

SPNHC NEWSLETTER

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SPNHC

ADVANCING COLLECTIONS CARE

**Society for the Preservation
of Natural History Collections**

September 2009
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CollectionsWeb – A Natural History Collections Community Building Project

Hank Bart¹ and Alan Prather²

¹ Tulane University Museum of Natural History, 3705 Main Street, Belle Chasse, LA 70118 USA;
hank@museum.tulane.edu

² Michigan State University Herbarium, 166 Plant Biology Building, East Lansing, Michigan 48824-1312
USA; alan@msu.edu

COLLECTIONSWEB

Building a Community of Natural History Collections

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..... and much more!

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The CollectionsWeb, Natural History Collections Community Building Project is a five-year, Research Coordination Network (RCN) project funded by a grant from the Biological Research Collections program at NSF. Alan Prather, of the Michigan State University Herbarium, is lead Principal Investigator (PI) for the project. Hank Bart of the Tulane University Museum of Natural History is Co-PI. The project is governed by a steering committee and draws core participants from a number of museums and academic institutions (<http://www.collectionsweb.org/about/people.html>). We are also partnering with a number of biological organizations in this important endeavor, including SPNHC, NSCA and AIBS.

The ultimate goals of the project are to increase the base of support for U.S. natural history collections (NHC), and raise the profile of NHC as research resources. The project aims to achieve this through a community building effort, more specifically by opening the lines of communication across different taxonomic collections, among researchers

and other stakeholders who use collections, funding agencies, and administrators of institutions that house collections. The NHC community has been fractured and demoralized of late, due to the steady erosion in staffing and other resources that has plagued the discipline in recent decades. The hope is that a renewed dialog will increase understanding of the value of collections to scientific research, call attention to the perilous state many natural collections are presently in, and increase research use of collections, staffing and support.

The conversation that is being fostered by this project is happening at national, regional and local levels through a series of workshops and symposia, discussions at national meetings, surveys of collections, and other information gathering activities. One of the key information gathering activities of the project is a comprehensive survey of U.S. natural history collections. The survey is modeled after previous Association of Systematics Collections

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(Natural Science Collections Alliance) surveys, and will use the results of previous surveys as baseline for assessing status and trends in the NHC community. The results of the survey will be stored in a database that members of the community will be able to access for information on locations and curators of U.S. NHC, resources, best practices, and a calendar of collection-related meetings. We hope to reach all of the estimated 2,500 U.S. NHC. So, please respond when contacted about the survey.

Two symposia have been held in connection with the project. The first, which dealt with Best Practices in Collections Care and Management, was hosted by SPNHC and held in conjunction with the 2008 NSCA-SPNHC annual meeting in Oklahoma City, OK. The second was a CollectionsWeb and Southeast Regional Network of Expertise and Collections (SERNEC) co-sponsored symposium on Biodiversity Informatics, held at the 2009 annual meeting of the Association of Southeastern Biologists in Birmingham, AL.

Six workshops are planned for the project. The first workshop, held in East Lansing, Michigan, in Spring 2008, dealt with the subject Opportunities and Challenges of Small Collections. Small collections often face staffing and funding challenges unlike those of larger university collections and free-standing museums, and yet small collections often have unique regional foci and the ability to respond to emerging opportunities in ways larger collections cannot. They also reach communities and students not typically reached by larger collections and play a key role in training. The workshop explored strategies for expanding the role of small collections in collection-based research, and for educating curators of small collections about funding opportunities, and digitization and networking.

The second Collections RCN workshop - Enhancing the Interface between Collections and Systematics - was held in Fairbanks, Alaska, in June 2009. The focus of the meeting was increasing communication and collaboration between the systematics community and the collections community. Systematics has enjoyed a resurgence in recent decades due to the explosive development of molecular biology techniques. Taxonomy and collections-based research have waned over the same period. Several widely-circulated reports have documented the fundamental importance of collections and taxonomic research to addressing scientific and societal needs, such as biodiversity discovery, biodiversity loss, global cli-

mate change, and emerging diseases. This workshop developed an agenda and a roadmap for reengaging taxonomists and systematists in collection based research.

The third workshop - New Research Opportunities from Integrating Data Across Different Taxonomic Collections will be held in New Orleans in Spring 2010. The workshop will explore new research opportunities and synergism that can emerge when data are integrated across research collections representing different major groups of organisms. Examples of the kinds of data integration that will be explored include associations among organisms, such as symbionts, parasites and their hosts, plants and herbivores, and environmentally or geographically defined communities (e.g., aquatic organisms, desert biota). The workshop will explore challenges to retrieving data from different kinds of collections and enabling new search criteria (e.g., by association, habitat, geography).

The fourth workshop (planned for the second half of 2010) will explore connections between the collections community and various databasing initiatives. Many NHC have made at least some progress in digitizing their holdings but these efforts are often stand-alone, conducted with local or proprietary software, etc., and have minimal connectivity to other such efforts. This workshop will bring together information specialists to educate the collections community on data management software options, georeferencing tools, database portals, database standards, web services, image and character repositories.

A fifth workshop will explore new strategies for integrating collections into K-12 education and outreach. The sixth and final workshop - Enhancing the Relationships between Collections and Stakeholders – will involve people other than taxonomists and systematists who are important clientele for the information in NHC, namely representatives of state, federal, international and non-governmental organizations, and ecologists and other researchers with strong interests in collections data and specimens.

We encourage the membership of SPNHC to visit the CollectionsWeb web site (<http://www.collectionsweb.org/>), read about project activities and get involved. For more information, contact Alan Prather (alan@plantbiology.msu.edu) or Hank Bart (hank@museum.tulane.edu).

NEWS: CollectionsWeb is excited to work with the Coalition on the Public Understanding of Science (COPUS) in an effort to increase public understanding of the nature of science and its value to society. A key objective of COPUS is to create new forums for communication and to develop new opportunities for engaging the public with science. Participants in COPUS are leading the celebration of Year of Science 2009 — a grassroots celebration of how science works, why science matters, and who scientists are.

This space could be yours.....

SPNHC Newsletter is looking for articles, news items, etc., for the next edition. Articles of 1000 words or less considered. Contact Andy Bentley (ABentley@ku.edu) for information. The deadline for submissions for the next issue is February 1, 2010.

Presidential Report

Rich Rabeler

**Senior Collections Manager and
Assistant Research Scientist**
University of Michigan Herbarium,
3600 Varsity Drive, Ann Arbor, MI
48108-2228 USA



When you read this, it will be September and time for those of us at academic institutions to gear up for another “school year” of activity. As I write this, I find I am still catching up after attending the 24th SPNHC meeting that was hosted by Naturalis and the Leiden University Medical Center (LUMC) in Leiden from 6-11 July 2009.

This was our first SPNHC meeting on the European continent. We had about 230 delegates from twenty-one nations in attendance; not as many as the organizers hoped for but, considering the world economic situation, it has to be considered a successful gathering. The theme “Bridging Continents: New Initiatives and Perspectives in Natural History Collections” included three days of sessions focused on new initiatives (especially in relation to Synthesys and EDIT); integrated pest management; digitization and documentation of collections; moving, storage, and display of collections; and interdisciplinary programs. The second “Best Practices” symposium, one of our deliverables from the NSF-sponsored Research Collection Network headed by Alan Prather (Michigan State University) and Hank Bart (Tulane University), was held, focusing on digitization and documentation. In addition, ten Special Interest Groups (SIGs) met and there were four workshops held on the last day of the conference. Look for more info from the meeting elsewhere in this issue of the newsletter.

The Leiden meeting was important to SPNHC, increasing our stature as an International organization. I was particularly touched when, late on Saturday, an attendee from Estonia came to me and wanted to personally thank the President for bringing the meeting to Europe. While the thanks really go to the Local Committee for taking on the responsibilities of hosting the gathering, the reaction of many of our European colleagues clearly showed an interest in SPNHC that we must both recognize and add more international content to our deliverables. As part of this effort, we will be working hard to schedule meetings outside of North America every 4-5 years – there are a couple of interesting possibilities currently being explored!

The Annual meeting also brings change to people and events in the operations of SPNHC. Two Members-at-Large, Paul Davis (the British Museum) and Deb Trock (California Academy of Sciences) were elected this past year. I wish to recognize Laura Abraczinskas (Michigan State University) who completed her term as a Member-at-Large this year – thanks for your dedication to our group! As noted elsewhere in this issue, nominations are now being received for the 2010 election, which includes the selection of a President-Elect.

There are two changes involving Sessional Committees as well. The Federal Collections Sessional Committee, appointed earlier this year, has a new chair (Christopher Norris) and will meet this September to follow-up on the recent US report on



The **Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections** was formed in 1985 and is recognized as a non-profit organization [501(c)(3)] in the United States. SPNHC members receive *Collection Forum*, a biannual journal of reviewed technical information, and two issues of the *SPNHC Newsletter* each year. The Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections (SPNHC) is a multidisciplinary organization composed of individuals who are interested in development and preservation of natural history collections. Natural history collections include specimens and supporting documentation, such as audio-visual materials, labels, library materials, field data, and similar archives. The Society actively encourages the participation of individuals involved with all aspects of natural history collections.

The **SPNHC Newsletter** (ISSN 1071-2887) is published twice a year, March and September, by the Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections, c/o Division of Ichthyology, Biodiversity Institute, University of Kansas, Dyché Hall, 1345 Jayhawk Boulevard, Lawrence, KS 66045-7505, USA.

Changes of address should be directed to SPNHC Treasurer, Planetarium Station, PO Box 526, New York, NY 10024-0526, USA.

Submissions are welcome. Please forward announcements, articles and notes to the Newsletter Editors by mail or email.

Deadline for the next Newsletter is February 1, 2010.

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Collections within federal agencies. A Treasury Operations Sessional Committee, chaired by Tim White, will examine the operations of the Treasurer with intent to implement efficiencies.

Plans are advancing quickly for the 25th Anniversary meeting in Ottawa. We will be meeting with the Canadian Botanical Association on 31 May - 05 June 2010. Look elsewhere in this Newsletter, as well as the Facebook page they have created, for more information – a website for the meeting itself will debut soon.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Archives Committee

BACKGROUND

The Smithsonian Institution Archives (SIA) houses the archives of SPNHC. From 1993 to 2007, SPNHC deposited 16 groups of material totaling 23.5 cubic feet and spanning the years from 1981 through 2007. Examples of this material include *Collection Forum*, SPNHC newsletters, documentation of annual meetings, financial files, election ballots, member-at-large files, various committee files, videos, CDs, and photographs.

PROCEDURE

The committee receives, lists, and transfers material to the Smithsonian Institution Archives when sufficient quantities accumulate. All material that is deposited within a fiscal year (October 1 through September 30) is assigned the same accession number and housed in the same storage box/unit. Some SPNHC archives need to be re-housed in archival materials prior to transfer to SIA. All material that has been received since the last deposit is currently being held by the committee.

ACCESS INFORMATION

In the last year, two requests were received by the chair for images to be used in the SPNHC Newsletter.

The minutes of the meetings of the editorial group for the upcoming SPNHC book, *Health and Safety for Museum Professionals* (edited by C. Hawks, et. al.), are stored in the archives of the American Institute for Conservation (AIC).

Respectfully submitted,
Linda Hollenberg, Chair

Bylaws Committee

The Bylaws Committee is reviewing the Leadership Manual and the Bylaws of the Society. There are two issues we are assessing: Proxy voting and voting at the Annual Business Meeting. Members have the option of designating an individual to vote on their behalf on issues at the Annual Business Meeting, regardless of whether there is a motion put forth for voting. We will review Robert's Rules of Order and the practices of other societies and organizations, and make recommendations to Council and the membership for consideration.

