



# Photo News

The Monthly Newsletter of the

**MARLBOROUGH  
Camera Club**

August 2012

I've been called upon to help out with the Newsletter for both August and September while Trevor is away travelling overseas. I have big shoes to fill but I will do my best, but can't promise that it will be as professional as our in-house Newlsetter expert!

If anyone would like to contribute a story or article, or a how-to-do-something-clever photography wise, for our September issue, then please email me on the email address below.

This months issue has an interesting article from Harry Matthews on the capabilities of in-camera HDR that is available on the newer cameras. After reading, I'm wondering if I need to upgrade my camera gear again! There's so many new things that cameras are doing these days, sometimes I long for the simplicity of film!

Roger talks about the magic of patterns and shapes in nature, which one can always be on the lookout for, especially on our field trips, and Trevor gives us his last president report and an indepth and informative article on digital video.

**Robyn**

ambling Rambler@gmail.com

## External Competitions



**Y**ears ago, when I was just a beginner photographer in C Grade up in Auckland. I remember the nervous feeling every time I put an image into the monthly competition. But I was al-

ways encouraged by the more expert photographers to just give it a go and look, listen and learn. I was also encouraged to put any image that I had an honours for, into external competitions. So I did. And I was pleasantly surprised by actually getting an honours in my first external competition with the Shag photo above.

Clubs around New Zealand as well as the PSNZ are always advertising Photography Salons or competitions open to all clubs and their members. I want to urge all members of the Marlborough Camera Club to give these competitions a go. We have amazing talent in our club and it should not go unnoticed.

Nelson is holding the Triptych Salon, and entries are due in by 31st August. I've been experimenting myself with triptychs and it's been a huge learning curve and lots of fun. So give it a go, and have some fun, and who knows- you might pick up a medal or honours that will give your confidence a huge boost.

**AGM** — the remits to change our financial year were passed at our SGM, so our AGM will take place at the start of our August meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup>.

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# PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Trevor Dennis

This will be my last President's report, and one less page — or three — for me to fill each month. We will be voting in new Club officers and Committee at our AGM on 9th August, and after three years as President, it is time for someone else to take over.

In the seven years I have belonged to the Marlborough Camera Club I have seen us grow into one of the best camera clubs in New Zealand, and I am very proud of what we have achieved — both as a club, and as individuals.

There have been several references to video in Photo News this year. Mostly because most new cameras are capable of recording good quality video nowadays, but also because, with a background in video and amateur film production, I've had a particular interest in this

development. That interest took a serious upturn after discovering the astonishing quality of the video my Canon 1DMK4 can record, and that quality would be similar with any of the current DSLRs with video capability.

However, there is no such thing as a free lunch, and while DSLR video picture quality is superb, they have poor handling characteristics, are terrible when it comes to recording audio, and they are limited to recording up to only twelve minute clips.

Handling encompasses things like the inability to zoom smoothly, difficulty in focusing, and the only way to see what you are shooting is to hold the camera in front of your face, and that leads to poor stability — video looks awful when the image is shaking all over the screen. But

There is a Canon 5DMK2 lurking in there somewhere, and it cost less than the accessories bolted on to it!





The Rode VideoMic attached to this Canon 5DMK2 considerably improves sound quality when recording video.

if you use a tripod whenever possible, and avoid trying to zoom by manually rotating the lens barrel, you can get some really very good footage.

There are workarounds for the poor sound. An organisation called [Magic Lantern](#) have developed freely available alternative firmware for the Canon 5DMK2, which fixes several problems. The AGC (automatic gain control) that causes audio volume to soar during quiet passages leading to noise, is replaced with manual gain control with audio meters on the main LCD. You still need a separate microphone for acceptable sound quality, like the Rode VideoMic pictured below.

There are also workarounds for the poor handling, but they mostly involve bolting on attachments that leave your camera looking like one of those Transformer toys, and the bits cost a fortune and add significant weight.

