

The Newsletter

Insight, Primesite, Foresight



Editorial – August 2010:

Yes it's Issue No. 2 already. The time has passed so rapidly that I have not really had time to catch up with myself.

I have not had the time catch up with everyone else either. This month I have not been able to get down to the George and Dragon on a Tuesday night. It seems I have missed a lot. The Tuesday night pub-club seems to be taking off. They got things organized for a trip to Henley. Great fun and it served a purpose. More on that trip later.


Where are you all this summer? Lots of members have not sent me interesting snippets for this issue. So let's have them for the next issue. Tell us about your trips and adventures into the photographic world out there. I will publish your holiday stories; your practice fun; your successes – or maybe your fun failures. The more the merrier. Let's make the September issue rock!

Some members have ideas for what they want in the new season. You can air your ideas here. Send me your thoughts. Alternatively you can go online. Feel free to start a debate in our new forum. The address is on the website.

At risk of being insulted or criticized I invite you all to share your opinions of this publication. Help me to use this newsletter to meet the needs of the membership. Send me ideas about what you would like to see in these pages.

Damon
MCC Secretary

Email the MCC Secretary
mccsec@marlowcc.org



Buy items on Amazon via the club website. The Amazon search box (shown above) is on the website home page. Enter the search you want and you go to Amazon. After that the club gets a small return for every purchase you make. It costs you nothing. It helps the club to raise funds.

The Chairman's spot...

This summer should have provided you with a favourable UK holiday climate and photographic opportunities. The forthcoming MCC season provides opportunities to display the fruits of your photographic endeavours. You can enter your great pictures in our forthcoming competitions.

Those who attended our summer BBQ at Kensham Farm kept a weather eye open. Courtesy of MCC Member Bryan Edgley and his wife Alison we had a great evening in the most attractive of surroundings at Kensham Farm. The constant threat of a downpour did finally manifest itself as a light shower.

On behalf of those who attended I would like to offer many thanks to our hosts for allowing us to use their farm for our summer BBQ.



Our talented chairman at the barbeque surrounded by happy campers!

Clearly the members were enjoying themselves.

The feasting begins...



MCC is technically in recess until 14th September, but in readiness for next season a lot of background work being done. Ray Reeder has taken over responsibility for our website. There have been a number of dramatic enhancements and new areas. In particular, the Forum area of the website is an innovation for MCC. You should check it out. It encourages the sharing of knowledge amongst our Membership. Maintaining a 'living' website takes much time and Ray is to be congratulated on his excellent work to date.

Likewise, Damon Guy has sought to introduce a different feel to our Newsletters. Introducing a more technical slant he is trying to encourage our Members to actively participate and share knowledge. Beware, Damon may be calling on you soon to produce an article! Any feedback you may have in respect of

the development of both the website and Newsletter would be most welcome by Ray and Damon.

The enthusiasm of our Members to maintain contact has no bounds. During the summer there is a gathering every Tuesday evening (8 pm) at The George & Dragon (Marlow High St, near the bridge) to discuss a whole variety of topics. Photography, being the common denominator, is keenly debated. A couple of photographic excursions have been considered and one has happened (see the Henley report). There are still many Tuesday evenings left to join them before 14th September – if you haven't already done so.

I hope you will find this Newsletter an informative and enjoyable read. Get out there and start "Having fun with your camera" over the forthcoming weeks.

Jim Robson - Chairman

The New Club Website
<http://www.marlowcc.org/>

The website continues to go from strength to strength. Use the forum to express your opinions and get help. See the gallery to get a feel for our photos. The programme for next year is posted now so look ahead. The activities information is up for next season. And... Well, there is a lot more.



Henley Shoot

We met at Henley on Tuesday 3rd of August. Why? The Tuesday night crowd thought it would be good to get ahead on one of our competitions next year. We are

having a joint meeting with the Henley Photographic Club on 22nd of February. They will be presenting photos of Marlow and we will be presenting photos of Henley. Is it a fair swap? We thought so.



The group strolled around the town in groups or singles from 7pm for about 2 hours. Some took shots away from the river front; some took shots of the bank side and bridge. I suspect we all took some shots of the water. There are lots of good shooting places around the town. It is not just the river that is picturesque. Some of the architecture is great photographic material. There are also some very nice areas to walk around in the town. Also quite attractive are some of the roads off the High St. – an area which might be very fruitful to explore. If you take good pictures now you will be able to provide a good show later in the season. If you want to let me know when you are going I can circulate a note to the membership. Have fun!

Technical Trade-Off

I often imagine myself as one of the all-time great photographers. What would Ansel Adams have thought of the technical prowess of my shots or compositions? Would Henri Cartier-Bresson have been persuaded that I have shot even one decisive moment? (Yes, go on you have to look them up now). My suspicion is that both would have been horrified at my terrible compositions and my technical muff-ups.