Respectfully submitted,
Tim White, Past-President

Conference Committee

The year 2008-09 has been a very active year for SPNHC conferences. Following an excellent and memorable conference in Oklahoma City, members of the Leiden Local Organizing Committee pulled together a very exciting program for the 2009 annual meeting (see the 2009 Conference Report in this issue), which brought our members to the second non-North American venue. This was a great opportunity to increase our presence in Europe and attract new members.

In the meantime, preparations for the 2010 meeting in Ottawa are well underway. The dates and location are now set in stone (May 31-June 5, University of Ottawa Campus) and for the first time, SPNHC members will be joined by those of a specialist scientific society, the Canadian Botanical Association. The program is coming together quickly to welcome 400-500 participants to this new "joint conference" experience. The Victoria Memorial Museum Building will also have just fully reopened after completing a 6-year renovation project.

Equally exciting is the fact that several other venues have now been identified for the following annual conferences. We have already received a formal invitation for the 2011 SPNHC Annual Meeting from the California Academy of Sciences in San Francisco. Of course, this will be a wonderful opportunity to see their brand new LEED Platinum building.

Also confirmed is the 2013 meeting at Yale University/Peabody Museum, New Haven, CT. We are currently in contact with strong prospects for the 2012 and 2014 meetings. These venues will also be showcasing new facilities and exhibits. Finally, we are examining the possibility of the next international venue for 2014 or 2015.

Two other important advances were made this year. The preparation of the SPNHC Conference Planning Document, prepared by Gretchen Anderson, was reviewed and edited and should be available shortly to assist future SPNHC annual conference organizers. Parallel to this document is the work done by Marcia Revelez in 2008 for vendors and sponsors. Marcia

agreed to continue her support role and assisted the Leiden local organizing committee in seeking vendors and sponsors. A guideline document will be prepared.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean-Marc Gagnon, Chair

Conservation Committee

Wanted: A chair for the Conservation Committee!

Last May, Victoria Book informed me that she could no longer continue as Chair of the Conservation Committee. Since this committee is at the heart of the mission of SPNHC, we need an enthusiastic volunteer to lead our efforts.

The Committee is "responsible for acquiring, developing, and distributing information to the Society that will promote the long-term preservation of natural history objects and associated materials" (SPNHC Leadership Manual). Currently, there are three subcommittees within the committee:

- Adhesives Historical Research - Jude Southward
- CBoL: Fluid Preservation Research - Andy Bentley
- Resources (Resource Display Units) – Cindy Ramotnik and Kelly Sendall

These people and others within the committee form a strong support group for a new chairperson.

I met with three members of the committee in Leiden and we discussed several ideas for the Committee to consider – focus further on standards for fluid collections; update the RDUs and consider making one for circulation in Europe; work more closely with ICOM-CC; work closely with the Web Committee to improve the conservation resources on the SPNHC website; and creating a standards/terminology subcommittee.

While many of us are not conservators in name, most of us have "conservation" as part of our daily jobs. There's a niche for our activities; several of our European colleagues noted how much they appreciate our efforts!

If "you" are the person we need to lead this effort, drop me an e-mail....

Rich Rabeler, SPNHC President

Documentation Committee

The Documentation Committee met during the 2009 SPNHC Conference in Leiden, The Netherlands.

Small steps have been taken to begin a review of a standardized checklist for such collections procedures as specimen acquisi-

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Membership

Membership applications for Individuals (US\$35), Student, certified (US\$20), Subscription or Library (US\$45), Corporate/Commercial (US\$300) or Institutional (US\$65) may be submitted to:

*SPNHC Treasurer
Planetarium Station
P.O. Box 526
New York, NY 10024-0526
USA*

Be sure to include the following information:

*Name, Discipline Specialty, Institution
Address (Street, City, State/Province, Country, Zip/
Postal Code)
Voice, Fax, E-mail address*

Payment may be made by cheque, money order, Visa or Mastercard.

Membership application/renewal form by portable document (Adobe Acrobat Reader required) and by Word file available at: <http://www.spnhc.org/files/renewal-2008.pdf>.

Life Membership

The SPNHC Life Membership is a special membership category for those interested in the long-term financial stability of our organization. Life membership monies are invested towards the future goals of the Society. SPNHC life memberships are available for US\$875. The fee is 25 times the Individual Membership rate, currently US\$35. Life Memberships may be paid in one of three ways:

- (1) one-time payment of US\$875;
- (2) two-year installments of US\$475/1st year and US\$400/2nd year;
- (3) three-year installments of US\$420/1st year, US\$280/2nd year and US\$175/3rd year.

Please contact the Treasurer should you require further information about life memberships.

Treasurer

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tion, destructive sampling, and dangerous goods transportation. The purpose of these will be to provide generalized resources on the SPNHC website for our members.

The description for the Documentation Committee has been revised for the updated version of the Leadership Manual. We also updated the NHCOLL-L software to improve its usability. Thanks to Larry Gall and Greg Watkins-Colwell at Yale for making this happen!

We are looking for new members!! Please contact Marcy or Liz if you are interested in joining (we are in special need of international members for the Citations Subcommittee).

The Citations Subcommittee has continued to evolve since the last newsletter, keeping us on our toes with changes in the Chair! The new Chair, Larissa Busch, is the Collections Technician at the Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History and is excited to take on this new role in the Documentation Committee! In the meantime, our outgoing Chair, Terri Jordan, will continue to serve on the committee and assist with the citations database setup (see below). Thank you, Terri, for all of your work this past year!

In addition to the bi-annual citations listed in the SPNHC Newsletter, the database of all past citations has been completed (using End Note). We are currently working on compiling a list of common words to make searching easier (we are just now trying to narrow down the natural history terms). These words will be added to the "keywords" section of the database, although you will also be able to search the database by title, author, year, etc. Once complete, we can post this database online for an added resource to all members of SPNHC! Compiling abstracts for the over 1,500 citations is a daunting task, so we may not be able to add these to the database until at least next year.

Respectfully submitted,
Marcy Revelez and Liz Leith (Co-Chairs)

Education and Training Committee

The Education and Training Committee met during the 2009 conference in Leiden, making progress on several fronts. Past and future workshops were discussed. An adhesives workshop is planned for the meeting in Ottawa, and the committee is recommending that a workshop on archival inks and papers be held the following year when we meet in California.

A welcome packet is being developed to promote awareness and interest in SPNHC among new museum studies students. The list of elements is not yet finalized, but Lori Benson will

coordinate development of a collections management bibliography, in coordination with the Publications Committee and the Membership Committee.

The Education and Training Committee will be coordinating with the Mentorship Sessional Committee on that topic.

An aim of the committee has been to develop mechanisms of sharing available expertise with museum studies programs and others through informal and undirected methods. Accordingly, we will be developing occasional case studies for use that pose a scenario. These will refer to a best practice and will outline the steps that were taken to resolve the issue. The committee intends to make these available via the SPNHC website.

Four workshops were held in Leiden: 1) Developing best practices and new standards for fluid preservation; 2) How to prioritize the digitization of natural history specimens; 3) The ultimate label; and, 4) New approaches to and uses for morphological imaging/scanning in a collections context.

Respectfully submitted,
Carol Butler and Jeff Stephenson, Co-Chairs

Finance Committee

It should not be a surprise that with the economic global downturn, SPNHC long-term investments dropped with the market. Please refer to the *Accountants' Review Report and Financial Statements* for specific information. SPNHC will wait for the financial climate to improve before making any major changes. In the meantime, this Committee has identified professional advisors from whom SPNHC may seek formal advice, particularly with our long-term investments. This Committee will seek travel support from Council to bring the SPNHC Treasurer to Northern Virginia to interview potential advisors over the next year.

During last year's First Business Meeting of Council, Council requested that the Finance Committee investigate ways to increase the SPNHC donor stream. It is felt by the Committee that it would be best to hold off from determining methods to increase revenue until Council has formally recognized a purpose. Forthcoming recommendations from the Sessional Committee on Grants and Scholarships may provide a basis to raise funds and/or establish endowments.

The Finance Committee will continue to advise and make recommendations to the Executive Council on matters related to the financial disposition of the organization. We plan to review the financial sections of the Leadership Manual over the next year.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Palmer and Rob Waller, Co-Chairs

Membership Committee

Membership Committee activities during 2009 were many and varied. Highlights include:

- Developed a membership recruitment plan that provides regular, consistent methods that invite museum professionals to join SPNHC;
- Developed and wrote a membership profile page for each of the last two SPNHC Newsletters (and shall continue to write one for each Newsletter);
- Developed an organizational membership kit for distribution to potential members. Our first mailing was sent in mid-summer to US-based undergraduate and graduate museum studies programs;
- Launched the new SPNHC logo (logo developed under the P&O Sessional Committee);
- Reviewed the Membership Committee section of the SPNHC Leadership Manual and added new content;
- Investigated the Institutional Membership Category (see explanation below).

The Membership Committee was asked to investigate the Institutional (=Associate) membership category by SPNHC Council. It was felt that the \$65 rate was low considering that a host organization could offer discounts to numerous individuals under a single Institutional membership. According to our investigation, the Institutional category was historically designed and is currently used by SPNHC for one member of an institution, not many. Because membership discounts at annual meetings are left to the discretion of the host organization and not SPNHC, SPNHC could clarify membership categories in "an explanation of categories" for host organizations. This Committee recommends to Council that the Institutional category should be left as is for the time being. Please refer to the *SPNHC Newsletter* Sept 2008 (volume 22, #2) on page 10 for a chart of membership categories containing a brief description of each category and its benefits.

Tasks for the upcoming year include developing a second column for the *SPNHC Newsletter*, and analyzing membership statistics and trends in light of the pending increase of membership dues (within 2-3 years) as recommended by the former Sessional Committee on Publicity and Outreach. Membership will continue to work with the Treasurer's Office especially to seek professional assistance in collecting member dues. Additionally, the Membership Committee anticipates work resulting from the suggestions of the Sessional Committee on Grants and Scholarships.

Respectfully submitted,
Lisa Palmer, Chair

Publications

The Publications Committee did not meet as a group at the Leiden meeting because many of the members were unable to be there. Chair Jean DeMouthe was not at the Leiden

meeting, so Tim White acted on behalf of the Publications Committee at both Council meetings. One of the critical issues discussed was the ongoing lack of suitable manuscripts for Collection Forum. The Editorial Board met to talk about this, and their members agreed to be more helpful in scouting out new authors and topics. It is hoped that the approaching 25th anniversary will prompt more SPNHC members to become active in the society's publications.

The museum safety book is now in the copy editing stage, and the current schedule is for it to hit print in early 2010. Cathy Hawks has done an amazing job pulling this volume together. It will be an important text for anyone working in museums.

Planning for the revision of both storage books is underway. Rob Waller and John Simmons have offered to act as principle editors, one for each volume. There is a possibility that a grant will be submitted to IMLS for production and other costs.

Respectfully submitted,
J.F. DeMouthe, Chair

Recognition and Grants

Awards serve an important function in a professional organization by providing a means for recognizing individuals who through excellence promote or advance the aims of the organization.

The Recognition and Grants Committee is accepting nominations for the Presidents Award and the Carolyn L. Rose Award. The President's Award is given to a member, or former member, for superior service to the Society, which normally would involve prolonged service to appointed offices, committees, and/or ongoing activities of SPNHC. The Carolyn L. Rose Award (formerly the SPNHC Award) is our Society's highest honor and given to a practitioner (membership not required) whose work and efforts have promoted the values and objectives of the Society. Our Society and community has many individuals worthy of these awards. Please look around your home institutions and consider nominating one of your colleagues or a member who has worked hard to influence the natural history collections community.

In addition to our awards, SPNHC offers the Faber Grant for \$1,000 for innovative research projects that promote the objectives of the Society in collections management, conservation, or other collection-oriented aspects of natural history. This is a great source of funding for students with thesis projects or museum staff with research projects.

Guidelines for nomination of our awards or application for the Faber Grant can be found elsewhere in this issue and on the SPNHC website.

