

Book Branch News

NUJ Book Branch

www.nujbook.org

April 2007

Diary Dates

3rd April, 6.30pm
Book Branch Meeting
All Members Welcome
Headland House
308 Gray's Inn Road
WC1X 8DP
Nearest tube King's Cross

12th- 15th April
Annual Delegates Meeting
the Holiday Inn,
Birmingham

1st May,
The May Day March

8th May, 6.30pm
Book Branch Annual
General Meeting

For more information on any of
the above please contact the
Branch Chair.

Book Branch Chapels

A & C Black
BCA (Book Club Associates)
Faber & faber*
HarperCollins (London)
LexisNexis Butterworths*
Lippincott Williams &
Wilkins
Lonely Planet
Macmillan (Oxford)*
Open University (Milton
Keynes)*
Orion*
Penguin/DK*
Random House*
Sage Publications
Taylor & Francis Books*
Usborne*
*recognized

Book Branch News

Editor: Helen Ibbotson
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BBN Deadline

Please send copy for the
next issue of BBN by 23rd
April to
editor@nujbook.org

ADM 2007, Birmingham Approaches As does the Branch AGM in May

The Branch will be sending a delegation of 6 people to represent the Branch and vote at this year's annual delegates meeting.

The Branch has also agreed to send observers in order to give interested members a chance to find out more about the union. To read about that motion have a look at the March minutes on p.3.

Book Branch will be holding it's own Annual General Meeting in May. On p. 2 you can find descriptions of all the committee posts that will be elected at that meeting. All Book Branch members are eligible to stand for any of these posts. If you are interested in standing for the committee and would like to find out more please contact the current chair, Sylvia Courtnage, or another member of the committee (see p.4 for contact details).

The AGM is the only time when the Branch can change it's Standing Orders – the rules governing Branch and Committee meetings and business. See p.3 for a proposed change to standing orders that will be voted on at the AGM.

Looking ahead to 2008

The Annual Delegates Meeting in Birmingham has not yet got under way, but the news on the grapevine is that there is already a plan for next year. The 2008 ADM is expected to be held in Belfast.

May Day 2007

Preparations are under way for May Day 2007 in London. The March will begin in from Clerkenwell Green (assemble 12 noon) to Trafalgar Square on Tuesday May 1. Speakers include Jeremy Dear, General Secretary of the NUJ, Tony Benn, and Megan Dobney of SERTUC.

Marchers will campaign for Trade union rights, human rights and international solidarity. This year there will be a focus on migrant workers and their struggles and on the need for trade union rights to win proper conditions.

CND Anti- Trident March

A group of Book Branch members met up near Trafalgar Square on the 24th of February for the CND anti-Trident march and joined the protesters with Book Branch banner and tabards. Police reported 10,000 participants; Indymedia reported 100,000. There were a large number of speakers at the rally who covered a wide range of issues. The atmosphere was warm throughout. The member who went have suggested that the Branch should invite a CND speaker to a future Branch meeting.

The recent NUJ ballot on whether to affiliate to the CND failed with 65% against. This may be due to a strong current of opinion in the union and on the NEC that it is inappropriate for us to affiliate to anything that is not directly concerned with 'journalistic' issues.

Chapel News

Penguin DK held a chapel recruitment event in March, resulting in 17 new people signing up. The chapel worked closely with Amicus who helped with funding for very good leaflets. Sue Harris arranged for 25% discount on first year's subscription for new members signing up between the event and 7 March, and the names also go into a draw for a bottle of wine. Congratulations from the Branch! The temporary move of some staff to Brick Lane is imminent. A chapel meeting is planned before Easter to assess progress.

Lexis Nexis/Reed Elsevier management want to change the criteria for awarding bonuses, but chapel have succeeded in getting the change postponed from this year.

HarperCollins has been holding drop in sessions for members. The first one resulted in a very good discussion. The second session is about to take place.

