

THE LITTLE MAN

THE NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2007



EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Welcome to this first of a new series of *The Little Man*. You will, of course, have instantly recognised changes in format and title which require explanation. The advent of a new editor provided a sensible opportunity for a complete review of the journal and, consequently, a report was prepared for Council to consider. Council has devoted time at the last two meetings to consider the matter. What you see is the result of careful consideration of how UPP Council communicates with the members and, indeed, how the members can communicate with each other outside the individual circles.

The increase in postal costs and the loss of all advertising revenue have had a bearing on the deliberations. Council has reaffirmed its view that *The Little Man* is of prime importance in the life of UPP and must, therefore, be supported from our income. Sadly, businesses which have supported us in the past with advertising have gradually withdrawn support to small organisations and we have been unable to find alternative sources of such revenue. This, obviously, has a great bearing on costs.

Council eventually decided that *The Little Man* should appear twice a year in a shortened, newsletter, style in Spring and Summer, with a grand issue in Autumn. The newsletters will coincide with Council meetings and the mailing of the Conference week-end literature. This means that the circulation of the synopsis of Council meetings will appear in the newsletters rather than in the circle notebooks via circle secretaries, which should mean most members will see this earlier than before and will carry a saving in print and postage costs. There will also be a saving in postage costs by including the Conference and AGM literature in the Summer newsletter. The Autumn edition will carry reports and pictures from the Conference and will be of higher quality print than the newsletters.

It is hoped that this arrangement will prove of benefit in quicker communication within UPP and that it will appeal to you, the members. Please bear in mind this is the first of the newsletters, the style and layout will develop as my skills with the software increase and, after say, three issues, you will feel that you have quality journals.

Having got all that off my chest I should like to pay tribute to Walter Steiner for all the hard work he put into *The Little Man* during his years as editor. Walter took over the position from Len Holman who had done a great deal to improve the style and appearance of our journal. Walter continued Len's development work and, amongst other things, introduced colour images. He is a very hard act to follow. I am sure every UPP member will wish to join in thanking Walter for his work and I include Gisela, his wife, who also worked tirelessly in her role of Advertising Manager.

It is a pleasure to report the formation three new circles. Two are A-V circles and are reported on more fully elsewhere in this issue. The third is C60 and a digital projected image circle where images are circulated on CD. All reports indicate they are doing well.

PRESIDENT'S REMARKS



Brian Davis
ブライアン デイビス

Another new year in our ever changing hobby when digital is now slowly taking over large sections of it. With most of the high street shops only stocking digital accessories and customers having to order printing paper and such items for delivery from the shops' warehouses. A look at the latest Jessops catalogue is proof enough that mainstream photography is now digital.

I am pleased that UPP is embracing this medium but, at the same time, we are still a home for any member who wishes to use wet darkroom printing and slides.

I am firmly of the opinion that we have to be a forward looking society and embrace all of the aspects of our hobby. For this reason I advocated that we also had a circle dedicated to audio-visual. This was well received at the last convention and we had sufficient members and new members interested to start up two audio-visual circles. These are a welcome addition to the variety of opportunities in our hobby that UPP has to offer. Audio-visual has always been a well accepted way of presenting slides but with digital and the availability of programmes like Pictures-to-Exe and Pro-Show Gold at a reasonable price, this method of presentation has now gained more favour with photographers and it is correct that UPP incorporates the medium into our repertory.

We are nevertheless not ignoring the traditional ways of presenting images either as slides or prints produced by any means. Within the circles we will continue to have ones that will embrace any discipline that the members wishes to pursue. We have found, however, that the number of members interested in slide circles is falling, and, for a six month period, non of the new entrants into UPP were interested in joining a slide circle. This is not something that is particular to UPP as clubs generally are finding that slide entries into their competitions and also entries into regional competitions are falling all of the time.

Work on preparing the next convention started no sooner than last year's had finished. We have booked two speakers and have decided to revert back to a Sunday morning visit when members will have the chance to use their camera. The location has at the moment not been confirmed. Overall another excellent week-

end is in the offering especially when that special added ingredient is added in, that is, the friendship of the membership.

Nick Bodel has agreed to look after our website and we have also purchased the domain name of upp.org, so that it should be more accessible to members and others and, through that increased interest, it is hoped that we will be able to expand our membership

All the best to you all in photography.



NEW MEMBERS

We offer a very warm welcome to our latest members and hope they have a long and happy association with us.

Dr. Edgar Beveridge CDI I	Rory Bevill C9
Jane Booth C60	Molly Clayton C51
Dennis Coote, CPAGB, APAGB	C51 & 60
Bill Dalzell, C9	Christopher Davies
Eddie Dean, C D11	Maureen Dennis, C60
Dave Dingley, C12	David Hall, C8
Maureen Harris, C33	Linda Hogg, C D14
Lee Iggulden, C 2/25	Alan Ives, C D12
Roger Kidd, C D1 I	Jeannine King, C 60
Keith Knight, C D1 4	Michael Middleton, C D1 4
Rachel Miles, C 8	Graham Neal, APAGB, C12
Donald Nesham, CPAGB, C50	
Harold Neville, ARPS, C6	Ann Owen, C33
John Rodgers, LRPS, C3	Bob Scarlett, ARPS, C D12
Gordon Scott, C50	Richard Speirs, DPAGB, BPE2*, CD14
Alan Walmsley, C1 I	Eifion Williams, C 2/25
James Wilson, C50	Judy Yates, C60



DIARY DATE

The 2007 Convention will be at Hillscourt Conference Centre on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 14, 15 and 16 September.

