

# **2023 WPF 51<sup>st</sup> Convention**

## **Report to the 2024 WPF AGM.**

### **1 BACKGROUND**

2022 was the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the WPF Convention and had restored direct physical exchanges between Delegates, Speakers and Sponsors at the Event after the Covid isolation years of 2020 and 2021.

Although people looked forward to the restart many were still risk averse and reserved their position with respect to physical attendance. “Perhaps I will attend next year” was an often repeated response when people were asked if they were Attending.

For 2022 the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and first post-covid year there was no charge for admission. The Convention was held over 2 days at the Heronston Hotel in Bridgend and 55 delegates made for a quite full small conference room.

### **2 OBJECTIVES**

Our aim was to build upon the success and turnout of 2022 to provide a bigger, better, back to normal, event with Inspirational speakers at a comfortable, easy access location; and all at a sensible affordable price. The overall brief to the Speakers was to try to communicate the motivation for their Photography and how it supported their ongoing mental and physical health.

### **3 LOCATION**

Despite further site visits and enquiries, suitable Conference venues remain scarce and tend to be advance booked.

Bridgend itself is reasonably at the centre of the Federation area and served by the M4 motorway.

The Heronston Hotel in Bridgend had provided the facilities to stage the 2022 event and we just about coped using their smaller conference room. Hoping for an increased turnout we hired their larger Conference room for 2023. Adequate rooms and meals for the Speakers and resident Delegates were available at typical 3 – 4 star hotel rates.

### **4 PRESENTERS**

Joining us in Bridgend, we were pleased to introduce:

#### **Vanda Ralevska FRPS**

Who spoke to her background in Industrial Europe and her need to connect with nature. (*The Scenic Detours*)

#### **Andrew McCarthy FRPS**

His work affords him wide and exceptional access to rare and endangered species in addition to those that most of us might photograph. (*Photographing British Mammals, Reptiles, Amphibians and Insects*)

## **Bill Ward**

Bill is another person for 80% of his working week – that is the life of a professional actor! He counteracts this madness by escaping to the coasts of the North East England where he reconnects with nature and reality. His imagination is allowed to run free with his use of creative in-camera techniques. (*In Search of... Contemporary Seascapes, Landscapes and Cityscapes Creative Photography projects - ICM, In-camera Multiple Exposures, and Abstract*)

## **Blair Jones**

Blair is one of those people more admired than emulated – he will be hidden in a camouflaged hide on the riverbank in a chilly predawn light while the rest of us are tucked up in warm beds. No wonder he captures outstanding images that the rest of us only dream of. (*Landscapes and Wildlife in Gwent & The Drone in the Landscape*)

There was very positive feedback that they had been an exceptional set of speakers both in style and content with Vanda and Bill receiving accolades for their Presentation.

## **5 PRINT COMPETITION/TROPHY**

One of the lighter yet more competitive moments in the Convention weekend is the Award of the Shield (and the 4 packs of Printing papers donated by Fotospeed). We asked Presenter Bill Ward to comment on the entries and select this year's Shield winner - he selected the printed image of Dennis Russ (already a repeat winner of this Award – 6 times??). (Our thanks go to all those who entered the Prints that made it such an interesting contest). We must also note the attendance of Tim Jones and ongoing support in the form of Print surgery and Discounts from Fotospeed. Davies Colour Photo Prolab (Cardiff) also kindly extended promotional discounts to attendees.

## **6 ATTENDANCE**

90% of the 2023 attendees held Day tickets but there were less in overall numbers (45) than 2022 (55). This despite a firm push on promoting the event and flexible pricing available ranging from a two day package through to a half day (single session) attendance.

Bridgend is central to the geography of the WPF region and this made a day visit a practical proposition for the most if not all members of the WPF.

The attendance numbers were disappointing and we need to further engage with Clubs to try and better understand the reasons for this. No complaints were made against any aspect of the Convention, indeed just the opposite with Vanessa Ralevski and Bill Ward receiving outstanding ovations for their Presentations.

Total number of Attendees 45

Early birds 14

weekenders 7

saturday single session 3

Sunday all day 9

Sunday single session 2

one day individual sessions 10

## **7 COSTS**

Delegates to the Convention were able to take advantage of a discount for “Early bird 2day/weekend” purchases (equating to £15 for the day) or avail themselves of single sessions (morning or afternoon) or single day tickets. Included were mid session refreshments of tea, coffee and biscuits or welsh cakes. Some delegates ate out and others brought a packed lunch and ate at the hotel. Hotel meals, residence or bar drinks were the responsibility of the individual concerned.

The overall expenditure on the event in 2022 was £1752 which was not offset by any income.  
2023 was £1778 offset by £960 of ticket sales.  
Hence the loss for 2023 was £818.

### Expenditure

Hire of Hotel £ 755.00 (Conference Room, tea, coffee, biscuits)  
Expenses £ 1,022.65 (Presenters, Accommodation and meals, travel)  
Total £ 1,777.65

### Income

Ticket sales £ 959.71

Loss £ 817.94

## **9 EQUIPMENT**

We thank all those involved in transporting, setting up and taking down the Projection, Computing and Display equipment necessary for the success of the presentations and the competition. We are particularly indebted to Les Loosemore whose Illuminated Print stands were used to such good effect throughout the weekend.

Ideally we would have the luxury of a dress rehearsal but that would increase Event and personal expenses by a 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, Dave Condon, Les Loosemore, Pat Hollis, Ed Cloutman, John Surrige. Our sponsors Davies Photolab and Fotospeed, (represented by Andrew Roberts and Tim Jones) for discounts and ongoing support. Our Speakers and Print competition winner Dennis Russ for an entertaining and informative weekend. Others already mentioned (Les, Jenny, Trevor and Gary Shinner, for their insightful Votes of Thanks to our Speakers. Jenny Hibbert for standing in for our President at the Opening and Closing formalities. The Executive committee whose ongoing support and encouragement makes all possible. Last but not least you, the Delegates and Attendees, without whom the Event is meaningless.

David D Jones - WPF Conventions Secretary  
17/1/2024