

BRITISH CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, held on Saturday 9th February 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
	Dr Tony Mace (AM)	Publications & Internet Officer
	Mr Barry Tibbetts (BT)	Shows Committee Representative
	Mr John Arnold (JA)	Legal Advisor
	Mrs Suzanne Mace (SM)	Committee
	Mrs Alice Vanden Bon (AVB)	Committee/Journal Production
	Mr Bill Hildyard (BH)	Committee/Forum Moderator
	Dr Roland Tebbenham (RT)	Committee

AGREED VERSION

13/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None.

13/02 MINUTES OF THE B.O.T. MEETINGS HELD ON 1ST DECEMBER 2012

These were formally ratified and signed.

13/03 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

12/27/2 BBC Garden Online – It was asked how the work on our website was progressing so that Mr Harris could direct the BBC to this for the information they wanted and there was discussion on the current progress, which did need some updating, but would be completed in the near future. It was also said that the work being done by Peter Arthurs was still awaiting completion and that feedback from him on this was almost non-existent. It now needed to be completed on an urgent basis and he would be informed of this. (BH/AM/AVB). (See also minute 13/06/12)

12/44/2 Free Literature – The list had been reviewed and it was agreed which names should be removed from this.

12/44/10(b) Publications Store – The date for reducing the current stock was agreed as 4th March 2013 starting at 11 to 11.30 am.

12/44/13 Society Calendar – Details for this had been previously circulated and were finalised at this meeting. It would be an A4 landscape picture area and an A4 landscape calendar area which when opened up would give an A3 portrait presentation. It was agreed that other Society and picture information would also be included. It would be advertised in the September Journal and on the website. (BH)

12/47/2 R.H.S. Meetings of Specialist Societies – Mr Harris had contacted the R.H.S. and received an apology that the Society had not been included on the circulation of information on these. It was said that the local branch had been given the information on the understanding that this would be distributed within the Society but this had not happened. We were now included in any further and future distribution of information.

13/04 ELECTRONIC DECISION MAKING

None.

13/05 COMMUNICATIONS

1. Epiphyllum Society – Mr Harris had received an email from a non-member Mike Burrige enquiring if there was such a Society in the U.K. as he wished to form one if there wasn't and possibly that it be attached to our Society. Mr Harris was not aware of one and had replied stating that this would not be a problem. It was suggested that the enquirer also be put in touch with John Horobin and Dr Mark Preston. (EH)

2. R.H.S. Insurance – There was a query over this in that although we had received the certificates, it was not certain if these had been paid for, as the direct debit seemed to have been cancelled by the bank. Mr Harris was waiting for a reply from the R.H.S. as to whether we needed to pay before we started issuing the certificates to branches. (EH) *Post Meeting Update – This had now been resolved and certificates could now be issued.*

3. I.O.S. – The two yearly affiliation fee to the I.O.S. had recently been renewed.

4. Sheffield Branch – Another letter had been received from Peter Cowdell asking that the Board build on the publicity outlined in the December Journal and that he felt that such initiative should be driven from the top. He suggested that branches give short presentations to local youth organisations with a view to encouraging an interest in succulent plants and thus try to increase future membership. It was also said that following his tram exercise last year, he had now arranged for publicity posters to appear on his local buses and that he was in contact with local TV/radio garden programmes which might hopefully encourage more coverage of our type of plant and hence generate more interest. Mr Harris had replied to his letter stating that although the Board would certainly encourage branches, we also had other tasks to do and that this was the object of the recruitment of a Marketing Officer/team. Once this was achieved, this would be one of their prime tasks. However, we would send out details to all branch secretaries and Zone reps. (JG) It was also said that Peter had written to Gordon Rowley along the same lines and that Gordon had replied in an encouraging manner. Following on from a suggestion made by Mr Cowdell, it was agreed that we would have an annual monetary award for the branch that demonstrated the best incentive/idea that year. This would need a set of rules for deciding these and we would then let branches know of this by announcing this at the A.G.M. and in the Journal.

