

Photo News

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF THE
**MARLBOROUGH
CAMERA CLUB**

August 2011

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You'll notice that we have a new layout in this issue of Photo News, and one that I hope will make it easier on the eye. This has come about after watching a [video tutorial](#) on using Type in Photoshop, and being reminded that serif fonts are not necessarily the best choice for an online publication, and that some fonts are designed specifically for reading on a computer screen. I'd be pleased to hear any feedback — good or bad — as there is no point in taking a direction that might even make things worse.

What would be really nice is if we can inspire some of you to send in items for future issues of Photo News. If you have been on a special trip, or have a picture with an interesting story behind it, then send me the words and pictures, and I'll do the rest.

We have a new trophy that will awarded for best Natural History projected image. Details on page 13.

We are still taking orders for polo shirts with the Club logo embroidered on them. We'd love to see a flood of club members dressed in these shirts at events like the Seddon Shields, so please go straight to page 14 and place your order.

Trevor



Ghost Ship by David Brinn, that gained a Merit in last months Creative competition

HEY, REMEMBER ME?! SO THIS IS HOW YOU TREAT THE ONE WHO SERVED YOU FAITHFULLY FOR DECADES?!



BANISHED TO THE CLOSET FOR SOME FLOOZY WITH A PREVIEW SCREEN!! GOODBYE, CRUEL WORLD!



PSSST. HE'S BEEN GETTING INTO THE CHEMICALS AGAIN.





PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Trevor Dennis

It's just a few months until our AGM, and an opportunity for some of our newer members to be involved in how the camera club is run by coming on the committee. It is easily the most fun of the committees I am on, and we always manage to find something to laugh about while sorting out camera club business.

We will also be looking for someone to take over from Fred as our treasurer. That person would not go straight into the role, but would work along side Fred until they were ready for the handover. Fred has streamlined our finances during his reign as treasurer, and a lot of the work is now done on-line. This includes the authorisation of payments previously made by cheque, which has bypassed the often difficult task of getting cheques countersigned.

Owen Dunne and myself went to Nelson for the [Bret Lucas](#) Lighting Workshop a couple of weekends back, and what an experience it was. I have owned reasonable lighting equipment for some years, but Bret gave my abilities with that kit a quantum leap telling us things I doubt I would ever have picked up from either my own experience or research. Bret is just that into his lighting.

He told us a story about spotting some shadows in his home's hallway that he did not understand, so he stood there for a full twenty minutes until he had worked it out. The answer had to do with Shadow Edge Transfer, (the width of the transition from shadow to highlight) SET is dependant on the size of the light source, and Bret's problem shadow had an SET that differed between its vertical and horizontal sizes. The answer turned out to be that the light source in this case was a strip light, so was effectively bigger in one direction (its length) to the other (its width). You have to take a person seriously when they are that obsessed with their subject.

The picture of Cait (Bret's daughter) on this page was one I took using lighting Bret set up, and is far better than any previous studio portrait I have taken.

So this brings us to our own Lighting workshop being held on Sunday 21st August at the Croquet Club hall off Brooklyn Drive ([MAP](#))

Cait, taken at the Bret Lucas lighting workshop in Nelson



starting at 9:00am. We'll be asking for a gold coin donation towards the hall hire.

The problem is we don't all own the sort of equipment Bret uses, so we are going to focus our workshop on what can be done with speed lights and basic equipment cheaply available from TradeMe. It is going to be an interactive workshop so you'll need to bring your camera gear, and we will be showing off our pictures at the fourth Thursday meeting at St Marys on the 25th August.

Our meeting on the 25th will also be about how we can improve our pictures using Photoshop — similar to the meetings Owen ran but Owen was using Lightroom. Photoshop has far more options available to edit our pictures, and I hope to demonstrate some of them. We'll need some of your pictures to work on, so please send them to me before the 25th. Or we could use images from the our lighting workshop.



MAYHEM MISHAPS & MISADVENTURE

By *Roger Thwaites*, APSNZ

Looks like a title more applicable to a best-selling thriller novel! But no!....It refers to the photographic problems that occur in competition entries. Over recent years, I have had the privilege of judging competitions for camera clubs throughout New Zealand, and it occurred to me, that many of the photographs I have looked at, present with the same problems time and time again, and I thought it might be helpful to share some of them with you.

Some photo problems (which I refer to as 'Hiccups'), seemingly happened on a regular basis, and I began to investigate why this was happening. First of all, my thinking was "why are these photographers continuing to repeat their mistakes, especially after I had flagged up the problem to them, in my competition commentary?" And then it dawned on me, that a lot of newer club members were 'coming on board' and were entering the competitions, and they were just doing the same as everyone else had done, before them!

The following, are a selection of some of the more common photographic 'hiccups' that occur, and some of the ways they can be resolved (they are in no special order of importance):

SLOPING HORIZONS: This is quite common, and more especially when the sea is used as the horizon. It's only a small problem, but it can appear as a major distracting influence which can upset the balance of an image. Take a moment to check out the horizon in the viewfinder before you press the shutter button and take steps to tilt the camera, so the horizon is straight again. You will find a tripod useful for this.

