

## A Rare Occurrence – a Zoo History Symposium -- From Royal Gifts to Biodiversity Conservation: The History and Development of Menageries, Zoos and Aquariums

The first zoo history symposium I ever attended was amazing ... it was called the "Ivy Zoo Symposium". It was held in Budapest, Hungary at the Budapest Zoo. I can't remember the year exactly but it was about 15 years ago. Budapest is a beautiful city and many colleagues from European Zoos participated. The next zoo history symposium conducted by a zoo was this past year in the month of May in Upton-on-Chester where the beautiful and world famous Chester Zoo is located.

One can do worse than visit England in May... the weather is still a little nippy which I love, but the spring flowers are in bloom and the leaves fully out – it is like a paradise of sorts. I was invited to give a paper on an important subject to me, the History and Development of Regional and National Zoo Associations! Well, you being zoo people will at least not fall on the ground laughing at this topic because you know (I hope) that Zoo Associations are important organizations in the zoo world. My friends in my home town asked me why I was going to England and I told them I had to give a presentations on History and Development of Regional and National Zoo Associations. "Ohhhh,!" they said politely with totally blank or confused visage.

The Symposium was co-organised by the Society for History of Natural History SHNH which is a British organization and the World Association for Zoos and Aquariums WAZA. For two days we listened with rapt attention as zoo history buffs presented fascinating facts on the history of zoos. One of the participants, Dr. Catherine de Courcy sent me a copy of her book the Dublin Zoo: An Illustrated History. I have reviewed it here in ZOOS' PRINT this issue and I've also included a short version of my talk. Studying the history of zoos, or writing about it, is actually not a chore; it is fascinating.



**Gordon Reid, organiser and host of the Symposium giving a farewell speech at the Symposium dinner. Gordon was Session Chair of the opening session. Photo by Karin Schwartz.**

The Symposium began on Thursday 19 May 2011 by the Session Chair, Prof. Gordon McGregor Reid, former Director of Chester Zoo and welcomed by Dr. Mark Pilgrim, Director General of Chester. Professor Geoff Moor, President, Society for the History of Natural History (SHNH) gave the Symposium introduction which included 75 years of the Society for the History of Natural History. Following this

Dr Alex Rubel, Director, Zurich Zoo and Past President, World Association of Zoos and Aquariums gave a fascinating talk on Heini Hediger and the foundations of zoo biology. The rest of the presentations and their authors are listed below:

- **The history and development of the World Association of Zoos and Aquariums**, *Dr Markus Gusset*, Conservation Officer, World Association of Zoos and Aquariums
- **The history and future of aquariums – a cultural and ecological perspective**, *Bernd Brunner*, Author of "The Ocean at Home - An Illustrated History of the Aquarium"
- **The development of regional and national zoo associations and conservation outreach**, *Sally Walker*, Founding Director, Zoo Outreach Organisation, South Asian Zoo Association for Regional Cooperation
- **The history and development of the European Association of Zoos and Aquariums: from early traditions to modern management**, *David Field*, Zoological Director, ZSL and Chair, International Species Information System
- **The history and development of the Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums – managing zoos in the New World**, *Bill Peters*, National Director, Canadian Association of Zoos and Aquariums
- **The development of zoos and aquariums as charitable organizations**, *Dr Miranda Stevenson*, Director, British and Irish Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Executive Office
- **From captive to conservation: the IUCN Conservation Breeding Specialist Group (CBSG) and the evolving role of zoos**, *Dr Onnie Byers*, Executive Director, IUCN SSC Conservation, Breeding Specialist Group
- **The evolution of zoos as environmental education, Providers**, *Dr Maggie Esson*, Education Programmes Manager, Chester Zoo
- **The evolution of record-keeping and development of ISIS – the International Species Information System**, *Karin Schwartz*, Biological Database Manager, Chicago Zoological Society
- **Vets, historically the most dangerous creatures in a zoo...now out in the wild**, *Professor Malcolm Bennett*, Director of National Zoonoses Research Centre, School of Veterinary Science, University of Liverpool
- **New information from old bones – remnants from the Tower of London menagerie**, *Louise Tomsett*, Curator, Mammal Group, Zoology Department, The Natural History Museum, London
- **Financing the early zoo: Manchester Zoological Gardens – charitable status and selling shares**, *James Kiddle*, BSc Student, Biological and Forensic Sciences, University of Derby
- **Day one summary** *Gina Douglas*, Honorary Archivist, Linnean Society, Meetings Secretary, SHNH
- **Arts, plants, animals: living zoo history in Budapest**, *Professor Miklós Persányi*, Director General, Budapest Zoo and Botanical Garden and Past Chair, EAZA
- **Doing a roaring trade: travelling menageries in 19th century Britain**, *Dr Helen Cowie*, Postdoctoral Research Fellow, University of Plymouth



**Miklos Persantyn, Director of Budapest Zoo (forward), organised and conducted the first international zoo history symposium in Budapest some years ago. He is joined by Gordon Reid and Sally Walker. Photo by Karin Schwartz.**



**Jo Gipps, Director of Bristol Zoo, and Gordon Reid, former President of WAZA. Photo by Gina Douglas. Linnean Society.**

- **The history and development of wild animal collections in Bulgaria,** *Dr Gabriela Petkova-Campbell*, Independent Researcher, Newcastle, University
- **Dublin Zoo: the long-term impact of 19th century penny visitors,** *Catherine de Courcy*, Historian, Dublin Zoo
- **Brighton Zoological Gardens: 1832-1833,** *Dr Graham Rowe* Lecturer, Biological and Forensic Sciences, University of Derby
- **The Sheffield Jungle 1910/11,** *Ian Trowell*, National Fairground Archive, University of Sheffield
- **Salad, sandbags, shrapnel and sustainability: learning the lessons from how zoos and botanic gardens survived wartime challenges,** *Mark Norris*, Education Manager, Newquay Zoo, Environmental Park
- **Society for the History of Natural History award presentation and AGM,** *Professor Geoff Moore* President, Society for the History of Natural History
- **The Robertson Museum and Aquarium at Millport's Marine Station: a century of compromise,** *Professor Geoff Moore*, President, Society for the History of Natural History
- **The history of the Horniman Museum Aquarium,** *James Robson* Deputy Aquarium Curator, Horniman Museum and Gardens
- **Natura Artis Magistra, Amsterdam: strategies for a new future of a 19th century institution,** *Professor Erik A. De Jong*, Artis Chair Culture, Landscape and Nature, Natura Artis Magistra Royal Zoo, Amsterdam
- **175 years of Bristol Zoo: reflecting on the past role of zoos as a guide to their future,** *Dr Jo Gipps*, Former Director General, Bristol Zoo, Bristol and Clifton Zoological Society, Chair of IUCN, SSC CBSG Advisory Committee and Past Chair, WAZA Conservation Committee
- **Conclusions,** *Professor Geoff Moore* President, Society for the History of Natural History and
- **Closing remarks,** *Professor Gordon McGregor Reid*, Director Emeritus, Chester Zoo, Past President, WAZA and Past President Linnean Society of London
- **End of symposium**



**Gina Douglas of the Linnean Society reviews the first day of the Zoo History Symposium. Photo by Malgosia Nowak-Kemp, Oxford University.**



**Sally Walker, Marcus Gusset, Conservation Officer of WAZA and Karen Schwartz, formerly of Brookfield Zoo goof off before a gala dinner. (The rhino is not alive; a plaster sculpture.) Photo by Gina Douglas**



*Bartlett Society*