

BRITISH CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, held on Saturday 4th December 2010 at 11.00 a.m.
at the Holiday Inn, Milton Keynes, Bucks.

<u>Present:</u>	Mr John Arnold (JA)	Chairman
	Dr Alasdair Glen (AG)	Vice-Chairman
	Mr David Kirkbright (DK)	Treasurer
	Mr Eddy Harris (EH)	Secretary
	Mr Tony Morris (TM)	Membership Secretary
	Mr David Quail	Advertising Officer & Journal
	Dr Tony Mace (AM)	Publications & Internet Officer
	Mr Barry Tibbetts (BT)	Shows Committee Representative
	Mrs Suzanne Mace (SM)	Committee
	Mrs Alice Vanden Bon	Committee/Editorial Team
	Dr Roland Tebbenham (RT)	Committee
	Mr Bill Hildyard (BH)	Committee/Forum Moderator

AGREED VERSION

- 10/48 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
Dr Colin Walker and Mr Roy Mottram.
- 10/49 **MINUTES OF THE B.O.T. MEETINGS HELD ON 7TH AUGUST 2010**
These were formally ratified and signed after correcting 2 minor errors (minute 10/32 second sentence should read ‘...10th January 2011’ and minute 10/39 last line should read ‘...be reviewed before being distributed in the December Journal. It would be circulated to Zone Reps about 2 weeks before appearing in the Journal.’)
- 10/50 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**
None not dealt with under other matters.
- 10/51 **ELECTRONIC DECISION MAKING**
1. There had been some e-mail discussion about joining Botanic Gardens Conservation International (B.G.C.I.) but no conclusion had been reached. The Conservation committee had also discussed this and were not in favour as it was felt that it was not relevant to our work and offered no advantage to our Society. It appeared to be looking for local support in setting up the body. It was therefore agreed at this meeting that we would not join but would keep a watching brief on future progress.
- 10/52 **COMMUNICATIONS**
1. Next April’s A.G.M. – Mr Harris had received 1 nomination for President, 1 nomination for Chairman and 1 nomination for Vice-Chairman. All had been suitably proposed and seconded but cvs were required for the Chairman and Vice-Chairman positions. It was agreed that the outgoing Officers, including the President, would not retire until the meeting was over. The Hampshire/Dunn Memorial lecture would be given by Frans Noltee, subject to be advised and it was suggested that we need to publicise it effectively, make it more attractive to the membership and thus help to improve attendance. *Post meeting update – a second nomination plus cv for Chairman had now been received.*
2. Rule Changes – A series of changes had been received which would now appear as a December Journal insert.
3. Bequests – It had been learned that the Society had received a bequest from the estate of a late member, details of which would appear in the Journal.
4. Awards – No applications received since the last meeting. There should be more next year.
- 10/53 **REPORTS OF OFFICERS**
1. **Vice-Chairman:**
a) Dr Glen reported that there had been no fresh problems relating to branches and Zones but that Peter Burton was the new Rep. for Zone 3 and that Zones 8 and 13 were to merge with Peter Arthurs as their Rep. The remaining members of Warrington and Mid Cheshire branches had been smoothly absorbed into Southport and Macclesfield branches respectively. Thanks to Messrs Arthurs and Hildyard, a Zone Reps area had been created on the Society forum. There was some discussion on possible problems on points raised in the paper addressing the Zone structure. Mr Kirkbright agreed to add a further paragraph which would help clarify/resolve the perceived problems.
b) The Speakers List had one less speaker but had gained 4 new talks. He had had no reports of speakers not fulfilling their engagements following his appeal on this at the October General Meeting.
c) In view of the proposed update of the Secretaries Pack, he said that a start had been made, in conjunction with John Arnold, in standardising the job descriptions and terms of reference currently available and chasing any missing ones.
d) There had been a query about a ‘roving exhibition team’ for an event to be held in Bristol. This team did not exist and although it was suggested that the query may have arisen from an item in the Terms of Reference for the Shows Committee, this was generally thought not to be so. It was also said that there were sets of display boards available and the Society could provide a grant if required. However it was down to local branches to plan and man such displays.
2. **Membership Secretary:**
a) Mr Morris reported that since August 2010 he had enrolled 62 new members, comprising 47 Full, 9 Senior, 5 Associate

and 1 Junior, 16 of whom had also subscribed to Bradleya. Of these, 9 were from overseas (including for the first time 1 from Costa Rica) and he had also reinstated 7 former members. This made a total of 191 new members since 1st December compared with 228 for the same period last year. 51 of these new members joined via the internet. The renewal reminder exercise by David Kirkbright was still proving important although renewals from this had become very late this year.

