

SPS address 2021-22

Thank you for the honour of allowing me to be the president of the society for the next season. When I was first asked to become president, I was unsure about taking on the role. After thinking for a while, I decided to accept the nomination. I have been able to work closely with Richard and Gareth over the past year to gain some insight into the scope of the responsibilities. That experience has been valuable for me. Richard delivered the regalia of office to me at the weekend. I am wearing the presidential chain and I have the gavel. I do hope that I will have an opportunity to use it – not because I particularly want to bang it too often, but it's use will signal that normal service is being resumed.

I am looking forward to the challenge of working with you all to manage the society in a way that will help it to flourish and create the enthusiasm for members to be creative and competitive and hopefully attract new members.

I am following on from the very able presidency of Richard Hall. Richard, of course, has faced a sort of pioneering role in leading us through a year when we have not been able to meet face to face. He has led us in a most efficient and creative way over the year. And what a year it has been, not just for us in the society but for all round us. We owe a great debt of gratitude to Richard for his work over the last year to keep us all going. As I look back, I sometimes wonder how we managed to complete such a full programme of talks and competitions, albeit in such a different form. It has been disappointing that we have not been able to run any print competitions this year and the two exhibitions have been missed! I know that Richard will be available for advice and support through the coming year.

What about next season. That is the big unknown at the moment. We have lived with uncertainty for the past year, and I think that will continue for some time yet. For the society the major uncertainty is when, or indeed if, we will be able to meet in one room. Even if we will be allowed to meet, there may be restrictions on numbers because of social distancing which may leave us looking for an alternative venue to St. Peter's. Those are some of the unknowns.

So, now I turn to what we do know and have planned. We obviously have a programme planned and I would like to thank John Ferretti for his work in finding speakers including those in the next few weeks as part of the Summer programme.

- The new season will begin on 7 September.
- We need to be prepared for Members' Competitions to be PDIs, though we will revert to prints as soon as we know when we can meet again.
- Membership renewal. There will be a letter in August welcoming you back for another year. With the letter will be a paper copy of the programme and an explanation of subscriptions. We hope to confirm then, if not earlier whether we can resume meetings face to face. But rest assured that as soon as we know of any changes I will be sending out that information.

Finally, I want to thank Mike McManus for accepting my invitation to be our next President. Thank you, Mike. I am looking forward to working with you over the coming months.

Jane Perryman