

Book Branch News

NUJ Book Branch

www.nujbook.org

September 2007

Diary Dates

4th September, 6.30pm
Book Branch Meeting
All Members Welcome
Headland House
308 Gray's Inn Road
WC1X 8DP
Nearest tube King's Cross

2nd October, 6.30pm
Book Branch Meeting

6th - 7th October
Equality for All training
course. Contact Deirdre
Heinrich in the NUJ Training
Department or book online
at www.nujtraining.org.uk

Members can claim travel
expenses and childcare
costs for attendance at
branch meetings.

**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
editor@nujbook.org

BBN Deadline

Please send copy for the
next issue of BBN by
24th September to
editor@nujbook.org

LexisNexis Pay Campaign Success

Chapel celebrates a successful negotiation with pub picnic

On Tuesday 21 August, members of LexisNexis Chapel gathered to celebrate the successful outcome of our pay campaign. We'd planned a "Payday Picnic in the Park", which morphed into a picnic in the pub due to the weather.

Members had benefited from rises of a minimum £1250 or 3%, if better, and substantial increases on several grades minima.

The pay negotiations had been protracted with agreement not signed until towards the end of July, despite a pay review date of 1 April. The chapel's claim had been based on a commensurate share of the company's excellent results, while the company's initial offer of 2.8% was well below inflation.

Chapel members were fully involved throughout and many meetings had more than 30% attending (and we have a lot of homeworkers). The chapel made all the major decisions.

We took our case to the whole bargaining unit, with regular emails, taking up management's arguments. They'd made much of their increased contributions to the company pension scheme. Many non-members were sympathetic and agreed with our case. Once, five people agreed to join straight after an appeal in an email.

Chapel and committee members talked to colleagues to persuade them to join us and we recruited

about 25 new members in three months. More have joined since the campaign. We're still working on recruitment – now we've shown what 100 members can achieve, how much more could we do if everyone joins.

The strength of feeling by members was what brought management back to negotiate with us. We put the matter in dispute and intensive talks took place at ACAS.

Unstinting support and advice from Sue Harris (National Organiser) and Jeremy Dear proved invaluable throughout. Dan Meredith (FoC) and I are so grateful for that.

With things deadlocked, the chapel reluctantly agreed to ballot members for industrial action. This was not an easy step – but like most of our decisions throughout, we agreed it unanimously.

Notice of ballot was served on management and committee members worked extremely hard to get out the vote and reassure members about possible strike action and legal aspects.

Again the members were really solid with a turnout of over 80% and more than 90% in favour of strike.

At the following meeting, we unanimously agreed to proceed with strike action. We continued our preparations – and told management the ballot result. Another meeting at ACAS followed, where an offer was hammered out.

Mitzi Celebrates 80th Birthday



Mitzi Bales is pictured with the flowers and gift presented in celebration of her 80th birthday at the August Book Branch meeting.



Mitzi and Sylvia Courtneage at the party.

Annie Pike as joint chair congratulated Mitzi on her commitment, energy and enthusiasm as the longest serving member of Book Branch and the meeting ended with a champagne party.

A further chapel meeting agreed to a consultative ballot on this as the best that could be obtained by negotiation. The meeting was very positive and the ballot produced a large majority to accept.

At a final chapel meeting, many members thanked the committee and officers for all their efforts – and started to discuss ideas for future negotiations. The chapel has gained in confidence and built up a real sense of unity in the last few months and we take this forward – in addition to a good pay rise for members.

**Sylvia Courtneage, MoC
LexisNexis**

NUJ BOOK BRANCH MEETING

3 July 2007 minutes (Abridged)

1) present A & C Black; CRES; freelance; Lexis Nexis; National Organiser; NEC, Ofsted;

2) agenda agreed

3) previous minutes accepted as correct.