Unfortunately, digital video is a considerably more complicated subject than still photography, and the learning curve is steep and long. This extends to using the editing software you need to turn your clips into a finished film, but there are lots of websites devoted to the subject, and I am starting to get the hang of it, and will always try to help. The editing software can also be used to

produce Audio Visuals, and we have heard that the PSNZ is going to allow a mix of stills and video in AVs. The options offered by a program like Adobe's Premiere Pro CS6 (which is what I use) go way beyond what you might find in something like ProShow Gold, and you have absolute control down to the nearest pixel. You also have huge control of your audio.

One thing that you should be aware of is that DSLR video is highly compressed when saved. This means that your computer not only has to move large amounts of data, but has to un-compress that data on the fly. The bottom line is that you need a lot of computing power to edit DSRL video.

I am currently devoting rather more time and energy into video than stills, and have just completed two projects, one of which has been a year in the making, but that was due as much to my lack of experience as the amount of work involved. I will also be producing our promotional AV for our hosting of the National Convention in 2014, which has to be ready to be shown at the 2013 National in Wellington, and I need stills, or even video if you have it, that show Marlborough at its best. Stills should preferably be at 2500 pixels wide, but I would prefer RAW files. Video is not so crucial as I can transcode it, and won't necessarily use it full screen.

My closing thoughts on this subject are that as good as the video quality is from DSLR cameras, the usability is too much of a compromise, and my next camera will be a good dedicated video camera.

***Trevor***



The Canon video camera that I have my eye on. Although it will be much easier to use than a DSLR, it still won't quite match one for picture quality.





# The Magic of Shapes, Patterns and Textures

By *Roger Thwaites*, APSNZ

When we look at any image, it is the "Patterns, Shapes, & Textures" (PSTs) that gives the elements of the image, it's 'visual character'. "Shapes" is perhaps, the strongest of the three, and tends to give 'visual direction' to the image, while "Patterns" and "Textures" play the 'supporting role' to the 'shapes'. The elements in a photo composition, are largely dependent on the "shapes" to give definition and contrast to them, while the "patterns" and the "textures" work within them.



It is interesting to note, that on Club field trips, we are never quite sure what we are going to photograph, until we get there, so we tend to rely heavily on our ability to see, and imagine the images with "the creative eye", and this includes the involvement of "PSTs", to add the "magic" to our images.

Different seasons, tend to add different effects to the Shapes, Patterns, and textures. For instance, during the Winter season, PSTs tend to be a little less noticeable, because there is an overall greyness to the colours, mainly due to the lower-than-usual Winter light.



The Summer season, on the other hand, is a time of much harsher light, and can have an effect on the PSTs by flattening the colours, and more especially during the hours of 10a.m. to 3p.m., being the hours when the light is harshest.

The Spring season brings with it a 'freshness and newness' of the PSTs, and it has the effect of making them crisper looking, with greater contrasts of the shapes. There is a more defined definition of the shapes during this season.

The Autumn is perhaps, one of the best seasons for seeing PSTs, as they become more apparent, due to the vivid colours displayed by a variety of deciduous trees, etc.



"Colour" is a vital ingredient which goes "hand-in-glove" with PSTs, and is vital to the photographer for visualising and composing any photographic image. Contrasting colour, gives "life" to the visual appearance of images, and helps us to see, and compose images, in the mind's eye. Switching from 'colour' to the 'Black and White' medium, means that the photographer only has tones of 'Black', and 'White', to work with,



which means that the use of PSTs becomes even more essential, as the photographer has to firstly, convert from colour to Black & White, in the mind's eye, with the PSTs assuming a greater role in the process.

While 'Colour' can be an important factor to the taking of any photo, it is the Patterns, Shapes, and Textures, that governs how well the various elements of the image, are in harmony with each other. How we put these together in our mind's eye, (and then in the camera), is vital to the making of a good image. It can of course, have the opposite effect, if we don't take enough care with the placement, flow, and balance of the elements within our composition. 'Shapes' in particular, if placed wrongly, can have a visually "jarring" effect, and can interrupt the 'flow' and 'balance' of an image.