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COVER PICTURE: Meditation Rose by Michael Bennett

HELP NEEDED

Anne Swearman

In reading this heading you probably are thinking that someone is being asked to give large amounts of time and effort to some project. This appeal is for a minimal amount of time and thought, but with major value to UPP.

In my time as Publicity Secretary I have tried several methods, but absolutely nothing works better than a personal approach. The magazine articles worked really well, but the editors are not keen on regular submissions, and apologies to those whose work has been sent but not published so far.

Each circle secretary will now have a CD with an A4 and A5 sized poster and some cards which can be printed off as needed. If you have access to a suitable notice board, (library, club, post office etc.), please put up a poster if you can. I can email them as attachments direct to you if you wish, but can also send a few through snail mail if necessary.

Local knowledge is also very useful. I have managed to get UPP information into a few web sites run by main libraries or town councils, detailing leisure activities for the area. If your town has such a web site, tell me and I will submit information. Also, maybe, newsletters of some organizations may accept a paragraph. My telephone number and email address are shown on the Council Members page of this magazine.

I have sent short paragraphs to many leisure magazines, such as cycling, caravanning, walking and those like 'The Dalesman'. Some reply, most do not. If you see UPP information in any publication you come across, I would be glad to hear.

It is always surprising how many people in photographic societies have not heard of UPP, and most of our members are also club members, so I do not think it would be seen as a conflict of interests if you told them about us.

Those who live in rural areas maybe have a village hall notice board and, remember, that disabled people who have an interest in photography might find it a great boon to be with UPP, if their nearest camera club is difficult to attend.

Any suggestion about publicity sources will be gratefully received. It would be a bonus if we could celebrate our 75th year by increasing the membership, rather than retaining the 'status quo'. Just think how amazing it would be if every member could recruit one other new member!



CONTRIBUTIONS

All items for inclusion in the Newsletter or *The Little Man* should be sent to the Editor: Howard Fisher, 21 Brockwood Crescent, Keyworth, Nottingham, NG12 5HQ

Email, CD or typed are acceptable but 'Word' format is preferred. Images may be sent by email or on CD with a preferred resolution of 300 dpi.

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Keith Knight,	C DI 4	Michael Middleton,	C DI 4
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question, and a quick repartee told him that the kid knew what he was talking about, that kid got University treatment, all the answers and all the time in the world. In my first case it was the simple matter of getting correct exposures for the Erneman, plates being available but not all that cheap, and exposure meters being 'black magic' and totally out of reach of kids! Must have taken Ted all of 3 minutes to tell me just about all I wanted to know – and it's still all in there!

Mind you, 4½ years ago most of it changed, the Nikon bit didn't, but the way of recording did, and I'm still running one of my loves, but this time it's a D100. Fascinating!

FOLIO AND MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

LIZ BOUD



I joined UPP in 1986, twenty years ago and have a deep affection for the society. I have made many friends and some now seem part of my family because we have become so close.

Apart from being a Circle secretary and Senior Vice-President, I have been Folio and Membership Secretary since Stanley Berg handed me the reins about five years ago. Stanley had done the job for many, many years and it has been hard to follow such a dedicated man. To my advantage I have access to email which has helped with keeping in touch with members and circle secretaries. Stanley had to write to everyone using dear old Royal Mail, so I feel I have an easier time. However, I spend several hours each week checking all emails and passing information to the database.

What do I really do in these roles? Well, wearing the membership hat, I work closely with Anne Swearman in Publicity and Francis Ouvry the Treasurer. Most new members find out about us by word of mouth from circle secretaries, members talking to friends at their local clubs, by leaving *The Little Man* for colleagues to read and by magazine articles. The interested person usually writes to me or rings me up for more information, but, in many cases, they have copied the application form from *The Little Man* and sent it to me with a cheque. In most cases people know a current member and ask to join the same circle. Others can be placed in an appropriate circle to suit their wishes as shown on the application form, after discussion with

the respective circle secretary. The Treasurer is then notified accordingly.

It is so important for the circle secretaries to notify me each month of circle numbers and vacancies, so that I can help fill the circles.

The Folio Secretary role co-ordinates all the 32 circles of UPP. Circle secretaries should notify me each month of the number of that month's folio together with information about the circle's members. Change of postal and email addresses are required. Details of circle members going off rota and circle vacancies all help me to keep track of things as a whole. Without this information I cannot help when a circle needs new members. I can also check that each member of UPP receives twelve monthly folios a year, except those circles which circulate at less frequent intervals, as required by UPP rules.

In fact, I try to help circle secretaries ensure that the proper number of folios is circulated. UPP has a membership of over 400 and each member needs consideration. I have worked in the voluntary sector for 28 years and I hope I am able to pass on some of the skills I have developed during this time, when dealing with our members. Some who contact me want instant results; some are unsure of the commitment and some just want to chat (occasionally very late at night).

