

**Minutes of the 45th Annual General Meeting of
The Benfleet Camera Club
held at St. George's Church Hall, Benfleet on Monday 23rd
May 2011**

The meeting was opened by the **Chairman** Nick Ford.

Apologies for absence: Keith Payne, Mike and Ursula Fuller, Mike Neville, Janet Neville, Val Thompson, Jim and Rene Abbott, John Everett, Linda Smith, Chris Aldred, Alf Greest.

Minutes of the 44th AGM held on 24th May 2011 were proposed by Don Thompson and seconded by David Portwain.

There were no matters arising.

Chairman's Report

I would like to say that it has been an honour and a pleasure to have been Chairman of Benfleet Camera Club for the second year running and it has been fun as well.

I congratulate the award winners in this year's annual competitions and, as usual, the trophies will be presented at next season's Opening Night which will be Monday, 5th September.

I would like to thank the members of the committee for their support and enthusiasm. They have done a great job in making Benfleet Camera Club a very successful club.

I would also thank those members of the club who help every week in getting the hall ready – Tom, Janet, Don, Chris, Barry, and others. Also to those who come along and help with the catering on opening night, the Christmas party, the Sandown Trophy evening and tonight. Without you all it would be a lot harder to organise.

A vote of thanks to those who support the studio nights in various ways including help with storing, setting up and the dismantling the equipment after each session

I would further like to thank Mike Fuller for his arranging of the tutorial evenings in the summer and for the forthcoming Tuesday evening tutorials.

Last, a special thanks to you, the club members, for your support and enthusiasm, especially those who have given talks or taken up judging at the last moment due to non-appearance of a judge or talk host, without you all, we would not have a club.

It's been especially good to see several of the newer members producing quality work, getting good scores and having their images shown in the inter-club competitions.

This year, at the Annual competition, we saw low levels of entries including no monochromatic prints at entry level. But overall we have seen a diminishing number of entries for Prints and Projected image entries in the Advanced Premier level and most of all from the entry level members and whilst members do not have to enter any of the competitions, I would say that we are primarily a camera club and our constitution states that we exist to promote and encourage photography, section 2 states;

2 Aims and Objectives

- (i) To form a meeting place where members can be stimulated, encouraged and guided in the art of photography to produce images that can give pleasure to themselves and others.
- (ii) To provide members with the facilities for the interchange of ideas and information.
- (iii) These objectives are achieved by holding regular meetings where the club will arrange lectures and presentations by professional and highly experienced amateur photographers. The club will also hold competitions and workshops. In addition, opportunities will be provided for members to exhibit their work within the local community and other photographic clubs.

To be able to compete externally we need the internal competitions to help decide on the prints or images to submit so I would say to those who don't want to enter the internal competitions for whatever reason please do, it will not only help with your own photography but by entering alongside other members it will hopefully help inspire you improve your abilities.

This coming season we are looking to hold more workshops along with Mike's tutorials and studio nights which themselves are workshops in the art of lighting and shadow, plus setting up and learning the different uses of studio kit.

The committee, having looked at the problems with studio nights in obtaining models and getting insufficient members to attend studio nights leading to a tight financial budget, have voted to change the studio nights to 8 in the season with the hiring of a semi-professional model and restricting the numbers who attend the evenings to initially 10 but this can be revised depending on the numbers wanting to attend studio evenings.

This year there are some proposals to be voted on and we will deal with them next.

This year I am standing down as Chairman to allow others a chance at the helm. I hope I have acquitted my term in office well.

Treasurer's Report

Financially, this has been a relatively uneventful year for the club. Membership has remained about the same as last year so that subs, and the significant contribution from the weekly raffle, have given us adequate income to cover costs and produce a small increase to our bank balance. It should be remembered that club equipment, including the studio group lighting etc. and the projector and laptop, is self-insured so that maintaining a healthy bank balance is a prudent precaution.

The Studio Group remains self-funding and, after covering Hall rental etc. has cash in hand. As there will be no Studio Group sessions during the Summer recess, they will also start the coming season in a sound position.

The only significant event this season, so far as club funds are concerned, was that we moved the Club bank account from Halifax to HSBC. This was because of new operating rules imposed by Halifax on the passbook type of account that we had with them which made it totally unsuitable for our needs. We now have an HSBC Community Account, which has a cheque book, for day-to-day operation and which is free of charge. We also opened a 'Business Money Manager' deposit account to gain a little income on our funds.

