

BRITISH CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, held on Saturday 22nd August 2015 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)	Journal Editor
	Dr Tony Mace (TMa)	Publications Officer
	Mr Bill Hildyard (BH)	Forum & Website Administrator
	Mr John Arnold (JA)	Legal Advisor
	Mr. Barry Tibbetts (BT)	Shows Committee Representative
	Mrs Suzanne Mace (SM)	Committee
	Dr Roland Tebbenham (RT)	Committee

AGREED VERSION

15/26 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mrs Alice Vanden Bon and Mr Peter Arthurs.

15/27 MINUTES OF THE B.O.T. MEETING HELD ON 23RD MAY 2015

These were formally signed.

15/28 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MINUTES

15/17/1 Society Bequest – The cheque for £1,500 had now been received and passed to Mr Kirkbright.

15/25 Journal Librarian – A volunteer had been found and appointed (Dr Jac Saorsa) and the library and bookcases passed to her. It had now been learnt that Martin Lowry had discovered a further 6 boxes of journals which needed to be passed to Dr Saorsa. Mr Laius had volunteered to do this (AL).

15/29 ELECTRONIC DECISION MAKING

An A.O.M. was agreed and the badge and certificate provided for presentation to the member (AG).

15/30 COMMUNICATIONS

1. R.H.S. Meeting at Wisley – Mr Harris had received an email invitation to attend a meeting of affiliated Societies on 4th November, plus a questionnaire on details of our Society for a poster design. He had completed the information required for the poster design, but asked if anybody was able to attend as he couldn't, and if so, would they be prepared to give a short address on our Society. Dr Glen was willing to do so, provided his travel expenses were met, and was willing to give a short address. The R.H.S. would be informed of this and asked that if this was still required, how long it should be (EH). Mr Harris would also send Dr Glen a copy of the information he had provided so that he was aware of its content and Dr Glen asked for suggestions on what points he should address. He would also be given one of our pull up banners for extra publicity.

2. Awards – Two A.O.M. awards were agreed.

15/31 REPORTS OF OFFICERS

1. Vice-Chairman:

a) Dr Gibbs said that he had contacted Zone Reps requesting information about pull-up banners and gave a list of 7 branches/zones which had expressed interest in having a pair (including our Patron Tom Hart-Dyke). He also said that he and his wife had worn tabards during a recent event and although they had been initially cumbersome, it had not taken long to become unaware of wearing them.

b) Potential Dorset Branch – He had been given a list of members from the surrounding branches who lived in the potential area centred on Dorchester and showed a map identifying their postcodes within a radial area approximately half the distance from the surrounding branches. He now intended to contact the surrounding branches to ascertain if these members attended their meetings and if not, would contact these members to offer setting up a Dorset branch.

c) Branch Meeting Programmes – He had received a question about what branches in other C & S societies do for their programmes and wondered if there was any potential in discovering if any members had experience of this.

d) Foreign Language Books – He had been offered 3 books in Spanish to anybody who wanted them and wondered whether they were already in the Society library. The titles were 'Las Cactaceas de Mexico (Vols 1 to 3)' by Helia Bravo-Hollis (Vols 2 & 3 in association with Hernando Sanchez-Mejorada), 'Flora Silvestre de Chile' by Adriana Hoffmann and 'Memorias de un Naturalista' by Martin Cardenas.

2. Membership Secretary:

Mr Morris stated that since May 2015 he had enrolled 85 new members, 9 of whom had also subscribed to Bradleya. This compared with 71 at this time last year. These comprised 46 Full, 28 Senior, 3 Associate and 8 Junior. Of these, 4 were from overseas (1 each from Belgium, Canada, China, and Norway) and 7 had joined using the Welcome Pack reduced price offer (currently a total of 57). He had also reinstated 8 former members. He said that the total would have included another Senior, but the application form accompanying the cheque had been blank. He hoped to resolve this, but it was suggested that in the event that he couldn't, the cheque be returned to the applicant's bank with the request that it be returned to their customer. Dr Mace said that the independent East Sussex branch would be closing at the end of this year and that Brighton and Hove branch would be holding an extra meeting in the Eastbourne area in 2016, where some of its members lived.

