

# BRITISH CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, held on Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> July 2017 at 11.00 a.m.  
at the Holiday Inn, Milton Keynes, Bucks.

<u>Present:</u>	Dr Alasdair Glen	Chairman
	Dr Jim Gibbs (JG)	Vice Chairman
	Mr David Kirkbright (DK)	Treasurer
	Mr Eddy Harris (EH)	Secretary
	Mrs Alice Vanden Bon (AVB)	Technical Editor
	Mr Barry Tibbetts (BT)	Shows Committee Representative
	Dr Tony Mace (TMa)	Publications Officer
	Mr John Arnold (JA)	Legal Advisor
	Dr Alan Bromley (AB)	Marketing Officer
	Mrs Suzanne Mace (SM)	Committee

## AGREED VERSION

### 17/23 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Messrs Bill Hildyard, Al Laius and Tony Morris.

### 17/24 MINUTES OF THE BOARD MEETING HELD ON 13<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2017

As there were no further corrections, an agreed copy of the minutes was formally signed by Dr Glen.

### 17/25 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

17/14 Mrs Seeley's *Lithops* Collection – Mrs Mace said that she would be obtaining this in the next two weeks.

17/15/1 Crawley Branch Trophies – Permission was sought to sell off a large solid silver trophy which was surplus to requirements and this was agreed. Dr Gibbs had contacted members via Tony Morris to ascertain which other branch they would like to be transferred to and of the very few responses he had received, one would prefer to become unattached and two would prefer to become North Surrey branch members and it had been learned that the secretary might join the Croydon Branch. The latter would pass on the branch paperwork in due course. Dr Mace said that many had now become Brighton branch members.

17/21 Steve Hammer's 'Treasures of the Veld' *Lithops* Book – Another 1000 copies had been printed and were in stock.

### 17/26 ELECTRONIC DECISION MAKING

None.

### 17/27 COMMUNICATIONS

1. Peter Cowdell – Several B.o.T. members had received a letter from him extolling the success of both his publicity efforts and the success of the Sheffield Branch Show. It was understood that attendance at Sheffield branch was not significantly larger, but that the branch would be making an application for this year's Branch Innovation Award in due course.
2. Last Meeting – An email had been received from the National Minute Secretary Alan Hill stating that this committee had not discussed, as requested by the A.G.M., the methods we should employ in advising members who had problems with their plants. It was said that there was no point in discussing this until the new website was up and running, when we would have a better means of doing this.
3. Steve Hammer's 'Treasures of the Veld' *Lithops* Book – An email had been received from China asking for permission for a Chinese publisher to produce a Chinese version of this. The text had been translated into Chinese and it was understood that Steve Hammer had given his permission, but that they also needed our permission to do so. As we currently had ceased to sell items to China this would not be a problem, but before giving permission, we needed to check on several points, i.e. how the picture files had been obtained (scanned or original) and if they need permission to use these, plus whether they would acknowledge the source of our original book. We would also need a copy of the book for our library once it was produced. Mrs Mace would check with Steve Hammer about these points (SM).
4. Ways of Promoting the Society – It had been suggested by Ian Thwaites that a good way to promote the Society would be to distribute copies of our journal as part of a 'goody bag' distributed to potential members at a Guild meeting of the various other Societies later this year. It was said that about 450 people attended the event and it was agreed that the print run of the September journal would be increased to provide the journals for this (say an extra 500 copies). Mr Harris would inform Mr Thwaites of this (EH).
5. Awards – A Robert Holt Meritorious Award and a Fellowship were agreed unanimously. Another R.H.M.A. would be considered once a suitable compendium had been compiled.

