

BRITISH CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, held on Saturday 2nd August 2014 at 11.00 a.m.
at the Holiday Inn, Milton Keynes, Bucks.

<u>Present:</u>	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)	Journal Editor
	Mrs Alice Vanden Bon (AVB)	Technical Editor
	Mr Barry Tibbetts (BT)	Shows Committee Representative
	Dr Tony Mace (TMa)	Publications Officer
	Mr Bill Hildyard (BH)	Forum & Website Administrator
	Mr John Gander (JGa)	Marketing Officer
	Mr John Arnold (JA)	Legal Advisor
	Mrs Suzanne Mace (SM)	Committee
	Dr Roland Tebbenham (RT)	Committee
	Mr Peter Arthurs (PA)	Committee

AGREED VERSION

14/22 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

14/23 MINUTES OF THE B.O.T. MEETING HELD ON 26TH APRIL 2014

There were two minor typing errors which were corrected and the corrected minutes were formally ratified and signed.

14/24 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

13/40 Society Patrons – Both had come to the Convention and given a short address introducing themselves to the audience.

14/15/4 Royal Cornwall Show – Dr Glen had been in touch with the organisers and said that although the show was run on a financial basis, he felt sure that if approaches were made to the organisers early enough, something could be arranged. However, it was pointed out that there was still the problem of the local branches in the Zone not being interested in participating.

14/25 ELECTRONIC DECISION MAKING

No Board decisions had been made using this medium.

14/26 COMMUNICATIONS

1. Awards – Three A.O.M.'s and one R.H.M.A. were approved.

14/27 REPORTS OF OFFICERS

1. Vice-Chairman:

- Dr Gibbs said that having reviewed and checked with those on the original Speakers List, he had now compiled a list of speakers willing to speak to outside organisations. The list was currently available in electronic form but he felt that occasional hard copies could be printed. He had sent a copy to the branch originally requesting it and also responded to the N.W. Naturalist Union to let them know of its availability. No response had been received to date.
- He had had a few communications from Liverpool branch acknowledging it was currently having difficulties with age and ill-health of its main officers. Things appeared to be better of late but he had asked that it get in touch if it felt the Society could help them. Ilford (Essex) branch had intimated that it wished to amalgamate with Havering branch and this was agreed by this committee. He had received a couple of indirect complaints where members of 2 branches were upset over perceived lack of communication from their branches. Neither of the situations was clear-cut and both had now been resolved.
- He wished to thank the Zone Reps again for their help in updating this year's Branch Officials list.

2. Membership Secretary:

Mr Morris stated that since April 2014 he had enrolled 75 new members, 11 of whom had also subscribed to Bradleya. This compared with 66 last year. These comprised 42 Full, 22 Senior, 5 Associate and 6 Junior. Of these, 7 were from overseas (America, Brazil, New Zealand, Spain and Zimbabwe) and 2 had joined using the Welcome Pack reduced price offer (currently a total of 40). He had also re-instated 7 former members. Total enrolment for the period July 2013 to July 2014 was 223 compared with 209 for the same period a year previously.

3. Treasurer:

- Membership – Mr Kirkbright reported that current membership compared with last year was: Full 1,493 (-28), Senior 975 (+19), Junior 18 (-5), which when added together, the Journal taking membership total was 2,486 (-14). Associate membership was 209 (-3) and 77 Full members had switched to Senior and 37 the other way. Bradleya takers were 529 (+5). This was a true comparison with last year now that the reminders had been sent and considerably better than this time last year when he had reported a decline of 89 compared with 2012.
- 2014 Calendar – He said that final sales had shown an £18 surplus.
- Convention 2014 – He gave a breakdown of the cost for this and said although we had managed to exceed our original attendance estimates he would have liked a bigger margin, for due to some delegates being on a reduced package because of other commitments, the income had been reduced by £114 from the estimate. However, this had been more than made up by

the raffle income of £326 thanks to the sterling work of Mesdames Mace, Smale and Vanden Bon. Total expenses (excluding University) had shown a saving of some £800 and he gave a breakdown of these. The auction had made £1,979 compared with £4,027 in 2010 and our gift aid claim next May would result in a further £445.