3. **Treasurer:**

- a) **Membership** – Mr Kirkbright reported that the current membership compared with the same time as last year was: Full 1,479 (-24), Senior 1022 (+42), Junior 32 (+13), which when added together, the Journal taking membership total was 2,533 (+31). Associate membership was 201 (-9) and 79 Full members had switched to Senior and 52 the other way. Bradleya takers were 532 (+3). This was a direct comparison with the same date last year. He said that of those who were members at 31st December 2014 and received an invitation to renew, 2182 had now done so. Broken down, 315 (84%) of overseas members had renewed, whilst 1869 (89.1%) of U.K. members had renewed. PayPal and credit card subscriptions, including Bradleya, accounted for 44.6% of receipts so far compared with 42.6% last year and that donations as a percentage of subscriptions received via PayPal amounted to only 2.8% (2.4%), whilst those paid by cheque/cash amounted to 10.8% (11.8%). He remarked that he had no intention of raising the subscription rates for 2016, but was concerned that the delay to the 2015 Bradleya publication could have a knock-on effect on Bradleya renewals for 2016.
- b) **CactusWorld Mailing** – He said that the June journal was sent out using the Royal Mail tariff DG1 for our overseas copies and unofficial reports suggested that it worked much better. However, he was extremely disappointed by the response on the forum to his request for receipt date information from overseas members, of 897 views to the post only 5 bothered to respond, but these did suggest that delivery time was much better. Not only that, but the average price per copy fell by 16% from using the consolidator. He said that we would be using the same system again for our September mailing and he would discuss using it with our other mailing house regarding the December posting.
- c) **Books** – Income from direct sales of the *Agave* and *Stapeliads* books had gone very quiet (total of 2 in July). The **Baja** book had now been produced and paid for (he had waited to ensure there were no problems before paying). He had now given up monitoring sales of ‘**Succulents in Nature**’ as they were too infrequent to record (original production cost was £7242 and sales to date were just under £3,300, a loss of £3,942).
- d) **Society Finances** – Mr Kirkbright said that he would soon be compiling the Society balance sheets and asked that anybody having an input to these should make their returns as soon as possible.

4. **Shows Committee:**

- a) **Judges Course** – Mr Tibbetts reported that the final attendance figures were 42, comprising 28 attendees, 5 speakers and 9 committee members.
- b) **2016 National Show** – He reported that Wood Green had agreed that we could put further trade stands in the annexe which meant that we could now accommodate all current trade applicants. However, the lighting in this area needed improving and Wood Green would be asked to arrange additional lighting in the area (EH). The R.H.S. had again been invited to attend, but had declined as it was said that they needed their younger committee members to attend a wider range of shows. However, we would arrange to obtain the R.H.S. Banksian Medal for the show.
- c) **Shows Committee Award** – It had been suggested at this committee’s last meeting that Shows Committee Awards be presented to Messrs Goodey and Griffin for their continued success at Chelsea. However it was said by the Shows Committee that the award was given to Society members who contributed extensively to a branch/zone show success and was not awarded for commercial successes. However, the Shows committee were to discuss this further at a future meeting. As agreed, Mr Harris had produced congratulatory letters to Messrs Goodey and Griffin, which our President had signed, and these had then been sent to them on our behalf.
- d) **Future of the Shows Committee** – At their last meeting, 3 or 4 members of the committee stated that they would probably resign or not seek re-election over the next couple of years. As a result, current judges would be contacted to ascertain their willingness to join the committee and the subject would be discussed at the forthcoming Judges Course.

