

# Crewe Photographic Society

Annual General Meeting Thursday 20th. April 2017

7.45pm in the Lifestyle Centre, Crewe.

## AGENDA

- 1.0 APOLOGIES.
- 2.0 ADOPTION OF COMMITTEE FOR 2017/2018 SEASON.
- 3.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM.
- 4.0 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES.
- 5.0 REVIEW OF RESOLUTION ADOPTED AT THE LAST AGM.  
*PROPOSAL TO CHANGE COLOUR PRINT CLASSIFICATION*
  - 5.1 *'Proposal to amend the Constitution to permit the tenure of one additional Committee post by the Secretary and the Treasurer and that the posts of Secretary, Treasurer and Chairman be held by three different people.'*
  - 5.2 *'Proposal that images entered in both the Maurice Ashwin and the Howard Edwards portrait competitions should be NEW images to CPS and should be entered ONLY in the portrait competitions of that season but may be entered into League competitions in subsequent seasons.'*
- 6.0 PROPOSALS for DISCUSSION and DECISION.
  - 6.1 *'Proposal to retire the Ladies Cup.'*
  - 6.2 *'Proposal to increase the annual subscription fee.'*
- 7.0 TREASURER'S REPORT.
- 8.0 SECRETARY'S REPORT.
- 9.0 PROGRAMME SECRETARY'S REPORT.
- 10.0 WEBMASTER'S REPORT.
- 11.0 COMPETITION SECRETARY'S REPORT.
- 12.0 CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.
- 13.0 AOB.

## **AGM Minutes**

The meeting began at 8:20pm.

In attendance are 21 members, including 11 committee members.

In the chair is John Royle.

### **1.0 APOLOGIES.**

Ian McNab, Ralph Browes, Christine Campbell, Les Simpson and Ian Whiston.

### **2.0 ADOPTION OF COMMITTEE FOR 2017/2018 SEASON.**

All other members of last season's committee are willing to continue in their role. Dave Barton kindly volunteered to take on an additional role of Competition Secretary Assistant.

### **3.0 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS AGM.**

The minutes of the previous AGM were emailed to all members a week before this AGM and a copy had been on display at the majority of club meetings during the season.

The members voted to accept the minutes to be a true record of the last AGM and were signed off by the Chairman.

### **4.0 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MINUTES.**

None.

### **5.0 REVIEW OF RESOLUTION ADOPTED AT THE LAST AGM.**

**5.1** The AGM agreed that the proposal to amend the Constitution to permit the tenure of one additional Committee post by the Secretary and the Treasurer and that the posts of Secretary, Treasurer and Chairman be held by three different people should remain in place.

**5.2** The AGM discussed last season's proposal that images entered in both the Maurice Ashwin and the Howard Edwards portrait competitions should be new images to CPS and should be entered only in the portrait competitions of that season but may be entered into League competitions in subsequent seasons.

John Royle informed the AGM that the number of entries for the Portrait competitions had dropped and some members who usually entered hadn't done so this time. Dolores Williams thought that the reduced entry proved that the change hadn't been successful. She also disagreed with the definition of a portrait saying one person had to be dominant. Martin McGing said that it would take 2 years for the proposal to be fully active and we would be able to judge it better after that period.

Eighteen members voted in favour of keeping the proposal in place and to review it again at the next AGM.

### **6.0 PROPOSALS for DISCUSSION and DECISION.**

#### **6.1 'Proposal to retire the Ladies Cup.'**

Wallace Baxter asked if it could be used for another purpose. Tom Seaton indicated the cup had been engraved 'The Ladies Cup' and it wasn't suitable for any other purpose. Dolores suggested that it could be used as a beginners cup. John Royle replied that we already had a beginners cup, but as we didn't have any beginners it wasn't used.

Thirteen members voted to retire the ladies cup so the motion was passed.

#### **6.2 'Proposal to increase the annual subscription fee.'**

This was discussed in the Treasurer's Report.

## **7. TREASURER'S REPORT by Sharon Barton**

'As you can see from the accounts both income and expenditure have decreased compared with last season. The main decreases in income are due to a reduction in attendance levies which are down by £263 and membership subscriptions which are down by £40. But this season this has been offset by a reduction in costs for judges, lecturers, L&CPU subscription, insurance and refreshments plus donations.

