

# **Saltburn Photographic Society**

Minutes Of The 50th AGM Held at Saltburn Methodist Church Hall  
7:30 pm Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2010

## **1. Apologies For Absence**

Kath Lynn, Catherine Jarred, Jim and Sheila McCormick

## **2. Minutes Of The Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as a true.

## **3. Matters Arising From Previous Meeting**

Geoffrey Darling asked what the position was with the Image 2000 collection. Bryan Clare said that he had recovered the files from Guisborough Library and that Tony Lynn had the rest. The software purchased to catalogue the images is no longer suitable and there has been very limited progress scanning the images.

It was agreed that urgent action was required and to that end we need to set up a sub-committee lead by a committee member, to focus on this issue. They will:-

- Establish the scope of the project before end November 2010
- Identify suitable software for cataloguing the images (Access could be suitable)
- Establish criteria for selecting meaningful photographs from the 2000+ photographs submitted
- Provide a monthly progress report on the Web site

Peter Appleton recalled that at the last AGM it was proposed that members should be asked for their e-mail addresses and asked what progress had been made. Collecting addresses at the same time as subscriptions had proved very difficult but further attempts will be made again this year. Members who are willing to provide an address are to be assured that it will only be used by the club.

## **4. Chairman's Report**

Christine started her report by thanking the members for their enthusiasm and support throughout the season. She was pleased that several new members had joined the Society.

Sadly however, Lucille Johnson, who was very successful during 2008-2009 and an excellent club member and photographer, died of cancer in February 2010.

She thanked the club members who filled in the Lecturers' Trophy voting slips and also those giving the vote of thanks. She said that the lectures provided by speakers and our own members during the season had provided much to interest, enthuse and teach us. She felt that this work, together with members contributions, particularly to the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary exhibition, had resulted in a very enjoyable season.

She thanked members who had taken part in our competitions and was pleased to see our new members entering the competitions and being very successful. She said that, despite allowing digital entries in both annual and monthly competitions, print entries had held up better than she expected. After a difficult start we have improved our projection of digital images and she thanked all those set up and operated the computer.

Practical Nights continued this season and she thanked Alan Meek, Malcolm Blenkey and Ken McDonald for leading these evenings. Attendance was good and the sessions paid their way. Members were encouraged to raise topics for future sessions.

She also expressed thanks for the work done by Alan Meek, Malcolm Blenkey and Peter Appleton preparing for the up-coming community photographic workshops being undertaken as part of our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations.

Ian Horner was thanked for his great work building the Society website which has been instrumental in bringing new members to the society. This season a Members Forum has been added to the site allowing members to keep in touch and share information and knowledge with one another.

However, the chairman was concerned that some issues had been aired in public on the Forum which would be better addressed by bringing the matter directly to the relevant member of the committee. She said she would not wish to join a group whose committee was being vilified by the membership. These posts were removed at the request of the committee. She does not want to stifle debate and welcomes constructive criticism of the society through direct contact, mail or e-mail to the committee.

The 50th anniversary year of the Society has had an excellent start with the exhibition at the Kirkleatham museum. The official opening was attended by civic dignitaries and many members, families and friends. She thanked Malcolm for all his hard work trying to obtain funding, Tees Valley Community Foundation for the grant they provided and Robert Taylor, Kirkleatham Museum, for the chance to display our work. Lastly she thanked the members who supplied the photographs and all those who made it happen.

There are more events to come and she asked members to remain alert so that they can support and participate in those events.

She thanked the committee for their hard work and support. Bryan Clare will be stepping down from the committee this year and she thanked him for his contribution which included two years as chairman.

Christine also thanked Ken McDonald for arranging the summer bingo challenge, a brilliant idea.

## **5. Treasurer's Report**

Alan Parker reported that net memberships have increased by 7. There are 16 new members which have offset the loss of 7 ordinary and 2 family members; almost all of them leaving because of various difficulties in attending.

There has been small further spend of the Awards for All (A4A) grant and a balance of £22 remains. The Tees Valley Community Association (TVCA) grant of £2872 is being ring-fenced within the accounts and so far we have spent almost £1100 of it, mostly on the Kirkleatham Museum exhibition.

