

The Society of Scribes & Illuminators

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
The Art Workers Guild, 6 Queen Square, London WC1N 3AT
Saturday 27 October 2018

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR **Julie Chaney**

As I reach the end of my first year in the Chair, I'm pleased to report that the last twelve months have continued to be an eventful and productive time for the SSI.

The first person to thank is Alma Swan, who has done a marvellous job as our Honorary Secretary. Alma's energy and determination is quite extraordinary and throughout this year she has often taken on tasks over and above her designated role just to make sure the work gets done. We are very lucky Alma is continuing in post.

And fortune smiled on us last December when Nikolay Valchev responded to our call for a Treasurer. Nikolay's career is in finance, which makes him eminently qualified. He has tackled his new role as Treasurer Elect with care and enthusiasm, introducing many innovations to our methods and procedures. Our thanks to you, Nikolay, for all your hard work.

Thanks also to Maggie Berry and Jilly Hazeldine who continued in their respective roles of outgoing Treasurer and Bookkeeper until Nikolay was ready to take over.

The Executive Committee have been incredibly busy throughout the year ensuring the Society's wheels continue to turn smoothly. We've had a full complement of elected and co-opted members whose individual contributions are always greatly valued and sincere thanks to everyone. A special thank you to Cathy Stables who is retiring.

Council represents all the Fellows and its role is to oversee and support the work of the Executive Committee. They have taken a keen and active interest in our ongoing work and projects. Many thanks to retiring members, Tim Noad and Vivien Lunniss.

Our Membership Secretary, Nicky Tait, reports that we currently have 419 members, the majority of whom live in the UK (85.7%) and Europe (4.3%). About 10% are spread across the rest of the globe. We have 48 Fellows representing 11.5% of the total. Lay Members are our largest category at 72% (302), then Friends at 11% (46) with Honorary members and organisations making up the final 5.5% (23). The Membership Secretary's role has changed and expanded over time as online services are used more fully. Nicky has adapted to those changes and all her efforts are greatly appreciated.

Cathy Stables has been formulating a Fellowship Mentoring Scheme and Tim Noad has offered to liaise with Cathy. Council suggested that a new Fellowship Panel (of up to three people) be appointed to write the procedure, run the mentoring scheme, engage with potential Fellows and look at the issue in its entirety.

Rebecca Osborne stepped into the role of Editorial Board Chairman this year. Highly organised and a good communicator with a keen eye for detail, Rebecca has the perfect skills to oversee all aspects of our output. We have a newly designed header for event documents plus a new

flyer promoting the ATS. We aim to create a cohesive and contemporary look for the SSI, helped by our Newsletter designer, Alice Mazzilli. More printed matter will also be produced to rebalance our focus on electronic communications.

The Scribe continues as our flagship publication, with two splendid editions in the past year edited by Vivien Lunniss and produced by Manny Ling. Articles have been varied and always beautifully illustrated and The Scribe creates a library to be revisited whenever inspiration is needed.

Jo Turner took up the role of Newsletter Editor at the end of 2017. Together with Alice Mazzilli, they have successfully produced each quarterly newsletter throughout the year, learning and developing the process as they went. Some changes have been introduced: landscape layout rather than portrait is popular, while fresh design and a variety of content have drawn regular positive comment. Jo and Alice thank all predecessors and the Editorial team members for their support.

Our Webmaster, Chris Baker, reports that our site is functioning well and his regular monthly request for updates is helping to keep it fresh. The website acts as our shop window, more images are being introduced and online payments are now available for our courses and events. Chris's appeal for illuminations has only brought in ten distinct letters and although they are beautiful, the quality of the images are not always good enough. He is considering other ways to obtain decorated letters. To comply with new data protection regulations, our online privacy policy has now been updated.

Our presence on Facebook continues to grow and Judith Porch tells us we now have over 1700 likes. An article on Alchemy of Colour has been the most popular post during the last month, reaching 847 people. Generally, videos seem to attract the most attention. Through sharing, the tribute to the late David Graham was seen by 2,000 people. Facebook allows us to flag up time-limited news items between newsletters and to promote the SSI to people who might otherwise not know about us. A post about the summer newsletter in July was followed by three new memberships a few days later.

Our Editorial output is crucial to how the SSI is perceived by members, the wider calligraphic community and outsiders. It is only through the collective efforts of Rebecca and her whole team that the desired impact is being achieved. Many thanks to each of you for all the work you do.

Our Education Board Chairman, Jilly Hazeldine, has expertly moderated all the courses under her education umbrella this year with her usual diligence and care. A marketing drive for all courses is ongoing - through the newsletter, inserts in The Scribe, via the website and emails. Jilly has stepped down as ATS Convenor, a role she had held for over a decade and we are very grateful for her dedication and enthusiasm during those years. We are pleased that Cherrell Avery is now Convenor.

