

Herefordshire Photographic Society - Est 1885
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Via Zoom
Minutes of Meeting held on 4th September 2022

Members present:

Phil Chapman, John Hardwick, Clive Handscombe, Amanda Apps, Cliff Spooner, Roy Harris.

The Meeting opened at 7.30pm.

1. Apologies: No apologies were received
2. The Minutes of AGM held on 17th September 2021 were viewed and accepted as a true record. Proposed: Clive Handscombe Seconded: Cliff Spooner.

3. Reports from Officers – Finance Report

The Treasurer reported that the Income and Expenditure account's opening balance stood at £1894.87p (year ended 31st March 2022) with income from Membership Fees amounting to £560.00p, London Camera Exchange, £75.00, and Visitor Fees amounting to £8.00p. Expenditure covered speakers/presentations amounting to £192.90p, Breinton Hall Rent, £112.50p, insurance, £78.80p, Subscriptions, £27.98p, the Club's Zoom account, £86.34p, printing, £31.00p and equipment purchases £364.97p with sundries and refreshments at £13.92p. These figures reflected a loss for the year of £294.19p, with additional funds being allocated to purchasing equipment this year, hence the loss. Referring to the HPS Accounting Statement since 31st March 2022, the Treasurer continued that income received to date was solely in the form of London Camera Exchange's Sponsorship but that Annual Membership Subscriptions were now due. Expenditure to-date consisted of Breinton Village Hall Hire, £112.50p, HPS Zoom Account, £100.73p, and two guest speakers, Paul Lack, £40.00p and Nigel Forster, £115.00p. Therefore the Club's financial position was £1302.17p in the current bank account with 28p

cash in hand. The Treasurer concluded that the Club needed to acquire as many members as possible to pull it back into the black.

Proposed: Phil Chapman Seconded: Clive Handscombe

4. Chairman's Report

The Chairman reported that this was his third Report at an AGM, and although dates had changed due to the pandemic and other factors, that things were more or less back to a normal pattern of meetings with our last AGM taking place last September and also virtual. The Chairman continued that although the landscape had changed hugely in this time, and the pandemic had thrown up challenges, it had also offered the club new opportunities and reiterated some of the comments presented previously, reminding members of the position of the Society in Herefordshire's history.

"As Chair, I had taken over when the Society was embarking on a period of transition and uncertainty. Indeed, we have things to learn from history – the club has had 'transitions' in previous years, mirroring changes to how we do photography. At the start of the 20th century the need for a wagon full of equipment diminished thus attracting a membership across a wider cross-section of the population. In the late '20's/'30s there was a similar transition when cellulose film (ie 120/220 film known as half frame became commonly available, and later 35mm film and the Leica was introduced, and then in the 1960s was the opportunities afforded by affordable single lens reflex cameras and at all these points the Society almost folded.

We have had transitions in this century – first of all with the fundamental change to digital photography, recently adopted by mobile phones.

At all these points there was increased automation that perhaps resulted in loss of members, but followed by a resurgence as we found that our Art form requires rather more depth and understanding in its development than is immediately perceived.

Undoubtedly, we are only now beginning to realise the limitations of social media, and indeed, starting to recognise that rather than a panacea it can be a threat to our way of life".

In 2019 the Chairman decided on a fairly traditional programme, without formal competitions but replaced by critique evenings, wanting as many members as possible to be able to engage. Members had to be focussed on the images at hand, and thus adapted guidelines originally set up by the American AOP, and have since seen other clubs adopting similar procedures. This is not to say that some simplification can't be made. 'Away days' outside the regular meeting schedule have also from time to time supported the critiques. The introduction of

Zoom presentations – both to our homes and also broadcast at our live face to face meetings – was an aspect impossible just 2 or 3 years ago. Indeed, there is no reason why we cannot introduce a speaker from Hong Kong, Australia, US or even Albania..., though the costs have not reduced. The Club maintained a stimulating menu of events from which members took part; despite Covid we have enjoyed presentations (face to face and online), critiques, technical demonstrations, and taken part in external 'battles'. The Chairman suggested that the club critique system is a lot 'fairer' than is typical at other clubs who rely on single 'judges' whose personal preferences are frequently all too apparent.... And continued that he felt that our critiques are not 'judged' but critiques positively with an immediate chance for many members to comment and the author to give an instant riposte. The Club intends to continue its Zoom critiques due to its ease of use whilst not entirely dismissing outside assessment that can also stimulate club members in so many ways.

The Chairman thanked Amanda for her careful appraisals each month, sometimes joined by Cliff, and also thank all those members who might not appreciate his own quick cropping/contrast enhancement/sharpening of images.

The Chairman continued that there had been a challenging time for our Society that has such a long history but thanked friends who have formed our committee and all who have contributed to our camaraderie. We share the organisation – Amanda keeps us in order with her secretarial duties and newsletters, and we know she is developing her skills and following external courses and qualifications. I do hope that we can continue to support her in those aims. Clive has done some sterling work in developing our website and supporting the critique process. His photography is always interesting, and sometimes we do need to stand back and look at what he is really saying. And we are all tempered by the sensible John who cares for and ensures our financial probity and governance propriety.

The Chairman closed his report by thanking everyone present for their solid support which was much appreciated and reamarked that new blood would be welcome to join the committee, contribute towards its future direction, and recognise where opportunities lie. The Chairman looked forward to seeing members in the coming year.

5. Next Year's Planned Programme

The Chairman outlined the current Club's programme, which contained a combination of outings, talks, demonstrations, Club Nights, challenges and Battles. A visit to Brinsop Court Manor House and Barn in Herefordshire was also suggested by the Chairman. Cliff Spooner mentioned that he would be happy for club members to visit a few acres of his woodland at Knockerhiill Wood – perhaps combining an afternoon and evening bar-b-q? This would be explored more fully.

6. Committee (and any more volunteers)

Current Committee Members all confirmed that they would remain in post. Cliff Spooner added that he was happy to help out when he could.

7. Fees 2022/23

There would be no change to the Club Annual Membership Fee remaining at £40.00p per annum. The Chairman remarked that this fee offered club members a comprehensive and competitive membership package, which included all refreshments.

8. AOB

Cliff Spooner added that there should be a push on memberships more and to email members who have expressed an interest in the club. The Chairman added that anyone who had expressed an interest in the club and supplied their email address was indeed added to the Club's membership email list and included in any emails about club events that were sent out. As memberships were due on 1st September each year – if those on the list did not respond to an email reminder by October then their names would be removed from the club mailing list by either John or Amanda. This ensures that the list of members is up to date.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm