

The Monthly Newsletter of the **MARLBOROUGH**

Camera Club July 2012

ou may have been expecting Phil Bradfield from DOC to be our speaker this month, but we have swapped Phil for two ladies and a bird of prey ('Wilson', pictured right). Not a bad deal, I hope you'll agree. We are expecting a good crowd for this meeting, but ornithophobic Club members should probably stay at home.

Please take note of the competition guidelines on page 18 — some people have been getting it wrong. There is an article suggesting some **free** image manipulation software on page 9, and one of the options comes surprisingly close to the power of Photoshop! There is also a rough guide to resizing your images using the most basic of those applications.

We have a change to our 4th Thursday workshop on 26th July, with David Brinn and Rachel Marfell talking about Macro photography. This will be a 'bring your camera' event, for some hands-on, one-on-one tuition.

Congratulations to our Club members who had success in the North Shore Salon this year. It probably comes right after NATEX for importance, and we are proud of you. See page 17 for details.

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 12th.



f you have been waiting for the perfect opportunity lacktriangle to try out the high ISO setting on your new camera, then you are in luck. Our July Club meeting will feature New Zealand falcon 'Wilson' (above) who, along with Shelly Sidley (of Department of Conservation), and Diana Dobson (of Marlborough Falcon Conservation Trust), are coming along to talk about the scheme to preserve the NZ falcon in the Marlborough Wairau valley. The falcon is classed as 'chronically threatened', and without proactive conservation, there is a real threat of the falcon becoming extinct in the next two decades. Let's hope that they feed Wilson before they arrive.

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PRESIDENT'S PAGE

Trevor Dennis

It was way too cold for comfort on our Havelock Field Trip, and the light was dull and flat, so it was a challenge getting any really decent photographs. I took the opportunity to revisit HDR. I was definitely over HDR after the 2010 & 2011 National Convention workshops, and had been avoiding it for a while.

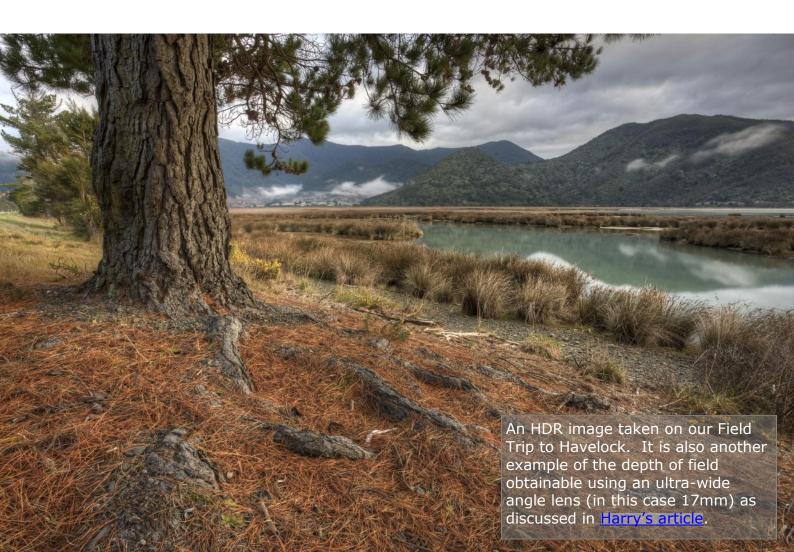
Consequently, I had not used the latest version of Photomatix, (v4.2.2) and was pleasantly surprised to find how much it has improved over previous versions.

It is now very easy to produce a photorealistic merge of your bracketed shots. In fact there are now a large number of presets which get you close with a single click. Out of interest, I tried the same images with Photoshop CS6, and found that it is also much improved when it comes to HDR. The image below is perhaps a little oversaturated for some

tastes, but does not suffer from the nasty artefacts that we used to associate with HDR images.

I understand that a lot of Club members use Lightroom, and I believe a good few use Photoshop, so here's a little trick you might not be aware of. The Clarity slider in Lightroom, and Adobe Camera RAW (Photoshop) is designed to add some pre-sharpening to an image while still in its RAW state, but have you noticed that you can also drag that slider back the other way?

