

2022-2023 SEASON >>>

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"The chiefs" – Jill Parker

Issue #7
Jan 23

A Monthly Insight into the activities of Stroud Camera Club

STROUD CAMERA CLUB



Contacts >>>

Welcome to Stroud Camera Club

We hope you enjoy this Newsletter. If you want any help with matters relating to the club, or your photography in general, we are here to help.

Chairman: Roger Matthews

Secretary: Trish Bloodworth

Treasurer: Leslie Holmes

Competitions: Richard Atkinson

Publicity: René Cason

Programme: Ali Garrett

For more information, including contact emails for all the committee please go to www.stroudcameraclub.co.uk

"Pink backed pelican" – David Hamilton



Roger's Report

Although SCC takes a break over Xmas, it is a busy time of year for the Battles Committee as we review all of the images over the past 12 months and make our selections for a variety of inter-Club competitions. Foremost among these is DPIC, the Western Counties Photographic Federation Digitally Projected Inter-Club Competition. With each image being presented to a panel of three judges for just five seconds, selecting images that have immediate impact is essential. Selecting 18 images to represent SCC from the 531 images that members entered into competition last year takes time as all images are reviewed, but the Battles Committee all have experience of attending DPIC and have a good track record on choosing images that score well in this environment. This year, nine members contributed to SCC's entry which unashamedly reflects the strongest entry we can select within the rules. A WCPF print competition will also be held on the same date as DPIC this year with 15 prints per Club being assessed by three judges. Despite fewer members who enter prints into competition than digital images, seven members contributed to our collective print entry.

After the WCPF competitions, we participate in three 'battles' against local clubs and the Battles Committee select a panel of 30 images to represent the Club in digital and print classes from 16 Club members. Congratulations to all those who have had images selected. SCC is a club that undoubtedly has strength both in breadth and depth and with 16 members achieving a score of 17 or higher in our first digital competition of 2023, I am confident that next year's selection will be more competitive than ever.

Competition is a great way to learn about your own photographic strengths and weaknesses and to gain inspiration from others, but must not be taken too seriously. What I particularly enjoy about SCC is the variety within the programme. The Members' Nights are increasingly well supported with many imaginative entries to keep members entertained - fears of a dozen or more post boxes appearing in the 'Red' themed members' Night were mercifully misplaced. Our external speakers never fail to impress and I am very much looking forward to some good-humoured competition (and banter) with the upcoming 3-Way Challenge and Chairman's Challenge. Your Committee tries to cater for all, but if we are missing something let one of us know so we can make the Club even stronger.

Finally, with the AGM being just under three months away, please let me know if you would like to put yourself forward to join the Committee. We must find a Chairman-elect to take over in 2024 and a volunteer to assist and then replace Richard as Competition Secretary.

AND FINALLY – REMEMBER
*Just because you think you can use Photoshop
doesn't mean you should!*

The review >>>

Heritage & Building Photography – Nigel Forster

Our first Zoom speaker of 2023 was a return “visit” by Nigel Forster with his fascinating insight into how he treats heritage and building photography. Nigel showed us a wide range of images from slate mines in Snowdonia to the Colosseum and other buildings in Rome. After taking us through a few basics, Nigel explained to us the importance of composition, and position of the photographer/camera. Using angles and lines to lead the viewer into the subject – very much used for his bridges and other angular subjects. Use of telephoto compression to achieve repeating patterns with period houses, and diagonal lines and tilts to add dynamism to the image were all discussed.

Whilst Nigel does plenty of long exposure, he cautioned us on using it in this style of photography “just because you can” – demonstrating to us how sometimes if the clouds etc. are moving in the wrong direction, this is more of a hinderance than a help.

Following the break Nigel gave us a whirlwind tour of internal photography with tips on how to show our interiors off to the best advantage – HDR, and post processing to balance lighting were key concepts explored.

In search of Bill Ward

Wow, wow, wow! “I’m still reeling”; “fantastic evening”; “Interesting, inspirational and inspired booking”; “phenomenal photographer and inspirational speaker”; “excellent evening”; “Wonderful evening, one of the best that I can remember” – just some of the comments that have been heard following Bill’s talk at SCC. Apart from being a thoroughly nice chap, his style of both photography and presentation was exemplary. There really was something for everyone in the mix of images he showed, from beautiful landscapes, the canals of Manchester, through to perfectly crafted ICM, and then of course the mud! Now, who would have thought that the mud of the Bristol Channel could be made to look so amazing?

