councils and committees of our member organisations to discuss these ideas in more depth and to tell us what they would like to see. Our next meeting will take place in July. We plan to follow this on 12 November with wider discussion sessions, preceding the 2002 Conservation Awards ceremony at the British Library.

NCCR Council: Chair, Carole Milner; Vice Chair, Bob Entwistle *Natural Sciences Conservation Group*; Treasurer, Mike Barrington *British Antique Furniture Restorers Association*; Kate Collieran *Institute of Paper Conservation*; Maighread McParland *Institute for the Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works in Ireland*; John Kelly *ICHAWI*; Ian Moor *Photographic Materials Conservation Group*; Nick Berkeley *Society of Archivists*; Ylva Player-Dahnsjö *Scottish Society for Conservation and Restoration*; Zoe Reid *Irish Professional Conservators' and Restorers' Association*; Stuart Sanderson *British Association of Painting Conservator-Restorers*; Chris Woods *United Kingdom Institute for Conservation*; Simon Moore *Professional Standards Board*; David Leigh *UKIC*.

Postscript

NCCR has extremely limited resources but, despite this, since March we have made some tangible advances. For this I want to thank all NCCR Council members who give up their time to do this, on top of their day jobs and the work they already do voluntarily within their own organisations. I would also like to acknowledge the generous help we have already received from Stan Lester and Diana O'Sullivan in developing our ideas on accreditation and collective resources respectively.

What we are doing is for all of us and you can help too, whether you are a student with some research time or a retired professional with advice to offer, from within your professional bodies or outside them. Please think about doing so. Contact us if you're interested (clare@conservationstudio.com) and thank you in advance.

Carole Milner
16 May 2002

BCG/NSCG Merger Meeting

NHM Entomology Seminar Room, 1pm, Wednesday 24th July 2002

As instructed by the AGM at Norwich, here below is a report of the business conducted at the first BCG/NSCG merger meeting.

Paul A. Brown [acting secretary for the merger committee], pab@nhm.ac.uk

- **Attending:**

NSCG: Simon Moore (Chair), Kate Andrew, Paul Brown & Donna Young.

BCG: David Carter, Nick Gordon, Howard Mendel & Steve Thompson.

- **Chair of the committee**

Simon Moore agreed to chair the series of merger meetings and that the post of chair will revolve amongst the committee if he was unable to attend.

- **Committee confirmed understanding of the remit given to them by BCG & NSCG AGM's "to write a constitution for the combined organisation and recommend the mechanism for merging".**

- **The Structure of the new group**

It was decided that the new organisation should have a central Executive Committee. The Executive Committee will have the power to form subcommittees, as the need arises, to cover 1. Conferences & Meetings, 2. Publications, 3. Membership & Publicity, 4. Collections Management & 5. Conservation.

It was noted that the structure and constitution of the new group should be established so as to allow GCG to merge into the new group at a later date, should they so wish.

- **Charitable status**

The Charity Commission was approached and based on their communications, four options were put to committee:

1. For BCG to gain charitable status and then merge with NSCG charity. BCG is already considered to be a charitable organisation but is not registered as such.
2. For BCG to be subsumed into the NSCG Charity with change in NSCG constitution to accommodate BCG.
3. For NSCG to close and move into the BCG with change in BCG constitution.
4. For both NSCG and BCG to wind up at next year's AGMs and for both to

hand over their assets to one new charity to be set up before next year's AGMs.

Proposals 1, 2 and 3 would be more complicated and require extra general meetings so would take longer to achieve merger. All present agreed that proposal 4 be the best way forward as the process should be as swift as possible.

Committee decided that we should follow option 4 and set up a new charity, dissolving both groups into the new charity at next year's AGM's. The Inaugural meeting of The New Charity would then take place immediately after the two final AGMs. The Trustees of The New Charity will initially comprise of the members of the merger committee.

The new (April 1998) Charity Commission "model constitution" provides a much less complex method for composing a charitable constitution than when NSCG established their charitable status. A new charitable constitution will be written up using the form and agreement on the new Name, the Objects and the Powers for the New Charity will constitute the main area for discussion.

- **Constitution.**

The following set of Objects for the New Charity were presented to, amended and agreed by committee:

1. To raise public awareness and appreciation of the scientific and cultural value of natural sciences collections.
2. To promote the highest standards in the management, preparation, conservation, care, interpretation and research of natural sciences collections and specimens, for the benefit of the public at large and other users.
3. To encourage exchange of information between individuals and institutions about natural sciences collections and records.

- **Finance & Membership Fees.**

Subscription rates were discussed and will be set between the NSCG membership rate of £10 and will be lower than the combined NSCG/BCG combined rates of £18. A higher rate for Institutional membership is envisaged. Overseas members may not be charged extra as yet.

- **Publications.**

This will require a subcommittee to agree to a new, possibly peer reviewed journal to be published once a year and a newsletter to be published three times a year. This will take some time to develop and might evolve from the improving

Biology Curator. The respective editors for BCG & NSCG would be part of this committee with possible referees for peer review. A possible name for a publication could be 'Natural Sciences Collections' or 'The Natural Sciences Collector'.

- **A Name for the new, combined group.**

The name 'Natural Sciences Collections Association' (NSCA, NaSCA or NatSCA) has been selected. Committee agreed that NSCA had the benefit of describing the group accurately, and was all encompassing including a full geological remit as well as the biological and conservation ones. [There is another group using the acronym NSCA (Natural Science Collections Alliance). However, they refer to themselves as the NSC Alliance, and as this is a relatively small American group, there should not be a conflict.]

- Until the merger has actually taken place, the general business of BCG and NSCG will continue as before.
- Decisions made by this committee must be communicated to the NSCG and BCG memberships. This should be in the form of selected bullet points published in 'The Biology Curator' and 'The [NSCG] Newsletter'. These could also be passed on to the Geology Curators Group via Steve Thompson. It was agreed that the process should be as open as possible, with all members being kept up to date with the progress of the merger committee.
- It was agreed that the meeting had gone extremely well and had been well chaired.

Advance notice of 2003 subscriptions

Since NSCG and BCG are in negotiations to form a new combined association, both NSCG and BCG membership subscriptions for 2002 will run until the 2003 AGMs in April when the new combined group is planned to take over.

Kathie Way and Kate Andrew, Treasurers, will be writing in due course to all institutional members and those BCG members who have bankers orders in place and overseas members who have paid in advance, all other members need take no action at this stage.

The AGMs will form part of a joint NSCG/BCG meeting in Manchester.