When used in this fashion, it does a remarkable job of smoothing skin tones and ironing out the wrinkles. Of course, you couldn't do this to the entire image, because you'd end up with one big blur with no detail, but later versions of both Lightroom and Photoshop allow you to apply 'negative' clarity locally with their



Adjustment brush. Here is how it is done in Photoshop:

- Open your RAW file in Camera RAW and select the Adjustment brush (outlined in red in the image below).
- Set the Clarity slider to minus 100% and all other sliders on zero.
- Paint over the entire face.
- Switch to the **Erase** brush, and paint out the effect from the eyes, mouth and other important detail.

Adjust the Clarity slider back towards

zero until you get the perfect amount of skin smoothing.

The image below shows with the effect (left) and without (right). Click to view at a larger size.

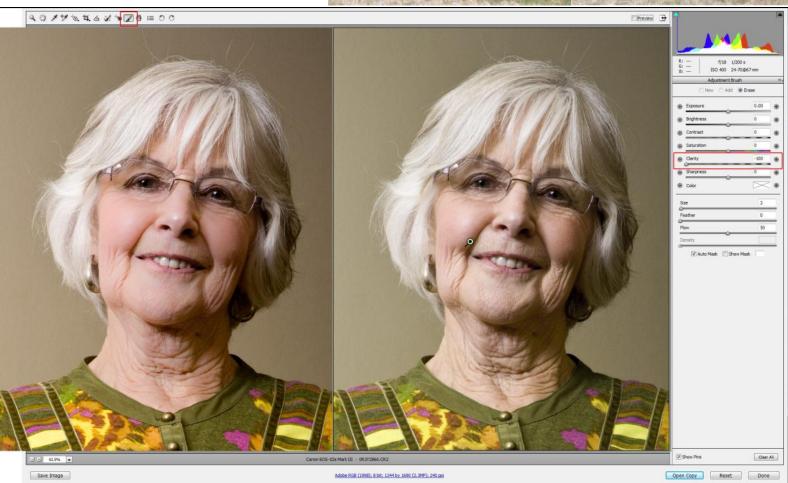
amera manufactures might need to pull their socks up, if they want to avoid losing market share to the ever more powerful cameras that are built into mobile phones. This extraordinary feature recently demonstrated by Nokia, can perform several cool tricks, but the one that impressed me the most was the 'Smart Group Shot'

mode that takes five images and chooses the 'best' faces for each of the subjects. (see video)

Our oft-travelled contributor, Harry Matthews, is currently touring Alaska, where he hopes to get some bear shots. Let's hope he does not get into a similar situation to this hapless photographer, who had to abandon some expensive equipment when a grizzly wanted to play with it. Full story and bigger pictures at Fred Miranda.

Trevor







The Creative Eye

By Roger Thwaites, APSNZ

or many people, Digital Photography is no longer a new and exciting technology, although it can certainly be exciting if you do the wrong thing! Digital has opened up the way to a 'plethora' of new creative opportunities which were not readily available in previous photographic technologies.

There are three main schools of thought when considering creativity in the 'digital photography' domain:

- Using the camera as the creative tool, or
- Using computer software as the means to being creative, or
- The collective use of both the camera and the computer to make creative images.

All options are legitimate ways of being creative, and all can be quite challenging in their own right — it depends on your personal preference as to which of these options you favour most. I personally, favour being creative with the camera, as it gives me far more satisfaction to produce a creative image in the camera than it does, having to sit for long spells in front of a computer screen. For me, it is the 'thrill of the hunt' that is most exciting, and the camera, is where the image begins. To me, this is the most important stage of making any photographic image, although I have been known to 'tinker' a little bit with image enhancement software occasionally!

Being creative with the camera, is dependent on two things mainly:

- A 'creative eye' to visualise and formulate a creative image composition. (Imagination)
- A good knowledge of 'camera technique' for the purpose of capturing the image and all its components, as visualised.

It is recognised that not all photographers are blessed with the natural ability of having 'the creative eye', but most of us can be trained, or can train ourselves to see things more creatively. One of the most important aspects of seeing, composing, and taking a photo is to

SLOW THINGS DOWN!

Images that are rushed rarely succeed, and often result in creativity being compromised. Next time you are out in the field, take the time to look at the scene you want to photograph, through the viewfinder, (NOT the 'live view' on the LCD). Look at the scene with a view to seeing which elements are more likely to give your image the 'creative' edge. Be selective about what you want to include in your image. Walk around, and view the scene from a number of different angles. Check out the colour tones, to ensure that they blend in to give a harmonious effect. Make sure that the elements of your composition are arranged to add 'interest' and 'impact' to your image. Above all make sure that you keep 'creativity' uppermost in your mind while you are doing all of this.

