

In Camera

The Newsletter of the Hawkesbury Camera Club Inc.

FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to Winter!

As the days become shorter and colder we turn to the indoors. Some of our members have been putting this time to good use with their creative sides coming out in the Mystery Bag Challenge as evidenced in the prints on offer at our last meeting. Congrats to the finalists on the night.

A large thanks goes to Lyn and Peter Cornish for showing us their trip to Ecuador. Also a large thanks to Paul Hulbert for sharing with us the wonders of square format. This was very inspiring and has made me look at prints differently.

Our next meeting sees us being joined again by Alan Hitchell who will be doing part 2 of his China Experience. I hope you can all make it to this great night.

Our next competition is Up Close and Personal – so pick up your camera and snap away.

Following from our last competition several comments were made as to the originality of the prints on offer. This raises the question again of when does your photograph become yours and not just a copy of someone else's art? Is taking a photo of a statue or the opera house really only showing someone else's art and not your own, or is it how you view this subject and portray it within your print that makes it your own. This also goes with concepts – where do you get your inspiration from, what is new and what has been done before (and can you make it better)? I feel any queries relating to prints submitted for competition nights should be raised during the night (ie by the break at the latest) so that any issues can be dealt with on the night. Please remember that we are all members of a social camera club who are there to learn, have fun, share, encourage others and



participate as a group in activities that are of mutual interest.

To wrap up this report, I would like to thank everyone for there suggestions regarding outings and I look forward to future trips being organised by Robyn for our club.

Happy photography

Kim Nemetz
President.

OFFICE BEARERS

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Jo's Muse

Last year I decided that I needed to simplify my life. Too many nights out in one week, too many things to juggle, all made me feel too stretched, just needed a bit of down time. One of the things I cut back on was Camera Club, deciding to attend only the talks and lectures once a month. However, last week I added the 5th Wednesday to my timetable in order to see Lyn and Peter Cornish's photos of Ecuador and Paul Hulbert's photos. The bonus was the competition of feathers and sticks challenge. I brought my Mum along too, and we joined the regulars at the dinner table at the Richmond Club. It was good to be among friends.

It didn't take long to realise that a night at home would have been a very poor 2nd to the enjoyable time at Camera Club. I had already seen Lyn & Peter's photos in albums but on the big screen they were even more special. I enjoyed looking at the creative images from the Feathers and Sticks Challenge as well. Maybe my time to rest has had a good effect and I can think about more nights out again.

I'm reminded of the song Turn Turn Turn by the Byrds, inspired by a passage in Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament: "To everything there is a season...and a time for every purpose under heaven." It recites a list of things to do, and their opposites, and that there is a time for each. We don't have to do everything all the time.

COMING UP

- 6 June** Alan Hitchell
China Experience
- 13 June** Mastering
your Camera
- 20 June** Competition –
Up Close and
Personal.

One of my mottos is “ you can’t do everything”, actually I have a few mottos that I try to keep in mind. “This too shall pass”,(times of stress), “ It’s only a piece of paper” (when doing a drawing that doesn’t work out), “ Be kind to yourself” (it’s ok to buy a bunch of flowers for myself), “ A bitter heart devours its owner” (African saying I read in 1971 and never forget), “Smile, at least inwardly”, “Do my best” . Maybe it’s time to say yes to more things again. Above all, ENJOY EACH DAY !

Josephine

BOOK REVIEW from Camera Club’s Library – available for borrowing.

SAY CHEESE

– Taking Great Photographs of Your Children, by Beth Galton and Carol McD. Wallace. 1993

At first glance, the cliché of the title meant I would judge this book by its cover and not be inclined to open its pages. Looking a bit closer, noticing it is almost 20 years old; I wondered what might be the attraction in borrowing or reading this book.

But I can recommend this book for several reasons. You might be inclined to skip the chapter on film, (though there is some information about ISO and White Balance that is transferrable to digital cameras). The charm of this book is its relaxed and conversational style, which disguises and gently delivers its carefully explained details of the nitty gritty about photography.

The authors, Beth Galton and Carol Wallace in the first section, give the usual advice about cameras: f-stops and shutter speeds, lens choice, flash, types of camera, illustrating by examples with photos of children, showing how they affect an image. The style of writing is relaxed, and the photos are used along with personal anecdotes to make it interesting to read.

