

## The Society for the History of Alchemy and Chemistry

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FOR 2018

The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at 1:15 pm on Saturday 19 October at the Royal Institution. There were 11 members present.

**1. Chair's Introduction:** Frank James (Chair), conducted the meeting and welcomed those present.

#### **2. Apologies for Absence**

These had been received from Stephen Clucas, Jenny Wilson, Carolyn Cobbold, Bruce Moran, Chris Campbell, Hasok Chang, Philip Ball, John Hudson and Chris Cooksey.

**3. Presentation of Trustees Annual Report (TAR) and Statement of Accounts (as independently examined) for 2018:** The 2018 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. Treasurer's Report:** Rob Johnstone (Treasurer) gave an oral report on SHAC's finances highlighting the Society's expenditure in 2018 on IT provision and the Award Scheme. He also commented on the Society's finances in 2019, noting Council's decision to build up reserves due to uncertainty with changes in the publishing landscape and the additional funds provided to support attendance at the International Conference on the History of Chemistry (IHC) in Maastricht.

#### **5. CIO Update**

At the AGM on 14.11.2015 the following motion regarding Transfer to Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) was agreed.

*MOTION: That the trustees of the present unincorporated association are hereby authorised to proceed with the steps set out in paragraph 17 of the paper entitled 'PROPOSAL TO TRANSFER THE SOCIETY'S ACTIVITIES FROM THE PRESENT UNINCORPORATED ASSOCIATION TO A CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION (CIO)' in the time scale they think prudent and convenient.*

Rob Johnstone reported that following further discussion by Council, the CIO constitution will shortly be submitted online to the Charity Commission, along with signed declarations from the Trustees, thereby starting the process of transfer.

#### **6. Secretary's Report**

The Secretary's Report for 2018 was included in the TAR which has been published on the website. Minutes of the AGM held on 30 June 2018 have been published on the website and a link emailed to members. Anna Simmons (Secretary) provided members with a report on SHAC's activities to date in 2019.

## **Meetings**

SHAC's spring meeting, entitled *Matter Ideas and Nature: A Conference in Memory of David Marcus Knight*, was held in conjunction with Durham University on 14-15 June 2019. Papers were given by Matthew Eddy, Robin Hendry, William Brock, Sarah Day, Peter Bowler, Jim Moore, Sophie Forgan, Nancy Cartwright, Frank James and Robert Fox. SHAC's autumn meeting commemorating the centenary of the death of William Crookes took place after the AGM.

## **Graduate Workshop**

For the tenth year SHAC is organising an international workshop to provide training on research skills and methodology for postgraduate students and early career researchers. This will take place on 29 and 30 November 2019 and will be hosted by the Embassy of the Free Mind in Amsterdam. The workshop is organised by the Society's student representative Megan Piorko and there will be keynote addresses by Marieke Hendriksen and Simon Werrett.

## **Award Scheme**

This year eight individuals received a grant towards their travel and accommodation expenses for attending ICHC, four New Scholars Grants were awarded and two Subject Development grants were given. In 2020, eligibility for the Award Scheme will be extended to early career scholars ten years post PhD and independent scholars.

## **Chemical Intelligence**

A new editor has been appointed for the Society's newsletter, *Chemical Intelligence*, Karoliina Pulkkinen. The first issue was published in July 2019, with the next issue due in early 2020.

## **7. Membership Secretary's Report**

Anna Simmons reported on behalf of Membership Secretary, Carolyn Cobbold. There are currently 277 members of SHAC, nine fewer than the 2018 total of 286. This includes 27 new members since the start of 2019, which is very encouraging. There have been 12 resignations in 2019, mainly a result of members changing careers, and 22 lapsed memberships.

## **8. Ambix**

### **i) Editor's Update**

Anna Simmons reported on behalf of Bruce Moran, Editor. There have been three issues of *Ambix* published so far in 2019. The February 2019 issue contained papers by Charlotte Salomon, Carolyn Cobbold and Vangelis Antzoulatos. The Humphry Davy double issue for May and August 2019 was guest edited by Frank James and Sharon Ruston and contained eight papers and an appreciation of David Knight by William Brock. The November issue is currently with the publisher, Taylor and Francis, and contains Alan Rocke's paper on Lothar Meyer, Frank James's edited manuscript and introduction "Humphry Davy's Early Chemical Knowledge" and a review essay by William Brock on "A German Partington ..." plus book reviews. If all goes to plan, the November issue will be online in November. The editor asked all at the AGM to encourage submissions to *Ambix*. He is eager to discuss ideas for special issues and is especially keen to encourage submissions from a wide range of approaches and regions.

At the end of 2019 Alan Rocke will step down as Associate Editor of *Ambix* after five years of exemplary service to the Society and its journal. A framed cover of *Ambix* was presented to Alan at the ICHC meeting in Maastricht in July. The Society is delighted to announce that Peter Ramberg of Truman State University will be taking over as Associate Editor in January 2020. Bruce Moran continues as Editor of *Ambix* and Viviane Quirke as Associate Editor. Tillmann Taape is Book Reviews Editor. He encourages all SHAC members to send him suggestions for books they would like to review or see reviewed in *Ambix*.

Peter Morris asked when the next issue of *Sources* will be published. Sebastian Richter's *Fragments of Coptic Alchemy* should appear in 2020. Peter Morris also enquired about the location of spare back issues of *Ambix* from his editorship, previously housed with Michael Jewess. The Secretary reported that these are now stored with Frank James. Members who require back issues of *Ambix* are encouraged to contact her.

## ii) Plan S

Frank James highlighted how Plan S threatens small learned societies, including SHAC, which partner with a commercial publisher for journal publication. If hybrid journals, of which *Ambix* is one, remain non-compliant with open access as defined by Plan S, SHAC is likely to lose out financially and thus its activities will be scaled back. The response to Plan S in history has been coordinated by Margot Finn, President of the Royal Historical Society, and SHAC has contributed to its lobbying and consultations. Implementation of Plan S has been pushed back from 2020 to the start of 2021 and future developments are awaited. Frank James will report back at next year's AGM.

## 9. Council Elections

Full Council elections for a three-year term were last held in 2016 and, although changes to the composition of Council took place in 2017, the current three yearly cycle means elections are due in 2019. Members were informed of Council's nominations and invited to make their own, although none were received. Since the communication to members on 25 August 2019 there had been a further nomination of Dr Chris Campbell by Council and his name was added to the list of nominees put before the AGM.

**Officers:** Prof. Frank A.J.L. James (Chairman), Dr Anna E. Simmons (Secretary), Mr Robert A. Johnstone (Treasurer), Prof. Bruce Moran (Editor), Dr Carolyn Cobbold (Membership)

**Ordinary Members of Council:** Dr Robert G.W. Anderson, Dr Chris Campbell, Prof. Hasok Chang (Vice-Chair), Dr Stephen Clucas, Dr Peter J. Forshaw, Dr Georgiana "Jo" Hedesan, Prof. Lawrence M. Principe, Dr Jennifer Rampling, Dr Tillman Taape, Dr Viviane Quirke, Dr Sophie Waring, Dr Simon Werrett.

The Chair presented the above names for election, with the nominations proposed by William H. Brock and seconded by Gerrylynn K. Roberts and passed nem con.

## 10. Any Other Business

The Chair concluded by thanking all those involved in the running of SHAC, with particular thanks to Rob Johnstone and Anna Simmons for the support they gave him as Chair.

Anna Simmons, Secretary, 30.10.19