

The 100<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Lancashire & Cheshire Photographic Union was held at 2.30pm on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> February at the Ormskirk School.

The meeting opened with a minute's silence for those who had sadly died during the past year.

They were:

**Ian Law**, President of Oldham Camera Club and a member of the L&CPU Executive Committee

**Brian Proctor**, Competition Secretary for both Prestwich Co-op CC and Wilmslow Guild AV Group.

**Graham Schofield**, Secretary of Hassra Fylde and Committee member of the Joint Fylde association.

**Trevor Harrison**, Lecturer and Judge from North Cheshire PS

**Stan Davies**, Life member of the L&CPU and member of Bolton CC

**The President, David Marsh FRPS Hon PAGB opened the meeting** and welcomed all those present.

After the Minutes of the 99<sup>th</sup> AGM had been approved, he invited the **General Secretary, Christine Widdall DPAGB, to give her report.**

The Executive Committee had met six times during the past year.

It was with great personal sadness that she had to report the death of one of the members of the committee, Ian Law. During his time on the committee he had proved to be a capable and able colleague with a keen wit and dry sense of humour – he will be sadly missed.

Another member leaving the committee at this AGM is John Dougherty APAGB.

John has been our Competition Secretary for a good number of years and was an extremely popular and hard working President of the Union in 2001/2. He underwent an operation at the end of last year – it was rumoured that this was to separate him from Bob Dennis who many had said were joined together at the hip!!!!

Much of the correspondence to the Secretary arrived by email – this was opened each day - but she asked that if someone had not received an acknowledgement within a couple of days to contact her again to verify that it had in fact arrived.

All the club details are securely stored in a database on a stand-alone computer – this is kept by Gordon Jenkins and is regularly updated to ensure that it is accurate. The information in this database is provided from the Annual Returns – last year a great many hours were wasted chasing up the 20% of clubs who were late sending these in. In an attempt to get the new Directory to the clubs for the start of the season in September the forms are being sent out now with the request that they are completed and returned before the end of April.

Last year's returns show that membership has increased slightly from 3043 in 2004 to 3181 in 2005.

Extra Directories are available at £2 per copy and we also have a few of the PAGB Directories at £6.

**Next up to the podium was the Treasurer, Norman Thompson DPAGB to report on the finances.**

Last year only three clubs were late in paying their subscriptions - this year 17 had not paid by the due date and 7 were still outstanding after the 14<sup>th</sup> January.

Commenting on the balance sheet he pointed out that the PAGB subscriptions have gone up from £20 to £22 per member club. The costs of Exhibitions, Competitions and Publications have all increased but this was due primarily to us hosting the 2005 PAGB Print Competition and Exhibition – something we only do every 15 years.

Our Centenary Celebration expenditure was slightly lower than anticipated however there will be further costs to come in when the Exhibition is moved around the region. The Centenary Booklet went on sale through the clubs priced at just £3.50 with 50p as commission going to the club.

To keep our finances healthy, he deferred some capital expenditure this year and there have been savings of around £300 in the EC budget. Savings have also been achieved in the costs of staging both the Delegates and Annual General Meetings.

The Big Day made a slight loss this year – it is the first year time that this has happened but it was a brilliant day and the excellent speakers from the PAGB Committee enjoyed their time with us.

On the plus side we have received more interest on our Standard Life deposit account.

The Treasurer proposed that the subscription should rise by 15p per member with a flat £1 increase for clubs of 10 members or less. This proposal was passed with 2 against and 1 abstention.

Before going on to the Sub-Section reports the President commented that he hoped that more copies of the Centenary Book would be sold. There was apparently some confusion that any unsold ones had to be returned immediately – this was not the case as the print exhibition would be touring the region until early 2008 and this booklet, whilst recording the history of the Union, also acted as a catalogue for this exhibition. Whilst mentioning publications we have recently had requests to re-publish the J. B. Dancer booklet and these have now gone on sale at £3.

One final point – the 3<sup>rd</sup> showing of the Centenary Exhibition was scheduled to be at the Helmshore Mills, Rossendale but due to ongoing building works, the exhibition will now go on show at the Queen Street Mills Exhibition Centre, Burnley.

**The Folio Secretary, George Smethurst, gave the first report.**

The Folios have been well received with no criticism of their content, however one print was found to have changed colour since being exhibited in the annual exhibition.

At the last AGM George had asked for clubs to give the committee feedback on the following:

What is the future of the slide portfolio?

Should the print folio be put onto disc?

Should all the folios be sent out on one computer disc so that the clubs could view them when they want?

These ideas and the reasoning behind them were published in a discussion document written by David Marsh but so far only 8 clubs have given us their opinion. He asked that these suggestions should be fully discussed and for the clubs to let us know their views.

