



Camera Clips

Bi monthly publication

From the Editor

James Allan

The Banner this month is from the waterfall expedition. Not well timed, this expedition occurred three weeks after the "water with movement" competition. Nevertheless it was a successful outing, venturing into a few lesser known parts of the Adelaide Hills. The waterfalls were still swollen with recent rains. I have created a gallery of images from the expedition on page 2. The "water with movement" competition was interesting in that Eric Budworth presented some interesting images of water droplets, reminiscent of the famous coronet photographs of Harold Edgerton. I was compelled to ask Eric how he had done it. Eric has outlined his technique in an article on page 3.

Things did not always go to plan this month. Our speaker on Antarctica was unable to attend and at the last minute Ashley was able to secure Stavros Pipos to speak for us. Stavros gave an engaging 90 minute talk without slides or visual aids. A summary of the talk is included on page 6. Heather Connolly and I attended a talk from another up and coming Adelaide photographer, Les Peters. He was a quietly spoken, and yet engaging speaker. Heather has written a short synopsis of this session that we have been able to illustrate with images from his website. I would recommend Les to all of you as an excellent wildlife photographer who has a real passion for his birds.

In early September we held our Annual General Meeting in which Chris Schultz was elected for a second term as president. Chris has done an excellent job this year and it is certainly appreciated that he is prepared to continue for a second term. The existing committee was re-elected with the exception of Jenny Pedlar, who stepped down to allow Carolyn Beckett to take on the role of treasurer. In addition Helen Whitford has been elected as an eleventh member of the committee.

Another topic of the annual general meeting was the usefulness of the traditional SAPF style competition judging. There has been an increasing groundswell of dissatisfaction with the underlying assumptions and precepts of this process. How useful are they for improving our photography? This sentiment has been expressed very succinctly by Terry Branford in his piece, "the future of clubbing." As a result Chris introduced a concept of "peer critique", where images could be discussed in an open forum with a moderator. Hopefully this will be a more rewarding and successful way in which to present our images. A motion was passed and it was agreed to run a number of these sessions next year on a trial basis. I trust that you enjoy this edition of Camera Clips.

The Future of Clubbing - Terry Branford

A recent guest judge proclaimed that our club was "stagnant" (and then proceeded to dismiss the changes in photography in the last twenty years as going backwards, which tended to show a degree of stagnation on his part). Dictionary.com defines stagnant as "inactive, sluggish or dull". Google adds "often having an unpleasant smell as a consequence", but we will leave that right alone. I hope that this is right off the mark, because photography as a hobby is in the middle of a boom. Canon has sold a total of 50 million EOS cameras, and has sold 10 million EOS lenses since October 2011. People are buying high quality cameras by the million, and they are buying them cheaper than ever before. And like every first time camera user since Kodak started selling cameras, they are finding that high quality cameras do not necessarily produce high quality photographs.

And there is the challenge for the Blackwood photographic club- to give a forum, a home and an education to the new wave of amateurs who are discovering a new hobby. They are different to the hobbyists of the past, who had to invest a great deal of time and money, with different expectations. In the good old days (avoid cliches like the plague) the committed hobbyist used relatively expensive equipment and a lot of time to produce "Art", and gravitated towards photography clubs to display their "Art". Today's newbie is

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Upcoming Events

27. Competition : Low Light
These images must be taken using only the light available at the scene. The fact that light was limiting must be obvious.

Note: Start preparing entries for Annual Exhibition – forms available (physically and online)

OCTOBER

29-Sep to 1-Oct. **Labour Day Weekend—Outing—Robe stay away overnight event**

11. BPC Quiz Night

Questions have been created by Ashley and James around images captured by club members. We hope this will be both entertaining and instructive. An excellent night to invite friends and family. This is a must attend night.

25. Competition: Natural Light Portrait

Use those skills you acquired at the Natural lighting workshop – portraits in natural light!

NOVEMBER

8. Annual Exhibition – Judging

Three judges will evaluate the best the club has to offer. Come along, view all the images and see fair play done. Images can be those that have been entered in Competitions throughout the year, or entirely new ones. Subject Open. Marked out of 15

22. Annual Exhibition and Awards

A display of all entries and presentation of Awards!

