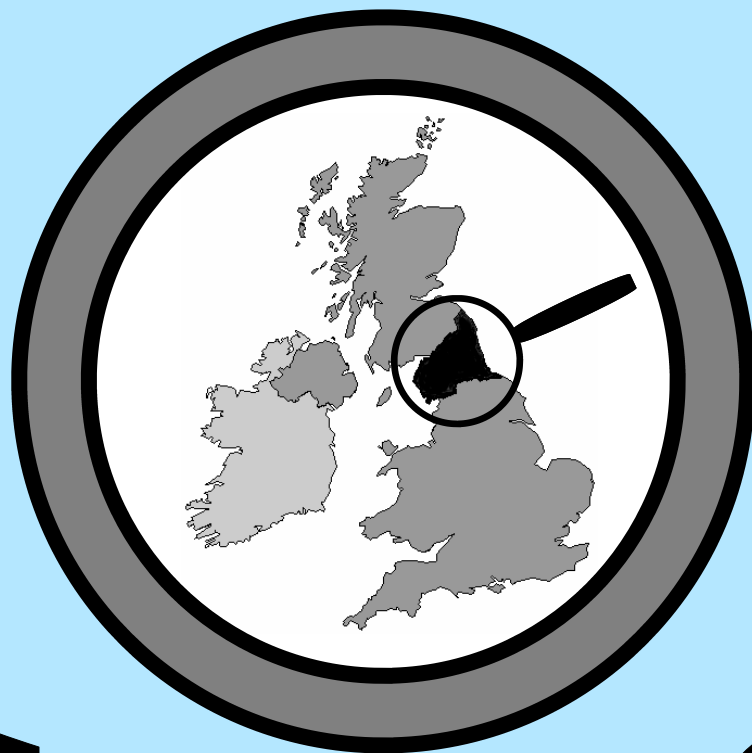


# NORTHERN



# FOCUS

THE MAGAZINE OF  
NORTHERN COUNTIES  
PHOTOGRAPHIC FEDERATION

([www.ncpf.org.uk](http://www.ncpf.org.uk))

Spring 2009

EDITION No. 074

# Diary

## 2009

### Feb

24 N.C.P.F.; South Tyne Area Print Competition at Winlaton CC.

### Mar

2 N.C.P.F.; North Tyne Digital Group with Ian Britton and Ron Henry

15 N.C.P.F.; Annual General Meeting.

20-22 R.P.S.; Dales Weekend, in conjunction with North West Region.

23 N.C.P.F.; North Tyne Area Projected Images Competition at Ponteland.

### April

17 R.P.S.; "Distinctions a Personal View" at Whickham C Centre, Front Street, Whickham. 7.30p.m.

26 R.P.S.; "DI Printing Day" with John Herlinger of Fotospeed and Margaret Salisbury at Backworth Hall, Backworth, Tyne & Wear. 10.00a.m. to 4.00p.m. Cost £20.00 (Students £10.00) including buffet Lunch. Booking essential.

### May

11 N.C.P.F.; North Tyne Digital Group with Tony Griffiths.

### July

6 N.C.P.F.; North Tyne Digital Group with George Ledger.

### Sept

7 N.C.P.F.; North Tyne Digital Group

14 R.P.S.; "The Coming of Age Roadshow" by John Wells FRPS at Methodist Church Hall, Brompton, Northallerton. 7.30p.m.

*(Continued on Inside Back Cover)*

## **NORTHERN FOCUS**

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Serving the North of England.

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Opinions expressed in articles are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the official view of the Federation.

Material for inclusion in the next issue should be sent to the editor by the 30th of June 2009 at the latest.

Web version of magazine available at [www.northernfocus.co.uk](http://www.northernfocus.co.uk)

# PRESIDENT'S PIECE

As you receive this edition of the Northern Focus Christmas has gone and a New Year is well under way so I hope that you all have had a great Christmas, and I would like to wish a belated happy New Year. Since my last President's Piece nearly twelve months of my Presidency has just about flown over and it will soon be by my first Annual General Meeting. As I mentioned before things went quite smoothly and slowly for the first few months but I can truly say it certainly quickened up for me towards the end of 2008. They are still treating me kindly on the Executive and a lot of work is still being done so this might be the way to keep on top of things, I don't know though, they could be luring me into a false sense of security. Still, September through to December has seen a few events taking place such as the 29<sup>th</sup> NCPF Salon of Photography, NCPF Presentation Evening, PAGB Distinctions weekend hosted by the NCPF and the Christmas Spectacular.

It was a great pleasure to be present at those events and to see the fruits of good organisation and planning coming together. A lot of thought, planning and running about in preparation for those events were very evident as they came to a successful conclusion. I certainly enjoyed each event, met new people and saw a tremendous amount of new images. This is what our hobby is all about, meeting others, getting to know each other and seeing each others images. I think in all of this we need to get out more, be adventurous, get out there and meet other clubs and societies and talk more about our hobby. This way we might encourage others to see that our clubs and societies are very much alive and we might, through this, get more people from outside to come in and join us. We need to show we still have enthusiasm and energy.

At this point I must add that the Christmas Spectacular was another success with Peter Yeo and John Wells. The day was tremendous from start to finish and both lecturers complimented each other in all ways. Their work was prolific, their images were great and their patter was something to be savoured. Their interaction with those in attendance was superb and the comments that came back hilarious. We gave as good as we got but I must admit the lecturers, and their wives, had the last say in it all. We all certainly had a feast both in the photographic sense as well as food wise with the Christmas lunch provided. Well done to everyone for making the day go so well and to you for attending. But alas, what about next year? We still have not found someone to take over the Social Secretary's job. Will this be the end of the Christmas Spectacular? I hope not as we need this sort of event to encourage, not only one another, but those of our fellow club and society members. Can you give of your time to help out, it is your Federation?

