

**MINUTES OF THE BORDER CONVENTION**  
**2019 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**Held on Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> March 2019**

**At The Roman Way Hotel, Watling Street, Cannock, Birmingham**

**1. MEETING OPENS**

The Meeting was opened at 10.30 a.m. by the Chairman Ronnie Sillitoe and the Secretary Colin Egner. The chairman welcomed all attendees and observers to the meeting. The attendees stood for a minutes silence in remembrance of past members.

**2. APOLOGIES for ABSENCE.**

Apologies were received from: - Malcolm Barnett (IBBA), A Smalley (Nottinghamshire BFCC), I Perrier (Wessex BFCC), L Rowlands (West Wales BFCC), L Evans (Welsh BFCC), A Pearce (North Staffs BFCC), A Triolo (Southern BFCC), P England (Doncaster BFCC), S Daniels (IBBA), A Speight (IBBA).

**3. APPOINTMENT OF TELLER.**

Nigel Leader (Doncaster BFCC) was proposed by C Egner, seconded by J Rance and accepted by all members and appointed as Teller. There were 15 clubs represented.

**4. ACCEPTANCE OF THE MINUTES OF THE 2018 A.G.M. (11<sup>th</sup> March 2018)**

The chairman outlined the main points from the minutes of the 11<sup>th</sup> Match 2019. The only matter arising was the problem raised by Nottinghamshire BFCC in 2018, Richard Thorley gave an update pointing out what the club has done to resolve the problem. The minutes were accepted as a true record, proposed Phil Dewland, seconded Richard Thorley and there were no other matters arising.

**5. CORRESPONDENCE.**

The secretary read out a letter from the IBBA publicly thanking North Staffs BFCC for their date change last year to allow the IBBA to hold their show at the Parrot Society's Stafford Show event. Colin went on to say that the Parrot Society have again changed dates for 2019, having their show on the same weekend as North Staffs and consequently the IBBA have decided that that they will not be having a show at the Parrot Society's Stafford Show event for 2019. Colin said that the future of the IBBA is being reviewed and they will report back to the Border Convention when decisions have been reached. The Chairman suggested that the IBBA and North Staffs discuss what could be achieved in the future. Colin Egner said that the Parrot Society will have their event on the second weekend in October for the next three years. Options are being looked at for the future.

Colin has received correspondence from the East of England BFCC saying they would not be at the AGM also outlining the current position of their club. They only received 65 borders at the last show but they are still going ahead with this year's show. They do however think it may be their last show. Colin said that he has put details on the website outlining the current state of the East of England and North Wales to try to get more fanciers involved with the club and their shows and he will provide details of the shows near the dates. Nigel Leader said that when he goes to shows he has a lot of room in his van and will take anyone's birds to the shows.

**6. PRESIDENT'S/ REPORT.**

The President Colin Egner said that the Border Fancy in 2018-2019, could be summed up by the casual observer or disillusioned border fancier as follows. A terrible breeding season. Most Clubs reported lower numbers of bird benched at their shows. There is a decline in Membership to Clubs intimating unless entries improve in 2019 their Club could fold. The number of committee members in most Clubs being counted on one hand. There are more people leaving the hobby through death and disillusionment than new members entering. None of this paints a rosy picture, but sadly this is the reality. What is even worst news is the only ones that can alter this decline of the Border Fancy are sat around this table, you are the only ones that have bothered to put the hobby before other commitments, a very sobering thought. He said that he knows this is not something you expect to hear in a President's speech but unfortunately the time for effusive thanks to the committee and congratulatory back patting is over, this is not the Oscars this is real life and in real life the Border fancy at this moment in time

