

**Winchester Art Club AGM March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2014**  
**Held at All Saints School Hall**

The meeting was chaired by the Club President, Mr Tony Hunt, VPRI who opened the meeting at 2.30pm.

- 1) **Apologies:** Tricia Spink, Margie Barton, Joyce King, Lucinda Graham.
- 2) **Minutes of Previous AGM:** The Chair reminded members that the minutes had been available on the Club's web site for some time and asked for comments or concerns. None were offered and so the minutes were accepted.
- 3) **Matters arising:** The Secretary drew member's attention to an item in AOB in which the AGM had authorised the Committee to negotiate on behalf of the Club with the fundraiser at the RHC Hospital who had asked for an increase in commission on sales made in the Hospital. He told the meeting that the fundraiser had been made redundant before the negotiation could take place. The fundraiser's duties had been taken on by a member of the Hospital staff and she had not pursued the proposal. It is assumed that there will be no change in the 10% commission charged.
- 4) **Reports:**
  - a) **Chairman:** Hilary Archer said that her item in the recent Newsletter had covered all that she wanted to say on general Club matters. She would, however be raising a new exhibiting opportunity in Item 7 AOB.
  - b) **Hon. Treasurer:**
    - i) Simon Churchill opened his report by explaining the changes in presentation that he had made to the summary of the 2013 Accounts. He had decided to show net subs, rather than total income and then refunds as an expense to make year on year comparisons easier. He also decided to show Courses as a net figure after any refunds. He had split sales of work at the hospital and dentist by venue and he had split visiting speaker fees into categories for appraisals, talks and demos, and course tutors; all to make the accounts clearer to members. He had also decided that items that represented less than 1% of Club expenditure should be grouped as expenses.
    - ii) Simon then showed that he had forecast a deficit of ~£300 for 2013, but the actual figure was £1306.50. There had been a number of unforeseen items including: a drop in membership; a general increase in tutor and speaker fees; less profit than expected from the Douglas Skeggs lecture; a larger than expected deficit on the courses because of lower take up.
    - iii) Sales of the Exhibition catalogue had been more profitable by limiting colour advertising to the outside cover to reduce printing costs and a shorter print run to minimise the number of unsold copies. An estimate on the print run was made based on sales in the previous year, with the addition of 50 spare, but this proved insufficient and the catalogues sold out three days before the end. Sales were partly increased by members of the Council staff who were more proactive than previously in selling catalogues. It was pointed out that although selling out was optimal from the point of view of the Club's finances, it was not ideal for visitors during the last three days. (The gap had been filled by a number of copies of the catalogue lists printed by the Secretary.) The Treasurer promised to make a better estimate for the print run this year.
    - iv) It was thought that the reduced numbers attending the Skeggs lecture was caused by a combination of factors: the lecture was a month later than usual because of the exhibition schedule; the lecture was on a Saturday because of booking difficulties with the Performance Hall; possibly the reduced publicity due to the lack of a Publicity Secretary at the time.

