

# BRITISH CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, held on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2010 at 11.00 a.m.  
held 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)	Committee/Forum Moderator

## AGREED VERSION

### 10/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

### 10/02 MINUTES OF THE B.O.T. MEETING HELD ON 12<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2009

These were formally ratified and signed after correcting 1 minor error (minute 09/42/2 – should be 2010 Convention).

### 10/03 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

09/08(d) Promotional CD – Dr Tebbenham said that John Gander had collected the material and a scanner to conduct the first stage of the process.

09/18/2&3 Digital Material – There had been a lot of email correspondence on copyright issues which might affect our digitising of journals, etc. This was still being researched and Mr Arnold would review what had been established on this so far (**JA**).

### 10/04 ELECTRONIC DECISION MAKING

- 1) Book Royalties – It had been agreed that we try to buy out these, this to be left to Mr Kirkbright to organise (**DK**).
- 2) Date Change for October General Meeting – It had been agreed to move the date to 9<sup>th</sup> October to avoid clashing with another major event, which could affect attendance. This change had been posted on BCSS–Announce.

### 10/05 COMMUNICATIONS

1. Mid–Cheshire Branch – The secretary had written stating that with the closure of the branch, they intended to make monetary donations to 3 local branches in appreciation of their past support and then return the rest of their monies to the Society with a closing balance sheet. Their active membership would transfer to Macclesfield and East Cheshire branch. It was pointed out that under the Charity rules all of their assets should be returned to the Society, who would then make such donations on their behalf. Mr Harris would write to explain this. He would also enquire if there were any other branch assets (trophies, library, etc) and suggest that these be donated to local branches rather than be returned to the Society for disposal (**EH**).
2. Society Archivist – John Cox, the current incumbent, had written to say that he wished to resign from the position and gave a list of what he held. It was agreed that Mr Harris would take possession of these, review what was there and then arrange possible re–distribution of the items (**EH**).
3. Society A.G.M. – Nominations for the posts of Chairman and Secretary had been received plus notification of two Zone Rep. positions. Two nominations for Vice–Chairman had been received, necessitating an election, which was being organised to appear in the March journal. He had also received two amendments to the proposed rule changes published in the December journal, these also to appear in the March journal.
4. Luton Branch – It had been learnt that they had a new Secretary, Mrs C. Clayton.
5. Awards – No nominations received.

### 10/06 REPORTS OF OFFICERS

#### 1. **Vice-Chairman:**

- a) Dr Glen reported that he had written to 63 speakers inviting any who did not wish their names to be passed on to inform him. Only three had replied saying they would rather not take part in the scheme. A further 21 had replied, to date, confirming their agreement and offering some helpful comments. He would still like suggestions on other organisations that might be interested in our list. He had also asked speakers to verify that their list details were correct and intended to circulate a compilation of any changes since April 2007, either electronically or in hardcopy form to all branch secretaries (**AG**).
- b) Five sets of comments on the B.C.S.S. Zone Organisation Survey/Recommendations covering 34 branches had been received and summarised. Final approval by 2 contributors was awaited before the joint view was passed on (**AG**).
- c) He said that circulation of the current contents of the Secretary's Pack seeking suggestions for a new edition had resulted in many ideas, including a number of omissions. These needed to be appraised and although many could be dealt with

now, some needed to wait until planned items such as the resources CD or changes recommended by the Futures Committee were available (AG).

- d) The disappointing situation in the N.W. area was not improving, with a new secretary needed at Lancaster, no takers or suggestions for a replacement Zone 5 rep. and the demise of the independent Bolton and District Cactus Society. A number of the more active members from that area would be at the Northern Weekend, so he intended to do some comment and opinion seeking regarding the future whilst attending that event.

## 2. **Membership Secretary:**

- a) Mr Morris reported that since 5<sup>th</sup> December 2009 he had enrolled 41 new members, comprising 24 Full, 6 Senior and 11 Associates. Of these 5 were from overseas. He had also reinstated 9 former members. For the same period last year, the total was 92, which was exceptionally high and for 2007/8 it was 43. He had also renewed a number of Senior members who had decided to change back to Full status.
- b) He said that the editorial team was currently reviewing the Welcome Pack for new members to include some colour and also a new sleeve was required that featured the new logo. His current stock of sleeves should last until the end of the year and he would speak to Mr Sims, who was thought to have arranged production of the current sleeve, to find out who this was and get an updated version made.

