

Dobson Henry Medal 2024

One of the benefits of being Chair of the RPS AV Group is being able to present a special award to people who have made a significant difference to the AV community. In fact it's the only benefit of being Chair of the AV Group!

It's called the Dobson Henry Medal – why this?

It dates back to a legacy left to the AV Group by two members of the then Swindon Camera Club, now known as Swindon Photographic Society.

John Dobson was a jazz band leader and Roy Henry was a schoolmaster, and both had a keen interest in AV, with John in particular making sequences on his Royale projector. When he died in 1992, he donated all his equipment to the RPS AV Group. Roy arranged the sale of this, and the proceeds were used to cast the Dobson Henry medal. It was called Dobson Henry medal rather than Henry Dobson so the names wouldn't be confused with a single person's name.

It's not awarded every year, instead being given when someone is deemed to fit the criteria. Last year at the Great Northern AV Festival, awards were made to Bryan Stubbs, Tony Collinson and Keith Scott, two of whom are serving as judges this year.

The criteria for receiving the Dobson Henry Medal are:

- For outstanding contributions in the Audio-Visual Medium
- For furthering the activity of the Medium.
- For long service to the Medium
- In organising events, such as The Internationals, The Nationals, workshops and AV Days, for working on committees such as the AV Group and the RPS Distinctions Panel.
- Working for charity over many years, using AV as the medium.
- Helping and advising others in public, and also for those people who work quietly in the background.

So, who comes to mind when we start looking at these criteria? Perhaps someone who has for many years arranged AV events to help keep the medium at the forefront. Maybe someone who has put on events and shows to help raise money for charity? Or someone who has written articles for AV news about how to use software to make good quality AVs. Maybe an individual who is a great back-room expert helping to keep the show on the road and ensuring the quality is always "spot on". Perhaps a "mover and shaker" who can make the connections, call in favours and make things happen in an efficient way. In addition, it helps if the recipient produces AVs and enjoys some success with these. Perhaps they might also have judged a few competitions over the years.

The recipient this year has been involved with making AVs for many years. They started way back in the days of slide/tape productions, and regularly attended the AV Summer Schools organised by Richard Tucker at Duffryn House in South Wales. After taking a

break from AV in the early 2000's, this person returned some years later when digital methods had re-vitalised AV production. After joining the AV Group Committee, they have played a major part in shaping the role of the AV Group within the RPS.

Narrowing down the possible recipients, this person has taken on two posts within the AV Group Committee – the Group Treasurer and the Editor of AV News. Both of these roles have been very challenging with the RPS changing its accounting methods, and the production costs of AV News rising every year. I am of course speaking about Alastair Taylor.

We have all seen how AV News has flourished under his editorship over the last nine years, and after the next issue, Alastair will step down after a tenure of nine years. He will continue to work as the Group's Treasurer, as well as supporting the new editor, Ian Hosker.

Alastair has also started collaborative projects with other RPS Groups, speaking at the Travel Group's conference and initiating the Soundscape Project with the Landscape Group. Both of these have helped raise the AV Group profile within the RPS.

This weekend of course would not be possible without Alastair and his team, who took over the running of the Nationals in 2023.

Within the RPS, Alastair is also the Chair of the RPS Nomination Committee, and regularly represents the AV Group at the MemCom meetings.

All of this makes Alastair Taylor a very worthy recipient of the Dobson Henry Award for services to AV.

But it doesn't stop there....

I'm very pleased to say that there is a second recipient this year.

This person has been heavily involved with AV for over 20 years, and has made a multitude of sequences in their own unique style.

They too have taken on a key role on the AV Group Committee, and have additionally organised regional events for the RPS. Over the years, this person has provided help and advice for numerous people in AV techniques, and has been involved in running AV competitions for the Western Counties Photographic Federation, has served on the RPS Multimedia Distinctions Panel, and is a member of the organising committee for the Jurassic Coast International AV Salon.

Crucially, she has been running the AV Group section of the RPS website for many years, and has built up a wealth of knowledge and information within its pages. She also handles the distribution of our newsletters and looks after the booking system for our events, so its with great pleasure that I can announce that the second recipient of the Dobson Henry award is Sheila Haycox.

Congratulations to both, and thank you for your contribution and service. Your service and support are wonderful and very much appreciated by all of the AV Group.
But that's not all!