

Council Newsletter No 38, presented to the 2020 AGM held in September at Plas Caerdeon

I am delighted that this year's AGM is happening in reality, and in this location, too. We have the prospect of good field days to follow and I do hope that informal discussions about the BBS and its future plans can also take place during the week.

The lack of personal contact for such discussion during the COVID-19 restrictions has been a real disappointment during 2020–21, but, remarkably, members have agreed to take over vacancies for roles and join committees, allowing the BBS to move forward as normal, as well as continuing to submit records even if group activities were severely curtailed during the restrictions.

Last year we coped with the AGM business on Zoom, facilitated by Oli Pescott who continued to provide that facility for our past three Council meetings, so many thanks to him for that. The uncertainties about restrictions meant that for this year we abandoned the paper-reading part of the traditional weekend autumn meeting, but that, hopefully, will resume next year. Previous Presidents have generally enthused about successful field meetings and training workshops that have been run during the year. Sadly, as last year, I do not have that option: this being the first meeting since I took on the role.

A highlight of the year was the launch of the new website in March. This was a major undertaking and we express ongoing appreciation to Claire Halpin and Ambrose Baker who continue to evaluate ways of improving accessibility to the extensive bryological information available and respond to questions and comments. This is an ongoing process and we are so fortunate in having their expertise. The web developers, CastlegateIT, also expressed their pleasure in working with Claire and Ambrose as part of a real collaborative effort. The main pages provide a platform for encouraging interested non-bryologists as well as informing active bryologists. The introduction of a Members' area on

the website allows access to extra information about the Society and resources that are not on open, public access.

In common with all organisations there is increasing pressure to maximise on-line access to information and some of the decisions brought to Council during the year have allowed previously paper-based resources to be available on-line, although some, such as the most recent issues of *Field Bryology*, are available only to members. Similarly, the Field Guide keys are now available through the website. For the Society, whilst we are keen to provide resources, there are substantial costs of producing and publishing the materials and, of course, developing and maintaining the website. There is the balance between providing everything on-line and the need (financially) to maintain our subscription-paying membership, as well as income from sales of the Field Guide and the *Journal of Bryology*. The Census Catalogue 2021 will soon be published – again the discussions resulted in the decision to print a limited number (about half of those printed in 2008) and to have the pdf available on the website.

The first 2021 issue of the *Journal of Bryology* included the new checklist of bryophytes of Britain and Ireland incorporating new taxa recorded since the 2008 checklist, as well as the extensive changes in taxonomy and nomenclature (following the publication of the European checklist last year). Liz Kungu maintained her watch over *J. Bryol*, through most of the year, continuing in that role until the new editor Neil Bell, elected as Editor, could finally extricate himself from a time-demanding role elsewhere. *Field Bryology* continues to provide a wide range of articles with wonderful photographs, perhaps this year inducing more envy than normal with the pandemic restrictions on movement, for those in the drier southern and eastern parts at least.

David Holyoak's awaited volume, *European*

Bryaceae, was published this year, using the revised nomenclature, and with line drawings supplementing the descriptions and photographs of all the species – certainly a guide that will be well used. Jean Paton's supplement to her 1999 liverwort flora has now been completed and we look forward to its publication.

Gordon Rothero has continued active involvement in monitoring conservation initiatives, consulting with relevant agencies in the UK countries and with Plantlife, but there have been frustrating delays in finalising some of those initiatives. There have been initial discussions, involving Simon Caporn, about some habitat-related pages on the website, such as on peatlands and their restoration, and a recent query about records for bryophytes in churchyards for a forthcoming New Naturalist volume on churchyards shows the potential for readily publicising bryophytes – and the BBS!

A working group to revise the existing Field Guide was set up during the year and there will be requests in *Field Bryology* and on the website for assistance with the revisions. Meetings, as we all know, have been postponed/cancelled throughout the year, but it is encouraging to see that local groups are publishing their activities on the website and the plans for the coming years are taking shape with the hope that the pandemic will allow them.

