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Biology Curators Group Newsletter

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Author(s): Swinney, G.

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BCG MEETING - MUSEUMS ASSOCIATION CONFERENCE. EDINBURGH 5 JULY 1978

Due partly to the success of the Biology Curators Group meeting held as a half-day symposium during the Museums Association Conference in Bradford last year, the Association has, in planning this years conference, set aside a whole day for the specialist sessions. The theme for this years specialist session organised by the BCG is to be "Research material in Museum Collections". This topic was covered, in part, by the highly successful joint meeting of the BCG, Systematics Association and Geology Curators Group "The Function of Local Natural History Collections" Liverpool last September. It is hoped that the papers presented in Edinburgh will provide the basis for continuing the stimulating discussions on the role of natural history collections which developed out of that meeting.

This year the Museums Association has waived the daily conference fee for the specialist sessions day, and it is hoped that this action will encourage those BCG members who might otherwise have been unable to attend the meeting to do so as day visitors to Conference. I am sure that there is no need to point out that the BCG session is open to all members of the Group whether or not they are members of the Museums Association. In order to provide the greatest opportunity for members to attend as day visitors the BCG has, unlike the other specialist groups organising a session, arranged for an excursion to take place in the morning and the main business session of the meeting to occur in the afternoon. It is hoped that this will allow sufficient travelling time for day visiting members to make their way to Edinburgh to take part in the main business of the meeting.

The programme for the meeting is as follows:-

- 09.15 Depart from University of Edinburgh Pollock Halls for Royal Botanic Gardens, Inverleith Row.
- 09.30-10.45 Tour of herbarium together with a short talk on the role of the herbarium and the preparation of material for incorporation into the collections.
- 10.45-11.00 Travel to Royal Scottish Museum, Chambers Street
- 11.00-12.30 Tour of the Natural History storage in the Royal Scottish Museum.
- 12.30-13.20 Lunch
Conference delegates are reminded the Association has made no provision for lunch during specialist sessions. Depending upon the number of members wishing to attend it is hoped to arrange temporary membership of the University of Edinburgh Staff Club, Chambers Street, where luncheon facilities are available at reasonable prices.

The afternoon session will take place in the lecture theatre of the Royal Scottish Museum:-

- 13.30-14.15 N Philip Ashmole of the Department of Zoology, University of Edinburgh.
"Are museums useful for research?"
- 14.15-15.00 Geoff Hancock, Senior Keeper of Natural History, Bolton Museum and Art Gallery, "A collection rescue operation in the North West".
- 15.00-15.15 Coffee
- 15.15-16.00 David Heppell, Principal Scientific Officer (Curator of Mollusca) at the Royal Scottish Museum and Member of the Council of the International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature.
"The Type Concept - steady state or big bang?"
- 16.00-16.30 E C Pelham-Clinton, Assistant Keeper (Curator of Entomology) at the Royal Scottish Museum.
"Insect Hoards".
- 16.30-17.15 Discussion.

Certain of the arrangements still to be made in Edinburgh require some estimate of the number of members likely to attend. Would all BCG members wishing to attend the specialist session on Wednesday 5 July (including those attending as Conference delegates) please contact:-

Mr I H J Lyster
Department of Natural History
Royal Scottish Museum
Chambers Street
Edinburgh
EH1 1JF

If, in doing so, each member could give some indication as to what time on the Wednesday they are likely to arrive to take part in the meeting, this would be greatly appreciated. Final arrangements must be made by 1 June 1978 so please ensure that Ian Lyster is informed by that date, at the latest, if you intend to attend the meeting.

GEOFF SWINNEY
28.2.1978