BACKGROUNDS: In the 'heat of the moment' of taking a photo, the background is often overlooked, and some ugly clutter, or busy looking shapes or textures, can appear and severely weaken your image. Background distractions present themselves in so many ways, and it is something that you need to be constantly aware of. Take a moment (before you press the shutter button) to look around the perimeter of the viewfinder, for anything that shouldn't be there. Taking this step, may pay dividends for you! Backgrounds, spoil more images, than any other single thing.

PLACEMENT OF THE SUBJECT WITHIN THE FRAME: 'People' shots often have a leg or and arm extending outside of the frame, not to mention the tops of people's heads, etc. touching the edge of the photo frame. It can be visually very distracting, and can have a 'jarring' effect that interrupts the visual flow of your image. Allowing some space around your subject, will ensure that limbs, heads etc. do not extend out of, or too near to the border of your picture frame. This could be applied to other types of subjects as well.

LACK OF SHARP FOCUS: Sharp focus is a fairly basic requirement in photography, but you would be shocked at the number of images that lack sharpness. Landscapes, and close-up images, are a couple of areas where the subject should be pin-sharp. Basic Landscapes in particular, should have a depth of field that ensures that the landscape is sharp throughout. With Close-ups there can be so little depth of field, so it is really important to decide which part should be in focus and make it pin-sharp. With portraits, it is the eyes, where sharp focus is so important. There are of course, some subjects where the intent is, to give a special effect, and accordingly parts of the image are intentionally out of focus.

continued

DISTRACTING INFLUENCES: Besides those mentioned in 'Backgrounds', there are things like Distracting elements which compete with, and overpower, the main subject in a composition. There are other distractions that visually dominate images, to the point where they tend to overwhelm the main subject, and are not complimentary to it. The elements of any image should work together, to give an overall visual harmony, without any single element 'jarring' with the rest. It is at the 'Composition' stage, or when the image is created in the mind's eye, that you should be aware of any distracting influences, and move to exclude them. A distracting influence can be a visual disaster, and severely degrade your image.

SQUEEZING TOO MUCH INTO THE PICTURE: This is a problem that is quite common, particularly with newer photographers. When you see a great scene in front of you, it is very tempting to try to get everything you see, into your image. Unfortunately, this approach does not make a very good competition photo, and it is seen by the judge, as more of a 'Record' shot of the location, or the subject matter. Adopting a more creative approach, and being more selective by just taking a part of the scene in front of you, and making that your image, will pay dividends. SIMPLICITY of the compositional layout of your photo can also make your image much stronger, visually.

The conclusion is that, the three "M"s referred to in the title, can be applicable to our own photography if we fail to take a few steps to prevent some of the obvious photographic problems mentioned, from becoming an issue.



FIG.1 shows an image where too much of the scene was included, which meant that the rather dominant 'tower' feature in the background acts as a distraction, with too much of the pool showing in the foreground, and no particular focal point for the viewer to latch on to.

Whereas, in **FIG 2**, the composition is simplified and the boy in the bubble fills the frame more, adding greater interest to the image, with fewer distractions in the background.





Correcting Colour

Some of my photos are criticized for having a “colour cast” which means that all the colours in the image are shifted, for example towards blue as in Figure 1. Sometimes I had already felt uncomfortable with the colours, sometimes not. There are several different ways to correct or change the colours in an image, especially if you are working with the RAW file. If your camera doesn't provide RAW files, you will be able to use some of the adjustments I discuss, but the range of adjustment will be less than with the RAW file. I am going to use Adobe Lightroom 3 for this discussion, but Adobe Camera RAW (ACR) in Photoshop CS or Elements as well as the RAW processing programs that come with cameras will make similar adjustments. This month is just an overview.

How can I detect and correct a colour cast?

First, colours are notoriously difficult to match between monitors and between monitors and printers or projectors. My monitor is calibrated but I need to redo the calibration because I just moved the monitor to a different environment. I've exaggerated some of the colours in the examples, to help with the calibration problem, so you should be able to see what I am doing. One way to identify a colour cast, especially in a non-calibrated environment, is to look at the suspect image in a collage with images known to have good colour. If there is a colour cast, it should stand out.

Figure 1 shows an image taken in Petra, Jordan, of a camel driver apparently talking to his camel. The image looks too blue. The white balance setting in Lightroom is “Auto” but the image looks too “cold” with this setting. What are the options for improving this image?

Figure 1 shows an image taken in Petra, Jordan, of a camel driver apparently talking to his camel. The image looks too blue. The white balance setting in Lightroom is “Auto” but the image looks too “cold” with this setting. What are the options for improving this image?