5. Bradleya Spam? Email – A website had appeared entitled Bradleya, which included details of our Society's officials, but

was publicising conferences that had nothing to do with our Society's Bradleya. It was thought that the originator had used the wrong I.S.S.N. number when setting up the site and once we knew how to contact that person, we would try to resolve the problem. (AM)

6. Awards – 1 A.O.M award was agreed but it was felt this should be upgraded to an R.H.M.A. The branch's agreement with this would be checked before doing so (EH).

13/06 REPORTS OF OFFICERS

1. Vice-Chairman:

Dr Gibbs raised concerns on two branches which had financial problems. One was having difficulty in accessing their finances following the death of their treasurer and currently any outgoings were being met by the chairman until this was resolved, the other seemed to have major difference between its income and expenditure and may run out of money. It was said that the former could have a temporary loan until their problem had been resolved. He said that Wiltshire branch had now filled all their main committee positions at their recent A.G.M and this should now resolve any potential problem. It was asked that branches inform Mr Harris of any change in officers; he would then let the appropriate officials know.

2. Membership Secretary:

Mr Morris stated that since December 2012 he had enrolled 39 new members, 7 of whom had also subscribed to Bradleya. These comprised 20 Full, 10 Senior, 4 Associate, 4 Junior and 1 Bradleya only. Of these, only 2 were overseas members (China and Holland), 3 re-instated former members and 2 had joined using the Welcome Pack reduced price offer. This compared with 55 in total for the same period last year, including 9 overseas members. He said that he had had a number of complimentary comments about the December Journal, one of which was read out, plus several expressing their thanks for the Board's work. He had also received a number of seed orders which he had passed to Jeff Capel and 1 renewal which he was unable to process due to lack of information on the form.

3. Treasurer:

- a) Membership – Mr Kirkbright reported that current membership compared with last year was: Full 1105 (-136), Senior 753 (+19), Junior 11 (+2), which when added together, the Journal taking membership total was 1869 (-115). Associate membership was 164 (-34) whilst 2012 Bradleya subscriptions were 405 (-11). 83 Full members had switched to Senior, 25 the other way. He said that this was a disappointing position given that we seemed to pick up members in the latter half of last year and he hope this would improve. *Meeting update: The latest Journal taking membership was now 1966, comprising 1170 Full, 785 Senior and 11 Junior members with more yet to be added, which would mean a membership similar or better than this time last year.* It was said that providing accurate figures at this time of year was always difficult. He said that this year he was able to email all branch secretaries about their trophy insurance, which was a big saving in postage and he would also use this method where possible for the reminders to un-renewed members which should produce a large saving on postage and his time.

4. Shows Committee:

- a) 2016 National Show – Mr Tibbetts reported that following comments on extending the show to a 2 day one, all exhibitors had been asked if they would support this. Of the 81 enquiries, 37 had replied, 18 would support the idea, 9 might but would not commit and 10 definitely would not. Other comments were for longer opening hours for the current 1 day format, running a convention in parallel with a 2 day show and the possible adverse reactions from traders to a 2 day format, based on observations at ELK. Following discussion by the Shows Committee, a list of 5 options was drawn up, this to be referred to this Board for its opinion. The options were (1) to retain the 2012 format (Friday/Saturday), (2) as (1) but with longer opening hours on the Saturday, (3) a 2 day show on the Saturday/Sunday with staging on Saturday morning, (4) 2 day show on Saturday/Sunday with staging on Friday afternoon, (5) 2 day show as (3) or (4) run in conjunction with a convention. He said that the committee felt strongly that whilst it was good to make a small profit, as a Society flagship event, this should not be a major factor in deciding its duration. Also if a loss was made, this should not be borne by the organising branch (currently Cambridge) which should be guaranteed a minimum fixed sum. Mr Harris had spoken to Wood Green and found that there was no cost addition in extending the hours and that it was possible to switch the days from Friday/Saturday to Saturday/Sunday (the latter had now been provisionally booked). Mr Kirkbright said that the branch payment arrangement had always been £250 plus a percentage of any profit above this. Discussion of these resulted in options 2 being thought acceptable and this would be made known to the Shows Committee. It was also said that there should be an improvement in quality of the photography and signage.
- b) 2012 National Show DVD – All material for this had been edited by Ian Thwaites and passed to John Foster to convert this ready for producing the DVD. Production was hopefully planned for release at the A.G.M.
- c) 2013 Judges Course – Details for this had now been finalised and confirmed and would be advertised in the Journal and on the Society website very shortly.
- d) Proposed 10th Edition of the Handbook of Shows – Ray Stephenson had collated all suggestions and views received and these were discussed by the committee. A draft copy of the new 10th Edition would be prepared for final discussion at the Judges Course, the aim being to produce the final version for January 1st 2014.

