

2022 WPF 50th Anniversary Convention - Report to the 2023 WPF AGM.

1 BACKGROUND

For 2 years we had held zoom based Virtual Conventions that were well attended and supported, but the social interactions of the physical event and to a lesser extent the Print competition, were sorely missed. The 50th Anniversary spurred us to try and restart the Convention with direct physical contact once again between Delegates, Speakers and Sponsors.

It was noted that although people looked forward to a physical restart many were still risk averse and not prepared to commit to physical attendance. This aversion extended to Speakers too but eventually we were able to find 4 who agreed to make in-person presentations.

For the most risk averse we planned a hybrid configuration whereby they would be able to use zoom to “tune-in” for the formal Presentations.

It was agreed by the Executive that for this the 50th Anniversary and first post-covid year that there should be no charge for admission to the physical Convention or for online access.

2 OBJECTIVES.

After the ravages and isolation of 2 years of Covid our primary objective was to restart the physical Convention with On-site Speakers and Delegates, and normal social interactions. The overall brief to the Speakers was to stimulate Club Photography especially Printing.

Secondary was to broadcast the Event, restore the Print Competition and to mark the 50th Anniversary.

3 LOCATION

We were unable to return to Trinity St Davids as their minimum capacity and flexibility were incompatible with our needs. Accordingly we sought a smaller more flexible conference facilities provider in a more central location.

The Heronston Hotel in Bridgend provided the necessary minimum of facilities to enable us to proceed with the event. (With hindsight we might have gone for a larger room but with the reluctance of Delegates to commit in advance that was not feasible. Expected attendances were 40 in person and 40 by zoom; in practice this was more like 30/20 on the day with the zoomed 20 dropping further into the second day).

4 SPEAKERS

Joining us in Bridgend, we were pleased to present:

Leigh Preston, FRPS, MPAGB, EFIAP, FIPF who under the heading of *“Is This It?” took a wry look at the UK, from the eyes of a middle aged grump and liberal extremist....*

Sue O’Connell FIPF, DPAGB, ABPE, EFIAP/d3 and Peter Brisley ARPS, EFIAP, DPAGB, BPE2, related some of their *“Traveller’s Tales” together with Peter’s “Shenanigans” and Sue’s “Travels in Ethiopia”.....*

Chris Palmer FRPS, DPAGB, APAGB, EFIAP spoke of *"The Eloquent Landscape" - of his experiences in the landscapes of Iceland and the UK, of his connections to the natural world and the elements within it.*

I am sure I speak for all of us when I say we were delighted with the contributions of each of these 4 Speakers which emphasised getting out there and taking photographs and then turning them into fine art Prints!

I think I should again remark the sheer entertainment (but perhaps sometimes politically incorrect) impact of Leigh Preston.

5 PRINT COMPETITION/TROPHY

One of the lighter yet more competitive moments in the Convention weekend is the Award of the Shield. We asked Dennis Russ (the then current Shield holder) and speaker Chris Palmer to comment on the entries and select this year's Shield winner who turned out to be our own Paul James with "Desperation". On behalf of the WPF Executive, Chris Palmer FRPS presented Dennis with a special Welsh Slate Plaque (designed by Susan Surridge) recording the occasion and recognising the contribution made by this 4 times winner of the trophy.

(Our thanks go to all those who entered the Prints that made it such a sparkling competition).

6 MOMENTOES

To mark the 50th Anniversary of the WPF Convention and in accordance with the wishes of the Executive, laser engraved Welsh Slate coasters (designed by Susan Surridge) were given to all Attendees of the Convention at the Heronston.

7 COSTS

As previously noted Delegates to the Convention were able to attend or tune in without charge. They also received free refreshments of tea, coffee and iced water during the day. Other incidental meals, residence or drinks were their own responsibility. The Speakers did not charge professional fees but we reimbursed their travel and subsistence costs. The overall cost of the event was £1752 which on this occasion was not offset by any income.

8 BROADCASTS

There were difficulties with the zoom broadcast transmission on day one. These were addressed and an acceptable level achieved as the event progressed.

There were a number of factors that combined to cause difficulty, some outside our control - these included Apple/PC presentations compatibility (which we had been assured would not arise) and possibly hotel/BT bandwidth issues. Meanwhile a possible Projector/PC calibration mismatch (although not visible to everybody) was our responsibility. A separate report on these technical issues was issued internally.

I offer apologies for any disappointment.

9 EQUIPMENT

Not all items of Equipment were located and/or available through normal channels. We are indebted to the individuals who made good the situation on a personal basis.

Ideally we would have the luxury of a dress rehearsal but that would increase Event and personal expenses by a (probably) prohibitive amount.

10 THANKS

I need to thank the members of the Convention Working Party for the time, effort and expense committed to planning and manning the Convention – namely Sue and John Surrige, Dave Condon and Ed Cloutman. Les Loosemore and Peter Young who stepped up to bridge the “equipment gap”. Our sponsors Davies Photolab and Fotospeed, (represented by Andrew Roberts and Tim Jones respectively) for discounts and ongoing support. Trevor Waller and Cardiff CC for insights into conference facilities around the Capital. Our Speakers and Dennis Russ for an entertaining and informative weekend. Others already mentioned (Jenny, Peter, Les), together with Julie Morgan for their thoughtful Votes of Thanks to our Speakers. Jenny Hibbert and Sue Surrige for their splendid handling of the Opening and Closing formalities. The Executive committee whose ongoing support and encouragement makes it possible. Last but not least you, Delegates and Attendees, without whom the Event is meaningless.

David D Jones - WPF Conventions Secretary