He concluded his report by thanking all the clubs who had kindly made the commentaries and Henry Mullarkey for his help in producing the final tapes and CD's.

The President commented that it was inevitable that changes would have to be made – if only because he did not know how long companies would continue to produce slide-duplicating film. As for the prints, it would be easier for the clubs in not having to transport them around, they would be easier for the members at the back of the room to see, all the selected prints could be seen rather than only half and we could show this year's PAGB entry rather than having to use the ones from the previous year. We need a bigger response and sufficient feedback so that a decision can be made. Norman Piper asked if it was acceptable to respond via the website – he was told yes it was.

**The next report was on Competitions and was given by George Steele LRPS CPAGB.**

58 clubs took part in the Annual Competitions with an entry of 1874 prints and 1449 slides. He thanked Gordon Jenkins and Ian Aldcroft from Chorley PS for all their hard work in handling the computerised scoring and results on the two judging days.

21 clubs took part in the Knockout Slide Competition which was hosted by South Manchester Camera Club and held at the Civic Hall, Poynton.

Our entrants to the PAGB Club Slide Championships at Warwick were South Manchester CC, Southport PS and qualifying from last year's competition, Wigan 10 Foto Club.

The worthy winners of the Championship were Wigan 10 and our two other clubs contested the 'Plate' competition. The winner of this competition was South Manchester CC with Southport coming 2<sup>nd</sup>.

In the Print Championship, held at Connahs Quay, South Manchester CC came 2<sup>nd</sup> with Southport PS equal 6<sup>th</sup>.

At the PAGB Inter-Federation Slide Competition we came 3<sup>rd</sup> with 21 acceptances, 3 PAGB Ribbons and the Silver Medal was awarded to Eb Swarbrick.

We organised this year's PAGB Inter-Federation Print Competition and won both the Colour and Monochrome sections. The winner of both the Gold Medals was Roy Rimmer of Wigan 10.

On the 11<sup>th</sup> March we are running three competitions in one day – one to choose our entrants to the PAGB Club Slide Championship, the PAGB Club Print Championship and a new Individual Projected Image Competition. At this time we have 115 entrants and around 460 images for this competition.

For this year's Annual Print Competitions we have taken a relaxed view on sizes – a maximum size of 20x16 with no minimum size – however entrants must remember that the prints are judged from a distance.

George concluded his report by saying that the entry forms can be downloaded from the website.

A member from Hyde asked if the projected image competition was going to be permanent

The President replied that he hoped so but to ensure that the image was presented as the author intended there was a need for standardisation of both the digital files and projectors.

The PAGB was currently liaising with the RPS on this matter – Bob Dennis pointed out that they were both watching the BPE's!

Norman Piper of SLIC made the point that each entrant's monitor also needed to be calibrated.

**Henry Mullarkey then gave the AV report.**

The 2006 L&CPU competition and showing of sequences was held at Ormskirk on the 18<sup>th</sup> February.

This year there was only one section with 26 digital sequences from 8 clubs. 11 sequences were by new authors however last year there were 13 new authors – he hoped that they hadn't been put off entering!

The judge, Keith Brown FRPS MPAGB from Hope, Derbyshire, gave some excellent constructive comments on the sequences which varied in time from 12minutes to just 30 seconds – so much so that the sequences with a total running time of 2hs and 45mins took around 5 hours to show!

The winner was Colin Balls FRPS of Wilmslow Guild AV for 'This is a Town' – the Jackass Trophy, for those who had not previously won an award, went to Mike Lawrence DPAGB and Christine Widdall DPAGB of Oldham PS for 'Towards Distinctions'.

The winner of the National AV Championship held at Buxton was Ron Davies of Wilmslow Guild AV Group, they once again became the Championship Club and the L&CPU were the winning Federation.

**Next up was Bob Dennis CPAGB APAGB, the Lecturers and Judges Secretary** who reported that numbers were down. Currently there were 65 lecturers, a loss of 3 and 59 judges, again a loss of 3.

There are many speakers who visit clubs who are not on our lists – he asked that clubs let him know who they are and he will do the rest. In an attempt to add more judges onto the list we are holding a Judges Seminar in Rochdale – presently there are 22 people registered for this but there is room for more. In the morning there will be two lectures and in the afternoon those attending will get together with some of our more experienced judges and there will also be the opportunity to try using the silent scoring system. After the last Seminar, 8 people were added to the list.

He concluded his report by reminding clubs of a couple of niggles that he mentioned last year, firstly if clubs book and confirm a lecturer or judge by email they must also confirm it by 'snail mail'. The second point was that quite a number of clubs are not acknowledging photographic distinctions in the club's Syllabus – please ensure that this is done.

