

# BRITISH CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, held on Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> August 2009 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 (DQ)	Advertising & Journal Production Officer
	Mr Roy Mottram (RM)	CactusWorld Editor
	Dr Colin Walker (CW)	Bradleya Editor
	Dr Tony Mace (AM)	Publications & Internet Officer
	Mr Barry Tibbetts (BT)	Shows Committee Representative
	Mrs Suzanne Mace (SM)	Committee
	Mrs Alice Vanden Bon (AVB)	Committee
	Dr Roland Tebbenham (RT)	Committee
	Mr Bill Hildyard (BH)	Forum Moderator (Coopted)

## AGREED VERSION

### 09/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

### 09/26 MINUTES OF THE B.O.T. MEETING HELD ON 9<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2009

These were formally ratified and signed after correcting 3 typing errors.

### 09/27 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

07/45 Logo – Mr Quail said that the operational version of this had been distributed and was starting to be used.

09/08(d) Promotional CD – Dr Tebbenham would scan all the material during the autumn and store the files on the new server prior to the content and format the CD being decided.

09/18/2&3 Digital Material – Chris Moore's D.V.D had been archived on the new server together with a copy of an **Asklepios** article supporting this material; this with Alan Butler's permission. It was reported that Chris Dean was currently digitising later journal articles to add to those he had already completed, these articles being supplied to him in pdf form by Mr Quail from the Quark files he had of these journal articles. This work Chris Dean was doing single-handed as there were insufficient other volunteers. Once this was done he would consolidate these and make them available in an indexed pdf format. Mr Quail was arranging for Chris Dean to have access to the journal file server for holding and transferring pdf files, as these were too big to send by email. Once this whole exercise was completed members would be able to access all material except the most recent 2 years (as previously agreed). Dr Tebbenham had received an offer from Brian Bates who was willing to allow up to some 20,000 habitat slides to be scanned for use in the slide library in exchange for a copy of the scanned images. Dr Tebbenham had also run a successful trial of downloading material scanned and put on the new server by another member which proved the process was workable. Mr Arnold had produced a draft document outlining copyright restrictions when downloading future digital slide shows or articles, which would be distributed to this board for comment. The final version would be given to all members wishing to make use of the service so that they were aware of restrictions in doing so. A copy of this draft was given to Mr Harris for archiving.

09/20 October General Meeting – The notice for this would appear in the September journal and volunteers for the information tables were sought. Messrs Mottram (Journal), Dr Tebbenham (Futures Team) and Mr Quail (Cultivation and/or Futures Team) agreed to help man these, but volunteers were still needed for the Society and possibly the Cultivation tables. Mr Harris said that no additional nominees had been received for the 4 elected Trustee positions and that a group nomination for Mesdames Mace & Vanden Bon, Dr Tebbenham and Mr Hildyard had been received, suitably proposed and seconded. Mr Harris was still to speak to Mr Potter about giving the Hampshire/Dunn Memorial Lecture at the April 2010 A.G.M. but would do so at the Judges Course. **Post Meeting Update** – Mr Potter had been asked and had accepted, subject T.B.A.

09/21 Trustee Status and Rules – Mr Quail had spoken to Mr Carr at a recent event and been told that the latter would not be pursuing his current action but would have rule changes to propose at the appropriate General Meeting. Mr Arnold said that he had received some adverse comments on the changes when speaking at a local branch meeting, but after challenging the people concerned and explaining our reasons for the change process, had received apologies from the people making them.

### 09/28 ELECTRONIC DECISION MAKING

None

### 09/29 COMMUNICATIONS

1. Membership Cards – Mr Harris had received a brochure and samples from Easipeel which might provide a better looking membership card, subject to cost and adaptability. The samples were passed around and Mr Morris would make further enquiries from the firm (TM).
2. Robins – Juliette Hatt, the organiser, had emailed Mr Harris asking if the Society would support the production of a pin badge for members of the Robins as she had had many requests from members for this. It was also suggested that perhaps this idea could be extended to Forum members. She had indicated internet prices of £1 per badge but it was unknown if

initial tooling costs were included. Whilst there was no serious objection to the idea for Robin members, who had to be Society members, there were a significant number of Forum members who were not Society members and hence could not be funded by the Society. It was suggested that whilst there would be no objection to a Robins badge, in view of the small numbers, perhaps this would be better organised within the group. Mr Harris would convey these thoughts back to her.

