

BRITISH CACTUS & SUCCULENT SOCIETY

Minutes of the Board of Trustees Meeting, held on Saturday 23rd May 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
	Mrs Alice Vanden Bon (AVB)	Technical Editor
	Dr Tony Mace (TMa)	Publications Officer
	Mr Bill Hildyard (BH)	Forum & Website Administrator (who had to leave at 4pm)
	Mr John Arnold (JA)	Legal Advisor
	Mrs Suzanne Mace (SM)	Committee
	Dr Roland Tebbenham (RT)	Committee
	Mr Peter Arthurs (PA)	Committee
	Dr Colin Walker	President (present for item 15/19 and lunch)

AGREED VERSION

15/13 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Mr. Barry Tibbetts.

15/14 MINUTES OF THE B.O.T. MEETING HELD ON 7TH FEBRUARY 2015

These were formally signed.

15/15 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE LAST MINUTES

14/47/1 Yvonne Tree's Books – Mr Harris gave the latest situation on this item. All but about 20 titles had been disposed of and it was estimated that the sold items had raised some £400 for the Society.

15/11 Gordon Rowley's New Book – Mr Harris had written to Gordon and received a reply thanking the Society for agreeing to publish his book.

15/12/1 Pull up Banners – Bill Darbon had asked if these were available yet as his branch was due to put on a display/sales stand at Blenheim Palace in 4 weeks time. Mr Harris would also like a couple for use at the Zone 15 show being staged at Hyde Hall in mid-July. As nothing had apparently happened since the last meeting, Mr Hildyard agreed to organise for a number to be obtained with suitable information on them; it was suggested perhaps 10 initially.

15/16 ELECTRONIC DECISION MAKING

It had been agreed that Mr & Mrs Peter Lewis would be the new Seed Distributors. An A.O.M. was agreed and the badge and certificate sent off for presentation to the member.

15/17 COMMUNICATIONS

1. Society Bequest – Mr Harris had received a letter from a solicitor representing a deceased member stating that in his will the member had specified that the Society receive £1,000 bequest from his estate plus a £500 bequest to the Conservation Fund. Mr Harris had completed the necessary paperwork and returned this to the Solicitor stating that a covering cheque, payable to the Society, be issued to him and he would then pass this on to Mr Kirkbright. The cheque was still to arrive, but the letter and copy of the completed paperwork was passed to Mr Kirkbright for information.

2. Brian Lamb – It had been learnt that he had recently died and it was agreed that an obituary appear in the next convenient issue of CactusWorld. Mr Laius would compile this, but Messrs Cox and Rowley would be consulted to possibly gain any additional information for it.

3. Michael Fletcher – This member was interested in mosses and liverworts and Mr Harris had received a letter from him asking if we could ask any of our members, who were going on plant hunting trips to anywhere interesting, to collect samples of these. Mr Harris had replied stating that we were never aware of member's planned trips, but that he would pass the letter to our journal editor, who might be able to put the request in a future journal. However, he also said that there were definite rules about collecting plant material and that many countries did not allow this (apart from any CITES requirements that might apply) and that any collected material had to have at least a covering phytosanitary certificate before it was allowed into this country. A further letter from Mr Fletcher was then received in which he included a copy of the relevant section of his handbook dealing with their collection. Both letters were passed to Mr Laius for information.

4. Dr Marianne Le Roux – She had written asking for permission to re-use information from certain Bradleya articles. Whilst we were in favour of this to happen, it was said that the article author's permission was also needed. Dr Glen would write to Graham Charles telling him that we were in favour and asking him to write to her stating that she personally needed to obtain the relevant authors' permissions before it could happen (AG).

5. Awards – One A.O.M. was agreed but two others were still awaiting suitable citations to be compiled (AG/DK/AM). The previous list of possible candidates would be updated and reviewed (JA/DK).

15/18 REPORTS OF OFFICERS

1. Vice-Chairman:

a) Dr Gibbs said that he had little to report this time. He relayed some comments he heard about the tabards in that the material was thought to be too good, a bit thick and clumsy in use and hot to wear. However, this was allied to overall approval of the concept. Other Trustees had heard similar comments. All but four had been distributed to those ordering them.

