

# Camera Clips

Bi monthly publication

September 2011

## From the Editor

James Allan

This month we have had the AGM of the club. Matt Carr retired after 2 years as president and Chris Schultz has been elected as the incoming president. Julie and Ray Goulter have both retired from the board after a couple of years of outstanding service. In their place Yvonne Sears and Richard Womald have been elected as new board members, Yvonne as the club secretary. We have had a couple of years of outstanding growth during the term of the previous committee and I wish the new committee the same degree of success.

We have had 2 competitions since the last Camera Clips. Illusion and Reflections, in which we have seen a couple of new judges, Lindsay Poland and Emily Schultz (graphic designer and daughter of Chris Schultz). They have both taken a different perspective from our previous judges, paying particular attention to print quality and design principles. Although this can be threatening at first, it has also been very useful in drawing attention to areas where our photography could improve. I have taken the liberty to use one of the high scoring images from the last competition to create the banner for this month's Camera Clips. The banner depicts the hood ornament from a jaguar, taken by John Vidgeon.

As an incentive to people choosing their images for the annual exhibition I have created a photo gallery by selecting some of my favourite digital entries from the last 12 months. Check it out on page 2. I encourage you to feel inspired and select images that go one step further than just being a pleasant picture. Show a bit of experimentation and willingness to try something new.

The articles this edition have an International flavour, Helen Whitford has kindly submitted an article about her travels in Africa. For months we have been inspired by her images of African wildlife. I must admit that I have become afraid to go to the zoo, as my pictures cannot compare to her wonderful portraits of the same animals in their natural habitat. Read on and hear the back-story. She also gives tips on wildlife photography.

John Duckmanton wrote a fabulous article on butterfly photography several months ago. He has shared our newsletter with a friend of his from the UK who in turn has asked if he can submit an article. John Sansom has taught photography for many years and is holder of an internationally recognised qualification in photography, the LRPS. He writes about a British founder of photography, William Fox-Talbot. Read on and discover more.

If you want to see the images from recent competitions and the recent Club photo shoots, Blackwood at night and the day trip from Tailem Bend to Narung check out the webpage and the Flickr group. Lastly there is an article about the Mylor Wine and Roses photo competition that was attended by myself, Chris and Ray.

## Africa

By Helen Whitford

**Aah...Africa.** It's true what they say - once you've experienced Africa, it calls you back. My partner, Russell, and I did a six week trip to Africa in February 2006. We took a Geckos trip in Tanzania (Serengeti/ Ngorongoro Crater) through Peregrine Travel and arranged the rest on-line.

The Geckos trip was on an overland truck with 14 other travellers and, though it was a great trip I would have preferred a smaller vehicle with fewer clients. Photography was often difficult as we only had small opening windows and were fighting for vantage points to capture the lions, buffalo, impala, gazelles, hippos, elephants etc. The wildlife viewing was just amazing!

Next we were on a three week safari in Botswana, arranged online with a local company, Bushways. Our vehicle was an open-sided extended jeep and we were only six clients so viewing was much better and it was easier to stop for photos though I still had to shoot from the vehicle most of the time and it was often moving. Bottom line - I have a lot of photos that are not as sharp as I would have liked! In fact, fiddling with settings on a borrowed D100 (long story) with a 70 - 200 f2.8 lens which wasn't nearly long enough, I was getting very frustrated and was envious of what a fellow traveller, a total nov-

*Continued page 3*

Contacting a member from the club; This month Mark & Jenny  
Pedlar : [mnpjpedlar@biqpond.com](mailto:mnpjpedlar@biqpond.com)

## Upcoming Events

November 10—Annual Exhibition—Judging

November 24—Annual Exhibition—Awards

December 3—End of year Picnic

January 19—Tell a story in 5 minutes—Bring along your digital or slide audiovisual presentations

February 2—Competition—Photos to be taken in the Mitchim area

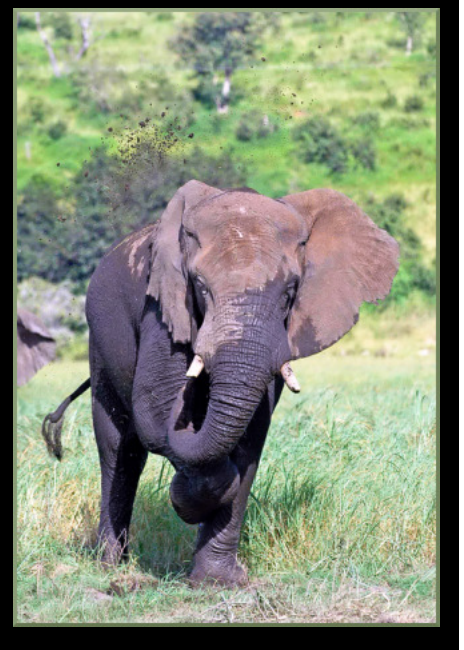
February 16—Workshop—Portrait in natural lighting