- b) Work on a new Welcome Pack was in progress with more colour included. Discussion on this covered what should be included, that it was in urgently need of updating and should be in A5 booklet form and include a packet of seeds. It was suggested that it be available for Spring next year and that once finalised, could be sold by branches to the general public as well. It was also agreed that we switch to a coloured membership form.
- c) He reported no major problems apart from losing his broadband twice and the credit card reader malfunctioning. However he did report that there was a falling off in Bradleya subscriptions which led to a very brief discussion of possible reasons, but it was agreed that in the absence of Dr Walker, further discussion would be deferred until the February meeting.

3. **Treasurer:**

- a) **Membership** - Mr Kirkbright reported that membership to date for this year compared with the same period last year was: Full 1838 (-133), Senior 894 (+5), Junior 10 (-3), which taken together the Full and Senior members were 128 down. Associate membership was 258 (-1) whilst the Bradleya position was unclear at this time of year so no figures were given.
- b) **Accounts** - The 2009/10 accounts had been audited and the various Charity and Journal reports compiled. These showed a net surplus of £25,579 for the year and total Society assets of £283,041.
- c) **Books** - *Echeveria* book sales after 28 months now needed £2,200 (64 copies) to break even, but the *Stapeliad* book had more than covered its costs after less than 6 months. The *Lithops* book had only been on sale for 2 months but had already exceeded its breakeven point by £2,000.
- d) **Aloe Monograph** - The members discount on this would be 30% as originally agreed and publication would be in April, the flyer appearing in the December journal. The discount would only apply if the application is received on the official form with the December Journal and it was thought that more than 1 book could be ordered per form. The German Society had expressed an interest and it had been agreed with Kew Publishing that whilst it would be appropriate to offer their Society a discount as a bookseller, which would be at the same level as ours, they could then decide what discount they would give their members. It would be inappropriate to offer their members the same discount as ours since they were not putting up the funds for publication. Mr Kirkbright had stressed that there must be a better deal for B.C.S.S. members or there was no incentive for us to fund such a project. We had agreed that there was nothing to stop B.C.S.S. members in Germany or other countries ordering through our scheme but it was felt these would be a fairly small number.
- e) **PayPal** - Mr Kirkbright gave an explanatory survey of our web sales via this company. This had risen from £1,927 in 2007 to £9,750 in 2010. In 2010 charges for the service averaged 4.25% and sales comprised Books and Publications (£7,266), Bradleya (£1,008), Back Journals (£430), Convention (£775), Seeds (£176) and Miscellaneous (£95).
- f) **Accommodation Payments** - It was agreed that these would remain unchanged from last year with one current exception.

4. **Shows Committee:**

- a) **Judges Course** - Mr Tibbetts reported that 45 people attended this resulting in a Society subsidy of £210.47. It had been very successful with positive feedback from attendees, the suggestions made to be reviewed by the Shows Committee including ideas on how to help branches stage more shows and improve those already undertaken. The judging tests resulted in 18 passing the Cactus section (4 of which passed for the first time) and 15 the succulent section. Next year's course was booked with Moulton College for 2-4th September 2011, cost to be unchanged at £125. This would be advertised in the next Journal.
- b) **2012 National Show** - Arrangements for this were in progress, the Method Statement and Risk Assessment having been reviewed with minor changes, the final draft of the schedule reviewed and approved after minor changes and a list of possible judges drawn up for finalising at the next meeting. Cambridge branch were to be contacted and a meeting arranged for the spring of 2011 regarding an organising committee. It was hoped that with continued contact with Anne Swithinbank, we might be able to persuade her to open the show and/or present trophies and medals.