One of the most important aspects of making any photo, is "design". It is the process by which we are able to bring all of the "bits and pieces" of an image together, so that it becomes something more than just an ordinary photo. Through our thoughts and imagination, it is the stage which happens, well before the camera shutter button is operated. It is the stage, where we have the opportunity to study an image with 'the creative eye', and begin to formulate a composition into something that is a creative 'work of art'. Of course, some of the "tools" of image 'design', just happen to be 'Patterns, Shapes, and Textures! Just how well these are used within the composition of a picture, will ultimately determine the "magic" and the success of it.

It is a fact, that we most likely won't find all photographic subjects to be inspiring, (and this can be especially so, on some Club field trips), but, the challenge is to work with what we have, and to turn the "ordinary" into something "fantastic". Start, by looking for some unusual "shapes, patterns, and textures", and before long, you will be seeing all sorts of weird and wonderful things to photograph! Some of the images accompanying this article, were taken on the recent Club trip to Lake Rotoiti, and are examples of photos that were created solely by looking for unusual Patterns, Shapes, and Textures.



**Roger**

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## Macro Workshop 26th July

The Macro Workshop held on Thursday the 26<sup>th</sup> of July was extremely well attended by 28 members. It was facilitated by David Brinn and Rachel Marfell, both of whom have a particular interest and great skill in this fascinating genre of photography. The workshop commenced with an instructive Power Point presentation demonstrating the vast array of gear that can be used for close-up work. They ably demonstrated that any-

one can execute macro images without a great outlay in costs. David and Rachel had also set up a number of displays of equipment for us to "have a go" if we wished, using our own cameras. They also displayed examples of macro prints and both were available to chat with and answer questions. Our grateful thanks to David and Rachel for going to so much effort to put on a most informative evening.

**Liz**

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# In-Camera HDR

Have you ever been frustrated or confused because you can't get your camera to expose correctly for a scene with both very light and very dark areas? Over-exposing works for the dark areas but loses detail in the light areas and under-exposing does the opposite. An exposure in between loses some detail in both light and dark areas. I certainly have been frustrated by this but help is at hand, at least in some such situations.

## What if a scene has too much contrast for my camera to handle?

Human eyes resolve detail in light and dark areas of a scene much better than cameras do. We can address this shortcoming by taking more than one exposure, typically an exposure that captures the midtones (normal exposure), one that captures detail in the light areas (under-exposed), and one that captures detail in the dark areas (over-exposed). Then, we use a computer program to combine the three images. Now, the composite image contains all the detail that our eyes saw in the original scene.

This technique goes by the acronym, HDR, which stands for High Dynamic Range, i.e. a wide range between the dark and light tones in an image. It used to require tinkering with bracketed exposures in the dark corners of your camera's menus. Then you had to wait until the exposures were developed in the computer to see if it worked or not (remember waiting for your slides to come back?). Understandably, HDR has never really caught on with many of us.

Recently, however, new cameras, including my Canon 5D Mk3 and Lorraine's Canon S-100, can do in-camera HDR. Now the camera does the technical stuff, as it is supposed to do, and shows you the completed tone mapped image right after you press the shutter button (well, a couple of seconds after).

The process still involves a bit of menu digging. I set the Canon 5D Mk 3 to Av (aperture priority) and then HDR involves 6 button presses and one knob twiddle before pressing the shutter button

once. It's not as bad as that sounds, once you've done it a couple of times. You can tell the camera to do HDR images until you tell it to stop or just to do one HDR image and then go back to normal single exposures.

When set to "HDR", the 5D automatically takes 3 consecutive images when you press the shutter button all the way down; the first image is the same as a normal exposure; the second is under-exposed and the third is over-exposed. The amount of over- or under- exposure is set as part of the above 6 button presses and the normal exposure is set with all the normal exposure controls. The camera then combines the three images and produces a composite jpeg image in one of several HDR styles (also set during the above 6 button presses). The original 3 RAW images and the HDR jpeg are saved to the memory card.

Figures 1 to 4 show an example of a set of 4 images. Comparing Figure 1 with Figure 4 shows how the HDR image (Figure 4) has more detail than the normally exposed image (Figure 1).