Camera technique is mainly about exposure and this is where a good knowledge of 'exposure compensation' may pay dividends for you. Aperture, Shutter speed, and ISO (sensor sensitivity) are primarily the most important of the basic camera settings. The camera 'exposure mode' settings: Manual (M); Aperture Priority (A,AV, or AP); Shutter Priority (S, or TV); Programme (P); Automatic (A); are designed to allow for different levels of control of the camera, and a good knowledge of them will help you in your quest to be more creative. 'White Balance' can also be another very useful tool, with a number of different settings which will enable the photographer to alter the 'warmth' or 'coldness' of the colour tones.

If you are a photographer who likes to run your camera on the 'Automatic' setting all of the time, you will most likely be severely

restricted when it comes to being creative. The only way to become more familiar with your camera is for you to start using all, or some, of the many settings that are available. The more you use them, the more familiar you become, and the easier it will be for you to take images, leaving you free to put more time and effort into being creative.

The last Club trip, was to Havelock, and the lighting on the day, was quite flat and drab, which meant that it wasn't optimal for being creative, but nevertheless, there were plenty of subjects to get 'creative' with. I have included an example of an



image that I took of dripping water, underneath one of the walkways at the marina. At first glance, the subject looked to be pretty ordinary, but then as I stood there looking at it, a number of ripples began to radiate out from where the droplets hit the sea, forming some interesting patterns. It took some juggling to get the camera and tripod set up, as there was a bunch of reeds sticking out into the scene. The colour image is pretty much, as it was taken, with a small amount of colour saturation to give it a boost. Then my 'Black & White'



imagination kicked in, so I desaturated the image completely, to make it a mono, which had the effect of desensitising the reeds protruding into the image. Anyway, it shows what you can do, using the 'creative eye' and a bit of good oldfashioned imagination!

Roger



Wide-Angle Lenses

wide-angle lens has a short focal length in contrast to a telephoto lens that has a large focal length. The short focal length has several important consequences for photography. For example, you can get much more of a scene in one photo using a wide-angle lens than with a 'standard' or telephoto lens. Getting more in is not necessarily (or even usually) a good thing in photography but can be appropriate, especially when the lens is used carefully. There are other issues to watch for like vignettes, chromatic aberration and distortion. Here are some suggestions for using a wideangle lens.

How do I use my wide angle lens successfully?

In 35mm film terms, a wide-angle lens has a focal length less than about 35 mm. For a full-frame camera like my Canon 5D, the same number applies. For smaller DSLR cameras, like my previous Canon 450D, there is a conversion factor due to the smaller sensor. In the case of the 450D, the conversion factor is 1.3 (APS/C)

so lenses shorter than 35/1.3 (= 27 mm) are considered wide-angle. My widest lens is a 24-105 mm zoom. At 24 mm, it is a respectable wide angle but more specialized lenses can be much shorter. Figure 1 shows an example of a snapshot taken with this lens set at 24 mm on the full frame 5D camera.

Figure 1 is a common use of a wide-angle lens. There is a foreground object close to the lens and the perspective rapidly opens up to include much of the background. This has the effect of pushing the background further away. In this case, the distortion of perspective is not obvious but does serve to emphasize the foreground object over the background while still showing the environment of the foreground object.

Figure 1 also illustrates another useful feature of wide-angle lenses, excellent depth of field. This shot was taken with a small aperture, f/16, but the sharpness all the way from very close to the camera almost out to infinity is characteristic of wide-angle lenses. Telephoto lenses are the opposite.



Figure 1Rarangi Beach

Demonstrates the extreme depth of field typical with wide-angle, and ultra-wide angle lenses.



Getting back to the perspective issue, some subjects are much more obviously affected than those in Figure 1. The cruise ship in Figure 2a looks very unnatural because the perspective pushes the more distant objects even further away. The camel in Figure 2b suffers from the same effect. Truly, the camera does lie.

Wide-angle lenses are subject to other distortions as well. These can be corrected by appropriate software. For example, Figure 3a shows an image of ANZAC memorial stones at El Alamein in Egypt, as it came from the camera. Figure 3b shows the version as corrected by Lightroom (a single click) for this lens set at this focal length, 24 mm. If you look at the building at the top left you can see that the image has changed shape a bit. Similar changes can be seen on the edges and also in the middle although they are not so obvious unless the images are superimposed.

