

# Chester Film Society

## Annual General Meeting

**Held on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022**

The Annual General Meeting was held before the film screening of “Petite Maman” in The Garret, Storyhouse and was attended by 64 members including Committee members

Apologies: Jo Crotty, Linda Cloet

### **1. Introduction and Report**

Rachel Cross, Secretary, introduced the meeting in the absence of the Chair, Jo Crotty, noting that the Agenda and Accounts had been emailed to all members prior to the meeting. She delivered the following report on behalf of the Chair:

It has been a year of change for the Society following the lifting of Covid restrictions.

Due to the financial risk associated with scheduling our own season in 21/22 we instead worked with Storyhouse to offer monthly World Cinema screening between September 2021 and February 2022. These were very well attended and allowed us to retain a presence in the city without the risk of having to cancel a season and make a substantial loss. We thank all members who supported these.

In early 2022 we resumed full Society activity, first with a very successful social night in February and then in March with the Chester International Film Festival (CIFF) incorporating the Animation Festival. Despite Covid this was our second most successful to date with an average of 50+ tickets sold for each of the 6 screenings. We secured 2 films on preview (before general release), including the winner of the Audience Award – Compartment No. 6. We also received high quality entries for the Animation Festival from all over the World – awarding the audience award to the Israeli short film ‘Black Slide’. I would like to thank Storyhouse staff for working with us to put on both festivals and for continuing to offer tickets for Film Society members at a significant discount (45%). I would also like to thank Mike Graham for his curation of the Animation Festival over the years and wish Donna Whittington well as she takes over in 2023. This is your festival so please do support the CIFF/Animation in March 2023!

We then moved to the ‘mini-season’ with three films at the Museum and a final film here in The Garret, all free to members, partly to compensate for the curtailment of the 19/20 season but also to judge how many of our members would ‘come back’. Turnout was disappointing. This, changes to the cost structure at both the Museum and the St Mary’s Centre, and changes to infrastructure needed to screen films, led us to make some tough choices about the Film Society’s pricing structure, venue and programming. As a result we are now located – for 22/23 at least – at Storyhouse on a new night of the week. We also had to shorten the season and raise the price. Without making these changes, we could not have carried on as a society. However I am pleased to say that at the time of writing we have 97 members for the 22/23 season and 86 attended our first screening. We are on our way back – but we have a way to go, as it will likely take several seasons for us to rebuild

our membership to pre-Covid levels and to replenish our finances to the point where we have a financial ‘cushion’.

To end on a more positive note; over the summer we celebrated our 50th anniversary, screenings some classic films, again in partnership with Storyhouse. These were well attended but also highlighted how cinema can transcend world events. With your support for the 22/23 season, the CIFF, and the social night, Chester Film Society will do the same, and continue for another 50 years!

*[Jo Crotty, Chair, Chester Film Society]*

## 2. Accounts

Jenny Spick, Treasurer, presented the Accounts for year ended 31 March 2022

### **Overview**

In the year ending March 2022 Chester Film Society (CFS) made a loss of £ 1,515.

This loss was because of the pandemic affecting our income, while we continued to incur ongoing costs. The 2021-22 season which should have commenced in September 2021, unfortunately had to be postponed due to concerns over the viability of operations during the coronavirus pandemic. Despite being unable to screen a season of films we did organise and support specific events such as the Social Night in February 2022, Chester International Film Festival and a mini season of four films (March to May 2022). These four screenings were in lieu of the final films of the 2019/20 season that could not be shown in Spring 2020 due to pandemic restrictions. In addition, the society also had ongoing expenses during the year such as insurance, memberships and film screenings costs in preparation for the mini and the 2022/23 season.

The loss-making position for 2021/22 is not ideal but as a society we have reduced our expenses for the season and were in the fortunate position of having a cash balance at the bank that has enabled us to continue to operate.

### **Financial Accounts for year ending 31 March 2022**

	Social Night February 2022	Chester International Film Festival March 2022	Min Season Screening March 2022	Society Expenses-	Total
Expenses-Premises hire, screen licences, Insurance, Film festival attendance, CFS corporate memberships,printing,postage	£1,364	£585	£389	£835	£3,173
Income – Ticket Sales	£1,437	£123	£98	0	£1,658
Net Loss/(Surplus)	(£73)	£462	£291	£835	£1,515
Bank Balance at 31.3.2021			£3,464.51		
Bank Balance at 31.3.2022			£1,949.80		

### ***Current Season 2022/23***

We are looking forward to showing the films that have been chosen for our 50<sup>th</sup> season. To maintain our financial stability and with increasing costs we have had to increase our membership and ticket charges. However, it is pleasing to recognise that Memberships for the new season have sold very well with an above target take up of memberships.

*[Secretary's note: as at 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2022 we have 100 paid members and 3 Honorary members]*

### **3. Election of Committee Members**

The current Committee had all put themselves forward for re-election:

Chair: Jo Crotty  
Secretary: Rachel Cross  
Treasurer: Jenny Spick  
Committee: Linda Cloet  
David Gill  
Adina Hilgard  
Anne Ord Sykes  
Donna Whittington

On a show of hands, all were unanimously re-elected

### **4. Questions and Answers**

There were no questions or comments from members present.

With the report and accounts being accepted, the business of the AGM was then concluded.