Yes, it really is this simple, but there are some things to bear in mind. The first is that HDR is really only suitable for stationary images. If the camera or objects in the image move while the HDR images are being exposed, the camera will have trouble creating the composite image and you may get "ghosting" where one object appears more than once because it moved between exposures.

The second issue is more complex. It arises because the composite image contains too wide a range of tones for any of our display devices, such as a computer screen or a printer or a digital projector. The camera thus has to adjust the range of tones in the composite image to match the range that the display device can handle. This process is known as "*tone-mapping*" and dramatically affects the final HDR image. The 5D offers 5 different types of tone mapping one of which you select as part of the above 6 button presses before the shutter is pressed.



Figure 1a

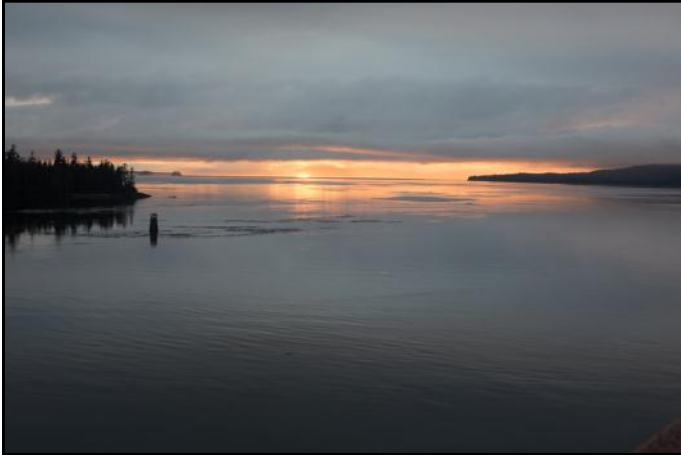


Fig 1

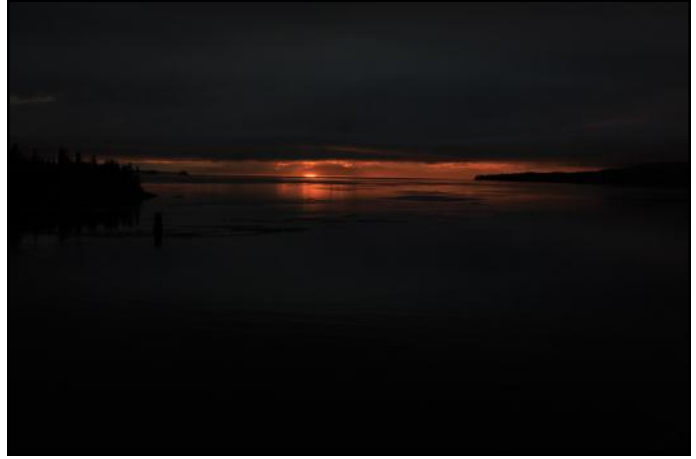


Fig 2

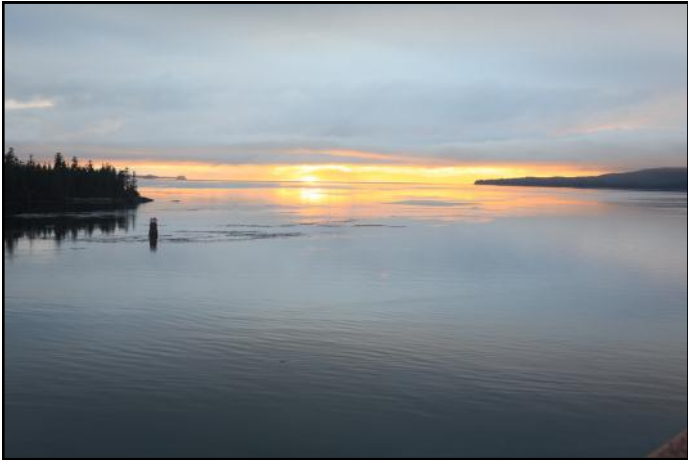


Fig 3



Fig 4

You may have heard of an “HDR look”; this is really a “tone mapping look” and ranges from quite natural to weird depending on how the tone mapping is done. There are also potential problems as in Figure 6 which shows an example of a tone mapping artifact; notice the halo around the island; that halo is not present in the original exposure, Figure 5, or the over- and under-exposed exposures (not shown). Computer-based post-processing programs give a great deal of control over the tone mapping process and you can still use such programs because the 5D saves the original RAW files that post-processing uses.

