

# The **Bulletin**



Croydon Camera Club - 127 years old - 1890 to 2017

Summer 2017 - Number 195

# The Chairman's View ..... Tom Sherrin

One season over and another about to start. Still everyone's had a month off in which to stockpile lots of exciting images ready for the new season. OK so I probably still believe in fairies, but I do hope that everyone has had a good summer break and is looking forward to what should be an interesting and informative year ahead.

We've had a change of Council members since the last AGM and I'm very, very optimistic about the governance of the club. The new members will hopefully bring forth some new ideas which will enable the club to continue to evolve for the benefit of all its members.

I know that I've said it before but I've been very impressed with the quality and standard of work exhibited by the Standard and Intermediate classes. Keep up the good work and enthusiasm.

At our last AGM it was pointed out that some members of the Council, including myself, were coming to the end of our tenure of office as we can only serve a maximum of 3 years. So, there is no point in waiting until next September (the next AGM) to think about what 'you' can do for the club. Take time during this coming season to explore the various roles within the club, ask questions of current Council members and then hopefully put yourself forward for election. Clubs unfortunately do not run themselves and changes of personnel do bring forth new ideas, which in turn breathes fresh air into the club. This is very well highlighted in Mike Farley's following article 'What is a camera club?'

Everyone should have received next season's programme from Iggy Tavares. The circulated programme only covers the club activities up to the end of January as some bookings still need to be confirmed. When everything is booked/confirmed then a full year's programme will be sent out.

With the programme in mind, it was mentioned at the last AGM that we as a club should consider introducing 'Focus' groups. The idea is that like-minded members arrange to meet up outside of the club to pursue a common facet of photography, whether it be sports, architecture, portraiture, landscapes or nature, it doesn't matter. The idea is to become motivated towards taking photographs. It is hoped that should such focus groups get off the ground then the group could contribute towards a Members Evening by showing other members what they have achieved. I recognise that club evenings don't always satisfy everyone and this is an ideal vehicle to maintain enthusiasm and perhaps increase or retain membership. So, any volunteers to set up one or more focus groups or even to arrange some meet-ups?

One interest/focus group which I would like to see set up as a matter of urgency is a 'How do I use my camera' group. The club is willing if necessary to hire the hall on another evening or even a Saturday to help this group. There are several new members who have new cameras, some still in boxes and dare I say some more experienced members who only use the most basic camera settings who would benefit from a bit of guidance. Not all handbooks or instruction manuals make sense to people, while a helping hand and some basic advice can work wonders. Any volunteers to help start up this group?

The past couple of seasons have produced some excellent long weekends away to the Brecon Beacons, Peak District, Jurassic Coast and Norfolk to name but a few. In September a group are going to Somerset and in October Wally Conquy has arranged a trip to the Lake District. All of the trips we've been on have not only resulted in a sharing of knowledge but added to a sense of belonging and friendship which makes a club all the more special.

For those who have not been on one of these outings it is hoped to return to Somerset next year as well as arranging a trip to Dartmoor. If anyone is interested in taking on the organisation of one of those trips or can make suggestions regarding places to visit and photograph then their help would be very much appreciated.

It would be wrong to end this article without a few mentions. Thank you:

# The Chairman's View ..... Tom Sherrin

Hillary and Wally Conquy for your hospitality in running this year's summer barbeque

Mike Farley for arranging the annual mount board purchase (last date for orders is 30 August)

Steve Brooker for stepping forward and taking over the role of Hon Secretary

Nina Ludwig, Tina Nuthall, Rebecca Clark and Emmanuel Muscat for forming the PHOTO 2018 exhibition committee

Wally Conquy for agreeing to be our SLF (Federation of South London Photographic Societies) representative

Graham Land, Mike Farley and Graham Cluer for their work surrounding the projections of DPI images

Chris Davis for all hours spent sorting out our internal competitions, doing all of our photo copying for us and updating the Competition Rules.

Finally, for next season we will have one exciting and significant change which will make life easier for everyone. That being in regard to the submission of images to our internal DPI competitions.

