

# The Newsletter

Insight, Primesite, Foresight

Issue #7



## Editorial – January 2011:

Last month I suggested new beginnings are the motto for the start of the year. Well, I guess we all like to see changes for the better, improvements and exciting adventures in our future. This year is no exception for me. I am hoping to do even more photographs and even more creative thinking. One of the things the club is doing more to help in this is to set up more practical activities and opportunities. So watch these pages, the website and the blog for more things to do with your camera this year...

To get things started we are running a practical workshop on 25 January. The workshop is shaping up. It aims to meet a range of needs for our members. So I am dedicating this newsletter to that practical session. On the night one group is to work on “exposure” – getting control of your camera. For advanced photo-editors there is to be a session about HDR (camera and software). If you are interested in getting your image editing off the ground you can focus on basic image editing. And, for those who want more advanced general editing techniques there is a group on that too. Everyone is advised to bring at least their camera and possibly their lap top too – especially with their favourite image editor. Gosh! It’s all ‘appning gov’n’r...

Email the MCC Secretary  
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## Is ‘exposure’ still relevant?

The key to a good photograph is your vision of what you want it to be and the way you ‘expose’ it.

It’s a word we don’t hear very often these days. Exposure. Expose; exposed. There you go, I’ve done it again. Shocked? For some, perhaps our newer members, this is a challenging, almost mystical term. Exposure is one of the two most important parts of your photographs. The other part is the content. If your content is right and you make a mess of the exposure your photo is doomed. Most perplexing about exposure is there is no **one** way of making it correct.

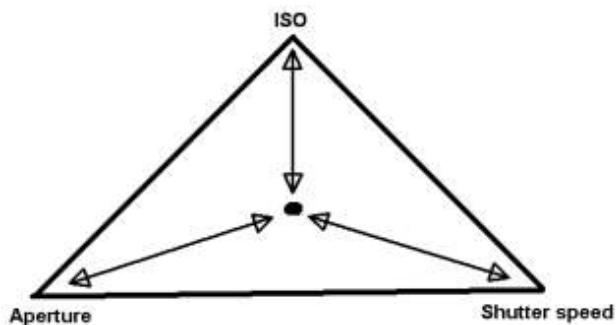
One of the reasons exposure has become so wrapped up in mystique is because of all those infernal ‘functions’. What do they do? What are they for? How do I use them? When do I use them? They obscure the real business of taking a photograph. You can forget these “over-ride” functions – as Canon calls them. Just concentrate on Aperture, Shutter speed and Light Sensitivity (ISO). Anything else is just the manufacturer by-passing your creativity.

Why ignore ‘over-ride’ functions? The camera is deciding how ‘it’ thinks you should be exposing your content. It is actively taking the creative choices for you.

Instead lets look at the components of exposure. The purest form of this is using the ‘M’ setting - M for manual control. It provides maximum control over exposure.

Things have been made much easier by TTL metering. ‘Through the lens’ you can see an accurate light meter. It is the best possible guide to most exposures. Long gone are the days of the hand-held light meter. The TTL light meter is probably the most liberating of the modern technologies aside from digitisation.

This is not the place for detailed explanations of good exposure. For now you can think of exposure as a Triangle. Aperture, Shutter speed and ISO are elastically attached to the exposure point.



The Exposure Triangle.

Move the exposure spot (black spot, centre) toward one of the three points in the triangle and you must extend the settings of the other two to compensate.

Move toward 'Aperture' and you shorten the aperture arrow (make the aperture smaller). Less light is let in so you must have higher ISO (more sensitivity to light – longer ISO arrow), or, you must have the shutter open longer (longer exposure time – longer shutter speed arrow). The dynamic relationship with the others is the same. Shorten the one arrow and you must lengthen one or both the other arrows.

For those who want to begin to get full control of their camera I am running an introductory session on the practical night. We will be looking at exposure. The aim is to appreciate what is involved in this Holy Grail for photographers. The session is open to anyone. You are especially welcome if you do not know what I have been talking about above. Join in if you DO know what I have been saying, but want to get better control of your camera. You are also welcome if you want to get 'functions' or over-rides out of your head and get to grips with exposure.

Oh, and for those who wonder, I think exposure is still relevant. In fact I think it is 'the' most important aspect of making a photograph besides "seeing" your content.

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### The Club Website

Does a website really exist if it has no

users? Ponder that at your intellectual peril. In the meantime visit [www.marlowcc.org](http://www.marlowcc.org) so that our website does not get lonely.

It is worth mentioning the blog too. If people do not read it then it exists for no purpose. Our blog is there to help us all keep up with the impressive range of things happening in the club. Be there or be square!



See the club website at:

<http://www.marlowcc.org>

### HDR – What is it?

One group in the practical session this month is going to look at HDR techniques with **Steven Galvin**. HDR stands for "High Dynamic Range" imaging.

Steven is going to take a practical approach. You will need to know a little about manual mode. Bring your camera and a tripod. Be prepared to spend some time outside taking photographs. Look forward to "having a play" with your shots and his software when you get back. This is a great opportunity to get started in HDR.

**On a more theoretical level**, human eyes can see a great range of tones in the world around us. They see well from star-light scenes to intense bright sunlight. A huge tonal range lies between those extremes.

Despite the 'advanced' nature of modern cameras they cannot see anything like the range of light levels or tones we can see. Film was similarly limited.

