

BRITISH CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, held on Saturday 26th April 2014 at 11.00 a.m.
at the Holiday Inn, Milton Keynes, Bucks.

Present:	Dr Alasdair Glen (AG)	Chairman
	Dr Jim Gibbs (JG)	Vice Chairman
	Mr David Kirkbright (DK)	Treasurer
	Mr Eddy Harris (EH)	Secretary
	Mr Tony Morris (TM)	Membership Secretary
	Mr Barry Tibbetts (BT)	Shows Committee Representative
	Dr Tony Mace (TMa)	Publications Officer
	Mr Bill Hildyard (BH)	Forum & Website Administrator
	Mr John Arnold (JA)	Legal Advisor
	Mrs Suzanne Mace (SM)	Committee
	Dr Roland Tebbenham (RT)	Committee
	Mr Peter Arthurs (PA)	Committee

AGREED VERSION

14/10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mrs A. Vanden Bon and Messrs J. Gander and A. Laius

14/11 MINUTES OF THE B.O.T. MEETING HELD ON 8TH FEBRUARY 2014

These were formally ratified and signed.

14/12 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

13/40 Society Patrons – Mr Harris had written to both Patrons inviting them to the recent A.G.M. and our forthcoming Convention and received replies from both. Neither had been able to attend the A.G.M. but both wanted to come to the Convention and were willing to give a 5 minute address introducing themselves to the audience. Tom Hart Dyke was coming on the Saturday only and Anne Swithinbank wanted overnight accommodation and would probably also attend on the Saturday. A copy of the proposed programme had been sent to her to help with this and she had been asked to contact Mr Arnold on what accommodation would be required. She had also agreed to our proposed terms.

14/05/2 I.O.S. Elections – It would appear that these had caused some discontent within the organisation with one elected member refusing acceptance of his post and closing down the I.O.S. website which he owned.

14/05/3 Deceased Member – Luton branch committee had expressed interest, visited the collection and only found a few plants they were able to save.

14/15/4 Royal Cornwall Show – The latest situation was unclear due to a lack of a report, although it was understood that the branches in the Zone were still not interested in participating. In the absence of a report from Mr Gander, Dr Glen would contact the show organisers and establish their participation rules (AG).

14/13 ELECTRONIC DECISION MAKING

No Board decisions had been made using this medium.

14/14 COMMUNICATIONS

1. Ayr Branch – A letter to Dr Gibbs had been circulated by him to the Trustees which concerned a lapsed past member who had caused considerable problems for the branch and had now intimated that he wished to rejoin and be a branch member, a situation they did not wish to happen. However the current Society rules did not allow a branch to refuse branch membership and Dr Gibbs wanted to address this and any future occurrence. After much discussion it was agreed that Mr Kirkbright would provide a rule revision that would give more flexibility in such situations, this to be submitted to the next A.G.M. (*see also 14/21(1)*) (DK).
2. Speakers List – Dr Gibbs had expressed concern about possible potential security problems if a speaker's name appeared on the Society FaceBook and Twitter sites. However he said that consultation with other Trustees prior to this meeting had minimised this concern and said that if a speaker was concerned about their name appearing, they should tell the branch when booked that their name was not to appear on these sites.
3. Awards – One A.O.M. and two R.H.M.A.'s were approved.

14/15 REPORTS OF OFFICERS

1. Vice-Chairman:

Apart from the points raised in minutes 14/14/1 & 2, Dr Gibbs said that there was little to report apart from a couple of incidents of individuals not receiving programmes from their branches, one of whom had now received a second copy. The other had been a member for 3 years and never attended a meeting, but the branch had now contacted him and taken him to their next meeting. He expressed his thanks to the Zone reps for their help in collating the list of branch officials. He was aware of one branch which was considering formal closure and another in much the same position. He would be writing to the latter branch's members to ascertain their views. He was also aware of another branch whose main officers were currently unable to maintain the branch due to age and health problems, but hoped that this would eventually be resolved. He had also received a request from an outside association for a copy of our full speakers list for circulation among their 40+ affiliated groups and wished guidance on this as they also produce a speakers list. He would now be producing an external society speakers list and it was suggested that we exchange speaker's lists with them as it might be of mutual benefit.