The same image suffers from chromatic aberration. Figure 4a shows the same image as Figure 3b but with the exposure corrected. Figure 4b is a part of this corrected image cropped from the left-hand side. You can clearly see the memorial stones have red and green edges that are due to chromatic



aberration in the lens. Figure 4c shows this corrected by Lightroom (just a single click).

Continued next page



This image also suffers from a lens vignette, which is a darkening at the corners. Figure 5a is the top left-hand corner of the Alamein image (Figure 3a) before any lens correction has been applied. After clicking the lens correction button in Lightroom, I got figure 5b which, as you can see, now has no vignette.

Lightroom knows that I was using the Canon 24-105 mm f/4 L lens set at 24 mm because the data is stored with the image at the time of exposure. Lightroom has a database of lenses that it uses to make the automatic corrections. The changes can be made at any stage of post-processing in Lightroom. I assume that the RAW processor, ACR, will do the same in Photoshop.

It's tempting to assume that modern high-quality lenses don't suffer from "defects" like vignettes and chromatic aberration but especially with zoom lenses and especially as the focal length gets very short or very long problems do appear. Fortunately, as we have

Figure 5a — Top left corner of original El Alamein image. The top left corner is darker due to lens vignetting

Figure 5b — After applying the lens profile correction

seen much of the issue can be easily solved with modern software in post-exposure processing. So go ahead and push your lenses to their limits. Figure 6 was taken at dawn at 24 mm, f/22, ISO 1600, 1/10 sec, handheld on the Canon 5d Mk III

Harry







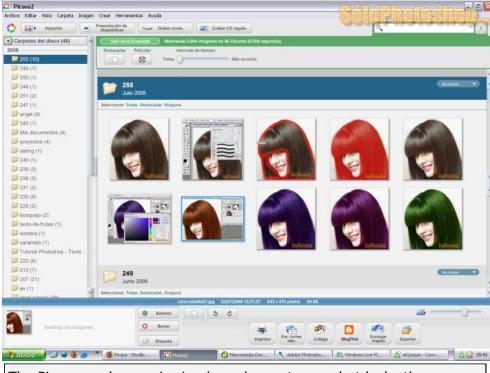




Almost Photoshop Completely for FREE



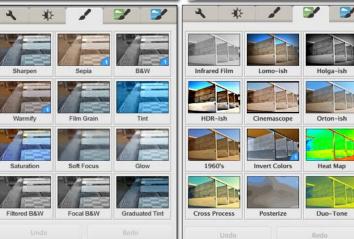
person's interest in photography can probably be measured by a direct negative impact on their bank balance. It can be an expensive hobby, and in these days of digital, your outlay doesn't stop with cameras and lenses. You also need a computer and software to edit your pictures — but most people baulk at spending the price of a good lens on Photoshop. The Extended version of Photoshop CS6 (the one with the 3D features) costs a jaw dropping NZ\$1800, and not so far off half as much again, every second year, if you want to keep up-to-date with the latest versions.



The Picasa workspace is simple and easy to use, but lacks the power some other free image editors.

Crop Straighten Redeye I'm Feeling Lucky Auto Contrast Auto Color Retouch Text Edit in Picnik Fill Light





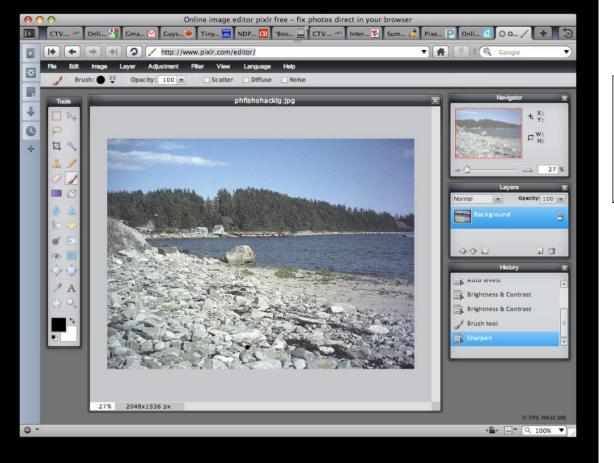
Picasa panels showing some of the filters and effects available. There are lots more.

But there are alternatives, and some of them are available completely for free.