3. 2010 Chelsea Flower Show – We had received an invitation to take part in this but it was agreed that it would be too expensive and not cost effective to do so apart from the problem of getting sufficient local members to organise and man any stand we might put on. We would however, continue to support regional show displays such as Malvern, Tatton Park, etc. Mr Harris would reply to the R.H.S. stating our reasons for declining the invitation. (EH)
4. BBC3 Programme – Mr Quail had been contacted by a company making a T.V. series involving a character interested in cacti. He had loaned his silver badge for the character to wear on the understanding that he would get it back and that the programme would not discredit our hobby. It was due to be screened later this year.
5. Avonia – Mr Arnold had been sent a copy of a special edition of this journal with a request asking if we were interested in reviewing this. The copy was passed to Mr Mottram and it was agreed that the organisation be added to our exchange list.
6. Awards – No nominations received.

## 09/30 REPORTS OF OFFICERS

### 1. Vice-Chairman:

Dr Glen reported that the Society had taken part in the Tatton Park show and won a silver gilt award. This had been staged by the Macclesfield and East Cheshire branch and manned by that branch's members plus others from five other N.W. branches. He had visited the succulent collection housed in the arid house in the David Welch Winter Gardens in Duthie Park, Aberdeen but whilst there were some impressive specimens, there were also a number of dead and dying plants present. An *Aloe/Gasteria* national collection had also not been very impressive and he had since spoken to a member of Grampian branch and Jim Gibbs, the zone rep., inviting them to offer advice on improving the collection and perhaps gain some publicity from the exercise. He had also given a short interview on Oxford radio and answered questions on cacti. He said that Shrewsbury branch and maybe others, regularly had its meetings mentioned on local radio and this was a medium worth exploring.

### 2. Membership Secretary:

Mr Morris reported that since June 6<sup>th</sup> he had enrolled 37 new members including 2 juniors and reinstated 6 lapsed members. Of these, 30 had joined via the internet.

### 3. Treasurer:

- a) Membership - Mr Kirkbright reported that membership to date for this year compared with the same period last year was: Full 1898 (-92), Senior 879 (+32), Junior 11 (+4), making a journal taking total of 2788 (-56), and Associates 258 (-7). Adjusting for the 89 Full members who renewed as Senior members this year, the Full member total would have been 1987 (-3) and Seniors 790 (-57). Current Bradleya subscriptions were 598 (-13).
- b) Gift Aid – He had received the payment for the fiscal year up to April 2009, the total being £8,884 of which £667 would apply to the Conservation and Research Fund and £362 would be repaid to branches who had consolidated donations, leaving £7855 from regular income.
- c) Books – The *Ferocactus* and *Ariocarpus* book sales continue to tick over and together were £5,579 in surplus. The *Echeveria* book sales continued slowly and still needed £6,563 to break even. However, there was one outstanding invoice to Rainbow Gardens, comprising £1,505 for the *Echeveria* book and £1,120 for the *Ferocactus* book. Payment of these amounts would significantly alter the picture.

### 4. Shows Committee:

- a) Judges Course 2009 – The total take up for this was 35 to date, including committee and speakers and a further announcement about it would appear on the B.C.S.S. Announce to try to gain more attendees. Although numbers were disappointing, the committee had decided to go ahead with the course to avoid alienating loyal attendees and Moulton College. Comments from those not attending ranged from cost, age and more importantly, that most qualified judges are not asked to judge any of the 50 or so shows held each year and saw no point in continuing. This could have a major effect on future courses. The committee would review the course's future and content in the light of declining number of shows after this course.
- b) Branch Shows – The committee spent some time discussing the reduction in the number of shows and suggestions made included offering prize money, inter-branch challenge competitions, inter-zone/regional show and other variations along these lines. It will also be raised as a topic at the Judges Course for any further ideas that people might have. Both topics would be discussed further at the next Shows Committee meeting.

### 5. Conservation Committee:

Dr Bill Maddams in a written report said that grants of £1,500 each had been agreed for 2 Mexican projects. The first concerned *Mammillaria herrerae* which was critically endangered, the second to fund micro-propagation work at Charco del Ingénio. The first would help prevent further pressure on habitat populations (currently estimated to be only 70 – 80 specimens) this from both local collecting and hydroelectric schemes. This would be by a combination of methods; propagation (seed, vitro and vegetative) from existing plants in cultivation (already in progress) and searching for additional colonies to its current limited area, necessary if reintroduction of material to the wild was to be undertaken. The second would fund micro-propagation being done in conjunction with a botanical Institute in Cuba, which had researched a cheaper method for tissue culture, and aimed to produce sufficient plants of *Geohintonia mexicana*, *Aztekium hintonii* and *Aztekium ritteri* to take the pressure off plants in the wild. It was also gratifying to establish an effective contact with them following the sudden departure of Martin Smith.

