

WPS AGM MAY 29th 2018 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Taking on the role of President of this vibrant society has been a great honour and the year has turned out to be one of much activity and great success for our popular Society which reached its membership cap of 200 in the first month.

This year has built upon the work done by our previous Committee's, carrying forward many of the new initiatives intended to address concerns and improve the experience of belonging to one of the largest photographic societies in the south. The Society has been fortunate in once again having a very hard working and dedicated Committee who have planned and coordinated the year. I am extremely grateful to all your commitment to the Society.

It is said that change is the one constant in life and the Society is no different. Interest in the AV Group had waned in recent years, culminating in the sad decision that 2016-17 season would be its last.

Tony Smith introduced a new Smartphone Special Interest Group in for this season which attracted a good attendance in the early part of the year but this also diminished as members became proficient with the Apps and techniques of Smartphonography. This has led to the decision that this group will disband this month but Tony will continue to promote Smartphonography in future workshops. Thank you Tony for your commitment to the Society in promoting this new medium.

The **Photo Hub** which provided a forum to discuss all aspects of photography has been a victim of the popularity of the varied workshops and Training which we offer to members. An informal vote at Christmas concluded this initiative is no longer required so it has been discontinued.

Building on the successful Beginners Group we have this year started a new Improvers' Group, under the leadership of **Brian Holloway** and **Eric Blake**. The group enjoys a monthly challenge followed by a critical review of their work at a subsequent meeting. This popular group has seen the standard of photography steadily improve over the year and this is evident in recent successes in the WPS league competitions and print exhibition.

Programme – We are mindful that many of our members are primarily interested in attending a varied programme of internal and external speakers. I believe this year's lineup provided informative, entertaining and inspiring presentations, several of which I will remember for a long time to come.

Highlights for me included a welcome return of Vivica Kok (iPhone photography and processing), Matt Emmett (Industrial heritage), Adrian Dennis (Sports press photography), and Chris Button (Local landscapes). The season finished on a high with our final external speaker, Vanda Ralevska captivating her audience with an ability to find beauty and

inspiration in the British countryside. Sometimes we need to be reminded by somebody born overseas just what a glorious country full of photographic potential the United Kingdom is.

I am also indebted to our own members who entertained the Society. **Paul Davison's** presentation took us from ship breaking in Bangladesh to ancient kingdoms in Columbia and the whale hunters of Lamalera. He hosted an evening which for many was the highlight of the year. **Tony Smith** presented a comprehensive talk on Vietnam, illustrated with superb images and video clips which clearly demonstrated the vast difference in life styles between the southeast Asian country and our own.

When our final external speaker of the season was unable to attend, former President **Steve Green** stepped in at short notice to deliver an account of his six month journey last year re-tracing the voyage he took by yacht 16 years ago. We were treated to some spectacular images and insight into the Antipodes.

Gavin Bowyer is new in post as Programme Secretary this year and will shortly present his lineup for next season.

We enjoyed continuing success this season in the SCPF Division one, by winning the PDI league after a nail biting final round of judging. My thanks to **Gordon Brown**, our Competition Secretary for hosting the selection evening and his management of our various competitions throughout the season. New this year was the George Walsh Trophy for Documentary /Photojournalism in memory of our Honorary Life President who sadly passed away just over a year ago. This was well supported as was the other new competition for a Set of Three images, partly intended to encourage members to enter this class in our Exhibition.

The Distinctions Group led by **Louise Brown** continues to be very successful, particularly in terms of achieving the Licentiate with eight members being successful in the past year. The ARPS group is in its second year and provides feedback and encouragement for those of us considering this next significant step. The Society can now boast 33 LRPS, 13 ARPS, 2 FRPS, 2 CPAGB, 9 DPAGB and 1 MPAGB, a demonstration of the high standards we achieve.

The Annual Print Exhibition is the enormously important public face of the Society. **Chris Smith** and her team have managed the logistical challenge which such an event entails. My sincere thanks to all involved including the Stewarding volunteers who have helped to produce an excellent exhibition.

The Winchester National Exhibition is now firmly established in the BPF Calendar and its success brings considerable funds into the Society. My thanks to **John Greenwood** and of course to his dedicated team for managing this annual event. I attended the Judging day on what must have been one of the hottest days last year and saw first-hand how carefully the day was planned in all aspects including IT and catering.

Education – Building upon the success of last year, we held 16 classes over 11 days, covering technical and creative topics, as well as Photoshop and Lightroom. Although not all the classes were full, **Keith Taylor** met his financial targets, and feedback on the classes was very positive. I would like to thank all the people who helped give the classes, particularly members of the panels group, and **Roger Dixey**, who gave up their Sundays to help out. Next season Keith will repeat some of the sessions, and be introducing new ones so watch out for the notices to see the details.

Workshops – We once again offered a wide range of workshops led by volunteer members and professionals. The seven monthly workshops covering a range of subjects including New Members' Night, Print-mounting evening by **Louise Brown**; Nightshoot at Southampton Docks (uncluttered by shipping); Single light portraiture by Andrew Appleton ; Family studio portraiture by Gareth and Kate Jones and High speed flash & water drops. A very special thank you to **Peter Whieldon** for bringing his menagerie of harvest mice, numerous frogs and assorted raptors together with all the necessary studio flashes and triggers on no less than two occasions for extremely memorable workshops.

An enormous thank you to all involved for their time, effort and expertise and a special thanks to **Tony Large**, assisted by **Trevor Morecraft**, for organising these incredibly popular activities.

The Beginners' Group under the leadership of **Gordon Brown**, continues to be popular with our new members who value the support, guidance and welcome which Gordon offers. A particularly important aspect of a Society with 200 members, many of whom are experienced photographers. Thank you Gordon.

I would like to offer particular thanks to **Gerard Carlin** our IT Secretary and Web Architect – Most of us just see and use the WPS web site without appreciating the amount of work which goes into it. This includes managing the frequent software updates and coping with their inevitable bugs, running the parallel offline site as a test platform and emergency backup, maintaining the sites security and being the Society IT help desk on the occasions when members have problems. Thank you Gerard for all this time consuming but largely unseen work

The Panels Group lead by **Martin Farrow** continues to flourish with another successful year which will continue with meeting through the summer. Panels' have been as varied as the challenge topics and ranged from 3 or 4 unmounted small pictures to 20 or so individually mounted prints to single boards with several prints on one board, and everything in between! The group welcomes new members and offers the opportunity to present work to the Society each November.

The Enhanced Reality Group, now completing its second year, is led by **Roger Dixey**. It has seen detailed demonstrations of the workflow used by Roger to create his distinctive images and given us the tools and motivation

to produce our own composite images.

Steven Cooper, our Digital Image Secretary, also deserves recognition for his dedication and IT skills which ensure the projection evening runs smoothly. The challenge which some members find in correctly sizing and naming PDI's add considerably to his workload and I would request that we all redouble our efforts next season to get this right first time.

I have had lots of positive feedback on the new, bigger and more colourful WPS Handbook. Thanks to **Viv Brett** for editing and collating the various changes required to bring this about. Hopefully this task will be much easier second time around especially as Viv also produces the two exhibition catalogues.

Tony Weller has once again provided the sound and light support necessary to run our evenings, often facing unexpected challenges with equipment left uncharged, misplaced or broken by other users of the Performance Space. Thank you Tony for your continuing commitment to the Society.

Ann Erkut is stepping down from her role as Communications Secretary and editor the weekly newsletter. Thank you for always getting the newsletter published and in so doing providing one of the best means of keeping members informed.

Our Committee Members Reps, **Sarah Strange**, **Trevor Morecraft** and **Tony Large**, who step down this month have all made significant contributions to the smooth running of WPS, taking on responsibilities when gaps became apparent. Thank you team.

On the catering front I would like to thank **Keith Taylor** for leading and **Jude Blackman** for organising the supplies and of course all the volunteers without whom our refreshments wouldn't be delivered in a timely manner.

And finally, I would like to thank my Vice President **Glyn Paton** for all the support and hard work he has put in this year. I am extremely confident that he will be a popular and committed President, more than capable of steering our Society to even better things.

I've thoroughly enjoyed being your president and wish you and WPS all the best for the future.

Nick Townley LRPS

President 2017-2018