In the develop module of Lightroom, there is a White Balance control, labeled just “WB:” near the top of the Basic panel. Changing the white balance to “Daylight” produces much warmer colours, Figure 2. Changing the white balance to Shade is warmer still, Figure 3. You can also change the white balance manually with the Temp and Tint sliders. Figure 4 shows the result of changing the “Temp” slider from 3100 (the value in Figure 1) to 4500.

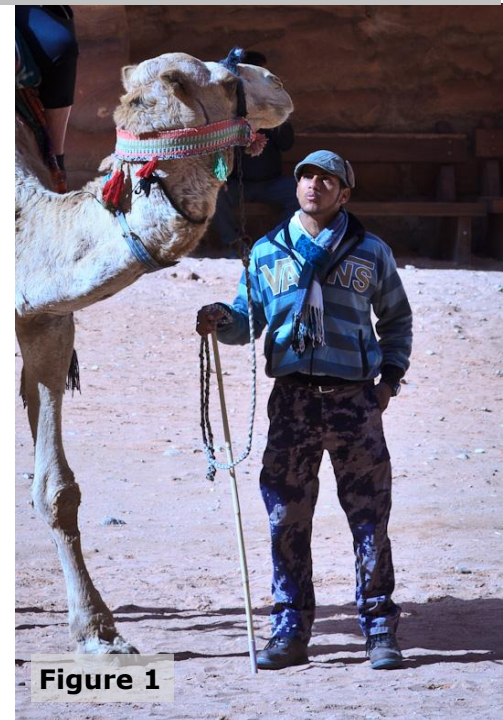


Figure 1

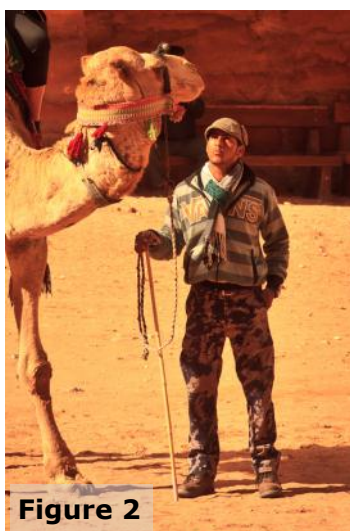


Figure 2

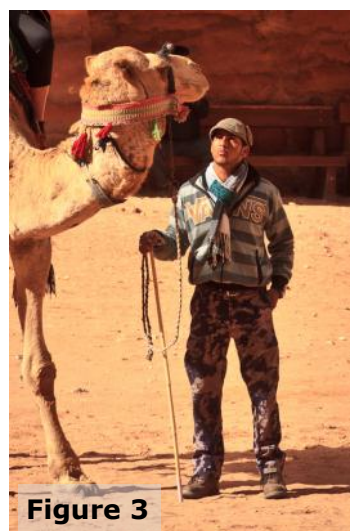


Figure 3

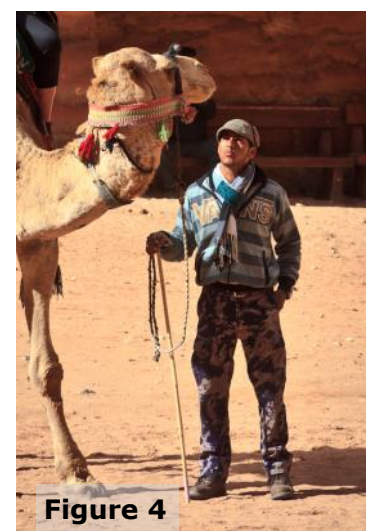


Figure 4

(The "Tint" slider is useful for correcting the relatively common magenta colour cast but is not needed with figure 1.)

The Camera Calibration setting (at the very bottom of the right-hand panels in Lightroom) also affects the colours in your image. The "Profile" options include the picture settings on the camera, such as "portrait" or "landscape", and an Adobe "standard". These effects are more subtle but, for example, Adobe standard (figure 5) is less saturated than camera landscape (figure 2) (look at the camel's red tassels).

The Camera Calibration panel also includes a useful "Shadows/Tint" slider that adjusts the colour of the shadows. Figure 6 shows a late evening shot of the Nile River with a thin belt of greenery separating the River from the arid desert. The colours are very muted, as befits the time of day, especially in the belt of greenery, which is in deep shade. I moved the Shadows/Tint slider towards green pulling out some of the green colour in the green belt area, Figure 7, without affecting the brighter water or sky.

Finally, a glimpse of the very powerful "HSL/Color/B & W" panel, below the histogram panel. There is a small dot inside a circle (like a target) near the top left-hand corner of the panel. With the "Saturation" option selected, I clicked on the "target" symbol and then moved the mouse pointer to the sky near the horizon and dragged the pointer towards the top of the image. This increases the saturation of just those colours present where the mouse pointer started. The result, with a little crop off the top, a tweak of the Tone Curve, and brightening the boat with the adjustment brush, is shown in figure 8 where the colour in the sky is more saturated.

There is more to the "HSL/Color/B & W" panel but that will have to wait for another column. I hope this quick overview has been helpful with addressing the colour cast issue.