- b) Branches – He commented on the Bradford branch reaching its 70th anniversary, a milestone for the branch and the Society, the Zone Reps help in updating the Branch Officials List and Cambridge branch for taking on a request for a speaker he had received from a Gardening Club. He also commented on an instance where a new member came to 3 meetings of one branch and then resigned as he said that he didn't want to see people's holiday snaps, but how to grow the plants. It was said that this was down to the secretary, but arranging a programme that was also suitable to an occasional new member was very difficult.
- c) TV Appearances – He commented on the long-awaited appearance of cacti and succulents on a couple of TV Gardening programmes, namely Craig House Cacti and Hamish McKelvie, who both had extended slots on two different programmes. There was some discussion on Craig House Cacti's and Southfield's continued success at the Chelsea Flower Show during the discussion on minute 15/23 and the possible beneficial effect this might have on new membership and it was agreed that the Society should write congratulatory letters to both. It was also suggested that perhaps the Shows Committee consider them both for a Shows Committee Award, but this would have to wait until the next Shows Committee meeting in August.

2. **Membership Secretary:**

Mr Morris stated that since February 2015 he had enrolled 73 new members, 13 of whom had also subscribed to Bradleya. This compared with 57 at this time last year. These comprised 40 Full, 19 Senior, 6 Associate and 8 Junior. Of these, 5 were from overseas (1 each from Chile, China, Germany, South Korea and U.S.A.) and 3 had joined using the Welcome Pack reduced price offer (currently a total of 50). He had also reinstated 9 former members. He said that he was still receiving a flow of renewals and that the lack of a March journal for those yet to renew had resulted in either an email or telephone call of complaint. He had also just received delivery of the new Welcome Packs and their plastic wallets.

3. **Treasurer:**

- a) Membership – Mr Kirkbright reported that the current membership compared with the same time as last year was: Full 1,399 (-48), Senior 985 (+33), Junior 24 (+11), which when added together, the Journal taking membership total was 2,408 (-4). Associate membership was 196 (-4) and 79 Full members had switched to Senior and 51 the other way. Bradleya takers were 513 (-2). This was a direct comparison and any effect from changing date/time of reminders had now evened out. He said that of those who were members at 31st December 2014 and received an invitation to renew, 2421 had now done so. Broken down 328(83.5%) of overseas members had renewed whilst 2093 (89.6%) of U.K. members had renewed. PayPal and credit card subscriptions, including Bradleya, accounted for 42.8% of receipts so far compared with 42.6% last year and that donations as a percentage of subscriptions received via PayPal amounted to only 3% whilst those paid by cheque/cash amounted to 11.0%. He remarked that one interesting coincidence was that the lack of new members during April followed by a rush since then seemed to have coincided with the period when the website was being 'blacked' by Norton and that the rush had occurred since it was fixed and might have highlighted how essential the website was to our membership numbers.
- b) CactusWorld Mailing – He said that in discussions with Warners, our new printer, who had their own mailing operation, it was suggested that we use a special code 'DG1' for our overseas copies and send these via Royal Mail using our regular account. Royal Mail delivery times using this code were Western Europe 3–5 days, Rest of Europe 3–5 days and R.O.W. 5–7 days, much faster than the consolidator was previously providing and was substantially cheaper! He would be interested in how the June delivery went.
- c) Books – Income from direct sales of the *Agave* and *Stapeliads* books was now quite slow, but we had received another £2,261 from Kew in respect of the *Aloes* book.
- d) Gift Aid – He had submitted our claim to H.M.R.C. on Friday 8th May and repayment was received on Wednesday 13th May.

4. **Shows Committee:**

- a) Judges Course – Mr Tibbetts' written report said that all required 6 speakers had now been finalised and that as of 19th April there were 21 confirmed bookings including the committee and speakers.
- b) 2016 National Show – He reported that all 100 trade stand tables had been booked with most deposits received. There had been a few latecomers who had gone on the stand-by list, but that all other issues were in hand and on schedule. A copy of the Show Schedule had been passed to Mrs Vanden Bon for inclusion in the September journal. It was also suggested by this committee that Cambridge branch ensured more publicity locally and also provided better signage on the approaches to Wood Green and that the Shows Committee ensured that the show was adequately promoted in the garden press.

5. **Conservation & Research Committees:**

Alan Hill reported that there was nothing new from either committee since that reported at the A.G.M. in April. There was some discussion on the comments raised on the work of the committees on the Forum, but it was generally felt that this had been adequately addressed and discussed at the A.G.M. Mr Arnold said that the adverts. for the Bill Maddams' Travel Scholarship had now been sent out.

