

# 2017 AGM Minutes

## Brighton and Hove Camera Club

2 May 2017

### Welcome and Apologies

Apologies received from Damon Hart

### Minutes of the AGM of 3 May 2016 and Matters Arising

There are no matters arising from the last AGM

### President's Review

**Paul Stillman LRPS, Club President, gave the club's 126th annual review.**

"It has been a privilege as well as a pleasure to serve as your club's president for the last two years and it has been from the centre of the club that I have learned how many people give up their time, often quite a lot of it, to make it work, willingly and without reward. I suppose this last is not strictly true, there is a huge satisfaction in seeing something you have worked on play out, usually very well, and paradoxically on the rare occasion that things do go awry the resolution can even more pleasing. I know we say this very frequently, but if you do have the time to help, you will not be disappointed.

At the heart of any club is its Program, and ours is by any standard excellent. Presenters have shown us a wide variety of subjects from Advertising to Wildlife, and have included some of the best and internationally renowned experts in their field. We are the envy of many other clubs, both locally and nationally, the result of a lot of hard work and persistence.

Our competitions too run smoothly and efficiently, especially if you take a brief moment to ponder the logistics of organising and displaying them. We were concerned that entries were falling, particularly in the print section, and have introduced two changes this year in the hope of making them more attractive. The first was to add an appraisal only category to the usual scoring system, and the second was to introduce more external commentators, in the hope of attracting a wider range of subjects and thus increasing numbers of entries. Both have I believe had an effect although not without extra work from the competition team and inevitably some unpredictability from the appraisers. On the one hand, we have seen a little of what is highly regarded beyond our own boundaries, but on the other perhaps the constraints of people used to very different standards than ours.

We have always tried to mount an annual exhibition of our work, to display at least to the local community what we do. This has been at a variety of venues and always incurs a lot of work and considerable costs. This year we have been fortunate I think, to use MADE in the centre of Brighton, where we held our Christmas party, and where we have enjoyed friendly helpful relations with the owners and it has to be said an attractive price.

The Entry Group is another area of success. In a large club with always upwards of 100

members it can be daunting to join and to sit alone wondering what is expected, when and how to participate. So the Entry Group was conceived as one of, but undoubtedly has become the most successful solution to this by offering a forum where new members could meet, share their skills and learn from the more experienced members. It has occasionally been almost the victim of its own success, with people reluctant to leave, and established members recognising what is on offer and attending the meetings. Even so, it has been a great success which I hope will continue to grow.

With time and growing confidence many members express an interest in obtaining distinctions from the recognised authorities in photography, especially the Royal Photographic Society. We are fortunate to have amongst our number many who have achieved this, and can lead by example, as well as RPS panel members who can provide more specific guidance.

Despite all these (in the main) positive reflections the club has had to wrestle with a further problem, that of membership numbers. Most camera clubs experienced a substantial rise in popularity with acceptance of digital photography a decade or more ago, and many have seen falling membership in recent years, possibly related to the rise of social media and mobile phone based cameras. Our total membership numbers have reflected this, at least to a small degree, creating the obvious concern that dwindling numbers would reduce the revenue we need to maintain the quality of the attractions we provide. I am pleased to report that whilst numbers have declined by small quantities in previous years, this trend had been reversed in this current year and our total membership has risen modestly. It would be rash to draw long term conclusions from this, although it does not seem to be reflected amongst many other clubs I have knowledge of in our area. We have reluctantly raised the membership subscription by what I hope is a modest amount, still representing I believe remarkable value when considered against the benefits it brings.

Related to this, I note that year on year we lose a proportion of our membership who choose not to renew, but maintain our total by recruiting new. I often wonder why this is and what we could do to reduce the loss. Obviously there are many instances of people moving away or changing their circumstances, but I would ask that if any member chooses not to renew next year or whenever, for other reasons, please let us know why. A brief word with any on the committee will suffice, if what we offer does not meet your expectations, when we don't know what's wrong, how can we fix it?

We continue to participate in, and enjoy success in the competitions held by the Surrey Photographic Alliance, the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain, the London Salon of Photography, and others. Probably not as much as our collective talent suggests we could, although this year we have supplied images of impressive size to hoardings around the new building works near the seafront, as well as members holding their own exhibitions as part of the Brighton Biennial.

A website is without doubt an essential part of any club's interaction with its members, and beyond. During this year we felt ours had become dated, and a team of people set about a total remake. The result is apparent; in particular the pages most of us use most like the club's calendar. Other sections have taken a little longer, although we have now a way to promote members own work both through our own club galleries, as well as your pages. This I hope will continue to diversify, and to be more used. The website team set themselves a suitably modest goal from the outset – to create the best camera club website in the country. They may well have succeeded.

The front of house, projection team, catering and archive people are all further examples of the behind the scenes help we receive, although not always with the thanks they deserve. Is there any amongst us who hasn't winced when the list to put out chairs, clear them up again, or simply help with half time refreshments comes around? One of my tasks as president has been to hold the keys to the hall, and every Tuesday I endeavour to be there early enough to unlock, and to witness the steady stream of helpers preparing the hall, putting up the screen and print panels, and the many other vital tasks to make things happen. Looking forward, we recently held an Extraordinary General Meeting to pass resolutions necessary to modernise the workings of the club. Some were purely administrative, concerned with the requirements of our bank, but we also added the option of increasing the number of Vice Presidents from one up to three, spreading the load a little more evenly and hopefully attracting new people and new ideas.

So finally I am indebted to the committee, Steve Boyle our Vice President, Tracy Wadey as secretary, John Francis as Treasurer, as well as Tony Bowall, Jo Teasdale and David Gerrard. Three are standing down today, John, Jo and David. Together they have contributed huge benefits to the club, and although they will all undoubtedly be missed I have a feeling their talents will not be entirely lost. I am particularly indebted to them, and to many others amongst our membership, who have deputised for my duties in recent weeks when I have been unable to attend due to illness. I have been saddened not to have been able to finish this season as I expected, not the least of which has been to miss some excellent club events, but I take this opportunity to sincerely thank all those who have sent their good wishes and offers of support. That has meant a great deal to me. I had intended to step down today, as is usual after a term of two years, but the constitutional requirements of presidency are necessarily restrictive, and I have therefore offered to continue for a further year.

It may be the end of this season, but we still have the summer Program to look forward to, and the prospect of another fantastic year to come. My thanks to you all, and to the members who fill the hall week after week."

**Paul Stillman LRPS**

### **Review This Year's program**

Jerry Webb presented a review this past seasons program highlights.

### **Treasurer's Report**

**John Francis, Club Treasurer, presented the clubs financial position.**

The Interim Accounts were displayed to the membership. **These were passed by show of hands vote.**

"Subscriptions are up this year. We have the equivalent of 126 full members, which is an increase of 18 on last year. There is no room for complacency, though as we know from past experience that 25% of our current membership will not renew in September. That means that we have to work hard at recruiting more members just to stand still, before

we add to the membership.

Administration costs are a little lower than last year, although we have spent money on subscription collection service that we now use and which enables people to join quickly and easily; we even have a few people who have joined and never come to meetings!

We have bought a new set of loud speakers as the old ones broke and have bought a new screen cover as the existing one is starting to wear out. We have also updated some of the software on the Club laptop.

As in previous years, the receipts for all our expenditure are available, if members would like to inspect them.

Every year the Church increases its charge for using this hall and we don't know what they will charge next season. With inflation going up, we may see a bigger increase than in previous years. The ELC haven't increased their charges for several years so we are overdue an increase there.

Looking to the future, we are researching a new projector as the present one has served us well, but is starting to introduce various colour variations that don't always suit the pictures being shown.

Our biggest item of expenditure, is the Program and we need to be able to afford to pay the fees charged by some of our speakers in order to offer a Program that is attractive to members. Bearing in mind that our membership cost is, probably, one of the most reasonable in the region, with other clubs charging a lot more for Programs that don't compare with ours, the Committee spent some time debating the various options for meeting the speakers' costs. We considered putting the subs up to £75 per year, which would have made it a lot easier for the Program group to book speakers, but concluded that, in these straightened times, that would be unreasonable. We will therefore retain the current system of charging £3 for some evenings, where the speaker is of such quality that their higher fee is justified, and we are therefore proposing to increase the subscriptions by £2 to £54. **Passed be show of hands vote.**

In accordance with the Club constitution, the accounts will be audited, after the year end, when they are all complete and Bob Webzell has very kindly agreed to do this again. If anyone would like to have a look at the records, they are here for you to see."