Cameras can only expose well in a range of about five to nine stops (each successive stop is double the amount of light). More than that and parts of the picture get 'blown out' or lose detail in the gloom. On the other hand the eye sees about 13 to 19 stops.



The human eye can see a huge range of tones compared to a camera.

Cameras do see the same 5 - 9 stops in high brightness. Then they can be adjusted to see the same number of stops in low light. Thus, photographers tend to try and keep the photograph within controllable boundaries. You can use an 8 stop range in a bright scene. Alternatively it's OK to use the same range in a gloomy scene. It does not work to have a shot across ten stops from dark(ish) to light(ish). HDR techniques overcome this problem.

Instead of trying to capture the whole range of tonality and light intensity the HDR photographer exposes many, many shots. Each picture shows its own scale of light and dark ranges. Each shot exposes for a different dynamic range. Then, this is the unique bit, the photographer uses a piece of software to combine the images and in so doing displays the full dynamic range of tonality, colour and light ranges from the darkest image to the brightest.

The HDR group is going to try out this technique.

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### **It's an Honour by David Buttle.**

I spotted in the Marlow Free Press that Bryan Edgley has been awarded an MBE for services to agriculture and the community in Bucks. I am SO pleased. He has quietly done a vast amount of good for the community for many years. His work goes back as far as when we had a Borstal for boys in Marlow. He did photography once a week with them until it was closed down. I thought you would all like to know the news.

Thanks very much for that David. Several other members contacted me [Ed.] with information on this award. I am sure that we

all want to join in congratulating Bryan for his well deserved honour.

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### **So if you are not doing HDR or basic exposure...**

The practical night is also going to include some image editing for those that want to extend their skills. **Ray Reeder** is going to be looking at the computer editing techniques people would like to develop. He hopes people will bring their own laptops and favourite editing software. He hopes to cover things like importing and sorting images; including basic key-wording with Adobe Bridge, Light Room, Picassa or Windows Gallery as needed. There will be the opportunity to see how to select images and basic adjustments with Adobe Camera Raw. He also hopes to include exposure, white balance and spot removal amongst others things. Using Layers and adjustment layers in Photoshop; making selections and cloning can also be included. Just bring your software or be prepared to muck in with someone else and all these techniques are there to learn. And, if there is a need or time how to use 'masks' is also something he will help with.

It looks like Ray has set up a lot of opportunities to develop new skills.

**Pippa St.John Smith** has the basics for you. She says: "I was thinking, everyone wanting to start on the basics of image editing could bring a picture they want to enter into the portraiture comp. I could help them edit and save it correctly for the comp. Then it would be easier for later competitions and for the other 2 photos".

If you are new to competitions getting your image ready the first few times is not easy. Pippa is hoping to help you through that. She says, "I can help you with basic tools like crop, contrast, removing colour, and other such things".

Feel free to bring a memory stick with any picture(s) you want edit, you can have a go. Alternatively you can just join in the session and pick up some new ideas. We are encouraging people to bring their own laptops so we can get as many people working as possible.

Looks like useful fun. Thanks Pippa.

## And Finally...

### Contributions?

Please think of this newsletter. With more contributions, information and news from members there will be less waffle from me [Ed.]



### A good website...

Newsletters are a good way of picking up tips and interesting ideas. One I have been reading lately is from the website "Digital-photography-school.com". From the latest newsletter is this little offering; ideal for the weather we are having at the moment. <http://www.digital-photography-school.com/dealing-with-gray-days>

### Winter photography courses in Maidenhead...

Rod Bird from <http://www.electriclandscape.com> in Maidenhead says, "I hope you and all the members of Marlow CC have a happy and successful 2011". He has a range of courses in the near future. "They're ideal for anyone with a new DSLR or good compact camera, but also for more experienced photographers who want to get the most from their equipment and Photoshop".

To find out more visit his website.

### ...Portraiture?

For those interested in portraiture the National Portrait Gallery is an essential resource. See: <http://www.npg.org.uk/>. The 'Taylor Wessing Photographic Prize' (2010) is still on until 20<sup>th</sup> of February. There are sixty selected works, including the four prize-winners and the winner of the ELLE commission. They showcase the very best in modern portrait photography. 1st March 2011 is the club competition "**People and Portraits**". The Judge is Micki Aston. Get clicking!

### ...Focus On Imaging

The UK photographic industry's biggest show of the year has come around again.



The exhibition is from the 6th - 10th of March at NEC in Birmingham. If anyone is interested one group might go on the 7th March. Entry is £8.00. Share a car anyone?

Visit <http://www.focus-on-imaging.co.uk/>

### ...A quote

The grand masters of photography represent the body of work we revere. They also have often had great insights. Ansel Adams said this:

**There are always two people in every picture: the photographer and the viewer.**

How true that is. It is worth pondering upon.

### ...And From the Canon Website

Member Graham Slough spotted a fun and informative lens chooser at:

[http://www.canon.co.uk/EFlenses/?WT.mc\\_id=147EOS60D000Trib081110](http://www.canon.co.uk/EFlenses/?WT.mc_id=147EOS60D000Trib081110)

There are all sorts of insights into choosing lenses for different occasions there.

### ...and from the Internet

Here is a very unfortunate wedding shot. It proves that it really pays to go on a course before committing your photography skills to wedding work. The sky is completely blown out!



Test your 'seeing' skills...