



**KIRSTENBOSCH BRANCH**  
**Minutes of the Annual General Meeting**  
**Held via Zoom on 26 June 2021 at 10h30**

**1. Opening of Meeting**

The Chairman welcomed all present.

**2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Lewis and Nicky Sparks, and Eugene and Alice Moll.

**3. Confirmation of Quorum**

Quorum was confirmed with 40 members present, including 2 proxies.

**4. Approval of Minutes of the AGM held on 16 September 2020**

- The Minutes were available on the website prior to the AGM. With no objections the Minutes were proposed by Jill Gribble and seconded by Nathan Finkelstein.

**5. Chairman's Report – Jeremy Wiley**

The Chairman reported on the year ending 31 March 2021. The main points were as follows:

- The past year the Kirstenbosch Branch has in terms of its Constitution adopted in 2019 become an independent registered Non-profit Organization (NPO) and a registered Public Benefit Organisation (PBO). While independent, the Branch subscribes to and supports the objectives of the mother body, The Botanical Society of South Africa. As an NPO and PBO the Branch is a separate legal entity which manages its own financial and operational affairs.
- The COVID-19 enforced closure of the bookshops from March to August 2020 had a devastating effect on their operational and financial performance and on the staff. Branch Manager, Catherine Gribble and Bookshop Manager, Greg Donnelly created an online e-commerce bookshop during lockdown.
- Most physical meetings, seminars, workshops, book launches and other member functions of the Society went 'virtual' over the past 15 months via Zoom.
- After the cancellation of the 2019 Plant Fair due to COVID-19, the 2020 Kirstenbosch Plant Fair was hosted online on an e-commerce shop on the Branch website in May. It was successful in attracting over 450 purchase orders from members for over 5000 plants.
- The Branch has partnered with the Princess Vlei Forum and the Friends of Princess Vlei's Cape Flats Sandveld rehabilitation project. The Branch has contributed financially towards replanting of several endangered species at Princess Vlei over the past 18 months and has participated in hacks to remove alien vegetation from the shores of the vlei.
- The branch has continued to support the Ingcungu Sunbird Project in and around schools in the South Peninsula. This project aims to create a network of fynbos feeding stations for sun and other birds from the Cape Peninsula mountain chain to the Hottentots Holland range across the Cape Flats, whilst teaching learners about the importance of biodiversity, ecology and conservation.
- Botanical walks and alien vegetation hacks for members have recommenced.
- The Branch has embarked upon an ambitious project to record for posterity the oral history of Kirstenbosch by interviewing several BotSoc and Kirstenbosch 'legends' including Dot Malan, Ernst van Jaarsveld, Christien Malan, Andrew Jacobs and Dr George Davis. These interviews have been transcribed and will be archived for future generations to access.

## 6. Treasurer's Report – Munier Dalwai

- The Financials of Botanical Society of South Africa were audited by the auditor Annelie Lucas; which included the financials of the Kirstenbosch Branch.
- The Bookshop Financials for the 2021 year have been included in the Kirstenbosch Financials.
- The 2020 Plant Fair was cancelled because of the COVID-19 lockdown.

### Income

- Income for the 2021 financial year was R1,541,312 and expenses were R1,864,752 resulting in a deficit of R323,440 compared to an income for the 2020 financial year of R1,169,225 with expenses of R1,522,316 resulting in a deficit of R353,091.
- The Bookshop was reported under National Office in 2020.
- Membership fees marginally decreased by 4%.
- Due to COVID-19, no fundraising took place in 2020/2021.
- The bequest was received from Estate Late O Van Oordt.
- Interest income decreased due to interest rate reduction.

	2021	2021	2021	2020
		A		B
	Bookshop	Branch	Total	Total
<b>Income</b>				
Bookshop Gross Profit	694 470		694 470	
Membership Fees		373 575	373 575	390 609
Events & Fund Raising				589 540
Donations & Bequests		398 445	398 445	11 393
Interest Received		73 510	73 510	172 383
Sundry Income	-	1 312	1 312	5 300
Total Income	694 470	846 842	1 541 312	1 169 225
Total Expenses	1 115 363	749 389	1 864 752	1 522 316
Surplus / (Deficit)	- 420 893	97 453	- 323 440	- 353 091

### Expenses

- Donations decreased due to a decrease in cash reserves.
- Computer costs decreased marginally.
- Other Admin costs decreased substantially as 2020 data includes plant fair expenses.

