

Charnwood Imaging Group
2002/3 Season

President's Report

It seems difficult to believe, but here we are almost at the end of our very first Season as the area's newest Photographic Group. From very small beginnings around a pub table in the Boat Inn, and much against the advice of a number of non-believers who thought we were trying to run before we could walk, we have put together a well-structured, active Group, and have already achieved a great deal in our first few months of operation. The Group now has around 30 paid-up members and, largely thanks to a very profitable Evening with Charlie Waite last December, we are now financially well placed, as the Treasurer will no doubt demonstrate in her Report.

For me, there have been a number of highlights this Season. First and foremost, it has been a great pleasure to work with a group of very committed people who have formed the CIG Committee – John Baker (who takes over the Presidency at the end of this Annual General Meeting), Helen Gray, Lisa Noon, Rosemary Amey, Russell Jesson, Derrick Gardner, Sarah Higgins and, our latest two recruits, Kevin Blood and Mike Clooney. My grateful thanks to you all for your patience and input throughout this Season.

Our programme of speakers, all of whom have delivered entertaining presentations at intervals throughout the season, was capped by the visit from Charlie Waite in December. Charlie is one of the UK's leading landscape photographers, renowned on a world-wide basis for his books, media appearances, photographic courses, and so on; and, as we discovered on the night, he is also a first class speaker and presenter, who effortlessly holds his audience's attention. Bringing Charlie to Loughborough was a real coup for CIG and must have done a great deal for our reputation as a progressive Photographic Group.

The main competitions this Season have produced a wide variety of high quality work and we have seen an increasing level of performance as the Season progressed. This is most encouraging and bodes well for the future. The standard of judging has proved to be somewhat variable, and certain of the judge's comments and mental gymnastics in trying to pin down the true nature of the subject matter of some of the images on show, and to suggest how they might be improved by the addition of plastic blow-up red squirrels and other dubious interlopers, has been quite bizarre.

In April, we met Coalville Photographic Club for our first ever Inter-Club Competition – CIG were victorious, and the evening was enjoyable enough to result in our being invited to join in with Coalville and Ashby Camera Club in an annual three-way slide battle, commencing next Season.

Taking and displaying photographs should be our main motivation for involvement with CIG, and it is our stated aim to see all our members improve their skills and try out new ideas. To this end, we propose to modify the rules regarding the main annual competitions in 2003/4 in order to encourage more entries and a wider variety of interest. Details will be announced in the near future.

Our evenings out – to Holme Pierrepont in February, Ashby on 2 June, and K&S in Leicester on 9 June – proved popular with those who attended. Our Post-Christmas Social in January also proved successful and will be repeated in December this year.

All in all a very successful first Season.

My only real disappointment this year has been the somewhat low attendance at some of the meetings. I understand that the pressures of life generally and work commitments make regular attendance very difficult for some of our members. In some cases, shift working is a major barrier. With a view to increasing the opportunities to attend, we are proposing to arrange weekly meetings on a trial basis up to Christmas. If successful, this arrangement will be continued into the New Year.

As we look forward to 2003/4, we have a great deal to anticipate, including the visit from Rosemary Calvert in November and the Inter-Club Competition against Sibley Photographic Society in February 2004. We are again planning a very varied programme of events for 2003/4.

Looking further ahead, our proposal to mount a major exhibition of work in the Charnwood Museum in Loughborough has been accepted. This will take place in November 2004 and, whilst this sounds a long time away, there is much planning and preparation to be done to make this event a success and the Committee are now considering ideas for a theme for this exhibition. Further details will be announced early in the forthcoming Season and all CIG members will then be encouraged to submit work for inclusion.

In summary, this has been a very successful, profitable and thoroughly enjoyable Season for me as President, and my thanks go to all CIG members for the contributions they have made to the success of this year.

Brian Ratcliffe
President
Charnwood Imaging Group

16 June 2003