

Any communications relating to the Newsletter, or on any other aspect of the society, can be addressed to either:-

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REMEMBER:-

If you cannot attend the AGM on 17th June, please let us have your opinions.

The
Satsuki
Newsletter



Issue Seventeen

Dear Members,

This has been the most difficult newsletter I have produced for the Satsuki Society.

This is not only because it includes the announcement that we are abandoning our national show due to have been held in Manchester. I also feel I have to raise the serious question as to whether our society can continue at all in its present form.

Over the past couple of years I have repeatedly asked for contributions from the membership for this newsletter, with very little result. Apart from a show, the newsletter is the only regular function of the society. I feel I can no longer keep generating items of interest on a regular basis and will be standing down from my position as editor at the AGM. If one or more people are not prepared to take on this function then perhaps the society will not be able to continue. I would still be prepared to produce articles on a regular basis if this was required but I can no longer cope with filling a newsletter on a regular basis.

Bearing in mind that our membership has fallen over the last couple of years, I would like all members to give serious consideration to the matter of the society's future. If you cannot get to the AGM in Birmingham on the 17th June, can you please communicate your thoughts to the Secretary or Chairman.

Alexander Kennedy
Editor

Special Notice

from the Chairman

It is with great regret that I must inform you this society will not now be staging its annual exhibition as part of the FOBBS National Bonsai event in Manchester.

This decision has not been taken lightly. After a great deal of discussion with the other officers I felt that our concerns over the event and the difficulties that had arisen over transport were too great.

Concerns over the poor advertising of the event have been growing for several months. It is clear that many bonsai enthusiasts and even entire societies were not aware that the National Bonsai Exhibition was being held in Manchester this year. A couple of small pieces on the event have appeared in the "Bonsai" magazine but these only seemed to mention the fact that it was a FOBBS event as an embarrassed afterthought. The only other advertising seen has been a poorly designed A5 flyer which is not of the standard expected for a major National event.

In none of this advertising is the National Satsuki Exhibition mentioned at all!

The other very big concern with Manchester has been the difficulty in communicating with the organisers. Telephone numbers have been constantly unobtainable and e-mails have taken weeks to get an answer. Apart from the lack of information, this causes severe worries about the efficiency of other aspects of the organisation.

The thing that finally prompted our withdrawal was the decision of Plymouth Bonsai Society to pull out of the show. Plymouth members were very troubled by the low key nature of the event and felt that they were being asked to risk several hundred pounds of their member's money on an event of uncertain stature. Most of the Satsuki for our show were to come from the South-West and the plan was to share transport with Plymouth and get their members to assist with collection and loading trees. Their withdrawal was really the last straw for us.

Society AGM

now on

**Sunday 17th June 2001
at 12.00 noon**

Pulling out of the Manchester show left us with a problem for holding our AGM.

Fortunately, Midlands Bonsai Society and our Secretary have come to the rescue.

The AGM will now be held at Birmingham Botanical Gardens on Sunday 17th June, during the Midlands B.S. show. In addition to the meeting the club has kindly allowed us to mount a small display of Satsuki.

I hope that as many members attend as possible since there is a need to discuss where the society is going. As with many clubs right now our membership is dropping. One proposal is that we should wind up the society. I personally would hate to see this happen because there is no other way for Satsuki enthusiasts to keep in contact with each other. Please come to this most important AGM if you possibly can. This is your society and it cannot function without your views and support.

Steve Davies (Chairman)

Some Thoughts on Manchester

Robin Morgan, the organiser of the Bonsai NorthWest (a.k.a. The FOBBS National Bonsai Exhibition 2001) has complained that the event has been plagued by gossip and rumour. Unfortunately, this in itself could be taken as evidence that communication from the organisers has been inefficient and ineffective.

Like Robin, I am very concerned that our pulling out of this show may lead to bad feeling between those involved. It is all too easy for people on both sides to say things and make claims in an effort to justify their own position.

It is very important to remember that the Manchester show may well be a great success, with everyone attending having a great day out at a memorable event. I certainly hope that this is the case and that everyone who does not make the trip will feel sick for years for missing it. If this does happen, the organisers should really feel that they missed out on the job of selling the exhibition to the doubters.

My worries over the Manchester event have been growing for a couple of years but they related to the position of major shows in general and did not reflect on those running this specific event. From the start, however, it was going to be essential that Manchester communicated very effectively with the Bonsai community if the show was to catch everyone's imagination. The general consensus, at least in the south of the country, is that they could have done much better in this area.

In the case of Plymouth Bonsai Society, which has had a crucial effect on our own plans, it was a lack of communication with a participating club which caused the problem. I was not involved in the Plymouth decision but I know that it was not taken lightly. It was certainly not a case of the chairman not fancying a long trip and forcing his view on everyone else (as suggested by Robin Morgan).