



Newsletter

**BRACKNELL
CAMERA
CLUB**

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Editorial

By Ruari Cumming

Well, winter has now arrived, with recent gales blowing all the leaves off the trees and the temperature dropping so much that my three layers of jumpers has had to be augmented by a switch on of the CH - Ugh ! The cost ! And in a few more days, the nights

will start to shorten and we can look forward to longer days of fine weather and the sound of birdsong again. So much for the advert for Springwatch !

I am pleased by the number of members signing up for all the various Workshop evenings run by Neil Attard. New or additional evenings are being added, to cope with demand, so do keep looking in the "sign up" book kept on the back table during our meetings.

It is heartening to see how well our Britishness Exhibition is going and how many members turned out last Saturday to support its opening at SHP. Well done to all who gave so freely of their time to this very worthwhile project.

One of the main contributors to this project was Jay Heiser, who joined our club in September 2007 and has since brought much wit and photographic enjoyment to us all, gaining his well deserved Licentiate's distinction with the RPS in January of this year. During his time with us he has produced some outstanding photographs, with great inspiration and technical ability; we have seen images that many of us would never have thought of or have had the conviction to enter in club competitions. Sadly Jay leaves us before Christmas to return to his native America and we wish him all the very best for the future.

With Christmas soon upon us I have, reluctantly, blown the dust off my credit card and bought all the gifts my family needs - so ...

Never a Christmas morning

Never the Old Year ends

But somebody, thinks of somebody

Old days, Old times, Old friends

Happy Christmas & a Good New Year to you all !



Your chance to be a judge !
Take part in the
BRACKNELL CAMERA
CLUB

PORTFOLIO

Competition

Enter one digital image only. You will have the chance to score & comment on every other image entered in this fun 'round robin' contest.

Simply submit your digital image (maximum size 1050 pixels high by 1400 pixels wide) on any subject, make it well exposed and sharp. Give it a title too, otherwise the organiser will think up one for you ! To get good comments make it different or a real bit of fun !

A cup for the winner and a bottle of wine for the best comment !

Closing date is Easter 2010.

Please hand your entries to Chris Bradley on a USB memory stick, CD or better still send it to chrisandeb@tesco.net

This Newsletter.....

.....is published six times a season, from August to May. Contributions are always welcome & in fact needed. Articles, with pictures, should ideally be of a photographic nature, but not necessarily if you have a particular story to tell or a scene to set. If you have a contribution to make, however large or small, then please see the Editor for more details or view requirements on our website at www.bracknell-camera-club.co.uk. Without articles from members, this "much enjoyed" newsletter won't continue and will fold (pun intended) like many other club's who couldn't sustain contributions. Besides, the last thing you want to see is all the articles written by our ghost writer - Hortencia Trubshaw ! Thanks !

Quote - Unquote

"If I knew how to take a good photograph, I'd do it all the time"Robert Doisneau

"The best zoom is your legs"Ernst Haas

When a hobby becomes a therapy

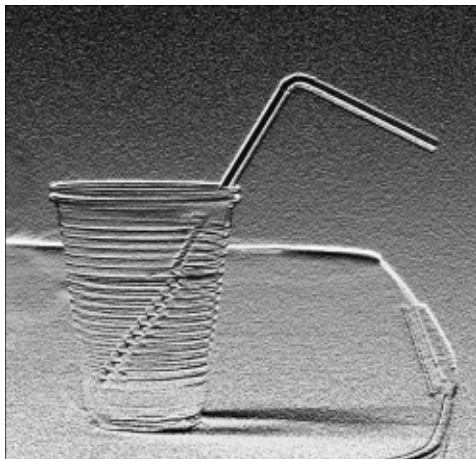
By Caroline Colegate

Many of you will know that life became very stressful for me this summer and many of my 365 images over that period could be classed as very dull and boring but to me they provided an outlet for my inner emotions. They helped me to cope with events and no matter what lies ahead some of those images will remain very special to me.

This brings me onto a subject that I had never given much thought to before and that is photography as a therapy. The awareness of poetry, song writing and literature is, I believe, very high in people's perception of ways to vent ones feelings. All these art forms revolve around using words to express emotions but can pictures tell a similar story? I am sure many of you will be saying "yes". Pictures that tell a story are often referred to as Documentary or Photojournalism but that's not what I am talking about. I am talking about photographing objects or situations that mean something personal to the photographer.

