

Trustee Annual Report
PEDAS Annual General Meeting
5th March 2023

Review of the last year

Our first full year of normal operations since the pandemic has been very successful by any measure. I would like to thank all our members for their continuing support over this period of disruption, and for your continued participation and engagement. As with most voluntary organisations, clubs and charities, there were good reasons why many people were not able to actively participate over this difficult period, but the vast majority of PEDAS members stuck by their art society.

Below, I list the significant ways in which we have had a successful year.

Publicity

Our publicity and our increased use of social media, Facebook and Instagram in particular, has proved to be very successful in attracting the interest of potential new members and/or attendance at our community events. Just think of the Auction! Facebook & Instagram for PEDAS & GUS each have up to 650 followers, with some of our posts reaching over 1000 people. The more interaction it gets the more it is shared.

My thanks to the continuing efforts of Steph Jones and Sally Holland in particular for the time and trouble they take to ensure a high standard of professional and enticing publicity and promotion for PEDAS and the Gallery.

Membership

Throughout the last 2 years, our membership continued at a healthy level, owing to the loyalty you showed and most people continued to actively participate. Last year our membership stood at 86 and these are being renewed as we speak. Over this last year, our average attendance at regular PEDAS sessions went from 11 to 23. We have had a significant number of new visitors attend our regular sessions, in fact a total of 76 visits from 35 different people, and this is actively being converted into new memberships! Thank you for making our visitors feel welcome at our sessions and for Pam and Carol who capture names and contact details. Carol continues to professionally administer our membership, (this is a busy time of the year for her). A challenge may be that the move to Wednesday has deterred younger visitors who have attended sessions but who do not sustain this over time.

Community Engagement

As a charity, our involvement in community events this year has been very successful and has been an important vehicle for raising our profile and attracting interest.

All of these have been well reported in the respective Newsletters, so I will not go into detail here.

Our joint exhibition and workshops with Broadstone in February, was reported at the last AGM. The GATHER centre has proved a very successful venue for us, in an area of high footfall.

Our participation in the Wellbeing courses run by BCP Skills and Learning and facilitated by Upton Country Park has continued. Our thanks to members who have led sessions; Dawn Goodson, Steph Jones, John Biggs and Val Willets.

Our participation in local Heritage events over the summer brought good exposure for us. We had full representation at the open day at Dunshay Manor on 17th September, residence of local artist Mary Watson. Unfortunately, the equivalent at UCP had to be cancelled owing the death of the queen.

The Auction we held in November at the GATHER centre was a magnificent success, raising over £1500 for the 'Waste Not Want Not' local charity.

Being a charity allows us to bid for grants and through the tenacity and perseverance of John Biggs we secured our first grant of £1746.36 to help towards the replacement of lighting in the Gallery. The total cost was £4365.90.

President and Art Patron

The other milestone this year was the appointment of individuals to 2 new leadership roles. We voted for John Biggs to replace John Bowen as President in a revised Ambassadorial role for PEDAS, as well embracing creative leadership.

Because of the complexity of the role that John Bowen originally held, we eventually decided to split it and appoint an Art Patron to bring artistic leadership and critical friend to PEDAS. This will be the 1st anniversary of these 2 new posts and the appointment of Helen Talbot and John Biggs. Thankyou for the active and positive roles they have performed over their first year.

Archives

We hold a significant record in physical form of the past activities of the Society. In response to a cry to get to grips with the volume of un-curated material, Pat Burnham has kindly spent a lot of time over the last year, sorting this. This will a valuable resource as we start to prepare for the big celebration as PEDAS turns 100 in 2024. Thus, the working party which has already been formed will take on the Archival material as part of their deliberations and plans.

Regular Activities

Other regular activities have successfully continued over the past year.