- e) Books – He was back in discussion with Lavenhams over the *Agave* book and needed to resolve the outstanding account and settle their bill by 10th September and then arrange delivery of the remaining stock to Dr & Mrs Mace. Recent sales had slowed to a trickle and assuming the bill to be settled was in the region of the original estimate, we still needed some £5,000 to break even, which was disappointing. The 2nd edition of the *Stapeliad* book had been available for 2 months but take up had been very slow and we needed over £6,500 to break even after the authors copies were paid for. Margins were much tighter than usual and we needed to sell most of the stock before we break even.
- f) Gift Aid – He said that H.M.R.C. had responded quickly to this year's claim and the Society had received £7,176 in early May. This meant the running total reclaimed back from the government was now £104,000.
- g) Mr Kirkbright said that he would be on holiday at the time of the end of our financial year, so would send out the paperwork to those requiring to make a return. He would be grateful if these were completed and returned as soon as possible and he was made aware of any bills that needed to be paid. He also checked that the current list of those likely to claim expenses was up to date.

4. **Shows Committee:**

- a) Judges Course – Mr Tibbetts reported that bookings for the 2014 course were 39 to date. The 2015 course had been booked for 4th to 6th September with Moulton College.
- b) Website – He said that despite new information being supplied 5 months ago to advertise the 2014 Judges Course, this had not appeared on the website. As it was now too late, information and photos would be submitted for the 2015 Course to try to get this promoted. He asked when the Shows Committee would be allowed to manage its own web pages.
- c) 2016 National Show – The schedule was complete although there had been some proposals to add a couple of classes, this to be reviewed at their next meeting. Judges had been allocated, but there had been a proposal to include a 'celebrity judge' from outside the U.K., which would also be considered.
- d) He said that the committee was trying to look ahead, in view of the shrinking membership and number of branches, as to how to move forward with shows, particularly at major venues. Points to be addressed urgently over the next few meetings were the current unsatisfactory nature of Zonal areas, the need for more inter-branch and regional shows, the need to make more classes and shows open to non-B.C.S.S. members, the possible need for the Society to make central funds available to allow shows to be staged at public and large horticultural events and the establishment of a Shows Committee Facebook page to publicise the 2016 National Show.

5. **Conservation Committee:**

- a) In a written report Dr Maddams said that effective contact had been made with Lex Garcia, Museo de Historia Natural de Tamaulipas, Mexico who was interested in formulating a project, but until details were known, it was uncertain if this would be within the remit of the Conservation Committee or the Research Committee.
- b) The article 'Conserving Succulents in the Wild' was published in June issue of THE PLANTSMAN, and a fee offered by the R.H.S. had been accepted and paid into the Conservation and Research funds.
- c) He said that at the Committee's next meeting on 10th August ex-situ conservation would feature prominently on the agenda.

6. **Research Committee:**

- a) Mr Hill reported that a project proposal entitled 'Pollination Ecology in *Haageocereus* species of Central Peru' had been received from Carlos Martel of the Institute of Experimental Ecology, Ulm University, Germany. After consideration by the committee, this was rejected as it was felt that there were certain weaknesses in the planned areas of investigation. The committee was currently considering an application from Cornelia Klak of the Bolus Herbarium, Department of Biological Sciences, University of Cape Town. This was entitled 'Evolution and patterns of diversity of *Mesembryanthemum* subgenus *Phyllobolus* in the Succulent Karoo region of southern Africa', but no decision had yet been reached.
- b) He said that an example of the queries the committee received was an email from a student of horticulture studying at degree level, who was progressing onto the 3rd year of her course in September and had become interested in cacti and succulents, particularly succulents such as *Lithops* and *Haworthias*. She wished to study these in more depth for her dissertation, but because she was new to studying them, wished to know where the research gaps lay and that if we wanted any particular areas studied, would like to be informed of these. He had circulated this request to the rest of the Research Committee and asked to be informed if the Board of Trustees could also suggest a topic.

7. **Advertising Officer:**

- a) Advertising – Mr Quail's written report said that the 3rd quarter advertising income was £313 (compared with £349 last year), that there was no change in the number of series-of-4 advertisers, but that he was yet to receive the BCSS Calendar advert./insert and that the submission deadline had passed.
- b) CactusWorld Production Trainees – He said that Christian Bohm had received further training and was nearly ready for a full training day together.
- c) Journal Printing – The detailed evaluation of Cambrian Printers had progressed to a point where they had produced test prints of a high standard, but were yet to produce evidence that lamination of the front cover would not cause greening of any yellow in the underlying picture, a problem experienced with another printer. A very generous deadline had been given with a warning that we would not wait any longer. Swallowtail had been invited to produce the September journal and would have produced all this year's journals. If Cambrian Printers did eventually produce the evidence required, we might consider them for next year but with a reduced confidence. Another printer had been identified that appeared suitable and would be contacted to carry out a detailed evaluation to produce an identical set of prints.