*Bill giving us a background to his life, and his alter-ego characters in his “day job” really set the scene perfectly for understanding why he does what he does with his photography. The mystery for most of us will remain the **how** he does what he does with his photography! Bill explained that his workflow involves minimal work in Lightroom (but he did encourage anyone who uses more post processing to keep going and experiment more with what that can achieve). His ethos is very much to slow down and get lost in the “feeling” of a place and time. Photography very much being his respite from the grind and grit of acting.*

I believe that we will certainly be anticipating a return visit from Bill, who wrote back to me after the evening “Thank you so much for Thursday night... great to meet you all! Thanks so much for inviting me... I thoroughly enjoyed the evening... great fun... and thanks to you all for welcoming me in to your club... really friendly and engaging atmosphere, I thought... lovely to meet Liz the bar manager too... and great location with the bowls... love a bit of bowls!



“Maryport”
Nige Bowsher

Facebook

Why don’t you view some of the member images on our Facebook Group?

If you are not yet a member, simply click the link within Facebook and answer 3 very simple questions.

Upload your image to the group – ideally for an image post use 2048px on the long side (either height or width) to get the best resolution for anyone viewing.

Please “like” and “comment” on members’ posts.

For more information go to
<https://facebook.com/stroudcameraclub>

Members’ Night >>>

Seeing Red!

Our members turned up in numbers for the first event back of the new year – where we as a committee are always nervous about member engagement and take up of these evenings once again you all rose to the challenge and with over 120 images on the theme of red we did ourselves proud.

Interestingly there were very few Christmas images, and those that were included were done with some creative thought. Members found a large variety of aspects to share with each other ranging from David Hunt’s Red Arrows (and of course a Red Kite), Geoff Perrett’s still life – beautifully crafted and lit, through to Ali Garrett’s ICM in Greenwich Tunnel with the red cyclist appearing to be chased by 2 mysterious serpents.

It was also incredibly pleasing to note many of our less experienced members showing some of their work. Kerry Williams found some beautiful red floral images, whilst Steve Harris showed an excellent beach scene. Our very newest joiner Kerrin Malone stunned us with

his imagery from Japan (probably not specifically shot for this challenge! But of course allowable in a member event such as this). His photographs of the amazing tunnel shrine in Tokyo certainly gave us red – as did Leslie Holmes who confessed to me afterwards that she thought the whole image had to be red and not just one part of it. As I said to her, this is the joy of photography as everyone can interpret a brief, or a scene completely differently and bring to it their own feeling and visual interpretation.

The next themed member night is “Making a Splash” – so check the website for ideas.



“Snow tree” – Mark Halling

Lens mysteries?

As photographers we are often being told to get “the best glass” or “use a fast lens” or “create nice bokeh.” All of which is pretty much gobbledegook especially when you are starting out. So here are a few ideas about lenses:

What is “the best glass”? – Roger would obviously say it’s one with the right wine in it! However, in photography terms this normally relates to the cost! The more expensive lenses generally have less distortion, and are made of higher quality glass so have the ability to be sharper. That having been said, if you ever experiment and check for these aspects (whilst they definitely do exist – I know I’ve looked!) it is only when you get to pixel peeping level that it is normally really evident. The days of inaccurate manual focusing are long behind us, and the cameras and lenses have built in correction against camera shake; so often the “best glass” is what you want, what you have already, or what you can actually afford to buy!

What is a “fast lens”? For me this was a tricky one. Is it the one that falls out of your bag more easily? No, it actually refers to the aperture that the lens can open to. Another confusion for most of us – wide open being the small F-number, and closed down being the big F-number! Why is everything always in riddles? Generally speaking a fast lens is therefore the lens that has a minimum aperture of below F2.8 – this means that it lets in more light and thus you can have a faster shutter speed than say a lens that has a minimum aperture of F5.6.

Are all lenses equal when it comes to aperture? The straight answer is “No.” A prime lens (more on this in the next section!) will have a single minimum aperture value. So, for example your “nifty fifty” will often have a constant minimum aperture of F1.8. However, many less expensive zoom lenses will have apertures that vary as you zoom in more. As an example I have a 100-400mm lens, which at 100mm is F5.6 but by the time I get to 400mm it is at F8. This is something to be particularly aware of when you are in Aperture Priority as your camera may compensate with a slower

shutter speed – something that may not be appropriate if you were about to photograph that elusive bird flying off its stick!

Prime or not? This does not refer to whether your lens came from Amazon. A prime lens is a lens with a fixed focal length, e.g. The 50mm lens (nifty fifty). As these lenses do not have to adjust internally to different lengths it is often thought that a prime lens will give you a far sharper lens – so sometimes a cheaper prime lens may be a better option for you than a cheaper zoom.

What is good bokeh? Bokeh (no-one knows how to pronounce it!) is the soft out of focus circles behind your subject. Some lenses like the Lensbaby or vintage lenses such as Helios are designed to create a particular style of bokeh – these are particularly pleasing in more Fine Art style photography. For nature photography you are probably more likely to be looking for smooth bokeh without any obvious circles or swirls. In general terms you will get “better” bokeh if your lens is “wide open” i.e. a smaller F-number. Or, if you are at a larger F-number if the distance from your subject to your background is greater you can achieve a similar “blur”. What is “good” bokeh is really personal preference.