In 2023, we will be celebrating the centenary of the British Bryological Society, which developed from the Moss Exchange Club. Council will have a working group to develop ways in which we can promote bryology and, again, there will be opportunities for members to suggest initiatives and activities. A National Moss Day may be one (without excluding liverworts), in addition to special publications and meetings.

Finally, some changes in people and roles: Peter Martin has completed ten years as Membership Secretary, a role that he has carried out so efficiently, dealing with diverse methods of subscription payments and responding helpfully to queries. Mari Whitelaw relinquished her role as joint editor of *Field Bryology* during the year and we were very fortunate

that Andrew Branson was willing to be co-opted and take on the role immediately. Simon Caporn comes to the end of his term as an Elected Member of Council. Joan Bingley also can be released from her role: she was appointed as Independent Examiner of accounts in 2008 and since then has carried out that task each year with the succession of Treasurers, providing helpful advice and ensuring that the accounts were in order. Thank you to them all. During the AGM we were delighted to invite Gordon Rothero to accept Honorary Membership with a very fitting tribute to his contributions to bryology and the BBS being delivered by David Long.

My personal thanks to all members of Council and those involved in the Committees for their willingness to take on the tasks that allow the BBS to maintain its influence and provide resources for members, obviously without field meetings for this past 18 months. The publications and web material has allowed people to appreciate the potential for bryological activities in more normal times. Especial thanks to Jeff Scott who also was new in 2020 in the role of BBS Secretary and, until this meeting, has had to operate entirely via e-mail and Zoom meetings.

The spring 2020 field meeting, planned for a shorter period here in Plas Caerdeon, was the first to succumb to COVID-cancellation and we are so grateful to Mags Crittenden who somehow appeared to maintain her energy and enthusiasm for getting the current meeting organised. This required so much extra work not 'just' the site visits, but also the re-negotiation of accommodation. The uncertainties about the relaxation of restrictions meant uncertainty continued until just a few weeks ago.

I hand over to Liz Kungu in January and we all hope for more normal times ahead. It has been a strange two-year period in office but at least on this, my second AGM, I have been able to meet Council members and attendees and look forward to the field days to follow.

Agneta Burton, British Bryological Society President

Annual General Meeting 2022

The Annual General Meeting will be held at 4.00 p.m. on Saturday, 10 September 2022 at Teesside University, Middlesbrough Campus.

The agenda will comprise the standard business: namely, Minutes of the 2021 AGM, the Annual Report of the Trustees for 2021, Accounts and Treasurer's Report for 2021, the President's report from Council, the election of Officers and Elected

Members (see separate notice), the place and date of the 2023 AGM and any other business.

The full agenda, minutes and reports are in the booklet enclosed with this issue of *Field Bryology* (no. 127). The AGM will be preceded by a paper-reading session and there will be a field trip to South Gare on Sunday 11 September.

D. J. Scott, General Secretary, March 2022

Election of Officers and Elected Members of Council

The terms of the following Officers expire at the end of 2022: Joint Editors of *Field Bryology*, Joint Website Editors, Education Officer and Meetings Secretary. The current holder of the post of Meetings Secretary does not wish to stand for re-election. The present incumbents of the other offices are eligible for re-election for another 2-year term.

There are three vacancies for Elected Members, each to serve for a period of 3 years. Members are

invited to submit nominations for Officers and Elected Members of Council, sending them to the General Secretary of the BBS, D. J. Scott, 19 Abbotts Grove, Peterborough, PE4 5BP (jeff83758@gmail.com) to arrive no later than 19 August 2022. A nomination must not be made without the consent of the person you wish to nominate. Elections will be held at the AGM at Teesside University.