is in Accident and Emergency and could be shortly in the Intensive Care Unit. Looking back in the minutes 10 years ago when he became secretary, the President, Chairman and secretary all bemoaned the decline in the Fancy then. The Question is, "What are we going to do about it?" Are we going to sit back and react as we stumble from crisis to crisis, or are we going to change and be more proactive and contrive to put policies in place to offer support to failing Clubs, disillusioned fanciers and new entrants to the Fancy? The biggest problem is how can we halt and reverse this downward spiral? Here are a few suggestions for the meeting to consider - With the falling number of fanciers have we too many clubs? We presently have 30 Club shows in the UK and Ireland in an 11 week period. Last year the most birds shown in a weekend was under 1,200 birds at 4 shows. Ten years ago the number was 2000. Should Clubs that are struggling amalgamate? A difficult decision maybe but sacrificing one might enable the other to survive. Clubs could amalgamate to host their show on alternate years, or a possibility of Area Shows. Cut the number of shows down to 10 or 11 open shows a year and all the clubs in that area amalgamating to run the show and make it a weekend show and social function? Clubs could always maintain their identity by having small member's shows. Midweek shows, with an ever ageing fancier profile (a lot of fanciers are retired) a mid-week show is a possibility. Unlike many other Canary fancies we have 2 excellent advertising tools which are seriously underutilized. The Clubs need to make better use of them. Better promotion of the Border at C. B.S.'s, you will not get new fanciers by preaching to the converted. A Border Convention Summit meeting to be held at the International Show where fanciers can meet a panel of members from the committee to discuss new ideas and innovations, put forward suggestions and even criticisms, some of these suggestions might seem radical but some are plain common sense. Gentlemen as I said earlier you are the only ones that care, "Will you help change the Border Fancy, or condemn it to the dust of time?" On A lighter note 2018 was not all bad, the Convention Committee did have some minor successes and innovations, the first success was when the Dutch tried to alter the Border and Fife classification without consulting the Convention or the Federation. The two bodies cooperated and sent similar letters to C.O.M. UK, whom we would like to thank for supporting our case, and managed to defeat the resolution. Our thanks also go to Walter Bonher chairman of the German Border Club who first alerted us to the situation. The other major success was the B.C Breeding Survey which was a reaction to the poor breeding season, our thanks are extended to two individuals Phil Dewland and Ronnie Sillitoe who persuaded (bullied) fanciers into completing the survey. Mention should also go to Cleveland, the Welsh, Mid Ulster and Northern Ireland clubs that encouraged their members to complete the survey. Special thanks must go to Ronnie Sillitoe who had the best results from the survey and has and has proactively written his method of conditioning Borders for the 2019 Breeding season.

## **7. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.**

The Chairman Ronnie Sillitoe thanked all of the clubs who had supported him last year with votes to become chairman. He said that too many clubs have problems both with their shows and organisation. Novices had informed him that they are not happy at shows feeling they do not get the same treatment as champions, he pointed out that novices pay the same entry fee as champions. Ronnie said that some fanciers feel that the journal has lost its way and some of the content is not relevant or current to the border fancy. He felt that the journal should fit a format of what we want to see and a proof reading should be undertaken before it goes out. The journal needs to be of help to fanciers in every aspect of our precious hobby. We need to give help to the clubs which need it with where possible committee members being in attendance at the shows to help where possible. He thought that a suggestion box at some shows may be helpful. Ronnie said that the only way forward is for clubs to ask for help in the journal/website/schedules or social media. He went on to say that he attended 11 shows last year, either showing or judging and he had been impressed at the way that the clubs had tried to improve and promote their shows especially their hospitality but he also saw a some clubs with just a few members who turn up, win or lose, but stay on to the end to ensure everything is tidied up and he thought some of these members deserved a diploma (or something) to show recognize their help to the hobby. He thought it was possibly time for a restructure of the hobby because the way it is going is not good. What we have we must use it or lose it.

## **8. SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Colin Egner said that as he had already said in the Presidents report, 2018 was a disastrous season in many ways and the way forward requires a total rethink, however every cloud has a silver lining. There has been a number of brighter moments and personal successes for fanciers during 2018. First and foremost was Mark Symonds outstanding team of Borders which rocketed him to becoming the top British winner in 2018 with 5 Best in Shows and he said that he had Birds on the Top Bench at every show at which he exhibited. Well done Mark.

The runners up to Mark were Billy and Paul Heathcote with a creditable 3 wins. Whilst over in Northern Ireland Mid Ulster secretary Davy Sommerville ruled the roost with 2 Wins. A special mention must go to Alan Differ who having gone up to Champion this year returned to Cleveland where he took Best Novice in 2017 and took Best Champion and Best in show, a magnificent feat for his first year. On the Novice scene whilst no novice took a Best in Show it was a case of "All Honours Even " With Garry Bishop (England), Neil Tench (Wales), Maurice McKenzie (N.Ireland), Al Brown (England), Wyndham Williams (Wales) and partnership Alan & Sophie Robertson (Scotland) all on 2 wins. Garry also made it Best Novices 3Years in a row at the IBBA National This can only be good for the Fancy. In Italy congratulations go to Valentino Cherubini who won all 3 of their major Shows.

Secondly Colin reported on the Border Convention Breeding Survey. He said that he had already thanked the organizer's but a special thanks to the 69 people who took their time to fill in the forms. Lastly he said that he would like to thank the committee for the support they have given to him over the last turbulent twelve months. With a special mention to Ronnie for the enthusiastic support, if not the phone bills, he has given in his first year as Chairman, and of course Malcolm who is always there.