### 17/28 REPORTS OF OFFICERS

#### 1. Vice-Chairman:

- a) Dorset Area – Dr Gibbs said that Bill Darbon had forwarded a message from Dave Ennals about his attempts to assess the interest in a new branch in Dorchester. Unfortunately, despite putting in a lot of work publicising new cactus classes at the Dorset Spring Show in both local press and websites and inviting all the local branches, the response had been very disappointing with very few exhibitors. Dave had therefore decided that it was not feasible to look at starting a new branch in the area, but should be commended for the work and efforts that he had put into this project.
- b) Waltham Forest Branch – Stirling Baker, the Zone 15 rep, had forwarded a letter that he had written to the branch secretary, Mr Jackson, on learning that the branch intended to close, itemising the procedure that had to be followed if the branch wished to do so. The secretary had discussed this intent with his committee, asking if anybody was willing to take over as

secretary/chairman and his wife's position as treasurer, but nobody had volunteered. Mr Harris had attended the branch meeting after that and explained that Mr Jackson couldn't just close the branch, but should follow the rules of the Society. He needed to officially inform Mr Harris, as Society Secretary, of this intent, so that he could get the B.o.T.'s permission for closure and that he should also let all his members know of the branch intended closure in case there was somebody else willing to volunteer for their positions. Mr Jackson had asked those present at that branch meeting (about 9 people) if anybody among them was willing to take over, with no success, and all had said that they were willing to amalgamate with Lea Valley branch (their nearest branch) and attend it's meetings. To date Mr Harris had yet to receive any correspondence from Mr Jackson and understood that the intent was to close after their A.G.M. in September, although he had subsequently learned that this had now been extended to after their October meeting. It was agreed by this committee that Dr Gibbs, via our Membership Secretary, would write to all the branch members informing them of the branch's intent and enquire if somebody was willing to take over from Mr and Mrs Jackson to try to save the branch.

- c) Speaker's List – He said that as he was retiring at the end of the month, he was hoping to have a little more time to produce the next full revision of this, as it was 5 years since the last one. He said that he would be interested to hear views as to whether it should be a printed document that was distributed to all branches, or mainly an electronic distribution with a few copies printed for secretaries without email. He also felt that we should consider a more regular electronic full copy updates to all branches (6 monthly/annual, depending on the number of changes). He would also be writing shortly to all branch secretaries to establish if there were any members of their branches who wished to be added to the Speaker's List. He said that currently the updated versions are only sent to those that asked for them, so the majority were working from an outdated copy, unless they were assiduously updating from the newsletter entries.
- d) Calendar – He had had the chance to speak at the Glasgow Show with both Ian Thwaites and Brian McDonough about the possibility of them providing photos for the B.C.S.S. calendar. Both would be happy to do so if approached officially.

## 2. **Membership Secretary:**

Mr Morris in a written report stated that since the beginning of May 2017 he had enrolled 99 new members, 12 of whom had also subscribed to Bradleya. This compared with 75 at this time last year. These comprised 65 Full, 24 Senior, 7 Associate and 3 Junior. Of these only 3 were from overseas (1 each from Australia, Japan, and New Zealand). 2 persons had joined using the Welcome Pack reduced price offer (currently a total of 98). He had also reinstated 6 former members. He remarked that the number of overseas renewals had been disappointing and that although he had had several enquiries about joining, nothing had resulted from these enquiries to date. He was currently trying to contact a lady who had unsuccessfully joined via our website. He said that the incorrect bulk delivery of June journals had resulted in him receiving 11 rather than his usual 3 boxes of journals and the Maces receiving none. He said that he was getting low on the seed stock that he had and which he distributed to new members.

## 3. **Treasurer:**

- a) Membership – Mr Kirkbright gave an updated current membership compared with last year which was: Full 1,470 (+11), Senior 1,061 (+22), Junior 26 (same), which when added together, the Journal taking membership total was 2,557 (+33). Associate membership was 194 (-1) and 84 Full members had switched to Senior and 50 the other way.
- b) 2017 Calendar – Costs and postage had been £1,699 whilst sales net of VAT had been £1,403, a loss of £296. It was agreed that we would produce a 2018 calendar.
- c) G.D.R. Publication – Net sales after post and packing and card/Paypal charges were £4,333 which was 34% of our capital outlay.
- d) Aloe Book – We had received another royalty payment of £225 from Kew for this.
- e) WebSite Rebuild – To date we had paid out £9,292 towards the redesign and build, which was just under one third of the estimated cost.
- f) 2018 Subscriptions – He had no intention of changing any of the rates of subscription or the level of service offered to Associates.