Open University staff who leave are not being replaced, and in consequence work is being freelanced in contravention of agreement. Management is considering rewriting many policies, including disciplinary and grievance procedures, supposedly to make them easier to implement. All four campus unions are being consulted.

Faber & Faber the chapel have successfully negotiated improvements to their house agreement including improvements suggested by MABIC and the Vice Chair of Book Branch. The chapel has also negotiated a magnificent 4.4% pay award, and enjoys generally good relations with management.

Book Branch Committee Role Descriptions

EVERY COMMITTEE MEMBER Each member has a responsibility to liaise with one or more chapels assigned after discussion at the first committee meeting of the year. This means being the first point of contact when chapels have questions or problems. Just as important, it means keeping in regular contact with the chapel M/FoC to check how things are going and to inform them of branch and national union policies and activities. This policy was enacted in the first year of the branch's existence as a way to serve chapels as well as reducing the call on the busy national organiser by freeing him or her of dealing with relatively simple matters. There is an expectation that committee members will attend both the monthly branch meeting and the monthly committee meeting.

CHAIR

The chair is the main spokesperson for the branch and is its visible representative to the wider union and the public. Specifically, the chair:

- conducts the business of the branch at its regular meetings (chairs)
- chairs the regular committee meetings
- organises for the meetings in advance
 - * prepares the agenda by reference to previous minutes, correspondence received and notices of motions
 - * circulates the agenda and motions, usually by email.
 - * assures that the meeting room is booked
- liaises with the national organiser and other national officials as required
- is expected to attend the national union's Annual Delegates meeting (ADM) and usually serves as the delegation's chair
- writes letters as instructed by the branch (See New Approaches)
- checks up that specific projects or assignments are being carried out

VICE-CHAIR

- conducts the meeting in the absence of the chair (See New Approaches)

SECRETARY

The secretary holds the second most important post on the committee.

- is the known point of contact for all incoming correspondence
- receives motions for meetings
- helps to prepare the agenda
- writes letters as instructed by branch (See New Approaches)
- is responsible for notifying ADM motions and delegates to head office
- separates and reports correspondence that needs immediate action
- prepares correspondence file to be circulated at branch meetings

TREASURER

- prepares monthly report on branch's financial status for meeting
- keeps committee informed of financial matters
- submits all reports required by head office on time
- receives and deposits branch's allowance from head office
- recommends amounts of donations when such motions arise
- pays affiliation fees and donations

MINUTES SECRETARY

- keeps a record of attendance at meetings
- takes minutes of meetings
- keeps permanent and up to date file of minutes
- circulates the minutes to everyone on the circulation list
- brings copies of minutes to the branch meeting

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

This position has been combined with that of secretary for a number of years.

- receives applications for membership from head office and presents them for endorsement by the branch
- is prepared to answer questions about membership applications
- informs membership department at head office of branch endorsement
- suggests transfer of a member to another branch if more appropriate
- prepares and circulates to committee a list of new members each month

GENERAL MEMBER

There are places for three general members but the committee has been one down this year.

- helps suggest and organise events and speakers
- helps carry out branch decisions by following up with liaison chapels
- informs liaison chapels when their new members are endorsed by branch
- carries out specific assignments as allocated
- works within own chapel, where there is one, as representative of the branch and a source of information

WELFARE OFFICE

This position is required under rule.

- receives and responds to requests for help from members in need
- liaises with national union charity to formulate recommendation
- reports on requests and recommends action to branch
- recommends when and how much branch should donate to union charity

EQUALITY OFFICER

This position is also required under rule.

- advises and monitors chapels on equality issues
- keeps informed about national Equality Council
- reports on national policies to be carried out by branches.

