

Photo News

The monthly Newsletter of the
**MARLBOROUGH
CAMERA CLUB**

You may remember from our AGM last year, that we intend to change our Constitutional obligation for a full annual audit to a review by a qualified person. Full audits have become substantially more expensive, and most Community and not-for-profit organisations are taking this same route.

It does mean, however, that we need a Special General Meeting, and a vote, in order to change our Constitution, and this will take place at the start of our meeting on 10th May. It should only take five minutes.

We should be including the relevant section of our Constitution along with the proposed revision in the March issue of Photo News.

If you were at the last Camera Club meeting, and heard Roger Thwaites give his comments on the *Shapes & Tones* competition images that he kindly judged for us, then you will have witnessed one of the best judge's feedback sessions I can remember since joining the club six years ago. Roger's points were carefully explained, made perfect sense, and I am sure that we all found the session both interesting and useful.

I heard several positive comments during supper, and later received an email saying how much the writer had enjoyed the session, and could we do it again. The committee agreed and we will do our best to get more judges along on Club nights.

Trevor



This splendid waterfall image was taken by Chook Searles in the Leatham Valley earlier this year. The Club has a Field trip planned for Leatham Valley on the 18th March. See [page 11](#)

Special General Meeting. Thursday 10th May, St Marys Parish Hall. 7:30pm The Marlborough Camera Club will hold an SGM on the above date in order to vote on a change to our Constitution.

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PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Trevor Dennis

You have probably heard that we have been asked to run the PSNZ National Convention in 2014, and will almost certainly say yes. But we will need a good team to make it work. Those Club members involved when we ran NATEX for the Nelson club two years ago, will know how interesting the experience was. So please think about coming on board.

Our last trip to the **Leatham Valley** was in August 2007, and one of the most memorable field trips I have been on. It is a proper four-wheel-drive trip and includes a decent river crossing, (see pictures below).

The track is very narrow in places, and the drop severe. It was at one of the very worst of these narrow tracks, with a terrifying drop off, that Rachel met four lads in a small Suzuki 4x4 coming the other way as we headed for home. Sue Clifford refused to stay in the vehicle and got out and walked. Rachel tucked her big ute as far up the bank as she could, and the lads braved the drop with their

outside wheels inches from oblivion!

But scary driving conditions aside, it is one of the best locations we've been to on a field trip, so try not to miss it. More details on [page 11](#)

Unfortunately I was not able to attend Gavin's workshop on using Cokin type filters, but I understand it was well received. It took me a while to get into using GND (Graduated Neutral Density) filters, mainly because I was already coping with high dynamic ranges by combining multiple exposures, but I am now a committed convert to their use.

My journey into using filters has not been without the odd bump on the road though — a variable ND filter I bought from TradeMe, and which was made in China, worked ok at its lower settings, but wreaked havoc with my photographs at anything above four stops of attenuation. That experience convinced me how important it is to use only good quality filters — why would you spend a small

Continued next page



(Left) Roger negotiates the bank in the center of a Leatham Valley river, while passenger David Brinn prays he won't have to get out and push. (Right) Roger crossing the second stretch of water (it was not deep, but the current was quite strong). Rachel Marfell, with passenger Sue Clifford, brings up the rear. Let's hope Rachel's husband Richard does not read Photo News.

fortune on a lens only to ruin its performance by placing poor quality glass in front of it?

I was further convinced after reading a series of articles on the [Lens Rentals](#) website. They must have had time on their hands, because one of their techs decided to compare a large stack of cheap filters with an equally large stack of quality filters. The two images below show a very marked difference!

So I now use 100mm [Formatt Hitech](#) resin filters which are made in England. Their eight stop ND filter is like looking through a welding mask, but my cameras are able to meter through it, and pictures taken through them are completely free of any colour casts or vignettes.

Formatt filters often appear on TradeMe, but with huge mark ups, so they are best sourced direct from the UK. There is usually a waiting list though.

Formatt filters occupy the middle ground quality wise. If you want to really push the boat out consider [Lee Filters](#) but be warned, they are twice the price, and there is a six month backlog on orders.

