

Press Officer's report 2019-2020

When beginning to review the last year (actually 17 months) since the last AGM, I was surprised to find that that as many as six press releases have been issued.

The "Our Fragile Earth" strand at the 2019 Salisbury Festival was attended by a number of our members (and our leaflets were placed on seats at events). Individuals' reviews of films, talks and discussions were collated into a Press Release that was printed by Valley News, with a photo of our members with Rebecca Johnson of ICAN.

Valley News also put the advance notice of the Candle Float on their website.

The Hiroshima Day Candle Float was well covered on a variety of media, with the message from the Mayor of Hiroshima attracting some attention. The Salisbury Journal had an article with four photos, with more photos on their website. Valley News also printed the story. Caroline and/or Peter G were interviewed on BBC Wiltshire radio. An interview with Tim, before the event, but filmed on one of the bridges on-site, was screened on Salisbury TV, and I gather it was syndicated to other regional TV stations.

Two letters supportive of the Candle Float were published in the Journal. I cannot over-emphasise the value of our members writing to the press on any relevant topic, such as those circulated to all of us through Peter G's posts on our website.

A few members joined the blockade of the DSEI arms fair at the Excel Centre in London, their story being covered on the Valley News website.

Then came lock-down!

The wonderful video for the 2020 75th anniversary of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, with another letter from Hiroshima's Mayor, was well covered by New Valley News, the Journal, Spire FM and BBC Wiltshire, several with links to the You Tube link on their websites. Given the format of the event it was surprising and disappointing that none of the local TV stations covered it, despite my giving them advance notice.

Finally, Salisbury CND welcomed the ratification of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons by the United Nations, which merited a Press Release which was placed unamended on the New Valley News website, and, amended to dilute the original message, in print in the Salisbury Journal.

Who knows what stories will arise in the year ahead, but I will be mindful of news from the media, and from stories posted on our website, and try to make sure that Salisbury CND continues to feature in our local and regional press.

Tim Sedgwick-Jell