- v) The Treasurer explained the extra expense on the Club's web site. This has been completely redesigned and expanded, so that it now shows the Club's activities in detail. There is also an interactive gallery showing the work of many Club members and a page for communicating with the Club. The Secretary commented that most enquiries about the Club came to him from the Web site and that this included the first contact from many new members.
  - vi) The figures for the Annual Exhibition were summarised and compared with previous years. Sales were the same as the previous year but the average sale price was about 15% lower. In general sales were down a little compared with the average of previous years and so it was difficult to conclude whether or not the Club's subsidy on sales had had a positive effect. Simon explained that the effect of the subsidy on the artists who made sales was to reduce the commission taken from them from 35% of the sales price to 10% of the sales price. This gave club members the opportunity to choose between achieving a better margin on any sales, or to reduce their sale prices by up to 25% if they so wished in the hope that this might stimulate sales. Whilst some members responded to the subsidy by reducing their prices, many did not for various reasons. The Committee examined the effect of the subsidy at their February meeting and they concluded that they could support a smaller subsidy of 10% for 2014. This would mean that members commission paid would be 25% rather than the usual 35%. Mike Ellis asked if the Committee had an ongoing policy for commission in future. The Treasurer said that the subsidy came out of the Club's reserve and that each year the Committee would make a judgement based on the amount of funds above the agreed minimum reserve level of £3000 that there was in the bank.
  - vii) The Treasurer showed an initial forecast for 2014. This showed that membership has increased, improving income from membership fees and that the take-up of courses was also very good. It is also anticipated that a greater surplus will be made this year on Douglas Skeggs lecture.
- c) **Exhibition Secretary**
- i) Sheila Bushnell told the meeting that she was pleased to be able to say that the 2014 Annual Exhibition would be back in its normal slot in September. There had, however, been problems with booking the Performance Hall again this year. In spite of trying to book immediately after the 2013 Exhibition, the venue had already been booked for a poetry weekend. The consequence is that she was forced to book the Skeggs lecture and private View for Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> September. This will put pressure on the people hanging the exhibition, but it seems to be achievable.
  - ii) Sheila asked the members to offer pictures for use with the poster and other publicity for the exhibition. All images should be sent to the Secretary by 31<sup>st</sup> May. The Secretary said that he preferred digital images, but he was willing to help any member who had difficulty with this format. The Committee will chose the image that they think would be the most attractive at their meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> June.
  - iii) Handing-in for the next Hospital Exhibition will take place on 12th April. Sheila expressed her pleasure at having Helen Benjamin back in the team following her recent illness. Ongoing building work at the front of the Hospital will cause some disruption, but members have been sent a map of the Hospital showing where members will be able to park and unload. Sheila will ensure that there are sufficient signs in place on the day so that nobody gets lost.
- d) **Membership Secretary**
- i) June Mott opened her report by thanking all of the people who had helped her get into her new role on the Committee. She thanked the Treasurer, who had filled in as temporary

Membership Secretary and had instructed June on the intricacies of the job; she thanked the Secretary for IT support; she thanked Irene Dowding who had handled the large mailing of nearly 250 envelopes with three inserts, labels and stamps. June also thanked the people who give her lifts and the people, including gentlemen who operated the tea rota at Club meetings.

- ii) Membership now stands at 261 fully paid up members and honorary members including 8 members paid £9 despite the numerous reminder letters. When reminded again, two paid up with a cheque, one had gone away without leaving a forwarding address and the rest did not reply. 14 members did not renew their membership, two of whom resigned. 5 people who had been removed from the membership list last year still paid £9 by banker's order.
  - iii) June said that the current geographic distribution of members shows that the majority are from Winchester and district, with others from as far away as Portsmouth and Southampton. We even have one member in Wales and one in Saudi Arabia.
  - iv) So far this year, June has signed up 21 new members. She thinks that the new web site, the small cards (obtained for us by Mike Ellis) that she hands and member's recommendations creates the increase.
- e) Courses Secretary**
- i) The Secretary reported on behalf of Tricia Spink, who was unavoidably absent. This year the take-up of Courses has been very good. There is one vacancy for the Julie Collins workshop on Creative Still Life. The rest of the courses are fully booked and there is a waiting list for the Jake Winkle course.
- f) Programme Secretary**
- i) Belinda Ward explained to the meeting that her obligations to her family and the pressure of her new role as Programme Secretary had been more than she could sensibly manage and so she felt obliged to resign her position at the end of last year. She had, however, completed the bookings for the programme for 2014 and had been managing the meetings pending the arrival of an interested person to take over.
  - ii) Belinda reported that the programme activities were going well so far this year, but that she had become worried that the Secretary was setting up and operating the TV camera, projector, screen and sound equipment alone and she felt that he should have some help. She pointed out that the equipment will be needed in all three upcoming meetings on 24<sup>th</sup> April, 10<sup>th</sup> May and 24<sup>th</sup> May.
- g) Activities Secretary**
- i) Helen Benjamin told the meeting that she was pleased to be back in action again following her recent illness and she expressed her gratitude to all of the Club members who had sent her their best wishes.
  - ii) Helen announced that she is considering setting up a coach trip to Bournemouth in June and she asked members to contact her if they were interested so that she could estimate if the numbers made the trip worthwhile and what size of coach would be needed.
- h) Publicity Secretary**
- i) Chris Sealey explained to the meeting that since he had taken on the role in November he had been "reading in" to the job with information from Chris Brown, his predecessor, and also from other Committee members. He then thanked those Committee members who had shared the role for the 2013 Annual Exhibition.
    - (1) Chris said that he had looked over the possibilities for Club publicity mainly in relation to the annual exhibition and thought there were three broad categories: things we should do; things we should not do; and things we might do.

