



Volume 6 Number 12

April 2014

Shutterbug

NEWS LETTER





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This newsletter is published monthly via posting to the club website. Back issues can also be accessed from the website.

Submissions: The editor welcomes ideas, questions, suggestions, and photos that illustrate club activities. Sold an image? Exhibiting? Win a photo competition prize? Taking a photo-related course? Other members would be interested in hearing about it.

Please send material to Editor Frieda Van der Ree:

newsletter.opc@gmail.com

Visitors welcome

You may attend two free meetings (either/or general or education) before deciding if you would like to join. Please check in at the membership desk as you enter. The membership dues are \$36 per year plus \$12 for a name tag.

Oceanside Photographers is a member of the Oceanside Community Arts Council.



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Cover Photo: John Groenhof took this shot of Canada Place in Vancouver with a Canon EOS 5D Mark III.

The aim of the club is to promote learning, sharing and the enjoyment of photography in a convivial atmosphere.

Club doings...

Take your photography to new heights!

"Aerial Photography—A Different Perspective" will be guest speaker (and new member) John Critchley's topic at the April general meeting.

He will discuss how to make the most of the experience, what equipment (and what not) to use), camera gear setup and choosing weather conditions.

John will illustrate his talk with his own images taken in at various sites over the Fraser Valley and Mt Baker, including a small wedding in Chilliwack.

Coming up

General Meeting

Wednesday April 2nd at the QB Civic Centre East Hall 7-9pm

Field Trip to Heritage Forest in QB

Sunday April 13th

For more information about this beautiful 50-acre forest park [click here](#).

Education Meetings

SIG meeting: Wednesday March 26th at the QB Civic Centre Windsor Room 7-9pm

Regular Education Meetings: Tuesday April 15th at the QB Civic Centre Windsor Room 7-9pm.

Club exhibit at the Quality Resort Bayside - March 2014

During the opening night of the Brant Festival event (March 1st), attendees were asked to vote for their 'favourite' three pictures, and at the end of the evening, those selected as first, second, third were announced, and ribbons placed on the pictures. Wayne Duke placed first with his 'Great Blue Heron', David Blackmore placed second with his 'West Coast Ballet' and Vivienne Bearder placed third with her 'French Creek Sunrise'.

Several club photographers donated their pictures for the silent auction in benefit of the Nature Trust of British Columbia. Contributors were Wayne Duke, Kevin McGuinness, Corrie Dekluyver, Steve Price Francis and Margorie Dunlop, who donated a picture taken by Alan Cornall. All donated pictures received bids during the silent auction.

My personal thanks goes to Kevin McGuinness, who cheerfully helps hang the club pictures, and to Wayne Duke who also assisted. Lastly, thanks to all our club photographers whose pictures help create a beautiful wall of art at the Quality Resort Bayside!
by Vivienne Bearder



First I would like to say thanks to everyone who helps with the education side of the club. I really appreciate the time and expertise all of you give to the education meetings.

It has been a busy time so far at the education meetings. The latest news is that **we now have two education meeting per month**, the second one being devoted to the SIGs. This is a work in progress and we will see how it goes and then decide whether to carry on with this meeting. Input from you all is always welcomed as to how you would wish this to be run.

We have added a **new SIG**, Photographic Techniques, which is very popular. Leader Les McLean is such a good teacher and so knowledgeable and he always has time to help club members. Photographic Critique was suggested as another SIG but not quite enough people are yet enrolled.

A problem is that computers are usually used as display screens at each SIG table and it is always difficult to crowd around only one. I am discussing other options—such as using a screen and projector—with the leaders.

Over the months we have done several **hands-on projects** such as water droplets, photos with black backgrounds, metering and zoom burst. These seem to be popular. People try out the techniques as an assignment and then upload their pictures for viewing the following month.

In February Bill Trace, one of our new members, gave a talk on the basic relationship between shutter speed, aperture and ISO.

We also did a **project** in which we took photos of the fountain in QB with various types of cameras (Point & Shoot, Compact and DSLR, iPhone etc.) to see what the differences were. We decided there was little difference unless you zoomed in which would matter only if you were making large prints. The exercise proved that good pictures are possible from almost any type of camera.

The library is being brought to the Education meetings now as there is more time to browse at these meetings and please do make use of it. The Elements dvds I brought can be borrowed for however long and then when finished please bring them back so someone else can take them. They do not have to be signed out. I bought two new DVDs recently—one on Lightroom 4&5 and one on Fundamentals of Photography by The Great Courses. Borrow them and enjoy. There is another good DVD called Learn and Master Photography. These do have to be signed out and brought back at the next meeting. Please see me to borrow them.