I find the relatively quick and easy access to getting an HDR image very useful. I would not want to rely on the camera’s tone mapping, though, and keeping the original exposures for later processing is essential. Using HDR to extend the dynamic range captured in a photograph allows us to photograph scenes that were previously impossible to handle satisfactorily.

*Harry*



Fig 5



Fig 6



# Lake Rotoiti

22 July, 2012

By *Liz Davidson*, LPSNZ

*Field Trip  
Report*

Over a dozen members met at the railway station car park at 8.am and travelled in convoy to Lake Rotoiti. In contrast with last year's field trip when there was snow right down to the water's edge, there was no snow on this occasion. The weather was over-cast and raw. Some of us had to don extra layers for more warmth.

However the light was not too bad for some macro photography along the bush tracks. This was a chance to get up close to mosses, lichens, some fungi and other subjects. Reflectors were useful in the gloomier areas.

Some of us had great fun posing for the Webcam which is on a post overlooking part of Kerr Bay. We checked on an iPhone to figure out the exact time that the camera captured shots....every ten minutes...then we posed dramatically and hoped we would appear on the web shot. It was a bit disappointing to find we had not got the timing quite right and we were snapped in neutral poses. We engaged a big crowd of folk from Stoke and got them to strut their stuff too. Once again the timing was a bit out. But it was all good clean fun and is what field trips are all about apart from improving our camera skills.

A side trip to the confluence of the Lake and the Buller River gave us the chance of capturing some nice landscape and water scenes.

Our day finished at the old Tophouse Hotel where we imbibed Devonshire teas/coffees.

If you are planning to visit Lake Rotoiti do get online and check out the webcam. That way you can suss out whether or not there is snow around the lake if that is what you are hoping for.

Google St Arnaud and the Tasman District Council webcam and take a look!

*Images to the right are from the Webcam—top right is the whole group on the jetty, and the bottom right is of the webcam testing committee!!*

*Liz*



## **Seddon Shield Weekend—Fri 7th Sept—Sun 9th Sept.**

### **Have you Registered yet???**

The weekend activities are based in the Vintage Car Club Rooms, Brayshaw Heritage Park, Arthur Baker Place, off New Renwick Road, Blenheim. We have put together a varied program of activities which we hope you will find interesting, photographically stimulating, fun and memorable.

Rob Suisted is our guest speaker on Saturday night and is a truly inspirational presenter that you will not want to miss.

**Registrations close Monday 13th August so get in quick!**





## 'Close-Up'

*Judged by John Reid*

### **Prints — A Grade**

#### **Honours**

<i>Trevor Dennis</i>	<i>Mycena Inclinata</i>
<i>Gordon Walker</i>	<i>Praying Mantis</i>
<i>Will Parsons</i>	<i>Admirer</i>

#### **Merit**

<i>David Brinn</i>	<i>The end of Summer</i>
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### **Prints — B Grade**

#### **Honours**

<i>Rod Wegener</i>	<i>Colour Splash</i>
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#### **Merit**

<i>Nola Neal</i>	<i>Untitled</i>
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### **Projected Images — A Grade**

#### **Merit**

<i>Trevor Dennis</i>	<i>And I got this one for</i>
<i>Gordon Walker</i>	<i>Huhu Wood Beetle</i>
<i>Trevor Dennis</i>	<i>Mycena Inclinata</i>
<i>Gordon Walker</i>	<i>Katydid</i>
<i>Mary Anne Rienke</i>	<i>Passionfruit Flower</i>

