



BRISC AGM 2001 at Inverness Museum at 12.20

Apologies:

These had been received from Alison Hannah, Paul Harding, Steve Hunt, Paul Kirkland, William Penrice, Bob Saville.

The Minutes of last year's AGM (at the Burrell Collection, Glasgow on 26/2/2000) had been circulated to all members with the January mailing and copies were also enclosed with delegates' packs. These were accepted without change, proposed Thomas Huxley and seconded by Ro Scott.

Chair's report

AMS indicated that the printed report for 2000 had previously been circulated to all members with BRISC Recorder News no 40, and copies also enclosed in delegates' packs. She therefore did not propose to go through the report in detail, but only to highlight some points, in particular the great sadness in our loss of BRISC's membership secretary, Bill Brackenridge, killed in a car accident. Lesley Brown had agreed to take on the task of membership secretary. Also mentioned were the two projects, undertaken by BRISC: the Recorder 2000 demonstrations (with financial assistance by the Esmée Fairbairn Charitable Foundation and SNH). 140 people had attended these demonstrations throughout Scotland, and AMS thanked Richard Weddle for carrying them out as planned; the other project was updating the national Squirrel database, a project financed by SNH and undertaken by Nicola Penrice. 5471 new records were added. Project reports had been produced for both these and could be viewed on the BRISC display. The Website was now up and running thanks to Andy Wakelin, and comments on layout and contents were invited.

Committee

There had been a number of changes over the past year: David Mellor had resigned and Roger Riddington had left to become Editor of *British Birds*. The following members were standing down: Ross Andrew, Alan Cameron (whose post as LRC support officer ends in May), Malcolm Muir and Bob Bryson. Alison Hannah was on maternity leave and Corrie Cheyne was standing in during her absence.

Current committee members willing to stand again were: Lesley Brown (CARSE, membership secretary), Alison Hannah (SWT co-opted), Stephen Hunt (Borders Council); Paul Kirkland (Butterfly Conservation), Bob Saville (Lothian Wildlife Information Centre), Mark Simmons (treasurer), Anne-Marie Smout (Chair), Andy Wakelin (website manager co-opted). MS indicated that he wanted to stand down, having served on the committee for 8 years, but that he would be willing to serve till a replacement had been found.

Joining the committee was Jeanette Hall (SNH), proposed by Thomas Huxley and seconded by Mark Simmons.

This made a committee of nine. AMS made a plea for more members to put themselves forward to join the committee. It was agreed that the committee should seek to further increase the committee during the coming year if possible.

RA indicated that there has been a reduction in funding to OBRC, and although it will continue to function at some level, it will not finance a full-time post. RA also stressed the need for subsidising travel costs for northern committee members. AMS undertook to look into this.

The meeting sent Alison Hannah and baby Robin our very best wishes.

Membership report

AMS gave a brief report in the unavoidable absence of Lesley Brown ¹ By 15 March 2001 the membership was 143. A number of people from south of the Border had joined, possibly as a result of the offer of a free copy of

¹ Lesley had missed her train from Stirling, due to busses not running).

the 'Source Book' with all new members. It was too soon to tell, but it was hoped that they would find membership of BRISC worthwhile and remain members in the years to come.

Membership subscription falls due in April, and reminders were mailed out with *BRISC Recorder News*. New members joining during the year received all back-issues of newsletters and other material published during that financial year to keep them up-to-date. New members joining between January and March had their membership carried forward to the end of the coming financial year.

It was agreed to retain the annual subscription of £10 for individuals and £25 for corporate membership. The introduction of paying by banker's order was approved, in order to ease the considerable effort involved in collecting the annual subscriptions.

AMS acknowledged the substantial effort going into keeping the membership list up-to-date and expressed her gratitude to Lesley Brown for doing a very good job.

Treasurer's report (MS)

Mark Simmons had prepared a Draft accounts and this had been included in the delegates' pack: Membership income was a little down. The subscriptions present BRISC's only fixed income, and funds newsletter mailing and such like. Another source of income is the conference, and the 2000 conference at the Burrell Collection in Glasgow was very successful and provided a good source of income.

BRISC had been successful in obtaining three grants, two from SNH (Squirrel database update and *Recorder 2000* demos) and one from the Esmée Fairbairn Charitable Foundation (matching funding for the *Recorder 2000* demos). Over the past three years, our accounts had been audited through Simon Burton by the solicitor's firm for which he worked, but he had now left this firm and it was uncertain that his new firm would take on this task. Other arrangements might be needed. The membership agreed to the committee approaching a new auditor. AMS thanked MS for all his valuable work.

Strategic document

AMS introduced this and indicated that the committee had worked hard during the previous six months to produce this document, the penultimate draft of which had been circulated with the January mailing. The main proposals were to set up three subgroups in order to cater for specialist interest and involve more of our members actively. Comments had been invited and three responses had been received and incorporated (Frank Gill, Adrian Sumner, Gordon Corbet), and the final draft had been included in the delegates pack for this meeting. The Academic community had been added under 1.1.7; and a few alterations had been made to the group functions. It was still not too late to comments on the document.

One respondent had raised concern regarding the manpower: was the document too wide reaching for BRISC to undertake? However, the committee felt that BRISC had to be ambitious if we were to achieve anything, and the new structure was designed to help to involve more people although levels of involvement could still present problems. The proposed groups are not new committees but represent a new way of working. Perhaps not all groups would get off the ground in the coming year, but increased activity and involvement were things to aspire to.

AMS propose that the Recording Group be launched with a Scotland-wide bumblebee survey. BWARS (Bees Wasps Amts Recording Scheme) is keen for this to go ahead as bumblebees are poorly recorded in Scotland. In addition, Highland Biological Recording Group is working towards producing a bumblebee atlas, organised and promoted by Murdo Macdonald. BRISC will prepare and supply identification material and recording forms, recommending that all records should go to LRCs. Where there is no LRC, then records will go to BRISC, to be forwarded to Murdo Macdonald and eventually to BWARS.

AMS proposed that list of members be published in the next newsletter. Discussion took place as to the details such a list should provide, whether this should only contain names and addresses, or whether interests, specialisms, e-mail addresses should be included. It was proposed that AMS should produce a questionnaire with various options to seek members' views, to elicit information on interests and to ask for permission to release information.

It was agreed (proposed by Gus Jones, seconded by Gordon Corbet) to proceed with the strategy

There was no further business and the meeting finished at 13.00