



# Camera Clips

June 2013 Bi monthly publication

## From the Editor

James Allan

Welcome to the June edition of Camera clips. A lot has been happening of late and I don't have a hope of covering all the news in the newsletter. Please remember to go to the blog on the website where you can read about the recent competitions, (Science / Nature and Red), expeditions to Port Adelaide and Gorge wildlife park, as well as our guest speaker Barry O'Brien, photographer for the Advertiser newspaper.

Recent competitions have seen a range of judging styles and there has been some debate within the club about style and image integrity. We may be running a debate (similar to a Jeffrey Robinson hypothetical) where we will get some of the club members to put forward different points of view on this topic. We will notify you closer to the time.

Chris Schultz's monochrome image skin tones has been chosen for this weeks banner. I was very impressed by the image and it is worth looking at the original in the top digital images section of the club webpage. Like wise another image, by Steve Wallace has stimulated an article on Canyon photography by Peter Lik (page 2).

A third image by Mark Peddlar has been presented on page 3. Mark explained during the last Crit. night how he had used a photoshop technique to restore the original range of tones in the image. In this article, Mark has explained the steps in more detail. Have a look at his article. It is well worth learning this approach.

On page 4 John Duckmanton has given me another of his original articles. This one describes how to create interesting abstract effects by burning slide transparencies. I love John's articles, they are innovative and interesting.

On the next page David Douglas Martin has taken a different angle where he has written an article on the O-Flash a cheap way to get a ring flash that can be used for macro work and portrait photography.

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to step back in time? Our impressions of former times are influenced heavily by the images we have from that era. The late 19th and early 20th century are black and white in my mind. Perhaps because the era is depicted by so many excellent monochrome images. However the US congressional archives have unearthed some really early colour images taken in Russia prior to the first world war. It is hard to believe that these images are so old. They look much more contemporary, perhaps a 1970's travel documentary. Check it out on page 6. It might even change the way you see the past.

Talking of the past, the club will be celebrating its 30th Anniversary this year. Julie Goulter has done a fine job of organizing an afternoon tea in the Mitcham historic precinct. Make sure to leave the 14th of July free.

Lastly we have our gallery of members images. In this case they are pictures from the Port Adelaide Excursion. There are many fine images including this Mini-world panorama of me crossing the street (above) taken by JoeTabe.



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

## Upcoming Events

**May 23 Workshop: Image Workflow in Lightroom**—by experienced club members.

**June 6 Peer Review / Critique Session**—Present images you might want to get ideas on.

**June 10 Queen's Birthday Holiday**

**June 20 Competition: Photojournalism/Street Photography**—Images to tell a news story.

**June 30 Excursion**—Mannum—meet at the Ferry 1.30pm

**July 4 Interclub with Edwardstown**—The annual duel - this time it's at our place

**July 14 Club 30<sup>th</sup> Birthday**

A Saturday evening celebration of 30 Years of BPC!

**July 18 Peer Review/ Critique Session** —Present images you might want to get ideas on.

**July 21 Excursion—Steam Trains**—meet at Mt Barker Station 10.00am

**August 1 Competition: Lines**— Eg Railway, converging, leading, parallel, whatever!

*Nomination forms for AGM available*

**August 15 Guest speaker: Astrophotography** Come and explore an art that few of us indulge in.

**August 29 Peer Review/ Critique Session**



During the Red competition last week, Steve Wallace was awarded 9 points for a beautiful photograph of a painted canyon taken during his trip of America. This photograph reminded me of another notable Australian photographer, Peter Lik, who has made a reputation as a landscape photographer based in Las Vegas. Peter



has a wonderful flowing style, with highly saturated pictures, often with limited palettes and beautiful detail. His photograph "one", the depiction of autumn trees reflected and blurred in a body of water has sold for 1 million dollars US. (look it up) He has starred in an American documentary series about braving the elements to take beautiful landscape photographs in wild places. The series of photographs that I have depicted are from his "Hidden Canyon" series. The hidden canyons, also known as slot canyons, are found in Arizona. Peter has timed his photographs to catch the midday sun percolating down over the red or yellow walls to depict a visage of colour and form. Peter cut his teeth as a photographer on family holidays from his home town of Melbourne. In the 1990's he set up a post card stand in Cairns. He now has a studio in Noosa Heads as well as in Las Vegas. Another photographer well worth emulating.