5. Conservation Committee:

- a) Dr Maddams in a written report said that no new conservation projects had been received.
- b) The possible funding for collections of importance and allied matters, raised at the B.o.T. meeting on 1st December 2012 will be considered at the next Conservation Committee meeting to be held on 16th March, together with any that may arise from the B.o.T. meeting on 9th February. He said that he now had a list of succulent National Plant Collections, which number thirty five, of which twenty three were succulents other than cacti. He also said that there was confusion in minute 12/44/5(b) over the term 'National Collection'. This commonly applied to collections approved by Plant Heritage but in minute 12/44/5(b) the term was also applied to other collections of horticultural and botanical value. It was correct that no formal lists of these existed and also, that some owners of such collections would not wish their names to appear in print.

Discussion on these points decided that whilst in principle we could not support all known commercial National Collections, there might be possible assistance for private ones if support was requested. There would need to be observable rules laid down for such support. It was also suggested that ex-situ conservation could be applied if a collection owner died to ensure that any relevant plants went to appropriate National Collection owners. It was also agreed that funding would be available to provide suitable information signage for public collections to improve interest.

6. **Research Committee:**

- a) Mr Hill in a written report said that a proposal from a French student, Florent Grenier, had been received. He was studying for his master's degree and planned to go to South Africa to study *Haworthias* in situ. The intent was to obtain a better understanding of the ecology and the differentiation of the elements of the subgenus *Haworthia* so as to infer hypotheses on the mechanism of their diversification. He had a supervisor in South Africa and was receiving advice from Bruce Bayer. A grant of £1000 has been granted subject to firming up of methodology and a detailed breakdown of costs, so correspondence would continue.
- b) David Lambie, chairman of the Research Committee, had attached a reasoned proposal to the report asking that the research grant available be raised from its current maximum of £1000 to a new maximum of £2000, as it was felt that the former was insufficient for most small projects and increasing this would encourage more applications. The Research Committee would of course limit the number of grants per year if too many were received. Work was in progress on preparing information for the Society website, i.e. a full list of project grants made by the Research Committee had been prepared, a website advert. was being prepared reflecting this proposed increase and the Research Committee members would also appear. Discussion by the Board agreed that both the Research and the Conservation grants be raised to £2000.

