



Newsletter

**BRACKNELL
CAMERA
CLUB**

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Editorial

By Ruari Cumming

When I started to write this editorial we were basking in the hot & humid weather of one of the sunniest, hottest and driest summers on record. It is now cooler so feel more inclined to finish this off !!

I do hope you have all had an enjoyable summer and are looking forward to the new season of our club.

Caroline Colegate, our Programme Secretary, has yet again produced a cornucopia of events and speakers which will entertain us throughout the season. I am particularly looking forward to "Just Velvia", now that you can't buy any more of that particular film in its 50 ISO rating; "A Venetian Medley", as I was last there 30 years ago & want to go back again; "Creating Order out of Chaos", as it is something new which I could learn from and finally "Going Totally Digital", even though it will be too late for me to do a U turn by then !

We also have some, but never enough, very good articles in the pipeline for the next couple of issues of this Newsletter. More contributions are always welcome so do try to put something together soon !

I hope you managed to see our Exhibition at South Hill Park which ran for 9 days. The major players in putting our exhibition together were Bruce Collins, Brian Steptoe and Caroline Colegate. All the prints were pre-viewed and grouped in cohesive themed panels prior to being hung. This ensured the pictures didn't look as if they had been just randomly stuck up. Our club is indebted to Brian for the detailed diagrammatical planning & hanging layout plan that he created & to the meticulous way that all pictures and panels were positioned.

See next issue for more on this & snaps of the event.



Workshops !!

By Peter Handford

What a terrible name! Sounds rather like HR talk. Well last year I was involved in running two on "Looking at our Prints" and I would like to say a bit more about these.

You will have read Janice's rather nice comments in her recent article which gives a good idea of the atmosphere in these "workshops" (Oh ! for goodness sake let's call them sessions !) The sessions are open to ALL members and the bigger the range of expertise and experience we have, the more interesting the sessions will be. The idea is to provide a chance for people bring along pictures (Not necessarily "Exhibition" pictures) and to give and get feedback from fellow members in a non-competitive atmosphere. I once belonged to a group which met regularly to express our ideas and how we tried to create pictures from these ideas. It allowed a unique platform to show pictures, especially experimental ones.

So come - one and all, those just starting and those more experienced. Bring enprints or mounted photos - just bring yourself and some of your pictures !

Editors Note - the first such workshop, sorry session, is on 4th September at Coopers Hill starting at 8 p.m. prompt.



The Second Chance

By Brian Richardson

Who has not, at some time or other, been in a situation where all the conditions for a potentially prize winning photograph are present and, sin of sins, the camera has been left back at base ? It happens to me more often than I like to admit, & happened when on a family holiday on the Dorset coast in the early seventies.../contd.

We had been for a walk along the cliffs and were returning to our holiday caravan in the late afternoon. The sea was like a millpond and the setting sun cast a golden glow over the scene. The peace and tranquillity were palpable and cried out to be recorded but the light was changing too fast to give time for a dash back to the caravan for the camera. I made a note of the time with the aim of returning with my camera at the same time the next day, and by great good fortune identical conditions prevailed the next afternoon. The scene was duly photographed and on my return home the film was processed (I was into home processing Ektachrome at the time). The resulting slide was entered in the Club's next Annual Exhibition and won the trophy for best pictorial slide.

I was reminded of the occasion by Minch's remarks when he presented the Quarterly Competition awards at the 2006 AGM, when he said that winning a cup for a picture in the Annual Exhibition was largely a matter of luck whereas winning the Quarterly Competition was the result of producing a consistently high standard of work throughout the year. Luck certainly played a part in my being given a second chance to get my picture.



Old Rockers visit the Stones

By Martin Williams

Since joining BCC in 2003, it's been a great joy to see the outstanding pictures presented during the regular club competitions & by the guest speakers. Seeing so many great pictures has inspired & driven me to develop my own photography, and I believe improve a little. I did however feel a little surprised that we never see a camera at the club or arrange outings where we could share our hobby and possibly learn from one another.

