

Chairman's report for the AGM - 13 June 2024

Obituary

Sadly last summer our former Treasurer died after a long illness. Charles B Pegram, or Bev as we knew him, was a loyal and longstanding club member who had served on the committee for many years. He was very well liked by all who knew him and we still miss his commanding presence, his cheery demeanour and sense of humour as well as his indisputable photographic talent. On behalf of the club I sent sincere condolences to his wife Jenny and family and many members attended his funeral service.

Financial position

Our Treasurer Mike Hall has kept a tight rein on the club's finances and the on-line banking system he played such a major part in setting-up and which is proving to be a great success. Mike's report to the AGM shows a small surplus ~£175 after all expenses have been met for the year and I thank him for his excellent stewardship in managing club funds.

EGM

On 21 September 2023 an EGM was held to ratify temporary changes to club rules 1b and 6a allowing the annual subscription to be increased to £65. The proposals were duly agreed at the meeting.

Membership

This year we had 28 paid members excluding our two honorary members. Despite losing 3 members at the start of the season we recruited 4 additional members during the year. However, membership numbers remain critical for the club's future wellbeing and we are grateful for the work undertaken by our membership secretary, Gwen Ward, to help keep numbers stable and following up all new member enquiries.

Club programme

During the 2023-24 season we managed to hold a full and uninterrupted programme of internal and external competitions, workshops and practical evenings, presentations by four external speakers plus three internal talks by members Pete Baldrey, Mike Hall and Chris Flood as well as the usual seasonal events.

The major source of the club's income stems from subscriptions from a relatively small number of members which imposes a restriction on the number of meetings we are able to host over the year (currently 34 weeks). Inevitably this creates a crowded programme with an overload of competitions particularly during the latter part of the season. This, together with the expressed wishes of the membership during the member survey in 2022, is why we are proposing at this AGM to move away from being overly competition focused and towards providing greater opportunities for learning and creativity - see item 9 on the AGM agenda .

My thanks to Angela Karney for her hard work in putting a varied programme together each year and arranging for judges and guest speakers to come along to the club.

Publicity

Donna Gorin has worked tirelessly to maximise publicity via the club's social media outlets on Facebook and promoting club activities on other local community sites. I thank Donna for all her efforts in ensuring club publicity reaches as wide an audience as possible. This is vital work and in turn it helps support the formal club website designed as the CCC *de facto* information centre.

External SPA competitions

In November 2023 and May 2024 the club competed in SPA inter-club print and PDI competitions. Although in both cases we finished well down the leader board we should remember that small clubs like ours always find it difficult to compete for the top honours with the larger and better

Chairman's report for the AGM - 13 June 2024

resourced Surrey clubs. Thanks to Miles Thompson for organising the club's qualifying entries enabling it to compete in these prestigious competitions.

This year we hosted an inter-club two-way PDI competition via Zoom against Ludshott and finishing second in both the nature and open sections. While we always wish to win these inter club battles, on this occasion we were up against some very strong opposition and ultimately deserved winners.

Annual exhibition

Our annual exhibition at the village hall in March was very well attended by the general public and was a fitting showcase for displaying club members' work. As well as providing good publicity and demonstrating our presence in the community it also generated a small cash surplus after all expenses thereby making a valuable contribution to club funds for future investment. A big thank you to members who volunteered for all the work parties which are necessary to ensure the event ran smoothly throughout the day.

IT

This year we have managed to keep our IT costs and IT procurement costs to a minimum following last year's heavy investment in laser projection equipment. Phil Copestick must be congratulated for continuing to nurse along our current laptop computer system which is showing signs of obsolescence not only in terms of occasionally freezing but also in the length of time it takes to boot especially if a reboot is required during a meeting. We are trying to re-build club funds to cater for a replacement machine and are keeping the situation under constant review.

Committee

The committee met five times during the year and I would like to thank them for their continuing dedication in keeping our club going. The club's survival and future prospects relies on full member participation and willingness to serve on the committee and in this respect proper succession planning is key.

Many committee members have loyally served for many years and all excepting Chris Flood have indicated they are willing to stand again. Chris intends to spend more time in Ireland throughout the year which would make his continuing as Vice Chairman untenable. I thank him for all his personal support shown during my time as Chairman and for all the sterling work he has given the club over such a long time. I would also like to encourage more members to volunteer as shadow committee members to become familiar with various aspects of committee work and with a view to taking on various committee roles in the future.

So again a big thank you and well done to all members for playing your part in making this past year successful, whether through volunteering for club duties, giving presentations or simply taking part in competitions and other club activities. If you have any suggestions for further improving the club programme/activities then please do let the committee know.

Ed Hull - Chairman