

BRITISH CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, held on Saturday 7th December 2013 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 Al Laius (AL)	CactusWorld Editor
	Mr Barry Tibbetts (BT)	Shows Committee Representative
	Mrs Alice Vanden Bon (AVB)	Journal Production Officer
	Dr Tony Mace (TMa)	Publications Officer
	Mr Bill Hildyard (BH)	Forum & Website Administrator
	Mr John Arnold (JA)	Legal Advisor
	Mr John Gander (JGa)	Marketing Officer
	Mrs Suzanne Mace (SM)	Committee
	Dr Roland Tebbenham (RT)	Committee
	Mr Peter Arthurs (PA)	Committee

AGREED VERSION

13/34 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

13/35 MINUTES OF THE B.O.T. MEETING HELD ON 28TH SEPTEMBER 2013

These were formally ratified and signed after correction of 1 small typo error (corrected on the signed copy).

13/36 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

13/25/1 R.H.S. Wisley Meeting – Dr Tebbenham asked if there had been any feedback on this, but it was said that we had not been represented and that minutes of the meeting were yet to be received.

13/25/3 Awards – All those agreed at our last meeting had now been presented.

13/26/9(b) JSTOR Digital Archive – Mr Laius said that this was in progress, but access to the digitised files was not yet available.

13/37 ELECTRONIC DECISION MAKING

Logo – An email request from a new nursery asking if it could use our logo to provide a link to our website had been received and although this had been agreed on a no charge basis, Mr Harris asked which one should be offered. It was agreed that he should offer both the current and the new banner type ones, but emphasise that their use should not suggest our endorsement of their products (**EH**).

13/38 COMMUNICATIONS

1. Another email and some hard copy correspondence had been received from Peter Cowdell.
2. Awards – 1 A.O.M award was agreed.

13/39 REPORTS OF OFFICERS

1. Vice-Chairman:

- a) Dr Gibbs reported on the Zone Reps meeting in October and the points raised there. One was branch discontent at the Sheffield 'initiative' where it was felt that other branches work just as hard, but don't publicise themselves as strongly, but it was felt that, dependent on local conditions, utilisation of some of the ideas should be encouraged. Others concerned Zone reps who were not doing an effective job being replaced (a function of the affected Zone), the setting up of a deputy rep. in Zones where distance/travelling time did not enable visits to all their branches, Zones having an effective constitution (not all Zones had this or it had fallen into disuse) and the possible geographical rearrangement of the current Zones to improve liaison. There was also discussion on ex-situ conservation and the role of the Zone rep in this, although it was felt that the Conservation Committee could help by providing a list of people with an interest in documented plants or with specialist collections. Other points raised was the need to publicise branch syllabuses to other local Societies; that the eventual removal of the slide library would disadvantage some branches; and the possibility of funding emergency visits to branches where the Zone Rep. felt this was necessary. Mr Kirkbright said that this was possible provided he was informed of the facts and reasons for doing this. It was also said that the Society would provide a grant for a branch display at a major event provided an itemised estimate was provided with any request.

- b) Secretary's Pack – He had obtained a copy of this and had digitised it prior to updating the contents and including items suggested by the Futures Committee. It would then be issued both as electronic and hard copies. It was then asked as to the current progress of the Secretary's information disc which would contain specific information/formats and documents useful to secretaries as discussed at a number of previous meetings of this committee. It was said that the information currently available would not work in its current form and needed modification/updating.

- c) Calendar – There had been discussion at the Zone Reps meeting where it was said that 2 or 3 of the pictures were not great. In addition John Ellis had been in touch with him on the same subject and had provided suggestions and website information that would help improve both the judging and the pictures provided. Mr Hildyard said that he felt that as the organiser of the competition from which the calendar pictures were chosen, perhaps they should have contacted him, but he would speak to Mr Ellis. Following discussion on next year's competition and its judging, several names were suggested either as judges or organisers. Dr Glen would contact one of his former branch members and secretary who might be a suitable judge (**AG**).