Respectfully submitted,
Tim White, Past-President

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Treasurer

In 2008, the Society's total net assets decreased to \$178,896 from a total of \$202,514 the previous year. Liabilities and net assets for 2008 totaled \$181,306. Operating income was generated from two sources: membership dues, and publication sales. Approximately \$20,400 in membership dues was received. Sales of our four publications brought in approximately \$5,610. A total of \$2,189 was received as unrestricted donations including \$2,089 from the American Museum of Natural History Local Committee.

Eighty-four subscribers, and 370 individuals and associates renewed their membership in calendar year 2008. Of the 566 SPNHC members, 28 joined SPNHC for the first time.

Major expenses for the Society in 2008 were \$7,836 for Collection Forum 22 (1&2), \$3,850 for two issues of SPNHC Newsletter and \$2,167 for work on our website. Election expenses including printing and mailing of the ballots came to \$435. The Membership Committee spent \$376 for travel from Washington, DC, to New York to review recommendations of the P&O Committee. Six hundred and thirty-five dollars from the President's Contingency fund were spent sending a representative to Washington, DC to attend the NPS Biological Collections Forum. The Faber Award in the amount of \$1000 dollars was awarded.

Additional expenses include \$84 by the Archives Committee for photo documentation, and \$150 for annual dues in Heritage Preservation. The Treasurer's Office incurred the following expenses: \$876 for postage and supplies, \$3,602 for insurance, \$507 in merchant fees, and \$3,750 for the 2007 financial review, tax preparation and filing.

Long-term investment funds were consistent with the market; SPNHC investments lost approximately \$26,000 in value and our money market funds and CD earned \$2868 in dividends and interest. For additional information concerning the 2007 finances, please contact the SPNHC Treasurer.

The first part of 2009 has seen good income activity. Thus far, approximately \$18,355 has been received from membership renewals, including approximately 75 library/subscriptions, and 357 individual, student, associate/institutional members, 4 corporate members and 1 life member. Thus far, of the 430 members, 51 are new. Over one hundred-fifty members paying in 2008 have yet to renew in 2009. Please pay your dues on time.

In the first quarter of 2008, sales of all our publications total \$1,503. Once again our donors promise to make 2009 a good year. We have received \$426 in donations. Thank you!

Expenses thus incurred in FY 2009 include \$576 for printing and mailing renewal forms, \$313 in merchant card fees, \$150

for Heritage Preservation dues, \$654 in Election Committee expenses, \$2,646 for Newsletter 23(1), \$2000 for copy editing the Health and Safety volume, \$30 for storage of the negatives of MuseumWise, \$1,148 in Scholarship/Grants Sessional Committee expenses, \$72 for P.O. Box rental. The financial review for 2008 has been performed and taxes filed. The cost was \$4,150. We have reprinted both storage volumes. The cost of this was \$3,228.

The Annual Meeting loan of \$3000 has been made to the Canadian Museum of Nature for 2010. The Society anticipates expenses related to publications during 2009.

Please contact the SPNHC Treasurer for further details.

For their help throughout the year, we would like to extend thanks to Andy Bentley (University of Kansas), James Macklin (Harvard University), Judith Price (Canadian Museum of Nature), Rich Rabeler (University of Michigan), Kelly Sendall (Royal British Columbia Museum), Tim White, Chris Norris and Sue Butts (Yale University). Special thanks to Lisa Palmer for the many phone calls and emails this past year. The American Museum of Natural History Department of Ichthyology provided general office support for the Treasurer.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Brown, Treasurer

Web Committee

Ann Molineux has graciously agreed to be the co-chair of the web committee with James, giving representation for both webmaster and content "master." We are currently investigating a new design for the main pages of the website making use of our new logo. In the Fall there will be a switch over to a new server and an upgrade in software to increase functionality and maintain a stable platform. We are in final testing of our new membership database which will allow members to keep their contact information up-to-date and ultimately, through a log-in system, be able to control the content that they wish to access. We are also in final testing of the new Permit-L forum which will be accessible from the website. Look for an announcement about these new additions in the near future. New content in the works include a page covering museum studies courses, a bibliography and calendar of events.

As always, please send worthy news items or job advertisements to Ann Molineux at annm@austin.utexas.edu. Also, if you are interested in helping to produce or identify content for the website we would love to hear from you.

Respectfully submitted,
James Macklin and Ann Molineux, Co-Chairs



SPNHC

ADVANCING COLLECTIONS CARE

SESSIONAL COMMITTEE REPORTS

Ethics

Since the Ethics Committee is a Sessional Committee without historical precedence, much of the year was spent mapping out a work plan on addressing such a document (e.g., its scope, detail, and general content). The committee contacted the NSCA to inquire about their representative, and will be ready to liaison when one is named. Since the AAM currently does not have a noted contact for the Standards and Ethics Department, several queries were made to various departments inquiring about a possible template for guidelines for an Ethics document. Most of the referrals were to the previous Ethic Codes created by the AAM and guidance from their own history on updating the AAM Code of Ethics.

In the interim, the committee has opportunistically gathered Ethics policies from various organizations and institutions. The committee's first task in the upcoming year is to systematically contact the 15 major societies as defined in the 2007 SPNHC survey, and inquire about any ethics or related documents that might be cogent for this project.

Respectively submitted,
Linda S. Ford, Chair

Long Range Planning

At the 2008 meeting in Oklahoma City, following a review of the 2007 Membership Survey results, the Council decided to focus on five major targets for further development during the year; these items are discussed below. Unfortunately, no actions specific to the Long-Range Planning Sessional Committee (LRPSC) were identified for these items, leading to limited progress for this committee during the year. However, other committees have successfully moved forward several items identified by the LRPSC under these five targets.

- How can we increase our memberships and the benefits of membership?
Significant advances were made by the Membership Committee this year. For more details, see the Membership Committee Report.
- Improving professional development opportunities
The Scholarships and Grants Sessional Committee recommended to Council for the creation of a mentorship program. Accordingly, this sessional committee is now called the Membership Sessional Committee and will work out the details.
- Developing SPNHC as a resource for Best Practices
A Best Practice symposium (Digitization and Documentation) was offered at the 2009 Meeting in

Leiden, as well as a workshop entitled "Best Practices for Fluid Collections".

- Improve our international presence
Many suggestions were presented by Clare Valentine in her 2008 report entitled "Some possible suggestions for how SPNHC can maintain an international association". The former Scholarship and Grants Sessional Committee also submitted a proposal for funding to assist foreign members in attending SPNHC meetings (see the Mentorship Sessional Committee report). The President's report also outlines a number of international participations that are increasing SPNHC profile, taking into consideration some of the recommendations from Clare's report.
- Increase collaborations with other organizations
A couple of organizations in the southeast US, including discipline-specific societies, were contacted with the intent to develop collaborations and reach potential new members. No concrete results to report on so far. Lists of organizations (with survey comments from the 2007 Membership and Community surveys) were extracted and provided to the Membership Committee to increase reach.

During the Leiden Meeting, members of the Long-Range Planning Sessional Committee met and determined that for 2009-10, it would concentrate on developing a vision for the Society, particularly taking into account the Society's role at the international level. The first step will consist in defining the strengths of our Society and formulating a draft vision statement of where we want to see SPNHC in 5-10 years. This document should be circulating later in the fall 2009.

Respectfully submitted,
Jean-Marc Gagnon, Chair

Mentorship

The Sessional Committee had preliminary discussions via email in November of 2008. Information on travel grants and mentorship schemes run by other societies was gathered by members during the early part of 2009. The Committee met at Yale on April 9, 2009. A draft report of this meeting was circulated to Sessional Committee members for comments on April 24th and, after comments and input were elicited from other relevant committees of the Society, the final report was submitted to Council on July 6, 2009. A complete copy of the report will soon be available for download at www.spnhc.org.

The principal recommendation of the Committee, which was approved by Council at the Leiden meeting, was that the Society should move decisively to establish a travel grant scheme to support attendance by student members at annual meetings, funded by the Society but administered by the host committee of the meeting. Details of the scheme will be advertised in the next Newsletter.

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*Continued from page 9:
.....Sessional Committee Reports*

The Committee also discussed the more complex issue of setting up a professional mentorship scheme. It was clear from these preliminary discussions that there were a number of issues that needed to be explored in more depth including the creation of a international support infrastructure, possibly in the form of regional "nodes" for SPNHC, and the use of third-party provider to administer the scheme.

The sessional committee's term was extended for a second year in order to explore these and other issues and the committee was renamed the Sessional Committee on Mentorship to reflect its new focus.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Norris, Chair

WANTED - SPNHC representative for RC-AAM

The Registrars Committee, American Association of Museums (RC-AAM) endeavors to increase professionalism among museum registrars through educational programs and publications, establish standards of professional practice, and create an atmosphere of understanding and respect, of communication and cooperation among registrars, between registrars and other museum professionals, and between registrars and individuals in related service fields.

I recently learned that Elizabeth Merritt, our present representative, is no longer the AAM staff liaison to the Registrars Committee and has requested that we look for another volunteer. This is an important group with which to maintain a tie since they focus on professional standards and practices for museum registrars. SPNHC representatives report on activities to Council and the membership prior to the Annual Business Meeting.

If you are active in both the RC-AAM and SPNHC and would like to help, please drop me an e-mail....

Rich Rabeler, SPNHC President

This space could be yours.....

SPNHC Newsletter is looking for articles, news items, etc., for the next edition. Articles of 1000 words or less considered. Contact Andy Bentley (ABentley@ku.edu) for information. The deadline for submissions for the next issue is February 1, 2010.

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP (SIG) REPORTS

Some very interesting and topical discussions were held during the Special Interest Group meetings at the SPNHC 2009 meeting in Leiden. As these topics were selected by the conference committee due to their timely relevance, I thought it might be of interest to share the discussion and outcomes of these meetings here.

Collection Ownership

Moderator: Carol Butler

A SIG on Collections Ownership issues convened in Leiden, attended by 13 people from six countries to discuss issues associated with registration, changes in expectations regarding collections ownership, and ways we can communicate clearly internationally. Presentations made earlier in the conference touched on common loan forms, issues with deaccessioning, sustainability, and working internationally, all of which served as a good platform for the group. Discussions revealed that most organizations do not have a single person or office dedicated to managing registration. Several people are working with research colleagues who regard the collections they have made as personal property, making it more difficult to document, plan for and generally manage the collections. Many of the participants spoke of managing negotiations and paperwork themselves. Everyone is finding that managing permit documents and procedures, and material transfer agreements is complicated. One person raised the issue of a registrar as an impediment, in that bureaucratic procedures and time lags in workflow affected timeliness in sending loans. The group concluded that SPNHC can assist with these challenges by:

- Posting a toolkit with policy guidance and samples or templates of agreements and forms
- Preparing a glossary of commonly used terms
- Providing a site where members can post their country's regulations that affect ownership
- Create a website to help with resolving old loans

Cultures of collecting...

Moderators: Marieke Hendriksen & Hieke Huistra

Soaking wet and slightly late because of a delayed train, we kicked off our Special Interest Group session on early Friday morning at the SPNHC conference in June 2009. With a group

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SPNHC Membership Profile

We are continuing with our new series: Membership Profiles. Our members play many different roles from collection management and conservation to databasing and informatics to research and education. Most of our members come from a traditional research background while many new members are coming into the field from the museum studies field. Our hope is to introduce our membership to a variety of individuals who are playing very dynamic roles in their museum's activities. We are casting our net broadly and selecting individuals from institutions of all sizes and backgrounds.

