

Presidents Report 2023/24

Dear Member

Introduction

This will be my last annual summary as Club President and I have been looking back at my previous 13 reports. My very first one in 2014 for the previous year included...

Whilst we have Charitable Objectives we must review and adopt robust business practices to ensure that we operate economically and efficiently, whilst ensuring we maximise our income generating opportunities. This is no change to what has always happened but we have given a little more focus to some areas this year.

In regard to income generation then there were some "low hanging fruit" opportunities. Hence the arrival of the Elavon credit card machine, which has been popular with the public and undoubtedly resulted in increased sales activity.

I doubt that our focus will ever change. We continue to forensically examine ways to improve how we operate the Club and I have always been conscious that there needs to be more focus given to the duties and responsibilities that lie with the Trustees.

So I will now have more time to focus on reviewing our Mission Statement , objectives and strategies for achievement plus updating our policies and protocols. We also need to pursue grant opportunities which are laborious and time consuming but so essential for ensuring the building remains in good repair and condition.

I have also agreed to adopt the role of Entertainments Officer which will encompass organising and over-seeing all bookings for the Upstairs premises - both internal and external.

As Trustee I shall also continue to work closely with the Management Committee to deliver a planned and reactive maintenance programme for the building.

So I shall still be around for some time yet but I am delighted to hand over the role of President to Chris O'Reilly who has completely re-organised the back office functions over the past 3 years into a highly efficient system of administration.

Year in Review

In other AGM reports precise data will be included in regard to weekly occupation , revenue etc so suffice to say that we have had our busiest year on record in regard to the Exhibition space and September Festival events.

The Exhibition space closed shortly before Christmas with a month long Festive Exhibition of 22 members work

We also hosted Christmas concerts by Carly and Sven as first time visitors to the club and the traditional Molly Hocking Festive extravaganza.

In this past year we have hosted exhibitions by over 10 new member artists which helped to ensure we had hardly any free weeks over the membership year.

At the August bank holiday Mirva Theatre - based at Falmouth University - put on "*A Bone to Pick*" which proved very popular with tourists and they will hopefully return next summer with a new offering.

The September Festival was our boldest and busiest program ever - probably too many events! - but was so well supported by visitors and it was pleasing to receive such positive feedback. The Club benefitted from an early and persistent marketing programme devised by our Events Manager - Jo Grant .It was also our most profitable 2 week festival and we are already making plans for next year!

Summary

As ever we could use more member support at committee level to spread the burden and at events both as helpers and paying audience.

We now host number of regular events/groups being :- 3 art groups , a yoga class , ukulele groups , theatre group, writing group , drawing class , monthly Cafe Frug nights , and a members coffee morning.

If more help is not forthcoming we may need to reduce the frequency of some events.

However we are grateful for all those who regularly volunteer their time to help. In particular thanks go - again - to Chris O'Reilly for his

many roles and to Eileen Huggett for publishing the Monthly Newsletter.

So all that remains is for me to say it has been a privilege to act as President of our historic Club for the past 13 years which has been part of the local / national art community for over 134 years. The Club is now well funded , has high and growing levels of membership , is used almost everyday by , mainly , in-house organisations and is continuing to build its brand and reputation in the county.

I've learnt so much so much over the years and would leave you with some rules of life that have worked for me...so far!

"Listen, smile, agree, and then do whatever you were gonna do anyway."

"Criticism is the best sign you're onto something."

"I always wanted to be somebody, but now I realise I should have been more specific."

"Never follow anyone else's path. Unless you're in the woods and you're lost and you see a path. Then by all means follow that path."

"Your most important work is always ahead of you, never behind you."

Steve Litherland President 2013 - 2024