5. **Conservation Committee:**

- a) Dr Maddams reported said Messrs Paul Hoxey and Ray Stephenson had filled the two vacancies on the Committee.
- b) Thanks were expressed to the Haworthia Society for a donation of £1,200 towards the project concerning *Haworthia magnifica 'splendens'*. This had resulted in the project cost being able to be approved within their remit and the remaining monies authorised.
- c) A proposal regarding a new form of *Matucana oreodoxa* would be somewhat delayed due to the botanist involved yet to visit the site.
- d) An additional project proposal for the conservation of *Pilosocereus robinii* had been received from the group at the National Botanic Gardens, Cuba and was awaiting appraisal.
- e) A project relating to *Discocactus* was still in preparation.
- f) **Ex-Situ Conservation** - effective planning for this was in progress, the first objective being to create a greater awareness of the problem. Publication of John Arnold's article 'Where there's a Will' would appear in the March 2011 Journal, to be followed by a letter to all branch secretaries asking them to ensure that it was widely read and appreciated by their members. A concise list of advice for branches had already been compiled but its circulation will be delayed until the committee judged that it will make an impact. By that time an article in preparation by the Southend branch chairman should have appeared in the Journal and should act as a stimulus for other branches to follow their lead.

6. **Research Committee:**

Mr Hill reported that support of two new projects had been agreed; one in Cuba to survey for 3 critically endangered *Leptocereus (Leptocerei leonii, scopulophilus and wrightii)* and to work on strategies on their conservation, the other an investigation of the genetic and morphological diversity and phylogeography of the group of species allied to *Discocactus*

placentiformis which would foster knowledge of both the group and the genus as a whole and also serve to accurately assess the needed conservation of each distinct species in the group. Two other projects were yet to be considered were firstly the study of the hardy cacti at the northern limit of **Cactaceae** distribution, focusing mainly on the **Opuntioids** of Canada. This was unusual in that it would form part of the assessment of someone studying for a diploma at Kew. The other was to study the stem anatomy of *Leptocerei scopulophilus* and *wrightii* and was being considered on scientific grounds. This had raised the question of how much B.C.S.S. members would be interested in what was a very narrow specialist field.

Three other projects had also raised questions, one on a preliminary survey of the genus *Ledebouria* Roth (**Hyacinthaceae**) in the Kaokoveld, Namibia (general query about the classification of succulents), the other two both concerning *Pilosocereus robinii* (questions about our attitude to research on a problem, followed by another on conservation of the taxon). This had resulted in a 'Thought Document' on guidance criteria for assessment which had just been distributed to members of both the Research and Conservation committees.

Following a query about the minutes of both committees being distributed to the B.O.T., it was stated that whilst the Conservation Committee did issue minutes, the Research Committee did not have formal meetings but operated via email, telephone and occasional personal contact and therefore did not issue minutes. Mr Hill was happy to ensure the B.O.T. members appeared on the circulation of the former minutes in future.

7. **Advertising/Journal Production Officer:**

- a) **Advertising** – Mr Quail reported that the 4th quarter advertising income was £477 (£424 last year) primarily due to Koehres advertising again
- b) **Journal Production** – He said Charlesworth had produced the September journal without any quality problems. Presstream postal service was used for all UK deliveries but as a result of damage limitation by Messrs Kirkbright and Morris, an error, whereby the 3rd line of the address was omitted, did not stop all UK members receiving their journal as far as was known. Similarly, no further problems were known with overseas journals now that Charlesworth have changed their U.S.A. consolidator. A meeting was to be held with Charlesworth before Christmas to review the 2 journals they have printed this year, plus the 2 books, and to consider plans for 2011, and they had been reminded that as holders of ISO 9001 they should have noticed the address problem. Castle Colour was to print the December journal and as a result of continued pressure by us, believed they have resolved the excessive cover 'greening' of the June issue. We were awaiting the results. It was agreed that, subject to the satisfactory resolution of outstanding issues and acceptable pricing, we should continue the current printing schedule arrangement with both printers for 2011. The December journal (80 pages plus inserts) was with the printers and all proofs had been checked and signed off. Philip Barker had had continuing computer problems which had resulted in delays in the preparation of branch reports and then reduced layout time available for the Newsletter so Mrs Vanden Bon had undertaken the layout work that Joel Robinson had been unable to do due to lack of spare time. Stephen Morris had been able to help this quarter but not Steven Penfield. Philip and Joel would be given further support to enable them to reach the required level of technical competence and speed of work.

