

## Yorkshire branch AGM Minutes

**Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

Dianna Bowles lecture theatre, Dept Biology, University of York

### 13:00 – 14.15 AGM

#### 1. Introduction and welcome Dr Lynda Partridge (Chair)

Committee Members present: Dr Fiona Real, Dr Martin Walker, Dr Lynda Partridge (Chair), Professor Val Randall (Vice-Chair), Dr Sohan Jheeta, Sara Booth-Card (Secretary), Dr Richard Reece-Jones, Professor Graham Bonwick (Treasurer), Dr Andy Holding, Chris Collins (Archivist), Hayden Ho

#### 2. Apologies for absence

June Scott, Peter Wiggins, Dr Antony Scimone, Aleksandra Bidzinska

#### 3. Minutes from the previous meeting

No comments

#### 4. Review of committee roles

Dr Lynda Partridge is currently Chair and has been for 5 years. No nominations for a replacement have been received as yet. Lynda is willing to stay on as Chair for a while longer, but the Branch needs to think about new nominations in the next year, ideally someone who has been a Committee member with experience of the structure.

Other Committee Officers were happy with their current roles. Prof. Val Randall is currently Vice Chair and Prof. Graham Bonwick is Treasurer.

Dr Ben Stephenson left the Committee this year and stood down as Secretary. The Branch thanked Ben in his absence for all his hard work. Sara Booth-Card is currently standing in as Secretary. Beth Webb has resigned as Social Media Officer and has stood down from the Committee. Dr Andy Holding has taken over Beth's role, but would like support if anyone is available.

Professor Louise Robson and Dr Emma Jones also stood down from the Committee earlier this year and Dr Danae Dodge has left and joined the London branch of the RSB. The Branch thanked them for their contributions.

#### 5. Elect new committee members

Sara Booth-Card for the role of Secretary. Nominated by Lynda Partridge - voted in.

Aleksandra Bidzinska for the role of Ordinary Committee Member. Nominated by Lynda Partridge - voted in.

Dr Anthony Scimone for the role of Ordinary Committee Member. Nominated by Val Randall - voted in.

Hayden Ho for the role of Ordinary Committee Member. Nominated by Andy Holding, seconded by Lynda Partridge - voted in.

## **6. Chair's report** (Dr Lynda Partridge)

There are now just under 800 members in the Yorkshire Branch.

There have been 4 Committee Meetings in the last year, including the first live meeting on 27<sup>th</sup> April in York before the joint RSB/RSC seminar.

The RSB Branches Group has replaced the Branches Working group. This is a group to facilitate communications between the groups and Lynda Partridge/ Graham Bonwick are representing Yorkshire on this. The first meeting in September was virtual. Lynda reported that RSB are keen to promote face-to-face events going forward. The Society is very keen to recruit more FRSB females. Members were asked to make suggestions to the Committee for suitable candidates.

## **7. Treasurer's report** (Professor Graham Bonwick)

The Branch had a complete income of £1363 for 2021-2022 (until 30-09-2022).

£117.33 was used for travel and subsistence.

£1245.67 was sent back to RSB as there were so few physical events.

The Budget put forward for 2022-23 and has been accepted; the Branch is expected to generate some revenue in addition. All bookings and payments for Branch events (including Frontiers of Science meeting) must be taken through the RSB website.

Graham confirmed that all payments made on behalf of the branch also go through head office. Graham to forward text and report to Sara and text to Sohan re Frontiers of Science.

Graham confirmed that the Branch can apply for up to £500 backup funding. The Branch satisfies the requirements for additional funding as have 4 live events planned for 2022 - 2023.

Clive Tiney suggested using some of the Branch budget to buy promotional materials for the Yorkshire Branch. It was agreed that name badges/ lanyards for the Committee would be useful for live Branch events. These should be wooden, so sustainable.

## **8. Event reports**

The following successful Branch events were held last year, with reports on the RSB Yorkshire Branch website/The Biologist.

November 13<sup>th</sup> 2021 Autumn Symposium and AGM (virtual). "Bats: Friend or Foe", organised Professor Val Randall.

March 12<sup>th</sup> 2022 Frontiers of Science Meeting (virtual), organised by Dr Sohan Jheeta.

April 27<sup>th</sup> 2022 Joint RSB/RSC seminar 27<sup>th</sup> April, live at the University of York, Professor Peter Sadler “Elements of Life and Medicine” organised by Dr Derek Wann, Dept. Chemistry, York

May 21<sup>st</sup> Himalayan Garden outing, organised by Chris Collins.

20<sup>th</sup> July Virtual seminar “Lady Mary Wortley Montagu: Medical Pioneer” given by Jennifer Rudd, - History guide for National Trust at Wentworth Castle Gardens. , organised by Chris Collins and Lynda Partridge

15<sup>th</sup> October Spurn Safari, organised by Sara Booth-Card

## 9. Future events

Lynda Partridge reported that there has been no further information from RSB on the postponed Pioneers of Biology event to celebrate the life and achievements of Lady Wortley Montagu and the unveiling of a blue plaque.

Martin Walker reported that The Big Biology Day (an RSB funded community event) postponed from May 2020 will now be held on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> December 9am -1pm in the science block at the Wilberforce College in Hull. Martin updated us on plans for this, which will be a weekend session. Sara Booth-Card will be attending.

Sohan Jheeta reported that the next The Frontiers of Science meeting will be held live on the 18<sup>th</sup> of March in Leeds, hopefully at KPMG as previously.

Lynda Partridge reported that the joint RSC/RSB seminar will be held on the 19<sup>th</sup> April in the Dept Chemistry at the University of York and given by Professor Tony Ryan (Dept. Chemistry, University of Sheffield) on "The Desert Garden project: developing a hydroponics agricultural system from discarded foam mattresses"

Chris Collins is organising a summer outing on 11<sup>th</sup> June to Foxglove Covert at Catterick.

There has previously been a suggestion from Aleksandra Bidzinska that the Branch should organise something for Biology week next year.

Members were asked to put forward suggestions for the Autumn Symposium in 2023. The Biology of Brewing was suggested.

Previously, Richard Reece-Smith and Martin Walker have planned to hold a Workshop for A-level to degree level laboratory skills. They have written a short course and plan to publicise it from December for a trial in 2023.

## 10. AOB

(i) Professor Nigel Brown, Chair of the College of Individual Members at central RSB gave a virtual address to the members, explaining that Council and Head Office like to have Branch oversight and so he has tried to visit every AGM. Prof. Brown gave an overview of staff changes at central RSB, including trialling a 4 day working week and plans for a new representative for the Northwest to engage with schools, HE and employers. RSB is wanting more engagement with schools and universities. Prof. Brown also spoke about male:female ratios in the Society and the need to recruit more female Fellows. Other points mentioned were new travel grants (up to £1000), the desire for Branches to be involved in strategy development and the contribution of RSB to government policy. There was some discussion of member benefits and how retired members could obtain CPD points.

Prof Val Randall asked Prof Brown about the cancelled Pioneers of Biology and blue plaque event for Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Prof Brown agreed to follow this up with central RSB.

(ii) Chris Collins suggested having named person(s) on the Committee to liaise with schools and other organisations, to be discussed at the next Committee Meeting.

(iii) Sohan Jheeta spoke to raise awareness of the Norcel network of researchers and their forthcoming Blue Earth Project Event to held on Jan 21<sup>st</sup> 2023.