

Keswick Film Club Chair's Annual Report 2023 - 2024

Although our AGM is now in early January 2025 to enable more time for the accounts to be audited, this report covers the two seasons, autumn 2023 and Spring 2024. These were the first seasons we risked printing a brochure again after Covid and we were hopeful of growing our audiences back to previous levels. So how did we do?

Before Covid, we were averaging up around the 110 mark for the year, with the largest audiences over 160, whilst Covid brought this down to only 59 average for the season. Well, our audience sizes have grown slightly each year and the year ending April 2024 saw our audiences climb again to a total of 2113, the largest audience being 142 with several over the hundred mark, and an average of 74. This look hopeful for the future (NOTE: the autumn season 2024 was averaging 85 as I wrote this, with the largest a sellout 157). The Film Festival was, likewise, a success, though the numbers were still not up to pre-covid level.

Though not a club event, Carol Rennie's second Chinese Film Festival at the Alhambra last February was attended by many club members and looks hopeful for the future too.

The decision to make the committee much smaller, basically just the 'officers', leaving most of the weekly jobs to volunteers, seems to have been a success, with many new faces volunteering to help – my thanks go to all of them. Please keep volunteering and, if you haven't yet, please consider doing so. It would be especially good if you wanted to introduce a film or even review it for the club; please let me know.

We have continued with the 'pre-film drinks', which has had some success drawing in people to mix before the film, but we did drop the 'post-film discussions' directly after the film, due to their dwindling support.

The other good news from the year is that, once again, we are still in good financial position having managed our spending in line with our income.

As we go to press, we are looking forward to the start of the club's 26th year and, especially, the 25th Keswick Film Festival, which Ian Payne, the Festival Co-ordinator is hoping to make even bigger and better than normal. I will finish with my usual thanks to the Committee and to the many helpers who keep the Club and the Festival running. Thank you.

Vaughan Ames, Club Chair