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NEWS-LETTER OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN ASSOCIATION OF BOTANISTS
NUUSBRIEF VAN DIE SUID-AFRIKAANSE GENOOTSAP VAN PLANTKUNDIGES

S.A.A.B., PRESIDENTIAL REPORT FOR 1976 (presented at the Durban Congress):

Ladies and Gentlemen it is my honour and pleasure to present to you the eighth presidential report of the Association. It can be truly said that the Association has fully justified its existence during the last year. It represents all facets of botany in South Africa and is gradually exercising a positive influence on the development of the subject. The membership is rising slowly and this year we have acquired 27 members but lost 3. The membership is now a record 269. Financially the Association, despite its low membership fees, is in a sound position but is limited in its financially activities.

As in other years some of our members have done remarkably well. The South African Medal of Botany was bestowed by the Association on South Africa's most renowned ecologist, John Phillip Harrison Acocks, the highest honour in botany. In addition to this medal he also received the Gold Medal from the Fertilizer Association, the Gold Medal of the Wildlife Society as well as Honorary membership of the Grassland Society (1977) and the S₂A₃. We bemoan the fact that due to ill health he was unable to receive these honours personally. We offer him our best wishes as well as his wife who through the years has so faithfully stood by him and thus had a part in the honours.

This year Professor R.H.Compton celebrated his ninetieth birthday and on the same day saw the publication of his Flora of Swaziland, surely a notable achievement. A telegram was sent to him on behalf of the Association. Dr. A.O.D. Mogg also reached his ninetieth year during 1976 and we offer him best wishes.

On the dark side there was the passing of Col. H.A. Baker known for his work on Erica.

A milestone was reached in the existence of the Association with the first two meetings of the Advisory Committee for Botany which took place in 1976.

This Advisory Committee owes its existence directly to the activities of the Council of S.A.A.B. The Committee has already shown that it will be playing a positive and guiding role in the development of botany. Four subcommittees are busy examining the physiological, ecological, taxonomic and economic aspects of botany and will make recommendations to the central committee which after further consultation will present a consolidated report to the Minister of Agriculture. These subcommittees are expanding and developing the investigations and reports that have been produced by S.A.A.B. during the last two years. It is hoped that the final reports will be completed during the first half of 1977.

The Joint Council of Scientific Societies on which S.A.A.B. represents botany and the Advisory Committee for Botany are important channels of communication between botanists and the authorities. The activities of Joint Council have already shown the contributions that it can make. Representations made to the Scientific Advisory Committee to the Prime Minister in connection with the remuneration and status of scientists have already had positive results. The Council has also made a considerable contribution towards the establishment of national journals, while the registration of scientists is, in my opinion, potentially one of the most important developments that will affect the status and pay of scientists.

The reasons for the Joint Council's very strong recommendation for the registration of scientists are three-fold, namely: 1) it will give our profession official status and identity; 2) it will put us on an equal footing with other professions such as medicine and engineering; 3) it will protect the employers and public through the establishing of an autonomous Council which will have supervision of the training and practising of registered natural scientists.

That the considerable majority of scientists support registration in the form as presently envisaged, is indicated by the recent opinion poll. Of the questionnaires sent out, 2327 were returned in time for analysis and showed 90% in favour of registration.

A further important botanical event, in which S.A.A.B. was not strictly involved, was the Meiring Naude Committee of Investigation into Botanic Gardens which produced its report during 1976 for the Minister of Agriculture. Two Council members of S.A.A.B. served on this Committee in their private capacities. The reaction of the Minister is now being awaited.

A letter from Dr Noble of the C.S.I.R. was received in connection with the establishment of a South African branch of INTECOL (International Association of Ecology). Council accepted the proposal that the following six associations together form the branch. They are: Grassland Society of Southern

Africa; Zoological Society of Southern Africa; S.A.A.B.; the Wildlife Management Association of Southern Africa; the newly formed South African National Committee of the IUBS and the Limnological Society.

These are then matters which occurred in the broad field of botany during the year.

The Council and the Executive held the required number of meetings which on the whole were well attended.