I would like to thank Mary & Tom, Keith and Ken Last for their generous donations to the society and also John Royle for donating his expenses for the season.

L&CPU subscriptions and insurance fluctuate around membership numbers and equipment value at the time of renewal.

From the 1st April we have negotiated a deal with the Lifestyle Centre so that we continue to have both rooms and at an increase of only £12.50 per meeting. But due to this I would like to propose an increase to membership subscriptions by £5 per person making them £30 single and £50 joint, the last time membership was increased was for the 2010/11 season. Whilst this increase won't fully cover the total increase in room hire for a season it will go a long way towards it and at the recent committee meeting we took the decision to absorb the rest of the increase from current club funds for next season.'

The proposal was the preferred way of raising more revenue rather than increase the weekly admission charge which the committee thought would put members off attending. Even with the increase of the annual subscriptions there will be a shortfall in covering the rental increase. We have enough funds to cover us for next season, but will have to review the finances again next year. The AGM discussed the topic and the consensus agreed with the need to increase the annual subscription considering the current membership numbers. Sharon said she's spent a considerable amount of time investigating other venues, but it was difficult to find one with the right facilities in a local location.

The AGM also discussed ways of raising funds. It was suggested that we had a guest speaker and invite other clubs to attend. John thought this was a gamble as it was expensive and quite common place now so we couldn't guarantee covering our costs.

Martin McGing we needed to try and increase our membership. He suggested hold an exhibition in a popular public town centre venue where potential new members would see it. This is how he discovered CPS. Sharon said she'd looked into this but was finding progress difficult as the property owners weren't very interested.

The AGM unanimously voted to increase the annual subscription by £5 per person.

## **8. SECRETARY'S REPORT by Peter Robinson**

I'm just completing my first year as Secretary and this is my first report. I asked Tom what to put in it and he said what every you can think off!

So I'd like to start by thanking Tom and John Royle for their support and guidance during my learning curve.

This season we've enjoyed an interesting and varied programme compiled by Ian Stevenson with several good speakers and it's been good to see our talented members give us enjoyable and informative talks.

I think every judge has been impressed by high standard of our work and found it difficult to choose one best image. We make their job difficult and they often admit that their decision is their personal chose.

Unfortunately, as is a general trend with most clubs, membership is dropping and less younger people are joining photography clubs. I think we need to address this as it's making it more difficult for photographic societies to survive. In this day and age photography is as popular than ever. Most people use a phone or tablet for their photography and share their photographs electronically

rather than print them. Looking to the future I think we need to find a way of encouraging these younger photographers to join our club for a mutual benefit.

We are making efforts to advertise our existence by cooperating with local groups who share a desire to benefit the community. These are notably the 'Crewe Life' website and Cheshire East Council who have promised to credit us for the service we're providing them with. The council are giving us an opportunity to photograph their community projects and have suggested that they'll host an exhibition of the photographs we take for them later in the year.

This year we will be celebrating our 70th. anniversary and plans are under way for a meal, photo book and possibly an exhibition to mark the occasion. So now is a good time for members to submit three photographs and a short biography for inclusion in the book.

I'd like to finish this report by giving a big thank you to John Royle who has spent many hours administrating the Chairman's and Competition Secretary roles. I'm sure all members would agree that he's done a wonderful job. Both roles are more than enough for one person. As you know John would be relieving of the Chairman's role giving someone else the exciting opportunity to steer Crewe Photographic Society into the future. It would be great if someone would volunteer for this rewarding role.

Have a good summer and don't forget you can keep in touch with fellow members by our Web, Flickr, Facebook and twitter sites.

#### **9. PROGRAMME SECRETARY'S REPORT by John Royle on behalf of Ian Stevenson**

Ian Stevenson was not present so John Royle gave the Programme Secretary's report.

Ian once again has created a varied and interesting programme which includes a mix of good speakers, members contributions and even more competitions than last season. the programme is almost complete. The battle with Sandbach still needs to be confirmed.

Wallace Baxter asked if our room would be suitable for inviting other clubs for interclub competitions that we're going to host. Sharon Barton and Paul Hill thought it wasn't and Sharon said she'll investigate finding an alternative venue. She was also evaluating various PA systems.

#### **10. WEBMASTER'S REPORT by Peter Robinson**

It's good to see that our website is receiving a steady increase in the number of hits. Being the first page accessed the home page is the most visited followed by the programme, monthly theme, news items and results.

