

Chairman's Report 2020

At the end of a very different year, I am hoping that all our members are keeping as well as can be expected during the circumstances.

2020 so far has been challenging for all of us, with our meetings cancelled from March onwards as a safety precaution following the Covid-19 outbreak.

We were unable to fill the programme secretary post last year, but Sarah Robbins kindly offered to arrange the 2021 speakers, which was completed in January. The follow-up emails were taken on by Anna Dagger. This year three volunteers have come forward to share the role, which will make a huge difference. I would like to offer my sincere thanks to them.

We tested the water about resuming our weekly meetings via Zoom in September 2020, and so far it seems to work extremely well. The committee decided to dip into our financial reserve to offer these meetings with no annual subscription.

Most of our speakers and some of our judges have embraced the virtual meeting technology, and we have managed to fill those evenings where we were left without a speaker or judge. Thank you to members who volunteered to fill those gaps, and to Anna for relentlessly contacting all the speakers and arranging replacements.

Using Zoom has been a learning curve for all of us, and no doubt will continue to be so as we discover various useful functions of the application. It saddens me somewhat that not all members felt comfortable to join us in this technology, but I totally respect their decisions.

As a result of dwindling numbers and poor uptakes for scheduled outings, Mike West stepped down from leading the Photoshoot Group this year. Clive Williams has incorporated this into the Practical Group, and has arranged a couple of outings since Lockdown eased. He also kept the Practical Group going all through the Lockdown via DropBox.

For environmental reasons, when we were still meeting in person, the committee decided to stop using plastic cups for teas and coffees, and instead ask members to bring their own drinking vessels each week. This was very well received, and once we resume physical meetings, we will continue with this initiative.

For a couple of years now we have held a permanent exhibition of prints at 65 High Street in Nailsea. This has now sadly come to an end following the refurbishment of the premises. David Bax organised the return of the prints and has distributed them to the respective owners. No 65 have agreed to store the display boards for us for the foreseeable future, and Bernard Yeo has kindly offered to find space for them once No 65 are no longer able or willing to keep the boards.

In discussion with Nick Cambourne and Ann Belcher, it has been decided to stop using the Dicentra software for our competition nights, and ask the judges to prepare presentations using the PixtrestoExe programme instead. For a while it has been a concern of mine that Nick was the only person who was familiar with Dicentra, and I know Nick felt this to be quite a responsibility too. I would like to thank Nick for all the work he has put in over the years we have been using Dicentra.

I would also like to thank

Malcolm Flintoff for ensuring our finances are up to date and that the relevant people and organisations are paid on time

Ann Belcher for organising our internal competitions

Bob Bishop for organising the Appraisal Evenings, DPIC and the Show and Tell evening

Mike West for getting us media coverage

Bernard Yeo for his role in liaising with the WI hall

Lyn Gowler for keeping the membership database up to date

Ruth Roberts for being our Health and Safety representative as well as making sure we all had tea, coffee and biscuits each week when we were still meeting in person

Carol, Sally, Brenda and Frank for collecting the door fees in the 'good old days'

Richard Pring for being in charge of the Travel Group

Clive Williams for putting the work in for the Practical Group

Jo Shepherd for her efforts with the Community Photography

Peter Otley for organising the Battle with Darwen

Hilary Britland for arranging the print exhibition in the Parish Hall

Members who have made presentations on our club nights, organised other clubs to present to Backwell, as well as reciprocal presentation to their clubs

Carol Bourton for arranging our Christmas Party

All the unsung heroes who used to help set up the room each week and clear away afterwards, make sure the equipment is in order and help with the teas

and coffees

Apologies if I have forgotten anyone.