

FEDERATION OF BRITISH BONSAI SOCIETIES

Minutes of Annual General Meeting:- 11.00a.m. Sunday 28th. November 2010 in Committee Room, Birmingham Botanical Gardens, Edgbaston, Birmingham.

1. **Members Present:-** Graham Walker (Teeside and BSA), Malcolm Hughes, Barry Walker, Kim Turton and Dave Barnsley (South Staffs), Malcolm Styles (South Worcester), Ray Ward (Sussex), Peter Fielding, Al and Ann Cambell (Cardiff), Dave Cheshire, Denise Baum-Pitt (Ambion), Judith Davison, Ray Beddow, Peter Toghil and Tony Allen (Midland), Reg Bolton (Swindon), Marion Disbury (Heart of England), Simon and Jill Richardson.

Proxy Votes:-

Chairman:- North West Kent, Cheshire, Northern Ireland, Shropshire, Friends of Bonsai, Dai-ichi, Chilton, Derby and District, Harlow Carr, Newbury and District, Surrey Heath, Wigston.

Peter Fielding:- Glynderi, New Dawn Bonsai.

Reg Bolton:- Eastbourne and Wealdon.

Ray Ward:- Sutton.

Graham Walker:- BSA

2. **Apologies:-** Northamptonshire, Milton Keynes, Berkshire, The Bonsai Group, Wirral, Nigel Wright.
3. **Ratification of the proposed constitution:-** Chairman explained the need to drastically reduced the size and contents of the existing constitution which in the opinion of the committee and for an organisation such as FoBBS, was too legalistic, extremely difficult to understand, and for the most part, unworkable. The revised constitution, which had been sent to all members for their scrutiny, had been reduced to a document consisting of 7 pages of uncomplicated wording, dispensing with all reference to Chapters, Colleges and Churches. It was explained that under the proposed constitution, only member societies and commercial members would have voting rights; 1 vote per member society and 1 vote per commercial member. Individual and Honorary Life members would not have a vote. The Chairman maintained that, for the meeting to continue and FoBBS to move forward, the proposed constitution would have to be ratified by the members. The Chairman commended the proposed constitution to the meeting and asked for a vote (show of hands) to be taken.

Carried :- 10 votes, 17 proxy votes for, none against and no abstentions.

4. **Minutes of the Extra-ordinary General Meeting of 2nd. May 2010:-** The Chairman explained that although the minutes of the EGM had been forwarded to members, there were no minutes in respect of the previous AGM of 25th. October 2009. Reg Bolton pointed out that at the last AGM, Paul Eslinger resigned at the commencement of the meeting but had said that he would still take the minutes. Unfortunately the minutes have never been prepared, or if they have, never forwarded to Reg. The committee did consider preparing minutes from memory but it was considered that minutes prepared from memory could not be put before the meeting as a true record.

Ray Ward, (Sussex) proposed that the minutes of the EGM be accepted as a true record. Seconded by Barry Walker, (South Staffs). Carried, 10 votes, 17 proxy votes for, none against, no abstentions.

5. **Matters Arising:-** None.

6. Reports:-

a.) Chairman's Report:- Malcolm Hughes presented his report to the meeting outlining the work carried out by the committee over the past 12 months, initially as an interim committee and as a fully elected committee since the EGM. At the time of the meeting we have a total of 42 member societies out of a total of 94 known societies. He thanked the committee and in particular Reg Bolton who had the onerous task of sorting out the financial reports in order to deal with the requirements of Company House which were now all in order.

b.) Financial Reports:- Reg Bolton presented his financial report and accounts to date to the meeting. At the time of meeting he has £60.00 cash in hand and £8,708.57 cash in bank.

A donation of £100.00 was made to Kew Gardens in memory of Ruth Stafford-Jones who sadly passed away earlier this year. It was explained that the accounts presented before the meeting did not cover the full financial year. In practice the financial year runs from January to December each year, so an interim account is normally completed.

It was proposed that in future the AGM should be held in January each year. This would bring everything back into line as membership and insurance runs from January to December. Denise Baum-Pick who was prepared to stand for election as Treasurer said that if the next AGM was put back to January the accounts for the remainder of this year must be shown. Effectively we would have to prepare accounts for a 15 month period to bring everything back to a financial year basis. This was agreed by all.

At this point Malcolm Hughes suggested that as Denise Baum-Pick was prepared to stand for election to the office of Treasurer she should introduce herself to the meeting.

Denise gave a brief résumé of her experience as treasurer for other organisations.

Reg Bolton also reported that he had managed to get the insurance for next year at the same cover and premium as last year. The insurance does not and never has covered the use of power tools.

The meeting was asked to vote by a show of hands to accept the treasurer's report and accounts as a true record to date. Carried, 10 votes, 17 proxy votes, none against and no abstentions.

c.) Friends of the National Bonsai Collection:

i.) Chairman's Report:- Tony Allen presented his report to the meeting.

ii.) Financial Report:- Malcolm Hughes presented his report to the meeting. He also reported that the committee had agreed to set aside the sum of £2,000 for the purchase of a Scots Pine for the Collection.