2. **Membership Secretary:**

Mr Morris stated that since February 2014 he had enrolled 42 new members, 6 of whom had also subscribed to Bradleya. This compared with 31 last year. These comprised 29 Full, 10 Senior, 2 Associate and 1 Junior. Of these, 7 were from overseas (America, Australia, France, Japan, New Zealand and Spain) but none had joined using the Welcome Pack reduced price offer (currently a total of 38). He had also re-instated 8 former members. There had been several mail delivery problems recently, with a St Helena member having not had a journal since the June 2013 one, a Maltese member having to wait 4 weeks for his March journal and nobody from the Dublin branch having received the March journal to date.

3. **Treasurer:**

- a) **Membership** – Mr Kirkbright reported that current membership compared with last year was: Full 1,393 (-7), Senior 916 (+26), Junior 12 (-6), which when added together, the Journal taking membership total was 2,321 (+13). Associate membership was 198 (-2) and 77 Full members had switched to Senior and 37 the other way. Bradleya takers were 502 (-7). The decline had been very small and he had now mailed all Full and Senior members from last year who had yet to renew at a cost of £69 in postage alone, but he expected the current surplus to become negative over the next month.
- b) **2014 Calendar** – He said that sales of this now showed a £10 surplus.
- c) **Convention 2014** – To date 132 residential and 11 non-residential bookings (including speakers) plus 1 non-delegate trader had been received, and all of the 44 sales tables had been taken. Day packages for Saturday either ‘with meals’ (£60) or ‘no meals’ (£30) were now being advertised and to date 6 ‘no meal’ packages had been booked. Invoices for the remaining balances had now been sent out and payments were being received on a daily basis.
- e) **Books** – It had been agreed that 800 copies of the 2nd edition of the **Stapeliad** book would be printed, a compromise between sensible numbers and the average unit price which had risen considerably since the original printing. He had agreed to hold the price unchanged at £39 UK and £42 overseas, which meant that profit margins would be much slimmer. He had also received another Kew payment from sales of the **Aloe** book totalling some £4,850, making a total profit of some £31,000 to date.
- f) **Gift Aid** – He said that with this year’s claim the Society would have claimed over £100,000 back from the government.

4. **Shows Committee:**

- a) **Judges Course** – Mr Tibbetts reported that bookings for the 2014 course were 26 to date including committee and speakers but hopefully a further 10 to 15 should be received by the course. Details of the course speakers and their subjects were given. The 2015 course had been booked for 4th to 6th September 2015.
- b) **Shows Committee Elections** – All nominees listed in the last minutes had been elected.
- c) **Handbook of Shows 10th Edition** – He said that thanks to Mrs Vanden Bon’s hard work this had been available for sale at the Zone 6 Convention and the A.G.M. A free copy was being distributed to all judges and branches.
- d) **2016 National Show** – Preparations for this were in progress although the advice of this Board was sought over what photography should be employed. Past experience of the last two shows showed that time was very limited and the quality of pictures taken was in some cases poor. There had also been other problems with background detail and mistakes caused by having too many people involved in the judging area, etc. As a result it had been suggested that rather than producing a DVD showing the top three entries in every class, this idea be scrapped and a smaller number of photographers be utilised to produce a reduced number of good quality pictures of plants and scenes in the show. This would provide a record for use in the journal. There was discussion on the points raised and it was felt that there was interest among members for a show DVD, but that we should try to get better photographers and test their competence by asking for evidence of their ability to produce photographs to the rules laid down. It was also suggested that a central black background be erected between the tabling to minimise fussy backgrounds. It was also said that there was the question of who would then produce the DVD. These thoughts would be reported back to the Shows Committee (**BT**).

5. **Conservation Committee:**

There had been no change to that reported at the recent A.G.M. Mr Arnold said that the Travelling Scholarship criteria were being worked on.

6. **Research Committee:**

Mr Hill reported that there had been no change to that detailed at the recent A.G.M.

