

FEDERATION OF BRITISH BONSAI SOCIETIES

Minutes of Committee Meeting, 10:30 a.m. Sunday 17th July, 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, Tony Allen, Denise Baum-Pick.
2. **Apologies:** None
3. **Minutes of the previous meeting, (17th April, 2011):** Proposed as a true record by RW and seconded by DC.
4. **Matters arising from the minutes:**
 - a. Item 4 a, insurance: No further communication has been received from Roy Musk.
 - b. Item 6 i, TA supplied a list of addresses that FNBC raffle tickets were sent to.
 - c. It was noted that in item 6 e ii, Cardiff Bonsai Society should have been included; also the Lottery grant applied for was £4,600 and not £200.
5. **Correspondence:** None.
6. **Reports:**
 - a. **Financial report:** The current balance is £7727.60. D B-P is now receiving bank statements.
 - b. **Companies House:** RB reported that everything is up to date.
 - c. **Current membership and society listings:** The membership is now 42 members and listings are up to date.
 - d. **Event reports:** MH reported that at the NEC Gardener's World Show 3 Gold and one Silver Gilt medal were awarded to bonsai stands including the Ambion display, which also won the Best National Society award. The New Talent competition was held on Saturday 4th and was won by Carl Hawkins (South Worcester Bonsai Soc). He will compete in the final at Sussex on Sunday 4th Sept. It was agreed that in future, the public need to be prevented from getting too close to the contestants and distracting them. Some large 'Competition in Progress' signs should be obtained. RB was unable to attend and MH was able to arrange for John Trott to stand in as judge. It was suggested that next year the area, when not in use, should display more information and possibly, some FNBC trees.

FNBC - Loan contracts for trees and materials:- TA referred to the two documents, Loan of Trees and Hire of Hydraulic Tables that had already been distributed to committee members, and explained that he had set out to produce the most basic form of contract. He had spoken and shown the documents to two solicitor colleagues who agreed that although basic both would stand up in a court of law which is all that is required of them. TA agreed with the concerns of SR regarding the valuation of trees from the National Collection and accepted that this is always going to be a contentious issue.

SR suggested that the trees should be valued so that someone loaning a tree would be aware of the liability undertaken in order to obtain insurance. RB added that it would not be possible to insure a tree. SR asked whether the collection had ever been valued. MH gave a brief history of the difficulties during the early days of the collection when the trees were loaned to the collection and unrealistic values were given to some trees which culminated in the eventual loss of a tree and the collection having to pay out £1,500.00 to compensate Peter Chan. A general discussion ensued and it was agreed that as opposed to someone loaning a tree/s under the terms of the agreement FNBC could be invited to show trees from the collection. This matter will also be addressed by the FNBC committee at their meeting 26th July. TA then explained the steps that would have to be taken if FOBBS and FNBC started hiring out equipment. Effectively FOBBS would be going into the Hire Business and would need appropriate insurance as our existing insurance would not cover us.

A full written risk assessment of all equipment would have to be undertaken and an operating instruction document would have to be produced. In the case of FOBBS the cloths would have to be weighed and instructions of how to lift should be given. How to erect and dismantle the backdrops would need to be given. The material, cloths and backdrops would also have to be fireproofed. In the case of FNBC and the hydraulic tables the same applies particularly in respect of insurance as they have none other than being covered by FOBBS.

TA had also explored the situation of loaning equipment and the borrower making a donation to funds. Unfortunately the above still applies as FOBBS would still be giving a service for reward. Even if FOBBS loan the equipment totally free of charge we still have to do the risk assessments, give operating/erection instructions and ensure that insurance cover is in place. A further general discussion took place which culminated in unanimous agreement that further consideration would have to be given to the matter and formally dealt with.

Chelsea was another exceptional success with another Gold medal. The main issue was costs. Van hire (£650), fuel, replacement tickets, admin costs etc., came to £1614. We received £1200 for the gold medal and money for travelling expenses – a total of £1,600. MH proposed a vote of thanks to RB for all his hard work, seconded by?. The materials are now in storage for next year with minimal new items required.

e. **Forthcoming bonsai events:**

- i. **'Bonsai World' – September 3rd/4th 2011:** RW reported that plans for the event are progressing well. 15 traders, 16 Societies and 10 individuals will be attending with displays. Also, 10 Japanese cultural events will be held.