8. **Bradleya Editor:**

Dr Walker in a written report said that he had been pro-active in soliciting more items on cacti for Bradleya 29 and its expected content was currently 7 items, details of which were given. 6 other items might be possibilities (details supplied) but these items were yet to be received.

9. **Journal Editor:**

- a) Mr Mottram in a written report said that the rate of new article submission had again slowed but that he had sufficient material to fill the March issue. He said that the December one was on schedule despite the Branch News arriving 2 weeks late. The issue would be a Convention special with 80 pages as against the usual 60 and the front cover is also Convention themed. He gave a list of articles in hand, their current status and planned publication dates, one of which was a welcome article from Victor Gapon, editor of the Moscow Cactus Club, on the rare and misunderstood *Gymnocalycium gaponii*, which would appear in next year's March or June issue.
- b) He gave the current status of the e-library, it now being 21GB in size. He had added many further items to it, including pdfs of all succulent related articles from the journals Acta Botánica Mexicana, Darwinia, Revista Mexicana de Biodiversidad and Archives of Natural History among others. He had also started scanning plates from Curtis's Botanical Magazine, having completed 26 to date. Some donations of pdfs had been made by authors of articles and these were very welcome. He had also added a link to the CWelibrary homepage and the BCSS Membership subscription page in his introduction. No supplies had been made in the last quarter, only 1 enquiry had been made, yet to turn into a request.

10. **Publications/Internet Officer:**

- a) **Internet** – Dr Mace said that last year the Society had paid for a larger disc to be installed on our server for use by the publication team, slide library and other work on digital presentations. There was still spare capacity, but this had now been recently upgraded from a 250Gb to a 1Tb disc. Due to lack of space on the machine for additional storage discs, this had led to a number of problems being experienced by users, which had led to an increased work load for Dr Mace, but these problems were currently being resolved. Mr Hildyard said that the seed list was ready to appear on our web site.
- b) **Publications** – It was reported that much activity had taken place since the last meeting. Stocks of the Lithops book (2nd edition) had been received. *Lithops* and *Stapeliads* were selling well. Income for the July/September quarter was around £15,371. Bulk orders from our usual sources, except one, had been received and dispatched.

11. **Update on the Society Future Projects:**

- a) **Slide Library** – Dr Tebbenham reported on progress to date. He said that the set up and process guide for the new scanner/laptop was complete and these were to be passed to Mike Stansbie. He detailed the current progress on digitising 12 slide sets and he had assembled additional material to help maintain the original programme of Sonia Barker Fricker

(SBF). Peter Arthurs would develop talks from these and the commentaries. He said that he had received a box of colour prints from the estate of Mr McMillan and was negotiating possible copyright issues with the late Peter Chapman's daughter for his slides, which she wished to donate to the Society. He had also received a Powerpoint presentation from Mr Mottram. He was also in discussion with Paul Klassen who was to produce *Dudleya* programmes using his own and selected images from SBF. He, David Kirkbright and David Greenaway were in discussion on how to organise and price the production and delivery of CDs for branches.

- b) Society Promotion – Dr Keeling, a teacher, had volunteered to extend the Junior Website to be suitable for Key–stages 3 & 4 plus ideas for a school outreach initiative and planned to use his pupils to test these. He also gave details of the progress on the 7 critical/higher priority items and the 6 medium/lower priority ones. There had been no further progress on recruiting a Marketing Manager, nothing further being heard from the two possible volunteers. It was suggested that the title be changed and the job be split where possible so that it became a team effort to encourage more possible volunteers.
- c) Branch Promotional CD – He had circulated a paper on this prior to the meeting which gave details of what the Trustees considered/prioritised what should appear on this, plus any comments on these. He said there were still items to be sorted but felt that where possible the CD should contain multi–choice options for some of its content to suit local requirements, but should still maintain a corporate image. Somebody was needed to undertake this and it was agreed that all Trustees look again at the prototype CD already circulated. Mr Hildyard was willing to set up the CD navigation and web links.