## **Nominations for Committee and Confirmation of Officials for 2017/2018**

The following positions on the club committee are to be decided by the membership.

**President** Was elected by show of hands vote

In the absence of any candidates **Paul Stillman LRPS** has asked to continue in the role of Club President for another year. **Elected**

**Vice-Presidents** Two VP's were chosen by secret ballot

**Note.** *As per the change in the constitution there can now be three VP's. One VP is already incumbent (Steve Boyle). Therefore two were select by secret ballot.*

<b><u>Proposed</u></b>	<b><u>Nominated \ Seconded</u></b>	
Nick Eastham	Jo Teasdale	
	David Gerrard	<b><u>Elected</u></b>
Claude Lester	Sumitra Sribhashyam	
	Colleen Slater	
Jerry Webb	Tracy Wadey	
	Steve Boyle	<b><u>Elected</u></b>

**Treasurer** Was elected by show of hands vote

<b><u>Proposed</u></b>	<b><u>Nominated \ Seconded</u></b>	
Colleen Slater	Claude Lester	
	John Francis	<b><u>Elected</u></b>

**Committee Officer** Was elected by show of hands vote

<b><u>Proposed</u></b>	<b><u>Nominated \ Seconded</u></b>	
Allison Benjamin	Steve Boyle	
	Nick Eastham	<b><u>Elected</u></b>

### **Entry Group's Images from this Season**

Audrey Marshall ARPS and Jo Teasdale FRPS will present a video of Entry groups achievements and highlights for season.

### **Summer Program**

Jo Teasdale FRPS will highlight the 2017 summer program and activities.

### **Treasure Hunt Awards**

Maggi Tillotson ARPS to present the images and results of this year's treasure hunt.

### **Next Year's Program**

Jerry Webb to present the comings seasons program highlights.

### **Book Sale Auction**

The club library is being auctioned off. Please see the appended list along with guide\reserve prices. Many of the books are first edition or signed by the author.

<u>Title</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Additional Information</u>	<u>Reserve Price</u>	<u>Sold For</u>
<b>The Stones Remain</b>	Megalithic sites in Britain	Andrew Rafferty	-	-	£2
<b>Voyage to St. Kilda</b>	1998	Monica Weller	Signed	-	£5
<b>Girton People</b>	Portraits of students, 1990s	Anne Crabbe		-	£1.50
<b>20th Century Photography</b>	From the collection of the Museum Ludwig, Cologne.	-	750 pages	-	£5
<b>Toth Istvan</b>	Portraits, 1965 - 96	-	-	-	£2
<b>David Bailey's book of photography</b>	How to do it, but illustrated with his work. 1981	-	-	-	£5
<b>Photographs as fine art</b>	A collection, 1987, including some classics	-	-	-	£8
<b>Gipsy Camera</b>	-	Tony Boxall	Signed, 1995	-	£2
<b>Personal View</b>	Collection of his work	Snowdon	1979	-	£2
<b>The Treasury Project</b>	HM Treasury, Whitehall	Mark Power	Signed, 2004	<b>£100</b>	<b>nb</b>
<b>Shadows of Change</b>	Industrial landscapes	Leigh Preston	Signed, 1993	-	£11
<b>Portfolio One</b>	From the RPS collection	-	2007	-	£7
<b>The Edwardian Eye</b>	1871-1956	Andrew Pitcain-Knowles	Signed by his son Richard, 2009	-	£3
<b>The Shipping Forecast</b>	Coastal photographs	Mark Power, 1996	Signed	<b>£75</b>	<b>nb</b>
<b>Portraits</b>	A compilation of "The World's Top Photographers"	-	2004	-	£10
<b>At The Water's Edge</b>	Natural History	Stephen Dalton	1989	-	£2
<b>In my Mind's Eye</b>	Landscape Photography	Charlie Waite	2002	-	£10