

## FEDERATION OF BRITISH BONSAI SOCIETIES

Minutes of Committee Meeting, 10:30 a.m. Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March, 2013 at  
"The Woodlands", New Hall Drive, Walmley, Sutton Coldfield, B76 1QX

- 1) **Present:** Malcolm Hughes, Reg Bolton, Judith Davison, Ray Ward, David Cheshire, Tony Allen, Denise Baum-Pick, Peter Fielding.
- 2) **Apologies:** Simon Richardson.
- 3) **Minutes of the previous meeting, (18<sup>th</sup> November 2012):** There were no issues raised, therefore it was proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record by RW and seconded by PF, carried unanimously.
- 4) **Matters arising:** None.
- 5) **Ratification of AGM minutes of 10<sup>th</sup> February 2013:** DB-P stated that the £89.52 mentioned in item 5b was the last charge received from Barclays and nothing to do with the change to the Co-operative bank. Also, the suggestion that small clubs should not pay the subscription fee was incorrect, they would be able to pay a reduced fee of £10 should the committee decide in favour. This still has to be discussed. Other than above, the minutes were accepted as a true record, proposed by DC, seconded by PF.
- 5) a) **Correspondence:** None.
- 6) **Reports:**
  - a) **Financial:** DBP reported that the FoBBS account currently stands at £6867.06. Acceptance of the report was proposed by RW and seconded by DC.
  - b) **Companies House:** RB said that the annual report had been completed and sent off.
  - c) **Membership:** There are currently 49 members, 7 of whom have membership only and 1 that has insurance only. Oxford Bonsai Society has now been disbanded but a few ex-members still meet and wish to be kept on the circulation list for the Events report.
  - d) **Event reports:** RB said that he had received some very complimentary reports regarding the Swindon Winter Image show, which had been very successful and made a small profit in spite of having spent over £1000 on new backdrops. There had been a slight problem in staging some oversized trees and more effort would be needed in future to ascertain tree dimensions in advance. There is a possibility that next year's event may include a display of suiseki.  
MH remarked that this is now a well-established event of such a high standard that it made judging very difficult. RB said that no complaints had been received about the judging.  
MH reported that the Noelanders show had again been very successful with many entries from the UK. RW agreed and said that he had talked to several European traders to invite them to come to the Bonsai World event but they said that as the quality of the British pots available was now so good that it would hardly be worth their while.
  - e) **Amateur New Talent Competition:** PF reported that the FoBBS website still hasn't been updated with details of how to enter the competition.  
The Wirral Society has confirmed that they will hold a heat at their show on 21-22 September. A second heat will be held at Bonsai World with the final possibly at Capel Manor. The use of Dyffryn Gardens is in question for future shows as they now belong to the National Trust who will charge for their use.  
A suggestion was made that, as the next EBA event would be in May 2014, a heat could be held on the day of the Bonsai Boot sale/ AGM next March but this was vetoed and a counter-proposal made that if necessary, one could be held at The Woodlands. Alternatively, RB might be able to host an event, personal circumstances permitting.  
RB proposed that only 2 heats should be held annually with a maximum of 4 contestants and a minimum of 2. The final would consist of the 2 winners and the best runners-up, if appropriate.  
This would therefore require a maximum of 12 trees annually. The motion was seconded by TA and

carried unanimously. TA remarked that with costs constantly rising, some people are put off entering and DBP proposed that as we no longer pay bank charges, we could increase the amount paid to assist winners, to £300. This was seconded by RB and carried unanimously.

RB suggested that contestants should have to submit evidence of their ability and/or be proposed by their society before being accepted as some previous entrants had ruined their trees by poor workmanship.

It was suggested that we need more fund-raising and DC said that the Ingleby Foundation has a very good fund-raiser named Nathan Williams who may be able to help, so it was agreed that DC should arrange a meeting to discuss possibilities.

