



Newsletter

**BRACKNELL
CAMERA
CLUB**

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Editorial

By Ruari Cumming

Welcome back to another fun packed season which starts next month with our first meeting on 8th September, so see you then.

I do hope you have all enjoyed the summer time and taken lots of nice

pictures to warm and stimulate us through the winter months. Talking of “stimulating” and right at the end of last season, I was very pleased and honoured to be invited to Havant Camera Club to receive both a trophy and silver salver for achieving 1st & 2nd place in the Open Slides section of their 35th National Open Exhibition. And here is a snap recording the event !!

A well done must also go to John Tyler, Chris & Debbie Bradley, Ron Gafney & Minch who also achieved both Highly Commended & acceptances. Some of you may not have seen my winning slide, entitled “Railway Child”, so here it is for a last airing, me thinks.



Photo: © Chris Bradley, CPAGB

In fact John Tyler has a print that is very similar to this slide of mine, as we both saw & took the picture at virtually the same moment, whilst on an outing to the Mid Hants Railway, better known as the Watercress Line.



Bruce Collins has also had an interesting summer, becoming South Hill Park’s accredited photographer, and has already had a number of his images used to promote their events.



Are you mouse trained yet ?

OR

How to get your digit out

by John Tyler

Any fool can use a computer -- and many do....ANON

John Tyler concludes his illuminating article here, part one of which we saw in issue 47.

The same logic applies to making adjustments for density, colour, contrast etc., where I invariably make use of an Adjustment Layer. To generate one of these highlight the layer you wish to adjust by clicking on it in the Layers palette, then click on the Adjustment Layer icon and a dialogue box appears; select the Type you require from the drop-down list e.g. Curves or Levels etc. and click OK. Make your adjustments and click OK. A new adjustment layer is thereby inserted in the stack immediately above your image layer. Even better though, overdo the adjustments. Then, at the top of the Layers palette, reduce the Opacity (it starts at 100% by default), to return to that level of adjustment you judged that you required. Save the image now! This gives amazing flexibility. At any time in the future you can return to the adjustment layer and alter its opacity, either up or down, or, by double clicking on its name in the Layers palette, modify the settings. You will save them won’t you?

Remember that a layer is active only if an eye symbol is visible in the first column: click there to toggle the layer on and off. Whilst ‘off’ it will nevertheless still be retained when the image is saved on the hard drive.

This is as good a place as any to pass on a tip about the grid in Curves. Alt + click within the grid area well away from the curve itself, and decide whether you prefer what you will then see. If you don’t prefer it, Alt + click to change back. One of the most powerful ways of working in Photoshop is by using selections, & there are, ../contd.

of course, a number of tools you can choose from to get exactly the selection you want. The **L**asso tool (short-cut L) has three forms and which you use will largely depend on personal preference. The magic **W**and (short-cut W) is probably the easiest to recommend; remember that you can add to your selection by holding down Shift and then clicking further. Try Alt + S then C to activate the Colour Selection tool -- useful to select, for example, areas of colour that are not contiguous, such as patchy sky behind trees.

Ctrl + A selects **a**ll the image -- useful for framing using Stroke (under Edit)

Ctrl + D **d**eselects the current selection

Ctrl + J copies the current selection to a new layer.

Whichever selection method you use, it will be indicated by some infuriating moving dashes -- known to the cognoscenti as 'Marching Ants'. I suggest that you don't initially spend too long refining your selection -- there are better ways. Press Q for **Q**uick Mask; you will see that what you have selected remains clearly visible, while what is not selected is covered by a translucent red overlay. Use a **B**rush (press B) to paint with black to extend the overlay, paint with white to extend the selection. Press D for the **D**efault colours of black (foreground colour) and which the brush applies, and white (background colour). A glance at the Tool bar confirms this. To paint with white, press X (for **eX**change colours.)

Press Q again to leave Quick Mask mode. After you have saved this selection, by pressing Alt + S, then S and clicking OK, you will find it in the Channels palette. Now save the whole file on the hard drive. It is permissible to paint on a mask (see below) at any time -- now, or after tea, or 2 o'clock tomorrow morning, even next year. This means that you can refine the mask in easy stages -- very convenient if you want to make a complicated selection. Just make a crude approximation to your mask, try out its effect, and if you like it, touch it up at leisure. You can even throw it away if you like, by dragging it to the waste bin at the bottom of the palette.

However, perhaps you want to use your selection to make an Adjustment Layer instead? With the marching ants visible, simply follow the procedure I gave earlier. Note that this time the selection is shown as a mask not in the Channels palette, but as a Layers palette thumbnail, & very importantly, any adjustment layer effects will be applied only in the white areas of the mask;

areas corresponding to black remain unaffected.