5. **Conservation & Research Committees:**

- a) **Conservation Committee** – Alan Hill in a written report said that it had been agreed to pay £500 to erect signs at Pichidangui, Chile to try a new approach to educating the local population about the plants on a protected area of land on the coast and thus protect them. The U.K. contact was Roger Ferryman and Mr Kirkbright said that the sum was yet to be paid as he was still awaiting Mr Ferryman’s bank details. The committee had also agreed to fund Pablo Weisser, who now lived in Australia, for his air fare and share of land transport for an expedition in Chile. He had an impressive botanical record, connections with Ritter, had visited Ritter habitats many years ago and done conservation work in South Africa. The aim was to compare the state of various habitats now and then, try to answer some questions about different or same species and examine the danger *Opuntia tunicata* was now apparently posing to native vegetation, with view to suggesting conservation action. The expedition would also be examining the damage done by recent bad weather to certain colonies of plants. The U.K. contact was Paul Klaassen and the cost would be paid partially in Australian dollars (\$2,117) and U.K. sterling (£428.47), a total of about £1,423 depending on currency conversion rates.
- b) **Research Committee** – Alan Hill reported that the A.G.M. was informed that a French student intended to submit two projects in reference to some specified *Conophytums* and the preparation of a book. He had been informed that the committee were favourable to financing his work but he was asked for further clarification on two points. The student accepted that these might cause problems and reported that he hoped for clarification within a short time, so the grant was yet to be finally ratified. Also at the last A.G.M. members were informed of the problems arising from Dr Peng Jiang asking on the B.C.S.S. Forum, in general terms, for money to help in the search for ‘the cactus genome’. He later sent a similar general request to the Research Committee. In April he was informed that the committee needed more details and was invited to send the usual formal request giving more details and the names of two referees. There had been no response to the request. In June it was agreed to grant Dr Peter Bruyns £1,000 towards an expedition to Algeria to investigate *Caralluma munbyana* at its type locality and to rediscover *Caralluma venenosa* as part of his research for a new book on *Stapeliads*. Mr Laius said in the 4 years he had been editor of CactusWorld, there seemed to be a lack of articles being generated from the projects funded.

6. **Advertising Officer:**

- a) **Advertising** – Mr Quail’s written report said that the 3rd quarter advertising income was £278 (£313 last year) and that we had lost two series-of-4 advertisers due to their retirement.

- b) CactusWorld Production Trainees – He said that the potential new trainee had not progressed since contacting him, but had confirmed continued interest in learning Quark.
- c) 2015/6 Journal Printing Plans – He said that there had been a few teething problems with Warner's first print run in June, but these were mainly administrative and the print quality and adherence to agreed deadlines had been good. These had all been discussed fully with them and assurances given that they would not recur. Warners were therefore invited to print and distribute the September journal and inserts (of which there were three). This run was in progress and after sending them all the files, proofs had been received, approved and returned, all before the deadlines. If all aspects of the September print run were satisfactory and subject to satisfactory quotations for 2016, Warners would be invited to join Swallowtail as joint printers for 2016 with two issues each. He said that as well as putting together the September journal, he would also be able to do the same for the March 2016 one. The Trustees expressed their grateful thanks for all his help in providing this service as well as all the other tasks he undertook on the Society's behalf.
- d) Welcome Pack/Information Sheets update and reprint – Warners had printed these successfully and these together with the plastic wallets were received by the due date of 22nd May at the agreed price. Their selling price would therefore remain unchanged.
- e) Marketing Officer – He hoped that this would be discussed again at our current meeting and that action to appoint one be urgently undertaken as there were many initiatives that required a Marketing Officer to drive them forward, keep branches and zones focussed on attracting and retaining members, setting up of possible new branches and ensuring that marketing received sustained and dynamic attention at Trustees' meetings. He mentioned his article in the News section of the December 2012 journal, which summarised the main points of this subject.

7. **Bradleya Editor:**

Mr Charles in a written report said that after a slow start, but following a request to some of our regular authors, the situation of material received was much improved and displayed all 19 papers on an attached spreadsheet. Some papers were still to be received, but if all were received there should be enough to fill this edition. He asked if there was a minimum size for publication and Mr Kirkbright said that any edition should be published regardless of size each year. Unfortunately, only one of the papers concerned cacti and raised concerns of its effect on future subscriptions, so he was writing a paper himself, which if accepted, would help redress the balance somewhat. Assuming there were sufficient pages he planned to have this edition finished and sent to the printer before his Peru trip starting on October 25th, which would mean a publication date of mid-November (last year's date was 20th November). He said that looking through the list of authors he was struck by the small number upon which we were dependent and believed that other authors would be more likely to choose Bradleya if it was available from on-line libraries like JSTOR or BioOne. This would also raise the profile of Bradleya as researchers find it whilst doing searches. It was generally agreed that this was possible and as we already had such an arrangement with JSTOR and CactusWorld, Mr Larius would arrange this with JSTOR. It was felt there should be no embargo period as the audience accessing JSTOR was not the same. He also posed a question raised by one of his authors about the Society's attitude to 'Open Access', as the author wished to deposit an author submitted version (not the final pdf) of his paper in his institutional repository, in line with current academic protocol and if permitted would there be an applied embargo period. Although it was felt there would not be a problem with this, it raised several questions which Mr Charles needed to ask, such as the definition of 'Open Access' and if the author intended to replace his author submitted version with the published version. On the subject of possible future authors it was suggested that he ask members of the Explorers Club to provide Bradleya articles. Mr Arnold said that he would suggest this to him (JA).

