

Minutes of the AGM Stratford Photo Group

Bishopton Centre 9 June 2015 commencing at 7.47pm

1.1 Apologies: Rob Shaw

1.2 Attendees: 18

2.0 Minutes of the Meeting of 10 June 2014 - Presented, accepted and signed

3.0 Matters Arising - None that could be remembered

4.0 Chairman's Report (Original)

Once again we have had a full programme aimed at meeting the needs of a wide range of (photographic) interests, meeting the needs of both current and potential members. Many thanks to Bill for his hard work in putting it together but we still need input from the membership.

We have over the last few years been putting together a committee made up of people who are all working hard to build a strong club and this year there have been a series of important new initiatives which go a long way towards this.

- We now have a regular newsletter edited by Dave Buckland which will reach its 10th edition since it started in March last year. Dave is also getting regular items in the Herald about Club activities.
- Perhaps the most important development has been the website which was set up by Irene and David Howard and now managed by David. For the first time in our history we have a website which is updated on a weekly basis. Without doubt this has become a vital means of communicating with the membership and again potential members.
- Hand in hand with this we will see a restructuring of the membership data in the coming year which will help us improve individual communications with members.
- We have a club made up predominantly of active photographers all of whom, regardless of experience, are striving to be better. In the 3 merit competitions we had 472 different images. In the panels competitions we had 49 panels. Also a further 189 images in the annual cups. Many thanks to Malcolm for his work in managing the print sections of the Merit competitions as well as the Annual Panels Competition.
- As a consequence of the healthy entry to the Club competitions we are the current MCPF Small Club Champions in both prints and projected images. We achieved our best ever performance by coming 8th overall in prints.
- The new print stand, made by David Howard, has proved to be very successful and is the envy other clubs in the area. Not even Smethwick have one that is capable of showing a panel of 3 50x40cm prints so well done David.
- The core of any committee are the Secretary, Treasurer and membership secretary and SPG's is no exception. My thanks go to Rob Shaw who is leaving the committee (to be replaced by Phil Welch) and to Stewart who is taking over as Chairman. I also welcome Irene who is stepping up to take over from Stewart as secretary.
- I will continue in the role of Competitions Secretary and will work to promote the image of the club through the PAGB Cup, PAGB Print Cup and the MCPF Club events such as MIDPHOT 2016, MCPF Championships and Photofolio. Alongside this we also will continue with our Interclub competitions against Evesham and Studley, Coventry and Leamington. We will also look to find alternative opposition to replace Sphinx and Daventry.
- The Thursday sessions have once again proved to be a valuable extension of the club activities. Many of the members who have attended have shown significant progress in their work. It is clear that the critique facilities that these sessions provide are a most important aspect in enabling this. Unfortunately, at present, there does not seem to be a way of providing this during the evenings due to the difficulty in finding affordable accommodation.

- The biggest blow to SPG since I've been a member is the loss of John Harding. John was one of us. He came to photography late in life but took it on with a single minded determination that marked his working life. Very quickly after he joined us he won the Beginners Section and went on to gain National and international distinctions. He will be irreplaceable. Trish and his family are very keen that he is remembered by SPG and will sponsor a trophy in his name. It will be awarded to the person who reflects John's approach as a member of SPG. The John Harding Trophy will be awarded to the person who has the greatest success in Club competitions through the year (ie Merits, Panels, and Annual Cups). It will be open to all members so the success can be either in the Beginners or the Advanced sections.

It is a truism that any organisation must be greater than the sum of its parts and all members are a part of what we do. One of the huge advantages of a club like ours is that we are all accessible and talk to each other particularly on the subject of improving our Group. As the club grows, as surely it will, it is vital that we maintain the friendly, welcoming, non-elitist, ethos that we have gained in recent years

5.0 Treasurers Report

5.1 Cliff Armstrong reported that an overall Profit of £36.91 had resulted from a total income of £1,653.75 and associated Expenditure of £1616.84, leaving us with a Bank Balance of £1,329.45

Subscription income of £967 had resulted from a membership of 32 members, and visitors to meetings. The workshops total of £392.2 included the takings from the Chris Bradbury, Bob Brind-Surch events and associated raffles. Total speaker costs for all meetings £408
Room hire costs £489 are based on £21 per meeting, plus a £3 surcharge for heating in the winter months

Michael Robertson-Smith asked if the funds were in a strong enough position to cope with replacement of the projector and laptop which potentially could cost £2,500-3000 if required. A discussion took place over the potential availability of Town Trust Arts Grants which could be awarded to organisations which benefit Stratford town dwellers. The majority of club members are resident in Stratford so we would probably qualify - this will be reviewed in future committee meetings.