- f) **Regional Updates:** RW reported that the local clubs in the southeast have been circulating information regarding their individual programs to encourage more visitors. DC suggested that members could advertise on the website when they have guest speakers but TA thought that it would be simpler to just provide a link to the local website. MH asked DC, RW and PF to collect more information so that a decision can be made about the most appropriate method.
- g) **FNBC and the National Collection:** TA reported that work has started on the staging in the octagon. Most of the joists are sound but cross members have been put in for extra support and everything has been coated in pitch. The trees in the octagon are currently on the floor, wrapped in protective fleece. Care will have to be taken whilst work is in progress regarding public liability. The maintenance manager has been very helpful but the staff numbers have been greatly reduced and they are trying to get the FNBC to take over responsibility for the structural maintenance i.e. the ironwork etc. but this would be very costly. DC offered to host a car boot sale at his nursery later this year to raise funds and TA accepted gratefully. It was noted that Marc Noelanders will hold a workshop in aid of FNBC at The Woodlands on 22/23 June.
- h) **European Bonsai Association:** RB reported that the next event is at Audincourt, France on 29<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 where all the demonstrators will be French with the exception of one Japanese. FoBBS' membership fee of £144 is due to be paid. MH raised the possibility of hosting the 2016 event in the UK and has obtained a quote from the Hilton Metropole Hotel where the facilities are excellent. They could provide space for the exhibition, a banquet and food (except lunches) for 400 delegates for 2/3 nights for a cost of £54,000. They also quoted audio/visual costs of £43,008 (Hollywood standard) but that could be considerably reduced. Their Monarch wing is separate to the main hotel; has a good unloading area; good parking and there are excellent road/rail/air connections. The ceilings are high and although the lighting is reasonable, some additional lighting may be needed for the exhibition. There are smaller rooms available for demos and the NTC. Italy has put in a tentative bid but has hosted it many times, but it hasn't been held in Britain since 1999. MH proposed that he should pursue the possibilities and it was agreed that KH detail the proposal for RB to raise at Audincourt.
- i) **W.B.F.F.:** After this year's show in China, the next event will be in 2017 and Taiwan has applied to be the host. However, this would mean 2 consecutive Chinese events and as it will be the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Omiya City, Japan would also like to host it. Japan is thought to be the preferable location as their organization tends to be better.
- 7) **Forthcoming events:**
- a) **Shohin Exhibition, Failand, 24<sup>th</sup> March 2013** – A plan has been received from Mark and Ritta Cooper and it is likely that the event will be crowded as it is over-subscribed and the hall is not very large.
- b) **“Bonsai World” Sussex, 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> August 2013:** RW reported that 21 traders have booked places, and half of them have already paid. The Shohin Association have asked for 5 tables and John Armitage will demonstrate. The plans for the other non-bonsai cultural events are progressing well and talks are underway with a local councilor to improve the catering facilities. Exhibits must be of a high quality as the event is a national one and the FNBC will be exhibiting some trees. Entrance will cost £6 per day or £10 for the weekend and exhibiting Societies will receive 2 free tickets. The Aurora Hotel is offering a 3-night stay for £163 through Booking.com. An application to the Heritage Lottery fund has been turned down but other grants have been applied for and the event is expected to make a small profit.

- c) **Reports – other society events:** PF raised the question of the rising costs of hiring suitable venues. The Crawley group are hosting a show in July together with 2 or 3 other local clubs and are using a hall run by the local horticultural society which will be free of charge but the fee to use Swindon's sports court is £1200 although they allow free put-up time.
- 8) **R.H.S. Events:**
- a) **The Chelsea Flower Show:** All necessary paperwork has been done and the rota is complete. We receive £470 towards travelling expenses and £650 for the stand and although some new materials will be needed for some minor structural changes, we should still break even. Ticket allocation is 5 per day and there is one spare for the Tuesday. There has been some contact regarding possible media coverage by the BBC as it is the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the RHS.
- b) **Gardeners World Live/Best of British Bonsai:** MH reported that the stand layout has been drawn up and setup should be fairly straightforward as there will be no Japanese garden to construct. 40 backdrops will be needed and there should be around 70 exhibits. We should receive either £500 or £600 from the RHS which will cover the main expense of van hire which is approximately £240 for 3 or 4 days. It is unclear at the moment whether any new fabric will be required. There will be demonstrations each day and names received so far include Steve Tolley, Kevin Willson, Will Baddeley, Simon Temblett. Tony Tickle and Alex Evelyn are also possibilities. Setup will begin on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>, the tree placement takes place on the Monday and judging the bonsai will take place Tuesday morning and by the RHS in the afternoon.
- 9) **Judging criteria:** A question has been raised about accreditation so MH has been invited to a judges training day at the RHS to discuss assessment criteria. From now on there will be process by which potential judges will have to demonstrate their ability to assess things such as plant quality, health, display and the level of endeavor displayed, e.g. comparing a tree that the owner has tended for years against one purchased 'ready made'. The RHS has asked FoBBS to put together a training programme for judges so that a list of approved judges could be compiled for recommendation to the RHS. A circular is to be distributed to all member clubs inviting people to apply for accreditation.
- 10) **Federation website and Publicity:** The website is now receiving regular updates. SR has produced a FoBBS flyer which was discussed and accepted with minor changes. Costs will now be investigated and copies produced in time for Chelsea.
- 11) **FoBBS trophies:** Trophies are to be awarded at major shows, either for individual trees or for Society stands. Two examples were discussed, a moulded/cast design and a hexagonal, engraved glass plaque. It was unanimously decided to choose the glass plaque.
- 12) **Teaching programme:** Kath Hughes is in charge of education within BCI. Originally American, this is now a global organization and possesses sets of slides for club use. Kath has prepared PowerPoint presentations covering various subjects such as tree species care, deadwood carving, pests and diseases etc., which could be downloaded by members. MH to pursue.
- 13) **Any other business:** The date of the bonsai boot sale 2014 has been set for March 16<sup>th</sup> and will coincide with the FoBBS AGM as this clashes with neither the event at Willowbog nor Mother's Day. DC confirmed that Nathan Williams has agreed to a meeting in early April about fund raising.
- 14) **Date and venue of the next meeting:** The meeting concluded at 15:45. The next meeting will be Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> May at 7:30pm.