Very few books have been borrowed during the past months, not enough to justify the work Paul Edelenbos does to cart all of them around. They are listed on the website so



Zoomba picture by Jim Troyanek

you can browse there and let me know if there's a title or even a topic you're interested in and those books will be brought for you.

We have reinstated the **favourites table** at the education meetings as those allow more time to browse and talk to the photographers. If anyone is willing to host a table please let me know. I also thought I would ask about six photographers to bring two photos each to a meeting and that way it is not too much of a hassle for you and not so intimidating. They do not have to be framed—just matted or simply printed, or in an album or photobook.

Thanks everyone for turning out to the education meetings. I hope you are all enjoying them. Again, your suggestions are always welcome.



April : Light Painting

The assignment in April will be painting with light after it gets dark! This is not as daunting as it may sound and everyone, regardless of camera, should be able to have a go.

Here are the basics:

—Take any object and place it somewhere in your garden, or use something in your garden that you would like to ‘paint with light’, i.e. an ornament, spring flowers, a pot, etc. Let us keep the subject matter simple so that everyone can have the opportunity to take an image.

—You will need a flash light (preferably LED) as a light source.

—You will need a tripod or other means of stabilizing your camera, to prevent blurry pictures caused by camera shake. Those with a point and shoot camera and no tripod can try using a bean bag, a stool or small table on which to place the camera.

—A cable release is handy but not essential. Another way to minimize camera shake is to use the shutter release timer.

—Experiment with coloured plastic filters if you have them.

—You need a long exposure, so those who do not have the ‘bulb’ setting should check their manual to see how to get a one-to-

three second exposure. You may need to go to Shutter Priority (TV on some cameras). If you don’t have a manual you can download a pdf version from the manufacturer’s website.

—While your shutter is open start painting the object with your flash light. Stay behind the camera, or if you go in front of it you must keep moving so as not to register on the sensor – unless you want a ghost like image and that might be fun too!

—For those not familiar with ‘bulb setting’, it allows you to keep the shutter open indefinitely—great for doing star trails etc.

—Try different ISO settings although the bigger (faster) number will result in more noise.

—Also think about your White Balance setting, especially if you are shooting in jpeg only. If you shoot in RAW you can change it later in Photoshop. Have a look to see if your image is the colour you wanted and if not, change the WB until you get the look you like.

—If you go online you will find all kinds of information on painting with light. There appear to be three variations: light painting, light drawing with light sticks, and kinetic light painting. For this exercise, we will stick with just the light painting.

—Set focus to manual and then pre-focus on your main subject.

Experiment! That is the whole point of this exercise. I look forward to seeing your results.

Assignment guidelines

As we have so many new members it is time to reiterate the assignment guide lines.

Before you even press the shutter ask yourself if this is well composed image, or just a snap shot. The difference shows! Step one: Take your time.

BLACK AND WHITE

Images must be black and white only. No sepia, colour casts or having parts in colour. There is to be no digital manipulation in an editing software. Fine tuning of contrast and sharpening are fine.

COLOUR

No software HDR, (that comes under ‘digital art’). We want to give everyone who enters the colour category the same chance. A little saturation, sharpening, contrast, etc. is perfectly acceptable. Removal of small objects with the clone tool is okay too. Dust on the sensor can lead to blotches in the sky. Removal of these is a good thing!

DIGITAL ART

In this category you can go wild and the sky’s the limit. However, every photo used in the composition of the final image must have been taken by you and not copied or taken from another source.

If an image does not meet the club’s criteria it may be removed before voting. If you enter a competition, say in a magazine, and you do not follow their guidelines you will be disqualified so it is a good discipline to learn this in the friendly atmosphere of a camera club.

Foregoing my annual trip south this winter meant a little extra cash in the wallet, which was crying out to be spent. Who am I to argue when there's always something needed, photographically-speaking? I'd already up-graded my camera and had a good arsenal of basic lenses, but they were acquired on a budget. Their higher apertures were limiting my choice of shutter speed, and the aperture changing by focal length was becoming annoying. I mostly shoot hand-held and overcast skies meant I was pumping up my ISO's to 5-600 and higher. I found myself in front of the computer compensating for 'noise' more than I liked.