Most of my photography is done using a pair of Canon 1D bodies, but they are big and heavy, and it can be tiring carrying them around all day. My wife Chris took over my little G10 (as

mentioned in [Photo News June 2011](#)) and I've really missed its convenience. Two Club members have the later G12 which has some impressive features (articulated LCD and full 1080p video). Well Canon have just bought out a similar camera but with a larger sensor, called the [G1X](#), which has amazing low light performance for a compact camera, so I have bought one as a carry around camera and for holidays. It is going to be a relief leaving the big camera bag at home.

Driving home along Hammerichs road last week I saw a large group of workmen laying a thick green cable. So I stopped to chat, and as I'd hoped, the cable is fibre optic for Ultra Fast Broadband. It will go to Rapaura School first, but will be connected to the telecom cabinet at the end of our road later this year. This is much sooner than we'd hoped, and I understand Blenheim is also scheduled for UFB. Yeah!!!

Trevor



It took two tractors to pull the cable laying machine through the ground

Budget Filter Stack

Quality Filter Stack





LOOKING FOR WAYS TO DO IT DIFFERENTLY

By *Roger Thwaites*, APSNZ

How many times do we hear comments about photos, that indicate that the viewer has seen the same subject a number of times in different competitions/salons or exhibitions? A common occurrence of this happens a lot in 'bird' photographs, where the bird is soaring on the wing, and whilst the bird has been captured beautifully in a nice horizontal glide, it lacks anything else of special interest to keep the viewer 'engaged', because the viewer has seen it all before. Not only that, the same image or images, do the rounds of all the competitions until everyone starts to tire of them, and passes them by without so much as a cursory glance. The real challenge is, to go out and produce 'new' photos with a fresh approach to the subject matter, whether it

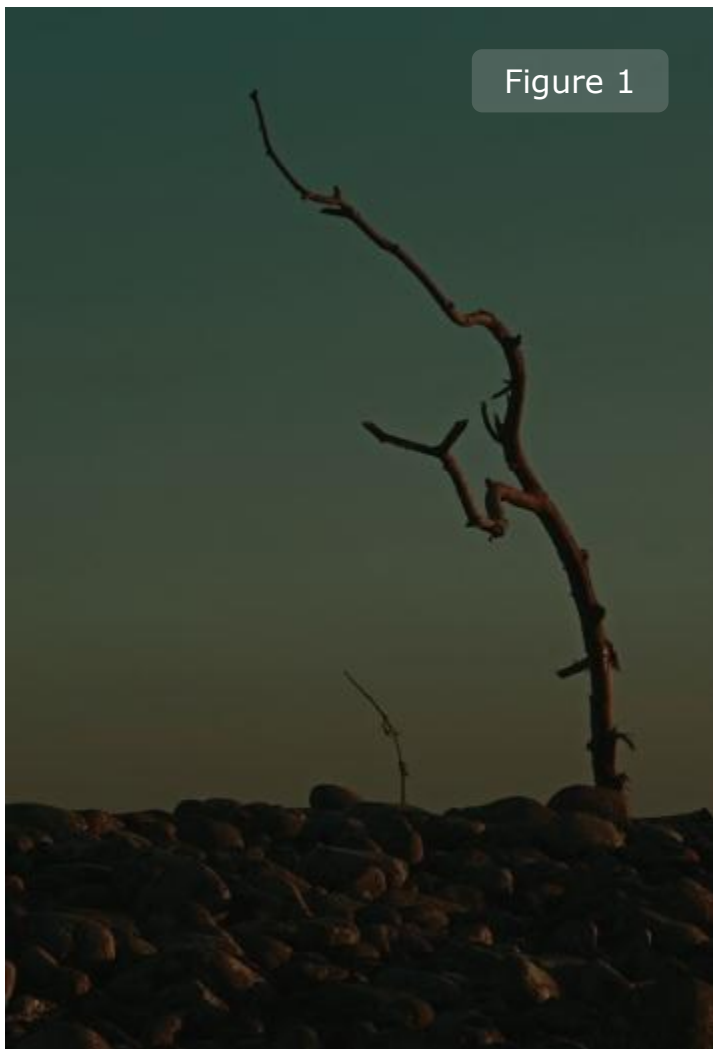
be by using more dramatic lighting, or just simply changing the composition to something that is different and more creative, etc.