## **9. JOURNAL EDITOR'S REPORT**

Simon Tammam the Journal Editor said that he did not have a lot to report on, he thanked Colin Egner and Malcolm Scott for the show reports. He said that if we do not receive any articles then of course he cannot print any in the journal. An ideal situation would be if show secretaries could send articles to fill up the journal. He said everything can be improved and new articles are needed. Simon reported that he has still not received some of the earlier show reports and one club had sent some pictures of the show but no report. He believes that the future content of the journal is in the hands of the clubs to send them to the journal editor.

Ronnie Sillitoe said that that he has discussed the Journal with Simon and they agreed that we should have a format which allows the journal to be produced the way that the fancy want it to be. He said the committee should set up a format with the clubs to provide articles and reports to Simon in the format that he needs them in. Simon said that some of the articles/reports that he receives are in an unacceptable format for him which he cannot change and they therefore cannot be put in the journal. It was agreed that articles/reports should be in word and pictures in JPEG format. Colin will write to every club outlining the print format and styles and the picture format. Ronnie said that he thought some of the print sizes in the journal in certain places can be reduced to give more space for other use.

## **10 PUBLICITY OFFICER AND WEBSITE REPORT**

Colin Reported that the highlight of the year for him is that we hit the 100,000 hits a year, in fact he smashed his target by 10% to 110,000 and that's up 16,000 for the year. He thanked all those who have written articles, sent in news items, photographs, show results and obituaries, because without their support fanciers would not log on. October and November were the most popular months with over 7,000 hits in 2 particular weeks. November also was the month with the most different I. P addresses a creditable 1100. He thought that the most popular item on the website has been the picture gallery of Show winners on the front page which this year has increased to 175 photos up 77 from last year due in no small part to Phil Dewlands and Ronnie Sillitoes sterling efforts.

He also thanked Jeff Pearce for coming up with the idea of having a button on the front page to go to the latest Article and this has been tremendously popular.

He continued with saying that's the good news, now comes the bad news, the website as good as it is still underutilized by the Clubs and there are Clubs who direly need to promote their shows but are not sending in adverts or features on their Clubs. He informed the meeting that he does not charge Clubs a lot for advertising, in fact nothing at all. He specializes in last minute adverts on the front page if a clubs entries are down and says the clubs should contact him and he may be able to give the Show entries a boost. In the Club profiles section of the website, not many clubs have sent in a profile, he suggested clubs look at the Wessex for an excellent example. Finally he is always open to innovation for incorporation into the website that will benefit the Border fancy.

## **11. PRESENTATION AND ACCEPTANCE OF 2018 ACCOUNTS.**

Malcolm Scott handed out copies of the 2018 Border Convention Balance sheet and then explained the background to some of the financial entries. Nigel Leader who had done the audit said everything was alright but he did not see any invoices from Avian ID. He asked Malcolm to bring the invoices to the next committee meeting. Malcolm outlined the stock being held by the Border Convention and thought that for future accounts it

may be useful to show these values. He explained that the rings cost about £450 per thousand and there was approximately one thousand rings for each colour used, a different colour per year for a six year cycle. This would mean that we held about £2,700 of ring stocks. We also have about 50 sets of closing pliers, selling at £3.50 per set, total value £175.00, 150 model laminates at £1.00, total £150 and 100 plus of rule books at £1.00 each, and total £100. This is a conservative estimate of the stock held. Ronnie Sillitoe said that he thought the finances of the Border Convention were going downhill with another loss of over £500 which was not good. Malcolm outlined that we have almost £12,000 in the bank plus the stocks as above and so we are not too badly off. Nigel Leader suggested that we do not send out journals until the fancier has paid. Malcolm Scott thought that this would be too detrimental to the journal and a lot of fanciers pay for their journals when they buy their rings or when they see Malcolm at the shows. Malcolm told the meeting that there were still 63 journals unpaid for from 2018 and he will write to these members to inform them of their debt. Further discussions took place on the Border Convention accounts with concern over the annual loss. It was said that we are not a savings scheme and therefore do not need the bank balances that we have accumulated over the years but the alternative is that if we make money we can help the clubs with their finances. The number of journals printed for each issue was discussed and Simon Tammam said that we could save some money by printing fewer journals. Jim Aitchison said that the fancy was in decline and we should enjoy what we have and not worry about finances. Simon Tammam pointed out that postage costs had just gone up again and asked whether we needed to increase the journal subscription to cater for this. Ronnie Sillitoe asked for acceptance of the accounts and Ray Morgan proposed this and Jim Aitchison seconded it, this was carried.