ON top of all this I run circle DI I and am an ordinary member of circles 19 and 50. I attend the three Council meetings a year and three days at the AGM convention in Birmingham. I enjoy the Convention where I can meet new members and almost all the circle secretaries. I also sell the annual CDs and so get to speak to many members in attendance.

The Convention is a great place to meet UPP members and I highly recommend attendance, and the purchase from me, of the CD.



NEW AUDIO-VISUAL CIRCLES

By Pam Sherren

After our AGM dinner last September, Liz Boud suggested a quick drink to get to know some DI I members as I had recently joined her circle. Half an hour later we had a number of recruits for a new audio-visual circle, C50 – and I had volunteered to be the secretary!

Dennis Coote, who has a lot of AV experience, decided to join UPP and kindly volunteered to assist with setting up and running the circle. Numbers grew rather rapidly and, before Dennis knew what had hit him, he was secretary of the second AV circle, C51. I first met Dennis at the annual Western Counties inter-club AV competition. He had founded this competition many years previously and so he was the ideal candidate to head the new circle.

Despite the fact that a number of members had not previously produced an AV, we managed to launch the folios a month later which was brilliant. Both circles have experienced AV workers so we are all bound to benefit from their knowledge and from sharing ideas and techniques.

I first became interested in AV when I joined Paignton Camera Club after moving to Devon from Kent just over two years ago. The club has an annual AV competition and I was hooked after producing my first slide sequence. Although Paignton Club still has slide sequences, digital has just about taken over and four Paignton members are in the UPP AV circles. In addition, two are in print circles and six in slide circle 33 which we hope to keep going for as long as possible! Molly Clayton, who is a member of C50 and C33, has been showing slide sequences at the Park Hotel every summer, and has raised a considerable sum of money for charity over the years. So, another use for AVs – and how better to use hundreds of digital images that you don't want to delete? How about scanning old family photos to produce a DVD for the family next Christmas? The possibilities are endless – do join us.



ROUND THE CIRCLES

This feature is for the use of our circles to communicate with UPP as a whole. It is not as well used as your Editor would wish but can be a very useful way of bringing UPP together. Please can I encourage all Circle Secretaries to contribute regularly, if not to each issue of *The Little Man*. Why not appoint a circle member to be responsible for sending the contribution? It helps show others what the circle is all about and, if needed, could even be an introduction to new members. Photographs of circle activities are particularly welcome. I hope to receive contributions from many more circles than in the past.

DI 4

Our founding Secretary, Anne Stobbs, decided she needed to relinquish the situation in Autumn 2006 and I found myself becoming Circle Secretary. I was an early member of the circle and therefore pleased to rejoin in this capacity. I should like to thank all the members for accepting this take over and welcoming me into the role.

I should also like to thank Anne for all the very hard work she has done over the years to get the circle off the ground and to maintain its development. I know there have been difficulties on the journey, but Anne has always most cheerfully overcome them. She is a truly lovely lady and all members of the circle join in expressing their appreciation of her work. We are very pleased that she remains a circle member.

I warmly welcome our new members, Linda Hogg, Keith Knight and Mike Middleton and Richard Speirs. Linda adds to our Scottish resident contingent and Mike hails from the East Midlands not too far from my home. We look forward to seeing their work and to their growing contribution to our circle.

Folios seem to be flowing well at present, some were quite close together but have now settled down into a regular monthly progression.

A recent folio notebook contained a piece about Nafferton, the home village of Tom Morton. This was a report of a walk around the village by the East Yorkshire Family History Society, culled from their journal. A surprise for Tom, but it was interesting to be able to learn something about his home village; to put him into a context, as it were.

Howard Fisher, Circle Secretary.

CIRCLE 3

C3, the oldest circle in UPP, will issue its 850th folio in April. We have not reported here for a number of years, a little bit of the 'get round2it' attitude I'm afraid.

We, like most circles in the last few years, have gone through the digital v traditional problems and lost some very long standing and good members in the process. However, we have retained some who have been around for ages! It is good to note that some of the lost members to C3 have not left UPP altogether but moved to other circles which suit their styles, such as B&W, traditional etc.

Although I have always strived to make C3 an open circle accepting all styles of photography, black & white, colour, digital and traditional, all within the confines of not allowing trade prints and a maximum paper size of A4, most members print digital colour these days. The advent of decent monochrome capability in modern printers means we also see a smattering of mono images. We used to be a mounted circle, but with rising costs it seems ridiculous to post around amounts of cardboard, so now we are unmounted and use envopaks, posted first class.

The thirteen circle members are from around the country with a group from the Bristol area, others from Nottinghamshire, Cromer, Stockport, Tweedsmuir and Greenford.

We used to have an annual Meet, but in 2006 support was poor and the arrangements had to be cancelled. Rising costs are the problem, especially for a week-end with some long distance travelling involved. We still meet up informally at the AGM, Focus on Imaging and some RPS Digital events.

There are vacancies for a couple of new members if anyone is interested.

Next time I might get one of the newer members to report.

Ralph Bennett, Circle Secretary.