Alan outlined several points in relation to income and expenditure but the essence was a surplus of just over £300, mainly the result of increased memberships, higher income from fundraising and donations and avoidance of loss with practical nights.

Sustained inactivity in the Image 2000 account prompted the bank to suspend it. The signatories will close the account and transfer the balance of around £75 into the current account.

In summary Alan said that the Society's accounts were healthy and recommended that there be no increase in subscription fees for next season. This was proposed by Malcolm Blenkey, seconded by Ken McDonald and approved. He reiterated from last year that the focus of the Society must be to retain and grow the membership.

In subsequent discussions, some potential special purchase items for next year were identified:-

- Microsoft Access software although we have to check if we already have a licence.
- Anti-virus software to be checked and replaced if necessary – some freeware is available
- Software to allow projection of two digital images for competition use, particularly the Frank Sanderson KO competition.

## **6. Syllabus Secretary's Report**

On taking over the role of Syllabus Secretary from Jim McCormick last season, Malcolm Blenkey (MB) has largely followed the tried and tested formula of providing a programme that is both entertaining and informative for our membership. He was mindful that there was a request from our new members from the previous season for advice on photography techniques and consequently built three sessions into the programme to address this. There was Jim's Colour Management session and we had three professionals from Gallery Photogroup, plus three of our own Advanced members giving us the benefit of their experience.

Hopefully you would agree that many of the other speakers provided a lot of valuable advice on how to improve our photography. MB thought that the talks given by Alan Brown from

Sunderland (What I See is What you Get), David Phillips, John Webster and Sandy Furniss were truly inspirational.

MB has always been an advocate of competitions as he thinks there is probably no better way of understanding how to improve our techniques than by listening to good judges explain why some images work really well and how others could be improved. If you are prepared to listen to the judges with an open mind over a period of a few seasons, this can really fast track us to taking better pictures. So he is pleased, as Syllabus Secretary, that our competitions have been so successful this season.

Thanks to the website forum, we now have a mechanism to find out what our members would like further instruction and advice about. We have dealt with this on an ad-hoc basis this season, responding to demand as it became apparent on the Practical Nights during the season. MB would like to express many thanks to Ken and Alan Meek in particular for their time and effort in preparing material for these sessions. Clearly, switching to a Monday evening has proved very popular, with regular turn outs of twenty or more people and the comments on the forum following these sessions indicate how useful these sessions have been.

We now have a stream on the forum for our members to let us know what topics they would like further instruction on. MB would encourage you to populate this over the closed season and we will endeavour to pull a more structured plan together for next season's practical nights.

The Summer outings programme was very successful, generating a good selection of fine images for the Les Gould Trophy. The coach trip to Cragside organised by Tony must have been one of the best days of the year from a weather point of view which made for a great day out even if it was, dare one say it, too sunny and bright for good photography.

In conclusion MB would just like to thank Jim McCormick for providing him with the templates he had developed when he was Syllabus Secretary. Each speaker needs to be contacted four times, the initial contact to explore their availability, formal contact – to confirm agreed arrangements, a reminder a month before they are due – to ensure that they are still available and finally a thank you letter after their presentation. Thanks to Jim's workflow templates for this procedure, my life was made a good deal easier.

## **7. Competition Secretary's Report**

Mike Sidgwick reported that entrants in monthly competitions had increased from 59 in 2008/9 to 87 this season. He was concerned about the continuing decline in print entries, down from 47 to 39, but heartened to get 31 entrants for intermediate digital projected images whereas previously there were 0 slide entrants.

In the annual competitions entrants increased in nearly every case and numbers overall were up from 71 to 113 an increase of 59%.

The rule book needs to be tidied up and modified particularly in relation to digital images. It was also reiterated that entries would not be accepted over the internet because of the potential for missing entries or software/hardware issues.

Also it was suggested that slide entries would not be accepted for the Frank Sanderson competition because they make it difficult to manage.

Rules for slide entries (where acceptable with digital projected images) are to be kept separate and will be available on request.

Alan Meek proposed and Steve Jenkins seconded that we adopt these rule changes. This was approved. The rules on the web site will be updated ASAP.

Members are to be asked to provide low resolution digital images to be used for publicity purposes but they do retain the right not to do so.

