

FEDERATION OF BRITISH BONSAI SOCIETIES

Minutes of Committee Meeting, 10:30 a.m. Sunday 17th April, 2011 at
“The Woodlands”, New Hall Drive, Walmley, Sutton Coldfield, B76 1QX

1. **Present** :- Malcolm Hughes, Reg Bolton, Judith Davison, Peter Fielding, Ray Ward, Simon Richardson, David Cheshire.
2. **Apologies** :- Tony Allen, Denise Baum-Pick.
3. **Minutes of the previous meeting, (16th Jan. 2011)** :- Proposed as a true record by RW and seconded by PF.
4. **Matters arising from the minutes :**
 - a. Insurance: At this time, there had been no further progress with the offer on insurance. MH had conveyed to the broker concerned (Roy Musk, Insurance Experts Ltd., Chelmsford) the issues that needed to be addressed and was awaiting a response.
 - b. Concern was raised concerning the information about societies that is being offered on the website ‘Empire Bonsai’ but as the information is already in the public domain and there is no financial gain to be had, it was decided that no action need be taken.
In the interests of Data Protection, new membership forms should include a tick-box for members to indicate whether or not they wished their information to be shared.
5. **Correspondence** :- None.
6. **Reports :**
 - a. **Financial report:** The balance as at 24th March was £8545.25. Bank charges of £40.36 were incurred between 06.12.10 and 06.03.11.
RB and D B-P are currently having difficulty in getting the Bank to recognize the change of address so that statements are sent to D B-P.
The available methods of payment were discussed and although it is now believed that the Government is in favour of retaining cheques, there remains the possibility of them being phased out so alternatives should be considered. MH suggested that it would be beneficial to introduce PayPal, whilst SR suggested an alternative method would be either direct debit or standing orders. It was decided to defer the decision until the next meeting when D B-P would be present.
 - b. **Companies House:** RB reported that he has completed the Annual Return at a cost of £15 compared with last year’s figure of £30.
 - c. **Current membership and society listings:** The membership is now quite healthy....
A new society in Bury St Edmunds has recently joined and paid their fee but unfortunately, they gave only a postal address but no phone number or email details. MH has written to them twice but as yet, has had no reply. DC suggested that the new membership form should state that no application could be processed without a valid telephone number and email address
 - d. **Event reports:** RB reported that, in spite of the higher cost of the new venue, the Swindon Winter Image show made a profit and had in excess of 300 visitors. It was reported that the Society was unhappy with the quality of some of the exhibits. Next year’s event on 19th February is already over subscribed.
BoBB – This year’s event was again very successful financially with large numbers through the door. There were 27 traders who paid £40 per table. The two marquees cost £200 each. There was no advertising done other than in the bonsai world. Advanced ticket sales were up on 2009, due possibly to using PayPal as a means of payment. As in 2009, a book would be produced illustrating the trees exhibited.
 - e. **Forthcoming bonsai events:**
 - i. **‘Bonsai World’ – September 3rd/4th 2011:** RW reported that 4 speakers have been confirmed, namely – Marc Noelanders, John Armitage, Ken Norman and Rammon Hamers. There would also be various oriental cultural events such as Chinese brush painting, ikebana, Japanese gardens and tea ceremonies. Also, currently 12 societies have agreed to

take part (others are welcome to put on a display) and the last heat and the final of this year's New Talent Competition will be held on the Saturday and Sunday respectively. MH has been invited to give a closing address.

A proposal was made by RB (seconded by MH and carried unanimously) that FoBBS should fund the guest speakers to the tune of £500.

RW asked whether FNBC would like to display some trees and MH said that he would report back after their next committee meeting on May 19th. RB said that extra backdrops could be made available if required. EBA to be invited to attend in view of the ease of access via Gatwick. SBG to compile a list of suitable hotels to recommend, e.g. it is believed that rooms are available at the nearby Premier Inn which can be booked one month in advance for £29. MH stated that the Sussex Bonsai Group, who are organizing this event, will have the use of the backdrops owned by FoBBS free of charge, as will any other member societies. Non-member societies will be able to hire them at a cost of £5 per item, though requests from member societies should take preference. Cloths can be made available if required. The use of the stands for the BoBB event was provided free in the interest of sponsorship.

- ii. **South Wales event, August 2012:** This is a regional event to be organized jointly by the Artistic Bonsai Circle, Dragon Bonsai Society, Glynderi Bonsai Club and New Dawn Bonsai and will be held at Tredegar House, Newport, over the Bank Holiday on 26th/27th August in the Orangery and/or the stables.