Matters which received special attention by S.A.A.B. during the year under review were mainly the following.

Attempts at the creation of a more effective Executive and Council resulted in the proposal of a system of "block nominations" for the Executive and the extending of the period of service of the President to two years. This year once again the President and Secretary were resident in two different cities. Albeit that these were within reasonable distance from one another, the problems of communication severely reduced the effectivity of the Executive and placed an unnecessary burden on these two office bearers. In order to ensure that the new system will function in the future I would suggest that the procedure in establishing an executive block should be by approaching the presidential nominee and by consultation with him to determine who he would regard as a suitable secretary and treasurer with whom he could form a strong compatible working team. If this is not done it will not be possible to exploit the great advantages of the "block nomination system".

Council also discussed the adviseability of creating new awards for S.A.A.B. during the year. At the instruction of the Council a draft proposal was drawn up, sent to all council members and discussed again by Council. The final approved proposal is before this meeting.

The organisation of our Congresses, executed very ably and with great dedication by the local organising committees, frequently with only the most skimpy instructions from Council, also received attention. A draft document was tabled at the last Council Meeting and is to be discussed at the first Council Meeting of 1977.

The long drawn out negotiations in connection with the establishment of a National Journal for Botany were continued during the year. Recent developments make it likely that finality will be reached, where S.A.A.B. is concerned, during 1977. As is probably known to most of you, the establishment of seven national journals i.e. one for each of the basic sciences namely: mathematics, physics, chemistry, botany, zoology and geology; and one general purpose journal (The South African Journal of Science), was approved by the Government in 1976. Three journals, of which two will be the S.A. Journal of Mathematics and

the S.A. Journal of Science will be established in 1977. A central Bureau for the technical editing and production of the journals has already been established, under the Chairmanship of Dr Danie Joubert who recently was appointed as Vice-President of the C.S.I.R. S.A.A.B. is represented on the Editorial Committee of the Bureau by Prof Owen Lewis.

The idea of the establishing of a fund to assist younger members of S.A.A.B. to attend overseas congresses was resurrected towards the end of 1976. The proposal to investigate the publication of a folio, representing work of a number of South Africa's most prominent botanical artists was approved by Council. One meeting was held. Dr G. Theron has agreed to convene this committee.

As in previous years Forum Botanicum has appeared monthly. This was possible only due to the tireless efforts of our Editor Ted Oliver and his helpers. Only persons who have edited a newsletter of this type will realise how much time, perseverance and effort it takes to keep such a publication going.

Probably the most active S.A.A.B. members during this year were our Durban members. They have with very little assistance carried the full burden of organising our 1977 Congress. We are all extremely grateful for their fine efforts.

This ends my account of the activities for 1976. What about the future?

Our Congress in January 1978 will be held in Bloemfontein concurrently with that of the Grassland Society. Discussions have been held with the Grassland Society and we are looking forward to a most successful congress.

Matters which will have to receive special attention in addition to the normal activities of the standing committees are firstly the preparations which are necessary before registration of botanists can take place (drawing up of a minimum standards for qualification for registration, as well as lists of those members who qualify, etc.), and secondly the establishment of an organising committee for the AETFAT Congress to be held in South Africa in 1981.

During the latter half of 1976 I was asked by the President of AETFAT (Association pour l'Etude Taxonomique de la Flore d'Afrique Tropicale) whether I was prepared to accept the office of General Secretary. This I agreed to do. The Department of Agricultural Technical Services was approached and agreed that the Botanical Research Institute could house and support the secretariat of AETFAT. Your Council has given its support to the organisation of the AETFAT Congress in South Africa in 1981. It has also been established that, provided that the correct channels are followed, the

C.S.I.R. will be prepared to assist in the organisation of the Congress.