2. **Membership Secretary:**
Mr Morris stated that since September 2013 he had enrolled 36 new members, 12 of whom had also subscribed to Bradleya (a particularly high percentage). These comprised 23 Full, 10 Senior, 2 Associate, and 1 Junior. Of these, 7 were from overseas (America, China, Austria, Australia, Malta and Spain) and 2 had joined using the Welcome Pack reduced price offer (making 36 to date). He had also re-instated 4 former members. Overseas enrolment numbers had improved slightly (6 for the same period last year) and the total enrolment figure was the same as last year. The 2013 renewal rate of members who had joined in 2012 was some 59%. Non-delivery of mail had again been a problem, including the loss of several Bradleyas, a Welcome Pack and membership details to a new member of Dublin branch.
3. **Treasurer:**
- Membership** – Mr Kirkbright reported that current membership compared with last year was: Full 1,587 (-122), Senior 979 (+33), Junior 25 (+3), which when added together, the Journal taking membership total was 2,591 (-86). Associate membership was 214 (-21) and 95 Full members had switched to Senior and 31 the other way. Bradleya numbers were meaningless at this time of year. New memberships during the October/November special offer period were almost the same as last year (37 in 2013 compared with 38 in 2012).
 - Journal Issues** – Charlesworth did reduce the bill for the September issue by £500 but a large part of the final bill (£2053) remained unpaid due to unresolved issues. David Quail was meeting with the Charlesworth management next week to get resolution to unanswered questions and approximately half the journal production bill and the charge for the unauthorised change of mailing company used remained unpaid. The latter change resulted in incorrect cover sheets being used. He had agreed the estimate for the December journal production which was an exceptionally large issue, costing an extra £1,280 to produce plus additional postage.
 - Convention 2014** – To date 106 residential and 7 non-residential bookings (including speakers and 4 of the organising committee yet to book) had been received, including 36 sales tables. 5 Trustees were yet to book. He had put an item on BCSS Announce that late booking could result in no places being available, but with little effect to date. He now needed to check with the University what their current policy on cancellations was to avoid cost penalties on unused rooms.
 - Calendar** – From current known returns, there was a current shortfall of around £250 to break-even point. There appeared to be a lack of branch based ordering for it and this should be addressed for next year's calendar. Dr Tebbenham showed a calendar that had been sold at the Birmingham Show. Picture and paper quality was very good and this printing source and any special offers would be investigated for next year's calendar.
 - Publications** – The situation with the free reprint of the *Agave* book was still unclear and to date no payment to the printers had been made. It was known that some replacement copies were still outstanding and the stock position remaining with the printers was very uncertain. Sales to date were in line with our estimates and approximately 60% of its cost had already been recovered, whilst only 40% of the cost of 'Succulents in Nature' had been recovered so far.
 - Annual accounts** – These had been produced and audited and were then signed by the authorised signatories at this meeting. They would now be prepared for inclusion in the March A.G.M. notice. He said that despite his appeal at the September meeting, he still had to chase certain officers for their year-end information and that if this happened next year, was inclined to name the defaulters and qualify the accounts, which were a statutory document, to the effect that they were incomplete due to non-provision of information. Mr Harris proposed and Mrs Mace seconded that the accounts be accepted and this was passed unanimously. Mr Tebbenham suggested that future versions of the Trustees report should be more balanced.
4. **Shows Committee:**
- Judges Course** – Mr Tibbetts reported that the tests had resulted in 3 new C & S judges, 1 Cacti only judge and 1 Succulent only judge. The 2014 course had been booked for 29th to 31st August, but that due to an increase from Moulton College, the price would be £140. Experienced judges had again been asked take a novice judge with them where possible to give them guidance/experience, any additional expenses incurred in doing so to be met by the National Treasurer.
 - 2012 National Show DVD** – Dr Mace said that these were down to the last 22 copies.
 - Handbook of Shows 10th Edition** – After consultation with those on the Judges Course and other experts, a final edition had now been compiled after input and correction from David Neville and others. Most of this was due to the original file of the 9th edition supplied not being its final version and containing many of the found errors. This had now been passed to Mrs Vanden Bon to be laid out in our house style and printing quotes obtained. Due to her current workload this would not happen before the New Year (it had been hoped to have it available for January 1st 2014), but would be ready in time for the Society A.G.M. Mr Charles had offered to do the work but this committee thanked Mr Charles for his offer but decided to leave it with Mrs Vanden Bon to complete. As a result it had been agreed that for 2014 either version could be used provided the schedule stated which version was to be used, but that only the 10th edition would be valid from January 1st 2015. This would also be stated in the Handbook.
5. **Conservation Committee:**
- Dr Maddams in a written report said that a tenuous contact with a botanist in the Mexican state of Tamaulipas was being strengthened in the hope that a conservation project might be forthcoming.
 - Ex-Situ Conservation** – Information was still being collected on this, both on methods and the problems arising in the process, with the intent of providing another article for CactusWorld expanding on the limited advice previously given
 - New E.U. Regulation on the Sale of Reproduction Materials** – Mr Harris had informed him of this proposed new regulation and in reply Dr Maddams said that he felt that most likely this would not affect our hobby. He said that more influential bodies such as the R.H.S., Horticultural Trader Association, National Farmers Union and other concerned parties had met to draw up a series of changes to the proposal and these would form the basis of a formal amendment to be presented by D.E.F.R.A. on behalf of the U.K. when the legislation came before the E.U. Agriculture & Rural Affairs Committee in early 2014. However, members of this committee were of the opinion that any amendment might not be accepted and that it could affect our hobby and some nurseries and therefore members should make their views known to their MEPs.
 - Travelling Scholarship** – Mr Arnold said that the committee had had offers of help in administering this from a number of prominent members of the Society.