Currently we send our DPI images to the club's Gmail account. This creates a considerable amount of work for the projectionist, acknowledging entries, sorting out any issues and saving the entries in folders so that they can be loaded the competition software (DiCentra). To minimise the workload and streamline entries, we are replacing the current submission system (Gmail) by utilising an application called 'PhotoEntry'. In summary, members will upload their images to a designated online location hosted in the 'Cloud'. PhotoEntry then validates the images and ensures they are in the correct format for input into DiCentra. When the deadline for submission has passed, all our projectionist then needs to do is download one file into DiCentra and everything will be ready for the competition.

Members will benefit by having greater control of their entries with an easy to use system and can change them at any time up to the cut-off point. A confirmation email will no longer be necessary as members will be able to see what they have loaded. After the competition, the marks will be uploaded to PhotoEntry so everyone can see what their images scored and receive an e-mail with the results. A further advantage is that over the season, everyone will build up a complete record online of their competition entries.

The SLF is introducing the new system for the inter-club competitions it organises and we are one of the first clubs in the area to introduce it for our own internal competitions. As usual, Croydon Camera Club leads the way! Mike Farley has kindly agreed to give a live demonstration of PhotoEntry and answer questions during the Chairman's evening on 6 September. Your attendance that evening will ensure that you will understand the new procedures and be ready for the first DPI competition of the new season. Any further training will be arranged as it is identified along with provision for those members who are not on the internet.

If this trial is successful, we will be looking to use a similar process for our internal print competitions. At present, it can be difficult to see the finer details of prints from the back of the hall as the judge makes their comments. We can resolve this by projecting a digital image of each print (out of view of the judge). This might mean that we will need more projectionists trained up. If that interests you, can you please speak to myself or Mike Farley and we can tell you more. The new system will ensure that there is very little effort involved to set up and run our competitions.

I look forward to seeing everyone back at the club in September.

Tom Sherrin

Chairman

# A tale to eclipse all others.....by Graham Cluer



Top: The Sun's Corona

Bottom: Diamond Ring



# A tale to eclipse all others.....by Graham Cluer

## The best two minutes of my life

...since my honeymoon

I have always wanted to see a total eclipse of the sun. On August 11<sup>th</sup> 1999 there was one visible from Cornwall and northern France and I took my wife – and a family we tended to holiday with – to The Havre to try to see it. Clouds defeated us that time. Then two years ago I was in Iceland where we were treated to a 97% eclipse but there is a world of difference between almost total and absolute totality. When I knew there was going to be an eclipse visible from the States I decided I had to give it a shot.

Solar eclipses go in an 18 year 10 day cycle and so two years ago we booked to be in Nashville on 21<sup>st</sup> August 2017. This town lies in the path of totality and there was a good chance of clear skies at that time of year but nothing was guaranteed. We had some tense days looking at long range weather forecasts in the days before we left home.

All the experts will tell you not to try to photograph the eclipse - just enjoy it. But as a fellow photographer you will understand that the desire to get that one shot was overwhelming so I went equipped. In fact by the time I had packed my suitcase with camera equipment it weighed 16.5 kg and that still left my Canon 7D and telephoto lens in my hand luggage. I would just have to do with only a few clothes.

I had a tracking mount to keep the camera following the sun as the Earth moved beneath it. I was using a 70 – 300 mm L series telephoto lens with a 2 times tele-converter on a sturdy tripod. I also had a Canon 100D and another 300 mm lens on a cheap tripod as a backup and a pocket camera to photograph the general scenes. Shots of the partial phase would be good but I was really after that classic shot of the diamond ring seconds before the sun gets completely covered by the moon and, if possible, a shot of the corona – the atmosphere of the sun which expands thousands of miles into space but is never normally seen as it is so dim compared to the sun's surface (despite being many hundreds of times hotter).

Getting the focus was tricky (manual focus then masking tape to hold it fixed) but the exposure was even more difficult. For the partial phases I went for manual exposure with bracketing giving 5 shots at 1 1/2 stop increments. At least I could practise this at home. But there was no way to practise the exposure for totality. Within a couple of seconds the scene went from sunlight to night time and I needed to be quick. The Internet gave some suggestions for exposure values but this time I bracketed 7 shots at 2 stop increments. The sun's corona varies greatly in brightness and if I wanted to capture all the detail I would need to have photographs at various settings then combine them as a HDR image. The one shown is made from 25 photos with 5 different exposure values.

The experience was stunning. I will tell you all about it at a members' evening in March but here are the final photographs. I know there were about 20 million people, all taking photos, and you will have seen dozens of photos like this but these are MY images and I have to admit that I am pretty pleased with them.



