

The Society for the History of Alchemy and Chemistry

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR 2016

The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at 12:20 pm on Saturday 30 September at the Maison Française, 2-10 Norham Road, Oxford, OX2 6SE. There were 27 members present.

1. Acting Chairman's Introduction: The Acting Chairman, Frank James, conducted the meeting and welcomed those present. He explained that he had continued in this role since in January 2017 SHAC's Chairman Robert Anderson had been appointed President of the Chemical Heritage Foundation in Philadelphia, a role that meant he would be based in the US for the foreseeable future.

2. Apologies for Absence: The following apologized for absence at the AGM: Hasok Chang, Lyke de Vries, Hattie Lloyd, Gerrylynn Roberts and Alan Rocke.

3. Presentation of Trustees Annual Report (TAR) and Statement of Accounts (as independently examined) for 2016: The 2016 accounts for members were distributed in hard copy with annotations specifically for members. (The *unannotated* accounts had already been published on the SHAC website.) The meeting noted these accounts together with the Trustees annual report ("TAR"), also already published on the website, without comment.

4. Secretary's Report: The Secretary's Report for 2016 was included in the Trustees Annual Report which has been published on the website. Minutes of the AGM held on 12 November 2016 had been published on the website and were circulated to those present. Anna Simmons, Joint Secretary, provided members with a report on SHAC's activities to date in 2017.

Meetings: The Society's spring meeting was held on 20 May 2017 at the Royal Institution, London. It was entitled "New and Old Themes in the History of Chemistry." The meeting honoured Bill Brock and marked eighty years of *Ambix*. Papers were given by Carolyn Cobbold, Rupert Cole, Aileen Fyfe, Sally Horrocks, Alan Rocke, Hattie Lloyd, John Brooke and Bill Brock and the meeting concluded with a round table discussion chaired by Jenny Rampling with Alan Rocke, John Brooke and Bill Brock. Around 45 people attended the meeting which concluded with a wine reception and a presentation to mark Bill's outstanding contribution to SHAC, having been on Council for 50 years and serving as Chairman, Editor and Book Reviews Editor.

Publications: So far two issues of the Society's scholarly journal *Ambix* have been published in 2017. The August issue is expected towards the end of the year. The November 2017 issue will celebrate the Eightieth Anniversary of *Ambix* and will contain Stephen Irish's Partington Prize winning paper along with specially commissioned papers written by Hasok Chang, Angela Creager and Matteo Martelli. The November issue is unlikely to be published until 2018. Until the end of 2017 *Ambix* is edited by Jennifer Rampling, with Alan Rocke as deputy editor and Jose Ramon Bertomeu Sanchez as Book Reviews Editor. Two issues of the Society's Newsletter, *Chemical Intelligence*, have been published so far in 2017. The next issue is scheduled to come out in late 2017 or early 2018.

SHAC Graduate Network: For the eighth year SHAC is holding an international workshop to provide training on research skills and methodology for postgraduate students and early career researchers. In 2017 the meeting will take place outside of Europe for the first time. The Chemical Heritage Foundation in Philadelphia has kindly agreed to host the workshop "(Al)chemical Laboratories: Imagining and Creating Scientific Work-Places" on 1-2 December 2017. Megan Ann Piorko, SHAC's new postgraduate representative, is organising the workshop. Mike Zuber, the outgoing Student Representative, was thanked for all the work he had done organising previous graduate workshops.

Award Scheme: The Society invited applications for funding under its Award Scheme with a deadline of 31 May 2017. Following consideration by a committee of three members, four New Scholars Awards for Research or Conference Attendance and two Subject Development awards were approved. Support

had also been given in the form of non-competitive grants for the 11th International Conference on the History of Chemistry in Trondheim and the Davy Letters Project.

Partington Prize: Stephen Irish was the winner of the Partington Prize for 2017 for an essay entitled “The Corundum Stone and Crystallographic Chemistry.” It was presented by Robert Anderson following the AGM.

Morris Award: Nominations have been invited for the 2018 John and Martha Morris Award for Outstanding Achievement in the History of Modern Chemistry or the History of the Chemical Industry. The deadline for nominations is 1 May 2018.

Oxford Part II Prize: The Oxford Part II Prize for 2017 was awarded to Andrew Eve of Christ Church, Oxford for a thesis entitled ““Contraceptive and abortifacient drugs from antiquity to ‘the pill’: A case for the power of traditional medicine in 21st century bioprospecting”. It was presented by Robert Anderson following the AGM.

Seminar Series: SHAC has supported one seminar series in 2017. Four meetings of the Oxford History of Alchemy and Chemistry Seminar took place in Trinity Term 2017 at the Maison Française d’Oxford (MFO) (which generously provided facilities and refreshments free of charge). Nine speakers covered the following topics: Seventeenth Century Chymistry in England; Alchemy and Religious Orders in Early Modern Italy; 18th Century Chemistry in Britain; and Methodologies for the History of Contemporary Chemistry.