March 1—Competition—Man vs Nature

March 15—Workshop—Low light

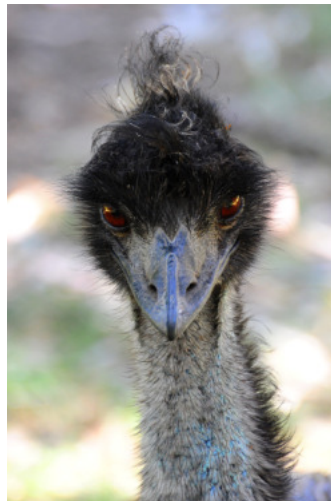
March 29—Competition—Book Title

April 12—Speaker—(TBA) - ?  
Lindsay Poland—Getting the most when printing images





## Photo-essay: Images from the digital competition



Looking back over the year I have decided to select a few images that made an impression on me from the digital competition. I'm not sure whether they were recognized by the judges on their respective nights. I am going to explain briefly what it is I liked about these images.

1. Cunningham Pier by Ursula Prucha  
The lovely golden light making the building stand out from a dark and dusky sky is very evocative. It creates an impression of the Victorian era from which we are left relics of great public spaces and great architecture.
2. Emu Portrait by Mike Davidson  
Of the numerous Emu pictures in competition this year, this one is the most engaging. I think the eye contact and the curl on top create a sense of expectation.
3. Abstract003 by James Taylor, a movement blur shot is one of the few true abstracts in the abstract competition. It is also pleasing and well done.
4. Country Life by Heather Connolly invokes wonderful memories of relaxing with a cuppa in the outback.
5. Nesting Storks by Theo Prucha is one of my favourite bird shots. The Storks which are known to nest on roofs in Northern Europe (although not shown in the photo) creates a sense of man living with nature. The exposure (difficult for black and white birds) and the focus are both good.
6. Summer fruit by David Tulloch is a well crafted still life, sharp, with beautiful colours and a very simple composition.
7. Glass half full by Jo Tabe is a very clever illusion. I don't know how Jo did this picture. My guess is that the glass was photographed on its side with glad-wrap over the top, and then displayed as if upright.
8. Red Tail Black by Richard Womald  
This shot has to have been taken in the wild. One of my favourite birds photographed flying over open water. You were very lucky.
9. Man vs Nature by Alex Zapcev is probably the most poignant images I have seen this year. A firefighter stands relaxed in front of a smouldering forest fire. The sense of threat and the story behind it are self evident.
10. Photographer, a portrait of Ashley Hoff taken by Chris Schultz through the lens of Ashley's beloved Bronica. I was standing only 1 meter away when this photo was taken on the spur of the moment. I am surprised by the clarity of the final image. Well observed.



ice, was getting with her new Panasonic Lumix p&s!

I had taken a monopod, thinking it would be good for steadying the camera but as we were usually in vibrating vehicles it barely saw daylight, so hand-held was the norm, I just had to think about shutter speed, aperture and ISO and get what I could.

This was very early days with digital for me, I was shooting jpeg, wasn't happy with exposures but couldn't figure out what I needed to change, then back home I was making adjustments to originals but had no understanding of sharpening and had a very dark monitor (but didn't realise the monitor was the problem) so it turns out I over-brightened most of my pics and felt they just weren't sharp. The result is a lot of over-worked pictures and I would certainly do it differently now ie. shoot RAW or at least work on copies



Although I was frustrated with equipment and access, the experience of Africa easily lived up to my high expectations. We saw around 60 species of birds and 70 species of other animals and I managed to photograph most, with varying success. Pioneering wildlife documentary film-maker, Hugo Van Lawick, said that when photographing animals he always looked for great light, a great backdrop and that the animal must be doing something interesting. Getting photographs along those lines was certainly my aim, but wasn't always possible - I have a lot of 'record' shots! However, my best images are certainly those which follow those guidelines!

The culture in different communities was fascinating. We visited a Masai village and passed through remote, primitive towns. People cooked on fire pits and slept in mud huts sealed with cow dung but then our guides pulled out their mobile phones in the middle of the Serengeti! Overall the people we met were lovely - very friendly and welcoming.