6. **Research Committee:**

Mr Hill in a written report gave details of the proposal from Dr Olwen Grace which had now been received and would cost £3,419. The research committee felt that the Society should fund this completely, although it was over the current limit of £2,000. In view of the current healthy state of the Fund and current lack of projects, this was unanimously agreed by this committee, with the proviso that articles for both Bradleya and CactusWorld be provided as originally stated.

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

- a) Advertising – Mr Quail in a written report said that the 4th quarter advertising income was £289, compared with £310 for the same time last year, and that there had been no change in the number of series-of-4 advertisers for this quarter.
- b) CactusWorld Production Trainees – He said that Sheila Cude had not only coordinated the December branch reports, but had also laid out the B.C.S.S. News in Quark with some induction training and supervision by him. As she already has considerable experience in Quark, she would need only minimal further involvement from him for future quarters. He hoped to accelerate Christian Bohm's training early in the New Year.
- c) September Journal Printing Problems – Progress on these with Charlesworth was slow and becoming heated, but a meeting had been arranged with them for 17th December to review these in detail and hopefully agree a financial settlement, as the relevant invoices remained unpaid. In view of this Mr Kirkbright had made a part-payment on account. Two further printing companies were to be assessed for our journal printing and meetings were being arranged with them for late December/early January.

8. **Bradleya Editor:**

Mr Charles in a written report said that he had nothing to report concerning Bradleya 32 except that he had just one article so far. He said that it was interesting to see a full page review in the latest issue of KuaS by Detlev Metzger.

9. **Journal Editor:**

- a) Mr Laius reported that the December issue was on target and no problems anticipated. He had 25 articles in hand, 7 of which were already designed, 6 were awaiting design and 12 were work in progress. These should fill the March and June issues (and beyond). He said that plenty of material was coming in on features such as 'In my Greenhouse', 'Succulent Snippets' (predominantly on aspects of cultivation) and 'Cactus Talk' which members were using as a communication means in place of the old letters page. He did not envisage reinstating this as he felt that the Forum was an effective vehicle for discussion and chatter. He said that Sheila Cude was becoming an effective member of the production team.