The images in the book are not the perfect studio-type images of the angelic baby sleeping on a pumpkin, but real children in normal life situations. (There is however, a pumpkin baby picture featured in the book). The author shares tried and true hints through her own experiences. Advice about working with children at different ages, significant life events, holiday locations and studio situations all flows easily and continues with the conversational style of teaching. Plenty of practical hints will help the photographer of

children deal with all sorts of situations: forewarned is forearmed.

There is helpful and interesting guidance about composition, with the simple reminder to look through the viewfinder at the “image”, not just the “subject”, and considering things like the horizon, focal point, balance, lighting, background and colour. It all sounds very dry, but I like the author’s style in how she imparts the information. Like many of us, the author began taking photos of children when her first child was born, and has branched out to take photos of other children and teens and events with children. It basically tells the story of how to take great photos of children, seizing the opportunity to capture by camera those special moments that would otherwise be lost to our memory.

Reviewed by

Josephine Blue

WINTER PHOTOGRAPHY

We all like our photography & we all like our warm sunny holiday destinations. The sun, the comfort and the relaxation all make for very pleasant photographic experiences. But also, what about those “wintery” type photos that we see so often. The foggy mornings, the frost covered plants & grass, the dew dripping spider webs, the smoking chimneys and the like. One judge & lecturer from Collaroy who visited our club quite a few years ago said that “all artists should suffer some degree, for his or her art” and that we as photographers are no exception. We also hear that this thing call “mood” can lift a photo from the ordinary and maybe put it up a level of viewing, that makes it stand out from the crowd just that little bit more.

Now that June and winter are officially here, we have a chance the step out of our comfort zones, suffer “to some degree” and get some mood in our photos. All that is really needed is the right frame of mind and a desire to photograph something a little bit different. An early morning drive to the boat ramp at the end of Governor Phillip Park in Windsor will yield some great photos of a misty and foggy Hawkesbury River, you could also try Pugh’s Lagoon at Richmond, Yarramundi Lagoon at Agnes Banks (which is also great for sunsets), not to forget Wisemans Ferry or up the mountains for those who are a little more adventurous. Rather than trying to organise an outing for the whole

club, which unfortunately are not well attended by members due to various reasons, perhaps just a small number of members could arrange just a carload of people for company. This could be an ideal time for some of our newer members to pick the brains of some of the, shall we say more antiquated members.

Apart from camera, tripod & cable release, the only other piece of equipment you need is a desire to experiment. Never be afraid to try different settings on your camera, change the white balance, or even change the colour temperature to something that it not preset in your camera, bracket using the manual exposure compensation, use a filter or 2 to affect the overall image or a graduated filter to alter just part of it. Let your ideas for composition run wild, play with macro, get a worm’s eye view of something but do take a ground sheet to lie on, rather than the wet grass (no need to suffer that much).

Then comes one of the most pleasurable parts of a club outing, the customary chat and culinary period, where we discuss our results and why we do or don’t like them. We all see the same things but differently and very rarely will any 2 photographers produce the same results.

Many people from Sydney travel to the Hawkesbury on a weekend to go somewhere “different” or for a “change of scenery” and here we are living in it. So why not throw the blankets off early one morning & go get some good images that are just there waiting for you?

Ian

Conceptual Photography

After our Conceptual Photography evening I am convinced that judges in general, and this one in particular, are now bordering on the irrelevant. The gentleman who regaled us with his ability to judge and award 700 images from 7,000 images in a single sitting, emphasised that digital photography can only be referred to as electronic photography, insisted that he needs to see a story in each image, and doesn’t like white backgrounds, is in my opinion, surely is some relation of an internet banker. This bloke did not bother to research the web on the subject; if he had he would have seen that some of the images he was ‘electronically’ judging, with or without the benefit of a story, were plagiarised from the web. Stealing someone else’s photographs is not part of this game,

but then again, if you don't do the homework you won't have a clue as to what you're looking at. What really got up my nose is the fact that he judged the photos on their photographic merit only – a judge with no concept of Conceptual Photography is not what was needed on the night and this “judge” should not be invited back unless he is prepared to lift his game and put some effort into the job.

