

Crewe Photographic Society

Annual General Meeting Thursday 24th April 2014
7.30pm in the Library, Crewe.

Competitions Report

Mary has talked about the print competitions and “Battles”. I will report on the PDI work and the regional and national competitions which we enter.

Crewe PS PDI Competitions

The new monochrome category was a success; spreading the achievements of members and mirroring the increasing interest in mono.

We got the change in the number of competitions wrong; having fewer comps with more entries is a better solution, less work and cheaper!

All results have appeared on our website within a few hours of the competition having taken place, followed by a gallery of the highest scoring work within a day or two.

A good thing about Crewe PS is that a number of people are capable of a win! Paul Hill, Dolores Williams, Ian Whiston, Dave Barton, Wallace Baxter, Ray Hill, Ken Dickenson, Ian McNab and I have all gained at least one win this season.

A very big thank you to all entrants for getting everything so right! The only errors I now get are incorrect sizing and colour space, which are corrected by **Dicentra**. However the L&CPU entry software is less forgiving and, in any case, do you want to trust the final look of your treasures to a machine? I'll have a word with the people who are making the same mistakes – they are only minor ones.

I was very impressed with the way everyone taking part in the print competitions sent in PDIs for simultaneous projection too. The projection is an extra task to organise and you all being so efficient makes it so much easier.

Our PDI Trophy comp (Howard Edwards Trophy) had its inaugural year and was a great success, with over 50 entries.

Thank you very much.

Our External Competition Entries

We came second to Leek PC in the **Robertshaw Trophy** this year, tying with Blythe Bridge. The event next year will be at Macclesfield (Monday 6 October).

The **Chester Knock-Out** this year was won by Birkenhead PA and Nantwich CC.

At the **North Cheshire Challenges** we had our best success for a number of years, coming 4th in the Print Competition and 3rd in the PDI KO. *Roosting Common Blue* by Paul Hill was the most successful print and in the KO Ian Whiston's *Lion Cub at Play* stayed in until the 5th round and *Priests Cove* by Paul Hill the third.

L&CPU Competitions

In the **L&CPU Knock-Out** we came 10th the most successful images being Paul Hill *Priest's Cove* which stayed in for 3 rounds and Ian Whiston's *Tommie Lamb* which stayed in for 4.

L&CPU Club Annuals

PDIs: Peter Robinson *The Carpenter* 12, John Royle *Alone* 12, Ian Whiston *Lionness with Warthog* and *Thompson Gazelle Escaping* both 14, *Wigeon* by Dennis Swaby and *Knot Roost* by Wallace Baxter both 12

Prints: *A long lead* by John Royle 12, *Steampunk* Martin McGing 12, *Washday Blues* Dolores Williams 12, *Sunset from the Roaches* Paul Hill 12, *After the Shower* Paul Hill 12, *Snowdonia stream* by Paul 13. *Meadow Pipit* by Bob Brown 14, *Roosting Common Blue* by Paul 13 as was *Slavonian Grebe*.

We came 15th in Open Colour, 5th in Nature in Mono 25th, 11th overall in PDI. We did not get the rank order in Prints.

2013 L&CPU Annual Individuals' Competition

Prints; John Royle had 2 12s, one going in the exhibition and the other to the PAGB competition. Paul Hill's *Fallow Deer Buck* also scored 12.

In PDIs *Winter Glow* by Peter Robinson scored 12 in **Colour Open**, whilst in **Monochrome** Darren Carter's *Minimal Defence* scored 13 and gained a Commendation. Also in Mono, *Sophie* by Peter Robinson, *Kite Surfer* by Ray Hill, *Conversation on the Bridge* by Dolores Williams and *The Starlet* by Meg Cumming all had 12. In **Nature** all 4 of Ian Whiston's entries scored 13 (*Lionness with Warthog*,

European Bee Eaters Lion Cub and Hoopoe Approaching Nest) *Nuthatch* by Ray Hill also scored 12.

The entries for the **2014 Annual Individuals Competition** have just been made and will be reported later.

Great British Cup

110 clubs entered the Open, 101 the Nature and 63 the “Small”

We had less success this year.

In the **Nature** section we had only two 12s and one 13 from Ian Whiston and Wallace Baxter in contrast to last year where Ian became wildlife photographer of the year!

The general section was even more disappointing, with no 12s at all but five 11s from Peter Robinson, Dolores Williams and Dave Barton

We came 43rd in Nature, 63rd in Open.

Website Report

(Delivered by the Chairman in the absence of Webmaster, Ian McNab who is ill)

The club has every reason to be proud of its website; it is elegant in design and very efficiently laid out .