The ATS groups met in April at High Leigh in Hertfordshire and again in September at The Hayes, a new venue in Derbyshire. Both weekends were very well organised by Helen Hayman. Angela Dalleywater has stood down as second year tutor and our thanks to her for her years with the teams. Ian Garrett will likely be sole tutor for the group of three students moving into their second year. Group 30 have now completed their three years and will display at next year's Lay Members' Day. There is one applicant for next year's intake and a publicity drive will be used to increase interest and applications. Teachers are asked to promote it as well.

Our new Writing & Design Course, written and taught by Jilly Hazeldine, ran over the same two weekends as the ATS with a full complement of six students. The first weekend concentrated on writing and the second on design and layout. Overall, it was judged to be successful and will be offered again next year, running concurrently with ATS once more. The marrying of these two courses allows social mixing between all participants and is already forming a successful pairing of study programmes.

A three-day, residential Masterclass with Yves Leterme will take place at High Leigh in June next year. The course is “Gestural Capitals using flat brush and pen” and is open to all but limited to 12 students. Our organisers, Helena Bryant and Anthea Power, have put in a lot of time and effort for what will be one of the highlights of 2019. To date, six of the 12 places are booked and there is interest from overseas calligraphers.

Our thanks to Ann Hechle who conducted this year’s Study Days. We are eager to see the results of two days of intensive study when the students show and discuss their work at the Skills & Ideas Day in November. Discussions are underway to run the Study Days and a Masterclass on alternate years.

The Calligraphy Correspondence Course continues to recruit well, attracting students from all over the world. The work of all the tutors is much appreciated. A total of 28 units were sent out in 2018. The course comprises four units of six lessons each and, of the 28 despatched, five people have paid to continue with Unit 2, one person has paid for Unit 3 and three people have paid for Unit 4, their final six lessons. There are still quite a few students who pay for Lesson One but never complete it.

The new Centenary Exhibition Committee chaired by Sharon Shaw met in July. A search for venues began last December, but almost a year on, we have yet to secure a firm booking. Many venues, such as the Princes School of Traditional Arts, have changed their policy for external exhibitions. It was decided to approach the Mall Gallery near Buckingham Palace who invite applications from potential exhibitors. Sharon and I were very impressed after a guided tour with the Gallery Manager, John Deston. After discussions with the committee, Sharon submitted an online application form. The Mall Gallery exhibition committee only meet four times a year and we are awaiting the outcome of their deliberations held on the 18th October. Outside London has also proved difficult as many places that would have welcomed an outside exhibition in the past no longer do so or are concentrating on displaying their in-house material only. The committee have been working very hard to find venues and will continue to do so.

This year’s Lay Members’ Day took place at Imperial College once again and 138 tickets were sold, around 100 to members, the remainder to guests. There were trade stands by Scribblers, Friends of Bangladesh and Calligraphity. The Lay Members’ Exhibition attracted 28 entries with commentary provided by Jilly Hazeldine. The creativity and work that went into the exhibition, ATS Group 29 display, regional group stands and demonstrations made for a marvellous show. The guest lecture was by Stephen Raw, who delivered an exciting and absorbing talk illustrated by many images and a video. It is wonderful that Stephen has achieved great success by capturing the public’s interest with his lettering. We need to find ways to increase attendance, entries for the exhibition and also encourage members to volunteer to help for a short time on the day. This year people were required to give an hour each, rather than the expected half an hour. This caused some disquiet and will have to be addressed in future. We are indebted to the excellent team of Alma Swan, Cathy Stables FSSI and Gwyneth Hibbett who made it all happen on the day.

Lay Members' Day 2019 will be moving to the Strand Campus, Kings College and will take place on the 11th May. Heading up the new team is Steve Eades, with Gwyneth Hibbett and Anne Marie Delaney - all have put in a huge effort so far. The Daubney Lecture will be given by Mark Ovenden who will speak about the legacy of letter design by Edward Johnston and Eric Gill. Sylvie Gokulsing will be providing the exhibition commentary. There will be five demonstrators, two regional group stands, ATS Group 30 display, and much more. Notices of the event and exhibition subjects have been published in the newsletter and downloadable documents are available on the website. A flyer will also be sent out with the next edition of The Scribe.

Last year's Research & Technical Day was a different kind of event with only Fellows and past and present ATS students invited to discuss the future of the event. It was attended by twenty people and the outcome of those group discussions was featured as an article in The Scribe.

