



FEDERATION OF BRITISH BONSAI SOCIETIES  
AND FRIENDS OF THE NATIONAL BONSAI COLLECTION

Joint meeting held at 10.30 am, Thursday, 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2023 at  
"The Woodlands", New Hall Drive, Walmley, Sutton Coldfield, B76 1QX  
Also online.

Minutes

1. In attendance. : Peter Fielding, Denise Baum-Pick, Malcolm Hughes, Barry Walker, Kim Turton, Nigel Wright, Amnon Paldi.
2. Apologies. Chris Durne, Nick Payne, James Thornton
3. Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting. PF and BW.
4. Matters arising. a) Signatories for banking. MH will use the AGM to update the signatures for banking purposes. b) Rosemoor bank account stands at £710 c) New table coverings for FOBBS shows. NW said that he had 37 of the 40 new table coverings. PF has the other 3 which will be conveyed to the venue of Bonsai Show SW along with the backdrops and demonstration trees.
5. Correspondence. DBP had a letter regarding a bequest to FOBBS from the estate of the late Alan Charles Osborne. DBP has replied thanking them for the donation of £444.44.
6. Reports.
  - a. Financial (FoBBS and FNBC). DPB submitted the accounts for the year. MH, AP all agreed. Auditing of the accounts was discussed, but as turnover is less than £10,000 an audit is not required. The accounts can be signed off by the committee.  
  
£9222.42 in the bank with £42.18 in cash. Profit last year was £856.93.  
  
FNBC. MH. Recent income £1220.00 and spending of £384.80. £6493.93 in the bank and the same arrangements for auditing as above.
  - b. Companies House. Nothing to report.
  - c. Membership. DBP reported that 47 member societies have renewed to date and that one has not taken out the insurance.
  - d. FNBC Working group and state of collection. MH read his report (appended to these minutes) regarding the planned major alterations to the Botanical Gardens. FNBC will be working closely with the Botanical Gardens in order to best manage the collection during the building work.  
  
BW recently visited the collection and the trees are in good condition. He said that several of the trees would be re-potted in the next few weeks.

- e. EBA including update on Mirislav Kolar participation at EBA event. AP Informed the meeting that the EBA Conference of 20 – 23 April 2023 is to be held in Olomouc, Slovakia. It is a national event with EBA added on. PF has been in communication with Mirislav and arrangements for his participation are in hand.

WBBF. MH informed the meeting that the recent Australian event held online have yet to supply a financial report.

The next WBBF event is in 2026 in Malaysia, as a result, as is customary, the chair has passed to the local area representative Kim Say Wan who is based in Korea. MH expressed his concerns regarding the competence of one of the three nominated vice-chairs and questioned the relevance of the organization. PF added that we need to concentrate on Bonsai activities in this country.

- 7. Member society contacts and communication. PF/MH. There was a discussion regarding the evident lack of clarity in dealing with various tasks concerning record keeping, circulating time critical paperwork and updating contact details etc. It was agreed that after the AGM a list of tasks would be identified with dates attached if appropriate and that these would be allocated to the person best suited to completing them. Item for next meeting.
- 8. FNBC Bonsai Boot sale 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2023. KT. At the time of the meeting KT explained that he was not able to confirm the arrangements as he was waiting to hear from the Gardens regarding several issues. A meeting was arranged for early March with the CEO and Head Gardener.
- 9. a. Chelsea 2023. NP had asked MH to update the meeting. The Chelsea bid has been accepted but with a slightly reduced space due to demand. NP has started to modify the materials for the stand. BBC have expressed interest in making a short film like last year. It was agreed to make polo shirts and sweat shirts available for both Chelsea and Rosemoor.
- b. SW Bonsai at RHS Rosemoor 2023.
  - i) Transport. Backdrops, table coverings, demonstration trees, FOBBS flyers, roller banner and polo shirts need to be taken to and returned from the event. After the meeting it was arranged that Dave Cheshire would be able to do this.
  - ii) Wire needs to be provided for the demonstration. DC to provide and bill FOBBS.
  - iii) A prize for the best display is needed. Item for next meeting.
- 10. AGM. Documentation and location. It was agreed that there would be no attempt to make the meeting available online. It was further agreed to inform members that if they do not respond regarding their voting preferences then their vote would transfer to that Chair. Location within the Gardens to be finalized at the meeting with the Gardens in early March.

Nominations for the AGM. DBP would like to stand down if a suitable replacement for her can be found. All others are willing to continue and PF to ask James Thornton about joining the committee.

11. OB.

i) PF has purchased a number of large plastic boxes for storage of merchandise.

ii) AP informed the meeting that he thought that there should be a one day FOBBS event in the next few years. Agreed by all. Item for next meeting.

iii) PF explained that Dave Cheshire asked if FOBBS would like to take part in an event he is involved in organizing. Item for next meeting.

12. Date and venue for the next meeting. Due to work commitments this was changed at the AGM to Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2023.

## **FRIENDS OF THE NATIONAL BONSAI COLLECTION**

### **Preliminary ideas being considered with refurbishment of the Birmingham Botanical Gardens**

Following an informal conversation between Barry Walker (Chairman F.N.B.C.) and a member of staff at the Gardens, various proposals are being currently considered to refurbish of the main buildings at the site. This would include the area currently occupied by the National Bonsai Collection.

To date, a grant amounting to £480,000 is being provided to cover costs for the glasshouses, all of which are Grade 1 listed structures. Subject to approval, the work envisaged would involve the removal of many of the surrounding buildings which, at present, surround large parts of the glasshouses. Such a plan could include removal of the main hall (the Garden Suite) as well as large sections of the main entrance and reception area, the *porte cochère* archway entrance as well as the cafeteria area and Loudon Suite, the latter comprising one side of the bonsai collection site.

A likely idea is to replace the area occupied by the Garden Suite with an open courtyard garden which may include a Japanese-style garden within it. Other plans would include a rebuilding programme so as to accommodate a new reception area, cafeteria, shop and other facilities.

The overall aim would be to make the glasshouses the principle feature of the Gardens.

In addition to the current staff which already includes a new director and management team, additional appointments are being made, to include a person in charge of "collections" ..... apart from the National Bonsai Collection, there is also a National Cyclamen Collection. It is therefore probable that the F.N.B.C. team would ultimately be linking with a member of staff dedicated to collections within the Gardens, something that has not been the case before.

When plans are approved and work commences, it is likely to be carried out in stages but at some point, the F.N.B.C. team will need to consider three major factors. There will be a point at which the current Collection site is demolished meaning that:

- a) The Collection will be closed over a period of time and
- b) The trees will have to be moved to temporary accommodation; ideally this might best be at the homes of two or three committee members.
- c) The structural changes F.N.B.C. had been planning for will now be put on hold until the nature and location of a new site within the Botanical Gardens is established.

It had been the intention for Barry Walker, Kim Turton and myself to meet with the Director of the Gardens, Sara Clutton-Brock and head of the Trustees, Sue Beardsmore in early February to discuss how the National Bonsai Collection could be improved upon. In the light of this new information and with new staff now taking up their posts, such a meeting will be deferred until this March.

Malcolm Hughes,  
Treasurer, F.N.B.C.