

DEVIZES CAMERA CLUB

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held May 18th 2021

The meeting opened at 7-30 p.m. and was held via Zoom Video-Conferencing (on account of the Covid-19 Pandemic).

The agenda, minutes of the previous meeting, committee reports and submitted resolutions had been emailed to all members.

1. Apologies

The meeting was attended by Steve Hardman plus 34 members. Apologies were received from Gill Cardy, David Fraser, Dave Dowding, David Wilkinson, Caroline Wright

2. Minutes of the A.G.M. held on 19th May 2020

The minutes from the 2020 AGM had previously been circulated.

3. Approval of Minutes of Previous A.G.M.

Approval was proposed by Clive Rathband, seconded by Mike Saunders and approved unanimously.

4. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

5. Annual Reports of the Committee

The Officers reports for 2020-21 had previously been circulated.

- a. Chairman's Address and Report – Sue Wadman asked for an update on the status of the Sports Club as rumours were circulating about financial difficulties. Mike Saunders assured members that based on his recent meeting with David Whatling (Chairman of the Sports Club), the Sports Club was financially sound. The Sports Club AGM was scheduled for 21st June, which is expected to confirm the reopening of the Club House. There is therefore no reason to doubt that we will be able to resume face to face meetings in September.
- b. Secretary's Report – there were no members' questions
- c. Treasurer's Report – Lynda Croft reported that the accounts had been circulated, and thanked all members for helping her reconcile their on-line payments. Lynda noted that although the club had recorded a healthy surplus this year, there would be a corresponding deficit next year if the Committee's recommended reimbursement of the Sports Club component (Resolution 1) was agreed.
Lynda also reported that the club had purchased a wireless card reader, to enable cashless payment of on-the-night fees when we resume at the Sports Club. Jennifer Skjoldbro questioned whether cashless payments would suit all members. Lynda Croft confirmed that we will still accept cash if necessary. There was also the consideration of paying speakers & judges + buying tea and coffee, which often involve payment in cash.
- d. Programme Secretary's Report – there were no members' questions

- e. Competition Secretary's Report - Dave Eagle highlighted an omission in his report, namely that Hilary Tapley had also been promoted from Beginners to Intermediate during the year. There were no other members' questions.
- f. Battle Secretary's Report – there were no members' questions
- g. Membership Secretary's Report – Caroline absent
- h. Landscape Group Report – there were no members' questions
- i. Website Report – there were no members' questions

6. Resolutions

Resolution 1: To be decided on a simple majority of votes cast. Proposed by Steve Hardman, Seconded by Lynda Croft, on behalf of the Committee.

It is proposed that members who paid the full £40 annual subscription for the 2020-21 year shall be entitled to renew their membership for 2021-22 for £10.

It is also proposed that members joining after the Xmas 2020 break, and paying a reduced subscription of £20 shall be entitled to renew their membership for £25.

For junior members (aged under 21 years at 1st September 2020) who have paid their reduced rate annual subscription of £15, it is proposed that they will receive a £10 discount on renewing their membership for 2021-22.

Steve Hardman explained that of the £40 annual subscription, £30 is normally paid to the Sports Club for our use of the venue, leaving £10 for Camera Club to buy equipment, pay for external speakers and judges, and for other miscellaneous expenses. During 2020-21, the Sports Club venue had been closed, and so the £30 per member had not been paid. The resolution therefore aimed to reimburse those members who paid the full £40 annual subscription for 2020-21, with pro rata arrangements for those joining after the Xmas break or who pay at the junior rate.

Peter Tasker asked what the subscription would be for those members who had not paid the annual subscription fee in 2020-21. It was clarified that any such members would need to pay the full subscription rate for 2021-22.

Gina Gordon asked whether the club had sufficient funds to pay for next year's speakers and judges if the proposal was agreed. Frank Collins replied that he works to a budget for the whole year when booking speakers, and that each speaker and judge had already agreed the fee to be paid. We therefore knew that the money was sufficient to finance the next year's programme.

A Zoom poll was used for voting, and the resolution was carried unanimously.

Resolution 2: To be decided on a simple majority of votes cast. Proposed by Dave Eagle, Seconded by David Wilkinson, on behalf of the Committee.

It is proposed that a one-off promotion from Beginners to Intermediate should take place at the end of 2020-21. The individuals affected have been notified and have given their consent.

