

BRITISH PIGEON FANCIERS MEDICAL RESEARCH TRUST (BPFMRT)
TRUSTEES REPORT OF AGM HELD ON 19TH FEBRUARY 2014.

Trustees present - Dr PP Lynch, George Pollock, Bill Frame, Ian Noble, Sam MacFadzen , Apol. Andrew Garven

Others present -

Dr Gavin Boyd has retired from clinical practice and as Medical Director of the Trust. Gavin has joined the board of Trustees at the request of the Trustees. Dr Charles McSharry has been appointed Research Director of the Trust by the Trustees.

Hosting Facilities - The Trustees thank the SHU and secretary Linda Brooks and staff for the usual excellent free hosting facilities provided at the AGM of the Trust in the SHU offices Wishaw, Lanarkshire

The minutes of the previous AGM were accepted by the Trustees and the Press Report on the RPRB BHW Show of the Year at Blackpool was approved for publication on the Website and the pigeon Press The Show was as usual a very successful and busy research exercise. The Trustees were grateful to receive a cheque for £15,000 from the RPRB BHW Show Committee. We are grateful to the RPRB General Manager Stewart Wardrop and his efficient staff who together with the BHW Show Committee and staff ensured that the excellent Show location and the Research Stand's needs were freely provided.

Accounts ended 30th November 2013

The balance sheet (copy enclosed) was approved by the Trustees. It was as usual expertly presented by George Pollock hon. Treasurer who drew attention to the fact that the Trust had a deficit of £ 7.6K this year and £ 7.8k the previous year and thus underlined the fact that financially we continue to live from year to year only on dwindling to negative reserves. The RPRB BHW Show donation continues to be our major financial lifeline, without it we could not exist. We are also grateful for the regular and continued financial support from the SHU, SNFC and the NEHU and all individual fanciers and organisations who contribute from time to time, the most recent being £1k from Planet Bros on behalf of The John Squib Memorial Fund charity for pigeon related needy causes.

We are grateful to I.A. Stewart & Company, Chartered Accountants, New Lanark for their continued free services and Independent Examiners Report which is a mandatory regulation by the Scottish Charity Regulator - Ref SCO13181 The free donation of their time, enthusiasm and expertise by the senior members of the Research Team and the Trustees continues at no cost. On behalf of the Fancy the Trustees wish to thank the Team for their continued voluntary efforts on our behalf. The voluntary partnership of British pigeon fanciers and their research team in the research of pigeon lung and the service they provide to fanciers on the funds available, continues to be a credit and testimony to the goodwill and charitable aims of British pigeon fanciers and their research team.

The Trustees are sorry to report the withdrawal of Dr Ken Anderson from the team. Ken has had to reduce his work load at this time for health reasons. We are indebted to Ken for the many years of service, enthusiasm and expertise he provided in running the pigeon lung advice service at Crosshouse Hospital Kilmarnock.

Research Lab Activities

The Research team attended the new SHU Show at Lanark, the NEHU Show at South Shields and the RPRA BHW Show of the Year at Blackpool. As a result of the ongoing deficits the research scientist's salary contribution has had to be reduced by the Trustees to £10k (from £15k) Glasgow University pays the remainder. All the Show results should be out by now, if there are any queries our research scientist Lisa Jolly can be contacted at Tel.0141 330 1878 e-mail lisa.jolly@glasgow.ac.uk (e-mail contact is by far the best method). Lisa is taking over from Iona Donnelly, Iona has given many years of excellent laboratory work, front line service and liason with fanciers and their results. We wish Iona and her young daughter good health and every happiness in the future.

Summary of Activities during 2013.

Dr Charles McSharry

Research Director and Senior Research Scientist.

Biomedical Research Centre Glasgow University.

Blood testing/screening Service

- a. Blood Collection Packs February 2013- 2014. 77 routine packs sent out, 12 packs sent out to attendees of Lanark 2013
- b. Tel. enquiries 2 per week on average and many more around and after Show activities
- c. Shows – Newcastle 2013 – 35 samples, Lanark 2013 – 12 samples, Blackpool 2014 – 177 blood samples/177 questionnaires/177 consent forms.