8. **Bradleya Editor:**

Mr Charles in a written report said that after a slow start, articles had been produced by many of our regular authors, making a total of 22 submitted or expected soon. There were many new descriptions of succulents, including 2 cacti, but unfortunately

some papers had not reached the standard for publication in Bradleya, including a proposed new *Gymnocalycium*, so he expected this to be published in one of the hobby journals. He was still awaiting some reviews (as well as 2 more papers) so regrettably it would not be possible to publish no 32 in time for E.L.K. this year. He was still hoping that there would be sufficient to fill this issue, but it was difficult to say since 3 papers had already been declined and at least one other was unlikely to make the grade.

9. **Journal Editor:**

Mr Laius reported that the June journal had been well received with favourable comments on both the variety of articles and one article in particular – 'Cactus & Succulent Touring, UK'. He currently had 24 articles in hand, 17 of which were laid out and 7 in progress. 8 to 10 of these would appear in the September issue. Promises of more had been received, so there was sufficient for the September and December journals and beyond. The December journal would contain a write-up of the Convention as usual. He said that JSTOR had contacted him to say that CactusWorld was at the halfway point of the release process and was currently at their vendor undergoing digitisation and that they would be in touch as the process moved along the production queue. He said that the standard number of pages for the journal was 56 (+4 for covers) and was the number used when negotiating with the printing companies. This had been exceeded on a number of occasions and he felt that it would be appropriate to increase the standard number by 8 (up to a total of 64 pages). This figure could then be used in future negotiations and it would be beneficial if this was in place for next year's negotiations.

10. **Technical Editor:**

Mrs Vanden Bon had little to report. She said that the September journal was on schedule and would be compiled by David Quail, whom she wished to thank and be printed by Swallowtail.

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

- a) Publications – Dr Mace reported that take up on the *Agave* and *Stapeliad* books had been slow, but that sales of these and older publications were sufficient to keep them busy packing and dispatching them. Total orders for the second quarter were some £5,386, but that there had been problems with Chinese customers who were very impatient and seemed to expect their order to arrive the day after placing it.
- b) Internet/Forum – Mr Hildyard said that he had little to report on the operational side of these as both were fine.

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

Dr Tebbenham reported that only limited progress on this had occurred since the April meeting principally due to him. Dr Gibbs had scanned over 1000 slides of the Vic Morris bequest although the associated caption list was yet to be compiled (RT). He gave updates on the work in hand including progress on the John Hughes' Mexico talk, Sheila Collette's slides and Peter Brandham's programmes and the current outstanding 11 programme titles. Our current P.C. was running Windows XP and although he had renewed the malware protection, it was potentially vulnerable, so he would consult with Mr Kirkbright on possible options.

13. **Website:**

Messrs Arthurs & Hildyard said that due to time constraints on both their parts, the planned update/changes to the Society website were still to happen. Mr Arthurs ran through the problems he was aware of and expected with the change-over and said that a planned approach to do the change-over in stages would be the best way forward. Timing for completion was very dependent on his outside work pattern. It was said that when the change-over was being done, there would be some downtime on emails, programmes, etc., but he would try to minimise these as part of the plan. This was not helped by restrictions imposed by certain I.S.Ps.

14. **2014 Society Convention Final Report:**

Mr Arnold said that it had been an enjoyable success and that he had received many nice comments by email supporting this. All the attendees and speakers had enjoyed the event. He thanked by name many of the people involved but apologised if he had missed anybody out, although he had thanked some of these by email. In the discussion that followed, one or two minor areas that needed to be addressed for the next one were highlighted, such as the dining arrangements and lack of time due to the number of the short lectures. This latter one could be addressed by reducing these to 3 instead of 4. Mr Kirkbright was still to receive the invoice for the event from the university. Mr Arnold, when questioned, was prepared to mastermind the next one with local help from Mr Morris and it was said that according to the planning schedule, preparations needed to be started now. This would be discussed further at our December meeting. The Board expressed its thanks for all of Mr Arnold's hard work on the event.