There is nothing wrong with copying someone else's photo subject, but at least try and do something different with it, even if it is just changing the camera angle, so that the subject is presented on a different plane. A different approach with the lighting of the subject, may also add a special effect. Think about how you can capture a subject so that it presents a completely different view, of it. It is about putting your personal creative 'stamp' on an image that may have been done a dozen times before, only this time, you are creating something that has your special 'brand' on it.

Check out some of the photography books and magazines, and see if you can recognise some of the individual 'styles of photography' that some of the 'higher profile' photographers have produced. There is usually a 'pattern' or 'method' that they use that people viewing their photos are familiar with.

Creating one's own "style" of photography is not an easy matter. It takes a lot of thought and commitment, as well as considerable skill and flair with the camera. It doesn't stop there! There are other very 'involved' skills such as 'computer post-production', and 'publishing opportunities', that could be used to take your photography to a higher level still.

The thing about developing one's own photographic style is that it is seldom one of those things that you can decide to do on a whim. It usually 'develops & grows' from a particular 'interest' or 'passion' that the photographer has about one or more branches of photography that he or she, is deeply interested in.



Over the years and during some of my judging assignments, I have managed to identify a few photographers who have an unmistakable "signature" that indicates their style of photography, and nearly always, it is like looking at a group of photos that you know, have been produced by the same person.

With the 'switch' to digital photography, a greater number of photographers are now taking the opportunity to enter the different competitions, which means that if the more 'commonly photographed' subjects are to succeed, they either need to be exceptionally well executed, or need to be approached in quite a different way to the usual. I have a little motto that helps me greatly when I want to do something different to a photo composition: SLT SEE-LOOK-THINK. You SEE something. You LOOK at it carefully and study the elements. You THINK about how you can best put the



Figure 2

composition of the elements together and what camera settings are needed to make a great image. Try to keep your compositions as simple as possible. (Most strong images are created with 'simplicity' in mind). Have a look at the simplicity, and strong contrasts of light, in the photo of the Nelson Boulder Bank ([FIG.1](#)). The other examples are of the vineyards, at Seaview, Seddon, and are Autumn images of the rows of vines. FIG.2, Shows a different approach to portraying the vines, to what is normally seen, and it makes a huge difference if you can include interesting rolling country in the background (I'm sure you could all make a better job of this one, than I!!). Then, with FIG 3, we have the 'posturised' version of the vineyards, which has been manipulated in Photoshop Elements, and although none of these images are very special, they do give you an idea what you can do if you dare to 'look for ways to do it differently'.

Roger



Figure 3

ONLINE PHOTOGRAPHY MAGAZINES

F-STOP
A PHOTOGRAPHY MAGAZINE

Underwater Photography

Digital Photo

Photographer



Nature Photographers

ePHOTOzine
10 YEAR ANNIVERSARY: 2001-2011



photo
technique



DIGITAL... *A monthly column by Harry Matthews*

USING YOUR PHOTOGRAPHS

What happens to your photographs after you've taken that first look? Is sharing them, or showing them to others important for you? Here are some thoughts on traditional and modern ways of sharing photographs effectively.

How should I share my photographs?

Digital photography has exacerbated the biggest issue with sharing photographs. Maybe the days of trays of 35 mm slides have passed for most of us but the tedium of sitting through seemingly hundreds of snapshots of someone else's holiday has become unacceptable. I recently received a CD of photographs of people on a 3-week tour that we enjoyed. He had included everything, almost 500 shots; I did skip through them, but Lorraine, who was also on the trip, has been too busy. I think there are some good shots in there but they are hard to find and appreciate among all the forgettable ones. I would have so much preferred to receive 10 or 20 of his best shots and Lorraine would have enjoyed them, too. I wonder how many others in our group received a copy of the CD and how few have actually ploughed through them.

When Ansell Adams was taking negatives on A4-sized glass plates, every image was valuable. Some modern photographers still work that way (one location; one shot) but some of us snap away until we get what we want or even just in the hope that some will turn out well. Probably most Camera Club members are somewhere between these extremes. I'm all for experimenting and trying different angles, approaches, exposures and techniques but they are for my benefit as a developing photographer, not for imposing on others.