These two were founding fathers of photography. They were known as much for their philosophical insights as for their superb works. Their pictures continue to endure in our literature today providing shining examples of the principles to which we aspire in modern photography.

What they achieved is not only great composition or excellent technique. It is a unique synthesis of both composition and technique that made them what we revere. How can we see this in our own photography? What benefit would we gain from understanding this synthesis? An example will help.

Competition judges often say “if only you had controlled the light more carefully you would not have that bright ‘blown-out’ area that distracts the viewer. That area of blown-out brightness is where the camera has focussed on a predominately dark area in your composition. But, the camera has also seen a very bright source. Unlike the eye, the camera cannot balance them out. So it sides with the predominant dark - the bright source turns completely white with all detail lost. It is where the detail is lost that the camera has failed to bridge the gap between light and dark.

Bright light coming through, say, a window or a white sky behind trees is destructive. It completely upsets the ambiance of the image - the eye is drawn to the white. The composition may be excellent but the technical failure has created an imbalance that kills the effect.

OK, so here are a couple of tricks. Turn to your manual everyone.

Look up ‘highlight alert’ (Canon) or ‘Highlight Display Mode’ (Nikon) or similar. When this function is enabled the camera detects the blown-out components of a picture where all the detail is lost. When you view the picture in the camera screen the blown-out highlights constantly blink. Tiny areas that blink may not be a problem. However, if large proportions blink you have a

problem. So, the first trick is setting the 'blinking mode'. It lets you know that the highlights in your picture are so over exposed that the detail is completely lost.

The second trick depends on your camera. Most digital cameras have the ability to lock the focus/exposure (exposure lock or AFL). To enable the function select the mode for locking the exposure. Now focus your camera on a blown out highlight near to your point of focus – one that is blown out. Now push the shutter button half way down. Continuing to hold the button halfway down, move your focus point to the place in the dark area where you would have wanted to focus. When steady, push the button the rest of the way to capture the image.

You have taken a light reading of the bright area but captured the image while looking in the darker area. Usually the highlights will not blink when you look at the image. Or, at the least they will be reduced. Every camera has different exposure controls and sensitivity. You must experiment to get it right.

Beware however! You may have darkened the other areas of the shot too much. This technique is not a perfect strategy. It merely helps you to balance out the light and dark to be more attractive to the eye in the final image. Ultimately if you really value that shot, you must come back to it with better light.

If that doesn't work for your shot, then you need to look at 'exposure compensation'. ...For another time tho'.

Damon

And Finally...

... a good website.

How many of you have used www.YouTube.com? Here is a little bit of advice. Try putting "photography" into the search engine on YouTube.com and you get dozens of 'how to' videos to watch. There are all sorts of levels from photography 101 right through to some

advanced photography. Lots of these videos are made by professional photographers with many years of experience. Some are not so good. You may find something that suits your style of learning so try out a few videos. If you find one that is particularly good why not post it on the forum so we can all benefit.



... an apology!

Ooops. In Issue #1 I gave you an Internet address to look up a handy lens cleaner. Someone pointed out that the address did not work. OK, sorry. Go to:

<http://www.warehouseexpress.com> and put 'Spudz' into the search box. At only £5 this tuck-away lens cleaner on-a-string is invaluable.

... a joke.

First Person : "Is that camera fully automatic?"

Second Person : "No. You have to download the images yourself".

Anonymous

... an exhibition.

On March 1st next year the Club is having a portrait competition. Portraits is a branch of photography that looks easy until you try it. Visit the National Portrait Gallery in London where you will find a huge number of paintings and photographs all chosen for their quality and artistic merit. It will get you started thinking about making portraits.



Until 24 October 2010 there is also an exhibition about [Camille Silvy, Photographer of Modern Life, 1834 - 1910](#). Silvy was a French portrait photographer who established many of the principles of the art. Some of these pictures have not been shown since the 1860s. Entrance to this exhibition is £5. Entrance to the National Portrait Gallery is free.

Stop Press...

My husband and I attended the Chairman's Reception, to mark the start of the Marlow Art and Crafts Society Exhibition, on Friday, the 6th August 2010 at 8pm.

The invitation was for wine and nibbles and a private viewing of the exhibition.

We were introduced to the Chairman Rod Grant and I told him I was representing the Marlow Camera Club.

On exhibit, there were about 80 paintings displayed. Paintings included watercolours, oils and acrylic, of which some were for sale.

There were also cards, pottery and some wood work items on display. They were all for sale at very reasonable prices.

Flowers and landscapes were a dominant theme of the paintings. Although there were surprisingly few portraits.

The subject for the Ted Try Cup was 'Winter Wonderland' of which there were about a dozen entries on display.

The visitors and members were invited to vote for their favourite piece of work. The winner of this was John Burnham's, 'A French Village'.

The evening was friendly, the red wine was very good. An enjoyable evening was had by everyone.

Digital and editing software is now bridging the gap between photography and painting and has made photography accessible to a wider group of people.

Margaret Warren