

In Camera

The Newsletter of the Hawkesbury Camera Club Inc.

FROM THE CHAIR

Come gather 'round people where ever you roam, and admit that the waters around you have grown, and accept it that soon you'll be drenched to the bone, if your time to you is worth savin', then you better start swimmin' or you'll sink like a stone, for The Times They Are A Changin'. ... Don't speak too soon for the wheel's still in spin... don't criticize what you can't understand... your old road is rapidly agin', there's a battle outside and it's ragin, It'll soon shake your windows and rattle your walls,the present is rapidly fadin', the present now will later be past, the first one now will later be last, for the times they are a changin'.

These words from Bob Dylan's THE TIMES THEY ARE A-CHANGIN, from his song of the 1960s are almost 50 years old, and I was thinking how apt they are for our world of photography. The date on the sheet music is written in Roman Numerals, MCMLXIV, and it cost 3/6.

How times change! This was brought home to me at the last Camera Club Tech night when Mike Smyth gave an in depth talk about Colour Space and various aspect of getting a perfect print via digital technology. It is such a long way from Film Technology in terms of what is required of a photographer. I knew there was a lot I didn't understand about digital photography before the talk, and by the end, I knew a bit more about just how much I didn't understand.

But I would say that it has always been this way with photography. The "latest" has always been what is the newest, whether it was film instead of glass plates, colour film instead of Black and White, Single Lens Reflex Camera, Twin Lens Reflex Camera, Bellows, Compact Camera, Close Up Filters, Macro Lenses, Zoom lenses, Ring Flash, Depth of Field Preview Button.... There's always a new feature on the newest camera that

gives the consumer a reason to upgrade to the latest. The technology development with photography is like a continuum. John Swainston of Nikon said about 5 years ago in a talk to Camera Club that digital technology was at the stage of about Kindergarten



OFFICE BEARERS

President:	Josephine Blue 4571 2017
Act/Vice President:	Geoff Pfister 9626 7537
Secretary:	Debbie Web 4578 3680
Treasurer:	Peter Baldock 4573 1357
Comp Manager:	Grant Daveport & Tim Hodson
Publicity:	Debbie Web
Activities Coordinator	Ian Cambourne 4577 5148
Newsletter Editor	Alan Aldrich 9627 4225

August 2009

August 5 Lecture - Lenses & Depth of Field

August 19 Competition – Architecture

when comparing it to the technological development that is yet to take place in the future. Will the future ever arrive? There will never be a definitive moment in photography, there will always be something new to embrace and strive for.

In my collection of books about photography there is an historical record of the changing style of photography. One book called The Impressionist Camera displays images from the 1800s in Europe, when a particular style was developed with the use of the technology available then. The images are beautiful and depict the era in black and white. Progressing over the century, different styles emerged as technology developed. Black and white gave way to colour film, transparency film had different applications, hand colouring extended the black and white film. There have been so many innovations along the way to where we stand now. Styles of photography come and go, and I wonder what our era, as beginner digital will be characterized by? It might just seem to those in the future that we lived in a perfect world, when they look back at the photos of our era. All defects will have been Photoshopped out of the images that record our life and times!

John Swainston also talked to us about the future of photography, and he foresaw the tidal wave of interest in photography that would occur because of digital technology, the coming advent of photo print kiosks that were all around Europe before they came here, and the surge of interest in Camera Clubs. That is certainly true for our club.

One thing that came across in Mike's talk was the fact that it's not over yet. And if the past is any indication of the future, Bob Dylan was correct – the wheels still in spin – there will be more changes. What is now the best of technology is still developing. Often it seems to be more part of our consumer society than about photography. A visit to the PMA expo at Darling Harbour last month tells us that. All those stall holders displaying their wares, a product for every

imaginable application in photography, available for purchase.

I read recently about a new type of flash, called Dark Flash, which is invisible, but illuminates the subject with light outside the wavelengths of visible light of conventional flash. (An article in New Scientist Magazine). A new development, someone thinking laterally, to develop a new way of doing things. That added to tripods and monopods is a new device called a Gorillapod which holds a camera steady in awkward situations, strapping it to a pole or a fence. There are so many things we can add to our photographic kit and home computers, but the fact remains that photographs are the domain of the human photographer. Styles of photography change, but the creativity of the photographer is what creates the image. Ken Duncan spoke at the Top Shot Awards recently, and said that it is not his camera that crawls out of bed while it is still dark on a cold morning to be in time to photograph a beautiful sunrise. The camera doesn't take the photo, it's the human being attached to it.

Josephine Blue

THE STEPPING ON CALENDAR

Congratulations to our finalists!