CIRCLE 7

We recently changed from a maximum size of 7 x5 to a more modern A5 print circle. At the same time envopaks were introduced instead of boxes. Most of our members now enter unmounted prints which has resulted in a reduction of postage fees under the Royal Mail's new rates.

While C7 is still mainly a monochrome circle, our members do enter colour prints.

We welcome a new member in Jackie Thompson and hope she enjoys life in our circle and has a long stay with us.

Congratulations to Paul Hoffman who was recently awarded his CPAGB and we hope other members will also pursue distinctions.

Colin Douglas, Circle Secretary.

CIRCLE 51

' The New Kid On The Block '

Let me introduce myself as the secretary of Circle 51, one of the two AV circles co-ordinated by Pam Sherren. It was she who 'trapped' me into this position when she told me that she had started off C50 but really had too many members. "Would I help her with my knowledge of the subject and possibly take half of the new members into a new group as C51?"

In the past I had spent most of my photographic career organising something or other as a member of the RPS and later the WCPF, but I was getting on in age (75) and felt that my reliability factor was waning rather alarmingly, so I retired from all organisational activities. But it did leave a hole in my life that wasn't getting filled, and Pam's request dropped on me as manna from heaven – something to fill my days for a while. I thought that if I did make a mistake a small circle of nine members would not be a cataclysmic disaster.

I regard Pam as my mentor in UPP circles as she has a vast experience of the organisation so we tend to run the two circles in tandem. There are two programmes for making AV sequences that we tend to use; ProShow Gold and Pictures to Exe. Pam realised that the members split almost exactly into the two user camps, so now C50 specialises in the use of ProShow Gold and C51 the other. Our first folios were gathered together in the autumn of 2006 and C51, being the smaller group, completed it in December. C50 soon after in the New Year.

We are still finding our way, though, and members are coming up with new ideas. Awarding marks is probably our most difficult problem and, instead of awarding a score out of 20, we may find ourselves awarding marks to the best three only as 5,3 and 1, but this is not yet set in stone. There is also the possibility of the two groups going head to head with each member choosing

a sequence to be judged by a single, independent judge. C50 may not be party to that idea as I write but Pam will test the idea on that circle and arrange a competition if there is agreement.

For me the cost of transport of a folio is a bit of a problem. It pales into insignificance beside a print portfolio but, nevertheless, it must be kept as low as possible. To that end C51 send out the actual sequences on one of the smallest Flash Drives I've ever seen, and it goes under ordinary post for 32p first class. All the paperwork goes out by email and costs nothing in real terms. All members receive it at the same time, whereas the Flash Drive must pass from one to another. It is conceivable that C50 will follow a similar path but, as there are two members not on the internet, Pam will meet them in the same club as she attends and pass on work that way.

When the idea of an AV circle was mooted several years ago, I understand that, initially, there were no takers. But, a few years later, with enthusiastic members and the courageous action of Pam to take it on and rope me in to assist her, it looks like we are going from strength to strength. Our Achilles heel will be making sequences quickly enough to meet a demanding schedule of four folios a year. It may end up at three. UPP's initiative has meant that 18 members, and, in many cases, new members to UPP, have a new, strong interest in their lives and an audience for their creations.

As secretary of C51 I'm having a ball!

Dennis Coote, Circle Secretary.

CIRCLE 12

Circle 12 was formed in 1944 from PPP Circle 6 and, until 1950, membership was restricted to those workers with FRPS and ARPS. However, concessions were made and membership was thrown open to 'Advanced Workers'.

Fortunately times have changed, and anyone with an interest in monochrome prints is more than welcome to our group. We accept both darkroom and digital workers, although most of us have now turned to digital processing and capture.

The feeling among our members is that the final result is the important thing rather than how it was achieved.

We have recently circulated our 700th folio

Alan Robson, Circle Secretary



DIGITAL CIRCLES RALLY

by Anne Swearman

What do photographers need for a good rally? A comfortable bed, good food, good company and innumerable subjects for photography. DIs 1,2,3 and 4 had all these ingredients in Whitby, when the rally was held during the Goth weekend. The hotel was not only excellent for both comfort and food, but also proved to be superbly placed for photographers. Wonderful sunrises and seascapes from the bedroom windows, and an easy walk to the harbour where there were always dozens of subjects just waiting to be secured.

One of the especially memorable things was the atmosphere. Without exception all the crowds thronging the town were there to enjoy themselves and show off their amazing clothes, which frequently cost vast sums of money. Consequently the wearers of these spectacular outfits were usually delighted to be photographed. Even a golden Labrador with lace leggings and plumes was ecstatic to attract constant admiration and fuss!

Even though the hotel was large and busy, the service could not be faulted, and the staff always pleasant.

The organisation of the rally was once again a credit to Liz Boud, who even managed to secure a room for our evening



entertainment. There being plenty of prints and projected images to enjoy.

Although there are plenty of great places to visit in the immediate area, most of our cars remained motionless for the whole break. The Abbey, the buildings, the harbour, the beach and the sea, in addition to the people provided a feast of photography for everybody.