SNAPSHOT:

What is your name? Rachel Kaleilehua Malloy

What is your position called? Anthropology Collections Manager

Where do you work? Nevada State Museum, Carson City, Nevada

How many years have you been working in this capacity? 2 ½ years

When did you join SPNHC? 2001



IN-DEPTH:

What drew you to the natural history field? After I graduated with my bachelor's degree in journalism from the University of Texas, I moved to Hawaii and volunteered at the Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum. I loved working at the Museum. The staff was welcoming and the campus was beautiful. I was awed by the enormity and diversity of the collections and was humbled by my proximity to Hawaiian cultural objects. I knew that I wanted to work in museums in order to preserve collections for future generations. After research into different graduate schools and programs, I applied for and was accepted into the Museum Science program at Texas Tech University.

Describe the nature of the collections you work with. The anthropology collection encompasses western United States archaeological and ethnographic collections dating from 10,500 years in age to the present. Ethnographic American Indian collections reflect the Museum's specialization in the Great Basin and neighboring California regions. The Museum is also the state's principal repository for archaeological materials recovered from public lands.

What are your responsibilities for them? I manage approximately two million artifacts located in two curatorial facilities. I am responsible for processing incoming collections, retrieving artifacts/specimens for research or exhibition, and monitoring storage conditions.

Describe some of your activities. We moved the Anthropology collections two years ago and have been waiting for an end to construction to unpack our collections into our new curation areas. We just ordered new cabinets and shelving and hope to move in sometime soon.

What do you find most interesting about your work? The Anthropology Department at the Nevada State Museum has a variety of collections ranging from beautifully crafted Western American Indian basketry to Nevada Pleistocene megafauna. Working with such a diverse collection keeps me on my toes.

What accomplishments are you most proud of? One of my major projects is improving artifact and object storage at the Indian Hills Curatorial Center (IHCC). IHCC is an off-site repository desperately in need of much TLC after decades of benign neglect. We are replacing wooden shelving with metal pallet racks and have placed dataloggers in the storage areas.

What do you find most fulfilling about your work? With the collection move in 2007, we transferred a large portion of the collection from plywood cabinetry into new metal cabinets. We also removed artifacts from acidic housing (i.e., newspaper, mailing boxes) into archival material (i.e., custom-made blueboard boxes). These activities enforce the reason I went into the museum field, long-term preservation of collections.

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.....Membership Profile

What have you learned from SPNHC to be particularly helpful? How has SPNHC helped you?

After I was introduced to SPNHC in 2001 by Ann Pinzl (thanks Ann!), I have attended four conferences and found them invaluable, not only for the technical information, but also for networking. One of my favorite workshops was the IPM Workshop in London. I loved identifying the pests under the microscope and still use the hand-outs as a reference. The list-serve serves as a helpful tool when I require quick advice from other museum professionals.

Amherst Museum of Natural History Rare Find

Preparations for a celebration of the 200th birth anniversary of Charles Darwin at the Amherst College Museum of Natural History prompted a search through the College's library department of Archives and Special Collections. This search yielded a thrilling reward to library and museum staff: a handwritten letter from Charles Darwin to Edward Hitchcock, dated 1845. Hitchcock was the third president of Amherst College, as well as professor of geology and "natural theology" during the mid-nineteenth century, and was an early researcher on dinosaur tracks of the Connecticut River Valley. The letter will form part of a series of joint exhibits between the Museum of Natural History, the Mead Art Museum, the Frost Library and the Biology Department at the College this Fall, marking the 150th anniversary of the publication of *On the Origin of Species*.

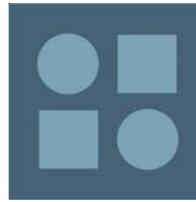
Take home message for exhibit planners: familiarity with archival resources in your institution can be well worth the time spent in the excavation of old documents. This is particularly important during financially limited times when funds may not be available to purchase new materials.

ATTENTION ALL MEMBERS!

We are looking for nominations to fill 4 positions in this year's election.

These are 2 Members-at-Large, President Elect and Secretary. If you have someone in mind, please consider nominating them and send me a name **before October 31, 2009**.

The membership in our Society is growing and changing worldwide. Having strong and effective governance has never been more important!



SPNHC Newsletter Advertising

Why Advertise in the SPNHC Newsletter?

Members of SPNHC are the people who use your products and services. They are often the decision makers about products and procedures that will be used in their institutions. These people want to know about products and services that will help them do their jobs more effectively. They are interested in the latest techniques and materials available, as well as educational and travel opportunities, new publications, and events and programs related to natural history and collections.

All advertisements should be submitted as .tif or .pdf files, formatted for a PC. Ads can be placed in one sixth, quarter, half or full page. It is recommended that image resolution be 300 dpi. Electronic files may be e-mailed (abentley@ku.edu) or sent on a disk to the newsletter editor. Any necessary printer's charges will be billed to the advertiser. Payment must accompany the insertion order and tear sheets will be sent after publication.

There is limited space in each Newsletter (maximum two full pages of advertising total), and space will be allotted on a first-come, first-served basis. Ad placement is at the discretion of the editor. So, do not delay, and post your ad today! More information can be found on the SPNHC website - www.spnhc.org.

COLLECTION FORUM

Manuscripts Needed!!

Have you invented a new way of doing something in your collections? Documented something like a collections move or disaster recovery? Share your expertise and your experiences with your fellow SPNHC members by writing it down and submitting it to [Collection Forum](#), the ideal venue for publishing on natural history and collections topics. Papers can be of any length.

Instructions to authors are available on the SPNHC web site. If you would like to discuss your ideas for possible papers, or if you have one ready to submit, contact the managing editor Jean DeMouthe at (415) 379-5258 or jdemouthe@calacademy.org.

Reviewers Wanted!!

[Collection Forum](#) needs reviewers! Are you willing to read and comment on papers submitted for the SPNHC journal, [Collection Forum](#)? It is an interesting task that will allow you to use your vast knowledge of natural history and collections care for a very worthwhile cause.

If you are interested, please contact Collection Forum managing editor Jean DeMouthe at (415) 379-5258 or jdemouthe@calacademy.org.

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LEIDEN, THE NETHERLANDS

SPNHC
 BRIDGING CONTINENTS 2009

 . naturalis
 LU
 MC
 LEIDEN UNIVERSITEIT MEDISCH CENTRUM

The 24th Annual Meeting of the Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections was held this year in the beautiful city of Leiden, The Netherlands. Birthplace of Rembrandt and home to the oldest university in the country, it is a charming town abounding with history and culture. This city's appeal lies in the peace and picturesque beauty of its quaint streets and canals. It doesn't take long to understand how this city attracted so many artists and scientists and why it's also known as the Key to Discovery.

Hosted by the National Museum of Natural History Naturalis and the Leiden University Medical Center (LUMC), this year's meeting was attended by approximately 225 persons representing more than 20 different countries. As acknowledged by SPNHC President, Rich Rabeler, during the Ice Breaker Reception, there were a lot of new faces at this year's meeting. Only one-quarter of the delegates coming from North America, the meeting definitely reflected this year's theme of bridging continents.

© M.A. Revelez



Anne Frank House

This year's meeting was kicked off with a choice of three excursions to experience the rich culture of Amsterdam, the beautiful coastal areas of the Netherlands, or the extraordinary architecture of the Delta Works that keeps the country safe from storm surges and flooding. The trip to Amsterdam included a view of the city through its beautifully historic canals, with visits to prominent museums such as the Van Gogh Museum and the Rijksmuseum as well as a visit to the Anne Frank House, an intensely emotional experience. The other trips promised a wonderful view of the country's landscape and all who attended each have everlasting memories.

Bridging Continents: New Initiatives and Perspectives in Natural History Collections, could be realized in the program, which began on Wednesday with a wonderful selection of keynote speakers. Dr. Peter Tindemans, Consultant for the Board of the Netherlands Centre for Biodiversity, and Dr. Wouter Los, University of Amsterdam, both gave excellent talks on the future of natural history collections in The Netherlands and Europe, while Dr. Dirk Draulans entertained us with his attempts to explain human behavior through natural selection.

The sponsors and vendors of this year's meeting should be highly praised for their continued support to the organization. Despite the global economic situation, the meeting was endorsed with three platinum sponsors, Delta Designs Ltd., Jeol B.V., and KE Software, and one silver sponsor, Dixon Glass. Ten companies purchased advertising and 13 participated in this year's trade show.

The technical sessions continued on with over 40 oral presentations covering new initiatives and perspectives in natural history collections, integrated pest management, health and safety, disaster planning, digitization, documentation, preservation techniques, moving and storage, and interdisciplinary projects. All of the sessions were exciting and informative and the most difficult part was having to choose which to at-

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.....SPNHC 2009...

tend during the concurrent sessions. The poster session included 32 posters except there were no actual posters to read. This year, the organizing committee introduced a fresh new approach to this session by having each poster transformed into a powerpoint presentation. A sight to see, the room was adorned with 32 individual PC's and one just had to walk around and choose which ones to view. No tired feet this year as there was plenty of room to sit and discuss the poster with the authors – a wonderful idea!



Medical School, Leiden

Four workshops wrapped up the meeting on Saturday. Meeting participants had a choice of attending a workshop on *Developing best practices and new standards for fluid preservation* organized by John Simmons and Dries van Dam with invited speaker Rob Crevecoeur, *How to prioritize the digitization of natural history specimens* organized by Walter Berendsohn and James Macklin, *The ultimate label* organized by Kees van den Bert with invited speaker Gerrit de Bruin, or *New approaches to and uses for morphological imaging/scanning in a collections context* organized by Norman MacLeod with invited speaker Jonathan Krieger. All were wonderful opportunities to expand one's understanding of object care and use.



BBQ on the beach, Wassenaar



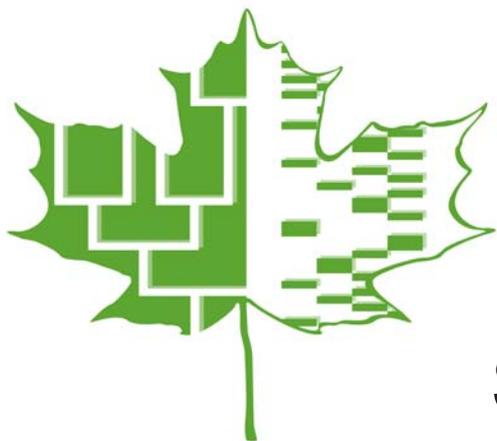
De Valk windmill, Leiden

On to the more important things, the socializing. These opportunities were abundant, beginning with the Ice Breaker Reception held at the Town Hall of Leiden and offered by the Mayor of Leiden and the Board of Leiden University. Appetizers consisted of some enticing Dutch foods including delectable cheeses and breads, and an interesting spread called Filet Americain, which is not a filet or anything American. It is essentially raw meat ground to the consistency of mashed potatoes. This year, the society was treated to a special event, a BBQ on the beach, offered by Naturalis, at the Strandhuys De Gouden Bal, in Wassenaar. Despite the wind and cooler temperatures everyone had a great time. Whether paddling in the North Sea, walking on the beach, or standing in line to get drinks and food, there was plenty of good conversation and laughs to be had. The congress banquet reflected this year's theme of *Bridging Continents* offering a cornucopia of food representing cuisines from Europe, India, Africa, and America. It was held at Het Arsenal in Leiden, a spacious sky-lit room filled with beautiful eye-catching decorations to match the different continental food stations. The festivities carried on into the night with an open bar and the dancing talent of its members to great music including a small tribute to Michael Jackson. Is there anyone out there who can't dance to "Thriller"?

Whether sightseeing, strolling along the canals while eating herring, visiting one of the 12 museums, or sitting with friends and having drinks with chips and mayonnaise, SPNHC members experienced a spectacular time in Leiden. The local organizing committee should be congratulated for putting together a fantastic meeting. Despite the economy, this year's meeting opened the door to an audience of museum professionals from around the globe. It was a unique opportunity to understand that we all share a common goal as stewards of natural history collections and that we all face the same challenges.