D. J. Scott, General Secretary, March 2022

Future Meetings

Summer meeting 2022 – Jura, Saturday 18 June to Saturday 25 June

The Isle of Jura in the Southern Hebrides is one of the most spectacularly remote and unexplored of our western Scottish islands and approximately half of its tetrads lack a single record. In addition to investigating previously unrecorded areas of moorland, bog, mountains, lochans and coastline there will also be the opportunity to re-examine the habitats of its known specialities including sea-caves and *Cyclodictyon laetevirens*; ravines and *Dumortiera hirsuta*, and the hepatic-mat constituent *Adelanthus lindenbergianus* up on the Paps. It is hoped that a boat trip to take recorders to the northernmost tip of the island may also be an option. To further explore the many

ravines, cliffs, raised beaches and localised machair characteristic of the west coast, those adventurous recorders who are physically fit might be interested in a second week (prior to the core week), camping and bothying. I am happy to provide any information/guidance required for this. The Cicerone publication *Walking on Jura, Islay and Colonsay* is an excellent resource to start with.

Evening microscope work and accommodation

The village hall in Craighouse has been hired for the week's evening work as it provides a more central location close to the shop, hotel and most of the holiday cottages. (A small charge will be made for the use of the hall – the exact amount depending on the numbers of people attending). Craighouse

also has a camp-site and a direct foot-passenger RIB service to Tayvallich on the mainland, in addition to a bus service to Feolin for the car-ferry to Islay and Kennacraig.

Booking accommodation is the responsibility of those attending. However, if those of you who are happy to share indicate this when you register your interest, I will put you in touch with each other and provide contact details for suggested local cottages.

Contact details

To register your interest and/or for further information please contact Fiona Cameron at Fionacam68@gmail.com

Autumn meeting 2022 –Teesside University, 10–11 September

Saturday 10 September 2022: Paper reading session and AGM

CALL FOR TALKS FOR THE 2022 PAPER READING SESSION

Are you working on an interesting bryological project and would like to share your findings with the Society? The paper reading session on 10 September 2022 could be the perfect time to do this. If you would like to give a talk then please contact Ambrose Baker: ambrose.baker@gmail.com.

Sunday 11 September 2022: Field trip to South Gare.

This site is located at the extreme north-east tip of North-east Yorkshire (vc 62) and has a range of artificial and semi-natural habitats, including dunes, dune slacks, grasslands, saltmarshes, ponds, reed beds, slag ‘pavements’, slag ‘outcrops’, etc. Bryological highlights include, for example, extensive lawns of *Distichium inclinatum* (but rarely found with capsules), *Drepanocladus polygamus* on marshy grounds, a 1998 record of *Aloina brevirostris* and the first and only vice-county record of *Tortella flavovirens*. However, the site has not been fully explored bryologically and may well reward us with interesting findings.

There is a vascular plant flora of South Gare by David Barlow (2021) that provides interesting

background information about the history of the sites and its habitats (https://bsbi.org/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2021/04/Flora-of-South-Gare-2021.pdf). The Teesside area is also the perfect gateway to explore the North Yorkshire coast, the North York Moors and the only English site for *Mielichhoferia elongata*.

Contact details

To register your interest and/or for further information please contact Ambrose Baker at ambrose.baker@gmail.com

Spring meeting 2023 – Lake District, Saturday 25 March to Friday 31 March

The meeting will be based in Rosthwaite, Borrowdale, and outings will be to various sites in the central Lake District, exploring a range of lakeland habitats. Upland and lowland sites will be included to cater for a range of mobility levels. Rosthwaite itself is close to many excellent bryophyte sites, in particular some good Atlantic woodland.

A room in the Borrowdale Institute in Rosthwaite has been hired for the week’s microscope work and will be available in the evening and daytime throughout the week. It will be up to individual members to arrange accommodation, but if you would like to share, please let the local secretary know and she will put you in touch with others that either have or are looking for beds. Rosthwaite has many holiday cottages and Borrowdale YHA is 20 minutes’ walk away (across fields) or a short drive. There is further accommodation in the Borrowdale area generally and at YHA Keswick and Derwentwater Independent Hostel. Early booking is recommended! Online booking for these dates is now available on some sites.

Note that 25 March will be for local exploration, potentially with meetings in the afternoon/evening, and the last field trips will be on Friday 31 March.

Contact details

To register your interest and/or for further information please contact Clare Shaw at clares9597@gmail.com

Lucia Ruffino Meetings Secretary

e_meetings@britishbryologicalsociety.org.uk