## **12. SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2020.**

It was proposed by Colin Egner and seconded by George Eltringham that the Club Affiliation remains the same at £25 and payable by all clubs. This was carried unanimously.

## **13. HONORARIUMS.**

The current Honorariums were read out by Ron Sillitoe and it was proposed by Jim Aitchison and seconded by Tim Ward that the Honorariums remain as they are.

Secretary/Website	£500	-	Colin Egner
Journal Editor	£750	-	£250 per issue
Treasurer/Ring Scheme	£500	-	Malcolm Scott

## **14. ELECTION OF OFFICERS.**

The chairman went through the officers individually and all officers were voted on by the attending delegates. Colin Egner said that there was now only one person to be nominated for president elect and this was Bobby Parker. Malcolm Scott said that he would continue to be treasurer and ring secretary for the next year but this will be his last year. Tim Ward has accepted the role of Ring Secretary but as yet there is no new treasurer. Ronnie Sillitoe said it will be discussed at the next committee meeting. Colin Egner suggested that when the minutes go out to the clubs they are accompanied by a letter outlining the tasks of the treasurer and inviting anyone for nomination for the position from 2020. There was a show of hands for all offices. All officers were elected unanimously.

	<b>2018</b>	<b>2019 Nominations</b>	<b>2019 Elected</b>
President:	Mr. Colin Egner	Mr. Colin Egner	Mr. Colin Egner
President Elect		Mr. Bobby Parker	Mr. Bobby Parker
Chairman:	Mr. Ronnie Sillitoe	No nominations.	Mr. Ronnie Sillitoe
Vice-Chairman:	Mr. Tim Ward	No nominations.	Mr. Tim Ward
Secretary:	Mr. Colin Egner.	No nominations	Mr. Colin Egner
Treasurer:	Mr. Malcolm Scott.	No nominations	Mr. Malcolm Scott
Journal Distributor:	Mr. Simon Tammam	No nominations	Mr. Simon Tammam
Journal Editor:	Mr. Simon Tammam.	No nominations	Mr. Simon Tammam
Minutes Secretary:	Mr. Malcolm Scott.	No nominations	Mr. Malcolm Scott
Publicity Officer:	Mr Egner & Mr Dewland.	No nominations	Mr Egner & Mr Dewland
Novice Rule Co.	Mr. Colin Egner	No nominations	Mr. Colin Egner
Auditor:	Mr. Nigel Leader	No nominations	Mr. Nigel Leader
C. Council Delegates:	Mr. Egner & Mr Thorley	No nominations	Mr. Egner & Mr Thorley
Ring Scheme Sec.	Mr. Malcolm Scott.	Mr. Tim Ward	Mr. Tim Ward 2020
Web Site Manager	Mr. Colin Egner	No nominations	Mr. Colin Egner

**Convention Committee:** Messrs. Ronnie Sillitoe (Chairman), Tim Ward (Vice-Chairman), Colin Egner (Secretary), Malcolm Scott (Treasurer), Simon Tammam (Journal Editor), Brian Martin, (Past President), Ray Morgan (Past President), Malcolm Barnett (Past President), George Eltringham (Past President), Jim Aitchison (Past President) Bob Norman (Past President) , Phil Dewland, Jeff Pearce, John Rance, Richard Thorley, Alan Smalley, John Williams. Paul England, Brian Wilkes Nigel Leader.

**Nomination** Adam Pearce – this was carried.

## **15. MANDATES**

### **Mandate from Wessex Border Fancy Canary Club**

The Border Convention shall hold the Annual General Meeting on the same day as the March Stafford Sales Day, ideally at the Show ground but failing that at the current venue the Roman Way Hotel.

#### **Reason**

Our reasoning is, we cannot justify the expense of sending two delegates, we suggest that is also the case with other clubs, however we believe that if we could “fill” a car, then delegates could go to the A.G.M whilst colleagues could enjoy the Stafford event and the cost to the Club would be avoided.

In addition, most Border breeders will find it hard to commit two weekends in early March , plus justifying costs along with the nearness of the breeding season, firstly to attend Stafford and secondly to participate in the Convention A.G.M.

A vote was taken on this mandate and the result was 0 for, 14 against which means that the mandate was not accepted.

### **Mandate from Cleveland Border and Fife Fancy Canary Club**

All Border Convention Affiliated Clubs must judge the novice section before the champion section.