Nevertheless what has happened to me this first year? Well, I have been around a few clubs and societies giving a talk here and there and thoroughly enjoying it. It was a great feeling sharing with others and showing some of my prints. Normally the evening with me is made all the better by the banter and discussion from the club members on the prints and finding out what others thought of them. It didn't matter what was said, even after pulling out the knives, the enjoyment I got, and I hope they did, was something special and I went away happy that I had contributed something to photography. I'm not the best but it was worth it to be amongst like minded people. I was thinking to myself "what is it about?" It is about sharing the knowledge that we have learnt, accumulated, over the years and imparting to others and from the news going around the Federation that is exactly what is happening. Clubs and Societies are opening their doors to the public and doing just that, imparting their expertise to others through digital photography. People are coming, learning, enjoying and entering into the spirit of the society or club and taking up membership. Long may this continue and well done to those of you involved in this outreach.

I would like to thank all the clubs and societies for their invitations to visit, give a talk and especially to their annual dinners and presentations. They have been great times for my wife and I. It is a credit to you all for the way in which you have made my wife most welcome at these functions.

I still look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in this coming New Year before my Presidency comes to an end, but I'm still available after that as well mind you!

Once again I do hope you enjoy this edition of the Northern Focus as a lot of hard work goes into it. Make it even better by sending in your thoughts, tips, hints, suggestions or comments as I am sure Pat would love to get more for inclusion in the next edition.

Take care and hope to see you soon.

**John Smith**

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## **KEEP UP TO DATE**

**M**embers who have a copy of the NCPF Directory are reminded that updates are listed on the Federation's website at [www.ncpf.org.uk](http://www.ncpf.org.uk) to enable them to maintain the latest known details in their copy.

**Editor**

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## **YOUR OWN COPY OF NORTHERN FOCUS**

**N**orthern Focus editions will now be available on the magazine's website as a PDF file which members can download as a personal copy. The website can be accessed at [www.northernfocus.co.uk](http://www.northernfocus.co.uk) or via the NCPF website.

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# FEDERATION NEWS

## PRESENTATION EVENING

**A**t the last Presentation Evening the numbers of club members attending the evening was smaller than in previous years. This is rather upsetting for the Courses Organiser and Competition Officers of the Federation who put in a tremendous amount of work to try and make the evening a success. Will club secretaries please encourage their members to attend and see the work that is produced by photographers in the Federation.

Due to an oversight, the Highly Commended Certificates were not presented at the last event. Apologies are given to the members who expected to receive them on the evening. In future Highly Commended Certificates will definitely be presented.

Presentation Evening is an enjoyable event when trophies and awards are presented and the winning pictures are displayed. If you are to receive an award, please try to attend on the evening. I was extremely lucky in receiving an award for Northern Focus from Photographic Society of America. I did not know the trophy was to be presented on the evening and was surprised and delighted to be given the award.

**Editor**

# PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY of AMERICA

## NORTHERN FOCUS WINS PSA AWARD

**N**orthern Focus came third in the Photographic Society of America's Bulletin Competition (Council Section). The Editor (Pat Porrett) was presented with the Award from PSA, at the NCPF Presentation Evening.

Northern Focus is your magazine and I am always pleased to receive news, articles and items for the magazine.

**Editor**

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## BEST IN SHOW FOR PAULA DAVIES

**C**ongratulations to Paula Davies of Stokesley for being awarded The Best of Show and receiving a PSA Gold Medal for her Digital Image "Venetian Fantasy" in the PSA Electronic Imaging Division's Creative Competition.

**Editor**

# PERSONAL PROFILE

## LEO PALMER FRPS FPSA EFIAP PPSA APAGB

Looking back I think I was always interested in photography without doing very much about it. Before WWII my Grandfather used to process his own prints at home in a large dark cupboard in one of the bedrooms. However by the 1950's it was full of junk and photography did not seem to be on the agenda. However my interest in this dark cupboard and photography had been ignited.

In the late 1950's a very early episode of Blue Peter showed how to construct a Pin-hole camera. I spent a number of hours painstakingly building this camera. I was delighted with the final result and the following week Blue Peter were going to show us how to use it with film and processing chemicals. Then disaster struck.....I missed the next episode and the camera lived, unused, on a shelf in my bedroom until I moved out 10 years later when I got married.

In the early 1970's, whilst living at Stocksfield, I made a second attempt to become a photographer by borrowing a number of books from my local library. I'm sad to say they were not a wise choice being full of technical data and graphs. I struggled with them for a week or so then thinking photography was not for me I took up golf.

In 1976 I moved back to Hexham and joined Hexham & District Photographic Society. On my second night I was very fortunate to see Dr Mike Constable ARPS, without doubt one of the most creative photographers of his generation. Before I saw him I thought photographs were a record of a time or place or a family event. He introduced me to the world of creative photography. Within a week I'd set up a darkroom and was printing B/W and colour negatives and creating composite transparencies. All very badly but I had started on the path of studying photography. Printing became a real passion and studying photography a lifelong quest.

