

2020 Chair's Report

Our twenty-first year turned into a real rollercoaster, going high with bigger audiences and a successful Festival but ending low when we were forced to finish the year early because of Covid-19. Hopefully this will be our one and only Zoom-AGM and we can get back to better times in the not too distant future.



The good news first, then; our larger audiences, combined with better budgeting and higher prices at the Festival has left the Club in the healthiest financial position it has been in since before I became the chair (I seem to have liked spending more than saving!). Hopefully you will have read the Treasurer's report and seen that we now have about £24000 in the bank having increased our reserves by about £7000 this year. The main increase here was the Festival whilst the Sunday viewings have remained pretty constant at £3000 plus over the last two years.

I will leave Ian's report to discuss the success of the festival, but the Club success was based on rising audiences - to an average of almost 114 (from 109), including 3 films with over 160 - and our membership remaining stable at 213. All of this was looking wonderful for this year until the pandemic hit.

We offered you the chance to choose some of the films again, by voting in an online survey. As a number of you took this opportunity, we feel it was worth it and would have continued this season if there had been sufficient films on offer; hopefully we can run this again in the near future.

The Discussion Group, in association with the Skiddaw U3A, continued on a monthly basis to discuss the previous week's film, with lively debates being the order of the day! These have been suspended for the time being, but we look forward to them restarting when times become safer again...

Behind the scenes, the Committee was, once again, on its toes all year, leading to the better budgeting already mentioned. My thanks go to all of them, and to all the other volunteers who keep the club running so smoothly. As I was away at my son's wedding from February, I would especially like to take this opportunity of thanking Roger Gook who took over the daily running of the club for much of the Spring Season.

The bad news was, obviously, Covid-19; whilst a lot worse things have happened around the world because of this, we effectively came to stop post Festival and were forced to close down completely 2 weeks later.

So, we enter a difficult year with fewer films and limited audiences being allowed to see them, or, indeed, choosing to venture to the cinema at all. Fortunately, thanks to you all coming week after week throughout our 21st year, our reserves have allowed us to offer you free membership if you were a member last year, and should tide us over some loss-making films whilst audiences remain low. Let us hope that 2021 will see Coronavirus being beaten and, with it, everyone feeling safe to return to watch some great films from around the world in our wonderful world-class Alhambra. Our twenty-second year will not be as successful as our twenty-first, but, with your continued support, it won't be our last and we can look forward to many more classic films in the future.