4) matters arising: a) Chapel Booklet: Sue has not yet had an opportunity to pass her comments to Dan

b) Magazines and Books: A Connected Approach: draft of Sue's strategy document has been circulated to the Committee and to other branches with a large representation in the sector. Emma provided a summary. Dona Velluti sent a long email to several of the committee shortly after ADM, which had a bearing on the strategic issues in the sector. These documents will be circulated and there will be a discussion at August branch meeting. Comments by email are also welcome.

c) BTBS Walkies: our 'buddy' is Arcadia Books, who are in Nassau Street, W1.

5) new members: 19 new names this month, 9 of which are from Lexis Nexis. List approved.

6) workplace reports: See Chapel News

7) reports: treasurer: bank balance stands at £3080; we have three tranches of management funding due to come to us shortly which will bring the balance to around £7000. Our normal expenditure is approximately equal to our income.

NEC: meets this week.

MABIC: meets next week. The last meeting was inquorate, because of the delayed election of the Magazine delegates. This will not be resolved until August; the nominated candidates will be invited to attend the July meeting, as most decisions of MABIC are reached by consensus rather than a vote. At the inquorate meeting the proposed strategy document was discussed.

Pride: Kyran took part in the march as part of the Federation of Entertainment Unions delegation. It was enjoyed by all despite getting very wet.

8) motion: 'Book Branch condemns the sentencing of Honorary NUJ member Mordecai Vanunu to six months in prison and a further six months suspended sentence for talking to representatives of the foreign press

in Israel. Book Branch notes that he served 18 years in solitary for disclosing to the Sunday Times Israel's Dimona facility for nuclear weapons, developed with assistance from apartheid South Africa, and was adopted as a prisoner of conscience by Amnesty International. Book Branch calls on the NEC to denounce the inordinate sentence and call for his immediate release and the restoration of his human right to travel.' Prop Kyran, sec Mitzi. Passed.

9) correspondence: a) Shop Stewards Network: founding conference for this national grass-roots network is on 7 July. 'Book branch agrees to send Sheila Cohen and Kim Moody as delegates to the Shop Stewards Network Founding Conference at a cost of £5 each, and to donate £50 to sponsor the event'. Prop Kyran, sec Emma. Passed. Support the Post Workers: petition was distributed.

Guantanamo: update received from the campaign, reporting on a recent conference in South London focussing on a particular prisoner.

10) AOB: Kyran attended a reception for the Cuban ambassador, along with numerous trade union luminaries. Israel boycott: some NUJ members are unhappy with the ADM decision to support economic boycott of Israel and have urged that the whole membership should be balloted on the issue. Other strands of opinion feel that those who disagree with the boycott had the usual opportunities to make their views known both ahead of and during ADM, which is the sovereign policy-making body of the union. The meeting agreed to endorse the Oxford Branch petition to this effect, and urged NEC members Andy and Kyran to pass on to the NEC the branch's support for the NEC in standing by the democratic processes of the union and resisting bullying on this issue.

11) next meeting: 7 August 2007

NUJ BOOK BRANCH MEETING

7 August 2007 minutes (Abridged)

1) Present: LexisNexis, Ofsted, Freelance, National Organiser

2 agenda: agreed. **3) previous minutes:** Approved.

4) matters arising: a) Re 4a: Update on the progress of the booklet for chapels: Sue had raised some issues about the coverage of recognition agreements and recruitment. Dan would make some amendments to deal with these by the September branch meeting and would circulate the document.

b) Re 4b: The discussion of Sue's strategy document was deferred to the September meeting.

c) Re 4c: Sue and others who took part in the BTBS Walkies, where Book Branch co-hosted a venue, reported that it had been a very enjoyable as well as useful event that had raised the branch's profile.

5) new members: 15 were admitted;.

6) workplace reports: See p.4

7) officers' reports: a) NEC: Kyran reported that the Emergency Committee had met to consider a disputed (within the union) agreement from Ireland, which after lengthy discussion on submissions from both sides, had upheld the approval of the agreement. Financial support for the Glasgow newspaper dispute had been agreed, but then negotiations had restarted and the strike was called off. Emma asked what the NEC had done to campaign on library cuts since our ADM resolution on the subject. Kyran said that other unions present in the sector had been approached (as the resolution stated) but were not currently campaigning on the issue. Emma pointed out that there is an ongoing cross-union campaign against cuts at the British Library that we could support. **b)** MABIC: Annie reported that the last two meetings had been inquorate, largely because an administrative error by Magazine Branch had resulted in their having no properly elected delegates to MABIC. This was being rectified.