Picasa is supplied by Google along with its online photo albums. It has a number of useful editing features that work particularly well if you use Google's Picasa Web Albums, and as such, it is a great tool for organising your images [1]. There is a reasonable online user guide and it is the photo editor they use at Senior Net, so other Club members may be able to help you with any problems.

But while it has some great features; like red eye removal, face recognition, and support for RAW files, it lacks some of the essential features needed for serious editing.

Footnote [1] **Picasa** takes an arbitrary approach to cataloguing your images, by searching your entire hard drive looking for suitable image files. A local urban myth maintains that this can lead to embarrassing content being discovered, and the realisation that you should think twice before letting other people use your computer!



The **PixIr** workspace shows more tools than Picasa, but you need a broadband internet connection to use it

PixIr is an online image editor that goes several steps further than Picasa, but you need a broadband connection to use it. Like Photoshop, it has both layers and layer masks. That means you can composite different images into a single montage, so could use it to produce a triptych, (and enter the Nelson Triptych Salon).

PixIr's user guide is sketchy, at best, but there are countless third-party web sites devoted to learning the image editor (see the sidebar at the bottom of this page). As a Photoshop user, I found I could easily use the application without referring to the help or user guides.

While PixIr is more powerful than Picasa, the fact that it runs 'on-line' makes its code inaccessible to third-party developers, so there is little in the way of plug-ins for PixIr.

If there is one 'free' image editor that stands out, and comes close to giving Photoshop a run for its money, then it is The GIMP (GNU Image Manipulation Program). The GIMP is an Open Source project that was first released to the public in 1996, and has continued to evolve into the powerful tool it is today.

In fact it has cult status among computer nerds the world over (it comes in many different languages).

Out of the box, it has most of the really essential tools found in Photoshop:

- Layers & layer masks
- A broad range of filters
- It will use the same brushes as Photoshop (there are literally thousands out there).
- Layer Transformation and Distort
- Vector graphics and clipping paths

The GIMP is easy to learn, if you take it in manageable steps, and there are a huge range of <u>tutorials</u> to suit everyone from beginner to expert.



I used the phrase 'out of the box' earlier, and that was referring to the GIMPs seemingly limitless expandability. Being 'Open Source' and running on your own computer, (as opposed to PixIr which has to be used online), and having a cult status, there are no shortage of clever programmers trying to outdo each other adding content to the GIMP, and they use Photoshop for their inspiration. The box at the bottom of this page lists just a few of the sites that add features to the Gimp, along with plenty of tips, tricks & tutorials to get you up and running.

So there you have it — several alternatives to Photoshop without laying out a single cent. I have installed the GIMP on my computer, and will do my best to help if anyone gets into trouble using it. Otherwise, check out the links in the sidebar.

Using Picasa to set Image Size

So you want to enter a Camera Club competition with a Projected Image, and need to resize your picture. Picasa is the most basic of the image editors discussed, in this article, so let's start with that.

The easiest way to open your image with Picasa, is to locate it in its folder, and drag the image to the Picasa icon on your desktop.

If the picture is in Landscape mode, then it is more straight forward. Go to the File menu and choose **Export picture to folder**.

A window will open. First decide where you want to save your resized picture, in **Export location**. The Desktop would be good. Then give the export folder a name.

Next make sure **Resize to:** is selected and **1024** is the value.

Set quality to Maximum.

Click on **Export** and you are done.

I'll add to this month by month, and using the other programs, but please email me if you need any help.

Trevor



Above Two screenshots showing some of the panels and features available with the Gimp (click to enlarge). Below Just a few of the websites teaming with tips & tricks, and hundreds of powerful addons that bring the Gimp surprisingly close to the all powerful Photoshop — but for free!



GIMP User Groups, Tips & Tutorials

GimpTalkGIMP TutorialsGimperNetGimp-tutorials.netTutorializedGimp Tutorials

GIMP Forums 50 Design Tutorials

Plug-ins & Scripts

Gimp Plugin Registry
Gimp Plugins for Photographers
Gimp Paint Studio
How to add Plugins to the Gimp
Handy Tweaks
Plugin Top



Havelock

17th June By Liz Davidson, LPSNZ Field Trip
Report

n Sunday the 17th of June, the day dawned bitterly cold, with the heaviest frost of the winter so far. Undaunted, 11 Camera Club members ventured from the Railway Station car park, and headed to the Marina at Havelock.