John Hughes

This article was amongst many comments in similar voice concerning the possible plagiarism and the judge's attitude to the subject.

Get to know Husband & Wife team (Bill & Gai Timmerman)

1. How long have you been a member of HCC?

BT: *Rejoined in 2012 having previously been a member 20-30 years ago*
GT: *Joined this year, 2012*

2. What is your favourite subject to photograph?

BT: *Landscapes.*
GT: *Anything interesting*

3. Where is your favourite place to photograph in Australia and why?

BT: *The Hawkesbury because it's where I live*
GT: *Outback, love the colours*

4. Black and White or colour?

BT: *Both*
GT: *Colour.*

5. If you could go to just one country in the world for a photographic vacation (no expense spared), where would it be and why?

BT: *Holland – the scenery*
GT: *Holland – love the scenery and the buildings*

6. What camera(s) do you currently 'shoot' with?

BT: *Panasonic Lumix*
GT: *Pentax – very simple*

Auto

7. If you had an unlimited budget what camera/lens would you buy?

BT: *N/A*
GT: *N/A*

8. Are you a fan of post production editing or not?

BT: *Yes*
GT: *Yes and keen to learn more!*

9. What is your favourite F stop?

BT: *N/A*
GT: *N/A*

10. When you're not at work and not out photographing, what will we find you doing?

BT: *Mowing and gardening*
GT: *Gardening, collecting antiques, markets, reading etc.*

Entering a Photographic Competition

The following is intended to help budding photographers understand why some photos win photography contests and others don't. These guidelines consist of a brief introduction into the judging criteria they are by no means comprehensive. But they should give you a start in the right direction.

The winning photographs feature a strong combination of the assets that are found pleasing in an image. These include: thoughtful attention to lighting, eye-catching colour; balanced composition; sharpness; correct exposure; and a host of other elements. A following explanation of judging criteria can be used as a guideline.

It must be pointed out that the photographer is entirely responsible for the composition of the entry there is not prescribed formula that will cover the whole gamut of things to point your camera at. All that any self-help guidelines can do is to how to get the best out of that scene you have in mind.

Know the Rules

First and foremost, read the competition rules, particularly if you are entering a competition held under

the Australian Photographic Society. These rules reveal much to the discerning contestant. Two very important rules are:

· all images must have been taken by the Entrant.

· Images must have a photographic origin and entrants must hold the copyright for the images.

Have a look at their website, many quality images are on display.

Look Sharp

Most judges evaluate the image against traditional standards of sharpness. The picture, above all, needs to be in focus (or, if the picture features some blurriness, it has to be a clearly intentional, artistic use of blur by the photographer). Photos that suffer from camera shake or other focus mistakes are often eliminated very early in the judging process.

We generally notice two levels of blur in the images submitted:

1. Some photos are obviously, and unintentionally, blurry. If the blurriness is detrimental to the photo, the image is usually eliminated early on.
2. There are many other photos, which are just slightly out of focus, or soft. When this appears to be unintentional and of an easily correctable nature, the picture receives a lower score. Only when other elements of the photo such as its uniqueness are remarkably strong does it continue in the competition.
3. Remember: sometimes softness is an attribute and not a problem. A perusal of the winning images will show you that some photos can excel with a careful use of blur.

Picture Perfect Exposure

It must be understood that images appear differently from one computer to another. What may be dark on a PC may appear extremely light on a Macintosh, for example. Therefore, judging exposure takes a back seat to judging sharpness, however it is still important.

Now consider the image itself. Is it underexposed? For example is the snow blue instead of white? Is the image faint and hard to see? Does it look like it may have been a nice image before it was poorly photographed?

Does the photo show it is composed of pleasing colours with clarity and correct exposure? Can you make out the details in the shadows? Clarity and resolution of the photo is being able to enjoy all the details of an image exposed to show a very pleasing image. This will mean a lot to as to how it is treated by judges. They look at how well it is exposed and unless the photo is black and white, how well colour is captured.

Be Aware of the Technical Limits

At times, a photo looks blurry after being captured with a digital camera. Become very familiar with your particular photo imaging software.