So, the main message is:

"Cull dramatically before presenting your photographs".

Do not simply take your memory card to a chemist, print everything, load all the prints into an album and show it to your friends and relations. Even worse, do not sit your audience in front of a TV (let alone a computer monitor) and plough through almost every single shot.

Just how far to cull is a personal judgment. My rule of thumb is to have

I'm writing this in the Chilean fjords on a ship. Here's a shot of a local inhabitant.



two or three sets. The first set is for showing to anyone and is usually about 5 to 8 images even from a memorable month-long trip and thousands of exposures. Another approach is to make a video with multiple images in sequence and blended together with music. I have seen some excellent examples of this genre but sometimes they just look like a way to use up mediocre images.

Often, on seeing the best half-dozen images, viewers will ask for more and I do prepare an additional set, of around 30 images, that are interesting and technically sound. For long interesting "shoots", such as a month-long African safari, I will prepare a third set which is like the second set but expanded up to about 100 images.

Personally, I like to look at prints. Currently, I take about 30 images, from a long "shoot", print them individually on A4 paper and put them into a simple album with one print to an opening and a caption to accompany each print. I show these albums locally to anyone who will look at them and they are usually appreciated. I also enter prints into Club competitions and hang prints in our house (sometimes in defiance of the competition judge's comments!).

For a more distant audience, I use the Internet. There are good commercial (but free to use) image-sharing sites such as Flickr, where the Marlborough Camera Club has a site. If you use the free image processing program from Google (Picassa) then it has an easy-to-use Web site. For my personal images, I have chosen to register my own domain, "harrymatthews.name", and use this for my on-line albums. It ends with .name rather than .com or .org or .co.nz because I have no aspiration to make money, I'm not a company nor an organisation, just an individual. The .name top level domain was created for individuals. I wrote my own program for this site but that is not necessary. Lightroom, for example, has several much prettier templates for posting images to a Web site. I also occasionally share individual photographs through Twitter (@HarryRM42) or as attachments to email.

I saved the most important point till last. Do show your photographs to others: family, friends, Club members etc. Enter Club and other competitions. Join a print circle. Share your photographic experiences.

Harry

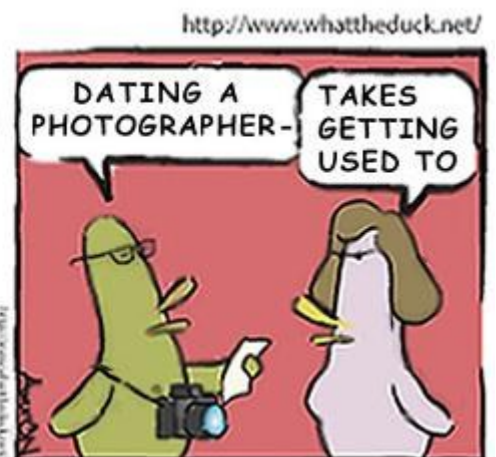
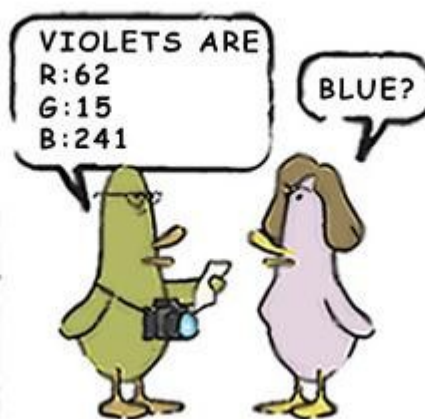


It is said that:

A good photographer takes one hundred pictures and keeps ten. But a great photographer takes one hundred pictures and keeps one!



What The Duck



<http://www.whattheduck.net/>



Pano Planets

Trevor Dennis

The set subject for our next competition hand in is Creative, so here is a fun and easy way to create something different. You will need Photoshop, but any version will do.