10. **Technical Editor:**

Mrs Vanden Bon reported that the December journal was the largest she had compiled, a total of 96 pages (28 extra pages). Sheila Cude had prepared the entire B.C.S.S. Newsletter (12 pages) and liaison with Swallowtail, the printer, had been trouble free and on schedule; mailing date was due on 9th December. The team was slowly expanding but she said that currently she had sole responsibility for compiling the journal and currently had to arrange her holidays around the journal schedule, but there was at least one other member of the team that could possibly help at a pinch. This year's seed list proved to have problems, but thanks to help from Messrs Morris and Pilbeam, was eventually sorted. She had received the file of Version 10 of the Handbook of Shows and would arrange quotes from Swallowtail and a new printing firm in Wales, but processing the file would not happen until the New Year.

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

- a) Publications – Dr Mace reported that overall sales had picked up with strong sales to dealers in the U.S.A. and Europe. Calendar sales were steady if not spectacular, but should reach at least break-even especially if there was a boost after the December journal appeared. Our stock of 'Stapeliads' was now gone and it was agreed that a reprint be ordered either from Charlesworth, which did the original printing, or possibly another printer. It was said that John Pilbeam wanted to correct/add information if this is done, but it was agreed that any changes should be included as an addendum. Review copies of the new *Agave* book were yet to be mailed out. It was agreed that the stock of *Agave* books held by Lavenham be delivered to our book store which now had space available and we would then know what our stock of correctly printed books was (**DK**).
- b) Internet/Server – He said that the bandwidth and disc space had been increased for a few branch sites which were running Wordpress or CMS software, but there was no cost implication due to the small number. Updates for the 2014 branch programmes were beginning to come in and would be handled by himself or Sheila Cude, although there were other people he could call on if necessary. He said there had been problems with hacked accounts on the server which had had phishing software installed, 2 of which involved branch accounts. These were due to account managers accessing them with an infected computer and those particularly vulnerable were those with multiple user access. He said that it was the responsibility of all users to ensure their anti-virus programmes were up to date and passwords were secure.

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

Dr Tebbenham reported the current progress on this stating that 32 programmes were now available, 4 were in progress and another 25 were being planned (details of these were given). He was currently scanning the late Vic Morris' 2,000 slides and had taken delivery of 900 annotated slides taken by the late Jan Meyer at this meeting. David Greenaway had given details of recent branch orders received: 11 digital files ordered by 6 branches and 3 slide sets by 3 branches. To date branches had bought 41 digital programmes since January 2012. This led to discussion on what to do with slides unused in the programmes and it was agreed that if annotated and scanned, they would form the basis of a reference picture bank for use by the Society and be held on the Society server. Dr Tebbenham had got agreement in principle from Dr Peter Brandham to donate some of his slide programmes to our library but needed to know which titles were pertinent.

13. **Forum/Website:**

Mr Hildyard said that there was not much to report on the website but hoped to tweak the site colours and header to incorporate something similar to the banner ad that he had produced. He identified areas that needed attention/updates and also said that the Forum was running without problems. It was intended to update the software and Society website as agreed

over the Xmas holiday and that he may then incorporate a few features that members would like to see (BH/PA/TMa). The Twitter and FaceBook sites were running okay, the former site showing more activity than the latter.