Your digital image will usually need a degree of sharpening, with a image-editing program such as Adobe Photoshop; investigate the "Unsharp Mask" or "Smart Sharpen" functions. If taken too far sharpening may create it's own artefacts an spoil the effects not enhance the image.

You should especially be careful to not overly compress a JPEG file when saving. If it is needed at all, try to avoid using compression of greater than 80%.

Eradicate any unwanted features by judicious use of the Cloning tool, use it with judiciously. With PhotoShop you can control the contrast range within your image. If the lights get too light while the darks get too dark, you have a problem and need to take steps to increase colour range. Curves, Levels or similar functions within the software are the primary tools used to control the colour range and mid-point on the grey scale.

Get Creative / Be Artistic

When the a judge views an image, a few questions asked include:

- Does the photographer show an artistic eye?
- Do they seem to notice the unique and the unusual and make the most of it?
- Did the photographer use creative techniques to make an interesting effect?

This is all about the art of seeing, of being able to creatively notice the right moment, as well as artistic treatment.

If the judge is able to score these questions with highly it will point to an image created by a photographer who is aware of the unique colours and qualities to be found in light, as well as noticing graphic elements such as lines, patterns, shapes, and forms.

Noticing and capturing the comical and humorous can also be helpful. Finding an interesting, unique and original choice of subject, and going out on a limb, will often result in some of the best pictures.

For example, an original use of the sepia tone effect, creative lighting, motion blur, techniques that effectively enhance the image, hence moving it up the ladder.

Framing the subject is another effective way to treat it artistically.

Consider the overall clarity of meaning and focus of statement. When the photographer's intention is clear and the main subject obvious, this can help make the photo a winner.

Lastly, the photo should be balanced in composition (e.g. by use of the Rule of Thirds or another compositional principle). Move in closer if you need to. Make sure the horizon is level.

Whenever possible, eliminate any extraneous elements - such as annoying spot of glare, an unwanted tree branch or telegraph pole.

Study the Winners and Keep Your Chin Up

There are many contests on line, if you are uncertain about what makes a winning contest photo, try judging these photos as is you're the judge. Ask yourself, why was this photo selected? What are the top qualities about it?

Judging images exclusively on quality rather than on the name, skill, or equipment of the photographer.

- Be open to all kinds of excellence.
- Refraining from photo snobbery.

That means that do not judge a picture poorly just because some photographers would consider it a "less professional" subject (i.e. your cat, your kid). At the same time, do not punish good photographers for working hard to becoming great (no handicaps, no separating the pros from the amateurs). Also do not hold it against the photographer for using artistically and skilfully digital enhancement.

Overall, look for beautiful, truthful, and creative images.

July Program	
4 July	Portraiture John Hughes
11 July	Digital
18 July	Competition – Just Rocks

**THE FEDERATION OF CAMERA CLUBS
INVITES YOU TO**

TOPSHOT 2012
at Central Coast Leagues Club
Dane Drive, GOSFORD
Saturday 16 June 2012

Viewing of images from 12 noon

EVERYONE WELCOME
Club members, Family and Friends

Guest Speaker – Steve Nichols – Adobe Australia
will speak on and show the latest Adobe Photoshop produce

RAFFLE TICKETS AT THE DOOR –
great prizes donated by Adobe and Macarthur Camera House
Just an hour from Sydney by car
5 minutes from Gosford Rail and Bus
Plenty of parking at the Club.

Restaurants, Bistro, Coffee shop.

FOR SALE

Marian Paap - 0402 116670 – prices negotiable

	<p>Cachet – Artwork/photo carry case A2 size [Brand New – in its original packaging] \$40.00</p>
	<p>Leather backpack- Genuine Leather by 'Just Leather Melbourne' \$100.00</p> <p><i>[used once – in excellent condition]</i> Space for laptop and loads of compartments</p>
	<p>King Single Black Iron Bed frame – with timber slats in excellent condition \$50.00 Ready for pick-up [purchased from Harvey Norman] – single mattress included</p>
	<p>Glanz – small camera bag \$5 [Brand New]</p>
	<p>Glanz – large camera bag \$20 [Brand New]</p>