The homepage is the notice board for current CPS news and events. It's regularly kept up to date by John and I'd like to thank him for keeping it up to date in a prompt manor.

This year the site has been updated with a more user friendly upload feature requested by members. So it's a lot easier to upload your images for comments and advice. We've also added a front page slideshow in which we display a random selection of images from last season. This shows website visitors a typical standard of members work.

The Monthly Theme gives members the opportunity to challenge themselves by photographing a fixed theme, then get the views of other members. It's been encouraging to see how members interpret the themes so differently.

I would like to thank Ian McNab for his continued support with the routine maintenance of the site. We are looking into ways of improving its performance and security.

Don't forget that the Web, Flickr, Facebook and twitter sites are open all summer so you can keep up to date with events and keep in touch with fellow members through these mediums.

## 11. **COMPETITION SECRETARY'S REPORT by John Royle**

*This part of the report was presented at the AGM evening, the second part published on the website before the AGM.*

My written report covers our performance in external competitions and the website has all the results from the entire season of competitions.

Here I would like to reiterate that we have to change to 1600x1200p for all PDIs. Unless someone would like to propose that we enter NO externals next year and we have a majority vote for the proposal? *There was no proposal not to enter external competitions.*

I will also write into the rules that only best three scores in the portrait comps (aggregate) count towards the PotY.

Are you happy to continue using "Best 3 " from the Portrait Trophies? *(Response was YES)*

We don't force people to enter Nature, neither should we force them to enter a portrait comp. 3 scores is perhaps sufficient enticement – and we don't say that of Nature either.

I also propose that we reduce the number of 18s in the Nature prints section if there are less than half as many nature as general section entries.

The job of competition secretary is a big one, especially since we now use PDIs in all competitions it is very hard to divide up, but I am looking at ways I can save time. I am going to leave any images with incorrect colour spaces etc for Dicentra to correct. In fact next year Dicentra will be correcting EVERY image since they will need reducing to 1400 x 1050 – I have not tried this yet! (Experiments conducted the following week resulted in members' approval with submitting 1600p images and letting Dicentra convert them to 1400p

The other area where I spend a lot of time is in selection. I hope that, by having three assistants, that work will be eased.

Good luck next season.

*This part of the report was published on the website prior to the AGM*

This year saw 21 members entering PDIs and 13 entering prints. That doesn't tell the full story though; a number of members were not able to complete a full season of entries. Strong work was seen from new members and we would doubtless have had a really great season had everyone been able to compete. Having said that – we saw a step up in energy, variety and quality from our stalwarts that had us awestruck. These positives helped greatly in keeping our heads above water in external competitions.

The change we made to the rules in 2015, allowing an extra nature section in the prints, was not well supported, with about half the entry we saw last year. We need to keep an eye on this as a low entry means that those who do enter may automatically gain higher marks and give an imbalance between the two colour print competitions. Perhaps it would be better to average the marks between the two when we compute the Photographer of the Year Award.

The change in 2016 of allowing only new work into the Portrait Competitions in a current year saw a big fall in entries, though since members can subsequently use the entered images in the next season the change will take a further year to work through. We were also only counting "best 3" from this competition in the PotY award and this may have had its toll.

Nevertheless our smaller band of competitors provided us with such quality work that we held up well in all our external competitions; versus Sandbach, Alsager and Nantwich, in the Great British Cup, the L&CPU Knock-Out, Club Annuals and the North Cheshire PS Challenges. We did not enter the Chester Print Competition this year.

In our own competitions the successes of individual members is detailed in the Awards report and in the results published on the website.

1600p x 1200p

One change that we do have to make is to switch to 1600 x 1200 for the PDIs – it would just be too difficult to have to seek new versions of all the work selected for external competitions. We will not actually see a benefit as our projector is 1400p x 1050p.

Some concern was expressed that low marks may discourage beginners but the Committee did not agree that restricting the range would help. If we have beginners in the competition I do indicate that to the judge and ask that they are given an appropriate comment. I also start the season with asking for a range 12-20. This range is usually not used – our work is so good the judge rarely goes below 13. Once the first League comp is over I modify my instructions to say what the lowest mark has been – this is to try and bring in some parity between the marks for the League competitions.