The Botswana trip included the Okavango Delta, Mkgadikgadi Pan and Moremi and Chobe parks. We saw large herds of elephants, a myriad of antelope and a rainbow of birds. Our transport included boats, canoes (mokoros) and light plane and we camped in small tents, sometimes in untouched bush sites. A hyena screaming one metre from our tent flap at 3am was one of the more surprising experiences, and the lion tracks that skirted our campsite were another interesting discovery the next morning!

Following Botswana we spent a few days in Victoria Falls, viewing the falls from helicopter, walking close enough to get totally drenched, and white-water rafting on the Zambezi (brilliant fun apart from the nearly fatal bit!). Then we headed to Hwange in Zimbabwe where we were the only guests at our lodge and had private game drives and got nice and close to black rhino (on foot!) and painted dogs.

The final four days we spent at Antelope Park, near Gweru, Zimbabwe, a lion breeding and conservation project, where we walked with lion cubs up to 17 months old and played with younger ones in their enclosure. For me, a crazy (big) cat lady, this was the highlight and I loved it so much that I returned last year to volunteer for six weeks, working with the lions. Of course, being that close made for wonderful photo opportunities with not just lions but also the resident giraffe, elephants, zebras and antelope. (Incidentally, a documentary series, Lion Country, shot there is currently airing on GEM, Tuesdays 7.30 and features lions which are personal friends of mine!)

There is something primal and enticing about Africa, perhaps it's our roots in Olduvai Gorge or maybe the iconic wildlife of childhood fantasy. Is the Dark Continent still calling me back? Absolutely! And I will get better pictures next time!

(You can see more Africa photos on my Flickr page. Go to the club page - members - 'the hid'n flower')

### Tips if you're thinking of travelling to Africa

- Go!
- Travel in the smallest group you can afford (a dedicated Photo Safari would be good but tends to be expensive)
- Shoot RAW (or work only on copies) and take a laptop or storage viewer to download
- Take at least a 400mm lens, 600 would be better
- Mix camping out and lodges - both have their advantages
- The golden hours for photography are also the best for wildlife viewing but be aware you may be dealing with low light
- Do everything!





A greeting from Lacock Abbey in Wiltshire, the home of photographic pioneer William Henry Fox-Talbot (1800-1877), the inventor of neg/pos photography.

I have lived within five miles of Lacock Abbey for nearly 40 years, and have been involved in photography for nearly 60 years, selling equipment, doing Wedding Photography and teaching photography for all of my working life, so Lacock has become a 'Mecca' for me'

For many of those years, both the village and the Abbey have been run by The National Trust who have preserve both, as far as possible, as they were at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. They do have electricity and running water, but cars are discouraged. The village has become a Mecca for the 'period drama' producers. If you have seen any of the 'Harry Potter' films you have seen Lacock,- both village and the cloisters in the Abbey feature in those and other Film & TV productions

But the Abbey has a greater claim to fame, for it was here that the Negative/Positive process was invented by William Henry Fox-Talbot. The Abbey was built in the early 1200s and housed a convent of Augustinian Canonesses, it was a prosperous and comfortable Nunnery until the Reformation and the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 16c.

In 1539 the buildings and land were sold off to William Sharrington for £783, he was the first of Fox-Talbot's ancestors to live in Lacock Abbey.

William Henry Fox-Talbot was born in 1800 in Dorset and was educated at Harrow and at Trinity College, Cambridge. He was a 'gifted' Astronomer and Mathematician and was awarded a Fellowship of the Royal Society at 32. He became 'Squire' of Lacock when he was 21, and was elected MP for Chippenham (including Lacock) in 1832.

A delayed Honeymoon in Italy in 1833 sparked the idea of photography, he had taken a Camera Obscura to help with his drawing skills and, as he wrote later

*'this led me to reflect on the inimitable beauty of the pictures of nature's paintings which the glass lens of the camera throw on to the paper in its focus, how charming it would be if it were possible to cause these images to imprint themselves durably and fixed upon the paper, and why should it not be possible I ask myself'.*