Although I would class myself as, primarily, a Travel photographer I photograph anything and everything. I enjoy photographing people and places, landscape, nature....in fact anything in front of my camera. A lot of my work is "straight" photography, if indeed anything can be described as straight but I do enjoy producing abstract or altered images. At one time this type of image would be achieved through table top techniques such as back projection,

multi exposures through masks or darkroom techniques. The advent of digital imaging has made things so much easier. In my opinion digital imaging, along with colour photography itself, is the most significant development in photography in the last 100 years. I feel very privileged to be around to be part of it.

My main “buzz” is the taking and making of pictures, especially printing and passing on knowledge to others. I’ve acted as programme organiser for Hexham PS for over 25 years and find it a very creative exercise. Finding new lectures and creative ideas to involve club members in photography gives me a lot of satisfaction.

For eight years in the 1980’s I carried out the role of NCPF Competition Secretary. Through this activity I got to know a lot of people from many clubs and handled thousands of prints.

I’m always working on photographic projects and find it an excellent way of producing new work. In the early 1980’s I started entering International exhibitions and have exhibited continuously since then. They have provided me with the motivation to strive to capture new images with a difference. My old friend and mentor Myles Audas once told me that if one of his images was accepted in any exhibition he never entered it again. My approach is a little more relaxed.....four acceptances and mine are “put to bed.”

Originality is the key to success in most things and photography is no exception. My rules are to never copy and avoid the tripod marks.....if it’s been done before then why bother?

Since the early 1980’s I have advised people on panel submissions for RPS (Royal Photographic Society) distinctions and since the year 2000 acted as an assessor on firstly the Licentiateship and then the Travel Associateship/Fellowship panels. In January 2008 I was elected Chair of the Licentiateship panel.

I have studied photography seriously for over 30 years and digital imaging for 15 years and continue to do both. If ever I thought I had “arrived” or reached any sort of “standard” I would pack in because what I would have reached was a plateau and would then probably be incapable of learning new things.....I hope this never happens.

The pleasure I get from taking and making pictures, especially printing, has if anything increased over the years, long may it continue.

**Leo Palmer FRPS FPSA EFIAP PPSA APAGB**

# CLUB SPOTLIGHT

## MORPETH CAMERA CLUB

Morpeth has had a camera club since the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and has been involved with the Northern Counties Photographic Federation since its inauguration in 1901, Mr J Whittle, an early club member, was the Federation Secretary between 1907 and 1912.

The present club was reformed as the Morpeth YMCA Camera Club in May 1948 with 20 members. The club met in the YMCA reading rooms and had access to a darkroom. With its intention to “promote the advancement of photography”, the club held 6 competitions in its initial year. One of the founder members was Mr Arthur Wood, a local garage owner, who provided several trophies for competition between the members. After the club left the YMCA to become Morpeth Camera Club in the mid eighties, these trophies were lost, but due to the wonder of the digital age, about 5 years ago, putting the club name into Google, showed the Arthur Wood Intermediate Print Shield in all its glory being advertised for sale in America for \$75!

The club has had reasonable success through the years in Interclub and external competitions, perhaps two of the highlights being when it won The Corder Trophy for monochrome prints in 1983, and represented the Federation in the PAGB Colour Slide finals at Warwick in 1996. The club is usually well represented by individual members in Federation Competitions and several club members, regularly gain acceptances in International Salons, both here and abroad.

Current membership, perhaps due to the introduction of digital photography, is in the low thirties, with a regular attendance at the weekly meetings in the upper twenties. Meetings are held each week between September and April in St George’s Church, and survived the recent floods in Morpeth, even though the nave of the church was flooded to a depth of two feet, because we use an upstairs room.

**Vince Rooker ARPS, DPAGB, EFIAP, APAGB.**

# CONGRATULATIONS

To photographers who have gained distinctions recently:-

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| A.P.A.G.B. | - Bob Winter of Esh Winning            |
| D.P.A.G.B. | - Henrietta Byrne of Richmond          |
|            | - George Ledger of Hexham              |
|            | - Mark Parvin of Washington            |
| C.P.A.G.B. | - John Gilkerson of Sunderland         |
|            | - Peter Koch Osborne of Penrith        |
|            | - Rosemary Koch Osborne of Penrith     |
|            | - Joseph Duffy of Whickham             |
|            | - Catherine Hall of Whickham           |
|            | - Tony Shepherd of Whickham            |
|            | - Don Bowman of Whickham               |
|            | - Bryan Lindley of Penrith             |
|            | - Judith Heyworth of Penrith           |
|            | - Ruth U Holden of Morton              |
|            | - Jane Coltman of Alnwick              |
|            | - John Thompson of Alnwick and Morpeth |
|            | - Robert L Hudson of Northallerton     |
|            | - Graeme Webb of West Cumbria          |
|            | - Kate Wilmer of West Cumbria          |
| L.R.P.S.   | - Kenn Reay of Whitley Bay             |
| A.F.I.A.P. | - Alastair Cochrane                    |
| PPSA       | - Tony Potter of West Cumbria          |

Congratulations to these photographers and to any others that I have not yet heard about.