These factors are important but count for nothing if the information isn't up-to-date and useful. Ian and I have worked hard to do this. During the year all meetings and competitions have been reported on within hours of them taking place and many other events have been similarly treated. The front page is also updated each week. Results are published and also usually a gallery of winners. There is a monthly topic for people to participate in on the Forum and one of the best Twitter feeds of classic photography that you could find.

Refinements continue all the time and we have also added the competitions gallery facility and an events page during the year.

The website gets a good number of visitors. The maximum in one day has been 363 and the total number of views now is 49,746 since starting in November 2012.

However, there has been a small decline in the number of visits in 2014 compared to 2013, perhaps because of our decline in membership.

What remains a disappointment is the use of the Forum. Ian has worked particularly hard on this and yet the number of participants I don't think has changed during the year. There is interest in creating a Facebook page; will that have the same fate?

Personally, I saw the Forum as something which would give us an indicator of the way things were going in the club, which we could respond to. I was hoping that questions might be asked which indicated what we might cover in open evenings and so on.

The website remains a vital feature of the club. People are working hard to make it useful, lively and interesting; **please support it by using it and contributing to it.**

Chairman's Report

Another year has quickly gone by. It finds us with one good old friend of the society lost to us recently; Alan Goodin (Moments silence?).

Quite apart from losing three other stalwart members in the last year or so; Howard, Mick and Ron Reade, our membership has declined and it is hard to know why. When I last analysed the L&CPU club membership figures in 2013 there had been no change in total membership of all 97 clubs over that year, so it would appear to be a general trend that the rapid growth experienced for a year or two has not continued. We should be asking why this failure amidst the tremendous growth of interest in photography generally?

At Crewe we are fortunate in having a good balance of interests. The club is not dominated by one or two people who "always win" and impose their slant on everything that happens. We have at least a dozen people who can do extremely well and they have quite different interests too, which is ideal. We need to work hard to keep this even keel and to make sure that people know that their work is respected and we inspire, interest and inform, not dictate.

This element, a kind of democracy of success is such an asset to us. I would also add that another thing we have is a great respect for each other's work; all styles, all subjects, all genres, all abilities are welcome here.

Respect for everyone's work is our paradigm.

One problem we **do** have for the next season though is finding new permanent accommodation for 2015 for the plan is for the Library to occupy a much reduced footprint in the new Life Style Centre, which itself has no meeting rooms planned at present.

Please help with suggestions for venues. We need accommodation for at least 60-70, black-out, kitchen, storage, affordable price and in Crewe.

We are looking towards an **exhibition**. The Theatre is no longer available and a suitable venue is being sought – we will be in touch over this during our closed season.

At least with our present membership numbers we are viable economically.

You will have heard by now that I have volunteered to take over as competition secretary. Doing this while also being Chairman is quite a job; there are 22 competitions to prepare for each year. I am pleased to say that Mary is still prepared to book the judges and this is a key to the division of labour in the club – help by doing certain tasks. We take the wrong approach when we just ask for volunteers to take official total responsibility for something. I would like to cultivate the attitude that we can all do something to help, not necessarily in taking on a committee job.

A big task, yes, and I feel that this time next year it will be time for me to hand on the Chairmanship, a job I will have held for 10 years.

Over the last few months I have reduced my commitments to club photography outside Crewe PS. I am no longer a member of the L&CPU Executive and I have only accepted one judging booking for the next season. This was not a move I made to devote more time to CPS, it was to devote more time to my own photography and other interests. I am prepared to take on the additional CPS work for a definite period of one season.

Chairman's Choice

Every year for the last 7 or 8 years I have given this special award to a person who I think deserves some distinction. It was never intended to be given for competition success; the many trophies and certificates are ample reward for that. It was an opportunity to show appreciation of a single person to mark how their special qualities have served the club.

The award has been made in the past to Carole Cotter (2008), Dot Johnson (2009), Paul Hill (2010), Patrick Whalley (2011), Wallace Baxter (2012), and Dolores Williams (2013).

This year the award goes to another lady member; **Mary Seaton!**

Mary has been our competition secretary for many many years. She and husband Tom have become the rock on which CPS is built. I would like to pay tribute to her long service and the wonderfully efficient way she has performed that task and (dare I say) been the Club's matriarch!

But she isn't just a good helper and confidante; she has shown us some good photography too. She has not entered much in the last few years but many of the ones she has have a great resonance which I really admire.

Mary, thank you.

John Royle

April 2014