Dave Eagle explained that the club operates 3 skill-based competition sections, and members competing in one section are required to gain a specified number of points and number of placings

before progressing to the next level. Over the years, the numbers competing in Beginners and Intermediate sections had become very uneven. There are many members in Beginners competing for points and placings for advancement to Intermediate. Because of this, there are too few members in Intermediate, competing for the same number of points and placings, which makes advancement into Advanced relatively easy, further reducing the numbers in Intermediate. The Committee's recommended solution was a one-off promotion of the upper segment of Beginners (based on points accumulated) to equalise the numbers competing in Intermediate and Beginners.

To emphasise the seriousness of this situation, Dave Eagle reported that there were only 4 members competing in Intermediate in 2020-21, and there will be a similar number in 2021-22 unless action is taken. The only viable alternative to the one-off promotion of Beginners would be to scrap the Intermediate section, leaving just Beginners and Advanced. The Committee believed that this would be detrimental to the development of our member's photographic skills.

Robert Harvey asked if relegation had been considered as a way to keep the numbers in balance. Dave Gray replied that it had been considered by the Committee and rejected because it was likely to be divisive. Lynda Croft reported that Frome Wessex have a system of promotion and relegation, which can stop members sharing their knowledge, and which in the past has led to relegated members leaving the club.

Tony Leach thought that the situation could arise again in 3 years' time. Dave Eagle agreed and said the Committee would need to stay alert to future signs of imbalance before it reached the position we have now.

Graham Sawyer thought that the rebalancing may encourage more Beginners to start competing, whereas they had previously been deterred by the extremely high standard of some of the Beginners.

Pam Mullins noted that historically, the points totals required from promotion were designed so that a very good Beginner could gain promotion within 2 years.

The vote for the Resolution was 27 in favour, and 1 against, so the Resolution was carried.

Resolution 3: To be decided on a simple majority of votes cast. Proposed by Dave Eagle, Seconded by Frank Collins, on behalf of the Committee.

It is proposed that Rules 1.2, 1.8, 1.9 and 1.10 be modified to read as follows;-

1.2 All elements of a photographic image must have been taken (by whatever photographic medium is used) and processed by the photographer, and the copyright must be owned by the photographer.

Where another artist's work is necessarily included (for example street art, posters, paintings, drawings or statues) in an image entered for competition, it must be self-evident that the work is NOT the work of the photographer, and cannot be mis-interpreted as such.

In composite images, all component images must meet this requirement. For the avoidance of doubt, use of images from any other source, including, but not limited to, royalty free image banks and clipart, are not permitted.

Images taken while the photographer is receiving tuition, paid or otherwise, are only permitted where the image is created and processed entirely under the direction and control of the photographer.

1.8 *The Committee reserves the right to limit the entry for any Competition where the total number of images received for judging exceeds 80; or not to run a competition where there are fewer than 3 images entered. In addition, the Committee may add or suspend any Competition and (provided notice is given to the members prior to the opening of entries for that Competition) amend the maximum number of entries for any particular competition as it sees fit.*

1.9 *An image or AV (or one that is significantly similar) entered in a Club projected image or print competition may not be re-entered in any other Club Competition in either medium except that:-*

- *An image may be used as part of an entry for the Projected Image League (para 5.6)*
- *An image used in an entry for the Projected Image League may be subsequently entered in a Club Competition (whether a projected image or print) if it had not been so entered previously*
- *Images entered into Club Competitions may be entered in the Biennial Print Exhibition competitions (para 7.2) and any image entered in the Biennial Print Exhibition may be subsequently entered in a Club Competition (whether projected image or print) if it had not been so entered previously*
- *if the image did NOT receive a placing or Highly Commended (in either format) it may be entered in one further Club Competition, but not in the same Club year.*

Please check carefully before submitting your images for club competitions. The Competition Secretary will have the final say in determining if an entry is eligible and may ask to see the RAW files and metadata for the image to determine eligibility

1.10 *For the avoidance of doubt;-*

- *Rule 1.9 does not apply to the Print and Projected Image of the Year competition in respect of those images eligible for that Competition under Rule 6.2*
- *'Club Competition' means any Competition organised under sections 4 and 5 of these Rules or any other Competition designated from time to time by the Committee as a 'Club Competition'*
- *The 'Christmas Fun Knock-out' competition (together with any other informal competition so designated from time to time by the Committee) is not a 'Club Competition' for the purposes of Rule 1.9*

Dave Eagle explained that the resolution was in 3 parts:

- a. Rules covering photos taken on workshops, whether or not paid for. The important point added in bold text above was intended to extend the principle that competition entries must be the work of the author and not simply based on the tutors' instructions.
- b. The Committee had from time to time informally varied the number of competition entries allowed per member in order to bring the total entries to a reasonable number for the evening. This resolution asked members to approve the Committee's power to vary the entries allowed per member.
- c. The remainder of the proposal was simply to tidy up the wording of existing rules without changing their substance.