£200 lottery funding has been applied for and DC offered to help liaise with an application for a grant to help fund it.

A motion by MH that FoBBS should support the event was carried unanimously. It was agreed that a headliner would be required to help attract visitors but it would depend on what funds were available. Names suggested were Ryan Neal, Kobiyashi, Serge Clemence, Francois Jeker and Steve Tolley.

- iii. **Chelsea:** RB reported that one more helper was required for the second shift on Wednesday 25th and DC volunteered to stand in.

RB will hire a van for set-up and breakdown if FoBBS will stand the cost. This was unanimously agreed.

- f. **New Talent Competition/acquisition of material:** MH has ascertained that suitable material can be sourced from Lodders in the form of junipers between 50/60 cm high, at a cost of €45 each and he and Kath would go to Utrecht on April 27th to select 30 trees. RB, DC and SR offered to help look after them until needed.

An application form, required to reflect agreed changes and DC agreed to produce one. Currently there are 3 entrants for the Cardiff heat, 4 for Gardener's World and 5 for the Sussex show where both the last heat and the final will take place.

As Eddie Savoury, who was the winner at Wessex 2010, has refused to go to the EBA final, the runner-up will have to be asked to go instead.

Judges need to be appointed for the Cardiff heat, and Dan Barton and Mark Cooper were suggested. PF said that he could be available on either the 16th or 19th June for the NEC event but he would prefer the Sunday. The space used for the heat would need to be filled with something else when the competition was not in progress. The heat should take place on Saturday 18th between 11 am and 2 pm and the finished trees displayed on Sunday 19th. RB and MH will judge the event. Any new entrants to be advised to contact PF and DC as soon as possible.

- g. **Regional updates:** Regional events are already being planned in Sussex and South Wales. It was suggested that Graham Walker from Tees Valley would be a good contact to cover the North East area but someone would be needed to cover the North West, possibly either from the Wirral Society or the Vale of Clwyd.

The aim was to ensure that any major event run by a Society would be opened to other neighbouring societies. Any society or group planning an event should be encouraged to check their proposed dates with FoBBS to try to avoid clashing with other events.

- h. Bonsai Instructors book:** MH reported that Lee Verhorevoort has said that he does not wish to be included as he already does around 40 talks annually. Other possible inclusions would be Dan Barton and Chris Thomas. The book will need to be updated.
DC said that he might be interested in the Speaker's training course.

- i. FNBC & National Bonsai Collection:** The raffle held at the BoBB was unfortunately a little late starting but nevertheless, made £1084 leaving a profit of £970.80. The Ambion Society won the first prize. RW stated that he had not seen any tickets for sale prior to the show but MH said he was sure that all clubs had been sent some.

Gill Taylor-Duxberry had offered a Western hemlock and a beech group for the NBC. There are now more trees than space to display them. RW asked whether another satellite venue could be set up in another part of the country, the difficulty being to get a secure area with people available for regular maintenance. RB reported that he has been told that, generally, the National Collection is looking much improved.

- j. European Bonsai Association:** RB is currently unable to get information about the amount of space available to exhibitors and traders for the show in Ratingen in September. Some traders have decided to go to another show in France the following week.

MH reported that there had been an issue at the Italian New Talent competition. A question was raised about the validity of the winning entrant who was not of Italian nationality, however, the complaint was not upheld on the grounds that the entrant lived in Italy and was a member of the national bonsai organisation. Entrants within the UK only need to be affiliated to FoBBS in order to be eligible to participate in the Amateur New Talent.

- k. W.B.F.F.:** Nothing to report.

- 7. Federation website and publicity:-** It was requested that any changes and/or new items that need to be made to the website should be sent to KH as soon as possible. Nigel Wright is currently on holiday and will be available to update it on his return.
- 8. Any other business:-** Recently, a FoBBS society member had expressed a concern that trees displayed at a national level did not cater for those starting in bonsai with material in the early stages of development. In response to this comment the view was expressed that trees displayed at national shows should always be of the very highest quality. A show with the title "Best of ..." should be exactly what it says. Local societies' shows are different in that they are trying to encourage new members by displaying trees in training/development and those which may break the "rules" of bonsai but which are still pleasing to the eye, and so it was agreed that such trees should be restricted to local events.
- 9. Date and venue of the next meeting:-** Sunday July 17th, 2011 at 10.30 a.m., at The Woodlands.