The first decision was made – I needed a fast lens with constant aperture but what focal length? Quality lenses aren't cheap and I didn't want to buy something I wouldn't fully use (like that's never happened).

My second criterion was that I wanted a zoom but not with too much range. I'm finding in my old age that less can be more. While I like the flexibility of a zoom, too much "zoom-zoom" hinders creativity - too much choice of composition.

Thirdly, there is always the matter of cost. I knew fast lenses can be expensive (as well as heavy!) but I've read enough to know some "third party" lenses are every bit as good as, and sometimes better than, Canon or Nikon, and I've had good experiences with both Sigma and Tamron. I approached all brands with an

open mind.

With Google's assistance I began pouring over reviews, forums, opinion pieces and came away confused and hesitant. Some raved over mid-range zooms (like 24-85mm) while others said the 70-200mm was their "go to" lens. My current 4-lens artillery, all zooms, had focal lengths ranging from 10 to 270mm. I knew which my favourite was but I wanted to know what actual focal lengths I shot the most. If I could determine this I could justify the new glass, knowing it would be well used, particularly if it was faster.

I use **Lightroom** for post-processing and find its organizational system to be first-rate. I've always used it to sort photos by keyword tag but now I needed it to break out my photos by focal length. First, using the Attributes filter, I narrowed my investigation to my best photos (those I rated 4 stars & over) for the past year. Then using Lightroom's Metadata Filter I pulled up focal lengths. I manually sorted them into arbitrary sub-groups: 10-16mm, 17-50mm, 51-85 etc. While I rely on Lightroom I assume a similar procedure is available in Photoshop.

The results were very surprising. So much for my 10-270mm lens arsenal – a whopping 75% of all shots were at 50mm or less!

My take-away was clear: Listen to others' opinions but when up-grading equipment take the time to review your particular photographic styles and shooting prefer-

ences. With only 12% of my shots over 90mm a telephoto zoom would not, for me, be a good investment. On the other hand I like wide-angle – apparently I used my 10-24mm lens on 26% of my best rated photos last year. I was surprised to find my "favourite" lens (18-105mm) was used on only 38%.

Researching my shooting habits took very little time and was very worthwhile. I put the data on to an Excel spreadsheet and will re-evaluate at the end of each year. And yes, I did buy the glass – I'm now enjoying a 17-50mm f2.8 lens.

<http://capapac.org/pzn/PZNSpring%202014.pdf>



While going through the photos I came across images that were attempts to capture something that I had envisioned and had fallen short of my expectations. I recognized the potential but wondered if they were good enough to keep or if I should just consider them a near miss and discard them.



This is the original shot. I like the colours but it lacked a real point of interest.

After closer scrutiny I decided that there are elements inside this image that may have potential.

By closing in the colours appear more concentrated and there are fewer distractions. Also, the leaves on the left are in focus, giving the eye something of interest.



Understand, I'm not saying that in comparison to the originals I've managed to make something wonderful by simply zooming in and performing some subtle manipulation. I'm just trying to point out that by taking a closer look you may find gems among the rough.

Enlarging a portion of an original image will make many photographers, who have been following the instructions of the experts, squirm at the thought of zooming in; worrying that they are going to end up with pixels showing. It's akin to the fear of being 'caught out'.

Using the first example photos, I think that you would find that even if the small portion of the original image was enlarged to 16 x 20, the loss of image quality would not be significant enough to be objectionable. In fact, it might add to the appreciation of the subject and lend it a different 'feel'.

I think that the photo gurus try to instill the impression that you should never use an ISO above 100 or anything other than RAW to get the largest file size possible. The prevalent stricture is that we should be striving to capture a masterpiece every time.

After all these year behind a camera, I've come to the conclusion that what I want to strive towards is to capture *that* moment in time and place that will never exist again. My aim is to share my vision of how I've experienced life using my craft of choice—photography.

This is how I shot the original. Again, it lacks a compelling focal point and really misses what I was trying to express. But inside that image there was another, outlined by the yellow rectangular.



Cropped tight with little or no manipulation of the original, the image may still not be especially compelling but to my taste it looks more interesting.

Sure, I should have moved in closer to begin with but that's hindsight and there were probably other constraints at the time that didn't make it possible.