- (2) Things that we should do included posters, small publicity cards, ads in free papers and local magazines and radio.
- (3) Things that we should not do included ads in the Hampshire Chronicle and similar papers because the consensus is that it is not cost effective.
- (4) Things we might do include investigating whether we can display a banner outside of the Discovery centre, setting out roadside signs; and exploring the potential of social media. On the latter Chris feels the need for instruction - as do we all.

#### **5) Election of Club Officers**

- a) the following have agreed to stand for re-election:
  - i) Chairman – Hilary Archer
  - ii) Vice Chairman – Lucinda Graham
  - iii) Hon. Secretary – Mr. Derek Butler
  - iv) Hon. Treasurer – Mr Simon Churchill
  - v) Hon. Exhibition Secretary – Sheila Bushnell
  - vi) Hon. Activities Secretary - Miss Helen Benjamin
  - vii) Hon. Courses Secretary – Patricia Spink
  - viii) Hon. Membership Secretary – June Mott
  - ix) Hon. Publicity Secretary - Chris Sealey
- b) The Chairman asked members to vote for the officers in a block since there were no opposing candidates.
- c) Chris Brown proposed and Dianna Snagge seconded. The vote was unanimous.

#### **6) Proposal to Elect the Hon. Programme Secretary**

- a) The Chairman opened the discussion and Dianne Reeves volunteered to be helper to the Programme Secretary and Belinda Ward pointed out that she was happy to give a full handover and to follow up with advice when needed. Paul Stovold, whilst not volunteering, having just left a similar position in another club, said that he would be available to give advice and ideas. Christine Compton then agreed to take on the lead role and to fill the position of Programme Secretary with support from Dianne Reeves and help and advice from Belinda Ward and Paul Stovold.

#### **7) Any Other Business**

- a) Proposal for an exhibition at Bursledon Brickworks Museum in July 2014. Hilary Archer told the meeting that herself and the Secretary had visited the Brickworks and seen the new facility that would be used for the exhibition. The management of the Brickworks are planning an open day in July and would like the Club to put on an exhibition to augment the many attractions that will be on show. Hilary said that there would be space for about 70 or 80 small and medium sized pictures on screens that they would provide. In order for the exhibition to run smoothly it would have to be manned by a Club member for the whole time that it was open. The proposed schedule is to hand-in on 16<sup>th</sup> July and exhibit on 17<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> (their gala open day), 23<sup>rd</sup>, 24<sup>th</sup>, 27<sup>th</sup> July: handing-out on 30<sup>th</sup> July. The gallery would be open from 11am until 4 pm each day. The Bursledon management would take 20% commission on sales and would advertise the exhibition with their own publicity. There would be no hanging fee and exhibitors would not have to pay an entry fee to the Museum. Hilary asked the AGM for an indication of those that were interested. About 15 people replied. The Exhibition Secretary will email a selection of Club members to find out how much wider support might be forthcoming. It was concluded that there would be enough interest and that preparations would start. The Club was also offered a painting day for a fee of just £5 by the Bursledon contact. ACTION Exhibition Sec, Chairman and Secretary.
- b) The Secretary drew member's attention to an exhibition sponsored by the Royal Society of Portrait Painters in the Gallery in the Discovery Centre. If this exhibition is seen to be

popular, the organisers will seek funding for a biennial portraiture exhibition and competition. The Secretary encouraged members to visit. Our President, Tony Hunt, made a direct appeal to members for a volunteer to help the Secretary with the equipment that is used at most meetings. No member felt able to volunteer.

The informal competition was won by Marion Bray who received a cheque for £10 from the Club. The runner up was Tony Sexton and Les Nicholson and Hilary Archer were joint third.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 4:00pm.