Finally it gives me great pleasure to thank all those who, during my year of office, have given their services to S.A.A.B. Dr Fiona Getliffe who under difficult circumstance continued with the arduous duties of secretary, and travelled many hundreds of kilometres between Johannesburg and Pretoria; our capable and meticulous treasurer Dr Eicker; Dr Amy Jacot Guillarmod and Prof Grobbelaar, the vice-chairmen, and all members of the council my personal thanks are due. The editor of Forum Botanicum and his helpers deserve a very special vote of thanks. To those members who have served S.A.A.B. as representatives on the Advisory Committee for Botanical Research, on Joint Council and as convenors of subcommittees also our grateful thanks. Finally to all members of the organising committee of the 1977 Congress under the able leadership of Prof Trevor Steinke; to Prof Villiers and his staff and the University of Durban who made available the facilities we have enjoyed so far, we are extremely grateful. Without your efforts this Congress would not have been possible. (B de Winter: President, 1976).

S.A.A.B., NORTHERN TRANSVAAL BRANCH, REPORT FOR 1976:

Committee: Chairman - Dr G.K. Theron, Vice-Chairman - Mr B.J. Huntley, Secretary - Miss M. Welman, Treasurer - Miss I. von Teichman, Members - Mr. L.A. Coetzer, Mr.T.B. Vorster, Mr C. Stirton, replaced in April by Dr J.C. Scheepers.

Number of Members: At present there are 80 members of S.A.A.B. in the Northern Transvaal, of whom 68 are resident in Pretoria.

Lectures: The following lectures were arranged during the year:-

- 16 February: Dr M. Werger: "The Phytogeography and Vegetation of the Alps"
25 February: Prof K.V. Thiman: "New Ideas on the Mechanism of Auxin Action"
5 April: Dr A.J. Oakes: "The Contribution of South African Germplasm to American Agriculture"
Dr E.C. Bashaw:- "Reasons for transporting South African Grasses to Texas"
27 July: Dr B.A. Barlow:- "Host-Parasite Mimicry in Australian Mistletoes"
17 August: Prof D. Wiens: "Chromosome Evolution in Mistletoes"

The average of 17% Northern Transvaal members who attended the lectures, was much lower than the almost 30% of last year. An average of 8 visitors attended each lecture. The members of the Southern Transvaal Regional Section were invited to all the lectures and the members of the Grassland Society and the Genetical Society to lectures which were of interest to them. The support of the Southern Transvaal members especially, is appreciated.

Other Activities: On the 27th of March, an excursion was undertaken to

Nylsvley to become acquainted with the Ecosystems Research being done there. This was attended by 24 persons.

In collaboration with the Botanical Research Institute, a very successful Open Night was arranged at the Institute on the 16th June. This occasion was attended by about 150 persons, of whom many travelled from Johannesburg and Potchefstroom. The members of the Biological Society and the Grassland Society were invited, as well as the Botany Students of the Universities of Pretoria, the Witwatersrand, the Rand Afrikaans University and the Potchefstroom University for C.H.E.

Committee Meetings: The committee met 9 times during the year.

General: The committee addressed a letter to the Council of S.A.A.B. in connection with the proposed new system of block nominations for the Executive Committee of the Council.

This Section is still represented on the Council for the Conservation of Moreletta-spruit.

The Committee has already started to make arrangements for a Short Course in the Use of Computer Techniques in Ecology and Taxonomy, planned for June 1977.

SHORT COURSE IN THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF QUANTITATIVE ECOLOGY AND NUMERICAL TAXONOMY: The Northern Transvaal Regional Branch of S.A.A.B. must announce, with regret, that the abovementioned course, planned for July 1977 and announced in the December 1976 issue of Forum Botanicum, must be postponed until a later date. This is due to the fact that the Universities of Pretoria and the Witwatersrand do not have their holiday periods at the same time and it is therefore not possible for Prof B. Walker, one of the speakers, to be available in July when the computer of the University of Pretoria can be used. We hope to present this course at some later stage, possibly in January or February next year.

TO PAY OR NOT TO PAY? Something for botanists who are always being asked for plant names and information to think about - "The Melbourne Herbarium (Australia) now charges the public \$1.75 to name a specimen or \$7.00 for an hour of work" according to the newsletter of the Australian Systematic Botany Society.