## 4. **Shows Committee:**

- a) Judges Course – Mr Tibbetts reported that the majority of their last meeting had been taken up with this topic. All the talks and classes had been arranged. Dr Taylor and Mr Gillman, the new committee members, had been welcomed to the meeting and Mr Weobley whose health had prevented him from attending, was liaising with the venue, although if he was unable to attend the course, Mr Stephenson agreed to stand in for him. Mr Tibbetts said that it had been agreed that the judging criteria had been changed in that passes in both the plant identification and the judging classes had to be achieved to obtain a judging qualification and that this qualification would in future only be valid for 4 years instead of 5. This would be explained to all attendees at the course.
- b) R.H.S. Chatsworth Show 2017 – He had attended this and felt that it was not the sort of show that the Society should support and felt that events organised by branches local to an R.H.S. showground/centre were a better proposition. It was felt that a professional set of display boards needed to be designed about the Society for these events. This was agreed.

## 5. **Conservation Committee:**

Projects – Mr Hill reported that following this committee's agreement to award a more than usual sized grant to Madeleen Struwig for her project, the money had now been sent. Email conversations had taken place with Pablo Weiser and Paul Klaassen about articles for CactusWorld based on their 2015 expedition and an article was being prepared for publication. However, no new proposal for a project had been received.

## 6. **Research Committee:**

Alan Hill reported that a proposal from Ignacio Soto, entitled 'Cactus and Succulent Diversity in the National Reserve of Valle Fertil, Argentina: Second Survey and protection strategies' had very recently been received. It was a survey of plants in the reserve, their condition and threats to their existence, the latter including analysis of the danger from rot. There was an element of training botanists included in the scheme. The proposal was currently being considered. He also said that an article entitled 'Taxonomical adjustments in *Discocactus* (*Cactaceae*)' had been received from Marianna Rodrigous Santos,

who had been given a grant several years ago to carry out the required work and discussion was to take place about in which of our publications the article was to appear.

7. **Journal Editor:**

Mr Laius in a written report stated that there were 20 articles that were ready, 8 of which were with the production team awaiting design and layout and 8 were work in progress. There were enough articles for the next 2 issues and beyond. He said that the September journal was on schedule and being put together by Mrs Vanden Bon. He said that Phil Crewe, one of the new trainees had completed his first layout successfully and was already working on another and deserved our thanks for volunteering his services. He thanked Sheila Cude, who was also helping with both article layout and the Newsletter and also deserved our thanks. He also said that he had heard from BioOne regarding Bradleya, who were now ready to accept PDF's of articles on a dedicated server and had passed all the relevant information on to Graham Charles and Mrs Vanden Bon (who had files of the more recent issues) and hoped they could perform this task without too much trouble. He said that this must happen quickly, otherwise any delay could affect the contract we had signed with them. They needed to have all the material in place so that Bradleya could be launched on the BioOne platform commencing 2018. Regarding earlier issues of Bradleya, it was likely that we would need to scan these in house and produce PDF's suitable for uploading. He felt that whoever held the Society scanner should be asked to assist with this.

8. **Technical Editor:**

- a) Journal – Mrs Vanden Bon reported that page layout of the September journal had been planned and it would be larger than normal, with 16 extra pages giving a total of 80 pages plus the 8 page newsletter. The only insert for this quarter would be the National Convention Booking form. It would be printed by Warners.
- b) Lithops - Treasures of the Veld – She said that the archive for this was on another version of Quark Xpress and various difficulties were encountered in retrieving the files. Consequently, the original printer's PDF from the Second Edition were used, with the first page only needing alteration. Charlesworth Press were selected to produce the book as these were the printers we had used originally and 1,000 copies had been printed and delivered to Dr and Mrs Mace.