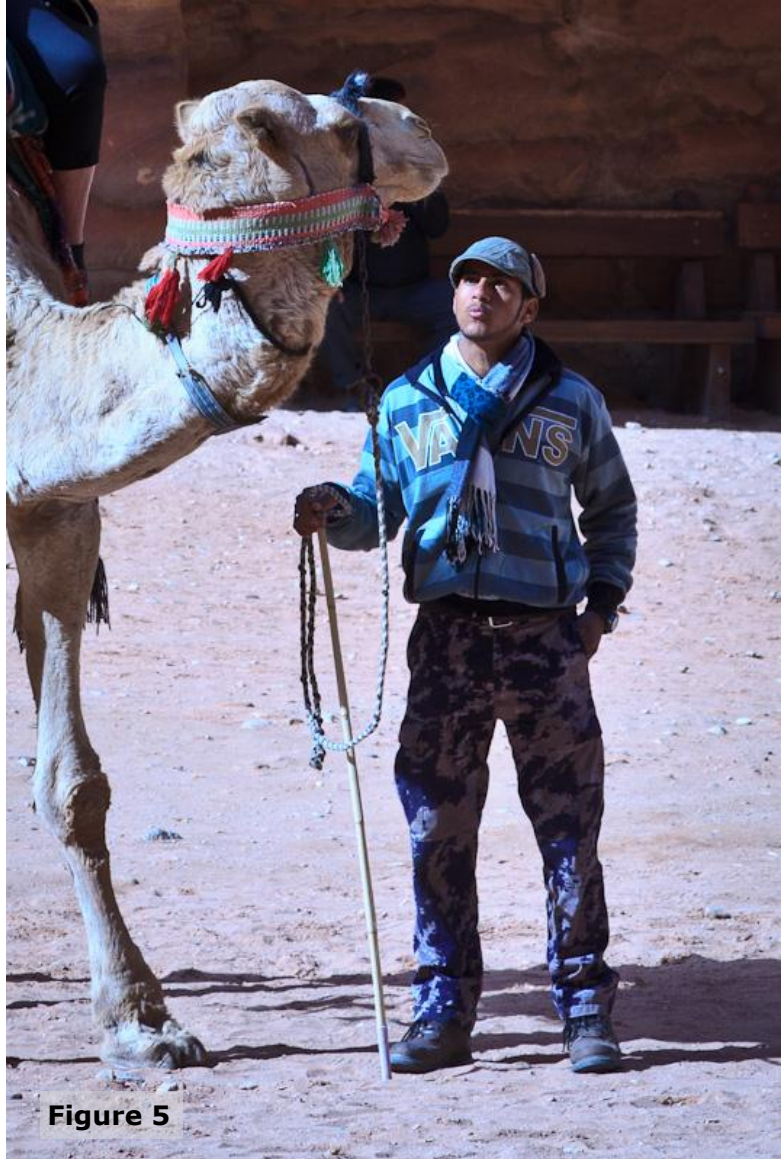
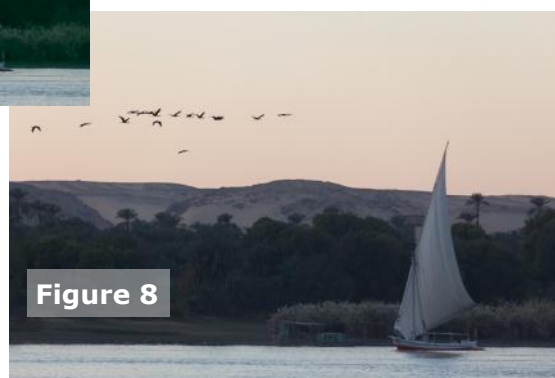
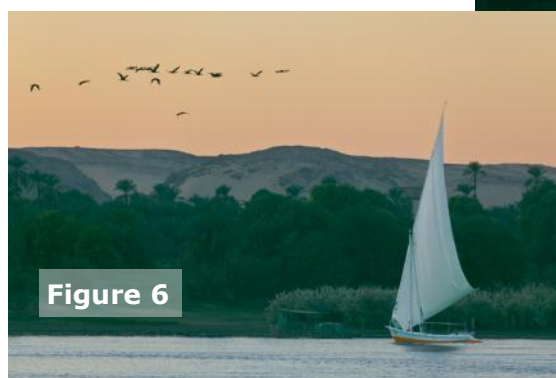
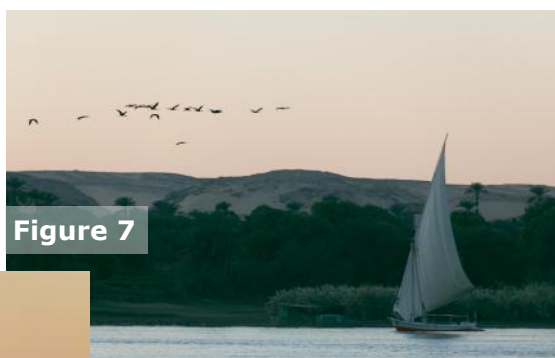


Figure 5

Harry



I've often thought that for all the mountains that surround our valley, we are surprisingly short of easily accessible high vantage points from which to take photographs. There is the cemetery at Tua Marina, and the easy walk up to the Rotary tower on the Withers, but other than that, what is there? So I have been eagerly awaiting the opening of the new four floor car park behind the council offices in Alfred Street, and spent an hour on the top floor this week.