Although there will be a small increase in Hall rental costs next year and, probably, in expenses claimed by judges and speakers due to fuel costs, the Committee have agreed that we should maintain subscriptions at their current level i.e. £27 for single membership and £40 for joint. (I must stress that we can only do this if members continue to support the weekly raffle. Without this income, subs would have to be increased significantly!)

Lastly, three thank-you's:- First to Barry Thompson for looking after the Studio Group funds, secondly, to Brian Crawley for manning the raffle every week and, lastly, to Ursula and Martin for auditing the accounts. I hope that we can call upon you both to do the same next year.

The accounts were proposed by David Portwain and seconded by Harry Tabcart.

General Secretary's Report

Well another year has passed in the Club's forty-six year history. A year in which there have been few changes. Probably moving on from transparencies to projected images has been one of the major changes since the club began. There have been more entries for this competition than was seen in the last throes of slides and I believe there will be even more entries in future years.

I have missed several Mondays over the past year – one of the reasons for me leaving the post of Secretary – but I feel that the programme for the year has been well received. A fair bit of work has to go into the planning of the following years programme. Being able to get the right judge or speaker on the right day can be difficult. The speakers in general have been fine but when booking them the Programme Secretary does not always know how good they are so if you get a speaker who isn't particularly good don't blame him. The same of course applies to judges.

We get to know who not to invite back for a second time.

Your elected officers and committee have worked well over the past year with regular meetings, discussing matters such as competitions or ways of improving studio nights to memberships.

The size of membership and the regular attendance is a good barometer of how the club is faring.

Studio nights have changed since I first started it back in the eighties. I then used my own studio equipment as well as tungsten lighting. Now the lighting is far superior. Models then came from two local model agencies, both of which have disappeared. We were known by judges who visited us as the portrait club, because of the quality of photos. Recently we seem to be reliant more on members bringing in someone they know. Now the lighting is far superior. The future of the Tuesday nights will be different over the coming year.

The quality of photography in the club as a whole has improved with several members producing some very high quality photography. Wild life pictures and macro photography has increased over the years as well as picture perfect shots and we have the entries that really make you think – do I like it or hate it. This all helps to make this an interesting club to belong to.

I will be sorry to stand down after so many years as Secretary but it is time for someone else to step in and enjoy the post as much as I have and continue to enjoy the friendship of so many photographers.

Changing the subject; since I brought the Benfleet Camera Club to this hall from Hadleigh many years ago we have made good use of the facilities. The managers of the hall have worked very well with us and now the time has come when the church is moving forward to build a new community hall on this site. They have been and will be holding special events to raise money for this project. One of the projects is being held this year on Saturday July 12th. This is to be an old-fashioned type fete and all the users of this hall have been asked to participate. We can take part in two ways.

1. They have asked if we, that is members, could donate any of our saleable photographs for an exhibition in the church and any money made from the sale would go towards the new hall fund. I feel that this is something in which the club could participate, as we must have many prints, even older ones that could help raise money for this project.
1. They have also asked if we would be willing to set up a small studio in the back room of the hall to take photographs of visitors to the fete and profits from the sales of these prints will also go to the Hall fund. I'm sure the cost of materials could be deducted from this so it is not a total out of pocket event.

I feel this is a worthy cause and will help the club in the future – storage facilities being one of them.

Please see me or the Chairman about taking part in this event – don't forget we will all benefit in the end.

Programme Secretary's Report

The Programme Secretary went through the proposed events for the coming year. The members each had a copy of the draft programme. The season's programme was welcomed by the membership although there was a question whether the change of trophy competition each year was a good or a bad thing.

Internal Competition Secretaries Report Kevin Rainbird and Russell Holman)

League Movements.

Entry – Advanced

Alf Greest
Mark Suckling
Glenn Smith
Cheryl Kirby

Advanced - Premier

Kevin Hurdle

Premier - Advanced

Ursula Fuller
Keith Payne

11 people entered in the entry level competitions during the year, 3 of these only entered one of the competitions.

4 regular entrants are being promoted from next season, if we deduct the entries they made, it would leave of an average of 7 entries per competition this year, we feel we need to encourage more people to enter the league competitions at entry level.

For the coming season, of the members who entered the league this year, there will be 21 members in the advanced league and 5 in the premier league.

Trophy Competitions

The trophy competitions this year attracted the following number of entries.