Marcy Revelez & Janet Braun
Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History

(see back page for more images from SPNHC 2009)



Biodiversity 2010 and Beyond Science and Collections

2010 SPNHC & CBA-ABC Joint Conference

www.SPNHC-CBA2010.org

May 31 – June 5, 2010

The *Canadian Museum of Nature* is looking forward to hosting the **Joint Conference of the Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections (SPNHC) and the Canadian Botanical Association (CBA) / L'Association Canadienne de Botanique (ABC)** in Ottawa, Ontario, Canada, from **Monday May 31 to Saturday June 5, 2010**. The event will celebrate the 25th annual meeting of SPNHC, and their first collaboration with a specialist scientific society such as CBA/ABC. Members of the Consortium of Northeastern Herbaria will also be joining us.

To mark the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Convention on Biological Diversity target of achieving a significant reduction in the current rate of loss of biological diversity by 2010, our meeting theme is related to our common interest in Biodiversity and Collections.

The Meeting will be held on the University of Ottawa Campus, with the focal point being Tabaret Hall, built in 1905. At the Icebreaker Soirée and almost every health break during the conference, the anticipated 400-500 attendees will enjoy the lovely Chapel, the impressive rotunda and the spacious lawn in front of the building. Technical sessions and symposia will be held in brand-new, state-of-the art auditoriums in the Desmarais Building, located just behind Tabaret Hall.

The University of Ottawa is located right next to the core of downtown Ottawa, along the Rideau Canal, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Strategically situated within walking distance to Parliament Hill and many cultural, culinary, and touristic spots in town (e.g., http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Byward_Market), you and your friends will have an unforgettable time. And let's not forget the great diversity of drinking holes...

The conference program will include a keynote address, followed by a plenary session, and concurrent technical sessions and symposia for all participants to attend. Of course, you won't want to miss the field trips, workshops, a visit to the newly renovated Victoria Memorial Museum Building, and the banquet.

For further information, including registration details, log on to www.SPNHC-CBA2010.org (expected to go online in early fall 2009). You can also join us on the **Facebook** group "*SPNHC 2010 Annual Conference*" to get up-to-date information.



The e-Biosphere '09 International Conference on Biodiversity Informatics, London, 1 - 3 June 2009: a report for SPNHC

Richard C. Sabin

Natural History Museum, Cromwell Road, London SW7 5BD, UK; r.sabin@nhm.ac.uk

Introduction and overview

The e-Biosphere '09 conference at The Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London, brought together speakers and poster presentations from 49 countries across the globe. There were 496 conference delegates in attendance, plus a host of exhibitors and other contributors who set out their stalls in the smartly designed 'Street Fair' area.

The conference was primarily intended to highlight the current achievements in Biodiversity Informatics, and to discuss strategies for the development of what is essentially a new and rapidly growing discipline. Biodiversity Informatics was defined by the organisers as: a "field that brings information science and technologies to bear on the data and information generated by the study of organisms, their genes, and their interactions." In effect, they are describing the sciences and mechanisms concerned with gathering, manipulating, storing, retrieving, classification and distribution of recorded information derived from the broader study of organisms (including taxonomy, morphology, genetics, ecology, behaviour, etc.). This, they state "is creating unprecedented global access to information on biological species and their role in nature."

The first of two keynote addresses was given by Cristián Samper, Director, National Museum of Natural History, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, DC. The address began with a description of the vast (estimated) number of natural history specimens collected which are held worldwide – between 1.5 and 2 billion specimens. In addition, he stated that around 300 million pages of biological literature had been written, and that whilst much of the biological capacity and information is held in a few developed countries, the major areas of biodiversity are in developing parts of the world. The talk highlighted the importance of museums and museum scientists; that, through the study of their collections, they can help to identify areas where biodiversity mapping needs to be focused, carry out surveys and collect important data which can be used in the study of climate change. He emphasised that by working with people locally and helping them to manage their collections, it helps to develop an understanding of biodiversity by the people who live there.

The second keynote address was given by Sandy Knapp, Senior Researcher, Department of Botany, The Natural History Museum, London. She discussed the importance of possessing knowledge of biodiversity, which amongst other things gives people the ability to act effectively on conservation issues. She stated that the museum world (collections) represents a huge infrastructure for the study of global biodiversity,

to be used for the 'communal' study of taxonomic information. Think globally and act locally has been the mantra for conservation work in the past 10 years. Sandy is of the belief that the opposite should be true – think locally and act globally. It is her belief that by starting out simple (with data collection) and moving to the complex, this encourages greater buy-in from people and that this is how data gathering must be presented to society.

A discussion panel comprising seven leading organisations gave outlines of some of the largest and most important initiatives in Biodiversity Informatics. The panel had representatives from European Distributed Institute of Taxonomy (EDIT), Atlas of Living Australia (ALA), Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF), FishBase, Encyclopedia of Life (EoL), International Barcode of Life Project (iBoL) and Catalogue of Life. Whilst it was acknowledged during the panel discussion that certain organisations were acting as a lower-level infrastructure for others, comments made by the representatives made it clear that there were areas of overlap and possible duplication of effort that needed to be addressed.

Some key issues identified by the conference

- The need for continued development of standards and tools for data gathering.
- The need to leverage established groups such as GBIF and EoL, to build awareness of and access to data, information and tools.
- Requirement for the acceleration of digitisation of information (including more digitisation of museum collections – greater quantity and greater quality).
- Protection of intellectual property rights – acknowledgement of data sources.
- The linking of information across scales and disciplines/domains (e.g. ecological data, genomic data).
- The integration of specimen and observational data.
- The need for open, honest, full and genuine collaboration.
- The need to communicate to key audiences (not just the scientific community).
- To build data that can help inform both scientific research and policy-makers (e.g. ALA).
- The need to mobilise data and make them more widely available (e.g. GBIF working with IUCN).
- The need to build capacity for bioinformatics, allowing full participation in global biodiversity studies, from indigenous groups to scientific institutions.

- The need to write more algorithms to allow for the computerised/automated searching of websites for relevant data (e.g. EoL Global Names Index).
- As long as biodiversity informatics 'just does' biodiversity, the discipline will be underfunded and undervalued.
- The need for inclusivity and to help address the digital divide (lack of access to technology) in developing countries.
- The need to develop a set of 'benefits of use' cases to promote biodiversity informatics.
- Data publication needs to be a community expectation, e.g. mandatory and rapid, for data submitted to GenBank, etc.

Most speakers highlighted the need to involve local people/indigenous groups/the general public in biodiversity activities, to encourage buy-in and to help promote the importance and relevance of biodiversity studies. However, the overriding feeling one is left with having attended the e-Biosphere conference, is that this is a group of extremely talented, driven and ambitious individuals/organisations that are very much trying to define their discipline, its direction, objectives and initiatives.

Items of specific interest (relating to natural history collections) highlighted by break-out group discussions

- Effective 'cyber-taxonomy' requires that all type specimens be available in digital form, preferably in 3D.
- All type specimens will have to provide full genome sequence data.
- More server space is required for output molecular sequence data (note: the conference was informed by a representative from GenBank that they are currently working on developing server space for the storage of output data from next-generation sequencing platforms, such as Roche 454).
- Published papers must be entirely accessible and searchable, including the data, metadata and appendices (where much of the 'useful' information often sits).
- Citizen science:
 - Engage the public through education and citizen science.
 - Develop public-engaging terminology (e.g. citizen naturalist).
 - Design and market an educational campaign to build public awareness of biodiversity and bioinformatics.
 - Create and promote joint international biodiversity citizen science weeks, embedded in the existing biodiversity informatics infrastructure.
 - Turn citizen scientist (naturalist) events into educational activities.
 - Build social communities focussed on citizen science activities.

Summary and the future: SPNHC as a guiding force?

Whilst medium to long-term funding concerns were expressed by almost all of the major organisations in attendance at the conference, it was clear that biodiversity informatics is beginning to find its feet as a cohesive, inter-disciplinary area of study, and is expecting to play a major role in informing policy-makers both at local and global levels. Given the diversity of expertise, excellence and breadth of knowledge contained within the SPNHC organisation, should we not engage with the key players in this emerging discipline and offer our guidance? For example:

- *The Development of Biodiversity Informatics and the Continuing/Future Role of Natural History Collections* as a possible theme for a future SPNHC meeting?
- That SPNHC could/should enter into discussions with the major biodiversity informatics organisations to offer guidance and help manage their expectations of issues such as:
 - The effective digitisation of type specimens (e.g. by highlighting those initiatives already ongoing/planned in museums, etc.).
 - The issues/factors/variables surrounding extraction of genomic data from ALL type specimens (e.g. effects of age, storage environment, preparation/preservation 'contaminants', etc.).
- SPNHC to co-ordinate international 'citizen scientist' activities?
- Should the next e-Biosphere conference (in 4 years?) be co-hosted by SPNHC?

My attendance of the e-Biosphere '09 conference was funded by SPNHC. I am extremely grateful for having been given this opportunity.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS FOR PRESIDENT'S AWARD AND CAROLYN B. ROSE AWARD

The Recognition and Grants Committee is requesting nominations for the President's Award and the Carolyn L. Rose Award. The President's Award is presented to a member, or former member, whose activities have furthered the objectives of the Society through outstanding committee work, prolonged officer roles, or promotion of activities of the Society. The Carolyn L. Rose Award (formerly the SPNHC Award) is our Society's highest honor and given to a practitioner (membership not required) whose work and efforts have promoted the values and objectives of the Society. Nominations should include a letter of nomination, a current curriculum vitae, and letters of recommendation. Questions and nominations should be directed to the Chair of the Recognition and Grants Committee, Tim White (tim.white@yale.edu), and must be submitted by January 1, 2010.



Agreement Signed between NPS and AMNH to Aid Research on Endangered Species

National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior

Office of Communications and Public Affairs, 1849 C Street NW, Washington, DC 20240

The American crocodile, the Channel Islands fox, and the Hawaiian goose are just a few of the endangered species that could benefit from a partnership established between the National Park Service and the American Museum of Natural History.

Surrounded by liquid nitrogen-cooled storage vats in the Museum's Ambrose Monell Collection for Molecular and Microbial Research, scientists and curators from the National Park Service and the Museum celebrated the creation of the National Park Service Special Collection which will house frozen tissue samples containing DNA of threatened and endangered animals found in parks.

The five-year renewable agreement provides the National Park Service with the Museum's specialized expertise and technologically advanced storage facilities. The overall Monell Collection, launched in May 2001, will eventually house approximately one million frozen tissue samples representing the DNA of a wide range of species. Potentially the largest and most comprehensive initiative of its kind, the Museum's frozen tissue collection supports a broad range of research by offering an accessible repository of frozen tissue specimens.

"This partnership with the American Museum of Natural History will provide researchers with a uniform method to collect, analyze and store genetic material collected in parks," said acting National Park Service Director Dan Wenk. "It will be a great asset to our Endangered Species Program which works to stabilize and restore 397 federally listed threatened and endangered species in 195 national park units."

The Endangered Species Act of 1973 deems that all federally listed threatened and endangered species be restored to the point where they are again viable, self-sustaining members of their ecological communities. To effectively manage existing populations of these species, parks need data about these populations, their genetic relationships, and movements on the land over time.

Researchers collect the tissue samples under controlled conditions using kits that the Museum provides. Documented specimens, packed in special equipment, are shipped to the Museum, where they are housed in cryogenic storage in liquid nitrogen cooled vats, at temperatures below -150°Celsius. The Museum will make the samples available to researchers, consistent with National Park Service requirements, for a range of comparative genetic studies that investigate how park populations change over time. In a time of massive species loss, such efforts are essential in order to preserve as comprehensive a record as possible of the earth's biodiversity.

The National Park Service sites with the most threatened and endangered species that are currently federally listed, as of October 1, 2008, are Golden Gate National Recreation Area (29), Point Reyes National Seashore (28), Hawaii Volcanoes National Park (24), Channel Islands National Park (24), Haleakala National Park (23), Redwood National and State Parks (21), Canaveral National Seashore (21), Everglades National Park (18), Biscayne National Park (17), Natchez Trace Parkway (9), and Kalaupapa National Historical Park (9).