**Editor**

## **ASHINGTON CO-OP CAMERA CLUB**

**“A Celebration of Photography”**

**A Print Exhibition at Woodhorn Museum**

**Open 10.00a.m. Wednesday to Sunday  
until 19 April 2009**

# CELEBRITY PROFILE

## PETER YEO FRPS, DPAGB, APAGB

I joined the Royal Air Force as an Admin Apprentice, in the Supply Trade, in 1956 and during my two years at RAF Hereford I was shown the basics of B&W darkroom work by one of our Education Officers. Since then I have not had any formal training but have read many books and thousands of photo-magazines, but the most important factor in my development in the hobby we share has been membership of camera clubs wherever I have been stationed. Through club life I have made friends all over the place, and life in general has been enhanced through photography. I recognised early on that I should take photos as a way of recording all the places a lengthy career in the Air Force would take me. I have tried to go beyond simply recording places to being more creative. I will try anything, landscape, travel, sport, street photography and anything "quirky". Primarily I enjoy being out and about and will snap anything that catches my eye. I used to fancy myself as a portrait photographer until I saw the work of someone who could really do the job and gave up that idea. Of the places I have been in recent years I especially love Scotland and the south west of Ireland but enjoy anywhere that there is wild or unspoiled landscape such as the Yorkshire Moors and Dales, Northumberland and Dartmoor.

I believe that camera clubs are excellent places to learn ones' craft, especially in the early years when entering "set-subject competitions" will test you in all sorts of ways. With luck you will discover an area of photography that you had not previously considered but for which you find you have a real flair and may then specialise in. In my own club, RBCC (Lincoln), I encourage members to enter our regional Federation annual exhibition, and then to try national and international exhibitions, as a way of broadening experience and testing ones self further. Most of us now use digital cameras, and the fact that it costs nothing to take as many shots as one wants allows us to snap the thing that first attracts our attention and then to take "variations on a theme". By that I mean consider shots from a higher or lower viewpoint, a bit to the left or right, closer or further away, using a wider or longer lens; taking a number of options may reveal something that the first shot does not.

Most camera clubs include a number of competitions in their programmes as there is a demand from members. It is easy to forget that the people we ask to act as judges do so voluntarily and devote quite a lot of time to the task. I think that asking for marks for all items entered in a competition is unnecessary. I prefer to make comments on all the entries and then select 1st, 2nd and 3rd and as many HCs and Cs as the size and quality of the entry makes appropriate. I will only judge "on the night" as, like most judges and lecturers, I have far too much going on in my life to have work at my home from one or two clubs to look at before going to a club to deliver my comments. I make about 50 club visits a

year to judge or lecture, I am President of the Club and, as a Fotospeed sponsored speaker I am expected to create a new talk every 12 to 18 months, so I have to find time to take the pictures, print and mount them. It is fanciful to think a judge spends every spare moment giving deep consideration to work delivered to him two or three weeks prior to a competition. This is particularly true if the judge also gives talks and wants to attend his own club. It is common for me to have two or three talks and two judgments to deal with in any two week period and, of course, "real life" gets in the way too. Take comfort from the thought that an experienced judge will recognise the value of the subtle images and not be over-influenced by the dramatic and punchy ones to their detriment.

I have been a member of the Royal Photographic Society since the late 1960's and got the Associateship with darkroom B&W prints in the Pictorial category, now called Visual Art. I gained the DPAGB at an adjudication in Dumfries in 1996. In 1998 I was surprised and delighted to be awarded the APAGB for "Meritorious Service", based on almost 40 years of lecturing and judging, camera club and Federation committee work, including Presidency of two clubs and the Lincolnshire Photographic Association, and being Vice-President of N&EMPF until prostate cancer demanded a major reduction in commitments. The RPS Fellowship followed in 1999 with a panel of darkroom colour prints, also in the Visual Art category.

I have been a Fotospeed sponsored speaker for about 6 years and use and recommend their products. I encourage anyone who is serious about their photography to get their computer monitors "calibrated" and the papers they use "profiled" so as to get the best possible results.

During my time in Singapore, January 1969 to December 1971, I was a PA to a senior officer who was responsible for transport aircraft activity within the Far East theatre. He knew of my camera club interests and asked if I had ever been to Hong Kong. He told me that "there must be some good snaps to be had there", so he wrote a letter to one of his subordinates at RAF Kai Tak, stamped the envelope "Confidential" and sent me as Courier. He later arranged for me to go up to Kathmandu for five days on a mission to return Gurkha soldiers to Nepal on disbandment of their Regiment. Naturally I took a camera with me and shot away at every opportunity.

In 1982 Argentina attacked and captured the Falkland Islands. I was based at RAF Coningsby and No 29 Squadron, equipped with F4K Phantom fighters, was earmarked to go down there once the islands had been recovered and the short runway extended. Meanwhile I was charged with getting together the necessary spares to support 29 Sqn Detachment of Phantoms. I went south by sea with about £11-million worth of kit and set up a logistical support facility on a very rough airfield. Once again I took a camera and a few rolls of 35mm B&W film. As I felt people back in UK would be interested to see the conditions their husbands and boyfriends were living and working under, I sent the first film to my Squadron Commander so that prints could be made and displayed in the Families Club and NAAFI Club. He had two sets of prints made by the Station

Photography Section and showed one set to the Station Commander before displaying the prints. He asked for more pictures from me so I took, in all, ten 35mm B&W in the 4 months I was away. What I wasn't told until my return was that from film number three onwards 27 prints were made from each negative for distribution around Command HQ and MoD to all sorts of departments. The first thing I did when I got back was to go to the Photo Section to ask if I could have the negatives. To my surprise I was told in no uncertain manner that I should leave the Section at once as I had caused so much work for them. I suppose having to make close to eight thousand 10" x 8" prints would have "got up the noses" of the staff but I was really an innocent party. I was allowed to borrow the negs overnight and made enough prints for my own collection and memories.

Your Editor asked if I had anything, any stories, to share with other photographers. Well, here's one .....

