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There is a constitution and under its rules the chairman, elected at the first meeting for this year, is Peter J. Morgan of the National Museum of Wales and the secretary is Charles W. Pettitt of the Manchester Museum. One of the principal developments from the first two meetings has been the decision to begin immediately organising a Type Registry (reported below). The format of the recording forms is being worked on at the moment. Secondly, formal connections between the essentially provincial Collection Research Units and the National Museums are being forged through the common goals of both types of institution in terms of identifying the destiny and contents of taxonomically and historically important collections. The organisation of all this effort into one body, FENSCORE, is seen also as a potential medium between grant-aiding bodies and the curator working in Natural Science Collection Research.

FENSCORE Working Party on Type Specimens Register

Minutes of meeting on Wednesday 28 April, 1330 hrs., BM(NH)

Present: Eric Greenwood (in the Chair)
Howard Brunton Peter Morgan
Gordon Corbet Adrian Norris
Geoff Hancock Charles Pettitt
David Heppell Andrew Roberts

The meeting took the form of a general discussion, and the following decisions were made about the proposed National Register of Type Specimens.

1/. NEED FOR REGISTER.

AGREED: There is a need for a Register of Type Specimens to be compiled.

2/. OBJECTIVES.

AGREED: That the objectives of the Register should be
a) to identify the location of material likely to be of interest to taxonomists and
b) to stimulate scholarly investigation of this material.

3/. ORGANISATION.

AGREED: That FENSCORE would be the appropriate body to coordinate the compilation of the Register.

4/. COVERAGE.

AGREED: The Register should contain information on
a) type and figured material (see item 5) of
b) Botany (recent and fossil), Mineralogy, and Zoology (recent and fossil) from
c) all collections in the British Isles whether in private or public ownership, although
d) data for BM(NH) and, possibly, other national museums may need to be restricted to citation of published catalogues.

5/. DEFINITION OF TERMS.

AGREED: a) 'Type' to mean any specimen which the recording curator knows, or has reasonable grounds for suspecting, to possess type status at any level (e.g. syntype, paratype,

topotype, etc.) but excluding (Noted: curators to be warned about the continental practice of writing 'type' on a label to indicate merely that the specimen was 'typical' of the species) 'voucher' and 'keylist' material.

- b) 'Figured Specimen' to mean any specimen which the recording curator knows, or has reasonable grounds for suspecting, has been figured in a published work of taxonomic significance (e.g. Monographic revisions, etc. but not in local reports, etc.).

6/. "LOST MATERIAL".

AGREED: Details would be included of relevant material previously recorded but 'not found' or 'not extant' when the collection is investigated for the Register.

7/. NULL RETURNS.

AGREED: An informative entry to be included in the Register for all investigated institutions where no relevant material is found.

8/. FORM OF REGISTER.

AGREED: That a computerised database, probably supported by the periodic distribution of various listings, would be the appropriate form for the Register, at least for the next five years.

SUGGESTED: More permanent publication of inter-related subsets of the data possibly could be achieved later via papers in learned journals. Publication via commercial concerns such as IDC or BIOSIS also should be considered.

9/. DATA CAPTURE PRIORITIES.

- AGREED:
- a) Top priority should be given to recording extant specimens together with all readily available related information.
 - b) Second priority accorded to records gleaned from unpublished documentary sources but for which no specimen(s) can be traced.
 - c) Third priority accorded to the input of data from published sources. (See item 10).

10/. BIBLIOGRAPHY.

AGREED: In association with work on the Register a Bibliography of Lists of Type Material held in Collections within the British Isles should be compiled.

NOTED: Tony Harvey, Chief Librarian (elect), BM(NH), has indicated his willingness to assist in the compilation of this Bibliography.

11/. VETTING INPUT.

SUGGESTED: Some vetting of input be done by the Collection Research Units.

12/. NOMENCLATURE REVISION.

AGREED: Entries for input need only record names from labels or registers etc.; revision of the outdated nomenclature that inevitably will be found to be left to specialists for each group of material, working from computer-produced listings.

13/. DELPHIC EFFECT.

AGREED: The inclusion of records in a computerised database can give a spurious authority to doubtful data, therefore all writings from or about the Register must stress the provisional nature of the information.

14/. DATA ENTITIES TO BE RECORDED.

These are given in Schedule 1 (attached).

15/. Messrs. Roberts and Pettitt were asked to produce specific proposals for the rationalisation of these data standards and to suggest designs for suitable input documents.

16/. The Chairman thanked Dr. Corbet for his hospitality and closed the meeting at 1700 hrs.

Charles Pettitt (secretary)

FENSCORE Working Party on Type Specimens Register

SCHEDULE 1, Agreed data entities making up an ideal type/figured specimen register entry.

Extant/non-extant?

Botany/Mineralogy/Zoology?

Recent/Fossil?

Nature of specimen: Type? Figured?

Status if type: Holotype etc.

Taxonomic names found attached to specimen, with status where known.

Collection within which specimen is housed, if kept separately.

Field locality collected from.

Name of Holding Institution and MDA code.

Recorder (and date).

Any previous registered numbers (or accession numbers).

If additional data present, a brief note of its nature.

Source of data (eg. specimen/mss/published work).

Stratigraphy.

Higher Classification (Phylum level or equivalent).

Citation of publications, with indication of relevance.

Note of any unpublished documentation relating to specimen.

Number of specimens.

Form of specimen, including nature of preservation.

Details of field collection (names, date, field note book numbers etc).

Cross reference to associated material.