6. **Advertising Officer:**

- a) Advertising – Mr Quail's written report said that the 2nd quarter advertising income was £586 (£374 last year) and that the number of series-of-4 advertisers was unchanged. An increased number of occasional advertisers had placed adverts., including E.L.K., who were advertising for the second time.
- b) CactusWorld Production Trainees – He said that he was in contact with another potential new trainee and had provided some initial information.
- c) 2015 Journal Printing Plans – He said that the June print at Warners was now in progress, but that some additional contact had been needed because our job was new to their staff. A full review of how Warners had performed and the print quality would be undertaken straight after the run and then a decision made on whether to invite them to print the September journal.
- d) Welcome Pack/Information Sheets update and reprint – Corrections and updates had been made to all the sheets and Warners asked to print them. This was currently in progress with a delivery date of 22nd May or earlier. Our previous supplier would be supplying the plastic wallets again with the same delivery date of 22nd May or earlier. The printing price was a little less than last time and the wallets only slightly more, so the overall net cost per set in its wallet was actually less than last time and we could therefore be able to keep the prices unchanged.

7. **Bradleya Editor:**

Mr Charles in a written report said that the situation had not changed since the A.G.M., he still only had 4 articles submitted for Bradleya 33 of which only 1 was so far approved for publication. As he had said before, we had become dependent on a few regular authors to provide papers for Bradleya and he queried if there were any papers outstanding from recipients of B.C.S.S. grants. He had a few more promised, but these might not arrive until July and he proposed writing to prospective authors to try to encourage submissions. He also said that his planned trip to Peru in late October/November might be an influence on the publication date, depending on when he received enough material to fill the edition.

Mr Arnold said that he was not aware of any outstanding articles from the conservation and research projects, but would check with Mr Hill. This then led to a number of comments on how the list of forthcoming articles could be improved and in response to a question, it was said that Bradleya was archived on the server.

8. **Journal Editor:**

Mr Laius reported that journal production was running smoothly with ample articles in hand and a steady stream of new ones. He currently had had 10 articles ready, 6 were with the Production Team awaiting design and layout and 6 were work in progress, so there were enough for at least the next two issues. He personally thanked the whole Production Team without whom there would be no journal, namely, Alice Vanden Bon, who beavered away competently and tirelessly, producing superb layouts and enhancing images, David Quail, who produced the cover, provided valuable advice both technical and proofreading, dealt with the advertising and was involved with the training, Jim Mercer, who produced layouts efficiently and was a wizard with Photoshop, Christian Bohm, our latest addition, who had quickly got the hang of article layout and had already produced some excellent work and lastly Sheila Cude, who admirably produced the Newsletter section of the journal and collated the branch reports. He was grateful to them all.

He said the journal was now digitally archived on JSTOR and was accessible by scientific and educational institutes who participated in JSTOR. This had the potential to bring in a small amount of revenue as well as ensuring that the B.C.S.S. and the journal had a visible profile in the scientific and educational community.

He remarked that forthcoming journal articles to look forward to included *Micranthocereus*, a new subspecies of *Copiapoa*, *Pachypodium*, *Wilcoxia/Echinocereus*, *Agave*, *Schlumbergera*, cacti of Antigua, newly re-discovered *Euphorbia* in Madagascar, *Haworthia*, cactus touring in Mexico, close-up *Crassula*, alternative cultivation techniques, *Aeonium*, growing mix particle size and much, much more.

9. **Technical Editor:**

Mrs Vanden Bon said that the June journal would be printed by Warners Midland P.L.C., the proofs were now approved and signed off and it would consist of 64 inner pages plus a 12 page Newsletter. Assuming that we were satisfied with the printing, Warners would also print the September journal, which would be compiled by David Quail. She named and thanked the journal production team members and the proofreaders who had provided a quick turn round of articles, which was much appreciated, plus the people who had checked the content of the Officials List to ensure it was as up-to-date as possible.

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

a) Publications – Dr Mace reported that sales continued to be a bit slow although there had been a reasonable number of bulk orders from dealers which helped to push up the total. The Information Packs were being reprinted and should available soon, although their plastic wallets had already been received.

b) Bill Maddams' Library and Slides – He said that these were now with them and that Brendan Burke had collected 6 boxes of books for the Society library. A further 3 boxes of books, journal and papers were to be passed to Gordon Rowley for his library, which left a further 22 boxes of books and journals, including some identified to be added to the Journal Library. He would compile a list of these and these would be dealt with by the same bid process used for the Tree's books. He suggested that all bids be received by the end of July.

He said that a preliminary examination of the slides (some 30,000) had almost been completed. Many were very old, not cacti and succulent related and badly deteriorated or poor quality pictures. Everything seemed to have been kept, including his first wife's slides from before their marriage. About 10% of the slides had been kept, some of which were very interesting: people, displays, collections, meetings, etc. and it appeared that he travelled more extensively during the 1960's/1970's than people realised and these needed further examination to classify and identify them.