7. **Advertising Officer:**

- a) **Advertising** – Mr Quail’s written report said that the 2nd quarter advertising income was £372 (compared with £448 last year), that there was no change in the number of series-of-4 advertisers and that ELK were advertising with us again this quarter.
- b) **CactusWorld Production Trainees** – He said that Christian Bohm had received further training.
- c) **Journal Printing** – A detailed evaluation of Cambrian Printers was in progress with a view of inviting them to be one of our journal printers. There had been some concern over the quality and colour of some printed March journal pages when the page proofs were of a much more accurate and acceptable standard.

8. **Bradleya Editor:**

Mr Charles in a written report said that he had now had 11 articles for Bradleya 32 (including just 2 about cacti). These included 3 new succulent species and a new cactus from Peru. All were in various stages of preparation. As he had mentioned at the A.G.M., cactus articles were hard to come by but the recent agreement to publish well-illustrated versions of academic articles previously published in high impact journal was welcome.

9. **Journal Editor:**

Mr Laius in a written report said that the March journal had been well received and a steady stream of feedback, comments and suggestions was being received. He currently had 21 articles in hand, 13 of which were laid out and 8 in progress. Promises of more had been received, so there was sufficient for the June and September journals and beyond. The December journal would contain a write-up of the forthcoming Convention and despite the problems caused by the loss of Mrs Vanden

Bon's email provider, everything was going ahead okay. He said that JSTOR had contacted him to say that they now had a significant portion of CactusWorld's back run and work would shortly start on indexing and then digitising these. On completion these would be returned to Martin Lowry.

10. **Technical Editor:**

Mrs Vanden Bon's written report said that the June journal would be printed by Swallowtail and that its preparation was on schedule despite the problem of loss of her internet server. She reported that Charlesworth had printed the 10th edition of the Handbook of Shows in time for the A.G.M. and that the Quark archive of this was stored on her machine and on CD's held by both her and David Quail. A PDF of the booklet had been sent to Ray Stephenson as well. 5,000 copies of the new membership form had been printed by Cambrian Printers and colour production had been acceptable. It had been agreed to print 800 copies of the 2nd edition of the **Stapeliad** book, this to be done by Charlesworth who produced the 1st edition. She said that there had been some delay whilst pagination of the June journal was finalised, but the files should be with the printer shortly and that she would then establish when the book would be available.

11. **Publications/Internet Server Officers:**

- a) Publications – Dr Mace reported that sales seemed to be very quiet this quarter apart from a few orders for the Handbook of Shows.

b) Internet/Forum – Mr Hildyard said that he had little to report on the operational side of these as both were fine.

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

Dr Tebbenham reported that only limited progress on this had occurred since the February meeting and details of these were given. He said further work had been suggested including one of John Hughes' talks on a visit to Oaxaca, Mexico in 1979 and the possibility of digitising the slides of Sheila Collenette. If done, she would then be provided with a copy for use as a teaching aid for future Arabian botanists. However the scale of the task was yet to be ascertained. He also listed the outstanding 11 programmes currently in progress and the work required to complete them. In the discussion on the report it was suggested that in view of the amount of work to be done, perhaps a second scanner could be bought to the same specification as the current one. Although these were not as easy to find due to the switch to digital cameras, it was felt that something appropriate could be found.

13. **Website:**

Messrs Arthurs & Hildyard said that due to time constraints on both their parts, the planned update/changes to the Society website were still yet to happen, but hopefully should be done in the next two weeks. It was said that when it was being done, there would be some downtime on emails, programmes, etc.

14. **2014 Society Convention Update:**

Mr Arnold had circulated a provisional programme for the event and this was discussed and various changes/suggestions made to the content and timings shown. These included omitting the tour of the Botanic Gardens (although it would be noted that they would be open if anybody was interested), ensuring that the short talks kept to their allocated timing and when bookings for these would be taken and also when the sales areas would be open. The short talk problems might be alleviated if both the lectures and short talks took place in the main lecture hall, which was possible and it was thought that the sound proofing was such that sales could take place during the short talks without being intrusive. It was also said that all speakers should set up their equipment well in advance of being required and that all speakers needed to be contacted on what of their own equipment they would be providing and what format/media source the talk would use. They would also be asked if they were willing to have a copy of their talk auctioned off under the same conditions as previous conventions (**JA**). It was also said that all equipment used had to have a PAT certificate. This raised the question whether the university had facilities which would allow the plugging in of a memory stick and also had head microphones. This would be checked (**DK**). Board members were reminded that they were providing the raffle prizes. Mr Arnold aimed to list the auction lots in the programme and Mr Kirkbright would need this so that he could provide any necessary forms for certain donors to complete so that Gift Aid could be claimed on the proceeds of the auction and also for the list to be set up for the actual auction (**JA/DK**). Mr Arnold said that the 'goody bag' content was going well.