## 7. Approval of the 2021 Annual Financial Statements

Proposed by Tom Robbins and seconded by Tessa Brewis.

## 8. Election of Committee Members

There were seven nominees for the committee: Carol Cornell, Chris Moir, Ceinwen Smith, Desiree Galant, Donald Mmei Matjuda, Munier Dalwai and Jeremy Wiley. Since there were not more nominees than positions on the committee in terms of the constitution, the Chair asked the meeting whether the seven nominees could be accepted to form the new committee or whether there should be a vote. Keith Gottschalk proposed that the nominees be accepted. This motion was seconded by Nathan Finkelstein who also proposed that the committee be empowered to co-opt further members to assist with fundraising.

## 9. Resolutions proposed in terms of Paragraph 20.1.5.6 of the Constitution

No resolutions were received from members.

## 11. Questions & Answers

### - **Keith Gottschalk**

- Mr Gottschalk asked whether it had been possible for the Kirstenbosch Branch to have given assistance to the Edith Stevens Wetland Reserve since he made this request at the AGM in 2019. Mr Wiley reported that in the past year the committee has engaged with the management of Edith Stevens and have met with Dalton Gibbs, the Senior Southern Area Conservation Manager for the City of Cape Town, to understand where the reserve falls into the City's planning and what kind of support the Botanical Society can give in practical terms. The assurance that the committee has been given by the City and the management of the reserve is that there are some challenges, given the population growth on the Cape flats and the subsequent issues of encroachment and pollution, but that the City has funds to address these. The discussion of how Kirstenbosch Branch can be of support is ongoing.

### - **Jill Gribble**

- Mrs Gribble commended Catherine and Gianpaolo for their organisation and execution of the online plant fair, with limited volunteer assistance, due to COVID. Mr Willey thanked the volunteers who participated for their assistance.

### - **Jo Neser**

- Mr Neser said that he had ordered a large number of plants from the online plant fair and congratulated the branch on the superb organisation of the sale.

### - **Nathan Finkelstein**

- Dr Finkelstein suggested that a reminder be included in newsletters that members can make bequests to the Botanical Society, and in particular, the Kirstenbosch Branch in their wills, and that Section 18A certificates can be issued by the Branch for annual donations. After the crisis within BotSoc from 2017 to 2018, many members may have changed their wills to exclude BotSoc. Dr Finkelstein also called for more enthusiasm and active participation in activities and fundraising efforts by members of the branch. Mr Dalwai confirmed that although the branch's PBO status has been approved by SARS the certificate has not yet been received to be able to offer donors Section 18A certificates. The branch is planning a golf day and an online raffle to raise further funds during the course of the year.

### - **Antonia de Barros**

- Mrs de Barros spoke to the comment made in the chat by Pat Holmes about reserves or pieces of land that are not funded needing support from BotSoc, and suggested that a focussed fundraising approach might be more effective, for example for a specific group of plants or reserve. Mrs de Barros also highlighted Dr Finkelstein's point that the crisis within BotSoc is a closed chapter and that we should all work towards building confidence in BotSoc which is a family of branches across the country behind the same mandate of protecting South Africa's national heritage.

### - **Pat Holmes**

- Dr Holmes wrote in the chat that she would like to see the Kirstenbosch Branch supporting underfunded reserves of high botanical conservation importance that are in need of ecological restoration, such as Haasendal Conservation area in Kuils River, but in collaboration with the bodies managing those reserves.

### - **Penny Brown**

- Ms Brown asked that the Branch discuss how to raise awareness of indigenous plants which can become invasive and displace local vegetation in areas in which they are not endemic. Rupert Koopman, Conservation Manager for BotSoc said that he is currently working on broad guidelines for ecological restoration and a local list of problem plants not to be used for local restoration.

### - **Sean McGivern**

- Mr McGivern thanked the Chair, Committee and Volunteers for their hard work.

## 12. Closure

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.