He said that a request from the Succulent Plant Institute to fund micro-propagation of *Echinopsis* and *Aloe* hybrids to

make these available in the E.C. had been considered but this had been left until the next committee meeting as it was felt to be too narrow in its concept and that the I.S.I. should hold further discussions with the U.S. authorities about the problem of exporting micro-propagated plants classified as CITES I and II.

Some time was spent discussing the disposal of collections when their owners die or were unable to care for them. This was a major problem, for unless there was a certainty that new homes could be found, the Society could face major problems if it undertook this work. Nevertheless, it was felt that the Society should accept that it had a role to play in this work, in combination with branches, particularly to ensure the safety of documented material. This would be forcefully pointed out in the journal article on ex-situ conservation currently being prepared and that the Society must ensure this message got out to both branches and members to ensure that future enthusiasts would still have the range of plants available to them.

6. **Research Committee:**

Alan Hill in a written report said that a request had been received for financial help to permit investigating the distribution of a new taxon (an *Echinopsis*) and collect herbarium material so that the new species could be formally established.

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

- a) Advertising – Mr Quail reported that the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter advertising income was £517, a slight increase on last year and that one series of 4 advertiser had returned. He said that all reciprocal adverts. had been updated with the new logo, new Membership Secretary and a more eye-catching advert. and sent out to all the Societies concerned. Responses received to date indicated that most would publish the revised advert. from July onwards.
- b) Journal Production – He said that there had been a shortage of journal copies sent to the editor for the June quarter and Castle Colour's failure to react to his enquiries for information meant that he then took the problem up with their M.D. The problem was eventually resolved and the point made that the quantity specified is the quantity we expect. He said the September issue was currently near to being finalised and was expected to be with the printer on time. All team members had been able to help with this. The potential new member to the team, having produced an article reasonably close to completion, had indicated that he had doubts about his ability with Quark and his time availability. However, he had agreed that this be reviewed in the autumn and possibly an intensive training session arranged.
- c) Guidelines for Choosing Branch Venues – A draft of this had been produced and issued to the Trustees for comment. Revisions had now been incorporated following suggestions made.

8. **Bradleya Editor:**

Dr Walker reported that Bradleya 27 was now published and being distributed. Castle Colour had used a different press for the printing which had proved cheaper without loss of quality. He had a couple of articles in reserve for Bradleya 28.

9. **Journal Editor:**

Mr Mottram reported that there had been some problems in the production of the June journal (see 09/30/7(b)) and that some photographs had suffered a slight colour shift, although most readers would not notice this. The lack of journal articles had now ended and he had sufficient material for the next 3 issues. He had become dissatisfied with image of scanned slide quality from his old scanner and had bought a new one of better quality. He said that the September journal was closer to being printed and gave a resumé of the planned content as well as a list of articles currently in hand.

10. **Publications/Internet Officer:**

- a) Internet – Dr Mace reported that as discussed at the last meeting a new 1Tb disc had been bought by the Society for the server he rented and two accounts set up on this; one for a publication archive under the control of Mr Quail, the other for storing digitised presentations currently controlled by Dr Tebbenham. No volunteers to help with IT projects had materialised to date despite his appeals, although he understood Mr Hildyard had had some success. However he had learned of a better site management system which he was currently implementing plus he was also trying to raise the Society website visibility by using Facebook, Digg and Stumbleupon to expand on this. He had also solved a longstanding problem of making public the site's statistics on-line without granting general administrative rights. He was also looking at possible use of a Content Management System for the site using Druple and was currently setting up a better email system for members of this board.
- b) Publications – Mr Kirkbright had given current sales of the main items in his report but Dr Mace said that sales had been very slow over the last 3 month. The publication store had undergone a refit (new roof and a coat of cuprinol) and with some additional new racking, its storage capacity would be improved. He was still awaiting replies from Rainbow Press.

11. **Forum:**

Mr Hildyard reported that he had had 40 responses to his recent Forum appeal, a few of which had expressed interest in helping with future work.

09/31 **UPDATE ON THE SOCIETY FUTURE WORKING TEAM**

Dr Tebbenham reported on progress to date. He had distributed 2 discussion documents in advance of the meeting, the first of which was a status report on current projects including work on the initial report on feedback from branches and zones arising from the recent additional questionnaire that had been sent out. He elaborated on these by means of a slide presentation showing the current state of these. Dr Glen would review the current Secretary's Pack with a view of updating it and also making it available on a CD (AG). It was also suggested that hard copies of this be issued in a plastic folder rather than the current bulky green folder.