Open Subject	47
Animals Birds and Plants	39
Monochrome Prints	36
Landscape & Seascape	36

Russell and Kevin have enjoyed their first year and are willing to stand again for re-election as Print Competition Secretaries.

External Competition Secretaries Report

Both of us, (Tim Sharman and Nick Ford), as the Joint External Competition Secretaries, would like to thank all the members of the club who kindly loaned their prints and digital images for the external competitions. We have won three to date but the competition from other clubs is becoming very stiff with a very high standard of work being entered, but we acquitted ourselves well and managed to hold our own

maintaining a reasonable position in any competition. The fact that we have been able to draw on Entry level as well as Advanced and Premier work, gave us a greater breadth of work to choose from and it is hoped that the high standard of work can be maintained to help us win next season's batch of competitions.

We look forward to seeing even more excellent work next season and last we would like to mention that it is you, the members and your efforts, we depend on to win these competitions.

It's just the judges.....!!!!

Now for a summary of our results in the external competitions:

We were 2nd with 4 other clubs in the Barking Alan Colman B&W Competition 2010

We Won the Chelmsford-Benfleet battle. 2010

We Won the Sandown Trophy for the 6th time in a row 2011

We Won the Thurrock 3-way competition 2011

We were 3rd for the second year running, in the Essex Inter-club Digital Image Competition 2011

We were 3rd in the Pegasus Competition.2011

We still have these to enter in the new season in September:

The Chelmsford Challenge Shield, 2011

The Chelmsford Benfleet Print Battle, 2011

The Alan Coleman B&W Trophy 2011

This year we have done quite well and I hope our successors will do as well if not better as both Tim and I after 5 years are standing down as External Competition Secretaries.

To receive and consider the Club Rules

To put forward at the AGM the following changes to the Constitution

- a. Amendment to the Constitution Clause 5 Administration: "Honorary Slide Competition Secretary" to be amended to "Honorary Digital Image Competition Secretary"
- b. That the term of the Chairman be changed to two years office and then must stand down before re-election and can only remain Chairman for three years running
- c. An addition to the Constitution being an additional appendix listing the positions and outlining the description of duties of Officers and Committee members so that all members could view
- d. To create a new Honorary Membership Secretary to be responsible for new and possible new members

- e. To create a new Honorary Press Liaison Officer

All the above were carried

To put forward at the AGM the following changes to the Print Rules

A To split the Advanced and Premier Sections already on the tables into real sections for Judging; so on a League Competition the judge will judge entry level, Advanced Level and Premier level, this is to realise the original idea of the advanced members having a chance to win the advanced level competitions as at the moment they feel they cannot compete with premier level members under on judging section. To this end I also propose that a further Three (3) top Advanced level members be advanced to Premier level in addition to those already going up to give reasonable competition at that level and to compensate for those going down according to the rules.

Carried

b To clarify the Annual Print and Projected Image competition see print rules but a member can enter 3 in the colour section, 3 in the Mono section and 3 in the PDI section if they wish but the same, or similar as to be seen as the same, image cannot be put into all three. In the annual Mono the print must be B&W no tones and no colour popping these will be regarded as colour entries and rejected for the Mono

Carried

c To put to the AGM whether in the Trophy Competitions we keep existing subjects, change to a new set of titles still covering the subjects and introduce a yearly changing subject.

This was discussed for some while and the proposals regarding the Trophy competitions were that it was agreed to retain an open Mono and a Natural History with the 2 other subjects rotating every year. This was proposed by Tom Peacock and seconded by Harry Tabear. It was accepted after this.

Carried

The current Committee members stood down.

The Election of Officers and Committee Members for 2011/2012 took place

Chairman: Mike Barrett

Vice Chairman: TBA

Treasurer: Chris Buck

General Secretary: Barry Thompson

Assistant Secretary: Clive Pike

Programme Secretary: Kevin Hurdle

Membership Secretary: Cheryl Kirby

Print Competition Secretaries: Russell Holman/Kevin Rainbird

External Competition Secretaries: To be shared

Digital Competition Secretary: Mike Fuller

Webmaster: Keith Payne

Press Liaison: Harry Tabcart

Committee Members: Nick Ford, Tim Sharman

Appointment of Auditors: Martin Fullard and Ursula Fuller

Any other business

It was proposed that a list of all members, with telephone numbers and emails, be made available to all club members. Any member not wishing to take part in this may refuse.

The meeting closed at 10.00 pm