15. **Marketing Officer:**

Mr Gander reported that much of the work he had proposed to put into full operation had been delayed pending the launch of the new B.C.S.S. website. Much of this centred around sample extracts from previous CactusWorld editions to promote the benefits of B.C.S.S. membership and advertising the Society generally. He continued to explore the use of Facebook and Twitter as marketing tools, borne out by success of the T.S.G. Facebook group which now had over 570 members and its effect on the Cactus Southwest Facebook page. He hoped that in the near future, people would be advising him of events and news that can be promoted and said that there had been more visitors to the Cornwall Show at Hayle which he had managed to get opened by a local celebrity. He gave a breakdown of the financial success of that show.

14/28 **2015 SOCIETY CALENDAR**

Mr Hildyard said that he had arranged to use the same printer, but to use a better quality paper, which would mean a slight cost increase. The back pages needed to be changed to include the National Show instead of the Convention and some other information details changed/updated. He now had the winning photographs from the competition, but said that some of these were not in the format required or not suitable for calendar use. In view of the time constraints in getting the calendar printed in time, it was suggested that all the competition pictures be circulated to Board members, a consensus of possible entries for

the calendar be chosen by them, but the final choice of pictures from these left to Mr Hildyard. (BH).

14/29 **FUTURE PUBLICATIONS**

There was Gordon Rowley's book on 'C&S Plant Breeding' which was presently planned for next year and we had also heard from John Pilbeam suggesting that he attend our December meeting to give a Powerpoint presentation on his proposed book on Baja California. He would need to arrange this with Mr Harris.

14/30 **REAPPOINTMENT OF ANCILLARY OFFICERS, EDITORIAL TEAM AND SUB-COMMITTEES**

All were reappointed with the exception of the two Marketing Officers as it was felt that this post was in need of further definition and would therefore be left vacant until this was done. Mr Harris would write to Mr Doorbar informing him of our decision. It was also agreed that the time of reappointments be switched to the February meeting so this tied in more closely with the issue of the List of Officials with the June CactusWorld, this to start next February. *Post Meeting Update: it had been learnt that Mr Lowry wished to relinquish the post of Journal Librarian by July 2015 at the latest due to changes in his personal circumstances and a replacement would be sought via the December journal.*

14/31 **RULE CHANGES**

As well as the suggested change to rule 7(a)(i) to reduce the number of annual Trustees from 4 to 3, Mr Kirkbright proposed minor changes and additions to rules 17 and 18, seconded by Mr Harris. These would appear in the December journal and then be submitted, along with any subsequent amendments, for approval at the A.G.M.

14/32 **2015 BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING DATES**

These were agreed for 7th February, 23rd May, 22nd August and 5th December 2015.

14/33 **CURRENT PROGRESS ON BRANCH INFORMATION CD**

Dr Gibbs said that he had made little progress to date, but would concentrate on the task during the winter months.

14/34 **REVISION OF CRITERIA/AIMS FOR THE 'INNOVATION AWARD'**

The proposed document had been more or less finalised apart from a minor revision made at this meeting. The finalised document would now appear as an insert with the September CactusWorld.

14/35 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

1. **President** – Dr Walker attended this meeting for a short time and was given the opportunity to address the meeting. He started by inviting the members to visit his collection after our December meeting, if it could be arranged and also asked what the Board felt his remit should be as President. It was suggested that he act as the main liaison with our Patrons and also where possible try to promote the Society to the general public.
2. **Klondyke/Strikes Garden Centres** – Dr Glen spoke of an event held at a local Centre by his branch where the Centre staff had been very helpful. As it was part of a large north of England chain, he suggested that other branches look to hold similar events at other centres in the chain.
3. **Lincoln Branch** – Mr Arnold said that because the Convention had clashed with the Lincoln branch show of which he was the chief organiser/participant, it had had to be cancelled, as an alternative date for the venue was not available. This meant that their significant income from plant sales had been lost and he asked if the Society was prepared to make a donation towards that loss, due to his very significant role as organiser of the Convention. It was agreed that a one-off donation of £50 would be made to Lincoln branch funds.
4. **North Devon Branch** – Mr Gander said that Tom Martin, their previous chairman had died recently and he was arranging an obituary for publication in CactusWorld. It was said that it should appear as part of their branch report and that in such cases, the normal limit of 150 words could be increased to 200 words.
5. **Newsletter** – It was suggested that this appear on the new website, but it was subsequently said that the required omission of any personal details might cause problems and needed careful monitoring.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 4.27pm.

NEXT MEETING: 6th December 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.