As one gets older it is still easy to get down low to take a shot but it can be darned hard to get back up again. I've known this for some years but in early October this year, on the first full day of a holiday in the Lake District, I knelt down beside Buttermere to take a shot with foreground grasses, and water and mountains beyond. I took two or three shots, varying position and focal length slightly. I placed the camera on the shale "beach" and tried to get up and, as I did, my right foot slipped and my ankle twisted throwing me off balance and straining the knee badly. Result: I fell sideways and then backwards into the shallow water, immersing myself from head to waist. With a sodden fleece and shirt, and suffering a bit of shock from the fall, I was unable to get up. Fortunately there were people nearby and two of them came to my aid and pulled me out and into an upright position.

I took off the fleece and wrung it out, put the camera in its bag and limped back to the car 300 yards away. As I walked past an elderly couple who had seen the episode, the man offered the thought that "There's no fool like an old fool!" at which I suggested that if he nothing more sympathetic to say he should shut-up! His wife laughed at my amusing riposte. On reaching the car I told my wife that some twerp had just fallen into the lake; she asked if he was OK, to which I said "I'm fine, thanks". She looked up to find me taking my shirt off to wring it out, but showed no surprise as, for some time, she has felt that I was "an accident waiting to happen". Her best friend simply said that I was obviously "an attention seeker". Moral of the tale: As you get older, get to know your limitations and try to work within them.

The highlights of my photographic career so far have been gaining the RPS Fellowship, being awarded the APAGB after simply doing what I thought needed doing and "someone had to do it so why not me", and then being invited to join Fotospeeds team of speakers. I hope that all of you enjoy your hobby as much as I have, and make as many friends through it as has been my privilege.

**Peter Yeo FRPS, DPAGB, APAGB**

# ALLIANCE NOTES

## PAGB INTER FEDERATION PROJECTED IMAGES EXHIBITION (“ALLIANCE”)

As many of you will know, the PAGB holds an Inter Federation Competition for projected images (formerly slides only) and then produces an Exhibition which is available to member clubs of each Federation during the year. Usually around five clubs take the Exhibition within NCPF.

From this year, the Exhibition has been presented in the form of a CD, which is considerably easier to handle than the slides, and it is also available from the end of November rather than only during the two week period allocated by PAGB. This means that from this year, the Exhibition will be available to clubs at any time from the end of November. It can be booked through Chris Morton, NCPF Slides Competition Officer, telephone number 01609 770648, at the small charge of £5.00 per showing. This covers the cost to NCPF of buying the CD's from PAGB, plus administration costs.

Please contact Chris if you are interested in taking the show. Of course, the clubs who have booked it for the next two seasons already have their bookings in place.

### For Disposal

The Federation has a number of Slide magazines which are surplus to requirements at a very reasonable charge. Also available are a number of 'pencil boxes', previously used for slides sorting during Federation competitions, these being long, well made wooden boxes with a sliding lid, approx 600 x 50 x 50 mm internally.

Please let your members know and contact Chris Morton on telephone number 01609 770648 for details.

Chris Morton

# CLUB NEWS

## ANOTHER GOOD YEAR FOR THE WEST CUMBRIA PHOTO GROUP

2008 has been a very active year for members with a total of 3281 acceptances and 349 awards in International Exhibitions.

**Tony Potter ARPS, DPAGB, AFIAP, PPSA, APAGB**

# JUDGING

## JUDGING: OBSERVATIONS — BY DAVE PHILLIPS

Once upon a time, when I first took my early tentative steps in entering photographic competitions, I was witness to what could only be described as an egotistical moment. The Judge for the evening had already made a few disparaging comments, but gave no clues as to what was to follow. As he placed a beginner's print on the easel, he then remarked. "I don't like this one bit. How someone has had the audacity to enter this for a competition is totally beyond me. Absolute Rubbish. When I first saw this print, my first reaction was to give it one point (out of 30), but having seen it again in this different light I've changed my mind – NIL, Next". Although my initial words indicate otherwise, this is certainly no fairy story.

So, has judging changed in twenty-five years? – Definitely. For the Better? – Certainly!

In the NCPF we have some wonderful judges who are almost beyond improvement (if this happens to be you, Congratulations! – There's no need to finish the article). However, for the rest of us mere mortals, I'd love to retain your interest just a little longer.

Overall, I feel that there is currently room for improvement, but how can we, collectively as judges continue to move forward, aiming towards the ideal?

### **A few points to ponder:**

#### **Demeanor**

First and foremost, it is always appreciated by the audience when a judge appears to be enjoying the task of reviewing the evening's images. From offering a sprinkling of enthusiastic praise where it's due, to more importantly, giving helpful constructive comments and advice aimed at encouraging the author to improve their photography.

Fumbling around with prints, not knowing titles and appearing unfamiliar with the image does not send a positive message to your captive audience. Familiarisation with images is essential.

Taking a little time to find out just what part of South America the image's title relates to, or just what are the main characteristics of the Sally Lightfoot Crab (easily found on the Web), although certainly not compulsory, does tend to endear oneself to the assembled lynch mob, err I mean audience.

#### **Consistency**

Particularly where marking is involved, it can be so infuriating to the author to hear the guest speaker impart wonderful superlatives about their image, concluding that the "early dawn light and exquisite rising mist combine to add some tremendous mood to this image (blah, blah, blah)", followed by the comment, Nineteen!. Alternatively, when pictures have undoubtedly fallen at the first hurdle (ie. Poor Technique, Unsharp, Lacking in Composition, or just poor

Post Processing / Printing etc.), the words “There’s just something about it – Highly Commended – Twenty seven” just doesn’t make any sense.