Adoption of Accounts - proposed Irene Jutton, Seconded Malcolm Ranieri- Vote Carried - Unanimous

5.2 Set Subscription Rates for 2015-6

Cliff highlighted that whilst a small profit had been made the additional costs of £140 for the excellent new website would mean that an increase in subs to at least £35 per head was required.

Dick added that he had raised £75 from the sale of mounts from John Harding.

After a discussion of options Michael Robertson-Smith proposed a rate of £40 per head seconded by Andrew Dow. Vote carried unanimously. This would help to underpin the funds with the current membership numbers. A membership of 45 would significantly improve the situation

6.0 Programme 2015-6 -

Bill Gourlay presented a Draft programme for 2015-6 and asked for members suggestions as to content. He highlighted the 22nd September meeting as a Project Night where either individuals or small groups could define a project which would be reviewable throughout the year leading up to a final Presentation. This would encourage communication between members

Bill had spoken to Mark Williamson Chief Photographer for The Herald who was willing to speak to the club but would be available on a short notice basis. Dick suggested Steven Le Prevost FRPS AFIAP MPAGB a Fotospeed lecture, as a potential highlight speaker. It was agreed that a couple of highlight speakers should be obtained for the Programme, as the Chris Bradbury and Bob Brind-Surch events had proven financially successful.

Peter Gilbert offered assistance to Bill in filling in the Programme

7.0 Library Exhibition - 21st Sept- 3rd Oct - The Library space has been booked - Dick will contact members during the late summer for prints and assistance

8.0 Election of Officers and Committee Members

The following members were elected as officers and committee members:

Committee Nominations

Chairman	Stewart Band LRPS
Secretary	Irene Jutton
Treasurer/ Vice Chairman	Cliff Armstrong
Programme Secretary	Bill Gourlay
Competitions Secretary	Dick Prior ARPS BPE5 EFIAP
Webmaster	David P Howard
Publicity Manager	Dave Buckland
Membership Secretary	Phil Welch
Member without Portfolio	Malcolm Ranieri FRPS MPAGB AFIAP BPE5
Deputy Webmaster	Peter Gilbert
Member	Michael Robertson-Smith
Member	Mary Kirkby

Proposed Dave Buckland, Seconded Phil Welch - All 21 attendees in favour

- Stewart firstly paid tribute to Dick Prior for his 10 years stewardship of the Club as Chairman, where his commitment, tutelage, and competitive hunger had repositioned the club from a beginners club to a much more competitive club, recently winning the MCPF Small Club Award. He had witnessed a significant increase in the standard of work over a long period partly as result of the digital era, but mainly through the emphasis on coaching and participation in competitions. The recent successes achieved by Dick Prior, John Harding and Malcolm Ranieri in gaining their FIAP awards are a demonstration of this
- He stated that his aim was to build on the strong foundation, with a view to attracting more members at "all levels" which would improve the financial position and enable a more ambitious approach to be taken on the staging of exhibitions rather than the current Library project. "I believe Stratford as an International Tourist Venue is an ideal centre for Photographic Excellence where we could one day stage The Stratford Upon Avon International"
- He then stated that he would like to see a coterie of LRPS's and a few ARPS's in the club and maybe Dick could get an FRPS! - ALL POSSIBLE!
- It was up to the committee and members to achieve these ideals, through creating a lively programme catering for photography in it's many genres and applications - the inclusion of outdoor visits and activities, and hands on practical nights. The development of links with Permajet and also the Arts sector in Stratford would potentially be of benefit to the club

10.0 Any Other Business

It was agreed that Honorary Life Membership be awarded at the first meeting of the new season to founder members Derek Freeman and Bert Brand who joined in 1947 . These gentlemen are in their late 80's but still have an interest in photography. Cliff Armstrong and Dave Buckland will visit Derek and Bert and make the necessary arrangements

Proposed Andrew Dow, Seconded Mark Kirkby - Vote Carried Unanimously

Ian Bailey current MCPF President is an Honorary Life member of the Club

11.0 Date of Next Meeting - Tuesday 7th June 2016, 7.45pm - Bishopton Community Centre

Meeting closed at 9.35pm and 40 secs for Coffee and Cake provided by The outgoing Chairman Dick Prior - Thanks!



Presentation of Awards and Cups