VIEWFINDER

Quarterly Newsletter of the Steyning Camera Club





Summer 2004 Number 29

Camera Club News

Our new season will be starting on 1st September with a few slides and short talk about his Summer escapades by our new chairman, Ken Scott.

Please bring along a few of your own slides or prints to show to us, before we mingle and welcome any prospective new members during the Social.

Reg Richardson has managed to get a letter published in the Observer newspaper, see the column to the right. It will be interesting to see any further correspondence.

The Coffee Morning and the day at Bentley with the disposable cameras both had good weather and were well attended. Well done yet again Dave and Joan.

During the last committee meeting it was agreed that I will become Competition Secretary for this season and will step down as Programme Secretary. We will therefore be needing someone to fill this vital position and a volunteer is sought. There should be an easy transition as this year is sorted and work on the 2005 to 2006 will not need to be attended to until next Spring. Help will be offered if needed.

Cliff

ATHLETICS PRESENTS

moments of great drama as epitomised by your excellent photo of the finish of the men's 100 metres last week. I was then amused reading Will Buckley's article about being banished from watching the women's high jump at Manchester from the in-field, on the grounds of health and safety.

It reminded me of my brush with athletics officialdom last year. As an amateur photographer, I was at a men's league meeting between several clubs from the South-East. I was challenged because I might 'take pictures of people in compromising positions'! I was told that there was an edict from the AAA banning photography at these events.

On visiting a local rugby match, when an official asked me what I was doing and I told him, he said: 'Good. The more interest people show and the more publicity we get the better.'

Reg Richardson
via email

SET SUBJECTS FOR 2004/05

FIVE

Judges frequently refer to the notion that an odd number is more desirable than two, four, six and so on. Those who like to break the rules would probably disagree but this is a chance to make some judge a happy bunny.

BEACH

Worthing and Brighton are not far away and no doubt some of you will find yourselves in other resorts - at home or abroad.. A chance for those who like the broad sweep of a sandscape or the activity of holiday makers or getting close in on pebbles, shells and seaweed. A wide choice.

BODY PARTS

Steady now! People and animals immediately come to mind but I'm sure someone will come up with an unusual interpretation. Manicurists and chiropodists could have a field day.

Rex

COFFEE CLUB

Forthcoming meetings - meet at 10.30am for coffee, unless otherwise stated.

Tuesday 7th September
Amberley Village - meet for coffee at the Bridge Tea Rooms, opposite the Chalk Pit Museum.

Tuesday 21st September
Rottingdean - meet at the Car Park on the approach to the village.

Tuesday 5th October - Ardingly Reservoir

Tuesday 19th October - Sheffield Park Gardens, meet in the Coffee Shop

Extra Programme Info

The Mix'n'Match at Littlehampton Camera Club on15th December 2004, will also be with Bognor Regis C.C. and the judge for the evening will be Jean Holmwood from the Uckfield C.C.

Our Mix'n'Match with Henfield and Horsham on 2nd March 2005 will be judged by Andrew Perry ARPS from Chichester.

A suggestion for a local visit.

It is well worth visiting the Wildlife Photography Gallery in Washington where the work of the natural history photographer Roger Wilmshurst is displayed. The bird images are superb, with a good selection of other wildlife and local scenes.
The images are very reasonably priced and would make great gifts for that special occasion.
Just follow the sign between the roundabout and car garage, it is best to park on the old main road and walk up the drive, the gallery is on the left just inside the entrance.

Cliff

The Damsel and The Dragon

Recently someone asked me how I set about photographing damselflies and dragonflies. The answer is, with endless patience, a frequent lack of success and an occasional result that doesn't end up in the bin.



Azure Damselfly

My hand holding ability is less steady these days so I always have my camera attached to a tripod and use a 100mm macro lens with a cable release. The first thing I do is to try and find a damselfly or dragonfly in a relatively simple setting without a fussy background and without distracting highlights on the stalks and leaves.
Damselflies often rest along broad iris-type leaves, quite still but not offering the most exciting shot. When I find an "arrangement" that I feel looks OK then comes the moving in, adjusting the height of the tripod at the same time, I keep looking through the viewfinder, controlling the focus manually and keep myself hidden behind the camera as much as possible and avoid any jerky movements.

For the most part I hope to photograph them side on, which is fine as they rest by folding their wings back along the body and abdomen. Dragonflies on the other hand rest with their wings spread to the side. They often hang vertically, giving a sort of T shape, and in this way present an opportunity of an overall sharp image.
If you take a side view then be prepared to lose sharp definition on the wings.
Now comes the critical part. There is very little depth of field with macro work and if the plane of the camera is not exactly parallel with the insect there will not be the pin sharp image you are trying to achieve. For whatever reason I find getting the precise alignment difficult. I concentrate on the head and sometimes find getting the other end equally sharp a problem and can easily lose the shot as I keep making adjustments.
If, though, the blessed moment arrives when all is as I want it I use the cable release to ensure the camera is rock steady.
If you miss at the critical moment then you can always bore everyone with the story of "the one that got away".

Rex Peters

Touching the Light - Part 1 "Acting on a Hunch"

My website Touching the Light is well known - but what does "Touching the Light" actually mean? Other than the obvious photographic acronym of TTL, I wanted a title for the site that reflected my approach to photography. This series of short pieces, starting here, attempts to unravel some of the nuances of that approach with the aid of a few images.