LECTURING AND JUDGING

by Peter Yeo, FRPS, DPAGB, APAGB

When it was announced that my old pal, Howard Fisher, was to take over as Editor of 'The Little Man', my first reaction was to wonder where he would find the time to carry out the task, as I know him to be a very busy man. Furthermore, he was taking over from Walter Steiner who had done such a great job; it

would be no easy task to follow in Walter's footsteps. Then I discovered that one way of easing yourself into a new post is to call upon many years of friendship, and so it was that Howard asked me to write an article for him. He also gave me the subject he wanted me to deal with, lecturing and judging. A quick check of my back-copies showed that 'Onlooker' dealt with one aspect of judging in the Spring 2006 issue – the 'Aunt Sallie' aspect, one that many of us is familiar with. However, readers may wonder why it was me who Howard asked for another, similar, article ... well, I have been lecturing and judging around the clubs and federations for almost 40 years, and still get asked back, so I must be doing alright, or there are a number of clubs generous enough to invite me back so that I have a chance to get it right on a second visit!

This is not intended to be a 'how to do it' article as too many readers will be very experienced themselves, and not in need of any guidance from me. Rather, I will make a couple of points and go on to mention one or two things that might well happen to anyone willing to get up and speak or judge.

Lectures can be broadly split into two main types; Instructional and Entertainment. The first is likely to be given by someone known to be an expert in his or her field, and can be aimed at beginners or less experienced club members, in which case the content may need to be restricted so that 'overload' doesn't occur. I am relatively inexperienced at Photoshop and have attended 'Basic Introduction' talks that have left my brain aching and the rest of me needing to lie down in a darkened room for a few hours to recover. More advanced talks in digital techniques should be advertised as such, so that people like me can stay at home, or at least go prepared, with a pocket full of Paracetamol ready for immediate use. So it is a case of 'know your audience' and go suitably prepared with prints, slides, CDs or hand-outs that will ensure that those who come to the talk will get the greatest benefit from it.

Those of us who consider our talks to be more 'entertainment' than 'instructional' need not be afraid to slip in the odd technical tip where appropriate. Even I manage to do that from time to time. Remember, that in any audience there will be people far less, as well as those far more, experienced and skilled than you are. I find that it is best to be humble in presenting a talk so that I don't appear 'cocky', and I certainly strive not to fall into the trap of 'talking down' to newcomers who are in need of help. An insensitive remark to a newcomer may easily deprive the host club of a member, and this is particularly true when judging members' work. It is a good idea to have some light-hearted moments in a talk. Most of us take our hobby seriously, but that doesn't mean that it shouldn't also be fun. If your hobby isn't fun, why are you doing it?

Most speakers will try to show what they are best at, what they gained a reputation for that led to them being asked to visit a club and make a presentation. Playing to your strengths is obviously a good start. Such a talk might be quite specialised, concentrating, for example, on landscape and general nature topics, but, even here, it is wise to aim to entertain as well as instruct.

Too narrowly defined a talk may easily alienate many of the audience who do not share the speaker's enthusiasm. Whilst it is probably true to say that specialisation will have helped to raise the standard of a speaker's work, if a talk does not appeal to a wide cross section of the club membership, an invitation to return at a later date is unlikely to be forthcoming. Being well prepared, with the lecture material sorted into an interesting and logical order, with an ending that leaves the audience hoping to see more at a later date, is something that one should aim for.

Whilst serving in the RAF in Bedfordshire, I was asked to go to a club in East Anglia. I arrived early and sat in the car waiting for an official of the club to arrive and open up. The secretary came along a few minutes before the start time, unlocked the hall and asked me what I was doing that night, a talk or judging. I felt that was a poor start but said it would be a print talk. She went off to find a print stand whilst I began to lay out a row of chairs for the audience. I had placed only six chairs by the time she returned with the stand, and it was then that she told me that no more would be needed. She was right – there were six people in the room – me, my girlfriend, the Club sec and three ordinary members. My PAGB rate travel expenses must have severely depleted the Club funds that night!

Some years later I was delighted to receive an invitation to do a four venue tour of clubs in the west and north of Scotland. I was given dates of the talks and the names of my contacts at the various clubs I was to visit. As the time for the tour approached I was a little concerned that no-one had sent me details of with whom I was to stay overnight or the addresses of the club rooms and maps to help me find them. I wrote to all four 'contact', only to be told that two Clubs had never heard of me, the projected tour, or even heard from the 'organiser' for a year or more. They already had speakers or judges booked and were unwilling to change their arrangements. The other two clubs had vacant dates in their programmes and were quite happy to have me as a speaker. Being of a philosophical nature I decided to go ahead with the trip and talk to only two clubs, after all, that would give me more time to do some photography between engagements. The story doesn't end there at the club where the 'tour organiser' was a member, I found that I was the first to arrive at the community centre. Again, I sat in my car waiting for a key holder to arrive. Unfortunately, she didn't have any small change to feed the electricity meter, but she did have a torch so that I could see to put my money into it!! Well, I like to kid myself that even my prints look better with some light on them!

In the same way that talks should be entertaining, I feel that in judging, one should also entertain the audience. Those who have entered the competition will be on tenterhooks in the hope of doing well, but it isn't possible for all entrants to win. If the judging process is taken seriously, as it should be in fairness to those who have submitted work, it is still worth injecting some fun into the proceedings, if only to give some light relief to those who don't do as well as they hoped. Temper your remarks with a mix of what you see as the good features in a pic-

ture, whilst pointing out the less good aspects. Remember too, that the less than perfect picture may be the work of a newcomer and some ideas on how you think the image might be improved could be considered very helpful by that person. Try to avoid assuming that a poor picture is that of a beginner – it could be the work of the Club's only FRPS, and he was simply having an off day!