### **Projected Images — B Grade**

#### **Honours**

<i>Rod Wegener</i>	<i>Centrepiece</i>
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#### **Merit**

<i>Jamie McCracken</i>	<i>I-Drop</i>
<i>Jamie McCracken</i>	<i>CD Light</i>
<i>Chris Beech</i>	<i>A the Loom</i>



*Centre Piece by Rod Wegener*



*Passionfruit Flower by Mary Anne Reinke*



Katydid  
*By Gordon Walker*



And I got this for...*by Trevor Dennis*

At the Loom *by Chris Beech*



I-Drop *by Jamie McCracken*



Huhu Wood Beetle *by Gordon Walker*







*Mycena Inclinata by  
Trevor Dennis*

*CD Light by  
Jamie McCracken*



**‘Open ‘**

*Judged by Carolyn Green*

**Projected Image — A Grade**

**Merit**

*Roger Thwaites    Whispering Grass*

*Whispering Grass by Roger Thwaites*



**NEXT MEETING:** Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> July 2012 at St Mary's Parish Hall, Blenheim, starting at 7.30pm. Doors open by 7pm

**What's on:**

Results of — Dilapidated/Open

Hand In — Shadows/Silhouettes/Open

**7:30** Club announcements

**7:40**

**8:30** Supper

**8:50** **Competition** results and Judge's comments

**Please Stack Your Chairs before leaving**

Both remits were passed at our SGM in May, so our full AGM will be at the start of our meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> August. We will also be moving our main social event to coincide with the Saturday dinner at the Seddon Shields weekend on 8<sup>th</sup> September. The location will be at the Vintage Car Club, and the cost will be \$30 per person with BYO.

**4<sup>th</sup>**  
**THURSDAY**

23rd August 7.30pm at St Mary's Hall.

**Low light Photography and Painting with Light**

with

**Gavin Newell.**

Bring your camera, tripod, and flash guns if you have them for this really interesting session with Gavin. \$2 Donation will be gratefully received.

**Competitions — A Reminder**

If you are entering our monthly competitions, then please make sure you understand the basic [rules](#). You are allowed to enter:

**A maximum of ONE print**

**& TWO Projected Images**

If you enter three images, then **only TWO** of them may be either the **Set Subject** or **Open**.

For **projected images**, the colour profile should be **sRGB**. (sRGB is the default setting unless you have changed it)

The pixel size of Projected images should be:

**1024 pixels (maximum width)**

**768 pixels (maximum height)**

Projected Image entries should be emailed: [Owen Dunne](#) before midnight on Club night.

**Field Trips**

Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> August — **Architecture** in Blenheim. The Court House, solicitor's offices, Forum, Art Deco, churches... There is so much to point a camera at in our town. Meet at 8.30am at the railway station. [Contact Liz](#) if going on either trip.

**Buddies** — If you are fairly new to photography, and would like to accompany a more experienced photographer on one of our Field Trips, then we will be trying to team people up when we meet. It's a great way to learn, so please don't be shy.

**Future Club Speakers**

**August 9<sup>th</sup>** — AGM.

**September 13<sup>th</sup>** — **Dr Richard Smithers**, was the ship's doctor on a Heritage Expedition cruise around the Sub-Antarctic Islands in November 2010. Richard will share some his experiences and photographs from the trip.

Our experiment of having supper in the middle of our meetings has had two tries, and the consensus is that it is that it works well. So we plan to continue running our meetings that way for now.



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## Upcoming Events



**Southern Regional**  
12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> October  
Ashburton Photographic Society

[More  
Information](#)



**MARLBOROUGH  
CAMERA CLUB**

Low Light and Painting With Light  
With Gavin Newell  
23rd August — St Mary's @ 7.30pm

**4<sup>th</sup>  
THURSDAY**



**MARLBOROUGH  
CAMERA CLUB**

Seddon Shields Area Weekend  
7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> September 2012  
Vintage Car Club Brayshaw Park



For more news and information visit the PSNZ site  
[www.photography.org.nz/welcome.htm](http://www.photography.org.nz/welcome.htm)

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