Consistency levels have certainly risen over the years, but judges old and new need to be aware of the disappointment and frustration felt by the clubs and societies when this inevitably occurs.

### **Prejudice**

Gordon’s (name changed to protect the guilty!) heart sank as he picked up the next print from the box. He took a deep breath, placed the print on the stand and said “Although it seems like a nice picture, I don’t like Landscapes in the vertical format, so therefore it only gets a low mark”.

When you agree to become a judge, I feel you must at all times show impartiality in the varying degrees of subject matter. Landscapes, People, Close-ups, Documentary, Nature & Patterns etc. all deserve an equal amount of attention – Irrespective of their orientation. I wouldn’t mind so much, but that Landscape was a cracker!!!

### **Minor Irritations**

1. Although Christmas time tends to fill our hearts with joy and love to all mankind, it is still annoying when the judge proceeds to play “Jingle Bells” with the loose change in his pocket whilst mumbling his comments. Strangely, this doesn’t seem to happen with the fairer sex.

2. Be Prepared. Once the image hits the screen / stand, you should already know what your key points and comments are going to be. Fumbling around in the dark, trying to read notes without the use of a small torch is literally embarrassing to you and amusing to the audience.

3. It can also be embarrassing for a judge who constantly “talks to the print” with their back to the audience to occasionally turn round, only to find that half the crowd has gone home. Admiring a picture’s qualities, composing oneself, then addressing the audience is much better for all concerned.

Involve the audience – after all, you are part of that evening’s entertainment.

Over the years, I’ve been involved in some superb displays of judging (Although admittedly I was sat in the audience at the time!). Even though the above Observations are light hearted, they are still relevant and are raised with a genuine affection that I feel for judging images.

Who knows where the next generation of judging will lead us. Digital Images have taken hold and the transparency is on its deathbed. Images on CD, (bypassing Prints) has become the norm. How long will it be before the CD is posted between judge and Competition Secretary, without the need for a personnel appearance by the judge at the club involved?

I’m too young (honestly) too be put out to grass. The vast majority of Judges I know, all enjoy the task of commenting on images, and the vast majority of clubs tend to enjoy their judges performances.

Are we really that far apart from the ideal?

Possibly not, but there’s always room for improvement.

# AROUND THE AREAS

## WESTERN AREA BATTLE 2008

The Western Area Battle took place at the Morton Community Centre, Carlisle, on 15 November 2008. It was organised by Morton Photographic Society, judged by Diane Owen FRPS and commented at 6.30 pm.

It was preceded by a presentation by Diane in the afternoon. She showed pictures of her very personal style, together with several short A/V sequences showing the development of some of the images. During the interval between the presentation and the Competition we were able to inspect her recent successful RPS Fellowship Panel of prints. On arrival in the afternoon all the competition prints were on display for close inspection.

Diane pre-judged the competition, and gave an interesting commentary. She marked from 14 to 30, giving a few maximums. The prints had been photographed or digital files provided prior to the event and were projected for the audience while Diane delivered her commentary, this added greatly to the enjoyment of the evening. The club scores are as follows:

PRINTS			PROJECTED IMAGES (Digital)		
Position	Club	Score	Position	Club	Score
1	Workington	161	1	Penrith	154
2	Keswick	153	2	Keswick	151
3	Dumfries	141	3	Dumfries	147
4	West Cumbria	139	4	Workington	131
5	Carlisle	137	5	Copeland	125
6	Morton	132	6	West Cumbria	122
7	Penrith	128	7	Morton	113
8	Copeland	114	8	Carlisle	109

### OVERALL

Position	Club	Score
1	Keswick	304
2	Workington	292
3	Dumfries	288
4	Penrith	282
5	West Cumbria	261
6	Carlisle	246
7	Morton	245
8	Copeland	239

The best print was awarded to "AzedeH" by Brian McCombe of Workington, and the best projected image was awarded to "Little Girl in Pink" by Jan Dockwray of West Cumbria Photo Group.

The whole event was attended by the NCPF Vice President (Richard Speirs), which was much appreciated. Copious high quality refreshments were served during the interval between the two events. This completed a very well organised and enjoyable afternoon and evening.

**Les Ayres**  
**Western Area Representative**

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## **SOUTH TYNE PROJECTED IMAGE COMPETITION**

**T**his year's event was hosted by South Shields Photographic Society on 25 November 2008 and each participating club entered three slides and three digital images. The contest attracted a large attendance to hear the Judge, Don Bennett DPAGB, give his comments on the entries. The result was:

Ryton	155
Gateshead	153
Hexham	153
Whickham	152
South Shields	150
Winlaton	144

The Eric Hopper Trophy for the best individual image was won by Sylvia Lunn of South Shields for "You Can Fly" which scored 30.

The 2009 event will be hosted by Ryton on 24 November when the Judge will be Dave Phillips, and when the event becomes all digital projection for the first time.

**Trevor Walters APAGB**  
**Area Representative**

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## **NORTH TYNE PRINT COMPETITION**

**T**he North Tyne Print Competition was held at Gosforth Camera Club and Digital Imaging Society on Tuesday 25 November 2008. The Judge was Peter Yearnshire LRPS of Blyth Photographic Society.

The results were:

Cramlington	195	Gosforth	175
Whitley Bay	189	Ponteland	175
Tynemouth	188	Wallsend	166

The winning individual print was "Mousecatcher" by Alan Barker of Cramlington Camera Club.

