Virginia & Cliff's Coffee Morning - Saturday 3rd August

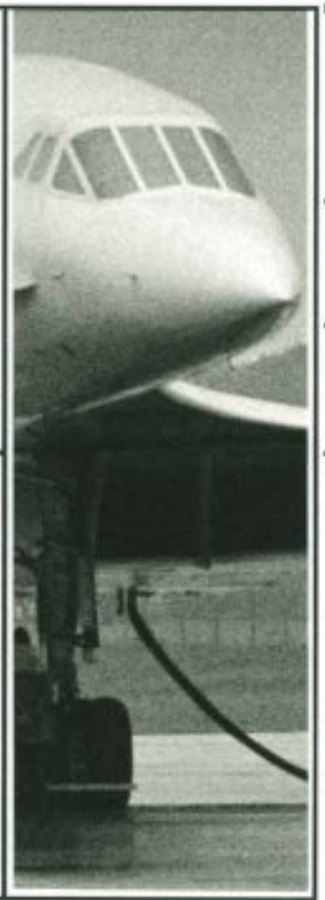
The date for our Coffee Morning this year is Saturday 3rd August from 10.30am to 12 noon.

Coffee and biscuits will be provided at a cost of 50p per person and there will be a Bring and Buy Stall and a Raffle. All proceeds will go to club funds so if you can bring something for the stall or the raffle it will be most appreciated.

Cliff and I are hoping for another sunny day and we look forward to seeing you all.

Virginia





Steyning
Camera Club
Newsletter

NUMBER 8
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Editor: Jim Jenkins

Viewfinder

New Phone Number

From the 22nd July, Hilda Metcalfe, our Honorary Secretary may be contacted on 814840

Goodbye To A Dear Friend

Sadly, Yvonne Dryden died on the 19th of June after a long illness bravely borne.

Yvonne had been a member of the Camera Club since 1981 and was the Programme Secretary from 1986 to 1989, working hard for the Club in her usual meticulous way. Her photography was excellent and she won the Lewis Cup in 1982 and 1985 and Slide of the Year in 1987.

Yvonne was a kind and gentle person with the ability to go out to people, welcoming new members and making them feel at home. **She will be sadly missed as she was a good friend to all of us.**

Dolly

Dates For Your Diary

Ken Scott is organising two photography evenings as follows and if you are interested please contact him direct on 812834 for more details.

Wednesday, 31st July. An evening walk. (Weather permitting)

Wednesday 21st August. An evening in Brighton (postponed from the winter, again weather permitting!)

Coffee Morning, **Saturday 3rd August** at Nelern 10.30 - 12.00

Photohunt With Henfield

23rd June at Groombridge Place - is anyone able to do a short write up on this outing for the next *Viewfinder* please?

(Copy to Cliff by mid August)

What's in the Fridge ?

Yes ! I have decided to put fingers to keyboard early this year so as to give everyone the chance to start thinking about next year's subjects.

The committee have thought long and hard about the set subjects for the slide competitions (well a few minutes at least !) and have come up with this strange list. As usual, try hard not to raid the file but to take your slides specifically with the competition in mind - I know I do (hum hum he said with guilt !). There is a host of new judges to welcome. In order, the subjects are:

Candid

Pictures of people are, I think, among the most difficult to get right. After all the expression counts for most of the appeal and it takes a lot of effort to stage manage your subject confidently. It also takes confidence to grab pictures of people without them knowing, particularly if you are in the street, but it's amazing how often they have that edge. The people need not be unknown to you of course, and children are especially attractive. If anyone would like to borrow three boys for a few weeks, call 812834 !!!

Floral

OK. If anyone can come up with something new on the flower front, you probably deserve the cup for that on its own merit ! Joking apart, the technicalities of getting in close inside or among flowers are pretty tricky and this subject presents a real challenge. Apart from the close-ups, you might also consider the swathe of colour approach, or perhaps set the flowers off against its environment or within its landscape.