BOOK BRANCH NEWS (BBN) EDITOR

- organises monthly newsletter of two to four pages
- arranges for distribution through *The Journalist* or otherwise
- liaises with branch committee for articles that need to be included
- recommends any changes in size, methods of production and/or distribution
- is expected to attend some branch meetings and is invited to committee meetings

WEB SITE MANAGER

- keeps the branch web site interesting, attractive and up to date
- suggests links to national web site

Proposed amendments to Branch Standing Orders

Proposed by Mitzi Bales, Seconded by Emma Wood

General notes:

- 1 Edited for consistency in style, replacing 'he/she' by rewording, insertion of missing words and punctuation when necessary.
- 2 Explanation follows each proposed amendment.
- 3 New language shown in all caps.

1 The quorum for a branch meeting shall be EIGHT (8). Meetings shall start at 6.30pm and END AT 8.30pm. IF ANY UNFINISHED BUSINESS IS STILL TIMELY, IT SHALL BE DEFERRED TO THE NEXT MONTH.

An examination of the minutes from May 06 to Feb 07 showed that only once was the attendance as low as 4 members, the present quorum. There were 8 in attendance three times and 10 or more six times.

Meetings have to end at 8.30pm when the building closes, so there cannot be an extension of time as currently provided for.

5 The mover of an original motion shall have the right of reply to the debate on that motion, or, if an amendment is PUT, to the debate on THIS amendment, unless the debate is terminated by carrying 'next business' (see SO12). AFTER THE MOVER'S REPLY, the Chair shall take the vote immediately without ANY further discussion.

This simplifies the language for clarity and cuts the 'he/she' convention.

6 The seconder of a motion or an amendment may second formally and reserve THE RIGHT TO SPEAK until later in the debate.

Avoids 'he/she'.

10 ...Nor shall a motion or amendment that repeats the substance of a proposition previously voted on by the meeting BE ACCEPTED BY THE CHAIR.

Avoids 'he/she'.

12 ...If the Chair accepts 'the vote' and it is seconded, THIS MOTION SHALL BE PUT to the meeting without debate. If it is carried, the ORIGINAL MOTION SHALL BE PUT TO THE MEETING without further debate unless the mover of the motion is still entitled to reply. If the Chair accepts 'the next business' and it is seconded, IT SHALL BE put to the meeting without debate...If the Chair accepts 'the adjournment' and it is seconded, one speech for and one against MAY BE ALLOWED...

Made clearer.

The mention of the "previous question" has been deleted as, to my knowledge, this formulation has never been used in the branch and I'm not sure why it need be specified.

14 ...If another member is speaking, THE QUESTIONER shall immediately give way and await the Chair's ruling. MEMBERS SHALL NOT raise a 'point of order' JUST TO CONTROVERT any speaker or TO MAKE a speech THEMSELVES. A 'point of explanation' is not a point of order, but if the Chair believes that a brief CLARIFICATION will help the conduct of business, IT MAY BE PERMITTED.

Simplification and avoiding 'he/she'.

16 Voting shall be by show of hands unless a ballot is requested, in which case the Chair shall nominate tellers AND THE MEETING SHALL APPROVE THEM. THE TELLERS SHALL ANNOUNCE THE RESULT OF THE BALLOT BEFORE THE END OF THE MEETING.

Again, for clarity.

17 All nominees for branch office or AS DELEGATES TO THE ADM must fulfil all the following conditions:

a) be a fully paid-up member, A LIFE MEMBER OF THE BRANCH, OR A MEMBER OF HONOUR

Rephrasing for clarity.

b) be FORMALLY nominated and seconded

Requirement for two seconds an unnecessary precaution and hasn't been observed in practice.

c) be PRESENT AT THE MEETING WHEN NOMINATED OR GIVE CONSENT TO THE NOMINATION IN ADVANCE.

This avoids the problem arising if a nominee who has not given consent does not agree to the nomination and another election is needed a month later.