8. **Journal Editor:**

Mr Larius reported that receipt of articles had slowed right down over the summer months and he currently had 7 articles which were ready, 4 were with the Production team awaiting design and layout and 4 were 'work in progress'. A number of articles had to be rejected due various reasons such as being taxonomically unsound, poor quality images, etc. He said that there were currently sufficient for the December issue and probably enough for the March 2016 one. A further 6 articles had been promised and should materialise by the end of this year. He said that he had run out of articles for the 'In My Greenhouse' feature but had promises for a further 2 articles and was following up on a third. He welcomed any suggested candidates for this feature.

9. **Technical Editor:**

Mrs Vanden Bon in a written report said that the September journal was being compiled by Mr Quail for which she was extremely grateful and would be printed by Warners.

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

- a) Publications – Dr Mace reported that he had been busy over this period with the additional work involved with the disposal of Bill Maddams books and journals plus the routine work supplying publication orders. Grateful thanks were given for the sterling work by their young lady assistant who dealt very efficiently with the Bill Maddams workload. Most of the books had been disposed of but there were a fair number of foreign language journals and U.S. journals left from the Bill Maddams collection and he proposed to try to dispose of these at ELK, but needed help with their transport. Mr Morris had offered to do this. He had also received a number of books from the late Lindsey Deaves' estate and would be issuing a list of these. New supplies of the Information Pack had been received plus overruns of the printing. These have meant that there were significant numbers spare, especially of the seed raising leaflet. Some were to be sent to Peter and Heather Lewis for distribution with every seed order sent out, but free copies were available for publicity events. The new Baja publication had now been received and some bulk orders sent out. The book was on the website shop, but copyright and review copies were yet to be sent out. Another batch of membership forms was being printed.
- b) Forum, Twitter and Facebook sites – Mr Hildyard said that the Forum site was progressing without problem, but the two people running the Twitter and Facebook sites had both ceased updating them so he would remove the sites. He was still willing to update other sites provided he was fed the information. He was currently preparing the 2016 calendar and said it should be available by the ELK. 500 copies would be printed.

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

Dr Tebbenham said that he had made little progress since his last report, but that Dr Gibbs had completed some background work such as retrieving information on relevant plants from Meena Singh's book and indexing a set of *Euphorbia* Study Group journals which mentioned Indian *Euphorbias*. These tasks were in preparation to getting to grips with Doug Donaldson's talks. He gave a list of the outstanding 11 tasks and their current progress. He hoped to get many of the less onerous tasks completed before the 2016 A.G.M. and Dr Gibbs planned to scan Bill Christie's presentations and finish annotating the Vic Morris slides. He ended his report by stating that he wished to withdraw from the project as he was unable to devote sufficient time to do it justice. Consequently, this meeting would need to discuss how best to progress matters from April 2016 onwards and to identify a new custodian of the Society scanning equipment. It was said that a full job description was needed before any replacement could be appointed (RLT).

12. **2018 Convention:**

Mr Arnold said that very little new had happened since his May report but he hoped to be able to report more progress at our December meeting.

13. **Seed Purchaser:**

Mr Arthurs had not provided a report but Mr Kirkbright said that to date he had only paid for a few seed purchases. Dr and Mrs Mace had a significant amount of *Astrophytum* seed which they needed to get to Mr Arthurs. Dr Tebbenham agreed to take it to the Explorers Weekend and pass this on to him there.

15/32 **SOCIETY WEBSITE UPDATE**

Mr Hildyard said that a major update had been attempted recently but this had identified more software problems. These had now been resolved, but no further work had been done. He said he felt that if more problems arose he needed permission to seek outside help to get the website up and running and said that this should not be expensive. As it was felt that as the process was taking too long this would not be a problem. There were comments that a lot of the information shown on the website was well out of date and in need of serious updating. Mr Hildyard said that if people let him know what these were, he would update them immediately. Quite a lot of the branch information on the website was also well out of date and it was suggested that branches be told to update their sites urgently. Messrs Harris and Morris would include a note to this effect when they next sent out information to the branches and Zone Reps asked to chase their branches on this matter (JG). Mr Harris would compose a suitable letter and circulate it to this committee before it was sent (EH).