5. Membership Secretary’s Report: Anna Simmons, reported that SHAC’s membership at the AGM stood at 292 with 187 full members, 51 retired members, 47 student members and 7 corporate members. However, 9 of these were unpaid for 2017 and were subsequently removed for non-payment, bringing membership down to 283. This was still an increase of 9 over the total of 274 at the end of 2016. Out of the 292, 99 members are based in the UK, 77 in the US, and 116 in the rest of the world. Twenty-six members have joined in 2016, eight have resigned. Any member whose subscription is due in January 2018 will receive an email reminder in November 2017. SHAC would be grateful if members could pay promptly and encourage their colleagues to do the same. The membership rate for 2018 remains £40 for full membership, £30 for retired membership with 10 years’ standing and £25 for student membership.

The membership secretary stated that this was her last such report as Carolyn Cobbold has agreed to take on this role. To facilitate this handover membership communications have already started being sent from a new SHAC Distribution email account rather than a personal email address. The membership secretary then thanked Michael Jewess for the extensive work that he has undertaken to get the new system operational.

6. Treasurer’s Report: Mike Jewess had in his capacity as SHAC Book-keeper presented a report to SHAC Council in June 2017 covering financial outturn and this was circulated to those present. The essential conclusion was that the General Fund was in very good health and there was no prospect of having to bail out either restricted fund. Events since June had not changed the situation, although the Society was starting to spend some income on much-needed infrastructure.

7. Election of Council Members and Officers: Although Council elections for a three-year term were held last year, resignations of Officers and two long-standing Council members, Bill Brock and Peter Morris, the appointment of a new Treasurer, Robert Johnstone (appointed by Council between AGMs and requiring confirmation at the AGM), and the appointment of a new Editor, Bruce Moran, and Associate Editor, Viviane Quirke, of *Ambix* from January 2018 necessitated changes to the composition of Council. 14 Council members continued their previously-elected term, 1 new Council appointment had been made since the last AGM, and Council made 3 new nominations. There have also been changes to some of the roles performed by Council members.

The Council for the Society of the History of Alchemy and Chemistry nominated Officers and Ordinary members of Council as below.

Officers: Prof. Frank A.J.L. James (Chairman), Dr Anna E. Simmons (Secretary), Mr Robert A. Johnstone (Treasurer), Dr Jennifer M. Rampling (Editor until 31.12.2017, Ordinary Member thereafter), Prof. Bruce Moran (Editor from 01.01.2018), Dr Carolyn Cobbold (Membership).

Ordinary Members of Council: Dr Robert G.W. Anderson, Dr José Ramon Bertómeu-Sánchez, Prof. Hasok Chang (Vice-Chair), Dr Stephen Clucas, Dr Peter J. Forshaw, Dr Georgiana “Jo” Hedesan, Prof. Lawrence M. Principe, Dr Viviane Quirke, Prof. Carsten Reinhardt, Prof. Alan Rocke, Dr Sophie Waring, Dr Simon Werrett.

The nominations were proposed by Mike Jewess, seconded by Cassie Watson and passed nem con.

8. Proposed Changes to Constitution

The following minor changes to SHAC’s constitution had been circulated to members in advance of the AGM.

Re Item 4 (iii) Membership. A reduction in the period after which members whose subscription is overdue are removed from the membership list. This currently stands at nine months and would be reduced to six, a change which is in line with Charity Commission guidelines.

The new clause reads:

4. (iii) In the event of a member’s subscription being in arrears for **six** months his or her name shall be removed from the list of Members. While a subscription is unpaid, a member shall cease to be entitled to receive the journal. If a member re-joins, he/she may be required to pay such past subscriptions as cover copies of the Journal he/she has received without entitlement.

Re Item 6 (i) Nomination of Members of Council. Removal of the stipulation that the AGM should be held in the Autumn of each year.

The new clause reads:

6. (i) Ordinary Members of Council and Officers may be nominated by Members of the Society. The Hon. Secretary shall invite such nominations at a suitable time prior to the Annual General Meeting of the Society held in each calendar year. All persons nominated must be Members of the Society and their written consent to nomination must have been obtained. If the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies as determined for the time being by the Council, the election shall take the form of a vote at the Annual General Meeting of the Society.

The changes were proposed by Peter Reed, seconded by Simon Werrett and passed nem con.

9. Any other business: Frank James concluded by thanking a number of members of Council who had given extensive service to the Society over a number of years in both Officer roles and as Ordinary members. In addition to the presentation made to Bill Brock in May 2017, presentations were made to Peter Morris, former Editor of *Ambix*, who was stepping down from Council, and to Simon Werrett, who had served as Secretary. Mike Jewess (formerly Treasurer and SHAC Book-keeper) and Robert Anderson (Chairman) were presented with prints in recognition of their service to the Society.

Dr Anna Simmons
Secretary
06.11.2017