Shift + Alt + click the layer mask thumbnail: the mask will appear as a red overlay similar to that generated in Quick Mask mode (toggle); it is usually easier to paint on the mask in this mode. (On my keyboard I press # to obtain this function; some other keyboards use \ [backslash].)

Alt + click the thumbnail to see just the mask on its own (toggle).

Shift + click the thumbnail to switch off the effect of the mask (toggle).

When you are working on a masked picture layer be sure that you paint on the mask and not on the image! How? Simply click on the mask thumbnail to activate it -- see a mask symbol in the second column: click on the image thumbnail to activate that -- see a brush symbol in the second column. You can paint with any one of 256 shades of grey and a proportional effect will be produced. Probably the easiest way of choosing a grey is to actually select black and then adjust the brush Opacity. Note that by this means it is possible to make a masked adjustment layer which will thereby vary, for example, the colour of the image to different degrees in different parts of the image.

You are now at what I think of as the heart, the very kernel, of Photoshop. Adjust the colour, density, contrast etc. of just a part of the image; then, using a differently masked adjustment layer, alter, to a different degree, other (or the same) parameters on another part of the image and so on. With a saved file, return another time, and start again if you wish. Be advised though: the hard part is knowing when to stop! You can still have an overall adjustment layer, of course, for fine tuning when printing -- it's a dark-room worker's dream come true. I have to confess though, that some of us do dream of other things occasionally.

My final piece of advice is that you should go into your computer workroom with a kitchen timer (or similar) set to 1½ hours or so to remind you of the passage of time -- or buy an uncomfortable chair.

We have not even begun to touch on cloning, blend modes, using selections to create montages and the thorny questions of adjusting image size and sharpening (USM is best). However, would you like to know how to get a really good, truly neutral, black & white print using all the colour inks, the sort of thing that reminds you of those richly gradated Multi-grade prints we made back in the Nineties? Well, so would I, and if anybody cares to write about it, I'm sure the Editor will print it.

***I think I may just have done that in the last issue ?
Copies of back issues are always available.
Just ask Debbie or me for one***Ed



Don't let a camera wreck your holiday

By C.S. Minchell

The following article, written by Shirley Fieldhouse & published in the Daily Telegraph on Thursday 8th August 1963, was cut out of that newspaper by my wife, as you can see, over forty

years ago. I have made one or two minor amendments but in reality it is as valid today as it was then.....Minch

Summer is in, the cameras are out and how I wish they weren't! For, however lovely you look, when you and a man and a camera go out together, you are merely the subject that adds interest to a flat landscape. The camera is the true object of his affection.

You get a foretaste of your future role the day he brings his new camera home. 'Just a minute' he says. 'Just a minute' you say 'and I'll comb my hair'. But he isn't interested in taking a pretty picture of you; he just wants to take photographs.

Bend down to light the fire and he'll get a candid shot to amuse the children when they are older. Roll up your hair before you go out and he'll materialise, crying wittily, 'watch the birdie!' and ignore you later in your new rig-out. Bath baby in a towelling apron, spectacles and a cross expression and there is another winner for the Club competition.

Thirteen and a half million people in England today own cameras and I only hope they are thoughtful enough to holiday alone. For a holiday with a camera fiend is not the rest, lie on the beach & soak up the sun relaxation most women enjoy.

It's keeping constantly on the go, searching for new scenes of breathtaking wonder to record for the 'Camera Club' when you get back.

It's lugging exposure meters and spare films in your handbag, leaving no room for tissues and cold cream.

It's slogging up a mountain so he can get an artistic shot of the comfortable hotel you unwillingly left behind you two hours before.

It's standing poised over a precipice to give the picture proper perspective or is it scale, or posing for hours in your prettiest dress and your prettiest smile and turning out later to be a minuscule dot in the landscape.

quarter of an hour like mutinous statues until the sun gets in exactly the right spot to suit Daddy.

It's Hell !!

What's worse, though, is the 'all-the-year-round' camera addict. The keen amateur hankering after photographic recognition, who develops his own films. The place he chooses for this task is the bathroom, and in any ordinary clean-living family this poses problems.

Curiously enough, the necessity for plunging the bathroom into total darkness for frequent intervals is the least of the inconveniences, once you get used to the hysterical cries of 'keep out' every time you pass the bathroom door.

