

Report from Society for the Preservation of Natural History Collections Representative

The SPHNC annual meeting was held at the Skirvin Hilton Hotel in Oklahoma City, OK on 13-17 May 2008. This was a joint meeting with the Natural Science Collections Alliance; about 200 delegates from nine nations attended the meeting. The theme "Collection Stewardship: Challenges in a Changing World". Sessions focused on challenges posed by policy, politics, and funding; environmental challenges; professional development; electronic stewardship; shipping dangerous goods; and collection stewardship. We also conducted the first of a series of "Best Practices" symposia, these will continue over the next several years. Participation by botanists remains strong – regular attendees include at least one delegate from the largest herbaria in the United Kingdom, and most of the ten largest US collections.

SPHNC will be meeting with several European associations on 6-11 July 2009 in Leiden, The Netherlands.

On 2 April 2008, I represented SPHNC at the Biological Collections Forum in Washington, DC that was organized by the National Park Service. Approximately 30 people, including NPS personnel and representatives from five scientific societies and four natural history museums, met to discuss the issues and perceptions surrounding natural history specimens collected on NPS lands. It was a very enlightening meeting for all parties and it was agreed that information from the meeting needs to be shared with the greater museum community. Along with five colleagues, I led a discussion about the Forum at the SPHNC meeting and will be doing so (with Jim Solomon) at the Botany2008 meeting.

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