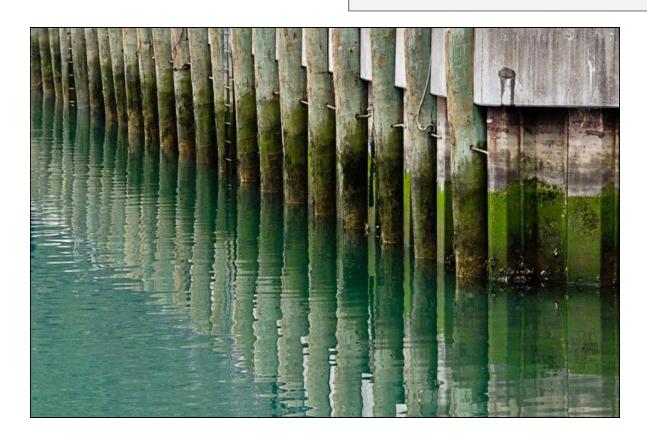
It was a grey, freezing cold day at Havelock, and some of the group warmed up with hot drinks at the Slip Inn café before venturing out and about amongst the waterfront and jetties. Boats of all shapes and sizes, some bird life and reflections were the most popular subjects. As the light was too poor for decent photography, some members concentrated on details. We saw some beautiful craft, but the most popular with some of us were the odd ones in interesting and dilapidated condition. Lichen, rust and even fungi on one particular vessel gave a good opportunity for close-up photography.

Despite the inclement temperatures and poor light, we enjoyed some hilarious

moments and the chance to exchange useful information with each other. That is the positive side of club field trips; the chance to learn from each other, swap ideas for composition under difficult circumstances and have fun.



Rueben, a mussel farm worker, who Liz & Ruth had posing for environmental portraits. The poor man never stood a chance! Liz entitled this picture 'Piles'. Hmm...





Competition Results

And Club Member's Achievements in National Competitions & Photographic Salons

'Food '

Judged by Carolyn Green

Prints — A Grade

Honours

Carolyn Hope Fruit from the Vine

Prints — B Grade

Merit

Nola Neal Oh So Nice

Projected Images — A Grade

Honours

Carolyn Hope Autumn Fruit

Owen Dunne Raspberry Delight

Merit

Owen Dunne High Tea

Projected Images — B Grade

Honours

Jamie McCracken Happiness

Trish Smith Home Produce



Fruit from the Vine by Carolyn Hope



Autumn Fruit by Carolyn Hope



Raspberry Delight by Owen Dunne



Competition Results

And Club Member's Achievements in National Competitions & Photographic Salons



High Tea by Owen Dunne







Home Produce by Trish Smith



And Club Member's Achievements in National Competitions & Photographic Salons

'Open '

Judged by Carolyn Green

Prints — A Grade

Honours

Gordon Walker Cicada

Owen Dunne Paddy Field Ploughing

Projected Image — A Grade

Honours

Gordon Walker Waxeye

Robyn Carter The Way to Mecca

Merit

Carolyn Hope Girl at the Window Roger Thwaites The Headwaters

Projected Image — B Grade

Honours

Heike Richter Jandals



Waxeye by Gordon Walker



The Way to Mecca by Robyn Carter



Competition Results

And Club Member's Achievements in National Competitions & Photographic Salons



The Girl at the Window by Carolyn Hope







Jandals *by Heike Richter*



North Shore Salon of Photography 2012

Digital Set Subject — Abstract

Silver Medal

Don Kelly A Close Relationship

Honours

Robyn Carter Oranga Tonutanga

Acceptance

Don Kelly Otago Lupins
Will Parsons Church Medley

Digital Open Colour

Acceptance

Robyn Carter The Jetty

Robyn Carter High Country Horses

Digital Open B&W

Acceptance

Don Kelly Conversation Pieces



A Close Relationship by Don Kelly



The Jetty by Robyn Carter





High Country Horses by Robyn Carter



NEXT MEETING: Thursday 12th July 2012 at St Mary's Parish Hall, Blenheim, starting at 7.30pm. Doors open by 7pm

What's on:

Results of — Close Up/Open

Hand In - Dilapidated/Open

7:30 Club announcements

7:40 Shelly Sidley and Diana Dobson, along with 'Wilson' the falcon

8:30 Supper

8:50 Competition results and Judge's comments

Please Stack Your Chairs before leaving



26th July — Macro If you have tried extreme close-up photography, and discovered how difficult it can be, then come along

and learn some tips and tricks from **David Brinn** & **Rachel Marfell**, who are two of the Club's best protagonists of macro photography. They will discuss the equipment you can use; the best way to use it, and tell you how to overcome some of the problems involved. This will be followed with a chance to try it for yourself, so bring your camera for some one-on-one tuition from our experts

C-Grade Workshop — we also plan to run a short workshop for beginners who want to start entering Club competitions. But this month the focus will be the mechanics of making it happen. **Gavin Newell** will lead. There should be time for C-Graders to enjoy most of the macro workshop, or all of it if they prefer.