On the evening that I went, the top floor was not accessible to motor vehicles, and I had to park on the floor below. There is an interesting story about the reason for this. It seems that complaints were made about how rough the concrete surface was, and the contractor was asked to bring in a polishing machine. Unfortunately, the ramp to the top floor is open to the elements, and was dangerously slippery after one of our morning frosts, so the contractor had to bring in another machine to re-roughen the surface. Strange but true.

With such a large footprint, the car park offers a good selection of angles, from the town CBD with the Withers behind it, to the Marlborough Clubs from the north east corner, and Alfred Street from the north west corner. It was a wee bit chilly when I was there, but the ramp will be finished by now, and you can sit in your cars while waiting for the light.

Trevor

Looking west up Alfred Street taken from the north west corner of the car park.



The Marlborough Council offices in the foreground, and the court house behind. The light was not perfect when I was there because of the low cloud, but I bet there'll be some spectacular sunsets to be taken from the car park in the weeks to come.



NIGHT PHOTOGRAPHY — PICTON

Saturday 6th August

by Trevor

Flickr never really got off the ground as a medium for club members to network, but where flickr failed, Facebook seems to have taken off and has become a popular place for local Photographers to interact.

The place to go is the Facebook group started by club member Gavin Newell, which is aptly called, Marlborough Photographers It was in this group that Gavin floated the idea for a night photography shoot, and that shoot took place on Saturday in Picton, when about a dozen, mostly camera club members, turned up to enjoy the fun, and hopefully learn a trick or two.

We started at Gavin's house, and after discussing the basics of how to work out the exposure in very low light, we headed for Karaka Point beyond Waikawa, and walked to the end of the point to catch the sunset across Queen Charlotte Sound. With the light fading fast, we headed back to the Picton foreshore, and soon found things to aim a camera at.

If there was one thing that stood out from our night shoot, it was the power of getting together and networking. One person told me he had learned 'a sh#t load tonight!', and I learned an invaluable point about flare and its relationship to aperture size, (thanks Gavin).

Gavin had also taken the trouble of producing a crib sheet that helped you work out long exposures after taking a test shot using a wide aperture and high ISO, and working back to smaller apertures and low ISO settings.

Try these Internet links for more inspiration on long exposure and night photography: [Images-1](#)
[Images-2](#) [A variation of Gavin's long exposure technique](#)

An HDR treatment of the sun setting over Queen Charlotte Sound

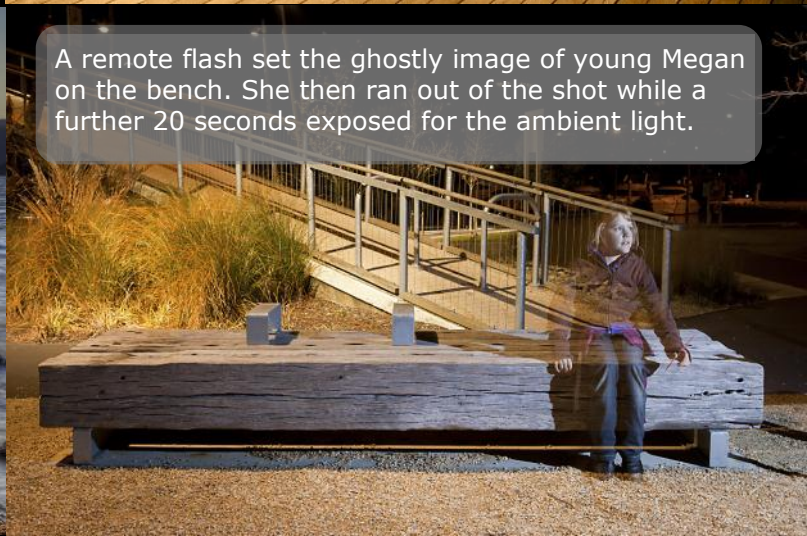


Two pictures of the Picton foreshore both by Gavin Newell. It was Gavin who started our interest in night photography, so good on him.



Taking a fun approach to night photography. You can see two ghostly images of myself as I moved through a 30 second exposure writing 'Picton' with a torch.

A remote flash set the ghostly image of young Megan on the bench. She then ran out of the shot while a further 20 seconds exposed for the ambient light.



Field Trip Report – Lake Rotoiti

17th July

The weekend before our scheduled Field Trip to Lake Rotoiti, the entire area had been snowed in with chains required from the Wairau Valley township onwards, so we were looking forward to some snow capped mountains and crisp clear winter air. We were not disappointed. The turn out was particularly good considering the distance, and a convoy of vehicles set out from the station car park just after a cold 8:00am. I had to follow on later.