Some clubs advertise their weekly meetings in the local newspaper. One of the clubs in Derby did exactly that, but, unfortunately, a spelling mistake crept into the paper and the talk title that should have read, 'My Way With Prints, came out as 'My Way With PINTS'. The club was most embarrassed but, as I live some 60 miles away, I had no idea until the Chairman mentioned it in his introduction. He had told the newspaper editor of the mistake; the editor saw the funny side of the error and got his cartoonist to create something in recompense. I don't drink but found the mistake amusing, and I now have a mounted cartoon amongst my collection of prints as a reminder of an enjoyable evening.

A club that I knew to have some very competent photographers in its ranks asked me to judge a competition. I arrived at the club to discover that there were only twenty-seven entries. Now, there's no way you can make your comments on twenty-seven prints fill an evening. To make matters worse, the standard of work that night was quite disappointing and, I'm ashamed to say, I let my disappointment show. Quite justifiably, I got the shortest 'vote of thanks' possible ... 'Thank you Mr. Yeo'. The chairman then went on to say 'The judge for our next competition will be (the late) Don Brophy ARPS from Chesterfield, and he doesn't take prisoners either!'. When I saw Don some months later I told him the tale, and he was surprised to hear that the club had that view of him as a judge. The funny thing is that I have been asked back to that club on several occasions, both to lecture and judge, so evidently there are no hard feelings. And that is one of the best things about club life; the opportunities that are given to make visits to clubs all over the place, to comment on the work of fellow enthusiasts, and to share your work with them, are worth all the hassle you might occasionally have to accept. Look upon lecturing as a chance to put back into the hobby something in return for all that you got out of it in your early years as a photographer. You will not regret it.



SENSOR CLEANING

Howard Fisher

We have all read dire warnings about dust on digital SLR sensors and admonishments that the camera should be returned to the manufacturer or their agents for sensor cleaning. This brings expense in a charge for the job, carriage and the loss of use of the camera during the time it is away. The latter can be obviated by taking the camera in person for cleaning but that involves travel costs.

I have always felt that I would ignore dust on the sensor unless it became dreadful. After all, dust marks tend to show only in areas of light even colour, such as skies and can be dealt with relatively easily in Photoshop.

The RPS Digital Group hold an annual event at Rugby where there are speakers and stands. I like this show as it affords the opportunity to talk with vendors without the crush often experienced at Focus on Imaging. It is also a good event for learning from the speakers and networking with other folk very rarely met face to face.

At the 2006 event in November I spent some time talking to a stand holder from a firm called Just, who was selling camera cleaning items, including sensor cleaning equipment. Having seen his demonstration I decided to take the plunge and I bought a 'professional' cleaning kit.

It is essential to buy the correct swab size for the sensor in your camera, in my case a quite wide one for the full frame sensor of the Canon 5D.

Having got the kit home I carefully read and re-read the instructions in the very full leaflet with the Just kit as well as the instructions in the Canon manual. Canon suggest using their DC coupler and I believe Nikon have the same recommendation. However, Canon also say a battery can be used and I took the precaution of having a fully charged battery in the camera.

The Just leaflet says that a dust free area should be used for the cleaning process but few, if any, homes will have a sterile area. I simply took the precaution of rolling up my shirt sleeves and being as free from dust as I could.

With some trepidation I removed the lens and located the menu item on the 5D for sensor cleaning. The first screen indicated that there was enough power in the battery. If the battery is low the camera will not allow proceeding until a good battery is fitted. The acceptance screen reminds one to turn off the camera after the clean and pressing OK blanked out the menu and almost immediately the mirror locked up and the sensor was revealed. The Just leaflet said only then to open the sterile pack containing the swab at the handle end and to put 2-4 drops of Eclipse Optic Cleaning fluid on the swab head and then wipe the swab across the full length of the sensor in one direction and then, turning the swab head over, back in the other direction.

With a slight tremble of the hand I did this, wondering whether I should press down or not and deciding to let the weight of the swab do the job. Having done this I turned off the camera and the mirror dropped. I checked the dust had been removed by photographing a light area and viewing the exposure on the computer screen. I used the levels control to lighten the image to be sure there was no dust remaining. There was none so the clean had been a success.

This all took less than 2 minutes.

I shall have no hesitation in cleaning the sensor whenever it is required in future. It also gives me the confidence to change my

lenses as and when required and not have to be too concerned about dust, although taking sensible precautions to keep it to a low potential.

The cost of this cleaning kit may seem high at £60 but I have enough swabs and fluid for quite a few cleans, and, as the nearest Canon service firm is 60 miles away from me, it would have cost almost this to get there, including the fee.

Just sell sensor swabs and the Eclipse fluid in cheaper kits so what does my kit contain? There is a large finned blower brush, anti-static cleaning cloth, Kinetrics Staticwisk cleaning brush, Speckgrabber, Eclipse Optical Cleaning fluid, PecPads and Sensor Swabs. I therefore have a complete cleaning kit, made specifically for cameras and lenses and so have the right tool for the specific cleaning task.



