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Biology Curators Group Newsletter

Title: Minutes of the BCG Committee meeting held at the offices of the Museums Association on Tuesday, 10th August 1982

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Minutes of the BCG Committee meeting held at the offices of the Museums Association on Tuesday, 10th August 1982

Members present Eric Greenwood (chair), G.Stansfield, E. Mendel, P.Morgan, G.Hancock, P.Davis, R.Cleeveley.

1 Apologies were received from Janet Chamberlain, S.Garland and J.Mathias.

2 Minutes of the meeting held on 20th April were approved and signed.

3 Matters arising

- a) Tax allowance This was being taken up by John Mathias.
- b) Conservation of Natural History Collections It was noted that Mr Howie had offered an article for the Newsletter.
- c) CoEnCo Membership It was agreed to suggest to the Museums Association that the Association and the Group should each pay £25.
- d) Wildlife and Countryside Act Seminar The Secretary reported that he was waiting for a contribution from Peter Morgan. It was agreed that the Group should publish the report as a special paper.
- e) H.M.Customs In the absence of Mike Hounsom there was nothing to report although it was noted that some of the points were covered in his paper to the Wildlife and Countryside Act Seminar.
- f) Collections survey deferred to item 6b.
- g) Chester Museum Geoff Hancock reported that together with Tristram Besterman a report had been prepared for the Museums Association but that no action appeared to have been taken. Mr Moore had accepted most of the recommendations relating to the disposal of collections. The problem of collections of local interest remained.
- h) Burton on Trent Museum In the absence of John Mathias this item was deferred until the next meeting.
- i) Consultations with NERC There was nothing further to report. An article would be appearing in NERC News.

4 Cardiff Conference It was felt by those members who had attended that the meeting had gone well. It was noted that two informal groups had been set up to continue discussions in the fields of Zoological and Botanical collections, and it was hoped that these would report to a further meeting in two years time. Peter Morgan reported that he hoped to have the proceedings published by Christmas. It was noted that the transcript of the discussions would need to be circulated.

5 Future programme

- a) Museums Association Conference No special meeting had been arranged for members of the BCG although Brian Playle had indicated that something informal might still be possible. The two speakers on Natural History Collections in the main session would be Eric Greenwood and Howard Brunton, with Geoff Tresise as Chairman.
- b) Meeting at the Harrison Museum It was agreed to accept the invitation to meet at the Harrison Museum on Saturday 25th June 1983 and to invite an article about the museum for the Newsletter.
- c) ICOM 1983 Peter Davis gave details of a tentative programme but reported that he had received no reaction from Chris Hill or Dr Engstrom. It was agreed that Peter Davis should proceed with the programme. It was noted that details would need to be sent out with the second ICOM circular.
- d) AGM 1983 Mr Palmar had written to say that a meeting in Glasgow would be better deferred until 1984. Peter Davis agreed to look into the possibility of holding the meeting in Newcastle upon Tyne.

6 Museums Association matters

- a) Manual of Curatorship. It was noted that this was going ahead but that the Manual did not meet the needs of Natural History Curators. It was agreed that the Group should take its own initiative on the lines of the G.G.
- b) Working Party on Natural Science Collection Resources The questionnaire was now ready and has been tested with a variety of museums. No grant had been forthcoming. A meeting was to take place with the MDA with regard to the processing of data. A room was available in Cardiff.
- c) Proposals for a Natural Science Diploma Course The working party had met and proposals for a short course discussed at the Professional Consultative Committee. Geoff Stansfield had prepared a document setting out learning goals and it was proposed that a further meeting of the working party should take place in Leicester.
- d) Professional Consultative Committee No further meetings had taken place.

7 Officers Reports In the absence of the Treasurer and the Editor there were no reports.

8 A.O.B.

- a) The Secretary drew attention to the bibliography prepared by Reg Harris on preparation techniques. It was agreed that this would be appropriate for a BCG publication and that the matter be pursued.
- b) New members A number of staff of National museums had indicated that they were prepared to join the Group. It was agreed that they would be very welcome.
- c) National Butterfly Museum Geoff Hancock reported that Tristram Besterman had suggested that the Group might wish to take up the matter of the title and functions of this museum. It was agreed that with the information available, no action be taken.
- d) Meeting of U.K.I.C. Howard Mendel reported that the entire meeting had been concerned with finance and the conservation of natural history collections had not been discussed.

9 Date and place of next meeting The next meeting was arranged for Tuesday November 30th at the British Museum (Natural History).

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11.0 The Evolution of Darwin. Professor John Maynard Smith of Sussex University delivers an illustrated talk on Darwin and Heredity, in which he explains how modern research into genetics — about which Darwin knew nothing — has faithfully supported his theories. Prof. Smith speaks before an invited audience at the Linnean Society in London, where Darwin read his first paper on evolution in 1858. *EVENING ARGUS 30/11/82*