8) motions: None

9) correspondence: None apart from the Union's emailed NEC newsletter 'Informed', from which selected extracts were announced to the meeting.

10) AOB: It was announced that the first of what would be regular meetings of the Group Chapel at Reed Elsevier would take place on 10 September.

11) next meeting:

4 September 2007

Headland House

308 Gray's Inn Road

WC1X 8DP

Nearest tube King's Cross

News from NUJ Active

Support for asylum seeker member

Mansoor Hassan, an NUJ member, is under threat of deportation even though he and his family would be at serious risk after he exposed Pakistani politicians involved in honour killings. Please support him by signing a petition to urge the Home Secretary to allow him to remain. Click here to sign: www.ipetitions.com.

JOURNALISTS: 100 years of the NUJ

Copies of the NUJ history are still available to buy online. The book tells the dramatic story of the union's first 100 years. The book is published by Profile Books at £17.99 but is on offer to NUJ members for the special price of £10. To buy online there is an extra £2 charge for post and packaging, making the full price £12. Visit <http://212.69.218.47/nuj/shop/index.html> to order now!

Stand Up for Journalism

One of the key events on November 5th will be a lobby of the Society of Editors' Conference being held in Manchester. Members will assemble at 12.30pm outside the Manchester Evening News building in Deansgate, Central Manchester, then proceed to a lobby at 1pm outside the Radisson Edwardian Hotel, Peter Street, Manchester, M2 5GP. This will be followed by a fringe meeting at 1.30pm at the Friends Meeting House, 6 Mount Street, Manchester, M2 5NS. To find out more visit the website www.standupforjournalism.org.uk

Committee vacancies

A number of vacancies exist on NUJ committees. Visit www.nuj.org.uk/inner.php?do_cid=1610 to see the full list.

Editor Needed

Could you edit BBN?

What do I need to do?

Put together BBN 10 times a year, following basic guidelines.

Do I need to be able to typeset?

Not as such, but an interest in laying out text and using desk top publishing (DTP) software can help. You can either use your own DTP programme, or Microsoft Word or Open Office. Open Office can be downloaded for free if you don't have any other appropriate software.

Do I have to do it on my own?

No, you can either take on fewer issues per year (Robert and Helen have recently been editing alternate issues) or you could take on just the setting or just the editing and find someone else to work with you.

Can I commission articles?

Yes, there is scope to add new features and articles, or just to follow the current format. As long as all the essential information is in here, the editor can add other material.

Why is Helen standing down?

She's having a baby!

How can I find out more?

Email Helen Ibbotson on editor@nujbook.org or contact one of the committee members (see contacts on p.4).

Union Casework

by Martin Spellman

On union casework the first question to ask is: 'why are the cases arising?'—what are the chief causes? Whilst there are problems like late payment and copyright, most union casework is likely to be due to discipline issues.

What happens?

Most discipline cases will be justified and not raised maliciously. There are sometimes instances where procedures are not observed but these are rare. I have known activists who argued against prevention on the basis that 'not knowing' or claiming ignorance of the rules is the way forward. I have never known of a single case where this has got someone off the hook. 'Ignorantia juris non excusat'—ignorance of the law is no excuse—applies. However, if there is suspected victimisation by management the first thing to do is keep a notebook or log of all instances, including what was said and any witnesses and documents.

Three or Four Things

Discipline in any company is usually centred on three or four things. In one large company I worked for these were: time-keeping; sickness and stealing. They had well-established and honed procedures for dealing with these. Stealing could either be in goods (using photocopier for private reasons, claiming unjustified expenses) or time—claiming for hours not worked, etc. Talking to someone I know, who still works there, he agreed and said that internet abuse was a new issue. Many people don't realise that even without surveillance software virtually anything you do on a computer is logged. Pressing Cntl+H in a browser should bring up the history of sites you have been visiting. Many companies bar sites to do with gambling, downloading and games. Systems managers can report every keystroke you make and contents of all your emails. So people need to keep their private business private and not do it on company computers. But the point is that, if staff know what the 'three or four things' are and avoid them they are likely to have a trouble-free existence.