14. **2014 Society Convention Update:**

Mr Arnold said that the overseas speakers had made their flight arrangements, but final travel arrangements were yet to be received so that their collection and return could be organised. The programme was out with the other committee members for agreeing a final running order. He had been contacting people about the auction lots, usually by email where addresses were known, but response had been low to date. It was agreed that proceeds of the auction would be split 50/50 between the Society and the Conservation/Research Fund unless a lot was specifically identified for the latter. It was also agreed that donations would be accepted where the donor wished to get a percentage of any money the donation made and this was fixed at 50%. It had been also been asked that donation lots be predominantly plants. He wanted to list the lots in the convention handbook, having obtained the file of the last convention and was in the process of updating it. There had been little response from members of this committee but it was agreed that we would provide the raffle prizes. The adverts. for the December journal were prepared but guidance on what to include in the March issue would be appreciated. He wondered whether synopses of the talks should be included, although he felt that the titles were self-explanatory. Progress on the 'goody bag' was slow and discussion on-going and help on this would be appreciated. Suggestions on both the bag design and its contents were made by this committee and it was said that having a small excess of bags would not be a problem, as they could be sold at E.L.K. David Minion was laying out the floor plan from information supplied. Mr Arnold asked if we chose the menus or left this to the university and it was said that the former was the case. Similarly he was currently unaware of any specialist societies booking space and it was said that at the last one there were only 4 special interest displays in the conference hall, but we needed to establish the amount of available tabling. He also needed to recruit and compile a list of helpers for the event. It was said that we now need to sort out details of day tickets that and entry would be by colour coded name badges. It was also agreed that Dr Tebbenham would make a record of the talks and Trevor Wray asked to take the photographs.

15. **Marketing Officer:**

Mr Gander said that since September he had circulated the Membership Xmas Present flyer via B.C.S.S. Announce and was working on ways of encouraging branches to appoint a publicity officer and meeter/greeter at their meetings; ways of encouraging improved branch publicity; investigating suitable leaflet holders and banners for publicity use at B.C.S.S. and other events; and identifying suitable display boards for branch use to promote the Society. Messrs Hildyard and Gander would assess a suitable design of banner with a view to us purchasing up to 10 units (BH/JGa).

13/40 **SOCIETY PATRON**

Anne Swithinbank had emailed David Quail enquiring if she was our patron and had we also asked Tom Hart-Dyke. Dr Gibbs would contact Mr Quail to ask him to update her on current progress on this and ask her to publicise us. Dr Glen would officially write to Tom Hart-Dyke welcoming him as patron and it was agreed that we would send him a copy of the *Agave* book. Once this had been done, Mr Harris would write to them both, welcoming them to the Society, inviting them to both our A.G.M and Convention and outlining what we would expect from them and asking what they expected from us. It was agreed that they would both get our publications to keep them informed and ask them for a short profile to be published in the journal (AL). The appointment would also be publicised on our website, Forum, Twitter and FaceBook. Mr Arnold would compile a sample letter covering these points and circulate it to this committee (AG/EH/JA). It had been suggested that perhaps Tom Hart-Dyke might be invited to give the Hampshire/Dunn lecture but due to timing for this being critical, it was agreed that perhaps our President (Dr Colin Walker) be invited to do this and that Mr Harris would invite him to do so (EH). We would also need a further supply of membership forms with the Patrons' names included.

13/41 **ACCOMMODATION PAYMENT FOR 2013**

It was agreed that these would remain unchanged except that Sheila Cude be added as a Group 4 recipient.

13/42 **FUTURE PUBLICATIONS**

Dr Mace said that he had previously mentioned 2 proposals for new books of which he now felt that only 1 (on hybrid *Aloes*) might be a possibility, but a decision would be made once a draft copy was available for assessment. Other possibilities were a Gordon Rowley book on hybrids and it was said that John Pilbeam was working on further books, one of which was on *Tephrocacti*. However, nothing would be decided for numerous reasons until later next year.

13/43 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

1. Headed Notepaper – A further stock, suitably updated, was needed and a template made available which members could use to print their own. Messrs Arthurs and Kirkbright offered to produce the latter (PA/DK).
2. Archival Material – A Ms. Ellie Stephenson from Teesside was looking for early records of Society events for a project she was undertaking. It was suggested that Mr Rowley may be a suitable source for this (PA).
3. Dr Gibbs asked that if anybody was aware of which succulent plants were found by or named after Scottish people, would they let him know. Louise Bustard and Messrs Frew and Rowley were suggested as possible sources of information.
4. Branch Libraries – It was asked how members administered their branch library and several existing methods were explained and noted.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 4.55pm.

NEXT MEETING: 8th February 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.