ON MY HIGH HORSE

by Eric G Hall

After nearly half a century of membership of various postal portfolios, including being a circle secretary, being a general secretary and establishing and running a Welsh medium circle, I remain convinced of the valuable contribution that such portfolios make to amateur photography. Alongside these rewarding experiences, however, there has been, at times, a darker side. One insight the experience has given me is the lengths to which some photographers will go in trying and put themselves at the top of the pile. I'm sure nothing of the sort even crosses the minds of UPP members, but I thought you might be interested in the subterfuges employed by some of our less scrupulous colleagues.

Many of these subterfuges employ tactical marking. You may have a print you think is in with a chance of winning, but its quite likely that there is at least one other print in the round which threatens your supremacy. In this case mark it down heavily so as to reduce its average. No one but the circle secretary will know, because the individual marks are confidential. I've never understood why individual marks have to be concealed. If everyone put their mark in with the comment it would encourage greater consistency between marks and comment -- and prevent a member describing a print as 'superb' in public and then giving it 5/10 in private. On the other hand, however, keeping individual marks from circle members does allow one to express in private what one is unwilling to state in public! -- in which case why not get rid of written comment entirely. Given the general abysmal level of print criticism in amateur photography, this would be no great loss.

When joining a new circle it is vital that one puts in the very best of one's prints right at the beginning (never mind how old they are). There are two advantages here. The first promotes what is well known as the 'Halo effect'. Establishing a favorable

impression at the outset ensures that this impression will spread to all subsequent prints, regardless of their merit. The second is the converse of the first and is an example of 'Give a dog a bad name'. If one creates an unfavorable impression at first, this will hang like a dark cloud over all subsequent submissions, however meritorious. The ways in which the 'Halo effect' can be exploited are legion. They include -- just happening to mention that your work has been accepted in the Timbuktu International Salon -- blazoning letters of qualification after one's name on every possible occasion ("Never mind the print, just look at all those letters after the name!") --- mentioning all the cups, prizes, trophies and other baubles one has been awarded and ensuring that all this 'merit' is recorded on the back of the print. All this is designed to intimidate the marker into thinking that the print is better than it really is.

Never express in the comments a reasoned, forthright condemnation of a print, however justifiable this may be, for this will probably ensure that the recipient will mark down your own print in retaliation -- a sort of 'quid pro quo'. If you want other people's marks, you've got to make them feel good about you, so butter them up with descriptions like 'superb', 'outstanding' (even though this is obviously not the case -- and you can always compensate this excess by marking down in private) -- refer in glowing terms to their previous successes and high standards -- at worst you might say 'This is not quite up to your usual high standard', but even here you are on risky ground.

Encourage the view that you are a photographer of vast experience and a technical expert of the highest caliber. Demonstrate this technical superiority in all your prints regardless of the triviality of their content. The former will nearly always compensate for the latter --- another version of the 'Halo effect'.

Spread your marks as widely as possible, use the whole range from 0 - 10. This gives you the maximum influence over the circle's results. Strictly speaking it is not fair to add together marks with different standard deviations (i.e.-range). At one time, when I was a circle secretary, I used to convert marks to standard scores so they could be added legitimately. As it happened it didn't make much difference because everyone used a narrow range of marks -- often only between 5 and 9.

Study carefully the sort of prints that win in a circle. You will soon discover that they lie within a fairly narrow range of subject matter and treatment. Don't stray outside this range (and hence reinforce the narrowness of the range), otherwise you will earn the reputation for taking the sort of photographs " -- we don't like". Circles have a 'winning print' tradition and aspirants to top positions are advised to pursue this tradition rather than merit.

The contribution of the data accompanying the print to the marks it attracts is problematic. On the one hand if the picture has been taken with a prestigious camera the marks may be enhanced, though, on the other hand it opens the possibility that someone will say "Pity you couldn't do better than this with a Hassleblad". On the whole, using a Hassleblad is likely to enhance marks, whereas using a Praktica or a Seagull is likely to depress them. Perhaps the best strategy is to always claim the picture has been taken with a Leica (preferably an M) or Hassleblad -- even if you don't own one -- up to 10 x 8 no one in the circle is going to detect the difference between these and a Praktica!

Another mistake which is lethal to high marks is to omit a title to one's work. Giving a title is an index of laziness. For the photographer it allows him/her to present in words what should be expressed visually in the photograph (remember Lewis Heine's "If I could say it in words I wouldn't need to lug this camera around"). For the viewer a title tells him/her the answer to the question the viewer should be supplying him/herself. The absence of a title makes the viewer work on the picture to generate meaning and -- hopefully -- a creative response. Being obliged to respond to a print at a level slightly higher than the trivial is resented and thus the print is marked down. So -- make the print's meaning obvious, do what has been done many times before, don't make demands on the viewer, spell it out in words if necessary, and your reward will be numeric!

And finally, don't stir it up. Promote a generalized bonhomie. Avoid any serious discussion of core issues in photography and certainly don't attempt a reasoned justification of print evaluation. Once you become the 'bête noire' of the circle you can say goodbye to all but the lower quartile of marks, irrespective of the quality of your photography.

