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NatSCA News

Title: An Introduction To The British Historical Taxidermy Society

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Source: Dunne, M. (2006). An Introduction To The British Historical Taxidermy Society. *NatSCA News*, Issue 8, 9.

URL: <http://www.natsca.org/article/260>

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An Introduction To The British Historical Taxidermy Society **- Martin Dunne**

Martin Dunne and Adrian Sailor founded the B.H.T.S. in 2004. Both founder members being keen collectors of historical taxidermy.

It has been evident for many years that there was no representative body for the collector of taxidermy, particularly those with an interest in the historical aspect.

The Society was soon born. Now up and running it represents the largest group of collectors of historical taxidermy in the U.K. With many members being recognized authorities in particular areas of interest. We are also proud to have Dr. Pat Morris and Christopher Frost as our Patrons, two of the most respected names in the taxidermy fraternity.

The society held its' inaugural meeting at The Natural History Museum, Tring, in November 2005 where members enjoyed a behind the scenes tour and a talk by Pat Morris on the history of taxidermy. This was a resounding success with members attending from all corners of the U.K. who found the museum staff extremely accommodating.

Whilst the Society is still in its infancy, our aims are clear; to provide a forum for collectors of taxidermy, natural history and associated subjects. We aim to promote, preserve and further our knowledge of the subject and its past practitioners.

We are also in the process of forming a society library, which has acquired its first publications through acquisitions and donations.

Our aim in 2006 is to create an archive of ephemera and related material. Plans of a central databank on historical taxidermy, its practitioners past and present are also well in hand. In fact, we are accepting donations both from members and collectors, via the Internet and in traditional paper form.

Looking further ahead, we are assessing the possibilities of creating a B.H.T.S collection of historically important taxidermy. This obviously creates its own problems for a society such as ours, housing and funding such a collection being the most obvious.

We believe all our aims are achievable and with the level of support we have so far enjoyed, we feel the society will at last bring together a much overlooked fragmented pool of information, to one central point benefiting collectors and researchers alike.

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