One stop was made just short of St Arnaud to photograph a roadside tarn with its perfectly smooth waters which made for beautiful reflections of the snow capped mountains across the lake.

At the lake one group set off around the lake side path, while others stayed by the boat ramps to watch the fun. The Kiwi Experience bus was in the car park, and several of the young tourists had been tempted into diving off the jetty.

After morning break, most people drove

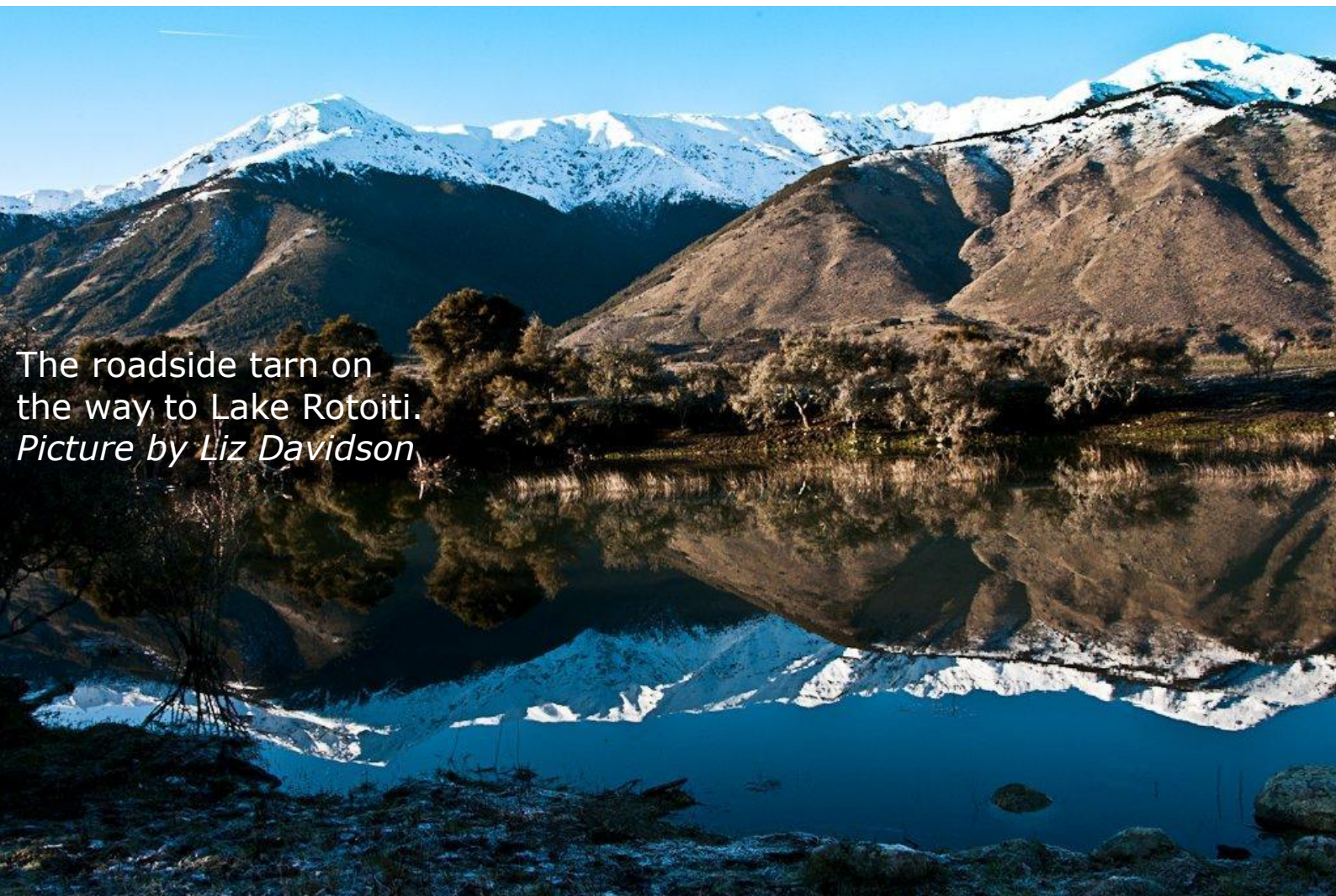


Tourists from the Kiwi Experience bus about to find out how cold the lake is

round to West Bay and ventured up the Mt Robert road, but conditions were too bad to get beyond the infamous narrow bridge.

A quick stop at the skating pond found it too rough for skating, and the light too dark for decent photographs, so most people headed up to the Top House for lunch and the views.

The Lakes were at their best, and despite it being as busy as I have ever seen it, everyone had a great day out.