15/33 **BILL MADDAMS PLANT SALE**

Mr Kirkbright said that this had now been completed, including the sale of the greenhouses.

15/34 **ADVERTISING/PROMOTION OF THE SOCIETY AND DISCUSSION ON THE MARKETING OFFICER POST**

- a) Dr Tebbenham said that he had had thoughts on 4 points that should be addressed, the first of which was that having been to Tatton and seen the Macclesfield branch stand and information produced, he had spoken to Mr Quail who said that he and Mrs Vanden Bon were willing to produce a Society leaflet that could be personalised by individual branches for their own use. Mrs Mace showed a branch programme that had been produced by one of the Brighton branch members, which was very attractive and gave all the relevant information about the Society and branch and various other Trustees said that they knew of other similar products that had been produced by other branches. It was suggested that examples of these be provided to give a better idea of what should be included on such a product. Secondly, Dr Tebbenham asked if we were sending copies of John Pilbeam's book to our Patrons and what were we doing with our Patrons? It was said that our contact point with them was our President and that in the introductory letter sent to them, this had included what was expected of them, which they had both agreed to. A copy of the letter would be sent to all Trustees for their information (EH) and Messrs Kirkbright and Tebbenham would speak to Dr Walker at their next branch meeting about this. Thirdly, he said that a query from our sole member in Guernsey had been received by our slide librarian asking if there was a DVD on basic cultivation of Cacti and Succulents which could be hired. At the moment there was not, so perhaps this could be addressed. Lastly, the R.H.S. was thinking of having a show at Chatsworth House in 2017. Mr Harris said that he had forwarded the initial query email to both Macclesfield and Sheffield and Dr Glen said that Sheffield had also sent it to Nottingham. As it was very early in the process at the moment, little progress had been made, but it was said that the Tatton show could close in the near future.
- b) There was then discussion on the pull up banners of which we currently had 4. After discussion it was agreed to purchase a further 8 pairs, which should cover the known interest in them.
- c) There was also discussion on the Marketing Officer post and it was said that we needed to revise our job description for the this. It was said that we needed to perhaps show our current job description to somebody experienced in marketing and ask what should be included. It was also suggested that we might have a candidate for the post in due course.

15/35 **TRAINEE JUDGES EXPENSES**

An experienced judge had asked if the Society would meet the travel expenses of a trainee judge accompanying him to gain judging experience. It was said that this had been agreed some 2 years ago, subject to our normal process of application for funding.

15/36 **FUTURE PUBLICATIONS**

- a) The Baja California book had now been printed by Charlesworth Press by the agreed date and an advertising flyer would appear in the September journal. Layout for the Gordon Rowley book would start in September and Mrs Vanden Bon envisaged its size to be the same as his previous two books published by Cactus & Co. She was currently unaware of its title or number of pages. It was said by a member of this committee that although she was typing up all the text of the second part of the book, the first part was being done by Mr Arthurs and that she would need both parts by September to start the layout process. It was said that John Pilbeam was considering another book, but it was felt that as our storage space was now completely full, no further titles could be considered in the short term.
- b) JSTOR ebooks – Mr Laius asked if we should take part in this as the company was willing to digitise what out of print books

we would suggest and pay us a significant percentage of the returns. Batches would be relative small and would involve no cost to the Society. We would probably need the permission of the author before doing so, but was it was thought to be a viable proposition.

- c) Journal Articles – Mr Laius said that we had published a number of series of multipart journal articles such as John Pilbeam's ones on *Gymnocalyciums* and Rob Stevenson's ones on *Turbinicarpus*. He suggested that the parts be combined into a single unit and sold to interested members and the general public via our website. This was thought to be a viable proposition, once the new website was in place.

15/37 **DATES FOR NEXT YEAR'S MEETINGS**

The agreed dates would be 6th February, 7th May, 30th July and 3rd December.

15/37 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- a) Exhibition Fund – It had been requested that in these days of very expensive venue costs, a fund, on the lines of the Conservation/Research funds, be set up and administered by the Shows Committee; this to be used to fund displays/major shows that helped publicise the Society. Following discussion it was said that there was already a process in place along these lines and this had been publicised some 2 years ago. Messrs Kirkbright and Tibbetts would update the criteria and put it into the December journal.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 4.30 pm.

NEXT MEETING: 5th December 2015 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 1 to 1.30 p.m.