## 3. **Treasurer:**

- a) **Membership** - Mr Kirkbright reported that membership to date for this year compared with the same period last year was: Full 1340 (-140), Senior 687 (-37), Junior 3 (-3), making a journal taking total of 2010 (-180), and Associates 197 (-21). Adjusting for the 77 Full members who renewed as Senior members this year and the 24 Seniors who renewed as Full, the Full/Senior members total would be 2007 (-177). Bradleya renewals to date were 438 (-19) which was considerably better than membership shortfall. Renewal had initially been running almost equal to last year's figures but tailed off significantly in mid-January, possibly a delayed effect of the 'credit crunch', but the extremely cold weather might also have had an effect, due to branches cancelling their January meetings. One point of concern was that 42 branch officials had yet to renew,
- b) **Books** - The *Echeveria* book sales now needed £3,300 (140 copies) to break even and the outstanding invoice to Rainbow Gardens Bookshop had now been settled thanks to Keith Larkin. He had nothing further to report on the *Aloe* book but would check with Kew Publishing to verify an expected publication date of the end of this year so that it could be advertised in the September journal. This should encourage interested members to renew their membership and gain the 30% discount available to members if ordered in advance. Dr Walker said that the book was progressing well and should meet that date. As reported elsewhere, additional material from Steve Hammer was awaited, before the *Lithops* book reprint could progress.
- c) **Interest and VAT** - The interest from our deposits continued to fall (£8,067 in 2008 and £3,295 in 2009) and current signs were that 2010 would yield some £800, a net drop of £7,300 per year. Our reserve, whilst showing a capital loss, was still yielding round 4%. With VAT now back at 17.5%, a greater part of our income was taken by this tax, but as we made no changes last year, we did benefit from the reduced rate.
- d) **Bolton and District Cactus Society** - On its closure (minute 10/06/1(d)), it had donated its funds (£575) to the B.C.S.S.

## 4. **Shows Committee:**

- a) **Judges Course 2010** - Details of this had been arranged and responsibilities allocated among the committee members.
- b) **National Show 2012** - It was decided that no action was needed at this point in time, but that the schedule would be reviewed later in the year. In view of the decreasing number of nurseries, a flier would be prepared for distribution at the E.L.K. to try to encourage more continental nurseries to attend.
- c) **Handbook of Shows** - Following discussion at the last Judges Course, plus a few comments since, it had been decided no revision of this would take place until at least after the next National Show, due to the need to have any new edition in place at least a year prior to the event. There were some minor revisions identified, but these could wait until these points had been finalised (i.e. DNA testing of relationships, etc.).

## 5. **Conservation Committee:**

Dr Bill Maddams in a written report said that they were still awaiting costs for the *Haworthia magnifica v. splendens* project. The Society had been left what was believed to be a very large collection by a deceased member in Carmarthenshire and he was contacting the South Wales branch to see if they knew anything about the collection and could help with its disposal, possibly to the National Botanical Garden of Wales. It would be discussed at the next meeting of the Conservation Committee on March 13<sup>th</sup> when more information should be available.

## **Research Committee:**

Alan Hill reported that there was nothing additional to report.

## 6. **Advertising/Journal Production Officer:**

- a) **Advertising** - Mr Quail reported that the 1<sup>st</sup> quarter advertising income was £719 (£769 last year) and that 2 series of 4 advertiser had been lost, one of which was Cirio which had finally run down their stock of books. He said that the Advertising Officer's post would not be advertised in the March journal as he was investigating other possible sources.
- b) **Journal Production** - He said that apart from needing to chase proofs, the print run on Castle's new press went well with excellent colour quality. As a result of very firm assurances from Charlesworth that the September journal problems would not re-occur, they had been invited to produce the March journal on a one quarter trial basis. He also intended to put the planned journal dispatch dates on BCSS-Announce. Production of the March journal was well in hand, the new published deadline of 10<sup>th</sup> January was working well and making the team's task of producing, printing and distributing the issue much more certain, for which they thanked all contributors involved. This was especially appreciated as there

were 3 new team members to train and support, these now dealing with the Calendar of Events, Branch Reports and the Branch Newsletter. All three had done extremely well. It was possible that additional pages might be required to accommodate the amount of material this quarter. He said that the *Lithops* book reprint would not be advertised in the March journal due to the delay in obtaining the additional material from Steve Hammer.