The real disruption of a happy home life comes when he boards in the window to make quite sure that not a glimpse of light creeps in to spoil his masterpieces; when he stains the bath so hideously with developing fluid that the only way to get a wholesome bath is to get a new one; when he forbids the use of talcum powder in case dust gets onto his negatives.

The man who knows that one day he will take his rightful place in the Royal Photographic Society with one of their distinctions is frankly a bore about it. And if another photographer comes for the evening you might as well go out. The talk is as clear as mud: 'I did it with Tri X or HPS'.

And when you are dropping with fatigue and boredom, out come the photographs to be dissected minutely. Pictures which look straightforward snaps to you and me, turn out to be rare examples of subtle lighting, witty montage or tricky high-key exposure, to be explained in infinite detail and at length.

The only photograph nobody ever gets to see is the one he took of you, quite accidentally, which shows you looking five years younger and five times more attractive than you really are.

And that one, unfortunately, isn't photographically interesting.

I am sure some of you have similar stories you would like to share with us? Perhaps of an event you went to during the summer months. Perhaps the Nelson celebrations held in July on the Solent or some fair, fête or festival where something amusing happened or a real photographic opportunity arose. We do need articles all the time so please try putting digits to keyboard & pass them on to the Editor. Thank you & to all those who have promised to produce an article, we look forward to seeing it...**Ed**

Photo Sayings Nothing happens if you sit at home. I always carry a camera.....*Eliot Erwit*



Bracknell Camera Club - A demographic study

By Caroline Colegate

Whilst trying
to decide what to do
for last season's

Golden Jubilee Celebration, I toyed with the idea of interspersing the evening with a few facts & figures about Bracknell Camera Club. I dispensed with the idea on the grounds that nobody would remember the data and anyway, you would all ask for it to be written up for the Newsletter. So here goes

- At the end of last season we had 61 members.
- 25% of members have one or more photographic distinctions.
- 21% are female.
- 33% of our membership have at some point held a committee position.
- 56% actually live in Bracknell.
- Years of membership:

Less than 5	= 46%
5 - 10	= 25%
11 - 20	= 11%
More than 21	= 18%
Left & rejoined	= 8%
- 80% of members entered one or more internal competitions

Looking at these facts and figures it brings home to me that as Programme Secretary I have to carefully consider balancing the needs of recently joined members along with a hard core of 29% of the membership who have been with us for more than 10 years.

As a judge I go around to many clubs who I am only too well aware are not catering for newer members. I guess this accounts for many other clubs being in decline. The fact that almost 50% of our membership has joined us over the last 5 years means that we must be doing something right in our recruitment process. I would like to see similar statistics for other clubs.

Some may argue that we should concentrate our efforts on the majority (i.e. the 71% who have been members for less than 10 years) but I am not convinced. As a committee we must cater for EVERY member and the moment we stop doing that will be the moment we are on the slippery slope.

For information, last years committee was split exactly 50/50 with members who had been at

BCC for less than 10 years and members who had been with us for greater than 10 years. Maybe that is why BCC is so successful. Without wishing to sound like some big corporate company, a balanced club has a balanced committee at its helm.

So to all of you out there, tell any committee member what you would like to see more of and equally what you would like to see less of. For those of you who are members (or have been members) of other clubs, I would be interested to understand how different BCC is to these other camera clubs. What do we do better, what do we do worse? Likewise if any of our newer members considered joining another club, what finally made you decide to join Bracknell?

NOTE: The data contained in this article may not be 100% accurate. It is based upon data held by the club that members have provided. The writer should not be held to ransom for any inaccuracies!



For Sale

I have the following items for sale, offers in the region of.

- Dell 19" CRT Monitor
(complete with connection and power leads) £75
- Epson Stylus PhotoEX printer for printing up to A3 size (complete with user guide, connection & power leads, driver & PhotoSheet software. Also includes 2 colour & 2 black inkjet cartridges plus Lyson cleaning cartridge & 2 Quad-Black inkjet cartridges) £25
- CanoScan 2700F film scanner for slides & negatives, scanning at 2700 dpi resolution (complete with all accessories, software, connection & power leads etc including user guide, SCSI card & all in original box) £30
- Minolta Dimage Scan Dual II film scanner for slides and negatives, scanning at 2820 dpi resolution (complete with all accessories, software, USB & power leads etc including user guides & all in original box.) £100

All above items are in working condition when last used. Drivers for current operating systems available as free downloads from manufacturers web sites. Happy to deliver if you want me to. Call me on 01344-779509 or e-mail me to ruari@Hebridean-Island-Images.com
See you all on Thursday 8th September.....**Ed**