Prevention: the best way

The best way to deal with discipline cases is to prevent them arising in the first place. It is in the interests of all union members that this happens.

- * Discipline breaches can lead to clampdowns or stricter observance of rules which affect everyone.
- * Dealing with discipline takes time and money.
- * Members who fall foul of discipline procedures are likely to feel shamed and not likely to take part in union activity.
- * People who see the best chance of increasing their income as stealing from their employer are not likely to want to fight for higher pay.

So chapels, the branch and national officers could keep each other informed of the sort of cases that arise (not personal details). Knowing what occurs and where it occurs might show a need for action in a particular area. Sometimes support of national officers and legal aid may be needed but a lot of the run-of-the-mill stuff, that takes up chapel officers' time, can be stopped at source. A case for more national officers or union training can always be made but by keeping things that are in our control under control we can save ourselves a lot of trouble.

Contacts

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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

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Chapel News

Faber: new joint MoC:
 Susan Holme.

Penguin/DK: pay negotiations continue. HR want to remove the pay scale and grading structure from the House Agreement, on the grounds that it is 'not clear and transparent'.

Orion: The redundancy process has now finished and we must thank the union for their help, support and advice, most particularly regarding the legal issues. The company were cooperative and obliging. All those affected have quickly settled, and some are taking a month off for rest and recuperation. If there were any non-fiction editorial roles available, or any freelance editorial work within the industry, now that the quiet month of August is coming to a close, we would be grateful if you would keep these members in mind.

Macmillan Oxford: Sue, the National Organiser, attended a meeting on maternity rights.

Open University: Peter Lee has taken over as Father of Chapel.

Usborne: All changes to the house agreement have been agreed upon and a final offer from the Company of 4.4% has been made. The chapel have voted to accept this, along with other settlements, including a trial run of free fruit in the office and an increase in Company childcare contributions. We're about to submit our final reply to the Company. The chapel intend to use this year's 'fruitful' negotiations as the basis for an event at the end of September.

We're very happy with how things have gone this year compared to the re-write of the house agreement last year! We think the pay rise is pretty generous given July's RPI, and appears to be fairly competitive within the industry. Altogether the negotiations have produced some pretty good results!

T&F Loses Bloomsbury Presence

Taylor and Francis books staff previously located at 'Haines House' in Bloomsbury have moved to London's trendy Shoreditch area.

Following the huge relocation of all T&F staff from New Fetter Lane to Milton Park in 2004 (which resulted in 75% of staff taking voluntary redundancy and many others obtaining a good NUJ negotiated relocation package), parts of the company remained in the small office in Bloomsbury (Europa, some Psychology Press staff, and a handful of Routledge editors). This office was under continuous threat of closure between 2004 and 2007 and the move to Albert House near Old Street tube (an Informa office) secures a London outlet for T&F for the foreseeable future. The Haines House leaving party (pictured) saw former T&F employee and outgoing BBN editor Helen Ibbotson make a cameo appearance.

According to former T&F Father of Chapel Terry Clague, the move has gone smoothly: "most staff were relieved not to be given the choice of redundancy or



Haines House on John Street in Bloomsbury, the London office of Taylor and Francis Books from 2004 to 2007.

working at Milton Park in Abingdon". The federated T&F chapel is now split into four sections: T&F Books; T&F Journals; Psychology Press and T&F Albert House. The Albert House section voted unanimously to approve a letter to the Informa board expressing their concern at recent pay settlements. This letter has been timed such that it is in the hands of the Informa board before they set their budget for salaries for 2008. Annual negotiations on improving the house agreement begin in earnest in the autumn.



Taylor & Francis Colleagues gather outside the building for the last time.