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

Dr Tebbenham said that as he had not addressed any of the outstanding tasks, he had nothing new to report.

12. **2018 Convention:**

Mr Arnold said that David Minnion and Chris and Dorothy Minors were willing to help again. The venue and date were booked, Joël Lodé would be one of the speakers and other suggested speakers included Len Newton and John Trager. The cost would increase slightly, but still be good value. He read out a letter from David Quail about opening up the event to people who wanted to just come for the plant sales (similar to what happened at E.L.K.), but it was generally felt that the venue did not lend itself to this idea and might well lead to a negative reaction from those attendees who had paid for the full event, so the suggestion was rejected.

13. **Seed Purchaser:**

Mr Arthurs said that he had an urgent concern in that we needed a source of the envelopes in which the seed was packaged. These might well be needed for this year's distribution, but certainly for the following year. Several alternative sources were suggested and their suppliers would be contacted to see if these were still available.

15/19 **FELLOWSHIP FOR ALICE VANDEN BON**

Just prior to the lunch break, Dr Walker took the opportunity to present a surprised Alice with a well deserved Fellowship. The presentation had originally been planned for the April A.G.M. which Alice had been unable to attend. Photographs were taken and a report on the presentation would appear in the September journal.

- 15/20 **SOCIETY WEBSITE UPDATE**
Messrs Arthurs and Hildyard said that this was progressing and a lot closer to completion than before, but there had been problems with moving the Forum, which worked on the dummy run but then didn't when tried with the live Forum. Mr Arthurs said that the new site would not solve the current problem of getting information updated and we need people to have responsibility for providing updates in specific areas. However, it was said that it was a case of work in progress and would be resolved in due course. In the meantime, Mr Hildyard would update all sites provided he was fed the information that needed to be updated. Mr Harris would add his name to the people to whom he sent any updates to ensure that this happened (EH). There was some discussion on the Norton blocking problem that had occurred recently and it was said that it was found to be due to the use of a non-updated version of WordPress on a branch website. Hopefully this should not happen again, although it was suggested that members be warned of possible problem areas. In answer to a question, it was said that the planned availability of an electronic Bradleya was still planned and would be available soon after the new website went live. CactusWorld was currently lower priority in the list of things to do but would use the same mechanism as Bradleya.
- 15/21 **BRANCH INNOVATION AWARD**
Dr Gibbs had modified the guidelines slightly and these had been agreed electronically prior to this meeting. The modified guidelines would now be published in the June journal.
- 15/22 **BILL MADDAMS PLANT SALES**
Mr Kirkbright began the discussion by saying that as one of the organisers he was disappointed in the response from this committee. He gave details of how it would be organised and said there would be just over 200 auction lots. All the rest would be sold individually at negotiated prices and that any plants material left after the sale would be scrapped. This would need another day's solid work. The sale would open at 10am and the auction would start at 11am.
- 15/23 **DISCUSSION ON THE MARKETING OFFICER POST**
Initial points raised in the discussion were that we currently seemed to be unable to differentiate between a Publicity Officer and a Marketing Officer and needed to decide what we wanted and produce a suitable job description/candidate accordingly. It was also suggested that we should start in a small way and then build up our requirement in stages with maybe a team of people countrywide. It was agreed that we needed to discuss this in more detail and the item should appear on the next meeting's agenda. It was also suggested that our Patrons also be utilised as part of the marketing process and that our President contact them to establish possible media sources for them to use to publicise our National Show and other events.
- 15/24 **FUTURE PUBLICATIONS**
Mrs Vanden Bon said that Charlesworth Press of Wakefield had been selected to produce this book and that an amended quote would be requested as the number of pages had been substantially reduced. She hoped to have the printers files ready for 1st June with delivery sometime in late July. It was said that he had another book on smaller *Opuntias* planned, but it was feared that this would be of limited interest. She said that she would start work on Gordon Rowley's book later in the year.
- 15/25 **JOURNAL LIBRARIAN**
The post would be advertised again in the June journal but in the event that there was still no volunteer, Mr Arthurs volunteered to store the journals until the post was filled. Mr Harris would contact Martin Lowry to inform him of this and to ask that he box up the journals and that we would then arrange and pay for them to be transported. He would also ask for a list of the journal contacts, so that we could make sure that future issues were sent to the correct destination. There were also some 5 book racks which may be our property. This would then be checked with Mr Lowry and if they were, would also need to be transported (EH).

There being no other business the meeting closed at 5.16 pm. Mrs Vanden Bon gave advanced apologies for missing the next meeting.

NEXT MEETING: 22nd August 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.