Geoffrey Pfister, Ian Cambourne, Ann Durham, Samantha Gilchrist, Jenny Aquilina, Suzette Howarth, Julie Day, Marian Fox, Elizabeth Turner, Denise Newton and Josephine Blue.

The calendar is a very worthwhile project, preventing falls in the elderly, and Camera Club met the challenge and has produced very pleasing results for them. Thank you and well done everyone. The photos that didn't make it to the calendar will still be used in PowerPoint presentations in the project as it is presented around Australia. We will be donating some funds to help in the production of the calendar, as voted in the last meeting. We will pass on the proceeds of our role as photographers for the Bendigo Bank AGM.

COMING EVENTS

Once again as we near September our club has been commissioned to undertake on behalf of the Hawkesbury City Council their annual Garden Competition. This has been

our ongoing commitment to the council for 20 years. We have gone from just taking photographs of the winning gardens to now photographing all the gardens entered and being responsible for the Presentation of Awards Night. For this effort the council pays us.

This event has become our financial salvation allowing us to buy items to be shared by club members or purchasing club assets. Recent purchases have been the digital projector and the laptop computer.

Many fellow camera clubs envy us this fiscal independence meaning we have been able to keep membership fees at a very moderate level as well as procure assets.

If members might keep their diaries clear for the last couple of weekends in September it will allow us to spread the workload evenly.

Don't forget the presentation night all members are invited to the event and see what a lot of us view as one of our year's crowning achievements.

The coming of October means the Annual General Meeting. Our club does not run by itself this duty befalls to the Executive and the committee. This year our president must stand down as she has served the club as president for three years. Our club rules limit office holders to this period. The next president will certainly have a challenge to maintain the standard Jo has excellently set.

DALE IS IN DARWIN

(The following article is from Dale Irving who often replies to club emails so I asked him to tell us a bit about what he is doing on the road. AA)

We are in the caravan 5:00am 22.6°, daytime temps around 32°. Can't sleep, mulling around in my head about yesterday's fantastic trip on the Adelaide River. We took a full day wildlife trip with one of the locals in a flat-bottomed tinny with a bimpini over the top. It was fantastic we saw White breasted Sea Eagles being fed and Whistling Kites trying to wrestle a piece of Buffalo meat in mid air. There were a couple of others who were keen photographers one in particular was a Dr from Sydney who was a bird fancier, his only problem was he had Canon gear and a 300 mm prime lens which I envied on the day but my 18-200 got me some nice shots. The D300 was superb for the day with the

rapid-fire capability, My confidence increases every time I use it.

Other birds were Egrets and Jabiru (Black necked Stork) both male and female nesting pair the only difference being the female has bright yellow eyes and male has jet black eyes. You see I am a font of knowledge.

The crocodiles were rather large to say the least and a little intimidating for us city dwellers, much different to seeing them in a 'wild life park'. It takes a little while for our eyes to become accustomed to spotting them but once you get the hang of it there were many to see.

We have driven over 4000km's to get to Darwin, and neither of us have become bored with our beautiful country. Some might say there is a lot of repetition in our scenery but everywhere we go there are different grasses and wildlife. Many things to see, much more to see than we can imagine while we sit at home doing less important things like gardening etc.. We were walking down the mall in Darwin two days ago and between looking at the range of lenses in the local camera shop (never seen quite so many choices or the exceptionally high prices anywhere else) and we were entertained by one of our darker skinned cousins with some snakes which he had it seemed all around him.

I think we can say that we are having a life experience which we will look back on in many years to come with fond memories. I miss you all and will be back soon enough. Signing off for now, as the gray nomads.

Dale

September 2009

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|----------------|------------------------------|
| Sept 2 | Lecture - Garden Photography |
| Sept 16 | Competition - Open |
| Sept 30 | Technical Night |

Garden Photography

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| Sept 19&20 | Photographing gardens |
| Sept 26&27 | Photographing gardens |

HOW TO PHOTOGRAPH BUILDINGS

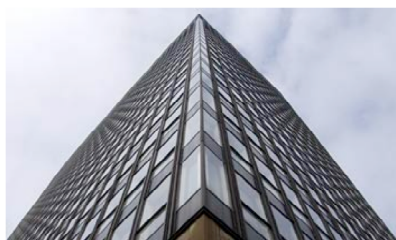
We live in them, we work in them, and most of us sleep in them but what about photographing them?

Any one who has a camera has probably taken a picture of a castle, local church or tourist monument but buildings offer much more scope from the intricate details of historical cathedral or the graphical shapes of modern architecture. We take most of the buildings around us for granted and with a little extra perception you'll start to see a whole new way at looking at architecture and its many forms.

What gear do you need?

