

# Presidents Address 2023

Firstly, I'd like to thank Mike for his leadership over the past year. His warmth and wit have become as much a part of society life as his exhortations to join the tea rota and we will miss all three. Mike leaves his post with the society in good health after a period of rebuilding, post COVID, and I ask you to join me in offering our heartfelt thanks.

It is a rare honour to take on the presidency of a society that has been in operation for almost 159 years. I note that our early archives record that the membership fee in 1876 was ten and six, which google tells me is equivalent to £78.24 in today's money, so not only are we still going strong, we now offer better value for money than ever before!

I do feel that I am taking over at an interesting time. Whilst its true that our attendances, both physically and including the 'baby-zoomers' online has fallen when compared to pre-covid times, we are fairing better than many PAGB clubs. I believe this is down to the winning combination of our excellent programme, put together by John Ferretti, the behind the scenes work of our council and the creativity and generosity of all our members who make life in the society so rewarding. So I'd like you to give John, the council, and indeed yourselves a round of applause.

I'd also like to pass on particular thanks for the outstanding efforts of our public-facing team. For Richard, and of course, our members who boost the reputation of the society through competitions; to Gareth and John for their tireless work on and publicity and to Eddie and Linda for their support of our first class public exhibitions. I believe these 'outreach' activities will be key to ensuring we grow as a society, and intend to work on a number of initiatives to attract fresh members and ideas over the next 12 months.

Our new season will be upon us in September, and John has once again, built a superb programme covering a very wide range of photographic styles. We will hear talks on Urban, Sports, Landscape, Portrait and Wildlife photography alongside our traditional 'club evenings'. One of these will, of course, be our internal print competition. Sue is taking a well-earned rest from organising these evenings after a hard fought battle with the technology. We are temporarily using a variety of council members to stand in, but are searching for a replacement to take up this important society role. Please see me if you feel capable of helping in this, or any other, capacity.

Another fixture is the President's theme night. This year, I have opted for "Behind The Curtain". We are used to seeing your best images, but I am interested in the process that goes into them, so I'd like to see how you got to the finished article. Did you take several angles? Did you have to choose one frame from a burst?; was there lots of photoshop required?; did you need to crop? Which images made up your composite? – Allow us to peek behind the curtain and show off your workings.

My final duty is to unveil my president elect, and I'm delighted to announce that Marcus Offinger has agreed to pick up the training wheels from me. Marcus is a fine photographer and an experienced council member, and I'm sure will do an excellent job.

So until September, please watch your emails and the website for details of our outings programme, enjoy the summer, and take lots of great photographs.