

## **CMAF Chairman's Report 2014**

I've now completed a full year as chairman. Our 2013 festival was a great success with a varied programme of excellent events and a wonderful art display.

Thank you to everyone who helped to make this year a success, especially those who are new to the festival – we look forward to seeing you again next year.

As always, the committee have worked tirelessly to manage concerts, check programmes, make canapés, wash glasses and cups and generally make the week run smoothly.

We are so lucky to have Carole as our president, setting a wonderful example working away behind the scenes managing the catering, hosting committee meetings and so much more.

Having a bigger committee made life easier for all concerned but the year was not without its challenges. Bearing in mind previous experience we arranged the programme to that we could set up Marden House at the beginning of the week and leave it in situ, thus removing the need to move the stage around. But the Swindon G& S Society decided, (against the terms of their contract) to do a full costumed version of Trial by Jury !! Although frustrating at the time – the end result was a wonderful evening that was thoroughly enjoyed by all who attended.

We welcomed David Speary and Robin to run the bar, Paul Woodman stepped up to be our treasurer and Joan re-joined the committee.

On the publicity front, the programme was revamped and we introduced new tickets, both for Friends and the public and our new Flappy flags were set up outside Marden House to alert people to the art exhibition and the festival events.

Sadly the number of festival friends is still reducing and we are not recruiting new friends to fill the gaps.

2014 will be the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the festival and we have lots of exciting plans so hopefully that will help to recruit more support

Our efforts to arrange a series of bespoke lunch time concerts for an invited audience of guests from local business or commerce have not yet been realised but we hope to correct that in the coming year. We're also looking into the possibility of arranging celebrity concerts and recitals that will bring the festival to the attention of more people from within the local community.

The Heritage Lottery funded Music in Action project is under way and I'll ask Peter Grant to give us an update on that shortly but there is still work to do to get the after school music club up and running.

I'd like to thank Marden House for their ongoing support and also St Mary's Church, John Bentley School and the Heritage Centre.

We are also indebted to Bevirs for their sponsorship and The Town Council for allowing us free use of the Town Hall.

Enormous thanks must also go to Kevin O'Daly and his team at the box office – Kevin gives us so much support and advice, he really is invaluable.

Finally – none of this would be possible without the support of our lovely audiences– thank you for attending our events and generally supporting us.

Glenis Ansell

16/01/2014