Research Update : -

- a Routine antibody blood test results – some don't correlate with questionnaire or with routine lung function therefore for these some new tests might be required

- b New Research Blood Tests :-

Most new measurements correlate:(blood tests for KL6,CRP,IgG, CCL18) and some don't: (blood tests for CCL17, 20, 21) suggesting latter is a ' blind alley' but even this negative information is useful to exclude certain processes

Conclusion:-

- 1 Questionnaire alone is not best way to delineate disease, screening blood test and further pulmonary tests are required in some cases.
- 2 Some fanciers don't want to admit symptoms, fear of having to give up pigeons persists.
- 3 Some disease is 'sub clinical' meaning that disease can develop with no warning (blood test for IL-1Ra is suggestive of this)
- 4 Disease may be associated with several phenotypes – genetic factors, therefore different mechanisms may be involved.

Current Activity in Medical Education:-

The research activity supported by the BPFMRT has general useful

information and training that is greatly appreciated by our medical colleagues.

As evidence of this we are publishing our experience in several ways:-

A Ever increasing reports of hypersensitivity pneumonitis similar to pigeon lung are being reported in the work place especially in metal grinding industries where oils are used in the grinding process causing fine mists eg brass grinders / workers lung etc. Dr Charles McSharry has been asked to write a chapter in the renowned Parkes Occupational Lung Disorders.

B An Immunology and clinical paper with phenotypes is being prepared by Drs Boyd/lynch/Bourke/McSharry.

C Newcastle Collaboration – with Dr Todryk and Dr Stephen Bourke continues in support of local pigeon fanciers.

D Report on new lung function testing in final preparation (Dr Carter)

E One paper on blood cell types in preparation.

F One PhD student in her final year of studies

Therapeutic Phase of The Research

. At the moment , and as we have long advocated, the best method of combating pigeon lung is still prevention of pigeon dust entering the lungs by the use of an appropriate mask, cap and coat whenever with the pigeons especially when cleaning out. The therapeutic phase of the research is however providing much hope for the future The use of Statins (blood fat lowering medicaments) appears to have a beneficial effect in pigeon lung and the relevance of vitamin D levels is still unfolding. . The laboratory team under Dr McSharry last year came across a molecule that attracts inflammatory cells into the lung and have also found a lung protein that is reduced in those fanciers showing a reaction to the pigeons in their blood test. When large quantities of dust are inhaled in the pigeon loft, antibodies are produced in the lungs and gives out a strong signal to bring lots of immune (defence) cells into the lungs. We have found the signal could be the molecule CCL18 a type of ‘messenger molecule’. We have found this is increased in the blood of sensitized pigeon fanciers especially along with the antibody (reaction) against pigeon dust.If we can block CCL18 we may block pigeon lung, a case of” kill the messenger’

Service to the Fancy throughout the year

The research team continue to be available to the Fancy throughout the year as a free service for advice and support - by telephone, by e -mail and by further communications via our website The trustees approved the token payment of £2,000 to the research coordinators Ken and Jane Boyd for the administration and coordination of the data bases relating to the Show blood results also the activities throughout the year including managing the website www.pigeon-lung.co.uk and coordinating the responses of the team members to the frequent questions asked by fanciers and non fanciers on our website in the role as webmaster.

The new shatter proof blood packs resourced and purchased from Royal Mail have

continued to be a great success. We sent out approx 90 to fanciers this year. They fulfill Health and Safety regulations both at home and abroad. We continue to provide the service of a free blood check for pigeon reaction in British fanciers and their families if there is a worry about health. The pack and blood test is free to all fanciers in the British Isles including Southern Ireland.

Thanks to all our supporters

The Trustees and Research Team are greatly encouraged and thankful for the support of British fanciers and their organisations especially the RPRA through their BHW Show of The Year, the SHU the SNFC and the NEHU for their regular annual donations and all the other pigeon fanciers and pigeon organisations who support us whenever they can. In truth this voluntary and charitable research activity by British pigeon fanciers and their research team continues to be unique in the international pigeon world and much envied in the scientific one. Our joint efforts on a limited and reduced budget enables us to continue to search for a cure for pigeon lung and in the same process strive to provide a service in support of the good health of all pigeon fanciers and their families. We thank you all once again for your vital support and wish all pigeon fanciers and their families good health and every success in the forthcoming racing season.

Yours sincerely, Dr PP Lynch chair BPFMRT