Tim Tapley asked whether a photo taken with artificial lighting already set up would be disqualified from competitions. Dave Eagle confirmed this was so.

Tony Leach asked whether an image taken following verbal advice from a tutor/friend would be allowed. Dave Eagle confirmed that so long as the author is in control of the camera settings, and just following advice, that would be allowed.

Voting was in 3 parts, corresponding to Dave Eagle's explanation, and all parts were carried unanimously.

Resolution 4: To be decided on a simple majority of votes cast. Proposed by Dave Eagle, Seconded by David Wilkinson, on behalf of the Committee.

It is proposed to amend Rule 2 of the definition of Nature set out in Section 5.1 as follows (struck out section is the existing wording, to be replaced by the text in bold):

Rule 2 - The original image must have been taken by the photographer, whatever photographic medium is used. ~~Any manipulation or modification to the original image is limited to cropping, minor retouching of blemishes, selective lightening and darkening, and must not alter the content of the original scene. Cloning is not permitted. Focus stacking is permitted.~~ **Processing of the captured image, by cropping, exposure adjustment, colour correction, noise minimisation, dodging/burning, HDR, focus stacking and sharpening, is allowed. Cloning of image defects and minor distractions, including overlapping elements, are permitted when these do not distort the truth of the photographic statement.** After satisfying the above requirements, every effort must be made to use the highest level of artistic skill in all nature photographs.

Dave Gray introduced the rationale for this as Battle Secretary. He explained that we compete in both regional and national battles under the auspices of PAGB (Photographic Alliance of Great Britain). PAGB had in 2017 relaxed its rules around post-processing of Nature images, while FIAP (the international body of which PAGB is the UK's representative) and the Royal Photographic Society had retained their stricter rules.

Our Annual Nature competition currently used the FIAP stricter rules for post-processing. Successful entries in our Annual Nature competition tend to be used for our Battle entries in DPIC and GB Cup Nature, but since both Battles use PAGB rules, our entries comply with unnecessarily strict rules which other clubs may not follow. Hence if we bring our rules in line with PAGB, we will be competing on more of an equal footing with other clubs.

Dave also explained that the type of post-processing allowed by the more relaxed PAGB rules could be described as 'digital gardening', which would avoid the damage which 'in-camera gardening' causes when the photographer cuts back all intrusive foliage to obtain a 'clean background'.

Robert Harvey argued that the existing rules were necessary to maintain the integrity of Nature images as depicting a natural scene. Also, if members shot their Nature images conforming to FIAP rules, they could be entered into both FIAP salons or PAGB Battles. He also disputed the effect of the advantage conferred on other clubs in PAGB Battles.

Dave Gray said that the basic argument was between club and individual, and if we want to do well as a club, we should follow the rules set for the battles we enter. Very few individuals enter FIAP Salons, and those that do should be sufficiently advanced to cope with the differing rules.

Clive Rathband pointed out interpretation of the new PAGB rules had been prone to change and could not be regarded as fixed.

Tony Leach argued in favour of getting the image right in-camera rather than using post-processing. Dave Gray said that in his opinion, post-processing is always necessary to get the best out of an image, particularly one shot in RAW format.

The vote on the resolution produced a dead heat, with 13 votes in favour and 13 votes against. The chairman did not use his casting vote, and so the resolution was not carried.

Resolution 5: To be decided on a simple majority of votes cast. Proposed by Dave Eagle, Seconded by David Wilkinson, on behalf of the Committee.

It is proposed to delete the requirements set out in Section 5.3 for entries to the Derrick Turner Memorial trophy (Landscape PIs) for the image to depict a landscape within the British Isles. Rule 2 will therefore be deleted, and paragraph 5.3.1 amended to replace 'within the British Isles' with 'anywhere in the world'

An amendment to this had been proposed by Robert Harvey and seconded by David Evans as follows:

It is proposed to amend the requirements set out in Section 5.3 for entries to the Silver Birches trophy (Landscape Prints) allowing the image to depict a landscape taken anywhere in the world and to restrict geographical eligibility to the British Isles. Rule 2 will therefore be amended to refer to both the Derrick Turner Memorial Trophy and the Silver Birches Trophy and paragraph 5.3.2 amended to replace 'anywhere in the world' with 'within the British Isles'.

Dave Eagle explained that the resolution first of all aimed to harmonise the geographic scope of the PI and Print competitions, since the PI competition is currently limited to the British Isles whereas the Print competition is Worldwide. This had over the years caused considerable confusion amongst members.