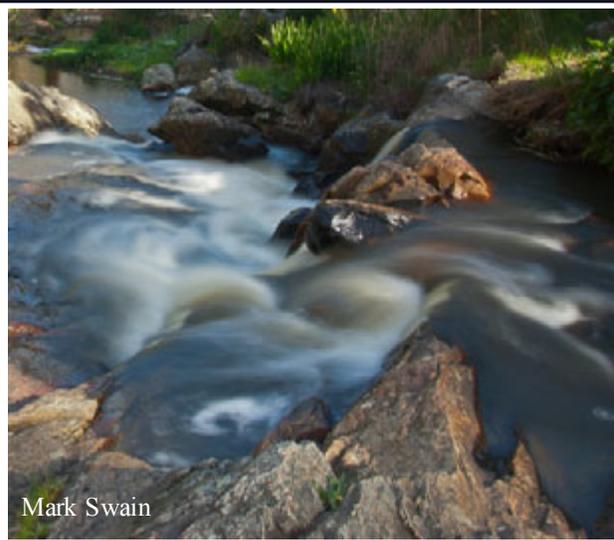
Note: Bring a plate

DECEMBER

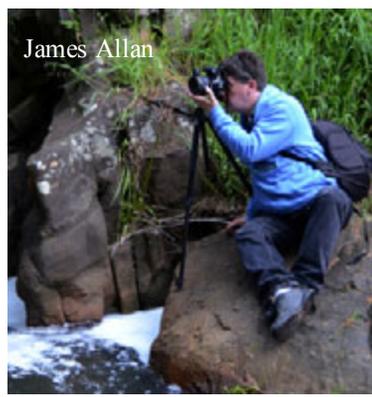
8. End of year picnic

The last club event of the year – on a Saturday. Always an enjoyable time. Venue will be advised

Contacting a member from the club; This month Mark & Jenny Pedlar : mnpjpedlar@biqpond.com

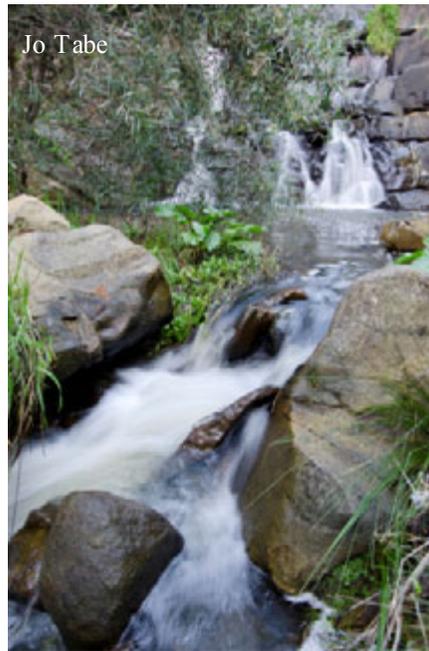


Mark Swain



James Allan

On Sunday the 9th of September we held an impromptu expedition to visit 3 waterfalls in an afternoon. We only managed to visit 2 of the planned waterfalls. The photographs however tell a different story. They suggest that perhaps we had seen a half dozen different falls.



Jo Tabe

I guess this is a product of the variation in of technique used by the different club members. Heather Connolly has used a very fast shutter speed to freeze the motion of the water in her shot. Mark Swain on the other hand had used a very long exposure to give a misty feel to his waterfall. In my photo the blurred water has a more textured look. I used an in between shutter speed.

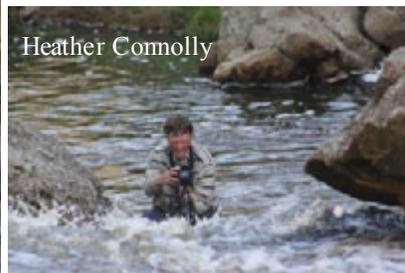


Heather Connolly

Joe has moved back from the fall and taken a vertical portrait that shows the water as it moves away from the waterfall. Graham on the other hand has come in close with a horizontal landscape perspective, showing only a small area of the whole fall. It is interesting what a range of effects are possible.



James Allan



Heather Connolly

You can see that the terrain was quite steep. Chris parked his car on a disused forestry track and is seen perching his tripod on a rock just centimetres from the rivers surface. Heather has caught me rising like a water sprite from the midst of the river with a look of intense concentration, (although my lens cap has not yet been removed from the camera).



Graham Field



James Allan

Despite a tortuous route through the Adelaide Hills most club members enjoyed the expedition and were rewarded with an excellent range of photos. It was also informative as we all tried new and different techniques.

