

## MAGIC LANTERN SOCIETY COMMITTEE NEWS



Mike Smith

The Society Committee held its first meeting of 2017 in early February, with most of the discussions focusing on arrangements for the coming convention in Birmingham. Other business included agreeing the various roles that Committee members will take for the coming year.

As noted in the AGM report in this issue of *The Magic Lantern*, the major change this year is the retirement of Mike Smith

as Hon. Secretary, after some forty years in the role. The Committee's loss is North Yorkshire's gain, and everyone wished Mike a happy and well-deserved rest!

The post of Secretary will be taken by Richard Crangle, alongside his existing role as Treasurer. One new face was elected to the Committee at the January AGM, in the shape of Lydia Jakobs, who will take up the vacant post of Research Officer.

The full list of Society Officers for the coming year is:

Chairman	Jeremy Brooker*
Vice-Chairman	John Townsend*
Secretary and Treasurer	Richard Crangle*
Archivist	Ine van Dooren*
Assistant Secretary	Alexia Lazou*
Auditor	Richard Feltham
Communications Officer	Dennis Crompton*
Editor, <i>Connect</i> Sales and Wants	George Auckland
Editor, <i>New Light on Old Media</i>	Mervyn Heard
Co-Editor, <i>The Magic Lantern</i>	Mary Ann Auckland*
Co-Editor, <i>The Magic Lantern</i>	Gwen Sebus
General Committee Member	Jeremy Fisher*
General Committee Member	Juliette Harcourt*
Lanternists' Representative	Richard Rigby
Librarian	Keith Utteridge*
Programme Secretary	Lester Smith*
Research Officer	Lydia Jakobs*
Web Editor	Anastasia Kerameos*

Those marked \* are also members of the Magic Lantern Society Committee.

Contact details for all the Officers are in the Society Membership Directory. A copy of the Directory is sent to all members by email (or by post for those who don't use email) in March each year, but you can also get an up-to-date version at any time from [www.magiclantern.org.uk/membership](http://www.magiclantern.org.uk/membership).

If you have any comments or suggestions on how your Society is run, or any matters you want the Committee to consider, please contact:-

Jeremy Brooker ([chairman@magiclantern.org.uk](mailto:chairman@magiclantern.org.uk)) or

Richard Crangle ([secretary@magiclantern.org.uk](mailto:secretary@magiclantern.org.uk)) at any time.

## THE 41<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE MAGIC LANTERN SOCIETY THE MUSICAL MUSEUM, LONDON, SATURDAY 21 JANUARY 2017

Mary Ann Auckland

Nearly sixty members gathered for the AGM at the Musical Museum in Brentford, west London, for the first meeting of the year. Chairman Jeremy Brooker got formal business underway with an upbeat assessment of the Society's position. Among the highlights of 2016 he commented on achieving gender parity on the Committee, developing links with new institutional members, including the International Panorama Society and the Museum of Childhood in Edinburgh, and our close involvement with international projects like Lucerna and the Million Pictures (see Issue 9) largely thanks to Richard Crangle. He then outlined what had happened at the four meetings held in 2016.

We marked a very significant moment in the Society's history – after forty years Mike Smith has decided to step down from the Committee and his role as Honorary Secretary. Mike has fulfilled this role since 1981 and up to 2013 was also Honorary Treasurer. The reports (see below) showed a society in a good position today when many are struggling – this is in no small part due to Mike's contribution and expert management.

Mike is a founder member of the Magic Lantern Society. Of the twenty members who gathered at Corsham Court on 23 October 1976 following Roger Orme's proposal, only four others remain – our current Chairman being one, along with David Francis, Janet Tamblin and David Robinson. Mike has been the driving force behind the Society's nine conventions, every one highly successful as well as memorable. He has also organised seven additional meetings on the continent in France, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Switzerland and Spain. Our global membership is largely due to Mike's encouragement as well as, in many cases, personal links and he has developed our close relationship with the US and Canada Society.

In his address, Mike highlighted the quality of the Society's publications. He regards the range of scholarly books as one of our strengths, comparable to the best in the world. The black and white *Journal*, first published in 1978, and its informal counterpart the *Newsletter* have since been superseded by *The Magic Lantern* but the important factor is that the quality of the content has been maintained. Mike thanked members for their support and friendship – sentiments entirely reciprocated, as Tony Dugdale, the Society's longest-serving Chairman, made clear in his response. Mike's advice and expertise will be sorely missed on the Committee but we hope to keep in close touch and see him at Magic Lantern Society meetings for many years to come.

After reports from the Secretary, Treasurer and *The Magic Lantern* Editors, and the election of Lydia Jakobs to the Committee, we adjourned to mark Mike's 'retirement' in suitable fashion.





The afternoon's programme began with Jan and Richard Rigby showing lantern slides from the early 1940s onwards. This enabled some members to indulge in a little personal nostalgia starting with the Odeon Club song revealing how many spent the Saturdays of their youth 'greeting everybody with a smile'. Next we enjoyed a range of cinema slides starting with public information messages – 'eat potatoes, don't guzzle bread' and what happens to bullies – followed by a wonderful range of 'coming soon' movie advertising slides right up to the end of the 1970s, from *Chance of a Lifetime* (Bernard Miles, 1950) and *Come Back Little Sheba* (1952) through *The Joker is Wild* (1957), *Carry on Sergeant* (1958) and *Some Like It Hot* (1959) to *Live and Let Die* (1973) and *Elvis the Movie* (1979). Then early Pearl & Dean adverts called for women lorry drivers (with horses), women workers in aircraft factories and promoted the WVS Blighty Café that offered mending, hot baths and a library in addition to refreshments!

The Rigbys concluded with a unique lecture set of Mr H.J. Southern that included glimpses of 'behind the camera' British cinema pre- and post-World War II. The audience attempted to 'spot the star and/or location' with limited success.

Next a guest, Peter Hudspeth, showed us some of the 3,500 slides inherited from his great-great-grandfather Joseph Patrick Ormstom and subsequent family members including his grandmother who began giving magic lantern shows at the age of sixty. The collection included boxes of mechanical and photographic slides, all listed in a series of black notebooks. A Carpenter & Wesley chromatrope and Mr Punch with his growing number of children were projected. Members helped identify the slides and were also interested in the 'Colman's starch' box they came in!



THE MAGIC LANTERN is edited, designed and produced by Mary Ann Auckland, Gwen Sebus and Dennis Crompton assisted by Annie Bridges.

Letters to the Editors can be sent by e-mail to: editor@magiclantern.org.uk

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The 'bring and show' section produced a rich variety of items. These included a beautiful multi-material version of the Magic Lantern Society logo lit by different coloured lights and made for Ray Gilbert by his granddaughter. Lester Smith produced a curious slide of a lady appearing from under a manhole cover. Mervyn Heard projected a 'show within a show' slide of a 'Punch and Judy' type booth with a complete animated shadow show of the well-known story of the broken bridge.



We finished with the now-traditional 'sing-a-long' to song slides. Our very own Juliette Harcourt rose majestically with the Wurlitzer – played by Chris Barber – to sing the verses, members joined in the choruses and Keith Uttridge both provided and projected the slides. Numbers included 'Love's old sweet song (Just a song at twilight)', 'Oh, you beautiful doll' (from the USA) and 'Josh-ua, Josh-ua'. A magical end to the day.



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