What is lens compression? This is where the lens basically gives the illusion that something is closer to its neighbour than it is. A longer focal lens will effectively squash the scene – hence why the ideal “portrait” lens is said to be an 85mm – this enables the camera to seemingly compress the distance between your nose and your eyes, so it is very flattering. Try an experiment where you take the same portrait with all your lenses, and look at how different in particular your nose and forehead look!

As with most things however, all of this is your choice, for your vision and your budget!

Federation News

2023 DPIC – Exeter Corn Exchange
Sunday 5th February 2023
Tickets still available.

WCPF Members exhibition now open for entries -
<https://photoexhib.co.uk/wcpfex/login.php>

FIAP Congress – did not ratify any changes to distinctions, so full accurate details remain as per PAGB website
<http://www.thepagb.org.uk/fiap/fiap-distinctions/>

Let Trish know any snippets of information that you would like included in future newsletters. Contact her using email: secretary@stroudcameraclub.co.uk

Back 2 Basics

Roger’s Affinity on the iPad was very well received with a dozen members in attendance. Affinity is a fully featured post-processing suite and is ideal for the iPad as it can be purchased for around £9.99!

The next Back to Basics in February will be Off Camera Flash – so get yourself down to The Bowls Club to participate in a live demo and as much user participation as we can manage!

The aim is to take you through the basics of the kit required, what off camera flash actually means, and basics of using it, together with how to modify it.

The cost of Back to Basics sessions is £3 payable on the door, or at the following Club Night. This helps us to cover the cost of hiring the room for the evening.

Send any thoughts and ideas to: secretary@stroudcameraclub.co.uk

Question corner>>>

Q. What are gels?

Gels are transparent coloured material used to modify lights for photography, video and theater. Light is projected through the gel to create coloured effects in the scene being photographed. Some gels modify the light for colour correction. These have specific colour to compensate for particular light conditions. Some gel types have generally recognised names. For example these common gel types have specific colour results:

A.

CTB (colour temperature blue) – converts tungsten light to ‘daylight’ colour
CTO (colour temperature orange) – converts daylight to tungsten

Gel strength is indicated by fractions such as 3/4, 1/2, 1/4, and 1/8. 1/2 CTB gel is half the strength of a full strength CTB gel.

Open 4 – Prints – Judge’s Choice



“Standing alone” – Francis Mridha – Score 20

Open 4 – Digital – Judge’s Choice



“Poppies” – Leslie Holmes – Score 20

“Photography is all about secrets. The secrets we all have and will never tell” — Kim Edwards

2023 competitive thoughts...

DPIC is literally just around the corner, so we are keeping our fingers tight crossed that Stroud Camera Club can once again give a decent showing, and perform to the level we hope. This will also be the first time back for prints since the pandemic, so remember we do also need your prints in future competitions so that the Battles Committee have plenty of choice.



"Woodland walk" – Annie Blick

Open 4 was judged by Graham Ireland from Gloucester CC. Graham was a new judge to SCC and offered an excellent commentary and critique of all the entries. It was good to see a few different people entering, and congratulations must go to **Francis Mridha** a very new club member for his well deserved 20 as winner of the Prints section.

Graham was very clear that the judging was his opinion, and that it is of course very subjective.

Prints

Judge's choice – Francis Mridha "Standing alone" (20)

Digital

Judge's choice – Leslie Holmes "Poppies" (20)

In addition to the above:

Scores of 19– Prints

Roger Matthews – "The Lantern store" (19)

René Cason – "Sun shining on Scwdd Dwli Falls" (19)

Jeff Wilson – "Love never dies" (19)

Scores of 19 – Digital

Roger Matthews – "The Guardian" (19)

Leslie Holmes – "And breathe" (19)

Don't forget you can view all the entered images on our website, and if you are logged in using your member log in you can also leave comments should you wish to.

The next competition is our "Mono" competition, so please carefully review the rules and remember that colour pop is not allowed.

We also start our season's "Battles" against Tetbury on 14th February.

coming up >>>

February 2023

Thu 2nd Feb 2023 – Members' night – 3-way team challenge

Thu 9th Feb 2023 – Cheltenham International Salon presentation

Thu 16th Feb 2023 – Making a Splash – member night

Thu 23rd Feb 2023 – Astrophotography – Graeme Healey

Thu 2nd Mar 2023 – Chairman's Challenge

Next Competition

MONO

deadline and print hand-in

Thurs 23rd February 2023

INTERNATIONAL SALON NEWS

CONGRATULATIONS to the following members who have had acceptances into International or National (BPE) Photographic Salons! The following members achieved acceptances in the highly competitive Toronto international salon – one of the oldest in the world!