Photography in the outdoors is for me a responsive thing. Over many years I have made it my business to become attuned to the natural comings and goings of light, so that when it happens I am prepared. However, it often arrives so fast that reacting to it is more often than not too late, leaving me in the wrong place at the right time.



How then to be in the right place at the right time? This series of pics from a recent trip to Snowdonia illustrates well the thought process that leads to the capture of a great scene. The day was not notable for light; it was pleasant and limpid for August but otherwise very unexciting. Some cloud lingered in the west though, and as evening drew on the air cleared and some brilliant bursts of sunlight began to drop through. It was something very subtle, though, that made me jump into action. In the eastern sky was a high-level thin stratus, just very slightly darker than the blue sky itself. Whilst I can never be sure, my hunch said "Go", because very bright light against a dark sky always looks fabulous. But where to go? I needed a good scene looking east, where I predicted bright light against a dark sky.
The map suggested Llynnau Cregennan above Arthog, where I could use the lake as a foreground to the ridge of Cader Idris - perfect.







Three things got to work: i) thinking evening light, ii) spotting something subtly different, iii) finding a place to offset the light.
Not photographing places, then, but photographing light. And being sufficiently in tune with it to go with its flow, and to be close enough to feel that I am almost
Touching the Light.

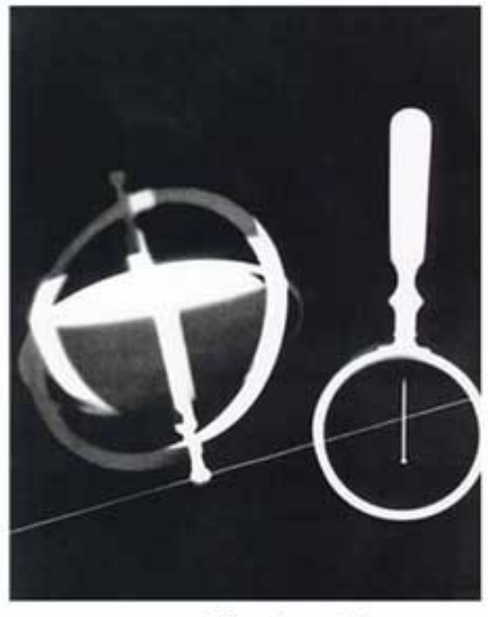
... Ken Scott

A Brief Photographic History - Part 10

In the 1920s and 30s the style of photography in the USA was New Realism as practised by Paul Strand and Edward Weston whilst in Europe we had Dada and Surrealism. The Surrealists were interested in the unconscious mind as a creative tool and one of the ways of representing this was to bring together within the image strange conjunctions of objects producing what is known as a photomontage. One such photographer to use this technique was the Russian, Alexander Rodchenko. He was a major figure in the avant-garde with many of his photographs being used for political purposes.
Another photographer using a different technique at this time was Man Ray who with his assistant Lee Miller, used a variety of photographic processes to produce 'Rayograms' which was positioning objects directly onto photographic paper and solarized (partly fogged) images



Man Ray - *Solarised*



Man Ray - *Rayogram*



Alexander Rodchenko

Steve Broad

Report

Saturday, 7th August - Disposable Camera Day with Henfield members.

Bentley Wildfowl, Halland, near Lewes. We met in the car park at 10.30am with our disposable cameras at the ready and after deciding to gather for picnic lunch under the trees by our vehicles, we disappeared in all directions.
The sun was so hot most of the wildfowl sheltered in the shade and were difficult to snap. Do they make these cameras with telephoto lenses?? The house was most unusual and the Motor Museum has a wonderful collection of cars, motorcycles, bikes, carts, in fact all manner of articles connected with transport.
Did anybody get to ride on the train? Apparently the electric and steam locos are privately owned and are brought along to run on the Bentley track when they want to use it. You may be lucky on other days to see a selection as they cater for two different gauges.
I think everybody enjoyed the day and we all look forward to seeing the enprints stuck on some card at the Xmas Social.
You may use as many of the pics as you want, but aim at five or six, showing the best as a panel.
Any suggestions for next year's venue??



PICNIC TIME

Photo Hunt at the Seven Sisters Country Park with Henfield Camera Club members.
This photo was taken by Harry's wife, Mary and I hope that all who attended had an enjoyable day.
The slides will be "judged" at Henfield's Xmas Social on Friday, 17th December and it is always great to see how the subjects are interpreted.

Forthcoming Events

8th September - 3rd Summer Workshop - Brighton Marina
Meet in the Asda car park at 7.30pm. for walk around the Marina..

18th September - WG & DP& AS Ploughing Match
Clothalls Farm, West Grinstead from 9.30 am, entrance signposted from the A24 only.

Please let the Editor have your images and articles to include in the next copy of Viewfinder as soon as possible. All subjects are needed and your views about the club, competitions, etc would also be welcomed.



Another Sunny Coffee Morning



Thanks again to Dave and Joan for "arranging" the weather for this year's bash in Coxham Lane. Croquet was played on the front lawn and we all had a good chat in the sunshine whilst enjoying the refreshments served by Joan. Thanks to all for your help and support.







*Why not visit the **RAFA Shoreham Airshow** during the August Bank Saturday or Sunday?*



"Tornados at Fairford" *Cliff Carter*