Therefore when I heard from a friend of a friend that their camera club had been on an outing to Stonehenge for something called 'Stone Circle Access', I was intrigued. A quick search on the Web, followed by a phone call to the very helpful Helen proved this rumour correct and that a small group of 28 people maximum could access the stones either early morning or late evening. Places were filling up quickly so I 'provisionally' booked a time slot in May at a time which I thought would allow us to capture the beautiful golden light,

dramatically dancing on the stones. Only problem left was that I had to give an idea of numbers as quickly as possible.

Knowing that I'd had to fix a date without consulting anyone, I was worried that trying to establish numbers would be difficult. I was wrong, within two weeks of placing the list at the back of the club & announcing the date, I had a fairly firm idea of numbers, so after another quick call to the very helpful Helen, one application form later, deposit collected and we were confirmed for our booking.

Time shot by, & before I knew it the visit was within a week, a quick check of the long forecast weather confirmed my worst nightmare that rain was expected. And no, this isn't the exciting storms we hear about that creates magnificent dramatic skies, this is the traditional British drizzly rain I get when ever I take my camera out of it's camera bag !

Day of the trip, I'd teamed up with others from



A forest of tripods

the club to drive down to the area, & as the Stonehenge part was for only 1 hour, we decided to go elsewhere first & spend a day there.

Alan had discovered that Thruxton had a race day, but as the weather was overcast and wet we felt that the limited cover of Micheldever woods would provide some protection and would hopefully prove perfect for bluebell photography.

After a few hours in the woods we'd all got our 'traditional' bluebell shots, some more abstract 'blurred' shots and I'd got very wet feet. Time for phase 'B' of the plan, the pub. Ham, eggs, chips and beer later and we set off for Stonehenge, and did I see a possible break in the sky, was there a shaft of sunlight peeking through the clouds and glistening across the Stonehenge ? No, there wasn't !

Club members were starting to gather at the Stones, bags on backs, cameras round necks and tripods in hand. I'd been warned that one member may be a no show, but we had two others still not arrived. We waited but were ushered in, the others would be sent in when they arrived.

Most members started capturing the stones from the perimeter, and for the first time, there was just the slightest bit of pink in the sky.



I'll have £5 each way on number 8 !

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Tripods circled the perimeter, almost all cameras pointed to the Stones, in hope the gradual pink sky would develop to provide the perfect '10' we all seek, whilst a few members seemed more interested in taking pictures of other members than the stones (for reference, I take pictures because I don't like people taking pictures of me!).

Within minutes the sky shifted from the gentle teasing tint of pink to the more traditional 'grey and I'm going to stay grey' type of sky. Time to explore within the Stones. The advantage of the Stone Circle Access is that you can get amongst the stones, the disadvantage is that others can too, so careful framing or a patient nature is required to eliminate all sight of man, failing this Photoshop to the rescue.

Thirty minutes in and the weather changes again, this time to light rain. This is where the die-hards are separated from the rest, as half the group stay and half leave to the comfort of their warm, dry cars. Though for years great minds have tried to discover what Stonehenge was constructed for, within minutes we quickly worked out that they were built to provide protection from the British weather! Whilst hugging into the Stones, more detailed shots on the patterns in the stones were captured until finally the hour was up and it was time to go home.



White Balance ?

Where's the 'rain' setting

I've not spoken to before. Also it's great to be among the stones which have stood for so long, and which possibly hold mysteries still to be discovered.

As for the photographs I took, certainly they're not the best pictures of Stonehenge ever taken, however they are my collection of pictures of a damp and overcast day at one of the worlds most famous spots, and every picture provides a memory and an opportunity to learn, and yes, I may just put one picture in for a competition.....

All Photos © Debbie Bradley



No Kevin ! That's not a Great Bustard you can see

I hope all that went had a good time, I for one enjoyed the opportunity to go out with fellow keen photographers, and also got the chance to speak to club members



Caught ! Between a rock and a hard place !!