The President made the additional comment regarding reminders – his view was if there was no reminder, then just don't go. Also an up to date map showing all the one-way streets is often of great use to a Lecturer or Judge when visiting a strange town.

**Keith Suddaby FRPS MPAGB ABPE EFIAP then gave the Events Report.**

The last Big Day was held almost twelve months ago – it was held at the beginning of 2005 so that it would not clash with our Centenary celebrations. 300 people attended – this was slightly down on previous years and because of this the day might a slight loss – an extra 20 or 30 people would make all the difference.

Our speakers were some of the members of the PAGB Executive Committee who had thoroughly enjoyed taking part. Peter Brown, the PAGB President showed the FIAP Biennial pictures and afterwards 36 copies were distributed and orders taken for more! Both theatres were buzzing throughout the day and the 'Bring a Print' competition judged by our speakers proved very popular. This year's 'Big Day of Find Your Way' will be held at Lancaster on 8<sup>th</sup> October and tickets would go on sale at the Delegates Meeting in June.

**John Smith CPAGB, the Exhibitions Officer** reminded the meeting that he inherited this position at last year's AGM and at first things did not go smoothly.

The first problem he encountered when looking at the calendar was that our Annual Print Exhibition consisting of 360 prints was to due to go on show to the public at the World of Glass on the 16<sup>th</sup> June

but then just 2 weeks later on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July the PAGB Print Exhibition – some 150 framed prints - had to go on show at the same venue!

On contacting the gallery to see if another date was available for our own exhibition he discovered that the room we had traditionally used for our Delegates Meeting and the exhibition opening had not been booked for either event and that they were now asking a considerable sum for the use of the room.

Discussions took place and we finally got an agreement that the charges would be waived but still the problem of the closeness of the two exhibitions remained.

The decision was made that we would leave as much of our own exhibition in place after the two weeks so that anyone visiting the PAGB one could also see part of our own – not an ideal situation - but the best we could do in the circumstances.

Thanks go Jo Hayward, the exhibitions officer at the World of Glass, for all her help in arranging the exhibitions and special thanks go to the people who came along to hang and take down the two exhibitions. They were colleagues, Christine Widdall, Henry Mullarkey, George Smethurst, Ian Stewart, Norman Thompson and David Marsh and from Wigan 10, David Butler and Ed Roper – without all their hard work the exhibitions would not have gone on show.

After five years of planning the Centenary Exhibition finally came to fruition with the opening ceremony on the 5<sup>th</sup> November at Salford Art Gallery.

The PAGB President, Rod Wheelans, officially opened the exhibition and also in attendance were the Presidents of some of our neighbouring Federations and many past Presidents of our own Union.

Congratulations go to:

- our President, David Marsh for arranging the whole event, cutting mats and framing the whole exhibition and producing the superb Centenary Book.
- to Norman Thompson, Ed Roper and Dave Butler for helping with the hanging of the exhibition.
- To all the galleries who have offered to show the exhibition which will travel around the region until early 2008.

The opening of this year's annual exhibition is on Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> June at the World of Glass, St Helens and the exhibition remains on show until Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> July.

John concluded his report by asking those present for their help in trying to find a gallery - we have recently been offered a showing of this year's PAGB exhibition when another Federation had to give back word - the dates are mid- October until the end of November.

#### **John then went on to give his report as Focal Points Editor.**

Unfortunately there have only been two issues of the magazine this year.

This is in part due to having to provide an additional publication that took up quite a bit of our time – the PAGB Print Exhibition catalogue. You may remember that in 2005 we were the organisers of the competition. Then of course Gordon Jenkins and himself also had to produce the L&CPU Annual Exhibition catalogue and the Directory.

With his many other commitments, time is unfortunately at a premium.

Compiling and editing the magazine wouldn't be too large a task if one didn't have to actually write most of it! Each year, through the pages of the magazine and again at this meeting, John asked for clubs to send him reports of their activities - when and where do they hold their Annual Exhibition, what speakers have they had or are due to have, are they gaining or losing members, what are their members asking the club to provide, what have been their successes or failures, maybe they could write an article on their photographic outings, the latest techniques.....in fact anything that might be of interest to others in the Union. In the main his plea tends to fall on deaf ears!

As a Union we must be doing things right as it is quite some time since we had any controversial 'Letters to the Editor'. We know that many issues are discussed in the forum on our website – why not give them a wider airing by also discussing them in the magazine for all those who do not visit the site?