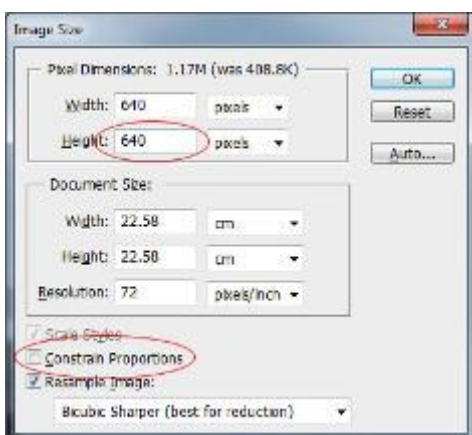
This works best with panoramic images, but if you don't have one, you can crop a regular aspect ratio image to be at least twice as wide as it is high. I started with this Shanghai cityscape:



And cropped down to this:



You then need to stretch the image so it is a perfect square. Open the Image size window; uncheck 'Constrain Proportions', and make the height value the same as the width:



Now turn your square image upside down by using:

Image > Image Rotation > 180°

The next step is to go

Filter > Distort > Polar Coordinates

Making sure you have 'Rectangular to Polar' checked:



And that's about it. You should have something like the picture below. Rotate it, fine tune, and sharpen.

(Click on the images for larger size)



'Shapes & Tones
Judged by Roger Thwaites

Prints — A Grade

Honours

Owen Dunne Potty

Merit

Carolyn Hope Paper Square
Peter Bargh Shapes & Tones

Projected Images — A Grade

Honours

Carolyn Hope Threesome
Robyn Carter Light

Merit

Owen Dunne Diffusion
Robyn Carter Five Moons
Window of Light Lindie Henry
Mary-Anne Reinke Center Piece

Projected Images — B Grade

Honours

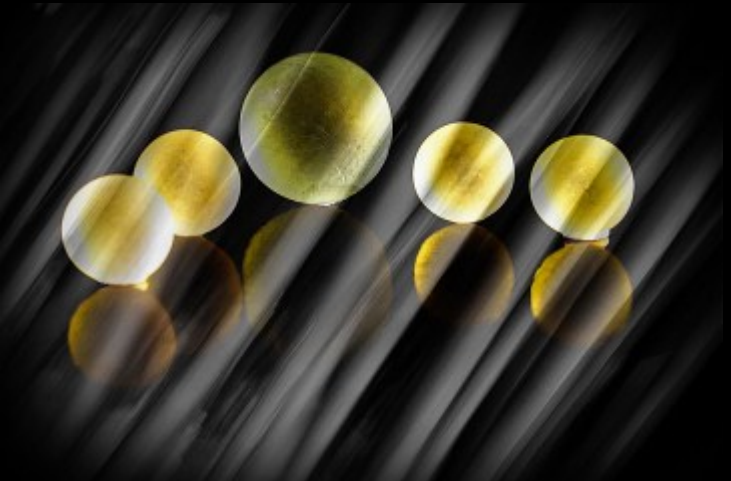
Rod Wegener Center Piece

Merit

Will Parsons Steel
Rod Wegener Weight
Trish Smith Reflective Shapes of
Marlborough



