

Crewe Photographic Society

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

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.

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