Exhibitions

My thanks go to the GUS sub committee and others involved, for their continuing efforts to ensure:

- the highest standard is achieved for each and every PEDAS exhibition, including publicity.
- the Gallery is hired out for the whole year and that each hirer is supported and supervised to ensure the safety and smooth running of the exhibition. In particular our thanks go to Liz and Barry for what is not an easy job.
- the continued negotiations with UCP management to constantly maintain and increase our profile as part of what the Park offers. This is also not an easy job, and is being made more difficult as the budgets for running the park come under extreme pressure.

Liz will report in more detail for the Gallery and the exhibitions held over 2022/23.

Regular Programmes

Our thanks go to David Roberts for taking the lead on the weekly programmes, both for Wednesday afternoons and for the whole En Plein Air (EPA) over the summer. We have all benefitted from his time consuming efforts to research and vet potential interesting tutors and EPA venues to ensure balance and variety to our offering.

The same applies to our monthly Sunday workshops which Sally is still very kindly looking after.

The sound system we purchased with our legacy from Yvonne Bottwood has been put to good use over the last year in these sessions.

In response to feedback on the EPA, David introduced a Whats App group last year to help with contact and communication for those wishing to attend an EPA session

Remember you can always give us feedback on any aspect of PEDAS activities, either in person, via the website, or write an article for the Newsletter.

Social events

...are back and have been reasonably well supported. Many thanks to Carole Gadsby and John Biggs for organising the first holiday to get off the ground in 2 years, to Dublin in September, which was a great success. Thanks again to Carole for 2 trips to London which through her efforts, attracted enough support to cover costs.

We enjoyed a great Christmas party this year which a wide range of members contributed to. Thankyou to all.

Regular, but important...

Lastly thankyou to our Treasurer and Secretary. Pam Marshall has kept us in the black through good control and oversight of the accounts. Sue Huskinson, our most recent Trustee has been an outstanding secretary over the last year. Both of these committee members have imposed professional discipline to the benefit of our Society and its members.

Passed on

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge the deaths of no less than 3 long standing members during this year. Firstly, the death of Penny Wilton. An extremely popular and very energetic artist and teacher in the local area and beyond. Her sudden death last September was a real shock to everyone. Penny made a significant contribution to the life of PEDAS over a long period of time and will be missed.

Secondly, in January, the passing of Linda Addison, who also led an interesting and varied creative life and had been an active member of PEDAS for a long time.

Recently we have been informed of the sudden death in February of member Jeff Hill.

Our Newsletters carry full obituaries. We will miss them all and our thoughts are with their families and friends, which of course included many of us.

Looking forward

- As we speak David Roberts is compiling another varied, stimulating and enjoyable En Plein Air programme to cover what we hope will be another lovely summer.
- Our exhibition in May is based on a project initiated and led by our Art Patron Helen Talbot, with the theme of 'Equilibrium'. With such an easy open theme, and based on the guidance and support Helen has given us, we hope that as many people as possible will participate.
- Art Pro Loco is being repeated by popular demand in 2023. This year we hope to hold it in Poole Park in August, using the Kiosk there as our base.
- Plans for the PEDAS Centenary in 2024 are already under way. As this is a significant milestone for us, we need to start thinking about it now. This will include building a working relationship with several other community organisations, eg Poole Museum, Powerhouse, local Councillors, other art societies.
- We anticipate a full programme of trips, holidays and parties.

We have had a busy year and everyone has risen to the challenge magnificently. As well as our members who continue to step up to help where and when needed, as acknowledged throughout, the continuing efforts of the Trustees and of the GUS committee have been amazing not only in terms of their time but also their wise counsel, ideas and the consideration they give to all decisions made on behalf of PEDAS. All this has been achieved in the face of various significant personal challenges over 2022 and most of these issues will be ongoing. With the help and support of our members, we will continue to ensure that there remains a full programme of exciting and varied activities of interest and attraction for our members and visitors throughout the year ahead!

Jacqui Gush

Chair of PEDAS

On behalf of the Trustees