Channel Islands fox blood is expected to be among the first deposits into the new National Park Service Special Collection. Previous DNA analysis showed that each island in the Channel Islands has evolved distinct fox subspecies. When it was necessary for Channel Islands National Park to establish a captive breeding program because of the threat from golden eagle predation, DNA analysis was used to calculate relatedness and minimize inbreeding. By 2008, reproduction and survival of wild fox populations on San Miguel, Santa Rosa, and Santa Cruz Islands reached about 650 foxes, allowing the cessation of the captive breeding and release program. Long-term storage of samples will allow NPS to monitor whether these and other isolated park populations are retaining genetic variation.

http://www.amnh.org/science/papers/monell_nps.php

CALL FOR THE 2010 FABER GRANT PROPOSALS

The Recognition and Grants Committee is requesting proposals for the Faber Grant, a cash grant of up to \$1000, to support a project addressing issues on the management, care, conservation, or use of natural history collections. Applicants for the Faber Grant must be SPNHC members in good standing for at least one year prior to the award date. The successful applicant will be expected to 1) present a final or interim report at the Annual Meeting of the Society and 2) publish the results, with the understanding that the manuscript will be sent first to the SPNHC Publications Committee for first right of refusal.

Each applicant may submit only one proposal per funding period. The cover sheet should include a project title, name(s) of project personnel (including title, address, phone/fax numbers and email), and a single line spaced 100 word abstract describing the proposed project. The proposal text should in-

clude a statement of purpose, project plan (e.g., participants, methods, materials, schedule of completion, etc.), and proposed use of funds. The text should have one inch margins, 10-12 characters per inch, and double line spacing. The application, including cover page, should not exceed 10 pages. Curriculum vita of the principal investigator and letters of commitment may be single line spaced and attached as an appendix.

Questions and proposals should be directed to the Chair of the Recognition and Grants Committee, Tim White (tim.white@yale.edu) and must be submitted by March 1, 2010.

Collections Storage Gets a Facelift at Burke Museum

FEMA Grant Funds Geology and Ethnology Collections Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture.

Millions of objects and specimens from the ethnology and geology collections at the Burke Museum will be moved into new storage units over the next two years. The renovation of collections storage areas is funded through a Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) Hazard Mitigation Grant, a special project geared to reducing potential seismic damage to the important collections housed at the Burke.



Ethnology staff struggle to care for large objects stored on open shelving. Compactors will replace the shelving and improve accessibility. Courtesy Burke Museum.

More than half of the geology collections, ranging from dinosaur bones to fossil flowers, will be moved into the new compactors. The entire textile collection, contemporary Northwest Coast print collection, and the Steinman collection will be moved from shelving onto the compactor units. The Steinman Collection encompasses over 400 pieces of contemporary Native American art, including 132 masks, argillite sculptures, bowls, rattles, and boxes. Ethnology and geology

collections will be closed to visitors during the renovation project. Transferring objects from open shelves to storage compactors will not only prevent earthquake damage but also protect valuable objects from long-term degradation due to light and dust. Compactors also increase the efficiency of utilized space, allowing more objects to be protected.

"This funding supports our goal of working to make the collections safer, both for people and for the objects," says Ron Eng, geology collections manager. The Burke Museum is home to world-class collections and research on the cultural and natural heritage of Washington State.

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of about fifteen specialists from Spain, the UK, Belgium, the US, the Netherlands and Italy, we discussed the cultural historical value of natural history collections and how this could and should be taken into account in preserving and presenting these collections. We did so by suggesting positions and by asking the participants for practice based input.

After some discussion about the term 'cultural historical value', it was generally agreed that almost any object or data can be historical, as they all document specific places or points in time. However, whether something has cultural historical value is a question often answered differently by scientists and historians. As many institutions do not have a policy to determine cultural historical value, the valuing process often comes down to institutional or even individual decisions. Some participants suggested it might be a good thing to develop decision models and criteria to define cultural historical significance, although others thought the professionalism of the curators and institutions themselves was sufficient to guarantee sound decision making.

Most participants agreed that we have a professional obligation to stimulate research and acknowledge the cultural historical value of natural history collections, although some felt more passionately about this than others. Moreover, enabling public access to collections, especially the unknown or seemingly unimportant parts, and stimulating interdisciplinary research, was considered an integral part of the curating job by the participants. Last but not least, the group concluded a lack of time and money to research and preserve cultural historical valuable parts of collections was the most important reason these parts of natural history collections were sometimes undervalued.

Destructive sampling

Moderator: Clare Valentine

The first issue we discussed was whether or not material be-

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ing sent for destructive sampling was to be treated in the same manner as a loan. The consensus was that it was, as by using the same administrative procedures for tracking the samples you are then able to trace the borrower and try to ensure that there was some sort of return - be it an unused sample, modified aliquot, GenBank number or copy of the publication in which the sample is cited. We also considered how you decide when to send samples. It was felt that the onus was on the borrower to prove they had a track record and that their technique had worked before. We considered whether, in addition to submitting a loan request form and the borrower signing up to the institution's terms and conditions, SPNHC members should work together to develop some sort of scoring sheet to help with the decision making process and perhaps go some way to standardising it.

There followed a discussion of the major problem with return of any of these items - particularly problems with researchers not adding full museum specimen details when entering data into GenBank, making tracing the sample back to the museum specimen almost impossible. The group wondered if SPNHC could effectively lobby editors of key journals to ensure that instructions to authors include the requirement of at least a museum registration number added to every GenBank entry. Similarly, it was felt that GenBank should be contacted to see if there was a mechanism to ensure the link between sequence information and specimen is maintained. It may be this needs to be done by the Museum that owns the specimen in order to notify the owner when sequence data and a registration number are recorded.

Some of the worst offenders for return of data or samples are the various Barcoding projects which have requested literally thousands of samples and not responded to any requests from the owner institutions for details of results (or lack thereof). Members of the group felt a response giving details of a sample not yielding results was just as important for future reference, particularly when you are asked for the same or similar samples. This information would allow staff to build on the preparation and preservation methods, particularly of historical material, that worked or did not, so that in future they would know if a specimen was worth sampling at all.

There was also a discussion about whether or not to charge for staff time as taking samples is so time consuming. Some institutions already do this, others were thinking about it. All agreed that staff should be the ones to sample as they knew the specimens best and should therefore control how and where samples were taken. Some institutions were even able to do the preparation of the aliquot and then send that to the borrower for analysis.

When returning samples, the borrower needs to be given better instructions about how to label it. Members of the group who had experience of this, worried whether the information was accurate. There were also issues about where the re-

turning specimen should be deposited. Does it sit with the original specimen or if you have a centralised frozen tissue facility, is it deposited there? This then led to a discussion of whether the sample was given the same registration number as the original (voucher) specimen from which it was taken, and how you link the two. Several solutions had been arrived at. One institution gave the sample a different number but linked it to the voucher specimen in the database. Another which uses KE EMu linked the sample as a child record to the parent record of the voucher specimen.

One very interesting point that was raised by an entomologist in the group was that these new techniques were generating huge numbers of samples that were almost too much to cope with when returned.

Developments in Fluid Preservation

Moderator: Simon Moore

Conversation at this Special Interest Group meeting (which was especially well attended, highlighting the need for further such interactions) focused mainly on the news that the EU potentially plans a ban on formaldehyde.

"Several European countries restrict the use of formaldehyde, including the import of formaldehyde-treated products and embalming, and the European Union is considering a complete ban on formaldehyde usage (including embalming), subject to a review of List 4B of the Technical Annex to the Report from the Commission to the European Parliament and the Council on the Evaluation of the Active Substances of Plant Protection Products by the European Commission Services. Countries with a strong tradition of embalming corpses, such as Ireland and other colder-weather countries, have raised concerns. The European Union decided on September 22, 2007 to ban formaldehyde use for embalming purposes throughout Europe due to its carcinogenic properties." Wikipedia and various other web sources...

Discussions in Leiden centered on the chemical and hazardous properties of formaldehyde, its various uses within our realm and further afield, and potential substitutes for its chemical action of fixation. As shown above, the main impetus of this ban appears to be the embalming trade and they are fighting this proposed ban vigorously.

Most alternatives to formalin are at least equally likely to induce allergy/auto-immunity – it is an inherent risk with any true, cross-linking fixative, as is the possibility of mutagenesis (and hence carcinogenesis). It is doubtful if any true fixative can be wholly free of such risks. Many other substances are currently being investigated and some have been mooted

as preservatives (only) but still requiring a primary fixation stage using 10% formalin. If formalin is withdrawn from museum fluid-preserved collections then a vital tool will have been lost.

Suggestions for moving forward included:

- Seeking an existing alternative (that is less hazardous).
- Obtain funding from the EU to promote research into new alternatives.
- Lobby the necessary Departments/Legislative bodies to allow regulated use of formaldehyde in museum preservation.
- Enlist the help of EDIT.

Finding the original legislation has proved to be a daunting prospect and this would seem to be a logical first task before any hard work is initiated. It does not appear as if a similar ban is imminent in other countries (USA, Africa) but this may be a sign of things to come unless some more universal action is taken now.

Integrated Pest Management

Moderator: Suzanne Ryder

The Integrated Pest Management (IPM) special interest group was made up of approximately 15 people from across the globe all with varied backgrounds in IPM. We had people new to the job looking for advice and ideas as to how to start an IPM programme, conservators and collection managers in charge of existing programs and two IPM consultants interested to hear what other people are doing in this subject.

This mixed group were all looking to gain information and advice to help them improve existing IPM programs by sharing experiences on control, treatments, training as well as storing and sharing data collected. A fruitful discussion provided three key resources from information on all aspects of IPM:

www.nrm.se/premal
www.museumpests.net
www.collectionstrust.org.uk

Measuring Once and for All

Moderator: Till Töpfer

Measuring natural history objects is a basic procedure of scientific data collection. Due to the variety of objects and the respective research approach there is also a large diversity in measurements and methods. Information on methodologies is scattered in literature and sometimes hard to find. Furthermore, even if measurements are published or are noted on the specimens' labels, it is often not indicated how these mea-

surements were taken. So, any later study may be faced with problems of data replicability and comparability.

The major aim of this first meeting of the SIG was to discuss whether it might be useful to develop a common standard for measuring zoological specimens and how such recommendations could be disseminated. As an example, the current handbook project of the German Ornithologists' Society (Deutsche Ornithologen-Gesellschaft) on bird measuring was presented in detail. By doing so, the different premises and requirements in terms of content and presentation could be nicely discussed. Another important point was the storage of measurement data with the specimens and how such data could be indicated unmistakably on a label. Again, the bird measuring book offered a useful solution with a set of unambiguous abbreviations.

To summarise, the meeting led to the following results:

- Since there is obviously no general standard for measuring in the different fields of zoology, a common guideline for each of the disciplines is highly desired.
- To meet the requirements for paleontologists as well, measurements of internal body structures (viz. osteological characters) should be considered, too.
- As regards completeness, a reasonable number of commonly used methods should be compiled for each group by the respective specialists. More specific methods can be added on occasion.
- In order to provide a broader forum for discussion on these subjects, a website should be established in the near future.
- With respect to time and publication costs, dissemination of guidelines could be realised as pdf leaflets to be downloaded from the website.

To date, there is no common agreement on how to file measurement data best. This point remains open to further discussion. Moreover, according to the participants' scientific background mainly thoughts and opinions concerning vertebrates were exchanged. Therefore contributions by specialists of any other field of zoology are highly welcome!