Metallic

I am looking out of my window and it is quite noticeable just how much metal there is around. The evening sun in next door's car looks great. And how spectacular do chrome or aluminium pipes appear ? Note the word - this shouldn't be something simply made out of metal but something to illustrate that fabulous light reflecting quality that metal has.

Perspectives

Distance plays some strange tricks on us does'nt it ? Look along a road or railway and the lines converge to a point. Look upwards and buildings do the same although our odd brains, and not a few judges, tell us it isn't right when verticals converge. Well perhaps it should be OK. Try to make something attractive out of strange angles or points of view. Look in the thesaurus and be creative.

The season will start on September 18th with the usual Members Evening. Bring aloong any slides and prints from the Summer to show everyone what you have been up to. We have talks arranged by Chris Peet, "On Yer Bike" and David Valdes, "The Art of Observation". We have at least two opportunities for some practical work and the usual discussion evening, although this year with a distoinct difference ! We'll also have to be at our best with competition since we seem to be organising them all next season. There are two away battles at Storrington and Middleton, and to add to the WSG Cup and the Crouch, we've now got the CCE Challenge as well. Ah well, serves us right for winning the thing I suppose.

Finally, don't forget the project for the season. The aim is to produce three pictures (slides and/or prints) of the same subject and to show them as a set. This might be the same view in different lighting, the same person in three different poses and dress, or the same object from three different angles. Just some suggestions but again the only limit is the imagination.

Hope your appetitie is suitably whetted for our 25th Anniversary Year, and that we'll find a suitable balance of looking and doing, and a blend of things for beginner and expert.

Ken Scott

A Year At The Club

'What makes a good photograph? After a year of listening to a variety of judges and looking at a multitude of prints and slides it seems very doubtful whether there can be a definitive answer to the question. ' I remember a judge who repeatedly affirmed that each picture he viewed was 'well exposed' as though this was a plus to the photographer, but with today's cameras a well exposed picture shouldn't make for too big a problem. If I'm unsure I can still hedge my bets by bracketing, autofocus will keep the image sharp and if I can afford quality equipment I can obtain a fine degree of detail. The trouble is I doubt if a well exposed, sharply focused, finely detailed limp cabbage leaf draped over a chipped turquoise vase will get me the ultimate accolade of twenty.

So what is needed? At a recent inter-club competition I call to mind a judge being most impressed with a single stalk of some herbage or other which scored twenty. Well, it was certainly an excellent aid to identification. A perfect illustration for a treatise on grasses, but surely a good photograph must be something more than just a record, be it plant, animal, portrait or landscape. Where is the photographer's flair and imagination? How well has the photographer composed the subject? Is there a strong pattern quality which will grip our attention? Can we find a simplicity of shape and colour to create a particular mood?

For many years I painted pictures. Here it was possible to have everything as I wanted it. The composition, the colour, the balance of light and dark and the quality or texture of the paint was at my mercy. Unfortunately what I visualised and what I finished with were usually two quite different things! Nevertheless artists of real ability have this total control of their work.

There are times, of course, when the photographer can take some control. Still life or portraits can be arranged and lit to order and who knows what can be accomplished within the confines of the darkroom. But for many of us, I fancy, the enjoyment is to be out and about and perhaps that is where the excitement of photography is to be found - hoping the light will assist a dramatic backdrop, catching the clouds posing impressively, chancing on a figure moving advantageously into position, recording the grimace on the face of an exhausted sportsman, or snapping an unplanned movement which makes a picture special. I realise the experienced photographer develops many skills but chance, luck, good fortune - call it what you will are invaluable accessories.

I have seen many prints and slides this year in our club competitions which, for whatever reason, have given me much pleasure and are an inspiration to keep on trying.

On last thought. If I sign my prints 'Lichfield' in future I wonder .....?

Rex

Of Judges & Men !

After a long season of ups and downs, nobody will be in the least surprised by a few comments on judging and competition.

Our club is probably in a similar position to most in that competition forms the backbone of the season. And its importance is often shown in the way the morale of the members can be affected. A first-rate judging evening can give everyone a real lift, yet a poor one just leaves us wondering why the hell we bother. **It is important**. And that we in Sussex are trying hard to raise our judging standards is good news.