Skills & Ideas Day emerged from those discussions and the first one will be held next month. It's format will resemble R&T Day, but with a stronger emphasis on the sharing of creative ideas and practical skills to encourage more Lay Members and Fellows to attend. Many thanks to Tanja Bolenz and Liz Barrow for stepping up to organise this.

Thank you to Janet Smith for all her work with sales. Janet reports another healthy year with an increased turnover of £3810 (£3343 in 16/17, £3313 in 15/16). The majority of sales are via the website (£2881) with events (LMD £149, R&T £149) and special orders (£631) making up the rest. This is a good result, especially as there were no new special items boosting the figures. Top earners were vellum (£1200), quill knives (£554) and burnishers (£294); bundles of quills were highest sellers by volume (60+). Lay Members' Day sales were low this year possibly due to same customers and same stock each year. This will need reviewing. Divine Inspiration catalogues (Scribe 101) have continued to sell and the postcards are back in stock and expected to sell steadily. Unfortunately, purchases of Correspondence Course units do not appear to drive sales of other items. There is a small list of ideas for new products for the coming year but items purchased easily elsewhere will be discontinued as stock sells through. If anyone would like to suggest new items to Janet, their help would be gratefully received.

Our library has received more book and archive donations during the year. As our Librarian is now the Chairman, we are looking for someone to take her place. This year's library display during November at the London College of Communication will highlight the significance of handwriting in the everyday practise of calligraphers. The display is freely accessible to all members.

And finally, the SSI were invited to be a sponsor at the Letter Exchange's 30th Anniversary Conference earlier this month. We sponsored the talk by Italian calligrapher, Luca Barcellona, and also had a stand over two days at the event. It's important that we continue to build and strengthen our relationships with other organisations who share the common aim of promoting calligraphy and the lettering arts.

To conclude, once again, thank you to everyone who has given their time and energy to support the work of the SSI this year. We are fortunate that membership offers so many rewards and as individual members, there is an intrinsic value in helping our Society thrive. That comes about by us supporting SSI activities, attending events and volunteering whenever possible. Getting involved and encouraging others to join in too, is what makes it possible for all of us to reap the benefits of membership.

REPORT FROM THE HONORARY TREASURER

Nikolay Valchev

First of all, I would like to thank you for offering me the role of Honorary treasurer at the SSI. I will do my best to keep the finances of the society in the good health they are passed to me by Maggie Berry.

To make myself familiar with the financial activities and position of the SSI I have reviewed the accounts for the last 7 years together with the tax returns. Aligning the records from 2011 till 2017 has helped me to see the bigger picture, the trends and to understand better the financial position of the SSI. It is evident that the SSI has a very good record of income exceeding expenditure for the last 5 years and constantly increasing cashflow at the end of each financial year.

As I have stepped into the treasurer's position just after the beginning of the 2018 financial year, I have been given the final accounts by Maggie Berry and Gillian Hazeldine, whom I would like to thank for keeping very good records, and here are my comments on the presentation made by our accountants.

Membership

The subscriptions received in 2017 are in a small decline after 2015 and 2016 but with the recent increase of the members up to 420 in 2018 this figure should improve, which will show in the next reporting year.

44% of the subscriptions were collected through PayPal, 28% by cheques to Nicky Tait; and 28% by BACS . We would like to thank Nicky Tait for looking after the membership and for maintaining a very thorough record of the members list.

As a whole the **Educational programmes** in 2017 have brought a £2,436 profit. The trend is the Educational activities are self-sufficient and do not need a subsidy from the subscriptions or the savings.

Advanced Training Scheme

The running expenses for ATS are relatively constant through the years. In 2017 ATS generated a loss which was the case for the last 4 years. Thanks to the revenue from the Correspondence course we did not need to use the membership to cover the shortfall in the ATS.

Calligraphy Correspondence Course

Last year we had 36 units sold that brought in about £9,000 income. With expenses of about £4,000 this is leaving us with a £5,000 profit from CCC 2017, which roughly is the case for the last few years.

Master Class

Master Classes did not generate revenue last year - the negative balance is because of bookings made in 2016 but refunded in 2017 after of the cancellation of the Masterclass 2017.

Study Days

Study days broke even in 2017.

The expenses for the **Lay Members' Day** in 2017 were more than the income. This loss should be looked into relation to the figures from 2016 because the venue hire has been paid well advance in 2016.

The profit from **Sales and exhibitions** is gradually increasing. We would like to thank Janet Smith for taking care of our online shop.

The expenses for the **Editorial and Administration** for 2017 were in line with the trend from the previous years. The figures are relatively constant over the last five years.

As a bottom line the expenses during 2017 were about £41,000 with an income of about £43,000 giving us a profit of £2,000.