Any camera from a single-use to a sophisticated SLR is capable of recording a decent picture of a building. Ideally you will often need a wide-angle lens but if you do have a fixed option look around for viewpoints where you can get the whole building in shot. Walking back up the road away from the interesting architecture or stepping across the courtyard will give you the necessary space. You could play up the strengths of your fixed lens camera and move in close on smaller areas of the building. SLR users who invest in a wide-angle lens or those with a compact with a zoom lens can open up far more options. With a wide-angle you can fill the frame from close range and take shots when you normally wouldn't be able to, such as in a narrow street or from a confined viewpoint.

When using a wide angle you will find that walls of a tall building lean inwards when you shoot from a low angle. This can be prevented by using a special lens known as a shift or perspective compensation lens to correct the perspective problems but a less costly way is to find a distant viewpoint and use a longer lens or from close range if you can gain height by climbing a nearby hill or shoot from the upstairs window of a building opposite that will help. Specialist architectural photographers take stepladders with them to gain the height. Ideally you want to a viewpoint that positions you about halfway up the building any higher and the bottom of the building will start to slope inwards.



These correction problems can also be sorted out using the transform tool of an image-editing program. You may, however, want to exaggerate the sloping walls, as shown in the above example, by shooting wide and going low.

The alternative end of the spectrum is to use a long lens to home in on small details such as gargoyles on a church or an interesting carving in its masonry.

What speed?

Slow shutter speeds and apertures of f11 and above will ensure you record all the subtle details in a building. This ensures you will be able to read any plaques or display boards, as well as see all the intricate carvings. Another advantage of slow ISO settings is reduced noise. If you may prefer to try



black & white adding an orange filter to your lens will ensure that the brickwork is recorded with superb tonal range and the sky behind will be saturated with white clouds against the dark blue background sky.

Interior shots may need the use of a tripod to avoid camera shake especially with church interiors that are often dimly lit. In brighter buildings lit by fluorescent or tungsten lighting you will need to adjust your camera's white balance. Become familiar with the variations afforded by the differing white balance settings. Some digital camera's auto white balance setting can accommodate the different light colour temperature but others may need the guiding

hand of the photographer. Remember to check the LCD preview to see the effect.

Exposure

Photographing buildings is one of the easier subjects to measure the light from. In most cases the brick or stone is a similar tonal value to mid grey so the meter will record it accurately. Problems will generally only occur if the material used is very dark (coated glass) or very light (white painted structures) In these cases the camera will compensate making a dark building too light and a light building too dark. Open up a stop or close down at least one stop to compensate. So, for example, if the exposure you record is 1/30 sec at f/8 when shooting a dark building select 1/60 at f/8 or 1/30 at f/11. If its 1/250 at f/8 when shooting a white building, select 1/125 at f/8 or 1/250 at f/5.6. If your camera has exposure compensation set either -1 stop or +1 stop respectively.

Cameras that have exposure lock allow the photographer to meter on a more neutral part of the building lock the exposure and recompose the photograph before the final image is taken.

Care must be exercised when a building is backlit that is when the sun is behind the building. The bright area will fool the camera into setting a shorter exposure and the building will become silhouetted. Take

spot readings on the building itself excluding the bright areas, then recompose using manual or the auto exposure lock.

They say a picture paints a thousand words so now lets look at some practical examples of techniques you can try.

1. A telephoto lens can also be used to create dramatic patterns by filling the frame with a repetitive brick structure, modern glass building fascia or tiled rooftops. Shoot from an oblique angle and the perspective will change dramatically creating lines disappearing towards a vanishing point
2. Use a telephoto lens to highlight an interesting structure or pattern, most pictures you see of famous buildings show the whole structure. Try cropping in tightly to highlight the fantastic repetitive detail to show interesting patters.
3. Use of the rule of thirds to place the point of interest in your photograph, use walls and rails to create leading or intersecting lines.
4. Use an arch or tree to provide a natural frame around your picture.
5. Use a water feature to reflect all or some part of the building as a counterpoint; this adds impact to a shot that could have ended up being a typical horizontal view of a building. Decide on which image is the most interesting, either the reflection or the building and make that the largest part of your composition, avoid placing the dividing line in the centre of the frame.
6. Not all photographs are best in colour. Black & white makes an often more dramatic alternative. A shot of a plain looking building can be improved by shooting on monochrome with appropriate filtration. This can be either by in camera or by editing software techniques.
7. If allowed, climb to the rooftops of churches or cathedrals by doing so you will be presented with many more photographic opportunities. As well as gaining a different background to your photograph using a great viewpoint of the city you can often find interesting architectural features projecting out from the walls to add interesting points of interest to your photograph.