NOTE: We have been collecting donations towards the cost of the hall hire on Fourth Thursday meetings, but the Committee has now decided that the usual \$2 donation will be reduced to \$1 each for family members, and that there will be no charge for youths (under 18) and full time students. Please remember that these are **voluntary donations** and are not compulsory.

Competitions — A Reminder

If you are entering our monthly competitions, then please make sure you understand the basic <u>rules</u>. 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 22nd July — **Lake Rotoiti**. A repeat of our July 2011 field trip to Nelson Lakes. Last year there was lots of snow and beautiful crisp conditions which made for some very sharp photographs. Providing it is open, we'll finish our trip with afternoon tea at the Top House. It's a good drive to the Lakes, so meet at the railway station at **8am**

Sunday 19th 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.

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.

NOTICE BOARD



It was cold on our Field trip to Havelock. Very cold. So Liz Davidson, Helen Horton, and Ruth Gill did the sensible thing, and retired to the Slip Inn for some warming beverages and sticky buns. *Picture taken by Rod Wegener.*

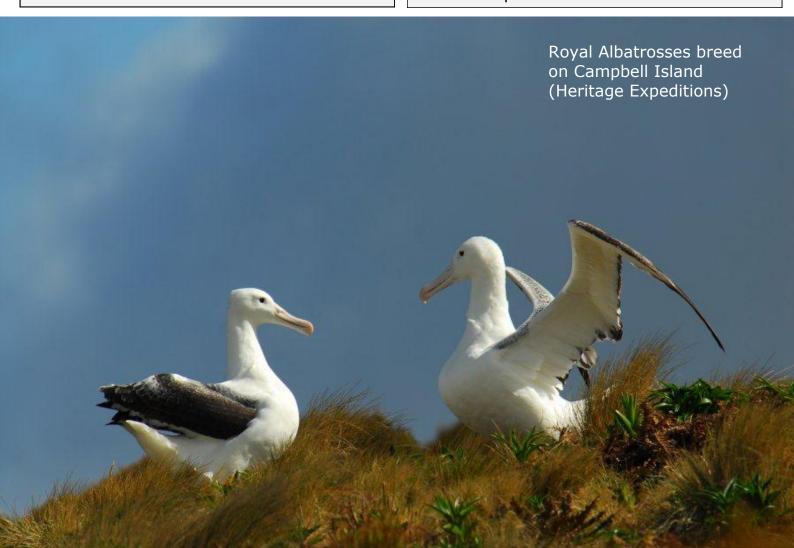
Robyn Carter is back home after another operation on her ankle. She has had a rough time of it, so I am sure you'll all wish her a speedy recovery.

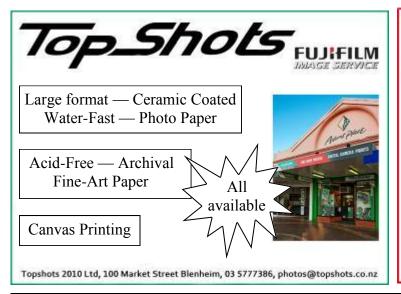
Both remits were passed at our SGM in May, so our full AGM will be at the start of our meeting on 9th August. We will also be moving our main social event to coincide with the Saturday dinner at the Seddon Shields weekend on 8th September. The location will be at the Vintage Car Club, and the cost will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

You've got to push yourself harder.
You've got to start looking for
pictures nobody else could take. You've
got to take the tools you have and
probe deeper. William Albert Allard

Future Club Speakers

August 9th — AGM. **September** 13th — **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.







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Upcoming Events



Southern Regional 12th to 14th October Ashburton Photographic Society More Information





Macro (with David Brinn & Rachel Marfell)
& C Grade Workshop (with Gavin Newall)
26th July — St Mary's @ 7.30pm





Seddon Shields Area Weekend 7th to 9th September 2012 Vintage Car Club Brayshaw Park





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

Events Competitions