Another time consuming part of the job is the distribution of the magazine, the managing of the individual subscriptions and the task of firstly finding advertisers and then obtaining the advertising

revenue. To this end he is hoping that one of his colleagues on the EC may help with this side of the 'business' during this coming year.

So this year's end of term report reads – John has had a reasonably successful year but needs to try harder.

**Another man with two hats then took to the podium - Gordon Jenkins gave a report on the Website** and his first question to those present was who looks at it?

During the past twelve months the site has gone through a radical update at no expense to the Union. By the end of 2005 we were having 200 visits per day and on Christmas Eve, 3200 hits – you sad lot!!! From the site one can download posters, entry forms and rules for all our competitions in PDF format. We have been allowed to have the PAGB Newsletter on our site and because the site is updated each Monday morning we even have the members of the PAGB looking at it to find out what's on! Thanks go to Ed Roper, Ian Aldcroft and Marion Waine for all their hard work on the site – please get your club to let us know all your news.

**Then it was Gordon Jenkins, our newly appointed representative on the PAGB Committee.**

It was his sad duty to report the death of the Patron of the PAGB – The Right Honourable, the Earl of Lichfield. The PAGB Secretary had sent a letter of condolence.

The cost of PAGB Medals was being increased to £10 and for those applying for FIAP distinctions, the cost would be £56 plus a Photographers Card at £36.

This year's FIAP Congress is to be held in China and will be attended by the PAGB President.

It was a privilege to represent the L&CPU at the PAGB especially this year when we had won this and that – well done to all the clubs who have taken part.

The PAGB have set up a sub-committee to look into the standards for Digital Projection and they hope to have a report together later in the year.

There have been many reports in the press and discussions in Parliament of the problems associated with taking photographs of children. The PAGB and the RPS have been involved in these discussions and are proposing to issue a 'Photographers Permit'

Gordon has taken over from David Marsh as the PAGB's Insurance Officer.

He concluded his report by reminding clubs who have taken out the PAGB Public Liability insurance of the ongoing need to let the L&CPU Treasurer, Norman Thompson, have a copy of their current Syllabus and to notify him of any forthcoming special events so that they fully comply with the terms and conditions on the policy.

From the floor the following questions were posed - what about clubs who do not have a Syllabus?

Norman Piper from SLIC asked whether 6 or 8 people going in two cars to the Big Day classed as a club outing?

The answer was that, to be safe, anything out of the ordinary should be advised to the Treasurer Doug Couzens from Lytham commented that there was no definition of 'special events'.

**The last of the reports was on the Loan Collection and given by John Dougherty APAGB**

Only four folios from the collection have been out this year and two of those went to clubs in North Wales. He reminded the meeting that clubs can borrow any of the slide portfolios since 1991 and there are slide copies of print portfolios going back to 1910 – all they pay is the cost of the postage.

This concluded his last report as Loan Collection Secretary – he was handing over the job to James Hardy.

He thanked all the members of the Union for their support during his time as Loan Secretary, his years as Competition Secretary and when he was President – but have no fear, for JD was not about to disappear!

The President, on behalf of the membership, thanked John for all he had done for the Union.

**Harry Emmett of Accrington CC on behalf of the members gave the Vote of Thanks to the EC.**

He recounted the story of the shoemaker and the elves making the point that these elves however looked after lots of shoemakers and that the competition entry forms, folios, details of events all arrived at his house as if by magic!

Clubs do not have to complain to get things done – but seldom say thank you when they are done. It was therefore his pleasure on behalf of all the shoemakers in the Union to sincerely thank all the elves for the work they do.

In his reply the President thanked all the members of the committee for supporting him during the past year and making our Centenary such a success.

The President then took the opportunity to present a CPAGB certificate to Fernley Stribling of Morecambe PS and PAGB Slide Acceptances to Chloe Johnson of Poulton CC, Kathryn Scolah of Southport PS, and Bob Dennis of Bebington PS. Two acceptances went to Ed Roper and Dave Butler of Wigan 10 Foto Club and a PAGB silver Medal to Eb Swarbrick of Bury PS.

**The next item on the agenda was the Election of Officers** for the coming year and these were voted in en-bloc.

**Item 10 was the election of Committee Members** and these too were voted in en-bloc.

**The final item on the agenda was the election of the Honorary Auditor** – the person who had kindly agreed to carry out this task was Linda Topping of Bury PS.

**The date of the next AGM is to be 24<sup>th</sup> February 2007.**

Well there it is – my recollections of the AGM!

Please note that these are not the official ‘Minutes’ and any errors or omissions are just that.....

Why not put the date of next years meeting in your diary now (yes now!) and then maybe I won’t have to spend the time taking down all these notes again.

John Smith  
Focal Points Editor