NEW MEMBERS OF S.A.A.B.:

Dr J. Anderson, Bernard Price Institute, University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg.

Mr A. Balsinhas, Botanical Research Institute, Pretoria.
Dr. P. Berjak, Dept. of Biological Sciences, University of Natal, Durban.
Prof P. de V. Booysen, Dept. of Pasture Science, University of Natal,
Pietermaritzburg.
Mev Y.M. de Bruin, Boersmastraat 49, Universitas, Bloemfontein.
Mej M.M. Eksteen, Dept. Plantkunde, U.O.V.S., Bloemfontein.
Mnr G. Germizhuizen, Navorsingsinstituut vir Plantkunde, Pretoria.
Mr D. Hardy, Botanical Research Institute, Pretoria.
Mev M.L. Jacobsz, Retiefstraat 19, Harrismith.
Mnr A.M. Kitshoff, Huis Olienhout, U.O.V.S., Bloemfontein.
Dr H. Liebenberg, Dept. Genetika, Universiteit van Pretoria.
Dr R. Magill, Botanical Research Institute, Pretoria.
Prof A.R.A. Noel, Dept. of Botany, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.
Dr N.W. Pammenter, Dept. of Biological Sciences, University of Natal,
Durban.
Mnr J.W. Potgieter, Leidenstraat 17, Noordhoek, Bloemfontein.
Mnr C.F. Reinhardt, Dept. Plantkunde, U.O.V.S., Bloemfontein.
Mev P.P. Swartz, Dept. Plantkunde, Universiteit van Pretoria.
Mnr C.F. van der Merwe, Dept. Plantkunde, Universiteit van Pretoria.
Mnr P.W.J. van Wyk, Instituut vir Omgewingswetenskappe, U.O.V.S.,
Bloemfontein.
Mrs L.G. Wooldridge, Fruit and Fruit Technology Research Institute,
Stellenbosch.
Mnr. W.J.J. van der Merwe, Bus 195, Brits.

DEPARTMENT OF BOTANY, UNIVERSITY OF RHODESIA: Applications are invited
for the posts of lecturer/Senior Lecturer in Plant Physiology and Crypto-
gamie Botany. In the case of the Cryptogamic Botany post an interest in
Hydrobiology would be an advantage.

Salary Scales:

Senior Lecturer: R8 868 x 336 - R9 204 x 348 - R9 552 x 360 - R11 712
R11 830 x 448 - R12 278 x 464 - R12 742 x 480 - R15 622
Lecturer Grade I: R8 052 x 300 - R9 252
R10 741 x 400 - R12 341
Lecturer Grade II: R4 698 x 264 - R6 288 x 300 - R7 788
R6 627 x 352 - R8 387 x 400 - R10 387

Conditions: It should be noted that both permanent terms and short-term
one- or two-year contracts are offered. In the case of one or two-year
contracts appointees would have no military commitment.

Permanent pensionable terms: Family passages and allowance towards trans-
port of effects on appointment. Installation loan of up to half of one

Year's salary if required. Unfurnished University accommodation guaranteed for a period of at least three years for persons recruited from outside Rhodesia. Sabbatical leave and triennial contact visits with travel allowance. Superannuation and medical aid schemes.

Short-term Contracts: Family passages and allowance towards transport of effects. Assistance with accommodation for persons recruited from outside Rhodesia.

Applications: (6 copies) giving full personal particulars (including full names, place and date of birth, etc.), qualifications, experience and publications, and naming three referees, should be submitted preferably by 18th March 1977 to the Assistant Registrar (Science), University of Rhodesia, P.O. Box MP 167 Mount Pleasant, Salisbury, Rhodesia, from whom further particulars may be obtained.

Finally a post for a Plant Ecologist still remains vacant in the Division of Biological Sciences in the University.

(Advertisement only received by Editors 1977.03.09)

FOR SALE: One secondhand copy of Frank Cavers' "The inter-relationships of Bryophyta" @ R13-00. Apply to P. Vorster, Botanical Research Institute, Private Bag X101, PRETORIA, 0001.

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EDITORS/REDAKSIE

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PRETORIA

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