The **bank accounts balance** as of 31.12.2017 is £65,515 which is in a steady increase year to year.

The Society of Scribes & Illuminators

Receipts and Payments Account		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Subscriptions received		15,297	12,364	14,157	10,872	16,107	17,798	14,437
Number of members		413	334	383	294	435	481	390
Membership expenses		-	-	-	(158)	(23)	(676)	(441)
Membership revenue		15,297	12,364	14,157	10,714	16,084	17,122	13,996
Legacies/Donations received		880	5,460	40	200	-	-	100
ATS Student Income		9,534	8,912	12,410	15,808	13,029	15,522	12,510
ATS Accommodation & Tutor Fees		(11,759)	(13,061)	(13,971)	(16,829)	(14,545)	(15,702)	(14,254)
CCC Student Income		5,910	7,388	5,538	4,873	8,204	12,958	9,382
CCC Tutor Fees		(2,693)	(2,701)	(3,089)	(3,156)	(2,143)	(7,692)	(4,365)
Master Class Student Income						3,427	420	210
Master Class Venue & Tutor Fees						(538)	(2,155)	(1,044)
Study Days Student Income						-	120	1,460
Study days Venue & Tutor Fees						-	(406)	(1,462)
Education		992	538	888	696	7,434	3,065	2,436
LMD Income Received		3,803	5,101	4,257	3,126	3,053	2,223	2,364
LMD Expenses		(2,915)	(3,039)	(5,886)	(2,344)	(2,602)	(4,027)	(3,316)
Lay Members' Day		888	2,062	(1,629)	782	451	(1,804)	(952)
RTD Income Received		677	681	638	315	453	540	-
RTD Expenses		(375)	(736)	(540)	(434)	(258)	(791)	(247)
Research & Technical Day		302	(55)	98	(119)	195	(251)	(247)
Income from Sales and exhibitions		4,672	9,480	610	1,280	2,383	11,257	2,869
Cost of sales		(14,272)	(1,088)	-	(1,640)	(1,307)	(10,475)	(826)
Sales and Exhibition		(9,600)	8,392	610	(360)	1,076	782	2,043
Journal print and post					(3,377)	(2,465)	(1,847)	(3,397)
Journal honorarium					-	-	(1,000)	(750)
Newsletter print and post					-	(242)	(127)	(227)
Newsletter honorarium					(2,600)	(2,600)	(1,200)	(700)
Website honorarium					(200)	(200)	(200)	(240)
Editorial		(7,802)	(12,402)	(6,780)	(6,177)	(5,507)	(4,374)	(5,313)
Public Liability Insurance		(477)	(530)	(312)	(281)	(314)	(329)	(335)
Accountancy Fees		(605)	(600)	(600)	(630)	(660)	(771)	(690)
Donations/Support Payments		-	(17,800)	-	-	-	-	-
AGM		(208)	(1,400)	(1,125)	(77)	(1,410)	(573)	(1,740)
Credit Card Terminal Hire Charges		(327)	(573)	(297)	(283)	(344)	(511)	(363)
Committee Travel		(1,085)	(866)	(1,081)	(1,144)	(2,218)	(1,868)	(1,905)
Library Expenses		(1,102)	(387)	(91)	(75)	(192)	-	(56)
Honoraria		-	(3,800)	(1,000)	(500)	(500)	(1,500)	(2,328)
General admin expenses		(147)	(1,532)	(2,174)	(298)	(686)	(849)	(981)
Website Development		-	-	-	(1,801)	(950)	(1,740)	(1,385)
Tax Paid		(134)	(113)	(137)	(42)	(48)	(51)	(64)
Administration		(4,085)	(27,601)	(6,817)	(5,131)	(7,322)	(8,192)	(9,846)
Interest on Deposit Accounts (gross)		580	668	212	242	256	320	12
Excess of Income over Expenditure		(2,558)	(10,574)	779	847	12,667	6,668	2,229
Total Income		41,343	50,054	37,862	36,716	46,912	61,158	43,344
Total Expenditure		(43,901)	(60,628)	(37,083)	(35,869)	(34,245)	(54,490)	(41,114)
Excess of Income over Expenditure		(2,558)	(10,574)	779	847	12,667	6,668	2,229

CASH-FLOW		2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Cash in Hand: 1 January		55,958	53,125	42,551	43,330	44,177	56,845	63,288
Paypal		-	-	-	-	-	219	3,338
Current Account		4,916	5,565	5,734	6,290	18,279	18,765	13,528
Deposit Accounts		48,209	36,986	37,596	37,887	38,566	44,304	48,649
Cash in Hand: 31 December		53,125	42,551	43,330	44,177	56,845	63,288	65,515