

Chairman's Annual Report 2024

(For the Accounting year 1 August 2022 until 31 July 2023)

Welcome to our AGM

The time period covered by this report is from 1 August 2022 through to 31 July 2023. This is the period of our financial year and is the reporting period required by the Charities Commission. In complying with the Charities Act 2006 and Charities Commission guidance this report contains a review of the main activities undertaken by the Society to further the charitable purposes for the public benefit during the year.

We are reporting as The Glass Society and in accordance with the requirements of the Charities Commission are loosely tied to holding an AGM in February each year. In fact attendances by Zoom exceed those for in person events so having the AGM in the winter is possibly a fortunate corollary. As we are currently six months into the new reporting period the report necessarily contains references to the current year. Indeed part of the AGM reflects elections of new Trustees.

In order to avoid any undue repetition on the night I have chosen to encapsulate any points raised at last years AGM within this message.

The Committee

Committee meetings have been held on line, by Zoom, over the course of the last year. All committee members are connected by email, so interchange of information can take place easily and quickly.

A number of changes to the Trustees of the Society have been proposed in line with statutory requirements:

- Sue Newell, Paul Bishop and myself will be retiring as Trustees at the AGM in line with the requirements of the constitution.
 - Sue Newell will be retiring as a Trustee in order to concentrate upon her further studies. Paul Bishop is also retiring although I'm pleased to say will remain as part of the management team.
 - I will be offering myself for re-election as a Trustee.
- Nigel Benson, Donald Hepburn and Simon Cottle have offered to stand as Trustees. Nigel, Donald and Simon are currently members of the management team.
- If elected, and should I be re-elected this will take the number of Trustees to eight, in line with the constitution : Wimpory, Clarke, Peake, Cottle, Wilcock, Benson, Hepburn and Willars.
- As mentioned in previous messages I will be standing down as Chairman. Simon Cottle has offered to stand as the new Chairman, subject to agreement at the AGM.

We thank both Sue and Paul for their service as Trustees over the last few years.

Our Accounts

Our treasurer, has presented consolidated accounts and his annual commentary is enclosed. The 2022 / 2023 accounts have been examined and approved. It has been noted again that our reserves were high in relation to comparable societies, however, this is discussed at greater length in the next section.

Our banking affairs, including any savings, have been aligned to The Glass Society, although old accounts are still live to assist with the collection of legacy payments.

Charitable Giving

The Glass Society made several awards over the year, but more importantly discussions progressed in a number of key areas.

The Stourbridge Glass Museum has been assisted with the purchase of two key items that will augment the museum's collection. Firstly we purchased bundle of items including a patent granted to the local Richardson company, and later on in the year a number of Whitefriars factory floor manufacturing drawings. In fact the latter purchase was made after the accounting year end but serves demonstrate the more intensive level of interaction between the two bodies.

Although the National Glass Centre at Sunderland is in a state of flux following the discovery of structural problems with the building we did make an award to students at the University of Sunderland. Hopefully this year will see us build upon the initial contacts and develop a master class award with the aim of teaching new recruits traditional skills.

Contact has also been made with the Isle of Wight Museum of Glass and we have committed to help with an on line catalogue of the work of Etling during the interwar years in Paris. This augments a display of Etling glass at the museum.

We have also committed to make awards at the 2024 Stourbridge based Biennale. The festival, which has been a long time feature of the Stourbridge glass environment will cease in its current form with the conclusion of the 2024 event.

Mindful of the level of reserves, that we feel is excessive for a society of our size, we have developed a Grants Policy which is aimed at assisting would be applicants as well as acting as a framework for us to evaluate requests. Alongside this we have also developed a Reserves Policy, which is intended act as a guide in steering our reserves towards a more reasoned level. These two embryonic documents have yet to be finalised although the former should be available to view shortly.

Events

The Spring of 2023 saw several of us spend a couple of days in Oxford visiting several colleges, and in particular their chapels, as well as the Ashmolean Museum. Our thanks to the organisers for a very enjoyable event.

Zoom talks continue to be the main point of contact with our membership, even though that contact is virtual. The broad variety of talks is still noteworthy with subjects ranging from The Grand Tour, through modern stained glass to the Stuart factory. We are grateful to all our speakers and also the organisation behind the scenes in setting up these events.