In reply to James's request as to how I took the pictures of the water droplets, find the following a brief of my efforts;

As a result of the recent club competition "Water with Movement" I was driven to replicate the type of shots I'd seen in magazines of the impact of liquids on other liquids or hard surfaces. James reminded me that it was Harold Edgerton who pioneered this form of photography. Some say he invented it, however I prefer to say he discovered another way of achieving it as Eadweard Muybridge had successfully proved that a horse has all four feet off the ground at some time during galloping much earlier in 1879.

To achieve my results I used the following :- A Teflon coated frypan; a D SLR; 2 Tripods (one for a flash-gun); a flashgun; a sync lead; a small squeeze bottle for dropping the water, a white cardboard reflector and extra water to partially fill the frypan.

I then set the following :-

Flash set to Auto and 100 ISO

Camera set to Manual with focus also set to Manual.

Lens if Auto-Focus set to Manual

Lens aperture set to f8. (adjust this setting after checking results on your camera LCD)

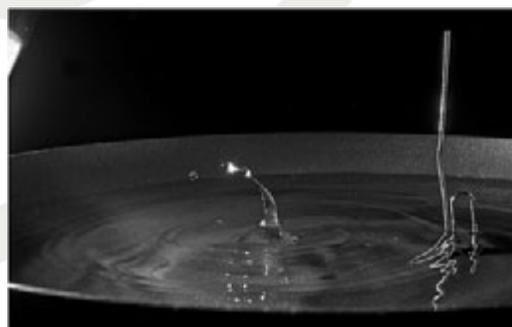
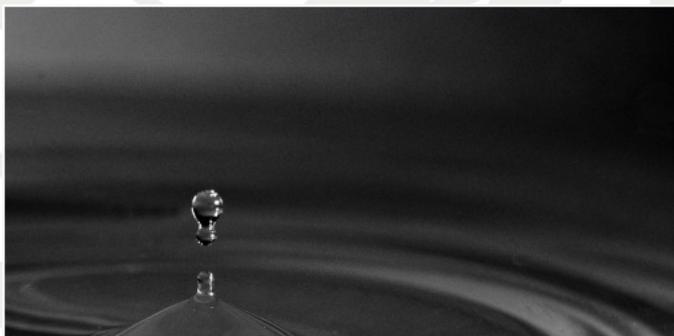
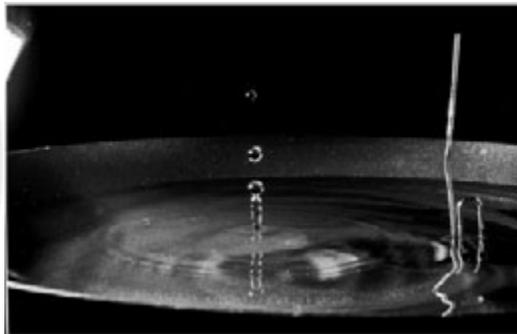
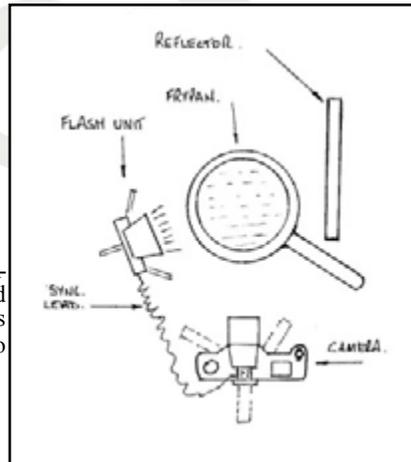
Set the focus point at where the droplet is expected to impact on the water. Stand something small in the water and focus your lens on this, if you use your lens on Auto-Focus to set this, after it's locked on to the focus then switch to manual focus.

Switch your camera to Continuous Drive (motor drive) and select the fastest flash sync speed the camera can use. Set the camera on the tripod and place the flash to one side of the frypan and the reflector on the other side see sketch. Keep the flash out of shot but as close to the frypan as possible. This is because you need the flash to be able to keep up with the camera's motor drive. If your flash gun has a manual setting where by you can select the output set this to a low setting of around 1/8*. output this should help keep up with the camera.