9. **Advertising Officer:**

- a) Advertising – Mr Quail's written report said that the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter advertising income was £135 (£197 last year).
- b) CactusWorld Production Trainees – He said that one of our new trainees had almost completed his training and had already laid out an article for the September journal. He felt that he should prove to be a good layout team asset. Of the remaining two, one had started his training, but had since suspended this due to family illness and the other had now completed his university degree and after a short break intended to start training in August. All three had Quark Xpress licences and we had two 'spare' licences as a contingency measure.
- c) Journal Advertising Deadlines – He said that contributors were still ignoring these and reminded them that the deadline was always the 10<sup>th</sup> of the relevant quarter (e.g. 10<sup>th</sup> July for the September Journal), except for B.C.S.S. News items where the deadline was the last day of the previous quarter. This date was also shown on the inside cover of every journal and among each issue's adverts. He had also asked that the copy received by then should be the FINAL version, also asking that where trustees were involved in this, they should set good examples. He also said that he was due to go into hospital next Tuesday for a bypass operation, that all his work on the September journal was up to date, but that he intended to continue maintain contact with the outside world once home again. Mr Harris had sent the BoT's best wishes for a speedy recovery on learning of this.

10. **Bradleya Editor:**

Mr Charles had said that contrary to last year, Bradleya was almost complete and consisted of 27 articles which filled 256 pages. Its publication date was planned to be 31st August 2017 so that copies would be available to sell at E.L.K. It contained nine new plant taxa, including a remarkable new cactus genus, and a new genus of *Aizoaceae*. He said that following constructive discussions with Lavenham Press, they had agreed to all of his requests to address the issues he had encountered with last year's production. He said that their equipment was ideally suited to produce Bradleya and he had awarded them the contract for printing this year's issue at the same specification and price rate as last year.

11. **Publications/Internet/Website Officer:**

- a) Publications – Dr Mace reported that the Steve Hammer Lithops book reprint was complete (1,000 copies received) and these were now stored. He had also become aware that John Pilbeam was using B.C.S.S. I.S.B.N.'s for his own recent privately published books, which was leading to confusion with wholesale/overseas booksellers, who were contacting Dr Mace asking for books which were nothing to do with us.
- b) Internet/Forum/Website – Dr Mace said that unfortunately there had still been no volunteers to back up his role as server manager to date. He said that there were a number of ongoing technical issues with its operation, which he had not had the time to resolve, which although not critical, ought to be dealt with. He warned that he would probably have to suspend the server backup on the week of E.L.K. as that relied on specific I.P. addresses, so he could not do it remotely. He said that he had done some work in setting up the field number service for Ralph Martin, but some additional software was needed and he had no idea how to implement it. It needed either a prolonged period of research on his part, or possibly input from Yann Cochard. Manchester branch had found that the service they used for their branch website, etc, had wanted a larger sum of money, so Mr Hildyard had set up a Wordpress site for them. Dr Mace had done a similar thing for Cactus Corner on the Cactus-Mall server. He also said that we still had many email problems. Although he ran a weekly monitor on public blacklists (which we were currently not on), many large email suppliers ran their own lists. It was very difficult and time-consuming to get these removed and there were far too many of them for a part-time manager to cope with.

12. **Update on the Society Digital Programmes:**

David Lambie reported on future programmes to be released, including Sonia Barker Fricker's 'Big Bend' talk and the '2012 National Show' which were currently in progress. He also reported on the progress in scanning the slides from our five slide bequests. He had noticed some errata/mistakes on a few programmes and planned to correct these as soon as practicable. He

also stated that a few branches were still requesting/using slide sets and that there was a need to monitor all our slide sets for condition and withdraw them as soon as they show excessive damage or bleaching. He said that the new, separate Digital Programme List was now in draft form with inclusion of improvements and any updates. He also reported that there was some good material available, which was unusable for talks, but ideal for the proposed Image Gallery. We would need to seek volunteers to manage this and work with Mr Hildyard and Mrs Vanden Bon to set this up. He had been in touch with Mr Hildyard and had started a proposal for how these images would work.