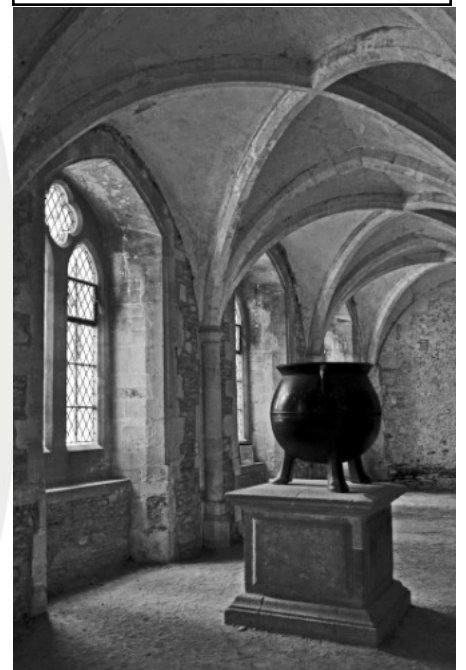
And so the idea, which was to be called the Calotype, was put into his mind. It was known that certain chemicals were affected by light. The problem was how to fix the image once it had been formed.

A number of other people were working on the same idea but, since communications were difficult, it is unlikely that they knew much of each other. Fox-Talbot had all the requirements, his knowledge of science was a good starting point, he had money and time, and staff on the Lacock estate to do the labour. It still took 6 years to produce a viable system, and he was beaten to the finishing line by the Frenchman Daguerre whose system had a basic flaw – it produced a single image, if a second image was required, you had to go through the process again. Fox-Talbot announced his invention to the world in 1839.

Fox-Talbot's Calotype, (from the Greek), produced a negative from which any number of copies could be made. To produce the negative, a sheet of paper was coated with light sensitive material, then placed in a camera – a wooden box with a lens. The camera was placed in a position where it could



Portrait of William Henry Fox Talbot



The Cloisters of Lacock Abbey with available light, printed as a Calotype would have looked. (J. Sansom)



The Fox Talbot Camera with negative of "the lattice window" his iconic Calotype.

capture a suitable scene over a long period, the emulsion was very slow and the exposures were very long, hours in some cases. All exposures had to be guessed, no light-meters then. This explains why Victorian portraits show people as stem-faced, they could not hold a smile for the long exposure. The 'positive' was made by putting the negative together with another piece of coated paper and exposing through the negative. This was the weakness of the Calotype, the positive was not as sharp as the Daguerre, the paper softened the image, why Fox-Talbot didn't think of glass for the negative is a mystery, that was left to Frederick Scott-Archer to think of that with his invention of the Wet Collodion system. The calotype system lasted about 10 years, but the faster Wet-Collodion process eventually superseded the Calotype.

Fox-Talbot had made photography a viable system, he opened a Portrait Studio in Reading where the rich came to be photographed, and he published the first book with photographic illustrations, this book, titled 'The Pencil of Nature' was published in small quantities – there was no picture printing process, so each print in each book was a true photograph. Most of them are in public and private collections now but, if you can find one, it is worth a fortune now.

Fox-Talbot himself rather lost interest in photography as his Calotype system declined, he had many other interests which took over – including running the Lacock estate, and in the 1860s he became reclusive, rarely leaving Lacock, though he did visit the Great Exhibition in Paris in 1867. His Grand-daughter Matilda was the last Fox-Talbot to live in Lacock Abbey, when she died in 1958, the estate passed to the National Trust.

William Henry Fox-Talbot died in 1877 and is buried in the family vault in the churchyard in the village of Lacock, but Lacock Abbey is a lasting memorial to his genius.

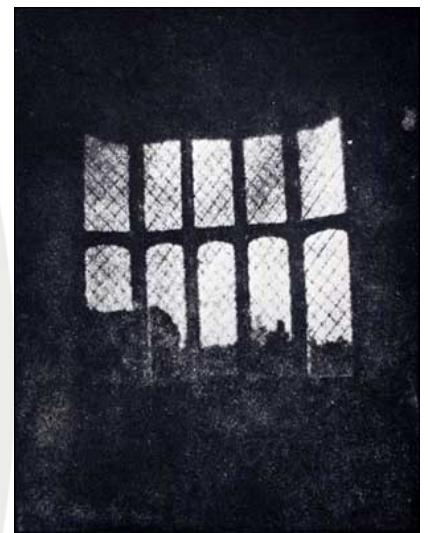
I have used his method as a part of a photographic course I ran for several years. On the first session of a basic course, I would put a sheet of photographic paper in a large 'pinhole' camera we had constructed from a cardboard box. I would place the box on top of a filing cabinet overlooking the group and start the exposure. After about 35 minutes (from experience), I would process the paper. At that point I had a paper negative, the next week I would make a print by sandwiching the negative with another sheet of photographic printing paper and make a positive print. This would show the room, with lots of swirls where the group had moved around during the first session. It was always a hit with the groups, and a graphic illustration of how the process worked.