I wanted many of my 365 pictures to convey my mood or something of my day, rather like a diary, not in words but in pictures.

Take for example my image for Day 226



After the previous few weeks of worry regarding my Mum's health I thought our troubles were behind us so the last thing I expected was a frantic call from her at 06.30 saying that she had intense pain in her hip and could not move. After an early morning visit from her GP he decided that she ought to go to hospital. He wrote a referral letter and called an ambulance there and then. A few hours later it was confirmed that she had broken her hip and would need an urgent partial hip replacement operation. This image was taken as I sat by her bed awaiting a visit from the Specialist; the refraction of the straw as it entered the water reminded me of the x-ray scan I was shown of her broken hip.

To most of you it will look like a very boring picture of a straw in a glass plus the addition of an



awful Photoshop filter but to me it will remain much more. Day 226 is not a day I particularly want to remember but documenting the events of the day in this way helped me to cope with the stress. Instead of the emotions staying bottled up, they had been released. There have been several other days in 2009 where a similar situation occurred. Some days have even recorded happier events.

All this made me realise that there is so much more to photography. Deep human emotions are often very personal and sometimes impossible to talk about and even harder for others to relate to, the result is that often tension stays within. For me the straw in a glass was a more powerful therapy than talking and it will remain in my portfolio forever. Once a conversation is over, the moment it lost. I appreciate that many of you might not share my views but until I tried this type of therapy I had not appreciated it's full potential food for thought I hope.

So when asked to list reasons for taking pictures I hope that along with documenting family, holidays, commercial work, competition work etc, you will add therapy to the list. If just one member does this as a result of reading this article then I will be delighted that without really trying I have made a positive difference to your stress levels. Whilst I hoped my 365 project would improve my photography and seeing eye I never expected it would have helped me to cope with a very stressful summer, wow!



TITLES

By Jeff Lawrence

No, not the inherited kind, nor those handed out as favours by the party in power to the great and the good, but the titles we give to our images when we enter them into competitions. One can reasonably ask if they serve a useful purpose or, indeed, any purpose at all? Are they as likely to distract judges from our carefully prepared pictures as they are to encourage them to award higher marks? In this article I'll consider the pros and cons of using language to support our visual offerings and illustrate that with some examples I've collected from the last few years of competition entries.

I'll start by declaring my own position - I like titles. So does my favourite judge, who agrees that they can give some insight into the thinking behind a picture which can otherwise be difficult to interpret. Not everyone feels

...../contd

the same about titles, though; one of our club's best photographers, for example, told me that he doesn't like titles, although he did admit that might be because he felt he wasn't any good at choosing them.

The first function of a title, it seems to me, is to identify the image. This may not seem too important to the photographer (I would have said author, but I've been told that that sounds pretentious) but it is important to the competition secretaries and selectors. It can be difficult to identify a print by describing it, especially if it's some time after the work has been displayed & the photographer's name was never mentioned. Of course with digital images identification isn't a problem as it's easy to keep a thumbnail of the image for reference, so perhaps in future we'll do that for prints too.



The Keyholder

A second function is to describe the image. After all, if identification was the only purpose of a title, a number would do just as well. Simple description is by far the most common class of title our members (and most photographers) use. This can be basic, such as the name of the sitter in a portrait or the name of the location of a landscape but I think this is



The Collector

missing a trick as it adds little to the image that hasn't already been provided visually. This isn't always the case, though, as recognising the name of a place

or a subject can spark off some associations for the judge (as advertisers are well aware). The skill is to make these associations positive - which is not always easy to achieve. After all, how can you know whether a judge had a wonderful, relaxing holiday in the magnificent scenery of the Highlands or two weeks of complete misery in continuous rain, except for the one sunny day when he was plagued by midges?

A third function, and to my mind a most important one, is to say something about the image that isn't obvious from its appearance alone. A perfect example of this is Debbie Bradley's "The Keyholder" where,



Ninety

without the title, the key which establishes the status of the subject could easily be overlooked. In a similar vein, my own title "The Collector" provides a focus for what is essentially a still life image. Titles can guide the attention for portraits too. My portrait of an old lady is entitled "Ninety" to relate the expression on the subject's face to her emotions.