**Editor**

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# OBITUARIES

## MILES AUDAS FRPS,AFIAP,APAGB.

July 24th 2008 was a sad day for the photographic world and in particular the Northern Region with the passing away of Miles Audas at the age of 89 having fought the horrible disease of cancer for the past two years.

Miles was a true gentleman who was greatly respected in photographic circles world wide.

Since the early 1950's he was giving lectures and judging to photographic clubs throughout the country and is no doubt known personally to all of the clubs in the Northern Region for the excellence of his prints, slides, AV's and the wise informative comments in his judging.

Miles was a member of Barnard Castle and District Camera Club, followed by Bishop Auckland PS, Darlington CC and a founder member of the North Yorkshire & South Durham Group, in addition to Tees Digital PG.

All aspects of photography appealed to Miles in particular Architecture, old processes, and landscapes. A prolific slide worker from which he produced derivatives creative work and superb colour prints.

To gain a Fellowship in the RPS is no mean feat, however Miles continued on and gained not one but three Fellowships.

Around 1999 Miles entered the era of computing at the age of 81 producing even greater stunning pictures digitally from scanned 35mm film.

As a judge he sat on the RPS Licentiate panel, the Alliance Judges List, judging international exhibitions, and the National Slide Competitions, in addition to clubs in the Northern Region.

To the end Miles was full of surprises not least of all was the discovery on examining his birth certificate that Miles is the true spelling of his name and not Myles by which we all knew him.

**Cliff Banks**

## BIG BILL WATSON

In the mid sixties Bill walked into what was then the YMCA Photographic Society in Blakett Street and immediately made an impression which would last for the next fifty years. This gentle giant of a man was not forceful or pushy but his imposing figure was always there to help when he was asked. Bill, an insurance advisor, came to photography via Rugby and Cricket clubs so his advice on all matters administrative was very much appreciated. His ability to keep projects on track was a great help when the YMCA moved from Blakett Street to the Durante Hall in Ellison Place and the Photographic Society committee worked hard to negotiate their new facilities.

When photographic life at the new YMCA became intolerable, Bill was among the ten members who migrated to Gosforth Camera Club in the early eighties where he took an active part in the club's committee and its association with the NCPF.

Although never a prolific photographer, Bill Watson's name did appear on several trophies, he appreciated good photography and most of all he appreciated good cameras. His knowledge of and admiration for cameras soon outweighed his photography. He became active in classic camera collecting attending every auction and fair between Edinburgh and London. Firstly with our good friend George Thompson then with Mike Hardy, Peter Gawan and others. He became a regular at Christies in London and Tenants specialist auctions in Leyburn and took stalls at Collectable Camera Fairs as well as at Photographica at the Royal Horticultural Hall in London.

Whereas his fellow collectors focused on pristine classic cameras, Bill would collect all sorts of remarkable paraphernalia like lenses for long defunct enlargers, box cameras with missing doors or broken viewfinders and leather carry cases with no known (or imagined) content. Bill was also a bit of a creative camera dealer; having come across a very rare but incomplete Kodak Beau Brownie box camera, a very collectable and valuable camera produced in five colours in very limited quantities in the early thirties, Bill attempted to glue on an ordinary Box Brownie body modifying the lens hole with his penknife to fit the antique shutter. His attempt to hand-paint an Ensign Fulview rather an exotic purple/blue colour was equally unsuccessful but his sale of a set of Voightlander lens tubes without any trace of glass in them whatsoever to a famous Dutch collector for over £300, left his fellow collectors speechless; nothing ventured, nothing gained!

Bill's folly aside, he was an astute collector. He had a collection of rare wood and brass bellows cameras as well as early Leica cameras. The prized pieces were displayed in cabinets, but the really prime examples were hidden from prying eyes behind wardrobes, under chests of drawers, in the coal cellar, in the garage and in other unlikely places.

Bill was a very fine golfer, a huge man who, despite his propensity for food, ale and smoking, in his prime was very athletic. All of which came to a sudden halt in 1990 when he underwent a triple heart bypass, soon after he developed diabetes but his road to recovery was quick and sure. By way of helping with this recovery, his friends including Ian Whillis and Gerry Davidson from the Gosforth Camera Club, organised weekend walking trips to the Lake District, Ted Marshall, who was always pleased to share a room with Bill, still talks of the nightmare of waking up in the B&B to the site of Bill in his underpants blocking the morning light from entering the window.

Helen, Bill's lovely wife, allowed him a long lead. He enjoyed the unfettered freedom to pursue his many interests and hobbies but occasionally he was reined in for holidays and family matters although no encouragement was needed for him to visit his grandchildren. Helen must have had a heart of gold to put up with Bill's fanatic collecting capers

'What on earth is that?

'Twenty three sheets of plate glass Ted gave me'

'What are you going to do with it?'

'Don't know – but it'll come in handy one day'

Despite his freedom, when Helen died suddenly in 2006, Bill missed her terribly. He was never the same man.

Bill knew everybody at the heart of everything. We would sit in the Collingwood pub after the camera club meeting and Bill would produce several china saucers (no cups – just the saucers) with the question,

'Anybody need any of these?'

'What would we need these for Bill?'

'Don't know – there's a pall of mine wants to get rid of them'

'How many?'

'About three gross' - and Bill was serious.

This wasn't a wheeler-dealer action; it was a genuine attempt to help his friend. The problem was, with so many friends like that, Bill was always hawking something around.