René Cason

Trish Bloodworth

CONGRATULATIONS

Do ask if you want any details about Salons – in particular with Cheltenham Salon coming up with a closing date of April.

Please send details of your acceptances or other external "wins" to secretary@stroudcameraclub.co.uk

Apologies if you are missed here – please let me know so you can be added next time.



"Bull running at the rodeo" Mick West

ADVANCE WARNING

- IMAGES YOU WILL NEED!
 - Water
 - Mono
 - Chairman's Challenge
 - Nature



"Night time reflections in the Liffey" – Mick West

UPLOAD YOUR IMAGES – to your gallery and our Facebook Group

Open Competition 4 – High Scores - Digital



“Guardian” – Roger Matthews (19)



*“The flower shot”
Jeff Wilson (19)*

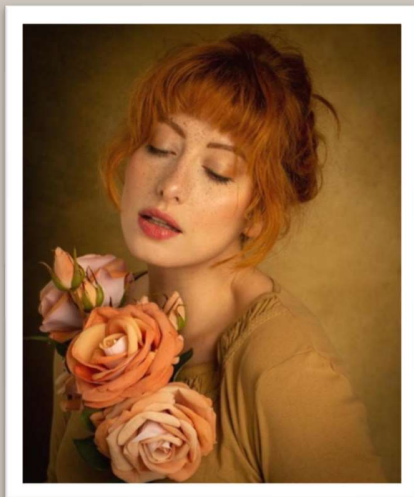


*“And breathe” – Leslie Holmes
(19)*

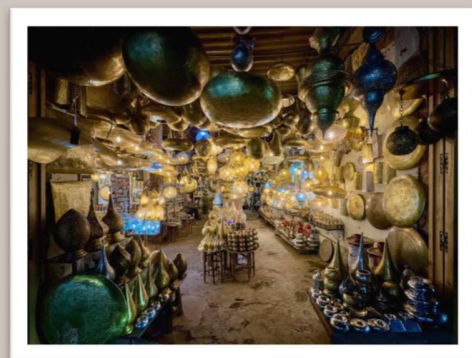


*“Glenfinnan Viaduct” – Andy Harbin
(19)*

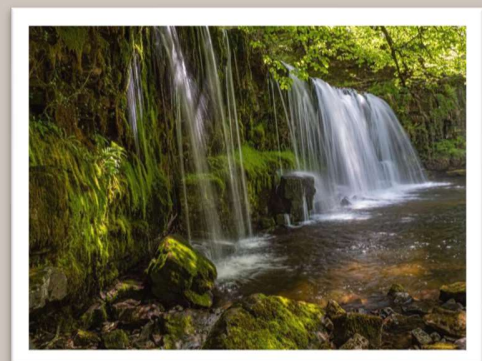
High Scoring Images - Prints



*“Love never dies” – Jeff Wilson
(19)*



“The lantern store” – Roger Matthews (19)



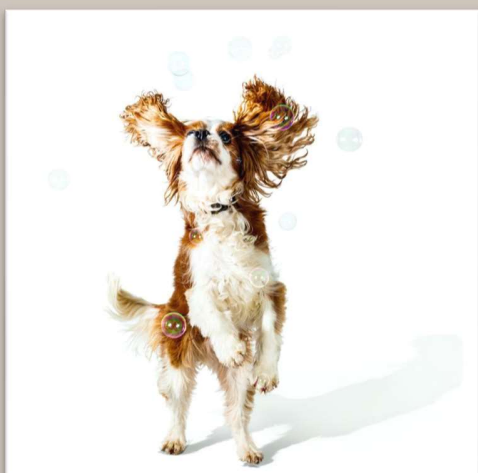
“Sun shining on Scwdd Dwli Falls” – Rene Cason (19)

More from the Competition

"Barn owl flying – wings down" – David Hunt



"Bubbles" – Trish Bloodworth

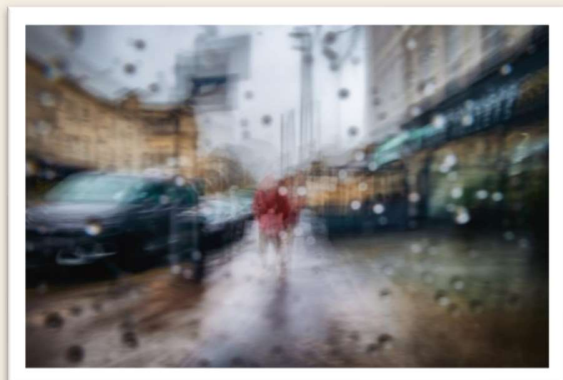


"Buzzards at war" – Rene Cason



Prints

"Walking in the rain" – Geoff Perrett



"Horse at Trough" – Ian Peters



"St Ives" – Richard Atkinson