#### **Reason**

To ensure that the novice entries receive the same time, care & consideration as the champion section.

A vote was taken on this mandate and the result was 9 for, 5 against which means that the mandate was accepted.

## **16. JUDGES A & B PANEL.**

### **B Panel**

Paul Wright. 28 Marina Grove, Portchester, Fareham, Hampshire PO16 9HF Wessex BFCC

The nominated judges have all been vetted by their clubs and reviewed by the Border Convention committee and as there were no objections from the delegates all were accepted onto the judge’s panel. The secretary will write to them all.

## **17. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **Raffle for £100**

The names of the clubs in attendance were put into a hat and Simon Tammam drew the Border Counties FCC as the winner of the £100 donation from the Border Convention.

### **Rosettes –**

Colin Egner had brought the Convention Rosettes to the meeting for clubs to take and save postage.

A discussion then took place on which winners the rosettes would be best placed, the chairman suggested that we look into this at the committee meeting. .

## **18. ITEM FOR DISCUSSION**

### **(a) Heavily Variegated / Three Parts Dark**

In 2018 we saw a large number of birds being wrong classed by judges in the Heavily Variegated and Three Parts Dark classes therefore should these two classes be amalgamated, or should a more precise definition of what constitutes a Heavily Variegated or Three Parts Dark bird be communicated to Judges? . The chairman outlined the problems and then asked for a vote, the vote was not in favour of an amalgamation and the opinion was that the information on what constitutes these classes was already available.

### **(b) Judges List**

The maintaining of an accurate Judges list is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain due to the lack of response from the Member Clubs. All Club secretaries recently received a list of judges residing in their area to

assess who is still judging, only 3 Clubs responded. How can we improve this situation? The chairman said that three clubs have volunteered to approach judges at their shows with a form to be designed by Ronnie Sillitoe and Colin Egner to commit themselves to continue judging. These three clubs are Cleveland, Nottingham and Doncaster. It was also proposed to take judges off the judges list if they do not show their birds, this was however objected to because of the conditions which could prevent a fancier from showing. Some of the attendees at the meeting said that they would help the officials of clubs to complete the judges forms. It is hoped to reduce the judges list by removing those who should not be judging and update the list on the web site.

### **19. A.O.B.**

Simon Tammam reported to the meeting that there are fanciers in Italy who are coming into the border section as novices despite having been champion before and in fact one fancier was on the judges list but still showed as novice. Colin Egner has already written to Italy explaining the judging/novice situation but Simon said that they use their own novice rules.

Richard Thorley suggested that we could hold a meeting at the British Border FCC show, Malcolm Scott said that the last time we did that there were only 3 people turned up. Ronnie Sillitoe said that if we do not try it we will never know.

A John Rance show cage was passed around the meeting to see if it was up to standard, and it was passed.

### **19. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next Border Convention Committee Meeting is arranged Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2019

The date of the January meeting will be 5<sup>th</sup> January 2020

The date of the next AGM will be 15<sup>th</sup> March 2020

### **MEMBERS PRESENT (20):**

R Sillitoe (Chairman), T Ward (Vice Chairman/Green Cinnamon & White BFCC), C Egner (President/Secretary/IBBA), M. Scott (Treasurer/Fauldhouse), S Tammam (Journal Editor); G Eltringham (Northern BFCC), B. Martin (Birmingham ABC), R Norman (BBFCC), K Wadkin (Merseyside BFCC), J Aitchison (BFCC), N Leader (Doncaster BFCC), A Wilson (Doncaster BFCC), J Pearce (North Staffs BFCC), J. Beddows (Border Counties BFCC), R Morgan (Wessex), P. Dewland (Cornish BFCC), J Rance (Cleveland B&FFCC), R Thorley (Nottinghamshire BFCC), J Williams (Nottinghamshire BFCC), B Wilkes (Observer),

### **Delegates representing 14 clubs were present:**

Border FCC, Birmingham ABC, Border Counties, British Border FCC, Doncaster BFCC, IBBA, Northern BFCC, North Staffs BFCC, Cleveland BFCC, Cornish BFCC, Merseyside B&FFCC, Nottinghamshire BFCC, Wessex BFCC, Fauldhouse B&FFCC.

### **Clubs Not in Attendance:**

Border Canary Ass., Cumbria BFCC, Welsh BFCC East of England B&FFCC, Wexford BFCC, North of Scotland BFCC, North Wales BFCC, Southern BFCC, Sussex & Kent BFCC, West Wales BFCC, West of Scotland BCA,. And all other clubs from Ireland and abroad.