Threesome by Carolyn Hope



Five Moons by Robyn Carter



Light by Robyn Carter



Diffusion by Owen Dunne

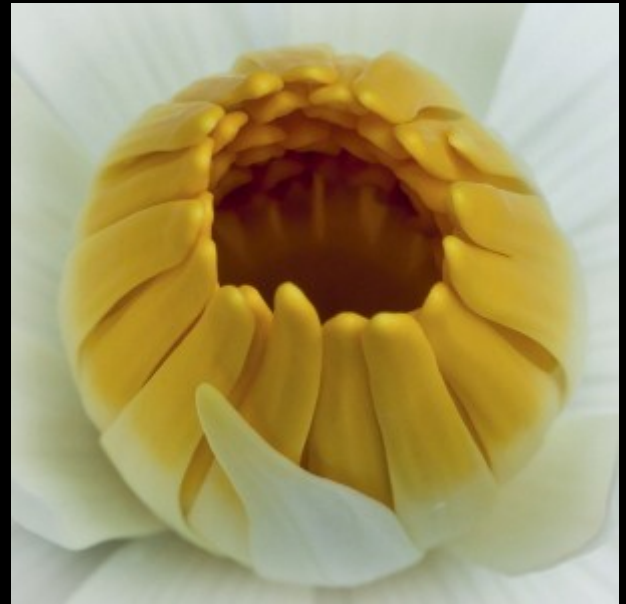


Competition Results

And Club Member's achievements in
National Competitions & photographic salons



Window of Light by *Lyndie Henry*



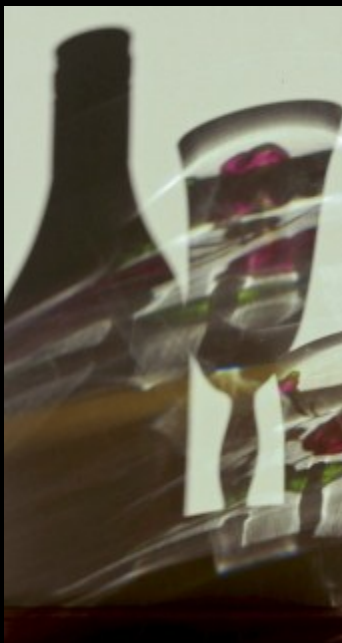
Center Piece by *Mary-Anne Reinke*



Airo by *Rod Wegener*



Steel by *Will Parsons*



Reflective Shapes of Marlborough
by *Trish Smith*



Weight by *Rod Wegener*

NEXT MEETING: Thursday 8th March 2012
at St Mary's Parish Hall, Blenheim, starting
at 7.30pm, doors open by 7:00pm

What's on:

Results of — Water / Open

Hand In — **Creative / Open**

7:30 Club announcements

7:40 Competition results and Judge's
comments

8:30 Robyn Carter — Europe trip

Please Stack Your Chairs

Before Supper

Leatham Valley update

Just before putting out this issue of Photo News, I received an update regarding Leatham valley from club member Helen Horton who'd been up there the same day with the Four Wheel drive club. They went right up to the head of the valley, but most significantly from our point of view, Helen said that the river crossings were quite hairy, and that some of the vehicles had to be towed through. You can see the tow rope wound round the spare wheel in the shot below.

We'll have a contingency ready in case recent rain makes our trip untenable, but if we go, it should be an adventure, and there are likely to be as many photo opportunities at the river crossings as landscapes when we get there.



Field Trips

Sunday 18th March — Leatham Valley.

This is strictly four wheel drive, but we should have enough vehicles between us. Meet at the railway station at 8:00am. Bring food, drink, and insect repellent.

See comments on [page 2](#)

We are hosting the Nelson Marlborough Challenge this year, on the 19th May at St Marys. While Blenheim often boasts more sunshine hours than Nelson, we have never managed to beat them in the Challenge, so as always, we want your best images available for selection.

The selection will take place at our fourth Thursday workshop meeting on 22nd March. We need 25 images altogether, with a maximum of 15 being either prints or projected. We would prefer 15 prints and 10 PIs. We don't need the prints until the 22nd, but it would help if we had the digital images by the previous weekend in order to get them sorted and loaded.

So if you have a print or PI that has done well in competitions, or that you are particularly proud of, and it has not been used in a previous challenge, please make it available for the selection.

While the changes to our competition rules have gone a long way to answering the points raised by Club members, we are aware that there is still work to be done. At the top of our list is the introduction of a third grade for people who would like to get feedback on their images, but are reluctant to put their work up against existing B Grade images. With the way standards have increased in the last two years, we can see why that might be.

We are also looking at how Club members advance through the Grades, so expect changes here as well. This might not happen until the start of the next competition year.

Top Shots

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Upcoming Events



Nelson Marlborough Challenge
Selection of our Club's set.
Thursday 24th March — St Mary's at 7:30pm

Bring
your
images for
selection



2012 **National Convention**
Southern Focus
25th — 29th April
Hosted by the
Southland Photographic Society

[Online
Registration](#)
(preferred)
Or download
and mail
[Registration
Form](#)



[Promotional Video](#)



Going For Honours
The PSNZ now has new guidelines
available for download

[Click here to
Download](#)



For more news and information visit the PSNZ site
www.photography.org.nz/welcome.htm

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