The roadside tarn on the way to Lake Rotoiti.
Picture by Liz Davidson

'Creative'

Judged by Rosita Manning

Prints — A Grade

Merit

Anne McLauchlan Creativity in the natural World
Owen Dunne Peggy's Cove Lighthouse - Nova Scotia

Projected Images — A Grade

Honours

Owen Dunne Masterful Web
Owen Dunne Space Bauble
Robyn Carter The Boat

Merit

Carolyn Hope Electric Pears
Carolyn Hope Into the Night
David Brinn Ghost Ship
David Brinn Moon Glow
Robyn Carter Three Moons
Rachel Marfell Glowing Tulips
Liz Davidson Monet in Marlborough

Projected Images — B Grade

Honours

Gavin Newell Night's Sky Over Port
Heike Reikter Old Boat in Havelock
Sue Burdon Berry Ice
Will Parsons Tunnel Vision

Merit

Gillian Clover Expansion
Lyndie Henry Focal Point
Dave Tose Joy to the Gargoyle
Trish Smith Mussels at Waikawa



Masterful Web by Owen Dunne



Space Bauble by Owen Dunne



The Boat by Robyn Carter



Into the Night by Carolyn Hope



Electric Pears by Carolyn Hope

Note: All Pictures can be clicked on to be viewed at a larger size.



Ghost Ship by *David Brinn*



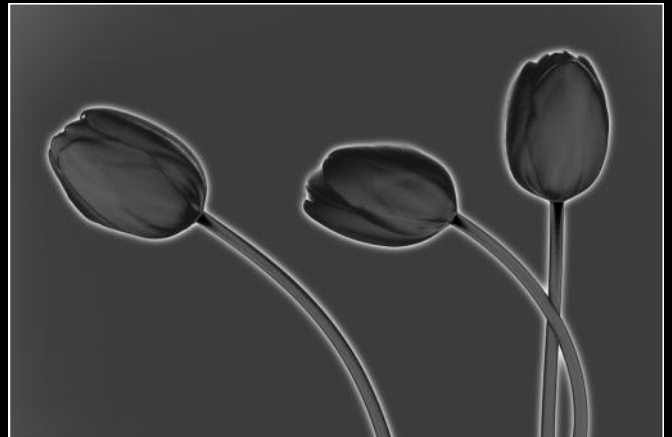
Moon Glow by *David Brinn*



The Three Moons by *Robyn Carter*



Night Sky Over Port by *Gavin Newell*



Glowing Tulips by *Rachel Marfell*



Old Boat in Havelock by *Heike Reikter*



Monet in Marlborough by *Liz Davidson*

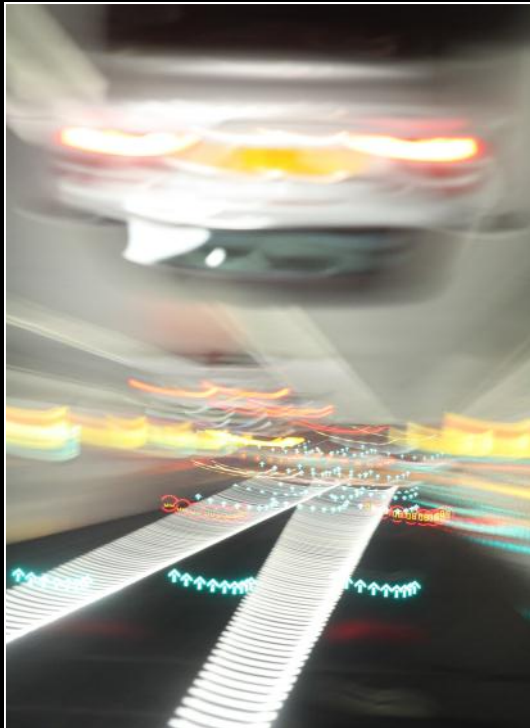
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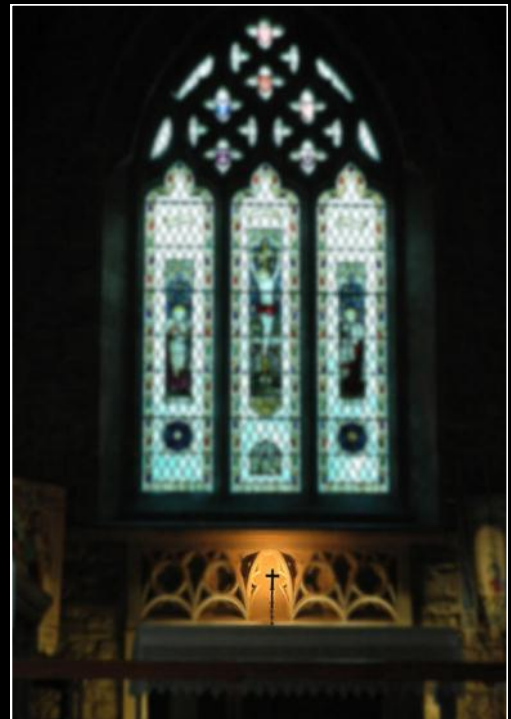
Berry Ice by *Sue Burden*



Mussels at Waikawa by *Trish Smith*



Tunnel Vision by *Will Parsons*



Focal Point by *Lyndie Henry*



Joy to the Gargoyle by *Dave Tose*



Expansion by *Gillian Clover*

NEXT MEETING: Thursday 11th August 2011 at St Mary's Parish Hall, Blenheim, starting at 7.30pm, but doors open around 7:00pm

What's on:

Results of — [Natural History](#)

Hand In — **Open (Enlargement Rules** a maximum of 2 prints and 2 projected images)

7:30 Club announcements, house keeping etc.