Who are the PAGB ?

By Debbie Bradley



The Photographic Alliance of Great Britain, usually referred to as the "PAGB" offer awards for photographic competence in a completely different way from the Royal Photographic

Society (RPS). The RPS, often known in photographic circles as the "Royal", have different rules to gaining a qualification, or distinction as they call it and you have to be a Member. This either means you become a member and then apply for a distinction or you apply for a distinction (Licentiate or Associate) and, if you are awarded the distinction you have applied for, then you have to join the "Royal" at that time. For each distinction you have to submit a 'panel' of work. Once a distinction has been achieved, you have to maintain your membership with the "Royal", which can be quite costly, in order to keep the letters after your name.

When you achieve a qualification through the PAGB it is yours for life, with no further fees and instead of having to produce a 'panel' you show a certain number of slides or prints (depending on which level you are applying for) and they are shown at random amongst others being shown at that particular adjudication.

So, what are the requirements ?

You need to be an active member of a Camera Club, affiliated to your particular Federation which, in our case, is the Southern Photographic Federation (SPF) of the PAGB, so that's the first hurdle ! You then need to accumulate points, and to achieve these your work has had to be picked by the Club & entered in external competitions or, you personally have entered work in open exhibition competitions, with some success, within the SPF and generally be of good Club photography standard.

All this sounds pretty daunting at first reading, but it really isn't as bad as it sounds ! As Bracknell Camera Club has so many members and is such a prestigious Club, it is pretty obvious that only a few club members are going to have work chosen to represent them. For instance, if a Club had only 15 members, the chances of having work chosen for external competitions is very high compared with us with over 60 members (so in some cases, the criteria can be a little flexible

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because of our circumstances). A letter of confirmation is required from the External Competition Secretary.

Jeff Lawrence (see picture inset) is now our External Competitions Secretary, & will be very helpful in supplying the necessary information to anybody who needs his support when applying to the PAGB for one of their distinctions.



Having complied with the above.....then what ?

The first step is to apply to the Awards Officer for the Southern Photographic Federation who currently is Leo Rich in Salisbury. He will send you a pack containing all the necessary information, application forms and advice on how to enter. Naturally, there is a “one off” cost, roughly about £40 but then, when you pass, no more fees apply. Full details can be found in the SPF Handbook which is always on display on our club information table.

What next !

The next part is easy! Simply pick a selection of your best work. The slides are shown, with other applicants work, in a random style to six judges who individually mark between 2 and 5 for each image viewed and the total mark is then given – this is helpful in case one judge does not like a particular style, his views become balanced by the rest of the judges. All the marks are accumulated and there is a different pass mark appropriate to each award.

What are the Awards !

There are three levels, **Credit**, **Distinction** and **Master**, each requiring a different number of points and items of work. In the case of a credit for example, you have to submit 10 slides/prints and have acquired 10 ‘points’. The amount of each increases as the awards get higher.

As you probably know, Chris (see photo to right) and I have been fortunate enough to gain our awards and are now proud owners of a CPAGB and DPAGB respectively, and both of us will be really pleased to chat to you about entering, tell you what we submitted, and help in any way we can to encourage you to have a go at obtaining a PAGB award.



Our Summer Bar-be-Que

A few shots from this year’s, very successful, Bar-be-Que held on a warm, sunny and dry (unlike last year !) evening. All those attending enjoyed themselves, once they had found the hostelry in the wilds of the country lanes around Warfield.



First come, first served and all with a smile



No Bar-be-Que would be the same without the Que !!

Summer Caption Competition

Now, after you have enjoyed your summer break and perhaps partaken in the odd glass of cooling lager or “G & T”, you may like to try your hand at our caption competition.



Just come up with a humorous caption for this picture taken at our Summer bar-be-que. Write it on a piece of paper, add your name and telephone number & pass it to me by

10 p.m. on Thursday, 28th September. Bottle of wine for what I consider the funniest & best caption.....**Ed**