13. **2018 Convention:**

Mr Arnold reported that a slightly amended advert., which included the speakers countries of origin, had been suggested and that the booking form would be included with the September journal. This would be slightly modified following suggestions from this committee and he thanked David Quail and Mrs Vanden Bon for the changes so far. He said that he had continued to omit reference to an auction or a photographic competition in the booking form or adverts. and was leaving the former open, but if it was held, its scale and quality of the lots would be limited, although this might be problematic in framing an appeal for donations. He said that he was continuing to include John Ellis in his plans and the advert., but was keeping him in touch. David Minnion was happy to deal with the plans for the trade stands. However, there were all the ancillary matters still to be prepared/finalised, and he was grateful for the suggestions from Mesdames Mace and Vanden Bon on these, such as the suggested bag which might well be used, depending on cost. These would have to be decided upon during the next year and any ideas from other people would be appreciated.

14. **Marketing Officer:**

Dr Bromley reported on results of the various aspects of his Social Media coverage. He said that he had had an excellent response to his appeal in the June Newsletter which had yielded several hundred photographs which were more than enough to see him through the rest of this year. For the sake of consistency he had posted the same photographs/messages promoting B.C.S.S. events. He said that whilst this got the Society's name heard it was unclear if this would translate into membership. Results were as follows:-

- a) Twitter – He said that there were currently 950 followers, which had steadily increased since May after dropping to zero over the winter months. He mentioned 4 sites which were doing a good job of promoting Cacti & Succulents.
- b) Instagram – Following some initial help from Sophie at GeoFleur we now had 650+ followers and he had posted over 160 photographs/messages to date.
- c) Facebook – He said that there were more than 6,100 members of the B.C.S.S. Group Facebook page, although the majority were from overseas. There was a fair amount of traffic on the B.C.S.S. Organisation page with occasional questions posted, but this was not as interactive as the Group page. Neither page was being used to publicise B.C.S.S. events and required somebody to manage it. He said that perhaps this was something that those that managed the website Calendar could take responsibility for. This would possibly be Mark Faint and it was suggested that perhaps he should appear on the Officials list as being responsible for calendar updates.
- d) Other Tasks – He would be undertaking the promotional event at Wisley on 30th July and would report on its success later. He was also trying to set up a Botanical Gardens Directory with the object of promoting the B.C.S.S. at those that had collections of C&S. Most have responded positively and the exercise had thrown up three possible leads:-
  - i) The National Botanic Gardens of Wales, although not having an arid plant collection, had offered to host a show for us. He had passed this information on to Bill Darbon and the South Wales Secretary.
  - ii) St Andrews University Botanical Gardens would like to forge closer links with the B.C.S.S. Dr Gibbs thought that there had been attempts to do so in the past, but perhaps personnel had changed there.
  - iii) The curator of the Arid Land glasshouse at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh, who was already a member and already had links with Glasgow branch, would be interested in hearing about local members who might wish to volunteer. He was also interested in promoting the Society and suggested a poster be put up on the glasshouse door and also offered the use of the Real Science studio for smaller plant shows and workshops for free. He would put him in touch with Dr Gibbs. He said that he would like to explore the possibility of putting a small stand in as many botanical gardens as possible with the aim of promoting the Society and membership, as he felt that targeted marketing in such places was likely to be more cost effective than broad-brush promotion.
- iv) Supporting Branches and Zones – He said that Mail Chimp was still proving useful with a few branches starting to use it. He had also been approached by Bill Darbon to provide some colourful 'information boards and provided copies of a couple of these with his report.

17/29 **WEBSITE UPDATE**

Mr Hildyard, in a written report, said that he had had limited response to his request for website content and zero submissions for the calendar. He also had nothing to report on the current internet based activities. He understood that Dr Mace and Ralph Martin had made a start on the hosting of the field number database (*see also minute 17/28/11(b)*) and reported that work on the new website was slow and steady and that various bits were being ironed out. Further updates might be available later. It was said by Mr Kirkbright that timing was critical as we needed time to ensure the system worked correctly before the end of the year when the membership renewals began. It had been said that updating of some areas also needed to be done as soon as possible, although there was confusion as to who had responsibility for updating some of these. There was also discussion on possible problems with the new data protection laws that were shortly to be applicable. These needed to be reviewed, although it was felt that they would not be applicable to charities such as ours.

