

Club History



It may surprise people to know that Ashington has had a Camera Club since 1931.

It all started with a group of 13 people, the first meeting was at Hirst School. It was all about rules and how to run the club. A committee was voted first, Chairman was to be Mr Webster. Secretary Mr Stephenson and Treasurer Mr Hay. The rent was 0ne shilling plus caretaker's fee. Subs were 2/6, kids 1 penny increased to 1/- later.

The first lecturer was a professional photographer called a mister Curry, his lecture was, Elementary Photography.

February 8th 1932

A vote was taken to join the Northern federation of the Northern Photographic Society; the cost would be 17/6 per annum

April 4th 1932.

A demonstration was given on gaslight printing by Mr Richardson followed by Mr Taylor's demonstration on bromide and toning.

At this time the club's attendance was 90% children. And the club was now getting lecturers from the federation.

May 22nd 1933.

It was decided to have the first Competition Secretary.

16th March 1936.

The club is now having a problem getting members, some camera nights had to be cancelled, this didn't last long, soon it was up to 30 members and the Federation fees are still 17/6. Rent 11/-

September 1936

Move to the Welfare Educational Institute was made. The rent was to be 1/3d per night.

The first AGM held here was 22 March 1937. At this time there were 23 members.

The committee now reads. Elected President Mr Hay. Chairman Mr D Pollard, Secretary M J Taylor, Treasurer Mr R Orton. The remainder

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of the committee was Ivan Brown, Stan Cross. J Ward. T Sample J Bell and A Henry.

The Federation Photographic Alliance was putting a heavy burden on the club with its membership cost, so the club dropped out but did rejoin again.

The Secretary Mr Taylor, wrote to the Co-operative Society asking if they could rent a room to the club, the co-op offered the choice of 2 rooms free.

29th March 1950

The Co-op is now Subsidising the Camera Club and it has been named, Ashington Co-op Camera Club and the meetings are now held at the Co-op Hall, Station road Ashington.

26 February Bob Holster's name is on the committee.

6th April 1955

At the AGM it was decided the subs had to be increased to 12/6

13 April 1960

Committee members now read. Chairman Mr F Fear Secretary Mr R W Hostler, Competition Secretary Mr A Cripps and Mr J Dent

An outing was organised to Keswick planned and booked for May 11th 1955 the cost would be 14/- adults and 9/- for children.

Social Secretary in 1962-3 was Ron Graham and membership was 24.

1966 Chairman Joe Dent, Secretary Mr Edell, Treasurer Mr F Spare, Competition Secretaries were Ron Graham and Rueben Daglish.

A meeting held in August 1973 decided a move to the local YMCA. There was a dispute with the Co-op taking over the North Eastern Co-op Society, the Camera club was asked to vacate their free premises, no other room was offered, the Co-op offered to pay the rent up to £2 if the club found other suitable rooms. This split the club in two, the majority went to the YMCA, later, others went with Bob Hostler to the Co-op photography shop which he managed. In 1974 a room came available at the Leisure Centre rent £2 per week A temporary committee was formed, D Wade Chairman, R Cullingworth Treasurer, R Hostler Secretary. There were 20 members.

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A big day came in May 29th 1975 the YMCA and the Co-op members got together to decide if to amalgamate which they did at a later date. Membership rose to a record 50 and by 1980 membership had rose to

61, Bob Hostler decided to retire from the Secretaries job, it was proposed to have a President and Mr Hostler was voted in.

A trip to Bradford Camera Museum or other places like the Lakes was being organised at the AGM, the election of committee was President Bob Hostler, Chairman Ron Staines taking over from Les Rowell, Mr Torrington Secretary taking over from Bob Hostler, Rueben Daglish was treasurer. Rest of committee was Mary Arris, Alan Arris, Ron Graham, Keith Torrington and Melvyn Robson.

In later years, Gary Owen, John Hunter John J Dodds, and Mark Rowland have held the job as secretary, Ron Staines, Gordon Willoughby and Bob Shell have been Chairman. Treasurer's, Melvyn Robson, Richard Alderson and Eileen Brogan.

And other posts, Competition Secretaries Bob Thompson Pearl Alderson, Vera and Deryck Wade, Mike Parker and many more. All other members making up the committee like long serving member Ron Graham, Joe Dent, Paul Brassell, Mike Parker Alan Murdie, and many more that have not been mentioned, these are the people who keep the Camera Club going.

With Digital Cameras and Computers now with us, and Film going out membership has changed, some like it and others don't, the membership of the Camera Club now is 31, subs are £30, a long way from the beginning: Two Shillings and Sixpence.

The last entry in our log book is written by Bob Hostler and reads:

"As we enter the year 2002 we close the tradition of recording our annual general meeting minutes and accounts in handwritten book form, such as this. Since Ashington Camera Club began seventy years ago in 1931, our records can be seen in these five books which may now be treasured as our archives. Currently AGM records are produced by computer and circulated to members on A4 printed sheets.

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As President, my major concern is that we must ensure continuity is preserved by henceforth maintaining a file of annual reports which should include enough detail to provide historical interest for the future."

President Robert W. S. Hostler. APAGB

Written by John J Dodds (Member of Ashington Camera Club)