Peter Appleton suggested that print entries be accompanied by digital images which could be displayed on competition night so that members would be able to see the image "better". There was considerable debate on this issue and some opposition particularly from print workers.

Malcolm Blenkey proposed that this issue be taken back to committee. Tony Lynn seconded the motion and it was carried.

## **8. Publicity Report**

Tony Lynn commented that as usual the Talk Of The Town and the Darlington and Stockton Times had continued to provide good coverage of our activities but the Gazette and Radio Tees are totally unresponsive to his efforts. Geoff Darling asked about the Herald and Post and Tony said that he provided them with club news but without result. Geoff suggested that Tony try to exert more pressure in these areas.

However, he said that our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations are generating quite a lot of good press and the web site is also of immense benefit.

## **9. NYSDPA Report**

For the benefit of the new members MB pointed out that the North Yorks and South Durham Photographic Association is the body that brings together the thirteen clubs in the Cleveland, Tees Valley and North Yorkshire area. For the last two seasons the recently formed Digital Audio Visual Group has also operated as a sub-group within this organisation. The main objective of this association is to coordinate the activities of the member groups by organising the inter-club competitions and also to provide a list of lecturers and judges. The annual handbook containing these lists and contact details is therefore the first port of call for the club competition and syllabus secretaries when they are compiling programmes for each season. With regard to the inter-club competitions, Saltburn PS was 5<sup>th</sup> in the print competition, with MB's Saltwick Wreck having the second highest mark in the competition and we were equal eighth in the projected image class. First place went to Hartlepool in the prints and Northallerton won the projected image competition. The Silver Salver competition for the best individual print was cleaned up by Hartlepool who took the first three positions and the new Individual Slide competition was similarly monopolised by Northallerton, although MB received an award of merit for his Roseberry Cornfields.

MB feels that we do not do ourselves justice in this competition and we need to re-visit how we go about putting our entry together. He is confident that we can get back to Saltburn being one of the front runners if we were able to pull our best work together for this competition. There was an attempt this season to implement a rule that any image could only be used once in these competitions meaning that prints from entries in the digital projected class and vice versa would not be accepted. In the event, due to a misunderstanding by some clubs, this had to be put into abeyance until next season. The rules have now been made explicit, to make it clear that any entry can only be used once within any of the NYSDPA inter-club competitions. Also next season any print that is entered must be accompanied by a digital file copy. This will avoid the need for prints to be copied and provide an authentic copy for the purposes of digital projection of the results.

There was the usual problem at the AGM where volunteers for some of the officer's positions were not forthcoming. Hopefully this will be resolved over the summer by the sub-committee who have been asked to develop a process to ensure that officers can be designated on a club rotation basis.

There is still a requirement for donations of images to the local hospitals who are grateful for any help we can give them in this respect. The images are used to generally brighten up the corridors for visitors and patients.

MB concluded by giving you a date for your diaries as Joe Cornish will present the bi-annual lecture on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2011 at the Southlands Centre.

## **10 Coffee Report**

Christine Parker said that as the cost of refreshments had virtually broken even this season and with there being a small surplus in the Coffee account, the price of coffee and tea could be retained at 20p.

She concluded by thanking all those people who helped with the clearing up.

## **11 Newsletter Report**

Alan Meek said that the Spring 2010 issue available right now. This has cost £10 for 50 copies.

In the future the best price Alan has found commercially is £25 for 50 copies in the current format. Some but some savings can be made by printing black only on the inner pages and this would cost approximately £17.50 per 50 copies.

The last few issues have been available on the website and it seems that many members are using that facility in order to save the expense of paper copies.

A key question is can we justify the cost of printing the magazine twice per year the principal benefits being it is very useful in publicising the Society when we leave copies around the town and it is pleasanter to read.

Alan would like to complete the next issue featuring Mike Kipling but suggests we consider the idea of shelving the Newsletter after that. We should also consider printing in black and white only.

## **12 Website Report**

The web site is very successful and has attracted new members to the club.

The member's forum now has 31 members and is also working very well.

Congratulations and thanks to Ian Horner, Ken McDonald, Alan Meek and Peter Appleton.