He then proposed that the common geographic scope to be adopted should be Worldwide, which is more in line with modern travel opportunities. Also, landscapes do not tend to do well in competition with other genres, and so the proposal would allow international landscapes to be judged alongside other landscapes.

Robert Harvey agreed with the need to harmonise PI and Print competitions but his amendment was to restrict both to the British Isles. He had donated the Silver Birches trophy for the Print competition, and now wanted it to be for British Isles only. He also thought that it would be difficult to judge British and Worldwide Landscapes in the same competition.

Clive Rathband said the the PI Trophy was originally donated by Derrick Turner nearly 30 years ago, expressly for landscapes in the British Isles. Dave Gray responded that although the wishes of the donor were important, if the club felt that a trophy no longer met its requirements, it should be 'retired' and a new trophy purchased.

Sue Wadman asked if there was scope for a separate competition for International Landscapes. However, the programme calendar is already full, and a new competition would have to be at the expense of another competition.

Gina Gordon argued that what matters is the quality of the image, and it should not matter where it is taken.

Tony Leach and Mike Saunders argued that a ‘British Isles only’ competition is more egalitarian, as all members can access the British countryside, whereas not everyone can travel the world. Steve Hardman said that our competitions were inherently unequal, as everyone had different camera equipment according to their budget. He thought that if we were striving for an egalitarian approach, we would need to insist that all members used the same model of camera, lenses, tripods, flashguns etc.

At the end of the debate, separate votes were taken as follows:

- 21 votes were cast in favour of harmonising the PI and Print Landscape competitions produced, with 8 votes against.
- 19 votes were cast in favour of Robert Harvey’s amendment to harmonise on the British Isles, with 9 votes in favour of Worldwide.

Therefore both PI and Print Annual Landscape competitions will be restricted to images of ‘the British Isles’.

Resolution 6: To be decided on a simple majority of votes cast. Proposed by Robert Harvey, Seconded by Sue Wadman.

This club congratulates the Committee for keeping the club functioning during the very difficult circumstances of the 2020/21 season. In particular, the club thanks Frank Collins for delivering an excellent programme of speakers and Dave Eagle for his outstanding contribution in efficiently running club competitions and expertly hosting weekly meetings by Zoom.

This resolution was carried unanimously.

Steve Hardman thanked the membership, and in particular highlighted the work done by Dave Eagle in keeping the club going during the pandemic. Apart from the complexities of learning how to use Zoom, Dave had put in an enormous amount of work organising each meeting, running practice events with speakers and judges, compiling stats of attendees which Lynda Croft could reconcile against payments received and which Caroline could use to analyse attendance patterns etc. As a thank you, the club has presented Dave with a cheque for £250 as part payment for a Light and Land workshop later in the year.

7. Nominations for the Committee for 2021-22

Position	Person Nominated	Proposed By	Seconded By
Chair	Steve Hardman	Dave Gray	Lynda Croft
Secretary	Dave Gray	Lynda Croft	Frank Collins
Treasurer	Lynda Croft	Frank Collins	Dave Eagle
Programme Secretary	Frank Collins	Dave Eagle	David Wilkinson
Competition Secretary 1	Dave Eagle	David Wilkinson	Gerald Clarke
Competition Secretary 2	David Wilkinson	Gerald Clarke	Dave Gray

Competition Secretary 3	Gerald Clarke	Dave Gray	Caroline Wright
Battle Secretary	Dave Gray	Caroline Wright	Bridget Codrington
Membership Secretary	Caroline Wright	Bridget Codrington	Mike Saunders
Publicity Secretary	Bridget Codrington	Mike Saunders	Steve Hardman
Committee Member 1	Mike Saunders	Steve Hardman	Dave Gray
Committee Member 2	Jennifer Skjoldbro	Bridget Codrington	Dave Gray
Committee Member 3			

Tony Leach asked for details of the function of Committee Members 1, 2 & 3. Steve Hardman explained that they would be expected to undertake ad hoc tasks or assist the named officers if needed. For instance, Mike Saunders was our lead contact with the Sports Club, while Bridget has been a Committee Member and has now accepted the role of Publicity Officer.

The proposed Committee was voted on en bloc, and received unanimous approval.

8. Handover to Chairman, if applicable

There was no change of chairman from the previous year.

9. Any Other Business

- Steve Hardman announced that Trophy presentations would take place in person in September, and at the same time, the winners in 2019-20 would be recognised.
- Clive Rathband drew members attention to an AV competition themed on the Jurassic Coast, with 160 entries and around 9 hours of viewing. This will be shown on Zoom on 5th/6th June.

10 Close of Formal Business

The AGM was closed at 21.06