Lacock Abbey is open to the public on most days, visitors can roam the estate and see the interior – including the famous 'Latticed window' – the subject of Fox-Talbot's first image. The cloisters are open whenever the grounds are open, and make some interesting subjects in themselves. Also within easy driving distance is the Roman/Georgian City of Bath, the City of Bristol with the Clifton Suspension Bridge and the S.S. Great Britain, Stone Henge, the Avebury Stone Circles and so much more. The area is a photographer's paradise. If you are coming our way it is well worth a visit.

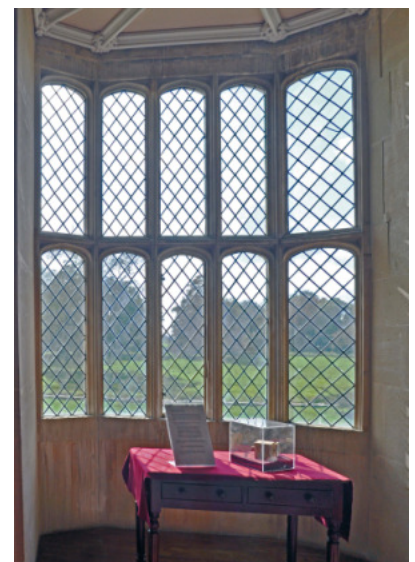
John Sansom LRPS



Lacock Abbey as it is today



The Positive of the Lattice Window Calotype



A modern photograph of the same window.



Eight thirty last Saturday morning I met Chris Schultz and Ray Goulter to do a photographic shoot of the Adelaide Hills town of Mylor. An acquaintance of mine, Paul Howe had been on at me for months to enter their photographic contest. In the last week he phoned saying that they desperately required images for the competition.

Cold and early I arrived with my Panasonic lumix, to discover Chris and Ray were already present and setting up their tripods. Ray brought out his Cambo view camera. (see the June edition of camera clips) With the hood over his head he really looks the part. We had an enjoyable wander around the town photographing the buildings, the residents, the cows and whatever took our fancy. Chris went into the café / restaurant and took a photo of the owners setting up for the days trade. He was rewarded with a free coffee. I met the minister to the Uniting Church who had come down with his wife to mow the lawns and do maintenance on the property. We had a lovely time photographing the old Coopers fodder and grain store that was established in 1892.

Ray unfortunately was busy and has not had time to develop his images. I would love to see what he has produced. Chris and I both entered the competition under 4 of the categories listed. In the end there was no shortage of images, with over 200 prints being displayed. We were rewarded with two firsts and two second places. In addition the Uniting Church minister approached Paul enquiring about purchasing the portrait of him in his gardening clothes outside of the church. An enjoyable and fruitful expedition. It might be worth encouraging a greater contingent from the club to enter next years competition.



### Aesthetic Choices—a readers survey

James Allan

Is it alright to sacrifice sharpness in order to create a more dynamic photo? It might be. It depends upon how it turns out. Beware however it might not please everyone. You will recall that in the last episode of Camera clips we asked readers to report on what importance they attributed to various attributes of a photo. Actually this survey was designed by my son Tom when he undertook his year 12 research project. Thankyou to everyone who completed the survey.

We received 16 replies from club members. In addition one person responded that really it was impossible to rank the attributes, in that all were important at different times. The final ranking of choices can be seen in the figure to the right. I have compared the club results to the same survey conducted to Tom's friends at school. The values can be roughly divided into 2 groups, those that are seen as more important (index from 5-10) and those that are of lesser importance (index 1-5).

It is obvious that the camera club and the year 12 students have a lot of similarities. Exposure, focus and having a subject of interest are all highly regarded by both groups, whereas patterns, textures, people and dynamism are regarded as of lesser importance. The differences are also interesting. The year 12 students rate exposure and focus above all other criteria by a significant degree, whereas the camera club rate the subject and a sense of narrative more highly.

Well where does that leave us? It does not answer all of the questions about why people will prefer one image over another. However it might be useful to see how your own preferences differ from those of our peers (or of year 12 students).

BPC Members		Yr12 Students	
Subject	6.5	Exposure	9
Narrative	6.1	Focus	7
Exposure	6	Depth	6
Focus	5.5	Subject of	
Amos-		Interest	5
phere	5.4	Atmos-	
Pattern	4.9	phere	4
Depth	4.8	Narative	3
Texture	3.7	Dynamic	2
Dynamic	2.9	Patterns	2
People	1.3	People	2
		Texture	2