If, on the other hand, you don't give a damn for the top or any other position in these artificial hierarchies -- then you can forget all that has been written above -- and you may find that this amnesia is liberating!



THE FUTURE OF UPP

By The Onlooker

Recently I have been pondering on the future of this great club of ours in the light of the ever increasing acceleration of the digital revolution which we are caught up in. Where will it all end I ask myself? The answer of course will be the total demise of the darkroom means of producing entries with the consequential casting away of the long history of photography which Fox Talbot started nearly two hundred years ago.

Of course over those years there have been many interpretations of basic photography with the arts of Bromoil, bas relief, tone separation, lithograph (which is currently undergoing a

revival) etc. The list is near on endless, but every process was based on darkroom activity as the initiating spur. I am not taking sides but we seem now to have abandoned that source of inspiration and can quite happily get on without it.

So quo vadis from here? As we all know there are a small number of circles which specialise in darkroom work only and more strength to their elbows but even some of the members involved do participate in the electronic production of images at times (even if they keep it secret) so it would be no loss to them, apart from a few nostalgic thoughts perhaps, if UPP changed totally to digital only. With the introduction of more and more internet exchange circles beginning to open up even the use of paper may become obsolete eventually! However, we are overlooking, are we not, the aim of the Society (as shown in our constitution) which states that it exists "for the postal circulation of prints and slides and for the mutual **photographic** (my emphasis) advancement of its members". Ok. Ok. Times change, and I fully appreciate that of course, but not always for the better and we would be unwise I would suggest to totally abandon the ideals of our founding fathers.

There are those in the society who have never attempted darkroom work and have therefore no conception of the wonderful experience of seeing an image appearing on paper in a developing dish. So be it, but is it fair that these members should be expected to comment on and mark an entry in circles where both types of work are acceptable? Equally so of course the same argument will apply to those members who have never attempted the digital process. We often hear forthright views being expressed on this situation and surely it cannot be equitable for such a mixture of styles to exist in the same circle. Whatever one hears about the **subject matter** being the most important aspect of our photography there are those who believe the technical side is the most important, and to them perhaps the most interesting, side of our hobby particularly in digital circles, and much raging occurs as a consequence!

My response therefore would be to ensure that only digital work should be acceptable in the majority of circles but to ensure the continuance of darkroom work such workers would transfer to circles guaranteeing the continuance of traditional style photography. Existing members who use both styles of photography would be catered for if they so wished by belonging to both types of circles of their choice. To my mind this would ensure a much more satisfactory coming together of like minded members to the full benefit of UPP as a whole.

I am aware I have set a hare running of course but it would be interesting to have the views of other members on such a contentious subject. [I will be happy to receive correspondence on this subject for the next issue Ed.]



DEADLINE

The deadline for items for the Summer issue of 'The Little Man—The Newsletter' is 1 June 2007.

NOTES FROM THE COUNCIL MEETING OF 3 MARCH 2007

The Little Man will in future be one larger colour magazine, annually after the AGM, with two shorter Newsletters in Spring and Summer. Lack of advertising income will be covered by sales of CD ROMs.

2007 AGM Convention (Friday 14 to Sunday 16 September):

Judging will be at Ken Payne's home with three judges from Central/Eastern area. Week-end programme will again be: Friday evening 'lecture', which will include presentations by A-V Circles; Two speakers on Saturday; and a walk or visit on Sunday morning.

Confirmed loop for hard-of-hearing will be available in main hall at Hillscourt plus full access facilities for disabled.

Council: Vice-President Liz Boud will be nominated at AGM to succeed Brian Davis as President. Pam Sherren, previously co-opted to Council, has taken on the duties of archivist to free Howard Fisher to concentrate on 'The Little Man' editorship.

Treasurer: reported funds standing at £7,373.44. Membership stood at 375, with 15 outstanding subscriptions chased. Additional Jubilee AGM costs came to approx. £900 but the anticipated deficit for the year could be less than expected with reduced 'The Little Man' costs.

Circle secretaries Meeting (at 2006 AGM) decisions notified:

- A) a member resigning during the year, even if paid up, will not be able to enter the Gold Label competition. (This does not apply to a deceased member).
- B) Closing date for Gold Label entries is 1st August this year but, subject to approved Rule change, will be 1st July from 2008.

Circles:

- a) some changes of Secretary imminent
- b) There are now two A-V circles, with a third planned. A-V circles will show some panels at the AGM but will not be judges as part of the Gold Label competition this year.
- c) Looking into creating Circle 60 as a DPI circle (Digital Projected Image).



VACANCY

A vacancy exists for someone to review the AGM prints and slides at the AGM Exhibition for *The Little Man*. I have done the prints for a few years for Walter but don't feel I shall have time to do the prints justice as I shall be chasing other editorial matters!

The style of review is open to the person doing it, subject to agreement between us, and the length can be variable depending on what the reviewer wants to say.

It is a rewarding, if slightly challenging, task and needs someone who regularly attends AGMs as I found that it needed a couple of years to get well into the task. Perhaps I should not call it a task because I actually found it a pleasure.