18 There shall be a branch committee ELECTED AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING (AGM) in accordance with NUJ Rule 7(c). In addition to the officers specified under THIS RULE, WHICH ARE Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Equality Officer and Welfare Officer, the committee shall COMPRISE ... ANY MEMBER WHO FAILS TO ATTEND THREE CONSECUTIVE MEETINGS WITHOUT REASONABLE CAUSE SHALL BE CONSIDERED TO HAVE RESIGNED AND A VACANCY DECLARED. IT IS DESIRABLE THAT the editors of Book Branch News and the branch website attend committee meetings AT WHICH THEY MAY PARTICIPATE FULLY IN DISCUSSION, but not vote. THE CHAIR CAN SPEAK IN DEBATE AND VOTE LIKE ANY OTHER MEMBER OF THE BRANCH. HOWEVER, AS A MOVER OF A MOTION, THE CHAIR MUST STAND DOWN DURING THE DEBATE ON THIS ITEM. THE CHAIR HAS A CASTING VOTE ONLY IN THE CASE OF A TIE VOTE AND CANNOT IN ANY CASE CAST A VOTE INTO A TIE. A tied vote means the motion is 'not carried' except where it is a challenge to a Chair's ruling THAT HAS BEEN UPHeld. IN THIS CASE, THE TIE UPHOLDS THE CHAIR.

It has proved invaluable in practice to have the BBN and website editors take an active part in the committee.

Committee members have a responsibility to attend meetings and missing three consecutive times not only indicates a disinterest but also adds to the work of the others. Reasonable cause for such absence keeps the member in good standing.

Other changes for clarity.

20 The committee shall meet MONTHLY, USUALLY THE WEEK AFTER THE BRANCH MEETING, AND 50% OF ITS MEMBERS SHALL FORM A QUORUM...

Past experience has shown that a monthly

meeting is necessary if all the business of the branch is to get done. The branch often refers business to the committee or instructs it to carry out certain matters.

22 These standing orders shall be amended only at the AGM of the branch and after the terms of any amendments have been duly circulated IN ADVANCE.

Due to a change in the way we notify members of branch meetings, it isn't practical to combine notice of amendments with the notice of meetings. The purpose is served if there is notice in advance.

6 February 2007 Book Branch Minutes (abridged)

1) present A & C Black; Folens; freelance; JKP; Lexis Nexis; NEC; Open University; Penguin DK

2) previous minutes

3) matters arising:

a) Amnesty International demo on 11 Feb commemorating 5th anniversary of Guantanamo Bay Camp was extremely well-organised and very moving. The prisoners were portrayed by demonstrators in orange boiler suits, kneeling on the road and being berated by other demonstrators dressed as guards. Other supporters held placards with the Amnesty slogan 'Protect the Human'. The event was well covered by TV and radio crews, though eventual broadcast coverage was limited.

g) European Works Councils: David Ayrtton is investigating how the union can use the EWC framework to strengthen and develop union representation within multi-national companies. Kyran and Dan are Branch liaison/information on this.

5) ADM:

Late Notice Motions:

a) ADM is alarmed at the proposed cuts to the State funding of the British Library, the principal repository of books and other elements of our international cultural

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NEC Members

Kyran Connolly (Book)
Andy Smith (South East)

Book Branch Website

www.nujbook.org
Freelance rates online
www.nujbook.org/freeln01.html

NUJ Freelance Directory and Rate for the Job

www.londonfreelance.org.uk

NUJ Head Office

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heritage. ADM instructs the NEC, as a matter of urgency, to campaign against any cuts in the financial provision for the British Library, in conjunction with other relevant interested parties. Prop: Kyran Connolly; sec Cath Rasbash. Passed unanimously.

b) ADM congratulates our officials and lay activists for the progress on improved rights for those on work experience placements in the television sector. ADM therefore instructs the NEC to press for the extension of these improved rights to placements in all media sectors. Prop Sylvia Courtnage, sec Mitzi Bales. Passed unanimously. ADM delegates: Annie Pike; Sylvia Courtnage; Cath Rasbash; Mitzi Bales; Dan Meredith; Martin Spellman reserves Kyran Connolly and Andy Smith. List passed with one vote against.