7. Election of officers and Committee:-

a.) Federation of British Bonsai Societies:-

Chairman: Malcolm Hughes 10 votes, 17 proxy votes for, none against, no abstentions.
Company Secretary: Reg Bolton, 10 votes, 17 proxy Votes for, none against, no abstentions.
Secretary: Judith Davison, 10 votes, 17 proxy votes for, none against, no abstentions.
Treasurer: Denise Baum-Pick 10 votes, 17 proxy votes for, none against, no abstentions.
Committee:

David Cheshire 10 votes, 17 proxy votes for, none against, no abstentions.

Peter Fielding 10 votes, 17 proxy votes for, none against, no abstentions.

Simon Richardson 10 votes, 17 proxy votes for, none against, no abstentions.

Vice Chairman- Ray Ward 10 votes, 17 proxy votes for, none against, no abstentions.

b.) Friends of the National Bonsai Collection:-

Chairman- Tony Allen 10 votes, 17 proxy votes for, none against, no abstentions.

Secretary- Kim Turton 10 votes, 17 proxy votes for, none against, no abstentions.

Treasurer- Malcolm Hughes 10 votes, 17 proxy votes for none against, no abstentions.

Committee:-

Ray Beddow 10 votes, 17 proxy votes for, none against, no abstentions.

Vic Yeomans 10 votes, 17 proxy votes for, none against, no abstentions.

Barry Walker 10 votes, 17 proxy votes for, none against, no abstentions.

8. Date and Venue of Next AGM

FoBBS and FNBC Sunday, 5th. February 2012, Committee Room, Birmingham Botanical Gardens.

Short Break for refreshments.

9. Informal Business Meeting:-

a.) Report on FoBBS Activities:- It was outlined in an effort to provide information and to assist societies, the Speakers Book had been re-introduced and supplied free of charge to member societies. It was emphasised that the fact that an individual appears in the book in no way indicates that FoBBS is endorsing the speakers. It is merely a book of individuals who are prepared to give a talk. FoBBS is also producing a regular news and information sheet which appears in the Bonsai Focus magazine. A general discussion took place re the need for societies to supply information to be published.

b.) New Talent Competition:- Dave Cheshire informed the meeting that there was already one finalist and a further stage to be held in May at Cardiff Show. The final is to be held at the Sussex Bonsai Show in the autumn next year, 2011. It was emphasised that the ultimate winner must be prepared to attend the EBA event in Ratingen, Germany next October.

£200 expenses will be allocated, but paid after the event on production of receipts.

A discussion ensued to establish possible venues for further heats to be held. Dave Cheshire said that Ambion B.S. will be at Gardeners Live again and he did not feel that the organisers of the event would have any objections to a heat of the competition being held at this event.

It was pointed out that all entrants must be amateur and derive no source of income from Bonsai.

Ray Ward put forward that the competition undergo a name change and suggested "Amateur Bonsai Competition". Reg Bolton said that we had to conform with Europe but could not see why we could not add "amateur" to the title "The Amateur New Talent Completion".

No decision was taken but the meeting was asked to give thought to holding heats at the various society shows next year.

c.) Regional Affairs:- Although the Regional Reps are doing their best to make contact with societies within their regions there is still too little information forthcoming. A general discussion took place as to how societies could interact to exchange information of events/speakers etc. It was agreed that there was a need for additional reps.

d.) Show Reports:- Reg Bolton said that we had had a very successful year. We had received another Gold Medal at Chelsea and had a good show at Cardiff although he was disappointed at Cardiff to only be awarded a Silver Gilt.

Next year's paperwork for Chelsea had already been received and we had been allocated a very good site. He has not applied for Cardiff next year as the dates clash with 'Best of British Bonsai' due to the fact that the RHS had changed the Cardiff dates.

e.) Reports – EBA and WBFF:- EBA Convention to take place in Ratingen, Germany, 1-2nd. October 2011. Kath and Malcolm Hughes and Reg Bolton will be attending. World Bonsai Friends Federation Mr Hu is now President and the next event, 2013 will be held in Shanghai, China.

f.) Website:- The new website www.fobbsbonsai.co.uk has been extremely well received and is not recording 2/3000 hits per month. It was pointed out that if anyone just puts in a search for fobbs, this will bring up the site which has links to the National Collection which has also been updated, and to the Botanical Gardens.

Nigel Wright has charged a drastically reduced fee for his services and will continue to manage the sites. The meeting agreed that this was money well spent.

g.) Proposed FoBBS Ventures:- Malcolm Hughes said that the staging of a National Event in recent times and particularly in the current economic climate, has become financially difficult. From a practical point of view FoBBS would be looking to assist societies to put on shows. The cost of suitable venues, speakers and just general expenditure incurred in the organisation of an event make it more and more difficult to break even let alone make a profit. Reg Bolton put forward that previously traders have been used as more or less the primary source of income and have had a hard time of it in recent years. We should not price the traders out of these events.

Tony Allen suggested that it is difficult to get sufficient attendance to specialist events consideration could be given to putting on joint events with other organisations. He quoted "Gardeners World Live" which was a single event but now incorporated food, housing and furniture. He had also read an article about a Bonsai/Koi Carp show in Europe. Perhaps consideration could be given to a joint show with Japanese Gardening and Koi.

A general discussion took place about the feasibility of FoBBS putting on a National/EBA event and it was left that consideration should be given to organising such an event in 2015.

Reg Bolton said that as the meeting were aware, various individuals had been entered on the FoBBS Roll of Honour and made "Honorary Life Members" of FoBBS. This is an award made to anyone for their services to bonsai.

Meeting Concluded, 1.15 p.m.