The second concerned finalising the Society Objectives statements prior to them being made available to the general membership. Several minor revisions were made and it was agreed that the finalised version appear on the Society website, in the new members pack and possibly the December journal. It was felt that the statements did not require any rule

changes at this point in time. Dr Tebbenham had sent a copy of this to Bill Keen for comment but had yet to receive a response. He had also sent a CD containing a copy of all the Futures reports to Bill Keen for comment and received a reply which he would circulate to the rest of the board. In response to a query, it was agreed that our Chairman would chair the October General Meeting and our President the Annual General Meeting.

Mr Arnold's daughter, who was a teacher, had sent an email response with her views and suggestions on the proposed children's web site and thoughts on how it might be improved.

Mr Arnold again thanked the team for all their hard work.

09/32 **NEW ALOE BOOK**

Dr Walker began the discussion by giving the background to the subject. The two Reynold's *Aloe* books published in 1950 and 1966 were now very much out of date and an updated *Aloe* publication was needed. He and three other authors (Susan Carter Holmes, John Lavranos and Professor Len Newton) were currently undertaking this task. It would bring the subject completely up to date and include all new species described since those publications (up to mid 2008). It was intended to be a guide to the genus for both scientific and amateur growers. The publication would be in the order of 800 pages and it was planned to have the manuscript completed by late 2009 and have it produced and marketed by Kew Publishing. However, this organisation was looking for a sponsor to provide half of the publication costs and hence any profit and had offered the Society a substantial discount on the planned publication price of £100 per book on a planned print run of 1,500 units. Details of the book and the publication budget spreadsheet had been circulated to the Trustees before the meeting and John Harris of Kew Publishing had been invited to the meeting to give future details. When he arrived he gave further explanation of the spreadsheet, how Kew Publishing marketed their products and how the discounts would work. He also showed examples of the expected quality of similar sized publications and said that Kew was looking for an investment of £20,000 from this Society to co-produce the publication. He then answered various questions from board members and following specific questions from Mr Kirkbright, agreed to provide him with a more detailed breakdown of the process and its returns. We currently had no planned book publishing commitments and the general feeling was that, providing the detailed breakdown gave the Society the returns offered, we would support this publication, plus it would improve the Society image to be associated with Kew in this way. A final decision would be made when the revised breakdown had been analysed by Mr Kirkbright.

09/33 **PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION**

Mr Mottram said that Derek Tribble had not been able to obtain external sponsorship and it was agreed that the Society would provide a free membership for the winner of each of the 5 classes proposed. Details had been finalised and these would appear in the September journal.

09/34 **JOURNAL PRINTING**

Our current printer had submitted a cheaper quote and this and the one from the alternative printer were being evaluated before a decision was made on future sourcing.

09/35 **SOCIETY CONVENTION**

Mrs Mace reported that bookings received to date were only 55, less than half that required to make it viable. Further publicity would be given via other journals, B.C.S.S. Announce and our Website, and word of mouth when visiting branches. Mr Morris would publicise it at the forthcoming E.L.K. whilst Mr Kirkbright would contact past attendees who had yet to book and encourage them to do so. Bookings were supposed to be received by the end of October so prompt action was necessary. Further items for raffle prizes and the auction were still needed.

09/36 **2010 DATES FOR THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETINGS**

These were agreed as 6<sup>th</sup> February, 15<sup>th</sup> May, 7<sup>th</sup> August and 4<sup>th</sup> December. It was also agreed that a special meeting to be set up to discuss final issues and action on the Futures Team's final recommendations and this was agreed for 20<sup>th</sup> March 2010. All these dates were subject to confirmation by the hotel. ***Post Meeting Update*** – All dates confirmed and booked.

09/37 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

1. **Cathy Darbon** – It was reported that she was now at home and had spoken to Mr Kirkbright. However it was early days in her recovery and progress would be slow. She intended to pay a brief visit to the Northampton Show.
2. **Society Scanner** – A high specification unit was required to process slides and documents in our future digitisation programmes. Mr Tibbetts agreed to speak to Peter Arthurs and other sources and research the required specification and sources (**BT**).

There being no other business the meeting closed at 5.03pm.

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**NEXT MEETING: 5<sup>th</sup> December 2009** 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.