



**NatSCA**

Natural Sciences Collections Association

<http://www.natsca.org>

## NatSCA News

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**MINUTES**  
**NatSCA AGM, 25.4.2007**

Venue: Long Gallery, Millennium Galleries, Arundel Gate, Sheffield, S1 2PP

In Nick Gordon's absence, Vicki Papworth chaired the AGM.

**1. Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence received from:- Jack Ashby, Adrian Doyle, Nick Gordon, Andrea Hallaway, Nicola McNicholas & Jane Mee.

**2. Minutes of AGM Liverpool April 2006**

These were signed as correct by the chair.

**3. Matters arising from Liverpool AGM minutes**

There were no matters arising

**4. Chair's Report:**

Vicki Papworth reported that there have been a series of Regional meetings with local and Hub museum members, concerning our Subject Specialist Network role with much willingness to be involved shown by attendees. We hope that our SSN status will be our organisation and not institutionally based. She presented the results of the SSN survey appended.

Vicki reminded AGM that we money allotted for bursaries to enable attendance of conference and future seminars.

**5. Secretary's Report: Paul Brown**

*Attendance NatSCA committee 2006-2007. Meetings were held on 27.vii.06 at Yorkshire Museum; on 6.xi.06 at the Natural History Museum; on 5.iii.07 in Newcastle and 24.iv.07 in Sheffield.*

4.vii.06 6.xi.06 5.iii.07 24.iv.07

**Nick Gordon**

<b>Kate Andrew</b>				<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Paul Brown</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	
<b>Andrea Hallaway</b>		<b>X</b>			
<b>Jo Hatton</b>	<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	
<b>Guy Knight</b>					
<b>Jane Mee</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>		
<b>Nicola McNicholas</b>	<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>		
<b>Simon Moore</b>			<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>
<b>Vicki Papworth</b>			<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Maggie Reilly</b>		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>
<b>Douglas Russell</b>		<b>X</b>		<b>X</b>	
<b>Clare Stringer</b>		<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>	
<b>Steve Thompson</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>			

**6. Treasurer's Report: Kate Andrew**

This year, Kate Andrew has used the Charity Commission pro-forma to present the accounts as this is the format that the Commissioner's prefer for the annual returns. Given that we have only a current account and a deposit account and no other assets, much of the second page of the return is blank, but it does now

have a comparison with previous year's accounts. Velson Horie continues to act as our independent examiner of the accounts.

*Reserves - We inherited quite significant reserves due to the good management of both pre-cursor bodies, the former NSCG and BCG. With the current stable state of membership and good attendance at well planned and budgeted meetings, we have continued to operate at a break even or slight profit most years allowing Natsca to continue to build reserves. Reserves now equate to close to two year's running costs.*

In recent years, we have started to experience higher running costs, as institutions become less willing to support cash costs of staff involvement but the committee feels that we could afford to reduce reserves further. We decided that one way to support the charitable aims was to fund bursaries to attend the AGM, with eleven bursaries awarded for the Liverpool AGM. This meeting will be the third such meeting we have supported in this way.

The accounts presented today would have shown a £2,000 deficit and a reduction of reserves but for the award of the SSN grant.

**Meetings** - The 05/06 accounts have no annual meeting costs other than bursaries, since the 05 meeting was led by SPNHC, only one NatSCA meeting was run that year. This year's meetings were the AGM in Liverpool, a Biochemistry training course at Kew, some late payments from the Herbarium training course and an early payment for the taxidermy training course.

**Newsletters** - Three newsletters were paid for from these accounts.

Natural Sciences Collections Association	No 1098156		CC16a		
Receipts and payments accounts					
	For the period from	Period start date	To	Period end date	
		01-Feb-06		31-Jan-07	
Section A Receipts and payments					
	Unrestricted funds	Restricted funds	Endowment funds	Total funds to the nearest £	Last year to the nearest £
A1 Receipts					
Subscriptions	4386	-	-	4386	4323
Sale of back issues	-	-	-	-	19
Conference and training	5020	-	-	5020	880
Grants / awards from other bodies	4300	-	-	4300	3000
Bank interest	1	403	-	404	377
Sub total	13707	403	-	14110	8599
A2 Assets and investment sales, etc	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total receipts</b>	<b>13706.61</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>14110</b>	<b>8599</b>

A3 payments					
subscriptions	35	-	-	35	35
Insurance	795	-	-	795	687
Newsletter printing and postage	3552	-	-	3552	3109
Committee travel expenses	665	-	-	665	866
Marketing and promotion	67	-	-	67	401
Operational expenses (postage, photocopying)	191	-	-	191	146
Conference and training course expenses	4992	-	-	4992	546
Bank charges	10	-	-	10	-
Bursaries	1009	-	-	1009	1886
Web site	150	-	-	150	2110
Subtotal	11435	-	-	11435	9777
A4 Assets and investment purchases etc.	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total payments</b>	<b>11435</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>9777</b>
Net of receipts / payments	2271	403	-	2674	1177
A5 Transfers between funds	1550	1550	-	-	-
<b>A6 Cashfunds last year end</b>	<b>730</b>	<b>23581</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>24311</b>	<b>25488</b>
<b>Cashfunds this year end</b>	<b>4501</b>	<b>22484</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>26985</b>	<b>24311</b>

The accounts have been checked by Velson Horie who signed them as being correct. Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Maggie Reilly, seconded by Jo Hatton and AGM accepted them nem. con.