John Tyler has produced some memorable titles including the punning "Carnival Bouncers" and my favourite of all, "Two of a Kind", which uses a familiar phrase not only to



Carnival Bouncers

highlight the similarity of dress of the subjects but to their sexual preferences. Another of John's titles which conveys a strong message was "Remember Ufton" but without the title the message is much less clear and I believe the



Two of a Kind

image did less well than expected in competition because of that.

Actually, some place names can prove extraordinarily difficult to handle, especially if they are in a foreign language - and I include in that category, to my shame, Gaelic, of which I speak hardly a word. This does raise one of the difficulties with titles - at least for the poor committee member who has to announce them; some are difficult to pronounce, or even to read! I've had to bite my tongue more than once as my carefully thought out title is misread, completely losing the impact it should have had. Still, the fault is mine, for choosing something which can be misinterpreted. I know better now.



Remember Ufton

For those of us interested in Nature photography, a standard exhibition requirement is to use the common name as a title, followed by the official scientific name. I find this makes for an uninspiring title and for the few nature subjects I've captured, I've only used a

common name
e.g. my
“Lawyer’s
Wigs” makes no
mention of
*Coprinus
comatus*,
(although I was
tempted to use a
better-known



common name - Shaggy Inkcap). The late and much missed John Browne was the only club member I’ve found in the last few years to use a formal title for a nature print with his “Foxtail Barley (*Hordeum jugatum*)”. To illustrate the difficulties of this approach, that scientific name, according to my reference sources, is for another species altogether; it should have been *Hordeum jubatum*.

Poetic devices have been used by many members, with alliteration the most popular. Examples include Sandy Pullar’s “Storm Suspends Service”, Caroline Colegate’s “Des Res” (throwing in a bit of irony for good measure), Ruari Cumming’s “Reflective Rambler”, Bruce Collin’s “Lindisfarne Lichen” and Janice Bradley’s “Rhythm on Roundabout”. Chris Bradley also has a good line in rhyming titles such as “Fighting Kites”, “Yawning Fox” and “Rousing Peregrine”.

So to summarise, an image needs a title, but must be able to do without it. The title should be original, but sound familiar. It should use linguistic and poetic devices but not be pretentious. It should use correct names of foreign places and technical subjects, but be easy to read and pronounce. It should be brief, but convey a meaning and message to the judge. I think that fairly well covers it but if you have any other suggestions to make I’d be glad to hear them. Good titling!

President’s Message

Just a short end of year message to say how pleased I was to attend the opening of your Britishness exhibition last Saturday. It was wonderful that so many members were involved & I was proud that the work looked professional and hung together in a united fashion. Special thanks must go to Brian Steptoe who provided the inspiration, motivation and organisation of the whole event. I hope all those who participated came away feeling justifiably delighted with their achievements, well done all.

Activities like this help set Bracknell Camera Club apart from the rest of the crowd and I hope it inspires your own photography. The end of 2009 is only four weeks away and I wonder how many of you will be making any photographic resolutions. No matter what your goals will be, here’s to 2010 and all your achievements, I look forward to seeing & hearing all about them. Finally, thank you all for your help and support of BCC during 2009, long may it continue.



Photos of Distinction

By Peter Ellis

As some of you might remember, in early 2008 I gained my Royal Photographic Society Licentiate Distinction for still photography by submitting a panel of ten prints. Earlier this year I was both surprised and delighted to be contacted by the RPS who informed me that one of my prints had been selected to be part of its “Photographs of Distinction” exhibition. This is a selection of 30 prints chosen from all of the successful distinction panels for 2008. I was further informed that this exhibition would be on display in Bath’s Guildhall during September and October.

The picture chosen was one which, with a total failure of imagination, I had titled “Autumn Gold” but had nonetheless acquitted itself well in the Club’s league competition. My wife, who has always been an aficionado of the shopping opportunities offered by Bath, decided that this turn of events would be the perfect excuse to revisit that fine city, which we did on a lovely day in early October. We duly found both the Guildhall and the exhibition. Ten prints each from the LRPS, ARPS and FRPS distinction categories. The accompanying photograph shows the author of said print looking shyly pleased at finding himself in such exalted company. He has another chance to see the print when the exhibition is shown at the 2010 Focus on Imaging exhibition at the NEC.