*Graham Cluer will be giving a talk on The Artic & Antartic on Wednesday September 27th. His talk on The Eclipse will be in March 2018, date to be advised.*

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## News

### SUBMITTING DPI IMAGES TO MONTHLY COMPETITIONS TO CHANGE

Entries for the DPI internal monthly competitions will be submitted via PhotoEntry starting from the forthcoming 2017-18 season. Mike Farley will be giving a live demonstration of this new system on Wednesday 6th September at the Chairman's Evening.

### COMPETITION SCORING CHANGED

All competitions will now be scored out of 10 points instead of 12. Certificates will be awarded for 10, 9.5 and 9 points.

Please see the 2017-2018 club competition rules for full details.

### MASTER TROPHY NOW PANEL COMPETITION

The Master Trophy will be a Panel Competition from 2018. Members can enter three DPI's or three Prints (but not a mixture of both) as a themed or un-themed panel. Scoring will be on an aggregate basis with points being awarded for each image and the panel as a whole. A trophy will be given for each discipline.

Please see the 2017-2018 club competition rules for full details.

#### Chairman

Tom Sherrin

#### Vice Chairman

Ron Barker

#### Hon. Secretary

Steve Brooker

### CROYDON CAMERA CLUB COUNCIL

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Iggy Tavares

#### Webmaster

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#### Council Members

Rebecca Clark

Tina Nuthall

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#### Hon. Comp Sec. Bulletin Editor & Archivist

Chris Davis

## Light Into The Shadows — *Mike Farley's regular column that aims to throw a lifeline to those floundering in the mysterious and sometime murky world of camera club photography.*

A shorter than usual article this time, as I want to raise a fundamental issue. I hope that brevity will encourage people to think about the question I am asking.

### **What is a camera club? More specifically, how does that question relate to Croydon Camera Club?**

In one sense, Croydon Camera Club, despite its history going back for more than 125 years, does not exist. Legally, it has no status. That is not an uncommon situation for many clubs, since their size and value of their assets do not merit the expense and hassle of formal registration as a legal entity. In another respect, the club is just a collection of assets. Some money in the bank and the equipment we use when running our meetings.

Either definition, of course, overlook the most important aspect. The club is its members. Nothing more, nothing less. Referring to “the club” in the third person rather misses the point. It is not some faceless organisation. The people who run things, who make “the club” happen are there in person week in and week out. Anyone who wants to talk to them, can do so. Croydon Camera Club most definitely does not have or need a call centre.

So it follows that we are responsible for our own destiny? Yes and no. In respect of the latter response, Croydon Camera Club is a member of two organisations. The main purpose of the Federation of South London Photographic Societies, to give it its full title, is to promote competition between local clubs. The more important membership is of the Surrey Photographic Association, or SPA for short. That in turn is a member of the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain, which is usually abbreviated as the PAGB.

The PAGB is important since it is the umbrella organisation for most of the camera clubs in the UK. Every judge and lecturer who visits the club is registered with their local federation. In our case, that will usually be SPA, but they can also come via the Kent County Photographic Association (KCPA) since we are so close to the boundary of the two. Each federation has lists of the judges and lecturers in its area and bi-annually the PAGB issues a handbook with the details of everyone in the country.

What that does is ensure a certain degree of homogeneity when it comes to evaluating images. There is a style which is often referred to as “camera club photography”. It exists since judges and lecturers are influenced by everyone who has visited their club. Images which do not conform are less likely to be successful in competition. It is self-reinforcing and while much good work is produced, some genres of worthwhile photography are overlooked.

If there are external influences dictating the style of images we produce, that does not affect other aspects in the way the club is run. In short, everything done by “the club” only happens because one or more members are prepared to do it. That has been the way ever since the club started and will continue for as long as the club exists. While some roles are formal, such as chairman, secretary or treasurer, anyone can pitch in with odd tasks here and there. The club’s activities are restricted only by what its members are collectively prepared to do.

Inevitably, some members will have more time and inclination to help with the running of the club. Yet everyone can contribute something if they are willing and even something which is straightforward to do, such as organising an outing, can bring considerable benefit to everyone. A little time or effort on one person’s part can be repaid many times over by the enjoyment of those who participate. It is something to think about?

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