His interest in almost everything, stopped at computers, talk of which would bring a glazed look over Bill's face, although he did manage to find out how to get onto camera collecting websites latterly. And it was with the advent of digital photography and its association with computers and all such talk that Bill migrated to a different corner of the pub and started talking about, of all things, dahlias. It was only a matter of weeks before he was a member of the Dahlia Society and chasing up a friend for paper bags to cover his blooms – none of which we actually saw.

During last summer Bill's character changed markedly. His cheery outlook became more sombre. His health deteriorated, he was in and out of hospital and hardly away from the doctor having tests for this and giving samples for that. The day after Bill had enjoyed a meal with his Rugby chums, his son found him unconscious in the house and Bill was rushed to hospital having suffered a stroke. After a lengthy stay in hospital, Bill finally passed away on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> November 2008 as a result of a Kidney infection which he simply couldn't fight. He leaves a son David and a daughter Clair and his beloved grandchildren of whom he talked continuously.

Bill's memory lives on in his idiosyncrasies. Peter Gawan, Mike Hardy and his other friends have been helping sort out Bill's collections and discover daily reminders. Like how Bill devised a method of wedging closed from the outside the door of a room, an Aladdin's Cave full of camera gear – without any regard for how to actually get back into the room! What to do with the 20 carousel projector trays full of slides, none of which were the work of Bill.

Bill knew his subject. Everybody deferred to his knowledge about cameras and associated equipment. He was a real specialist, and he was rarely, if ever proved wrong. But above all Bill was a lovely Guy in all respects. He commanded respect and love from all who ever knew him. He could be irritating and totally loveable at one and the same time. He was a huge guy with a huge personality who will be hugely missed by everyone.

**Ron Henry and Mike Hardy  
Gosforth CC**

## **JOHN THORPE 1935-2008**

It is with great sadness that we learned of death of John Thorpe. John was one of the original 'Gang of Four' that created the West Cumbria Photo Group. In many ways he was the 'architect' of the group. A brilliant scientist with a keen intellect he had moved into West Cumbria on retirement and as photography, along with his other interests of music and fell walking, were a major part of his life he soon found himself in the local Camera Club scene.

He was aware that traditional camera clubs sometimes failed to satisfy some photographers and the WCPG was formed. The introduction to the WCPG on their web site is John's own words. He felt that photography has to be a shared expressive activity and was very critical of the stereotypes that come through some camera club activities like competitions and judges. He was never imposing or rude; he was kind and always willing and helpful.

His great delight was the pictures that WCPG put up in the local hospitals and the benefit that this brought - an activity that started with John and 49 pictures in one hospital to now over 400 pictures in 4 hospital and clinics changed every few months still.

He was an active UPP member in Circle 20 for many years and still in what was DI4. John will be missed not only in the WCPG, or even the Western Area but much farther a field.

As a mark of deep appreciation the WCPG are in John's name to create a major award for the leading NCPF member in the 1st. Great British Small Print Circuit. He loved pictures and enriched those of us who take them.

**Tony Potter ARPS,DPAGB,AFIAP,PPSA,APAGB**

*(Continued from Inside Front Cover)*

- 15 R.P.S.; "The Coming of Age Roadshow" by John Wells FRPS at Lockhart Room, Moothall, Hexham. 7.45p.m.
- 16 R.P.S.; "The Coming of Age Roadshow" by John Wells FRPS at Methodist Church Rooms, Southey Street, Keswick. 7.30p.m.
- 17 R.P.S.; "The Coming of Age Roadshow" by John Wells FRPS at St.Oswald's CC, Gladwin Road, Grindon, Sunderland. 7.15p.m.
- 18 R.P.S.; "The Coming of Age Roadshow" by John Wells FRPS at Harraton CC, Bonemill Lane, Washington. 7.45p.m.

## **Oct**

- 8 R.P.S.; "A Printers Progress" by Peter Rees FRPS at St.Oswald's Institute, Church Street, Durham. 7.30p.m.
- 15 R.P.S.; "Impressions" a digital presentation by Nicole Billiau EFIAP,PSA\$\* from Belgium at St.Oswald's CC, Gladwin Road, Grindon, Sunderland. 7.15p.m.
- 19 R.P.S.; "Impressions" a digital presentation by Nicole Billiau EFIAP,PSA\$\* from Belgium at Methodist Church Hall, Brompton, Northallerton. 7.30p.m.
- 20 R.P.S.; "Impressions" a digital presentation by Nicole Billiau EFIAP,PSA\$\* from Belgium at Lockhart Room, Moothall, Hexham. 7.45p.m.

## **Nov**

- 2 N.C.P.F.; North Tyne Digital Group - AV Evening.
- 3 R.P.S.; "Digital Guide to Night and Low Light Photography" by Tony Worobiec FRPS at Lockhart Room, Moothall, Hexham. 7.45p.m.
- 4 R.P.S.; "Digital Guide to Night and Low Light Photography" by Tony Worobiec FRPS at Mechanic's Institute, Percy Street, Alnwick. 7.30p.m.
- 5 R.P.S.; "Digital Guide to Night and Low Light Photography" by Tony Worobiec FRPS at St.Oswald's Institute, Church Street, Durham. 7.30p.m.
- 6 R.P.S.; "Digital Guide to Night and Low Light Photography" by Tony Worobiec FRPS at Helena Thompson Museum, Park End Road, Workington
- 6-8 R.P.S.; Lake District Weekend with Arnold Hubbard FRPS, Barbie & Russell Lindsay ARPS, Tony Worobiec FRPS
- 13 N.C.P.F.; Presentation Evening.

### **N.C.P.F. Hon.Secretary**

Mr Malcolm Burns APAGB

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