7:35 Don Pittham — what do judges look for in your photographs?

8:30 Competition — Don will give his comments and suggest how an image might have been improved

9:30 Supper (please stack your chairs)

Club Speakers

This month we have **Don Pittham** coming over from Nelson. Don has judged the Natural History images we handed in last month, and will be giving us a talk about his approach to the judging process, which will flow into him giving us his comments and feedback on the natural History competition. Don is an entertaining speaker, and an excellent photographer, and he plans to demonstrate how some of our images might have been improved.

Elizabeth Passuello has now been confirmed for September 8th. Elizabeth is going to show us some images, and talk about how they were made, and the story behind them. This will flow into a talk about International salons and honours and the best approach to entering them. Elizabeth must have the longest list of Honours and awards I have ever seen, so she must know a thing or two about the subject. Check out her [website](#) for a taste of what she will be showing us.

Derek Flynn is still on our list of future presenters, but he has asked that we delay until next year some time. [Derek](#) is a multi-award winning photographer with the Marlborough Express, and has a knack of being in the right place at the right time, so I am sure this will be a great presentation when it finally happens.



The Marlborough Camera Club has recently commissioned the above trophy to compliment the Brian Thwaites Memorial trophy that is awarded for the best Natural History print every year. This attractive acrylic trophy will be for the best projected image in the Natural History category starting this year.

FIELD TRIPS

Indoor Workshop — Sunday August 21st. This will be an interactive workshop on lighting, so bring your gear including a flash gun if you own one. The venue is the Croquet Club of Brooklyn Drive ([map](#)) starting at 9:00am. We will be showing off our pictures at the 4th Thursday club meeting on 25th August at St Marys.

lizdavidson@xtra.co.nz

Seddon Shields — 2nd to 4th September. Hosted by the Nelson Camera Club. Venue unknown at this time. Our club has won the Matthewson trophy for the last two years, and Dave Tose won Champion Image last year.

NOTICE BOARD

Roger's [Basic Photography Classes](#) are always popular, and provide beginner photographers with a means to fully understand how to use their cameras, and compose a photograph. His current course is nearly finished, but he has other people interested in doing the course, so if he can get six to eight people in total, he will run another course starting Tuesday the 6th September. You can contact Roger on 03 578 3185 or at boxbrownie@snap.net.nz

Owen Dunne is running a third Lightroom course starting on Tuesday 16th August at 7:30. The course will take place at Owen's house in Picton, and will be limited to four people so that there will be time for one-on-one guidance, so get in quickly if you are interested.

Owen is also considering running a basic course on Photoshop if there is enough interest. Owen can be contacted at ennud@xtra.co.nz or 03-573-7408.



We have organised getting some polo shirts with the Camera Club logo embroidered on them. The picture above is out of the catalogue but the committee thought that red would be the best colour because it's what we use on our website, and cards. I have one of these shirts with the Volunteer Marlborough logo, and it is good quality 100% cotton.

Price is \$38 including GST, and the sizes are
Men: S to 3XL, Ladies: 8 to 22

There are also baseball caps @ \$15

Contact Trevor Dennis if interested.

trevor.dennis@xtra.co.nz



We are running out of time to get pictures for the 2012 Farmers Market Calendar. The market is currently being held in the car park behind Roselands pet shop, and we have just three or four more Sundays before the deadline. The picture on the left is the sort of thing they are after, and they would like several pictures for each month, so you can see we need as many for them to pick from as possible. This stands to make our club a significant income, and that will be reflected in the quality of the speakers etc. that we can bring to our meetings.

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Marlborough Camera Club has more than 80 members. If you would like to advertise in Photo News please contact the editor [Trevor Dennis](#)

Upcoming Events



How to improve your
photographs using Photoshop
St Marys 25th August from 7:30pm

Ps



Central Region Convention

Friday 7th to Sunday 9th October 2011

Hosted by the Stratford Camera Club



Southern Region Convention

Friday 25th to Sunday 30th October 2011

Hosted by the [Dunedin Photographic Society](#)

Definitely Dunedin
City of Contrasts

[Watch the video](#)



Northern Region Convention

Friday 11th to Sunday 13th November 2011

Hosted by the [Pukekohe Camera Club](#)



For more news and information visit the PSNZ site

www.photography.org.nz/welcome.htm

[Events](#)

[Competitions](#)

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