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

- a) Advertising – Mr Quail in a written report said that the 1st quarter advertising income was £593, compared with £695 for the same time last year, but that there had been no change in the number of series-of-4 advertisers for this quarter. He had still to find a replacement for his position and had tried to minimise the time required by reducing the deadline reminders to advertisers. He would continue the job at present, time permitting.
- b) Journal Production Trainees – He said that Jim Mercer had completed the training and joined the editorial team. The remaining trainees had made some progress, 2 having produced initial Quark files which meant that their training could now progress at a faster rate.
- c) B.C.S.S. Information Sheets – The article covering the Information Sheets had appeared in the December Journal and should form a basis for the new Marketing Officer to progress and develop when appointed.
- d) Journal Production – Mrs Vanden Bon reported that the March Journal would be another bumper one with 16 extra pages. She would not like this to happen every year as it would cause problems with our Journal binders not being able to accommodate a 2 year batch. She and David Quail had decided to stay with Charlesworth and Swallowtail Printers for a further year, for although Lavenham Press had provided a very financially advantageous alternative, they were untested to date and neither she nor Mr Quail had the time to do the acceptance testing required. The March Journal would be produced by Charlesworth. She also expressed concern about production of the June Journal and said that this needed to be addressed urgently. Steven Morris was still to purchase and install Quark 9 before he could take on the compilation work despite promises to do so (see also minute 13/06/9(b)).

8. **Bradleya Editor:**

Graham Charles reported that he had now bought a new computer which featured a solid state drive and this had made a significant difference to the speed and stability of Quark Xpress and photo editing. He also provided a list of the 12 expected articles showing their current state, but was doubtful if he would get them all processed in time for a May publication date. He needed to educate authors on the importance of deadlines.

9. **Journal Editor:**

- a) Mr Laius reported that after the March Journal had gone to print, he currently would have 21 articles in hand, 9 of which had already been designed and laid out, 7 required laying out and 5 were work in progress. He said that following an 'arm twisting' exercise he now had significantly more cactus articles, so he expected the March and June Journals to be evenly balanced. He also said that there was still a slight problem of a backlog of succulent based articles, with some authors having to wait up to 9 months or longer before their article was published. Priority was being given to taxonomical items. It was agreed that we stop publishing the author's postal address, just their email address and he also proposed to include an occasional technical term glossary in the Journal to assist readers.
- b) He was still concerned over who would be putting the June Journal together, as Steven Morris had yet to show his agreed commitment to do this. Jim Mercer, a previous trainee, had joined the team and was producing work to a high standard. There was then discussion on the production of the June Journal which Mrs Vanden Bon had already informed the committee that she would be unable to do due to a forthcoming holiday during the lead up of it going to the Printers. The bottom line would be that if Steven Morris did not do the compilation work then this would have to wait until she returned and the June Journal would be a month late. Mrs Vanden Bon agreed to confirm with Steven Morris whether he could take on this work or not. She would contact him again and if necessary Mr Kirkbright would contact him as well to emphasis this point. (AVB/DK)
- c) It was said that Mr Quail was willing to continue providing background help and supervising the training of potential editorial team members. The thanks of the Board were expressed for his continuing work on the Society's behalf.

10. **Publications/Internet Officer:**

- a) Internet – Dr Mace reported that work on transferring data from the old to new server was continuing and almost complete. All the B.C.S.S. accounts were on the new server, including those currently being tested by Peter Arthurs and for Bradleya. Disc space had been increased for the e-talk account, but would need considerably more for the additional talks. The main Web/forum space had also been increased, as had that for the Journal team. This latter one he would

reconfigure as a separate account at some point in the future. These would involve a small additional cost to the Society. The move had involved a very large increase in his time involvement and technical expertise and running two servers had been expensive. However the new server was performing well, was a larger size and considerably faster and thus gave faster access. Loading the remaining accounts should not affect this.

- b) Publications – He said that since December, sales had been exceptionally slow, individual orders few and were only boosted by bulk orders from dealers. He had continued to reduce holdings of back Journals and Bradleyas but only by a minimal amount. The planned reduction exercise should help this significantly.

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

Dr Tebbenham gave the current progress on this (22 of the 61 projected programmes currently ready for use and 10 additional ones to be released in April 2013) and also listed the current/planned progress on the remainder. He would pass any additions to David Greenaway via the server so that the library hard-drive was kept up to date. To help promote what was available, he had prepared an item for the June Journal and he and Jim Gibbs needed to update the current website files to reflect changes to speakers and digital programmes. It was said that the new server could cope with the increased usage. They also planned to contact all speakers who indicated that they would/might offer digital programmes, this planned for around the time of the April A.G.M. It was also suggested that slide talks be phased out by the end of 2013.