15. **Marketing Officer:**

A text had been received by Mr Hildyard from Mr Gander for this meeting stating that there was little change from what was reported at the A.G.M.

16. **Seed Purchaser:**

Mr Arthurs said that seed purchases for the coming season were in progress and that he was also progressing beginner's seed batches for sending out to new members.

14/16 **2015 SOCIETY CALENDAR**

Mr Hildyard said that progress was currently minimal but he would shortly start chasing for competition submissions (**BH**).

14/17 **FUTURE PUBLICATIONS**

There were no publications currently planned apart from the **Stapeliad** book which should be available by the Convention.

14/18 **TO APPOINT A SOCIETY TREASURER FOR 2014/15**

Mr David Kirkbright was nominated for the post by Mr Harris, seconded by Dr Tebbenham and appointed unanimously.

14/19 **CURRENT PROGRESS ON BRANCH INFORMATION CD**

Dr Gibbs said that he was compiling a list of subjects to be included and would then start making revisions, inclusions, etc. to the proposed CD. It was suggested that the information should also appear on the Society website and in hard copy.

14/20 **REVISION OF CRITERIA/AIMS FOR THE 'BRANCH OF THE YEAR AWARD'**

During initial discussion on this it felt that emphasis of the award should be for the best innovative idea/action (suggested title: Best Innovation of the Year), either by one or more branches or a zone. From this a series of action points were developed from a list suggested by Dr Tebbenham and based on the initial outline criteria that appeared in the September 2013 journal. These action points included suggested innovations/ideas, these ideas in action, their potential benefits to the branch or Society, evidence of their success by demonstration and recording and their potential for use by other branches. Dr Gibbs agreed to take these away and draw up an outline guide. This would be circulated to this Board for any further comment before being publicised within the Society via the September journal.

14/21 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Rule Change – A suggested change to rule 7(a)(i) which reduced the number of annual Trustees from 4 to 3 was proposed by Mrs Mace and seconded by Mr Arnold. The signed proposal was then passed to Mr Harris. It would appear in the December journal and then be submitted, along with any subsequent amendments, for approval at the A.G.M.
2. National Show Memorial Trophy – A query had been received whether the donation of a memorial trophy would be acceptable to the Society. However, it was said that we were reducing our current list of trophies and that a memorial fund set up in the member's name for use at National Shows would be more acceptable.
3. Proposed E.U. Regulation on the Sale of Reproduction Materials – Mr Arthurs gave an update on the progress of this. It had been considered by 2 E.U. sub-committees, both of which had agreed to abolish or change the proposed law. However, the revised proposals were even stricter and despite the committees rejecting them, they were then sent to the E.U. Parliament to vote on. The M.E.P.'s had already decided that they were not sufficiently expert to make a decision and had added a further 1,700 suggested amendments prior to the vote, which were apparently ignored. Meanwhile the European 'Green Party' had done its own investigation and discovered that most of the proposals was supported by 5 of the biggest world-wide seed producers and would give them a virtual monopoly. The M.E.P.'s voted that they were unable to make a decision and the proposal was referred back to the commissioners. It was possible that another vote would take place, but it could be that the final decision might lie with the commissioners. It was thought that whatever happens in the future, nothing would be finalised for at least 2 years. This was supported by information given to Bryan Goodey of Southfield Nurseries who attended a recent meeting attended by D.E.F.R.A. We would need to keep an eye on the situation.
4. Voting Fellows panel – It was suggested that this panel was in need of updating and that 3 of the names were replaced by other Fellows who it was thought were more aware of the current running of the Society.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 4.25pm.

NEXT MEETING: 2nd August 2014 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 1p.m.