Scientific Loan Policy

Moderator: Richard C. Sabin

Three main areas were identified by SIG members for discussion:

1. Problems with retrieval of overdue loans:
 The issue of overdue loans was identified as a major source of concern for SIG members. Most agreed that staff often had little time available to pursue overdue loans, and that 'incentives for return' in the form of robust scientific loan policies should be in place. Generally, SIG members were in favour of

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the idea of a 'blacklist' or enforcement of sanctions against those individuals/institutions who fail to return loaned material. SIG members supported the idea of a shared online list of offenders, which could be accessible to the SPNHC membership, allowing institutions to see who the worst offenders were. An associated forum could allow the exchange of notes on issues related to overdue loans.

2. Museum loans being seized and held by border control authorities:

SIG members discussed the creation of an online resource which would give details country-by-country of known restrictions and regulations (other than IATA Dangerous Goods) relating to transit of scientific loans across international borders. Most members thought that this would be a valuable resource, though maintenance of up-to-date information could be an issue, given the often 'fluid' nature of border control regulations in some parts of the world. It was agreed that shared knowledge of 'difficult' borders would be an advantage.

3. Museums' charging for scientific loans:

Charging borrowers for scientific loans was not supported by SIG members, though it was widely acknowledged that costs of preparation and dispatch of loans could be high. SIG members agreed that charging may preclude loan requests from less well-resourced institutions who may not be able to meet the costs. The group went on to discuss the process of loan preparation, primarily regarding materials used for packing and transit. SIG members would like to see the development of an online resource which listed recommended packaging materials for different types of scientific specimens.

SIG members were offered the opportunity to contact the moderator to receive copies of the NHM's loan policies for reference purposes. Continuing discussion was planned post-meeting via email.

Software Toolkit...

Moderators: Amanda Neill and Jason Best

Participants of the somewhat misnomered SIG 3, "Software Toolkit Demonstration Session," were ideally self-selected, as they registered for this SIG apparently in hopes of seeing a demonstration of software. The true intention of forming this SIG was to generate discussion about planning a viable forum at the 2010 conference for the many software/web applications available to collections managers and others with a need to manage collections/biodiversity information. These products include collections/transaction management software, georeferencing web-based applications, and programs for analysis of data/images, among others. Few SPNHC members have personally experienced or used more than one or two of any of these products, but as these digital tools be-

come ever more necessary, we are all interested to know more about them and evaluate them for our own use.

The average SPNHC attendee is aware of several products relevant to their work, has probably seen some demonstrated at vendor tables, or has seen a PowerPoint about some of these in actual conference sessions. Yet vendor tables and private demonstrations reach only a few SPNHC meeting attendees. Presented conference papers on these products usually do not entail actual live demonstrations. The SIG concluded that the current, disparate modes of product presentation at conferences prevent potential users from obtaining any real feeling for the complexity or utility that these products may present. The general format of conference sessions may have also served to discourage presentations of a purely demonstrative nature.

We propose a new session for SPNHC 2010 (and future conferences if successful) in the spirit of those "un-conferences" that arose in the last few years from the need for rapid, live technology demonstrations—variously known as FooCamps, BarCamps, or DemoCamps. Though the audience at these "camps" would traditionally consist of venture capitalists looking for the next hot product to back financially, the SPNHC audience presents a room full of potential "customers" in the same way - customers who want to see how these products really work and evaluate them for institutional or personal use. The typical, strictly-timed format of a DemoCamp gives each presenter only 10 minutes for a presentation plus 5 minutes for questions. And the primary rule is: No PowerPoints. Only live demonstrations of functional software or applications are allowed. SIG attendees expressed interest in the possibility of attending subsequent break-out sessions or workshops after the DemoCamp session, to learn more about whichever product they found most appealing.

If you represent or would like to demonstrate live software or web apps relevant to SPNHC members, be on the lookout for a "call for demonstrations" for SPNHC 2010 in Ottawa, Canada.

More input is needed from SPNHC members on an appropriate and fair selection process, since it is expected that more abstracts will be submitted than the available number of spots in this session. If you are interested in joining a DemoCamp Committee to help work out the details of the selection process and the presentation format, please contact Amanda Neill.

Position Announcements

If you would like to submit job descriptions, please send postings to the Newsletter Editor. See the SPNHC web site, www.spnhc.org, for current postings.

Collections Manger, Mineralogy Division, Peabody Museum of Natural History, Yale University: The Yale Peabody Museum of Natural History is seeking to fill the position of Collections Manager in the Division of Mineralogy. An abstract of the advertisement for the position is given

below. We are looking for someone with a M.S. (Ph.D. preferred) in systematic mineralogy and petrology with museum experience, the relevant management skills and who has research interests related to collections development. Information on the Peabody Mineral collection can be found at: <http://www.peabody.yale.edu/collections/min/index.html>.

Please note that applications must be submitted via the following web site: <http://www.yale.edu/hronline/stars/application/external/index.html>. Use the keyword "Peabody" to go directly to the relevant information.

The due date is October 7, 2009. Please contact Mineralogy Curator-in-Charge Jay Ague (jay.ague@yale.edu) for any further information about this position. Thanks for your interest in this position or for spreading the word.

Duties and Responsibilities: Responsible for the day-to-day management of the Yale Mineralogy and Petrology collections, including all aspects of the preservation, improvement, development and use of the collections. Duties include oversight of relevant budgets, staff, students, and volunteers, maintenance of the collections, processing of materials, care and conservation, documentation, and databasing. The Collections Manager will represent the Mineralogy Division within the Peabody and Yale, nationally, and internationally, to promote the collection and to maximize its use. She/he will also promote knowledge of the collection through exhibitions and public education initiatives, and will pursue grant funding and carry out research that relates to collections improvement and development, including, as appropriate, collecting expeditions.

Collections Assistant at the Paleontological Research Institution, Ithaca, NY: Description: Pending final approval, The Paleontological Research Institution (PRI) has been awarded a National Science Foundation grant for the installation of compacted storage units and the reorganization, curation, and beginning computerization of PRI's non-type systematic mollusk collection, which will facilitate its long-term use by the scientific community. The position will include curation of the non-type systematic mollusk collection and entering specimens into PRI's collections database. The Collections Assistant will also be responsible for interns and volunteers on this project.

Qualifications: The successful candidate will be an individual who takes initiative, is able to work and make decisions independently, has an understanding of museum/archival methods and understands the mission of PRI. The candidate should possess strong organizational, written, and oral communication skills as well as competency in principles of systematics and taxonomy. A Master's degree (or higher) in paleontology, systematic biology, or related discipline is required. Experience with molluscan systematics a plus.

About the organization: The Paleontological Research Institution (PRI) was founded in 1932 as a local research based non-profit. Our collection includes two to three million specimens and is among the ten largest and most scientifically important invertebrate fossil collections in the United States. More information about PRI can be found at <http://www.museumoftheearth.org>.

Applications: Applicants should send a cover letter, a resume/CV, and a list of three references (including address, phone number, and e-mail address). Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

Museum Naturalist, Las Cruces Museum of Natural History, Las Cruces, NM: Manages, protects and preserves the living collections, habitats and taxidermy exhibits of native wildlife species for the City's Museums, and manages support activities at the Las Cruces Museum of Natural History. Salary: \$16.95 - \$25.43 Hourly (\$35,256.00 - \$52,884.00 annually). Please see full job description at <http://agency.governmentjobs.com/lascruces/default.cfm>.

Publications of Interest

This section is from the Citations Sub-committee of the Conservation Committee and is chaired by Larissa Busch. Citations were submitted by, Larissa Busch (LB), Diana Dicus (DD), Elizabeth Leith (EL), Barbara Moore (BM), Ann Pinzl (AP), Cindy Ramotnik (CR), Marcia Revelez (MR), John Simmons (JS), and Janet Waddington (JW). Contributions, suggestions, and comments may be submitted to Larissa Busch: Sam Noble Oklahoma Museum of Natural History, 2401 Chautauqua, Norman, OK 73072; (405) 325-2828 (voice); (405) 325-7699 (fax); lrbusch@ou.edu.

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- Yesilyurt, J. 2009. Botanical related adhesives. *NatSCA News* 16: 30-31. (AP)
—Review of mounting methods with emphasis on adhesives.

Calendar of Events

The Calendar of Events is maintained by Christine Chandler of the Documentation Committee. Application deadlines, conferences and symposia relevant to collection management, computerization and conservation of natural history collections are listed. Notices may be submitted to Christine at Putnam Museum of History and Natural Science, 1717 West 12th Street, Davenport, IA 52804; (563) 324-1054 ext. 226; chandler@putnam.org or dinoceras@juno.com.

2009

August 2009

August 26, 2009. **America's Historical and Cultural Organizations: Implementation Grants deadline.** Details at <http://www.neh.gov/grants/grants.html>.

August 26, 2009. **America's Historical and Cultural Organizations: Planning Grants deadline.** Details at <http://www.neh.gov/grants/grants.html>.

September 2009

September 10-13, 2009. **Putting University Collections to Work in Teaching and Research, International Committee for University Museums and Collections (UMAC)**, Berkeley, California, USA. Contact March Meadow, Univ. of California, Santa Barbara at meadow@arthistory.ucsb.edu or go to <http://umac.icom.museum> or <http://hearstmuseum.berkeley.edu/meetings/umac/index.shtml> for more information.

September 12-17, 2009. **2009 Meeting of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums**, Portland, Oregon, USA. Details available at <http://www.aza.org>.

September 14-18, 2009. **Museum Security: Problems, Trends and Solutions, International Committee for Museum Security (ICMS) Meeting**, Quebec, Canada. Contact Hans-Juergen Harras, Staatliche Museen Berlin, Referat Sicherheit, Stauffenbergstrasse 41 D-10785 Berlin, Germany, Tel. +49 30 266 2900, h.j.harras@smb.spk-berlin.de, or go to <http://icms.icom.museum>.

September 14-December 20, 2009. **Curatorship: Contemporary Perspectives**, a distance learning course from the Cultural Resource Management Program, University of Victoria, Division of Continuing Studies, <http://www.uvcs.uvic.ca/crmp/contact.aspx>.

September 21-26, 2009. **Collections Management** course (on campus) offered by the Cultural Resource Management Program, University of Victoria, Division of Continuing Studies, <http://www.uvcs.uvic.ca/crmp/contact.aspx>.

September 22, 2009. **Geological Curators' Group (GCG) Seminar** in conjunction with the Society for Vertebrate Palaeontology (SVP), Bristol University, Queen's Road, Bristol, UK. Contact Leslie Noë, Thinktank, Birmingham Science Museum, Millennium Point, Curzon Street, Birmingham B4 7XG, Tel. 0121 202 2327, Leslie.Noë@thinktank.ac or go to <http://www.geocurator.org/meet/meet.htm> for more information.

September 23-26, 2009. **Society for Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) 69th Annual Meeting and the 57th Symposium of Vertebrate Paleontology and Comparative Anatomy (SVPCA)**, Bristol, England, UK. Meeting details are available at <http://www.vertpaleo.org/meetings/index.cfm>.

September 23-26, 2009. **Developing and Fabricating Education Interactives** at the Campbell Center for Historic Preservation Studies,

<http://www.campbellcenter.org>.

September 27-30, 2009. **Inspiration and Innovation, Joint Conference of the Association of Midwest Museums (AMM) and the Minnesota Association of Museums**, St. Paul, Minnesota, USA. Details at <http://www.midwestmuseums.org>.

September 28-October 1, 2009. **Documentation in the XXI Century: Connecting Cultural Heritage Information, International Committee for Documentation (CIDOC) meeting**, Centro Patrimonial Recoleta Dominica, Santiago, Chile. Contact Lina Nagel at lnagel@cdbp.cl or go to <http://cidoc.icom.museum> or <http://www.cidoc2009.cl> for more information.

October 2009

October 1, 2009. **Conservation Project Support Grant deadline.** Details at <http://www.imls.gov>.

October 1-2, 2009. **Understanding Archives: Introduction to Archival Principles and Practices** at the Campbell Center for Historic Preservation Studies, <http://www.campbellcenter.org>.