Peter Appleton wondered if the forum site was slowing down and Ian agreed to check.

## **13 Election of Officers, Committee and Account Verifiers**

President - Tony Lynn is willing to continue and was unopposed.

Chairman - Christine Parker has completed her two year term and Mike Sidgwick moves up from Vice Chairman

Immediate Past chairman Bryan Clare has completed his two year term. Christine Parker automatically takes on the role.

Vice Chairman - Alan Meek was proposed by Tony Lynn, seconded by Malcolm Blenkey and agreed by all.

Secretary - Tom Ridley is in the middle of his two year.

Treasurer - Alan Parker has been approached to replace Mike Sidgwick as Competition Secretary and Christine Parker has indicated that she is willing to become Treasurer. Christine was proposed by Lilian Waton, seconded by Ian Horner and agreed by all.

Competition Secretary - Mike Sidgwick has become Chairman. Alan Parker has agreed to take on this role. Alan was proposed by Malcolm Blenkey, seconded by Ian Horner and agreed by all.

Syllabus Secretary - Malcolm Blenkey said that as he had compiled the syllabus for next season he was willing to be considered. Malcolm was proposed by Geoffrey Darling, seconded by Mike Sidgwick and agreed by all.

Publicity - Tony Lynn is willing to continue and was unopposed.

NYSDPA representative - Malcolm Blenkey is in the middle of his two year term.

Newsletter Editor - Alan Meek is in the middle of his second two year term.

Ordinary Members - Bryan Clare offers his resignation from the Committee Alan Richmond and Lilian Waton are both willing to continue on the committee. Proposed by Malcolm Blenkey, seconded by Tony Lynn and agreed by all.

Catherine Jarred has been proposed by Alan Parker, seconded by Christine Parker and agreed by all

Ian Horner has been proposed by Alan Parker, seconded by Alan Meek and agreed by all David Tindale has been proposed by Malcolm Blenkey, seconded by Christine Parker and agreed by all

Account Verifiers Rita Price and Valerie Attard are willing to continue. They were proposed by Alan Parker, seconded by Steve Jenkins and agreed by all.

## **14. Summer Events**

A visit to Keswick has been organised for 15th May but this will only go ahead if numbers increase.

Wednesday evening walks have been organised for May to August as shown in the Newsletter and on the web site

Various weekend events between May and October have also been listed in the Newsletter  
As part of our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations Cleveland Concert Band will perform in Saltburn Methodist Church (TS12 1DN) on 19th June, 7:30 start. Tickets now available

Please support the Saltburn Coffee Morning to be held on Saturday 7th August and the Marske Coffee morning on Saturday 11th September. As usual any help that can be provided by the members would be appreciated.

Also as part of our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, we have two events in autumn

- An Audio Visual night at Huntcliff School on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> October
- A celebrity speaker, Mark Denton also at Huncliff on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> November

### **15 Any Other Business**

Catherine Jarred and Ian Horner asked whether a change of venue would be possible because sometimes the Methodist Hall is very cold. The committee and the management are aware of this problem and action is being taken to improve the situation in the short term and with a comprehensive review also being undertaken. Alternative locations are always being monitored but at this point the Methodist Hall still has significant advantages in storage of equipment and cost.

They also asked if talks reduced to 1 hr or have a break mid-way. Whilst speakers are advised of the society's wishes sometimes they will exceed an hour and it may not be practicable to split their talks. No action will therefore be taken.

They also suggested that the society advertise locally but it was felt that the publicity arising from our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations would generate enough publicity.

Lastly they recommended we consider sponsorship to aid the club and web site. We did attempt to do this for the newsletter but we were unsuccessful.

Peter Appleton asked how we solicited feedback from the members and was concerned that although various avenues were available for members to express their views no comprehensive survey had been undertaken. Whilst accepting the accuracy of his point it was stated that member's views had been very actively solicited on club nights and via the web site and that this was felt to be adequate. The committee is also endeavouring to be more accessible and in touch with the members.

Bryan Clare reminded members of the Cleveland concert Band Concert on 19<sup>th</sup> June and asked members to support the event

In the absence of any further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 10:10 pm.

Signed as a true record by

Chairman