#### 7. Membership secretary's Annual Report 1<sup>st</sup> Feb 2006 – 31<sup>st</sup> Jan 2007: Maggie Reilly

NatSCA ended the year with 258 names on the database. This includes the eleven regular FOC mailings. It excludes the 17 members who did not renew for 2006. 17 Swedish colleagues received complementary mailings for 2006 only in thanks for their hospitality in hosting the study trip in May 2006. Therefore the total of paying membership for the year is 230 consisting of 59 institutional members and 171 personal members. Or by region: 203 UK, 15 Europe, 7 North America, 5 Rest of world. New members joining late in the year i.e. after November were held over to 2007 membership.

Standing orders have proved to be an efficient way to collect subs and so far 30 members are using this facility. Standing order forms can now be down loaded from the website. Due to huge increases in bank charges and the exchange rate favourable to the pound, we are unable to accept EU member payments by cheques in euros so this info was taken off website.

Maggie Reilly is still checking out the information on the Charities Paypal web payment system at <http://www.webanywhere.co.uk/index.php?tab=3D3>. Initial information suggests that this company are more geared up for creating and hosting a website than modifying an existing one hosted elsewhere.

Committee were agreeable to a £10 sub for unwaged members – this will go to AGM for approval. Once we agree the student rate to contact colleges with Museums courses and ask them to bring NatSCA to the atten-

tion of their students

Information on NatSCA to Chris Norris at AMNH who is currently on the Publicity and Outreach committee for SPNHC who are surveying the operation of other societies, which overlap with SPNHC

In the course of the year a query arose over what institutional membership entitled an organisation to and this was clarified to 2 places at conference and one vote at AGM.

Members are asked to keep either Vicki Papworth ([v.papworth@nhm.ac.uk](mailto:v.papworth@nhm.ac.uk)) or Maggie Reilly ([mreilly@museum.gla.ac.uk](mailto:mreilly@museum.gla.ac.uk)) up to date with email addresses. For institutional members it can be problematic identifying the institutional contact – it would be very useful if institutional members can provide us with a named contact and email address, providing they want to receive emailings. Members without email will continue to receive information by post.

#### **8. Editorial & Website Report: Vicki Papworth**

Three issues of NatSCA news were published during the past year (issues 9 to 11) with many papers on the preparation and conservation of collections (botany, taxidermy), on education and reviews of seminars and latest parliamentary acts. Vicki asked AGM for papers for publication in NatSCA News and for information on permits, policies and other relevant documentation for the NatSCA website.

#### **9. Natural Science Conservation (& Institute of Conservation) Report: Simon Moore**

##### **Convergence with ICON? Maybe not!**

NatSCA cares very much about our membership and there have been concern from the conservator side about their perceived lack of representation, articles in *NatSCA News* or at the annual conference.

To try and address this Simon mentioned last year, about a possible convergence with ICON (the evolved UKIC) that was formed in 2005. To this end Simon informally polled the membership about converging NatSCA with ICON. Not surprisingly, the conservation side was in favour while the larger curatorial side, generally, was not and a few were quite strongly against this idea.

The main stumbling block is one of division that we have been trying to avoid for obvious reasons. NatSCA was formed from the Natural Sciences Conservation Group and the longer-standing Biology Curators' Group and we try to blend the conservator/curator lines and avoid division.

The problems of converging with ICON are that it would put up our modest subscription 4-fold and that we would lose a certain amount of our independence but give us a much bigger voice. There are many pros and cons with this issue but we was determined that NatSCA would not be divided within itself so that we would revert to a BCG and NSCG-converged-with-ICON situation.

The other problem of job description division is more complex since we have many curators who perform conservation tasks and conservators who have to do curatorial tasks. Why is this? Could it be due to the only slight recognition of Natural Sciences Conservation, after all these years and the lack of available posts? Simon considers this is the main reason and it's one we need to make known a lot more. In ICON we could have lobbied the heritage sector and may have gained more recognition. Can we do this with NatSCA? We all have an increasing work load and how many can afford to sit on yet more committees! On the plus side, however, there have been a few natural sciences conservator posts advertised recently.

What we need is someone to write a pointed, but not embittered, article in *Museums Journal* to make this point and hopefully the amount of job posts, even in these days of shrinkage, might increase. But we must keep up the pressure without appearing to moan.