It might be noted that members have the club Flickr site, Forum and Facebook on which they can post pictures for comment and that all important “seeing work as others see it”. We might also usefully spend more time during meetings discussing competition work if members would like to do that.

Inter-Club Competitions.

We won against Sandbach (539 to 489) but lost, narrowly, to Alsager (484 to 491), whilst Nantwich’s victory over us, by 1 mark showed how closely matched we are.

Great British Cup

The outstanding thing was Wallace Baxter gaining a bronze medal for “Splits on the Beam”. We came 6th in the Small Clubs section. The nature section is not for club entries and next year I propose to make no attempt “make up” the entry to 10 images just to get a club score.

L&CPU Competitions

We came 11th out of over 40 clubs (and 900 works) in the PDIs and 10th out of 29 clubs and 635 works in the prints.

North Cheshire Challenges

6th out of 13 in the prints and 8th out of 16 in the PDI KO. The entries for this usually popular competition were down considerably this year.

Although these external competitions represent a lot of extra work and travelling they give members a view of how their work stands up regionally and nationally. It is a pity that so few members are able to get to the judging and exhibitions to appreciate this more fully.

In the end competitions are a bit of a two-edged sword; encouraging some types of work at the expense of others and perhaps attaching too much importance to surface qualities but this tends not to influence us as a club too much. We enjoy seeing the work on display which represent a quality of presentation we can aspire to and a variety of meaning and content which we can value.

## **12. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT by John Royle**

I began my 2015 report expressing concern over membership numbers. The situation is now more acute, as you know. So, I start by thanking you all for supporting us this year and ask that you please continue to do that next season.

I would also like to thank those of you who are helping with the club Forums, Flickr and Facebook (not to mention the Twitter accounts) by using these facilities to both post your own pictures and also to comment on those of others. Since 2012, when the website was started I looked to these things as really useful facilities and I think we are only now beginning to really move on with them. If you have not looked at or signed up to these things, please do. Everyone is welcome, don't be put off by the fact that others are more familiar with it. You are all equally entitled to join in.

Next, more thank-yous....

To Peter Robinson who has so enthusiastically taken over from Tom as Secretary – and also continuing with his role as Webmaster. As webmaster he has introduced innovations but has also done a lot of work behind the scenes with the management of the website and we must also thank Ian McNab for continuing to support us with the website as an extremely well-informed backroom boy.

Next Sharon who has negotiated our accommodation here successfully and avoided an even bigger increase in costs that we may have faced.

Ian Stevenson especially for taking on the job of booking judges as well as the speakers.

My two comp sec assts Ian Whiston and Dolores Williams who help with the selection of images for external competitions. They will be joined next year by Dave Barton.

Dave Lucas; another season of helping set up and helping to manage the print competitions so ably. Paul Hill, for taking over management of refreshments after Peter and Vicky were unable to attend meetings.

And to everyone else on the committee, whether you have a specific role or not, thanks for being the voice of the membership and supporting their interests. A special mention of Martin Smith who started with us on the C this year – he speaks on your behalf in a very disarming way and you should be proud of him.

Thanks to those of you who volunteered to speak to us, especially Stephen Coyne who gave us an entire evening of fascinating journeying. I think we are growing in confidence with the Members' Evenings and there is great potential there.

Next, Chairman's Choice. This is now a very established award – one which is a recognition of a particular person's talents, not necessarily competition success. Sometimes I am still wondering about who the recipient should be right until the end, but this year I decided early on and I think the moment was when a particular picture appeared as an entry because it told me something important about this member, that they were not content with mastering one type of photography. It is Martin McGing.

Crewe PS is good at sharing skills, respecting each other's work and enjoying each other's company. Long may we continue to do that, let us hope that the present financial problems work out. I don't actually think we want 80 – 100 members – just enough to comfortably pay the bills – not too much to ask, is it?

John Royle – AGM April 2017

**13. AOB.**

Wallace Baxter stood up and gave a vote of thanks to our Chairman and Competition Secretary for his hard work and devotion in making Crewe Photographic Society such an enjoyable and successful society to be a member of.

John thanked Wallace for his tribute. Then he reiterated that we have several under used internet resources that members could take advantage off. These are accessible over the summer for members to keep in touch with each other and to keep up to date with topical events. Sharon Barton reminded members that there was a Dropbox folder open to accept submissions for the 70th. Anniversary Photobook.