- c) Digitising journals – He said that all but two quarter's journal PDFs had now been produced from the archives and sent to Chris Dean. One of the remaining two issues would need pages to be scanned manually and the other would need a large number of pictures to be scanned, before production of the PDFs, when time permits, as Mr Neville had been unable to supply these pictures from his own computer.
- d) Society Logo – Fiona Patrick had been contacted regarding changing their sweatshirt logo to the new one, but had expressed concern over the possible cost of doing so.
- e) Quark Files – It was necessary to establish the location of these files and the pictures for other books published by the B.C.S.S. and secure them for use in any reprint or production of electronic versions. Some enquiries had already been made.

7. **Bradleya Editor:**

Dr Walker reported that work on Bradleya 28 was progressing steadily and that editing had commenced. Its final content was yet to be decided and he gave a list of papers (12 to date) from which that content could be chosen.

8. **Journal Editor:**

Mr Mottram reported that the rate of new article submission had picked up in the latter half of 2009 and the 27 articles currently in hand were sufficient to fill three of the 2010 issues. All had been edited and all but two fully designed and ready for use, this being the most forward we had been in journal preparation ever. The March issue was on schedule and would feature an address from our President and a checklist of Society Objectives. It would also introduce the foundation of a B.C.S.S. e-library (see minute 10/14), a new venture and of as yet unknown interest to members, but would help foster our planned progressive image. He also gave a list of articles in hand, their current status and planned publication dates. He was also working on a Bradleya index and was currently completing Volume 14.

9. **Publications/Internet Officer:**

- a) Internet – See minute 10/12.
- b) Publications – Dr Mace reported that he had received a flurry of bulk orders over the Christmas period which helped boost the quarter's sales but sales were otherwise fairly routine. Progress on the *Lithops* book reprint had not been as good as hoped as Steve Hammer was still to provide the additional material for this, but as Mr Quail wanted to finalise his part of the process, would chase Steve Hammer for this on an urgent basis.

10. **Forum:**

Mr Hildyard had produced a document formalising the management structure of the Forum and this was agreed by the Board. It also suggested that a third moderator (Phil Crewe) be appointed which was also agreed. Prior to the meeting he had circulated an outline web site which was generally thought to be good. He said that there had been a copyright dispute between two members which had now been resolved.

10/07 **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 the progress summary of projects in progress, the second a suggested procedure for digitising and producing presentations plus commentary from slides.

On the first document, the digitising of the back journals was in progress but we needed to establish a source for any missing journals required. Dr Mace said that these were available from his stock of back journals. On the subject of B.C.S.S. promotional stands we really needed a Marketing Officer to progress this. He also said that this Board needed to determine how information flowed to and from the membership and how it should be maintained and developed. He had also included the reactions from a team member to the last General Meeting notes to illustrate this. He included a list of the current projects from the Futures Team and their current state of progress, these being split into critical and higher priority (9 items) and medium to lower priority (9 items). Of the former, 3 were complete or being worked on whilst the remainder were either planned or needed assistance to progress. Of the latter, 5 were being worked on, 3 were yet to start and the other (Junior Web site) needed a volunteer to progress further. There was some discussion on encouraging donations/bequests to the Society and one suggestion was to publish occasional non-specific lists of these in the journal to make members more aware of this option, coupled with a short article/item (DK).

The second document outlined a draft procedure for producing digital presentations from slides and included a check list, flow chart, suggested scanning method and resolution, production of a commentary for each presentation and their central storage. It had been decided to purchase a Nikon 5000 scanner, auto-feeder and software plus a dedicated laptop for Society use. Several volunteers were currently doing trial conversions to the proposed standards using their own equipment.

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

10/08 **SOCIETY CONVENTION**

Mrs Mace reported that bookings received to date were now 131 excluding speakers and that all speakers were now arranged. These would be coming from Czechoslovakia, America, Namibia, Tenerife, Switzerland and the U.K. No day tickets had yet been sold but the March journal advert. would include more details of the event including the Workshops planned on the Friday evening/Saturday morning. Attendance at these would be limited and could be booked at registration on a 'first come/first served' basis and depending on demand, could be repeated. Suggestions for displays were also made and appeals made for items for the raffle and Convention auction. It was agreed to again donate a Society

membership for life to the auction. Reminders for final payment would be sent out in mid-April.