Next is the fun bit, with one hand holding the squeeze container and the other hand pressing the camera's shutter button gently squeeze the bottle and at the same time hold the shutter button, try to start the camera just ahead of the water drop falling from the squeeze bottle and then.... best of luck !!! You'll get a lot of misses but hopefully you'll get some success. Thank God for Digital Photography at least you can check your failures for no cash outlay.

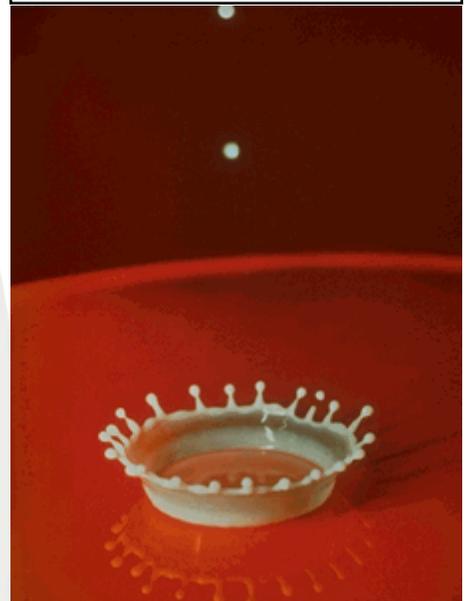
After taking my shots I found an article on a similar vein in the August Issue No.158 of "Digital Photo" magazine which is currently available in the newsagents this magazine has a pictorial description as well as a video tutorial on the accompanying CD. Worth a look I believe.

Regards Eric.



Harold Edgerton

"Edgerton invented ultra-high-speed and stop-action photography (1931). Before long, Edgerton's astonishing photographs of everyday events were winning him acclaim around the world. His "Coronet" milk drop photo was featured in the New York Museum of Modern Art's first photography exhibit (1937). In time, Edgerton would capture images of athletes competing (1938), hummingbirds hovering (1953), bullets bursting balloons (1959), and blood coursing through capillaries (1964)".



#i James,

I'll see what I can cobble something together. As for comparing my shot with the famous Harold Edgerton, Well.... while the end results may be similar the equipment used is as different as chalk and cheese! He used a pipette on a stand and set it to drip at a preset rate whilst he then operated the movie camera. He then selected a particular single frame from hundreds to display his "Coronet Shot". This is not to say his efforts were revolutionary they were and set in motion a whole new way of showing images which the eye cannot capture as well as assisting the scientific world. Where as I had to drop the water using one hand while operating the camera with the other, The camera was set to motor drive but only able to run 4 frames at a time when set to RAW before the buffer was full.

His camera was a movie camera capable of shooting hundreds or thousands of frames a second and using a sophisticated air strobe flash. The movie camera he used may have been of the revolving prism or mirror type...I'm not certain in that regard.

I'll see what I can do to give a good description of the procedure.

Eric



James Allan and I attended the July meeting of Birds S.A. where wildlife photographer Les Peters gave an excellent presentation to a very large audience. He is to be admired, as his technical expertise shows that he does not miss much, or have failures like most of us. He obviously visits bird habitats over a wide area of South Australia, and beyond. His first message is, to wait for the bird to come to you. You cannot crash around the bush and get quick shots. Walking with a group even is not often successful. Les uses a tripod, with a ball head, where it is practical to carry one. He demonstrated the difference between images with or without, and indicates this on his files. He uses a Nikon D300, Nikor lenses and sometimes an extender. We were surprised that he uses flash for the closer images, to get more saturated colours, and to get a highlight in the eye. The images did sometimes include background that our purists would criticise, but hey—where do birds live? One of the most frequented sites is the Laratinga Wet-lands at Mt Barker. I have been there twice and James has now had a look. It is an impressive place. Les has an Adelaide Hills garden, and it is there that many birds are photographed. It is very important to observe the regular life habits of birds, and at home is the best place to do this.

We are so fortunate to have our birds, and sad to see their demise when progress moves our lives.

Heather Connolly

You can visit a gallery of Les's images at the following web address,

<http://www.murrundi.org/>

Les did not dwell on the technical side of his photography, preferring to tell anecdotes of the birds and how he found them. He was endlessly captivating as he told of the interactions between bird and photographer. Many of the photos and anecdotes are reproduced at Les's blog on his web page. Feel free to explore this site. I was particularly impressed by the quality of detail in his shots. Les boasts that you can count every feather on the birds body. This extends even to his flying birds, where he uses very fast shutter speeds to freeze the motion.

more plebeian in their expectations- they merely aim to produce "good photos".