October 5-9, 2009. **The Mountain-Plains Museums Association (MPMA) 2009 Annual Conference**, Cheyenne, Wyoming, USA. Details available at <http://www.mpma.net/2009ac.htm>.

October 12-16, 2009. **18th Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals**, Quebec City, Quebec, Canada. Conference details at <http://www.marinemammalogy.org>.

October 13-16, 2009. **2009 Annual Meeting of the Southeastern Museum Conference (SEMC)**, Charleston, West Virginia, USA. Details at http://www.semcdirect.net/education_and_programs/2009_annual_meeting/index.html.

October 15, 2009. **Connecting to Collections: Statewide Planning Grants 2010 deadline.** Details at <http://www.imls.gov>.

October 15, 2009. **Connecting to Collections: Statewide Implementation Grants 2010 deadline.** Details at <http://www.imls.gov>.

October 18-21, 2009. **Mid-Atlantic Association of Museums (MAAM) Annual Conference**, Washington, DC, USA. Conference information is available at <http://www.midatlanticmuseums.org/annualmeeting.html>.

October 19-21, 2009. **Museums for Reconciliation and Peace: Roles of Ethnographic museums in the world, International Committee for Museums and Collections of Ethnography (ICME) Annual Conference**, Seoul, Republic of Korea. Contact Victoria Phiri at secretary@icme.icom.museum or go to <http://icme.icom.museum> for more information.

October 25-29, 2009. **A Rising Tide: Sustainable Practices, Green & Beyond, the Western Museums Association Conference (WMA) 2009 Annual Meeting**, San Diego, California, USA. More information at http://www.westmuse.org/san_diego_rfp.html.

October 26-29, 2009. **Cultural Heritage and Biodiversity – A new Challenge for Mediation through Museums, International Committee for Museums and Collections of Natural History (NATHIST)**, German Oceanographic Museum and Ozeaneum, Stralsund, Germany. Contact Dr. Gerhard Winter at gerhard.winter@senckenberg.de, Tel. +49 (0)69 7542 1356 or go to <http://nathist.icom.museum> for more information.

October 31-November 3, 2009. **Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC) 2009 Annual Conference**, Fort Worth, Texas, USA. Conference information at <http://www.astc.org/conference/future.htm>.

November 2009

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November 2, 2009. **Museums for America Grant deadline.** Details at <http://www.imls.gov>.

November 4, 2009, 2-3:30 p.m. (Eastern). **Project Management Basics, AAM Museum Essentials Webinar Series.** For more information: <http://www.aam-us.org>.

November 6-8, 2009. **International Registrars Symposium (IRS3),** Chicago, Illinois, USA. Details at <http://www.rcaam.org/irs3.htm>.

November 9-13, 2009. **TDWG 2009, Biodiversity Information Standards Conference,** CORUM Conference Center, Montpellier, France. Go to <http://www.tdwg.org/conference2009> for more information.

November 11-14, 2009. **Museum Information, Museum Efficiency: Doing More with Less!, The 37th Annual Museum Computer Network (MCN) Conference,** Portland, Oregon, USA. For more information, contact: Christina DePaolo, MCN 2009 Conference Chair, Seattle Art Museum, 100 University St., Seattle, WA 98101; (206) 654-3165; christinad@seattleartmuseum.org.

December 2009

December 1, 2009. **Conservation Assessment Program Grant deadline.** Details at <http://www.imls.gov>.

December 13-16, 2009. **57th Annual Meeting of the Entomological Society of America,** Indianapolis, Indiana, USA. Meeting website at <http://www.entsoc.org/am/cm/index.htm>.

December 2009. **GCG AGM and Seminar: Storage, Sorting and Documentation - good practice and practical solutions,** Leeds City Museum and Art Gallery. Contact Will Watts, Scarborough Museums & Gallery, Town Hall, Scarborough, YO11 2HG, Tel. 01723 232572, Will.watts@scarborough.gov.uk or go to <http://www.geocurator.org/meet/meet.htm> for more information.

2010

January 2010

January 4-April 11, 2010. **Caring For Collections,** a distance learning course from the Cultural Resource Management Program, University of Victoria, Division of Continuing Studies, <http://www.uvcs.uvic.ca/crmp/contact.aspx>.

January 4-April 11, 2010. **Museum Principles And Practices II: Programming, Exhibitions, and Management,** a distance learning course from the Cultural Resource Management Program, University of Victoria, Division of Continuing Studies, <http://www.uvcs.uvic.ca/crmp/contact.aspx>.

January 19-26, 2010. **10th Annual Jekyll Island Management Institute (JIMI), Southeastern Museum Conference (SEMC).** For more information, contact: John Hunter, Director, Jekyll Island Museum & Historic Preservation, 381 Riverview Dr., Jekyll Island, Georgia, USA, (912) 635-2119, jhunter@jekyllisland.com.

February 2010

February 1, 2010. **National Leadership Grants** deadline. Details at <http://www.imls.gov>.

February 1-6, 2010. **Exhibit Design and Installation** course (on campus) offered by the Cultural Resource Management Program, University of Victoria, Division of Continuing Studies, <http://www.uvcs.uvic.ca/crmp/contact.aspx>.

February 7-10, 2010. **128th Stated Meeting of the American Ornithologists' Union,** a joint meeting with the Cooper Ornithological So-

ciety, and the Society of Canadian Ornithologists - Société des Ornithologistes du Canada, San Diego, California, USA. For more information, go to <http://www.aou.org/meetings/index.php3>.

February 16, 2010. **Museum Assessment Program (MAP)** deadline. Details at <http://www.imls.gov>.

May 2010

May 22, 2010. **Save America's Treasures** deadline. Details at <http://www.imls.gov>.

May 23-26, 2010. **AAM Annual Meeting and MuseumExpo™,** Los Angeles, California, USA. For more information: <http://www.aam-us.org>.

May 24-29, 2010. **The 11th ICOM WOAM Conference (Wet Organic and Archaeological Materials), International Committee for Conservation,** North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources and East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina, USA. More information: <http://icom-cc.icom.museum>.

May 31-June 5, 2010. **The 25th Annual Meeting of the Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections (SPNHC) & The Canadian Botanical Association CBA-ABC 2010 Joint Conference,** Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

Summer 2010

June 11-15, 2009. **The 2010 Meeting of the American Society of Mammalogists,** University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming, USA. Go to <http://www.mammalsociety.org> for more information.

June 25-29, 2010. **Evolution 2010,** the annual meetings of the Society of Systematic Biologists (SSB), the American Society of Naturalists (ASN), and the Society for the Study of Evolution (SSE) will be held in Portland, Oregon, USA. Details at <http://systbiol.org>.

June 28-July 3, 2010. **Third International Palaeontological Congress (IPC3),** hosted by the Palaeontological Society, London, UK. Meeting website at <http://www.ipc3.org/>.

July 3-7, 2010. **24th Annual Meeting of the Society for Conservation Biology (SCB)** will be held at the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. More details are available at <http://www.conbio.org>.

July 7-12, 2010. **JMIH 2010, Joint Meeting of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists, organized by the American Society of Ichthyologists and Herpetologists, the American Elasmobranch Society, the Society for the Study of Amphibians and Reptiles and Herpetologists League,** Providence, Rhode Island, USA.

August 1-6, 2010. **95th Annual Meeting of the Ecological Society of America,** Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA. Go to <http://www.esa.org> for more information.

August 22-28, 2010. **25th International Ornithological Congress,** Campos do Jordão, Brazil. Go to <http://www.ib.usp.br/25ioc> for more details.

Fall 2010

October 2-5, 2010. **Association of Science-Technology Centers (ASTC) 2010 Annual Conference,** Honolulu, Hawaii, USA. Conference information at <http://www.astc.org/conference/future.htm>.



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STANDING COMMITTEES

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Linda Hollenberg (hollenl@si.edu)

Bylaws:

Tim White (tim.white@yale.edu)

Conference:

Jean-Marc Gagnon (jmgagnon@mus-nature.ca)
 Ottawa 2010: Jean-Marc Gagnon (jmgagnon@mus-nature.ca)

Conservation:

Chair Vacant

Adhesives Historical Research:

Jude Southward (jsouthward@dmns.org)

CBoL: Fluid Preservation Research:

Andy Bentley (abentley@ku.edu)

Resources (RDU):

Cindy Ramotnik (ramotnik@unm.edu) (US)
 Kelly Sendall (ksendall@royalbcmuseum.bc.ca) (CA)

Documentation:

Marcia Revelez (mrevelez@ou.edu)
 Elizabeth Leith (etereba@ou.edu)

Citations:

Larissa Busch (lrbusch@ou.edu)

NHCOLL-L List Manager:

Gregory Watkins-Colwell
 (gregory.watkins-colwell@yale.edu)

Education and Training:

Carol Butler (butlercr@si.edu)
 Jeff Stephenson (jstephen@dmnh.org)

Elections:

Kelly Sendall (ksendall@royalbcmuseum.bc.ca)

Executive:

Richard Rabeler (rabeler@umich.edu)

Finance:

Robert Waller (rwaller@mus-nature.ca)
 Lisa Palmer (palmerl@si.edu)

Legislation and Regulations:

Sally Shelton (Sally.Shelton@sdsmt.edu)

Membership:

Lisa Palmer (palmerl@si.edu)

Publications:

Jean F. DeMouthe (jdemouthe@calacademy.org)

Newsletter Editors:

Andy Bentley (abentley@ku.edu)
 Lori Schlenker (lschlenk@ku.edu)

Technical Leaflet Editor:

Leslie Skibinski (lskibinski@delmnh.org)

Recognition and Grants:

Tim White (tim.white@yale.edu)

Web:

James Macklin (jmacklin@oeb.harvard.edu)
 Ann Molineux (annm@mail.utexas.edu) (editor)

SESSIONAL COMMITTEES

Best Practices: James Macklin (jmacklin@oeb.harvard.edu)

Ethics: Linda Ford (lford@oeb.harvard.edu)

Federal Collections: Chris Norris (christopher.norris@yale.edu)

Long-Range Planning: Jean-Marc Gagnon (jmgagnon@mus-nature.ca)

Mentorship: Chris Norris (christopher.norris@yale.edu)

Treasury Operations: Tim White (tim.white@yale.edu)

25th Anniversary Events: Janet Waddington (janetw@sbcglobal.net)

SOCIETY REPRESENTATIVES/LIAISONS

AIC: Jude Southward (jsouthward@dmnh.org)

ASIH: Linda Ford (lford@oeb.harvard.edu)

ASM: Suzanne B. McLaren (mclarens@carnegieMNH.edu)

ASPT: Richard Rabeler (rabeler@umich.edu)

GBIF: James Macklin (jmacklin@oeb.harvard.edu)

GSA/Paleo Soc: Ann Molineux (annm@mail.utexas.edu)

Heritage Health Index & Preservation Working Group:

Cathy Hawks (cahawks@aol.com)

ISBER: Carol Butler (butlercr@si.edu)

NatSCA: Clare Valentine (c.valentine@nhm.ac.uk)

NSCA: Robert Huxley (r.huxley@nhm.ac.uk)

Paleontological Society: Jessica Cundiff (jcundiff@oeb.harvard.edu)

Registrars Committee, AAM: Vacant

Society of Herbarium Curators: Sula Vanderplank (vanderplank@cgu.edu)

TDWG: James Macklin (jmacklin@oeb.harvard.edu)

US Heritage Emergency National Task Force:

Cathy Hawks (cahawks@aol.com)



SPNHC Newsletter
 Andy Bentley
 Division of Ichthyology
 Biodiversity Institute, University of Kansas
 Dyche Hall
 1345 Jayhawk Boulevard
 Lawrence, KS 66045-7505

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See you all in Ottawa

May 31st to June 5th 2010!!!

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