12. **Society Convention Review:**

A post–convention committee meeting had been held, the minutes of which had been distributed. This contained a number of conclusions and a series of recommendations. The former concluded that it had been a social and financial success, with some 180 delegates and showing a small profit of some £1,000, the venue had been more than adequate, with a few minor exceptions, and that some aspects needed to be addressed to ensure that the next one would be run even better. The latter recommended that another Convention be held, although a new committee needed to be chosen as there were only one or two of the current committee willing to continue, but the outgoing members were willing to act in an advisory capacity. The recommendations also included a list of suggested action points to help improve the event. An early booking of the venue and possible speakers would need to be made, but most of the remaining preparations need not start until some 2½ years before the event. This would also enable adequate publicity of the event via the Forum and Journal. At this meeting, several Board members expressed an interest in helping to organise the next one and the point was made that if possible we should try to make the Convention an event to appeal to more Members if we could separate the sales and displays from the Convention lectures and then invite all Members to have free access to these. The possibility of increased plant sales may tempt some sellers who felt this year's Convention sales were unviably low to attend next time.

10/54 **POSSIBLE SOCIETY PROBLEMS**

This was a topic designed to cover any potential problems that the Society might encounter now and in the future. There was a general discussion on various points including any damage limitation that might be taken and Mr Arnold agreed to check on how current legislation might affect the Society's responsibilities. It was asked that all Trustees be kept involved in any possible problems.

10/55 **E.B.S.C.O. & DOPPLER PRESS**

1. E.B.S.C.O. – This was a company that published an on-line index of various publications of the members of their organisation. There was a small financial advantage to E.B.S.C.O. members if their publications were ordered and they had offered us membership. Mr Kirkbright had contacted the C.S.S.A. who had had experience of this company and was waiting a reply. It was felt that we should delay any decision until more is known, say until the February meeting.
2. Doppler Press – This had offered to provide small print runs on any publication once they had digitised it. Mr Kirkbright said that Charlesworth now offered a similar facility. It was suggested that perhaps we should get Charlesworth to do a small reprint of the *Anacampteros* book of say 200 copies.

10/56 **FUTURE PUBLICATIONS**

Two possible publications for the Society were suggested. The first was one authored by the group that had recently received a Conservation grant in Cuba and entitled 'The Cacti of Cuba'. Currently known details of this were given (approximately 125 pages in size, English/Spanish text, print run of 700/800 copies and text, pictures and initial layout by the authors). It was thought the authors only wanted a royalty payment. Details would be distributed to members of the Editorial team. The other was a publication that Mr Mottram had been toying with on *Borzicacti*. Mr Arnold would check with Mr Mottram about this. It was suggested that the topic be discussed further at the next B.O.T. meeting. It was also said that we should take delivery of the remaining Castle Colour stored stock of books a.s.a.p. We also needed to reduce our current stored book stock before taking on further publications, although it was said that there was spare storage available.

10/57 **REAPPOINTMENT OF EDITORS, EDITORIAL TEAM, MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY, ANCILLARY OFFICERS, CONSERVATION & RESEARCH COMMITTEES**

All current incumbents were reappointed en bloc. Incumbents were as the current list of Officials.

10/58 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Gordon Rowley – Details for celebrating his 90th birthday on 31st July 2011 were given and possible guests were 3 (possibly all 4) of the *Aloe* book authors. Details were given of possible sources of a suitable cake for the event.

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

NEXT MEETING: 5th February 2011 at the Holiday Inn, London Road, Newport Pagnell, MK16 0JA (just off junction 14 of M1). It would start at 11a.m. and light refreshments would be served at 1p.m.