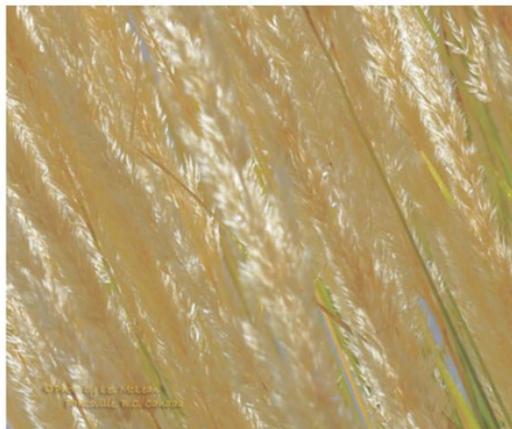


This is the original image of grasses I shot in Sisters, OR. The yellow outline shows the portion of the image I ended up using in the final rendition. This is an instance where it doesn't matter that you are zooming in so close that the clarity falls off. In fact, the effect actually enhances the finished image as it sets it apart from the ordinary.



First, I closed in on the flowering tops ...

Then I deliberately 'bleached out' the colours and lightened the exposure to give it this look—not very 'fancy' post-editing.



The previous stage in the process is OK but it really lacks interest. By tilting it on an angle you can add 'tension' and at the same time make the image more interesting. Process:

- Crop (Ctrl or Cmd C)
- Free Transform (Ctrl or Cmd T)
- Grab a corner and rotate image by the desired amount.

Above all, my suggestion is to have fun and express your love of the beauty you experience with the 'reality' capturing device in your hands.

All images were shot at 400 ISO, for various reasons (such as wind movement along with low light), except for this last image of the leaves that was shot at 800 ISO.

I used the zoom tool in FastStone Image Viewer to explore the possibilities within images when enlarged.



If you enjoyed **Gavin Hardcastle's** presentation at the March general meeting you might enjoy another look at his photos on his website:

<http://www.gavinhardcastle.com/>

Information about his guided trips can be found at:

<http://www.fototripper.com/>

Here you will also find tutorials on HDR, B&W landscape, tips for making sharper photos, etc. plus tips for shooting at various Vancouver Island locations including nearby Colliery Dam Falls in Nanaimo.



FIRST

Jim Troyanek *Harbour Lights*



Carol Anderson *Vessel with Blown Glass*

SECOND



THIRD

Paul Edelenbos *Sunrise*



Clifford Anderson *Inner Harbour at Night* **THIRD**



FIRST

Jim Troyanek *Reflections*

SECOND

Dennis Ritchie

Foggy Wharf



THIRD

Donna Wickstrom *Missed the Boat!*

FIRST

Paul Edelenbos

Zoom



Mary Watts

The Phantom Ship

SECOND



THIRD

Jim Troyanek

Harbour Mosaic



Kevin McGuinness

French Creek Home

THIRD

Grabbed from the camera bag



Member Susan Lightburn's photo 'Wolfgang's Woodland' tied for Best in Contest in a recent American Rhododendron Society photography competition and was also used as the cover photo for the winter issue of the society's quarterly journal.

Plug-ins are available for photo editing programs such as Elements and Lightroom. For some, like Topaz, the company offers webinars. If you have bought one of their products you will be notified of any that come up—usually about one per month on various topics and well worth watching. These products can be downloaded on a trial version to see if they are for you.

Often I notify members of **photo apps** to be added to your list on your iPad etc. Absolute Photo and Auto Painter HD are two for which you might want to keep your eyes open.

Submitted by Libby Lovis

Some words from the editor...

This will be my last issue as editor of the OP Shutterbug. The end of the sixth year seems a good place to stop, giving someone else a fresh start for the seventh volume.

The 'job' was every bit as challenging, creative, frustrating, fun and gratifying as I expected. What I didn't expect was the physical difficulty of spending so much time at the computer. Someone else may be able to work more efficiently, or perhaps they may choose another direction for the newsletter.

Thanks, everyone, for your encouragement and kudos and especially for sharing your images and knowledge with other members via your submissions.

Frieda

MISSA Photography Courses <http://www.missa.ca/workshop>

June 30 - July 04 Within a garden--within a flower. Allan Mandell
About seeing, with emphasis on visual training and photographic composition.

July 7- 11 Awareness & Editing Helen Cyr
Explore ways to enhance images through the editing process and develop a personal photographic language.

9th Annual Photographers at Painters April Point Lodge, Quadra Island
May 2-4 Workshops, discussions and hands-on demonstrations by some of Western Canada's premier professional photographers. Broaden your horizons, polish your skills and inspire your creativity.

<http://www.painterslodge.com/lodge/events/photographers-at-painter/>



Beate Kuhn