Enough backdrops are available from FoBBS and Swindon to cover the 65 tables. There will be 2 demonstrations each morning and afternoon for which tiered seating will be provided. Marc Noelanders and Rammon Hamers will be among the demonstrators. The last heat and the final of this year's New Talent Competition will be held on the Saturday and Sunday respectively and there will be a physical barrier to prevent interference from onlookers. It was agreed that this year's losing finalists should be offered a place in the final at Swindon next year. It was noted that at the NEC event two contestants came joint second and it was agreed that in future, there should be a point scoring form to enable distinctions to be made. Losers of heats and finals can continue to re-enter each level until they win. RW requested a copy of the insurance schedule to cover the event. FoBBS will support the event by covering the guest speaker's travelling (£148) and hotel expenses (£60 per night) and the acquisition of 5 new tables for the NT competition (£5 per table). TA proposed that a sum of £500 per annum be set aside to support this type of group event, (seconded by RW). MH suggested that all member societies be made aware of the fund and of the need to supply a breakdown of estimated costing when submitting a request. This was agreed unanimously.

RB undertook to prepare EBA type certificates of merit for award to trees and display stands.

- ii. **South Wales event, Tredegar House, Dyffryn, August 2012:** PF reported that Kevin Wilson has been confirmed as one headliner and a Japanese master may be invited (possibly Kobiyashi).

Societies should be advised to take out contracts with headliners. Dan Barton and Mark and Ritta Cooper will be putting on displays. Tredegar House is to be taken over by the National Trust but they have undertaken to honour all bookings.

- iii. **South West event:** Nigel Wright from North Devon (not members) has approached FoBBS about a proposed joint show at Rosemoor; however 2 clubs are reluctant to commit. It was agreed that FoBBS would offer to support as long as the clubs are members.
- iv. **Gardener's World 2012:** The Organisers have suggested the possibility of holding a joint Bonsai Society event at next year's show. This should be put to all member societies and

discussed at the next committee meeting. Each Society would be responsible for its own display, but trees would need to be of above average quality as it is an RHS show. There should be a clear distinction made between exhibition displays and those of an educational nature.

Applications must be in before Christmas.

- f. **New Talent Competition:** Each event will last 3 hours, from 11 am till 2 pm. Contestants will supply their own tools and wire and undertake not to communicate with each other. RB to prepare notices, guidelines and judging criteria etc.

Corin Tomlinson has expressed an interest in hosting a future event in Nottingham.

- g. **Regional updates:** Regional events have, so far, all been south of the Midlands, MH & KH offered to visit the Wirral Society to invite them to host an event.
- h. **Bonsai Instructors book:** It was agreed that each speaker's location should be included to make it easier for Societies to estimate travelling expenses. TA offered to take on responsibility for maintenance.
- i. **FNBC & National Bonsai Collection:** All is well, there will be a committee meeting on July 26th to discuss the loan/hire of trees/equipment, and so far, only favourable feedback has been received.

Gill Taylor-Duxbury had offered a Western hemlock and a beech group for the NBC. There are now more trees than space to display them.

Concern has been expressed by Wes Pinfield from the MBS about possible charges that may be introduced for events held at Birmingham Botanical Gardens. However, James Wheeler (CEO) has refuted this on the grounds that the extra visitors and revenue events bring are very important to them.

- j. **European Bonsai Association:** EBA want the names of all contestants for the NT competition. MH will act as one of the judges.

Any potential tree entries must be submitted as soon as possible with photographs. It was suggested that a future EBA event might be held at the location of this year's Sussex show; applications would need to be made by 2012 for 2016 event.

- k. **W.B.F.F.:** The next Board meeting will be held in Takamatsu.

- 7. **Federation website and publicity:** Nigel Wright is responsible for the websites of FoBBS, BoBB and FNBC.
- 8. **Any other business:** It was noted, with a degree of surprise, that there had been an item on TV about Bushukan Bonsai during the coverage of the Hampton Court Flower Show.

MH reported that Kath Hughes is now on the board of Bonsai Clubs International.

- 9. **Date and venue of the next meeting:** Sunday October 16th, 2011 at 10.30 a.m., at The Woodlands.