Let me start by telling you why I decided to judge, or more to the point, why I was quick to quieten the doubters. "Why on earth would you want to do that ?" I was asked. "It's a job where you just can't win." The fact is, it really is a pleasure to see so much photography and to have the chance to pass an opinion. I taught myself photography from looking at pictures and believe me, I continue to learn through continual exposure to others' work. OK. so I can't please everyone all the time but then who would really expect to win on every occasion ? I've come to learn in a very short time that people are genuinely pleased by constructive, informed and, above all else, enthusiastic criticism. Passion for photography is something I have never lacked, yet it is so plainly missing in many judges (or at least the way in which they appraise).

Years of disillusionment with the comments of judges led to me joining their ranks to do it my way. The disillusionment came not from lack of success, for I have enjoyed my fair share. No, it was that even in winning there was often plainly a misunderstanding of what a picture was trying to say, no appreciation of its atmosphere, no connection to what it said about me. Merely a few formulae, technical details and conformance to rules and convention.

I cannot stress enough how important it is to talk about the **picture**, the end result, the image. You heard it from Clive Munday. If during one of my lectures I were to start describing each picture in terms of f-stops and fractions of seconds, I would very quickly bore my audience silly. Imagine describing a journey in terms of gear changes and clutch depressions ! So should it be with an appraisal.

There are many versions of how one should present the comments about the good and the not so good. Without care, these too can become predictable, especially if there are 100 slides to view. Sometimes, let's face it, there is very little that can be said in a photo's favour. What matters is making the photographer feel valued. Most beginning photographers, and even experienced photographers who struggle on, would tell you themselves that their work doesn't stand up to the best stuff on show. So they don't need an appraiser to tell them so. Think about how you learn best. We all learn from mistakes, sure. But would you learn more from having all the errors and flaws pointed out continually and concentrating on eliminating them ? Or would it be better to see the good things, to strengthen them and to let the small problems be overwhelmed eventually ? **Much more important to spend time on the good.**

I keep using the word 'appraisal'. This reflects really on why I enter competition in the first place. The points and the trophies are a nice extra spice, but really the idea for me is not to win. Competition and judging are not the right way to describe what is going on for me. For the less experienced, it should be about trying new things, receiving the encouragement and getting the inspiration from seeing great work from other people. For the more experienced, who like me often have a speciality, it is also the chance to experiment, to challenge the audience and the judge and to try to break new ground. Like many aspects of business, it is the comment or the service which is much more important than the result.

My membership of the RPS has taught me much. An organisation oft criticised, the RPS has a way to go in coping with today's change. However, its recognition of various types of photography has a great deal to commend it. Judging a pictorial picture against a formal portrait or a perfect architectural record against a piece of reportage is futile. Instead, it is important only to appraise what is in front of you. Is the treatment appropriate for the subject ? Does the lighting show the subject to best effect ? Does the content overpower the technicalities ? Does the picture convey what the author intended ? It is equally pointless to suggest that a wide-angle might have been better than a macro, since the author intended to show a macro and the judge must be up to the challenge of saying what makes it a good picture (or not) and why. Hence I mark every picture on its merits alone, regardless of subject; another reason why competition is not the right word. We can't be like the Royal and have a dozen categories every month.

So, I'll end here by encouraging everyone to take as active a part in all competitions as they can. If all the judges were as good and as entertaining as Clive, then we would need no encouragement, I'm sure. (his marks were pretty low, by the way !). Fun and passion are key to most things in life. Nothing new here. Maybe, one day, we will have a true appraisal, and **I'll achieve my long ambition to score 2 !.**

Ken Scott

West Sussex 1946 - 1996 The Jubilee Record Office

EXHIBITION

A Petworth Girlhood





Mary Wyndham's life

1880s-1890s

to be held at Petworth House, West Sussex,
from 6 July - 1 August 1996
during normal House opening hours

west sussex county council