The success of the Zoom talks must be viewed against the declining interest in attending events particularly at the Art Workers Guild in London. An ever ageing membership together with the relative ease of attending a Zoom event are contributory factors. Given the long standing relationship with the Art Workers Guild, coupled with a reluctance to sever that contact we are looking to hold one or two key events a year at the Guild. These would not be transmitted live on Zoom, but would hopefully be recorded for onward transmission. This proposal, embryonic at this stage, would enable us to maintain contact at an iconic venue. The lack of a simultaneous Zoom

transmission would also eliminate several technical difficulties, which although not insurmountable, remove the pleasure of attending in person. Our resolve to hold meetings outside London remains and potential venues have been discussed.

An overseas trip to Cologne has been arranged for September 2024.

Publications: Glass Matters

Once again, I can report that Glass Matters continues to be a pleasing fixture of our society and remains the main point of contact that many members have with us. It continues to amaze and please me that our members contribute such a wide variety of articles and deep learned knowledge.

At the time of writing a Journal of the Glass Society, the second since the two groups merged, is about to go to press. This will be followed later in the Spring by another Glass Matters.

My thanks go to the editor and all contributors who make Glass Matters a cornerstone of the society

The Future

Many of you will be aware that this AGM will be my last as chairman. Having spent large parts of the last fifteen years acquiring Victorian glass manufactured in the North West, I owe it to myself to dedicate equal amounts of time to researching and documenting. This does not mean that I disappear from the scene and if required I will be available to help in whatever ways my abilities, experience and time allows.

Finally, this is your society and we need constantly to refresh and augment the collective skills of the Trustees and 'management team'. I am proud that we are a friendly society, united by a common passion, but our momentum is dependent upon our members stepping up and helping in whatever capacity you can. Please get in touch with us if you would like to help.

David Willars

Chairman, The Glass Society

Glass Society Membership Secretary & Treasurer's Report AGM Feb 2024

The slow decline in membership has continued this year. Our major recruitment route ended with the demise of the original Glass Fairs.

The accounts for our FY 2022- 2023 are enclosed. We have healthy reserves and we have a policy of reducing these by increasing our charitable activities.

This FY we donated three prizes to Glass Artists at The International Festival of Glass held in Stourbridge in August 2022. We will also be donating further prizes at the 2024 Festival. In addition, we sponsored an award for a student at The University of Sunderland.

We continued our long term support for The Stourbridge Glass Museum with donations to their education & acquisitions funds.

M Wimpory

GLASS SOCIETY ACCOUNTS	Year to 31 July 2024		Year to 31 July 2023	
INCOME				
Members' subscriptions & Donations	11818.01		13040.98	
Gift Aid Tax reclaim	3146.44		0.00	
Investment Income	2649.23		1102.61	
Sales of publications.	192.42		75.99	
Overseas Meeting	0.00		0.00	
Meetings National & Regional	215.00		4610.00	
	0.00		0.00	
Total incoming resources in the year	18021.10	18021.10	18829.58	18829.58
EXPENSES				
Administration expenses				
Committee expenses Post & Office Supplies	(945.91)		(224.05)	
Website, Domain & Insurance	(390.32)		(362.37)	
	0.00		0.00	
	(1,336.23)	(1,336.23)	(586.42)	(586.42)
Expenditure applied to charity functions:				
Glass Matters 18-19 & Journal 2 Publishing	(9,215.32)		(9,378.22)	
Glass Matters 18-19 & Journal 2 Distribution	(2,876.49)		0.00	
Literature Scanning	0.00		(569.28)	
Meetings National & Regional	(431.55)		(4,033.61)	
Overseas Meeting	0.00		0.00	
Grants Sponsor Donation Education	(2,646.22)		(10,412.99)	
	(15,169.58)	(15,169.58)	(24,394.10)	(24,394.10)
Surplus /(Deficit) of Income over expenses	1515.29	1515.29	-6150.94	-6150.94
Balances brought forward 1 August 2023	98516.74		104667.68	
	100032.03		98516.74	
BALANCES @ 31 July 2024				
Bank Accounts	39331.82		38622.54	
Savings Accounts	64270.82		61621.59	
Subs & Donations in advance	(3,571.61)		(1,728.39)	
Cash Float	0.00		0.00	
Meetings in advance	0.00		0.00	
Other	1.00		1.00	
	0.00		0.00	
TOTAL ASSETS	100032.03	100032.03	98516.74	98516.74