17/30 **DISCUSSION ON A REPLACEMENT SEED PURCHASER**

To date there had been no volunteers for the post, but Dr Mace said that his and one or two other branches did offer a seed purchasing facility and based on his experience of this, suggested that we employed a team approach to the problem, rather than depending on one person. He had several people in mind and would approach them to determine interest. This was agreed by this committee (**T.Ma**).

17/31 **SUGGESTIONS FOR A SHOW VENUE FOR THE 2020 NATIONAL SHOW**

It had been learnt that our previous venue at Wood Green was to be redeveloped and that no bookings were being taken until December 2019, although Wood Green was keen to host it for future years. As the venue needed to be centrally placed in the U.K., it was suggested that possibly the East of England Show Ground might be an alternative venue and Messrs Kirkbright and Tibbetts would investigate if this was possible and suitable (**DK/BT**).

17/32 **SPEAKERS FOR THE 2018 SOCIETY A.G.M.**

Mrs Mace's suggestion of inviting Guy Clark of the Border Force CITES team was agreed and discussion suggested either Michel Lacoste or Anton Hofer as the second speaker. Dr and Mrs Mace would see if one of them was agreeable to come (**SM/TMa**).

17/33 **DATES FOR NEXT YEAR'S B.o.T. MEETINGS**

These were agreed for 3rd February, 26th May, 11th August and 1st December.

17/34 **FUTURE PUBLICATIONS**

1. **Books** – It was suggested that possible titles to be considered for us to publish were the proposed *Eriosyce* book by Roger Ferryman and Graham Evans and possibly the proposed new *Matucana* book by Graham Charles. Mr Tibbetts would speak to Messrs Evans and Charles about this possibility (**BT**).
2. **Calendar** – As no appeal had been posted in the journal for contributed pictures for this and that we needed the calendar to be available for E.L.K, it was agreed that Mr Hildyard be contacted and asked to request Messrs McDonough and Thwaites to submit six pictures each towards this project (*see also minute 17/28/1(d)*) (**SM**).

17/35 **APPOINTMENT OF ANCILLARY OFFICERS AND MEMBERS OF COMMITTEES.**

Mr Harris had contacted most of the current officers and committees. All were agreeable to continue, so all were reappointed for the coming year (see current Officers List for details).

17/36 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

1. **Society Labels** – Mr Kirkbright said that as the die used to produce these was reaching the end of its life, plus other factors, meant that the future of these was uncertain. Sources of our type of label would be sought at E.L.K. (**SM**).
2. **Advertising Revenue** – It was noted that this had dropped away over the last 5 years, due to the reduction in nurseries that existed and the effect of the internet. It was said that we should suggest ways of either increasing this or change the way they were displayed. This would be discussed at a future meeting, possibly with Mr Quail in attendance.
3. **Old Journals/Books** – Mrs Mace had the remains of the late Dr Maddams' journals which she wished to be rid of and Mr Harris had books from the Grimsby branch library which he also wanted to be rid of. It was suggested that they be offered to members who might be interested in obtaining them either for free or for a small donation to the Society.
4. **Southern Area Show** – It had been learned that Dave Appleton wished to organise this in the Sevenoaks area in 2019 and wondered if the Society would sponsor it. However, it was said that it was just an idea currently, but it was said that if he wished Society support, he needed to apply in the normal way.
5. **Tom Jenkins** – Mr Arnold said that he had collected all of Mr Jenkins' slides from June, his wife. Mr Harris would write to thank her for this (**EH**).

There being no other business the meeting closed at 3.55pm.

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**NEXT MEETING: 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2017** at the Holiday Inn, London Road, Newport Pagnell, MK16 0JA (just off junction 14 of M1). It would start at 11a.m. and a buffet lunch would be served at 1 to 1.30 p.m.