



## Programme Secretary's Report

May 2021

The end of the previous season had required us to use Zoom for a couple of meetings but we had no indication of how long the lockdown was going to be. The remote experience was built on by Gary Wood running a "Just For Fun" competition on a weekly basis through the summer closure and this was quite well supported and was supplemented by Peter Lawrence creating bespoke musical accompaniment.

By the time the season proper was due to get underway there were already lockdowns operating and we were forced to cancel the physical exhibition at the Atkins Building, instead converting it to an on-line exhibition.

We did, however, manage to do the previous season's AGM at the Constitutional Club before it was forced to close.

I started to work on the basis of the lockdown being of a temporary nature so the first few weeks were converted to Zoom meetings by dropping the Andrzej Jablonski masterclass and the Mix n Match with Hinckley PS and adding two Zoom speakers, Glyn Edmunds with a presentation on African Wildlife and Lee Sutton on his photographic journey. Similarly the Secretary's Challenge was done on-line but using the already booked judge, Bob Moore

We now knew we could operate successfully via zoom so I was able to keep all the Photographer of the Year competitions unchanged except for the review evenings which were now unnecessary as Gary

circulated to images in advance and the review was therefore the competition evening.

This led to a number of spare evenings to fill.

I then added two more Zoom speakers, Julian Elliott from France, Mike Martin and Joe Houghton who gave us a Lightroom masterclass from Dublin, interspersed with the MCPF Travelling Portfolio which had been converted to digital images.

We were able to undertake the Cedar's Challenge thanks to Dave Tucker, the booked judge doing it remotely

At this stage of the season it was seeming increasingly unlikely that we would be getting back to face to face meetings for the foreseeable future so I then worked on bringing in more on-line speakers to fill the gaps. This was aided by signing up to the UK Zoom Register which allowed me to browse and select speakers and judges from a national database and worked well.

We then had Janey Lazenby give a very well received talk on textures and Sue Clark on 174 years of Photoshopping, then Gareth Martin with his "In the Making"

After the Christmas break, which saw us having to cancel the social evening, we had the Trevor Wain UK Landscape competition judged remotely by Chris Baldwin followed by a talk from Paddy Ruske with his "Back Garden Naturalist"

At this time I also canvassed members with the option to fill vacant evenings with their own presentations and this was very successfully filled in with James Botterill on Artificial Intelligence in software and Rob Jones on his Astrophotography

We then had a remote talk from Tal Chohan on "Sandwell to India wildlife"

We were able to run both our external inter-club competitions via Zoom with Anne Sutcliffe who had already been booked for the Fosse Challenge and Pat Couder who stepped in for the Ashby challenge after the previously booked judge dropped out.

We then had Dave Mason with a talk on Street Photography called “I Shoot People”, Geoff Reader on the “Art of Portrait” and finished off with two very highly recommended, nationally known speakers in Polina Plotnikova with her talk on Creative Still Life and Andrea Hargreaves with a talk called “Art of Metamorphosis”

The season finished with our Image of the Year Competition being judged by David Kissman, another fairly late booking owing to the booked judge dropping out.

Overall a very challenging season but thanks to Gary and Daniel operating the Zoom talks and the nationally available speakers and judges we ended up with an extremely varied and interesting programme.

The programme for next season has been created on the basis of returning to normal so I am hopeful we will return to normal and look forward to meeting members face to face, especially those who were new to us this year.

Ian Waite