Motion: Book Branch agrees to submit the following message of congratulations to the ADM agenda and make a donation of £50 to the ADM fund: 100 years of NUJ And 34 years of Book Branch, Still fighting to protect members, For better pay, And quality publishing standards. Prop Helen, sec Mitzi. Passed.

6) motions: a) Book Branch agrees to support the CND 'No Trident' march on Saturday 24 February and to carry the Branch banner. Prop Mitzi, sec Huw. Passed. Abigail and Kyran will carry the banner; any other volunteers get in touch by email.

b) As the NUJ and Amnesty International are working closely to protect our colleagues in trouble throughout the world, including the murder case of journalist Anna Politovshaya in Russian, the imprisonment of trade unionists Samuel Morales and Raquel Castro in Colombia and work with the End Violence Against Women campaign, the Book Branch agrees to affiliate to Amnesty International at a fee of £27. Prop Mitzi, sec Helen. Passed. Committee will investigate

getting a speaker from Amnesty for a future branch meeting.

c) As requested by the General Secretary, Book Branch agrees to take part in the new mentoring scheme by nominating volunteers from this meeting and also instructs the Branch Committee to consider other candidates. Prop Mitzi, sec Cath. Passed.

7) workplace reports: See p.x

8) reports: treasurer: balance stands at £7,980. Belated cheques to BWTUC and the printers of BBN have now been sent off.

BBN: Helen and Robert are co-operating on current issue. Any further help would be welcome.

6 March 2007 Book Branch

Minutes (abridged)

1) present A & C Black; freelance; Lexis Nexis; NEC; Open University; Penguin/DK

2) previous minutes

3) matters arising: a) ADM delegation: Emma Wood was approved as delegate to fill a vacancy.

b) ADM flags: this proposal has been withdrawn.

c) Chapel booklet: 'Book Branch agrees to print 2,500 copies at a cost of £870, of which £200 will be provided by MABIC.' Prop Mitzi, sec Andy. Passed. Booklet is due to go to press this month.

d) CND march: see p1

4) new members

5) ADM: our Late Notice Motions were declared out of order, as they did not make explicit that the matters raised had come to light after the main motions deadline. This can be resolved at conference.

'Book Branch agrees to celebrate the NUJ Centenary at ADM 2007 by making a donation of £1,500 to NUJ Extra'. Prop Kyran, sec Mitzi. Passed.

'Book Branch agrees to send up to two observers to the 100th anniversary Annual Delegates Meeting from 12 to 15 April, at a cost of up to

£200 per person, and authorizes the branch committee to designate the member(s) to be so honoured. Preference shall be given to those who have been active in their chapel or the branch and who would attend the full conference. However, the committee may make arrangements for part time attendance if necessary. The committee is also authorized to make other reasonable requirements of the observer(s). Prop Mitzi, sec Andy. Passed.

'Book Branch agrees to donate £180 to sponsor a student delegate to attend ADM 2007'. Prop Cath, sec Kyran. Passed.

6) workplace reports: See p.1

7) officers' reports: secretary/correspondence: Camden Trades Council request our affiliation. To be considered at our AGM. May Day: 'Book Branch agrees to donate £50 to the London May Day Organising Committee' Prop Kyran, sec Emma. Passed.

Trades Union Freedom Bill: should we become a sponsor? Discuss at next Branch. Treasurer: balance at start of this meeting was in the region of £7,200.

Welfare: NUJ Extra is preparing a presentation for ADM.

8) reports: MABIC: its officers had a strategy meeting with Jeremy Dear and Sue Harris. Sue's priorities in the Book sector are to be group issues and co-operation between Book and Oxford branches. It is likely that MABIC meetings will be reduced from the present level of 10 per year. NEC: Bernard Roche has been appointed as the union's new finance manager; Laura Davidson is the new Assistant Organiser for Broadcasting; Chris Morley will be taking up the post of Northern Organiser when he steps down as President after ADM. Thomsons are setting up regular legal advice surgeries for NUJ members. Access is via Organisers.

9) AOB

next meeting: 3 April 07