This leads us to the situation where prospective hobbyists sit in on a BPC judging session to hear a critic pass judgement on a series of photographs as to whether or not they are good examples of "Art photography". I am sure that our newbie's can see the potential of learning a lot in these sessions, but when the comment on each print is merely a "like/don't like" and a score, it must seem like a waste of time. If they came back to the club for the workshop sessions, I am sure that they would be impressed, but alas, Yorick, we have lost them by then.

What can we do to broaden the appeal of the BPC? I would suggest that the format of the judging sessions needs a few changes. Rather than leaving the judge to work in a vacuum, we should formalise the process and treat it more like an assessment of skills in a professional situation. An aspiring photographer should offer examples of their work for critique based on defined standards-a good/bad score is not acceptable, reasons must be given. This would turn the session into a learning experience for everyone, as each photo is discussed and evaluated, and even newcomers to the group would be shown a new level to aim at.

The assessment guidelines are open to discussion, but I would suggest that as a start all entries should be judged against two criteria- choice of subject and technique- with an overall score the sum of the two. This would give the judge plenty of scope to appraise the subject, capture of the photograph -including use of the lens, the camera, lighting, and perspective (camera positioning) - and processing of the image. The judge would know that they would be expected to comment on all of these aspects, and base their assessment on their comments (not "the lightings brilliant, cropping good, colour great, but it only gets a 2 because I've got indigestion).

This is variation of the old argument as to whether a photo should be judged on its merits or against the yardstick of "Art Photography". I would suggest that both are correct. It is time to realise many new age photographers choose not to photograph conventional "Art", but that their technique may be good even though their choice of subject matter may not, and vice-versa. This should all be recognised by the judge, and I look forward to interesting and educational judging sessions if it happens.



Which is the best lens choice?

Examples from the book "Picture Perfect Practice" by Roberto Valenzuela.



Which makes the better picture- balance or content?



Should all crops be symmetrical?

It was a pleasure to attend the August 30th meeting at BPC when the landscape photographer Stavros Pippos gave an inspirational 90 minute presentation about his life and his photography. At the outset he explained that he did not see himself as a professional photographer. “My career was in television. I started by sweeping the floor, but within a few years I was a producer for Channel 7. I found myself being paid to do something that I absolutely enjoyed; I loved every minute of it.”

Photography however was his passion. “If I was going anywhere, and I couldn’t take my camera, well I just wouldn’t be interested in attending.” Ever since he was a boy, rather than play football, he would ride his bike to locations around his home town of Maroochydore looking for landscapes to photograph. He maintained that interest over many years, but it re-ignited when he turned 50. Living and working in South Australia he decided it was time to set off to the Flinders Ranges with a painter friend and the outcome was a series of bestselling books.

He admitted that it was not easy to establish himself as a commercial photographer. Exhibiting and publishing are very labour intensive and required considerable outlay, for meagre rewards. He was however encouraged by friends. The owner of the Hawker Roadhouse was aware of his portfolio and encouraged him to publish his first book.

Since then he has been involved in numerous adventurous outback odysseys. He described getting lost in a boat in a boggy out back river trying to find his way into lake Eyre. He told of travelling across the Simpson desert with Camels, on the lookout for rouge wild male camels that might disturb his line of domesticated beasts. In another anecdote he had noticed an overhanging branch in one of his panoramas. As the image was due in an exhibition, he rushed out to the Flinders Ranges to retake the shot. Climbing the tree with a rope, he removed the offending branch with a saw. He told of camping at Kooinda campground below St Mary’s peak and befriending a Korean hiker who was too embarrassed to ask for drinking water.

His latest adventure was photographing South Australia from helicopter. With the door of the helicopter removed, sitting over the helicopter runner fumbling with backs for his Hasselblad in the dusk lighting was not only a test to his endurance but also probably dangerous. However it was the last thing on his mind as he was engrossed with the task at hand. The book is superb.

Stavros had three boxes of books for sale after the meeting. There was not a single book left by the end of the night. He spoke with an easy manner and was chatting both before and after the meeting to various members of the club who had had contact with Stavros in the past. Stavros is not only a good photographer, but proved also to be an excellent communicator. We would like to extend our thanks to Stavros for finding the time to speak to our club and making the evening such an outstanding success.