12. **Forum/Website:**

Mr Hildyard reported that the Forum had been relatively quiet recently. He was still to appoint a new moderator, but would do so very soon. He said that most of his time has recently been taken with dealing with spam account applications (over 50 just that day), that David Lambie had been in touch about providing information for the website research pages and that Graham Charles was providing something for the Bradleya page. However, he reiterated the previous comment (minute 13/03/12/27/2) on the lack of information from Peter Arthurs on the work he was doing on the website. *Post meeting update – It had now been learned that a considerable update on progress had now been received from Mr Arthurs and that the work was nearing completion. A reasonable timetable and access to the work had been requested.(BH)*

13. **2014 Society Convention Update:**

Mr Arnold said that the team plus Messrs Kirkbright and Morris had met at Leicester to review the new venue and detailed plans and photographs had been obtained. David Minnion would now produce a floor plan of the sales area and displays and the university was being very cooperative and helpful. A detailed advert. for the event would appear in the March Journal, for which he thanked Mrs Vanden Bon and Mr Kirkbright and the website information would be updated. Messrs Kirkbright and Morris had agreed a protocol for taking bookings which should ensure a smooth outcome. Dorothy Minors and her husband Chris were taking a detail look into the contents for the ‘goody’ bag for delegates. The next step would be to write to all participants of the previous Convention, both sellers and delegates, inviting them to this one and informing them of the arrangements for booking sales tables. However, he needed the list of attendees at the last Convention and asked who had this. He would also invite other groups who may wish to put on displays.

13/07 **SOCIETY ADVERTISING & MARKETING OFFICERS**

Despite some interest in the former position, this was still to be filled and Mr Quail was currently continuing to do the job, but still looking for his replacement. The revised job description for the latter position had appeared in the December Journal. As well as the candidate who had previously shown interest (Martin Doorbar), who was to provide a cv. imminently, John Gander had also applied and also sent in a cv. These were the only 2 applicants to date and after considerable discussion it was agreed that both applicants share the position and job and that as only one could be a Trustee under the proposed new rule changes, they mutually decide who this would be. The non-Trustee could stand in and attend these meetings if the agreed Trustee was unable to do so. It was also emphasised that the position was a voluntary one and that only expenses would be met. It was suggested that they also consult Peter Cowdell of Sheffield branch for possible ideas, based on his success in promoting his branch locally and further afield. Another suggestion made was that obtaining Journal advertising could also become part of the position’s remit at some point in the future. It was also agreed that Mrs Vanden Bon would speak to David Quail to ascertain if he would be willing to act in a supervisory/advisory role for both candidates and if this was so, Dr Glen would then speak to both and Mr Cowdell, informing them of our decision. (AG)

13/08 **SOCIETY A.G.M.**

The agenda for this had been submitted for inclusion in the March Journal. In view of the implications within the proposed rule changes, the running order had been changed so that the rule changes would be processed after the election of a President and before the remaining elections. No additional nominations for the main officers had been received, although there was a new nomination for one of the annual Trustee positions namely Peter Arthurs. It was said that, if necessary, we could co-opt suitable people as annual Trustees in advance of the 2014 A.G.M.

13/09 **FUTURE PUBLICATIONS**

Mrs Vanden Bon had brought some of the proof pictures for the *Agave* book to the meeting to show the Lavenham Press print quality, which looked good. It was agreed that Lavenham Press would produce it, but the cost was yet to be decided. It was hoped that it would be ready for the April A.G.M., subject to no unplanned delays. It was agreed that access to all proof pdf’s would be restricted on a ‘need to know’ basis.(AL) It was agreed that currently we would not fund new titles in the immediate future. The proposed production of e-handbooks on individual genera was yet to be progressed.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 4.45pm.

NEXT MEETING: 11th May 2013 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.