10/09 **FUTURE PUBLICATIONS**

John Pilbeam had offered his proposed *Asclepiad* book to the Society for publication and had been invited to attend this meeting to put his case. Prior to his arrival, a discussion took place on the Board's views on its viability, in view of a possible limited market, and a number of questions were drawn up around these points and the financial implications to the Society. These were to be posed by Messrs Kirkbright and Quail. On arrival, John outlined his reasons for wanting to publish this book, which he would publish anyway if the Society declined the offer, and passed around a rough draft of the book. He said that the book was almost ready for processing and publication, but needed just a few more pictures to be complete. He had also compiled an index of some 20 pages. The rough outline specification would be a book of around 210/220 pages max., covering all genera and species, some of these being illustrated with some 500 to 560 pictures. It would also contain some cultivation advice and genera and species covered would be cross-referenced where changes had occurred. It was envisaged to sell for under £40 per copy. Mr Kirkbright had obtained costs for print runs of 1000 and 1200 copies and having examined the draft copy and got agreement from John on various points put to him, it was agreed that the Society would fund a print run of 1200 subject to certain conditions. These would be that Mrs Vanden Bon would carry out and have control on how the book was laid out (subject to consultation with John and occasionally David Neville), it would include an index of all the species it contained (this to be in a smaller font, etc to reduce its size), be available for the latter part of the year, that the Society would hold all files for the book and that John would take 200 copies. *Post meeting update: John had suggested that the print run be increased to 1500 copies and that he would take an initial batch of 500 copies. This would still meet our planned objective of a reasonably quick return on our investment.*

10/10 **AWARDS NOMINATION SYSTEM**

It was generally agreed that the current system of relying on branches to highlight suitable candidates for award was not working as well as it could and that the suggested system of having a group of referees monitoring the system had not really worked either for various reasons. It was suggested that perhaps Zone reps could take on this function as most should be aware of what was happening in the branches in their zones. As a starting point Mr Kirkbright would provide a print from the Society database of branch officials showing length of service and what awards they had. Mr Arnold agreed to review this on a regular basis and where he found possible candidates, make local enquiries on their suitability for award. Once this exercise was completed, we could then enquire of branches if there were other branch members who could qualify for an award.

10/11 **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

There were a number of these in existence covering various Society Officials, sub-committees and procedures, two obvious major exceptions being those of Chairman and Vice-chairman. Some of these were in need of review and possible update and after discussion it was agreed that Mr Arnold and Dr Glen would do this and where necessary ask that the relevant Official/sub-committee update theirs. They would also provide terms of reference for their own positions. Messrs Harris and Kirkbright would provide them with all the information on these that they currently held (JA/AG/EH/DK).

10/12 **SOCIETY WEB SITE**

Mr Hildyard had produced a document in advance of this meeting summarising the web survey and outlining some of the issues and possible solutions. Dr Mace had circulated additional comments on this. In view of the technicalities involved and Mr Hildyard's involvement in both the Forum and putting forward a design for the website incorporating the Junior web site, it was agreed that this be left for them to review the issues (BH/AM).

10/13 **MARKETING OFFICER**

Mr Quail showed a previous advert. for this post which he felt was neither appealing or effective and said we should try to appeal to members' enthusiasm and wish to help and aim to get a number of possible candidates. He then showed two examples reflecting this approach and said that if we had more than one applicant, he was sure a position could be found for any not chosen. The board decided which of the two examples should be used.

10/14 **SOCIETY E-LIBRARY**

Mr Mottram had offered his personal e-library as a basis for this and had issued a suggested index and application form for those wishing to use it. The final versions of these were approved and it was agreed that it go ahead. A suggestion that members be allowed to view literature PDFs in advance of making a decision to purchase was rejected as it was not possible to do that without breaching current copyright legislation.

10/15 **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Seed Sales** – It was reported that having a single packet price had made the order process considerably easier, but that currently orders were 20 down on last year. The special pack sales had also reduced, i.e. 126 in 2008, 84 in 2009 and 64 so far this time. It was also reported that future lists needed to contain more succulents.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 4.40pm.

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**NEXT MEETING: 20<sup>th</sup> March 2010** at the Holiday Inn, London Road, Newport Pagnell, MK16 0JA (just off junction 14 of M1). This will be a Workshop to review the recommendations of the Futures Team. It would start at 11a.m. and light refreshments would be served at 1p.m.