In France they have no conservators or knowledge in Natural Sciences Conservation (except for a multi-disciplinary group called OCIM within the University of Burgundy at Dijon). Throughout the rest of Europe it is much the same although not quite so bad. ICOM does a good job of holding them together and part of our membership supports ICOM rather than NatSCA and that *NN* is becoming thinner. Fine perhaps, but we don't seem to hear much from ICOM after we agreed about staying in touch after the Dublin Conference.

Simon concluded by stating the following:

We decided not to converge with ICON due to increased subs, some loss of independence and not enough for the curatorial side, generally too much discontent within the ranks.

We are constantly under threat within the Heritage Sector since we work, largely on low-value and meta-stable objects.

Your committee works very hard each year to keep NatSCA as much as in the forefront as possible and, with our workload increasing and our budgets diminishing, it gets harder each year. The often Conservation angled seminars are going well but attendance could be much better – it gives the impression that some are keen enough to moan but not support.

As one of the few professional Natural Science Conservators on committee we need to help ourselves to serve the best interests of natural science conservators.

#### **10 Election of Officers & ordinary members of NatSCA committee :**

Below are the nominees for NatSCA committee posts to serve from 2007 to 2009/10, which reached the Secretary.

<b>Post</b>	<b>Name of Nominee</b>	<b>Institution</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Seconded</b>
1. Chair	Vicki Papworth	NHM Botany	Paul Brown	Dave Goodger
2. Secretary	Paul Brown	NHM Entomology	Maggie Reilly	Theresa Howard
3. Treasurer	Tony Irwin	Norwich Castle Museum	David Waterhouse	Peter Howlett
4. Editor	Douglas Russell	NHM Tring	Vicki Papworth	Maggie Reilly
5. OM 1.	Pip Strang	York Museum	Clare Stringer	Paul Brown
6. OM 2.	Peter Stafford	NHM Botany	Vicki Papworth	Paul Brown
7. OM 3.	Jack Ashby	Grant Museum	Vicki Papworth	Maggie Reilly
8. OM 4.	Jane Mee	Portsmouth Museum	Clare Stringer	Steve Thompson
9. OM 5.	Miranda Lowe	NHM Zoology	Vicki Papworth	Simon Moore

As there were vacant posts and candidates to fill them, no election was required. There were no objections to the candidates and so the Secretary asked the AGM to accept and elect those listed people en block onto committee to serve for three years for chair, Secretary and Treasurer and two years for ordinary committee members from this meeting.

Proposed by : Lindsey Loughman, Seconded : Steve Thompson

Kate Andrew promised to continue as acting treasurer until Tony Irwin is fully conversant with the job.

[Editor's note - Douglas Russell has since stepped down as Editor due to personal circumstances]

#### **11 Seminars: Notice of ...** Simon Moore

Simon is running an Anoxia seminar at the NHM, London in November 2007 which will be advertised

Vicki Papworth said that there will be a list of projected seminars on our website and that any requirements for seminar should be voiced.

#### **12 Study Trips: Notice of trip to St Petersburg in 2007:**

Steve Thompson reported that John Edmondson has not forwarded the planned study trip to St Petersburg and so this is now cancelled. Future visits may be planned for Budapest and Talinn.

#### **13 Any Other Business**

Claire Stringer mentioned the case of un-provenanced bird mounts presently housed in a Burton on Trent swimming pool building and asked for any interest.

Clare Valentine is now a 'member at large' for SPNHC and committee would like to co-opt her as our SPNHC representative.

NatSCA wishes to write a Natural Sciences appendix to the MA Code of Ethics.

We need a venue for next year's NatSCA conference & AGM. Any volunteers ?

**Vote of thanks**

Those retiring from Committee, Nick Gordon (Chair) Kate Andrew (Treasurer), Jo Hatton (OM) & Guy Knight (OM) were thanked by the chair, in particular Kate for her long and consistent service and Jo for organising many meetings including this AGM. Paul Richards and the staff of Sheffield Galleries & Museums Trust were thanked for providing us with a fine conference venue at the Millennium Gallery and for the tours of Western Park Museum and the New Museum Store, and for Mrs Richards for organising the informal conference dinner at the Devonshire Fat Cat pub.

**Close**

APPENDIX SSN Survey results. Vicki Papworth.

I have created a comparative ranking, awarding points to each category according as to whether it was ranked as 1st choice, 2nd choice and so on for each returned form, giving a total points score. This is shown on the 'overall comparison' chart.

As you can see, in the overall comparison, 'improving skills' and 'advocacy' come out as the most important to most people, closely followed by 'networks' and 'developing skills'. There was also overwhelming support for the idea of employing someone to help coordinate the SSN activity and I think we should consider this when we submit our application. I'd like to gauge people's thoughts on what would be the best way to go about this? Full time, short contract? Part-time longer contract?