Before and after images of the view from Mt William in the Grampians

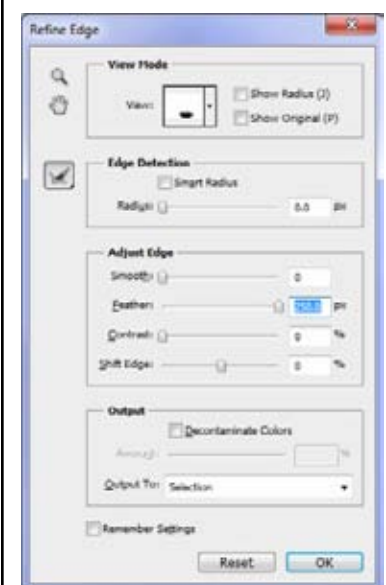
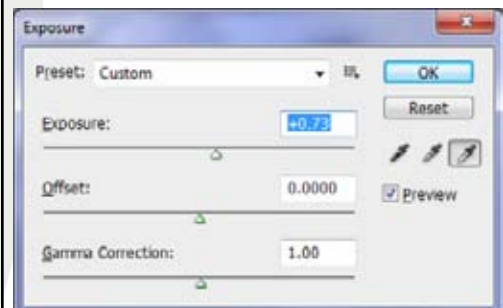
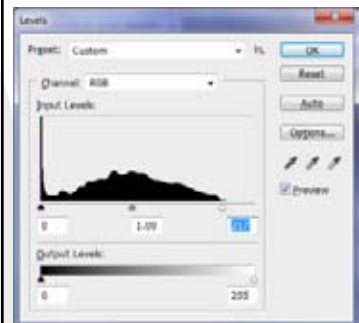
Levels, Lassos and Localisation. After reading an article on these three attributes of Photoshop CS5 I was able to turn a very ordinary landscape of the Grampians into a very pleasing image. When I took the photo, I felt that the scene showed promising lighting. However on the computer it was flat and uninteresting. At this point I must point out that I claim no credit for the concept. Eric gave me a magazine containing a useful article on the subject. A contributor to the magazine had done the hard work putting it together. I used the tips to reveal my image's potential. To my eye it has captured some of the drama that inspired me to take the photo in the first place.

This image was shot in the Grampians last July. The weather was lousy but the view from the top of Mount William breathtaking. Unfortunately the camera was unable to cope with the range of contrast unaided. So, following the Digital Photo mag article this is what I did.

First of all I went into Levels in the Image/Adjustments tab and moved the white slider left til it met the base of the curve. (1) This gave me a full range of tones from white to black. Then I went back to the Image/Adjustments and selected Exposure. This I increased to +0.73. (2)

Since the foreground was very dense I used the lasso tool to select a localised area and increased the exposure to +3.00. Then after saying OK to the exposure and before leaving the lasso tool, I selected Refine edge from the toolbar above the main image and moved the Feathering slider all the way right to 250 pixels. (3) I repeated this in several spots til I had the detail I wanted.

Finally, after entering it in a club competition and having it judged I straightened the horizon.



This is one of my favourites. I don't throw old or uninteresting slides away; I burn them in a controlled way.

In my big competition era I often took 3-5 rolls of 36exp K64 a week and expected to get 2-3 usable slides per roll. The rest? Well, some were as good as the usable ones and were kept anyway but over half were throwaways.

First choice was given to the slide library I was using (a nice little earner at the time) but I still ended up with a big waste bin.

I must have read about it somewhere but I tried passing some of these slides through a gas blowtorch flame and copying areas of the resultant 'mess'. Very intriguing.

I practised with the speed of pass and distance from the flame which allowed me to come up with reproducible results.

Card mounted Kodachromes were the best as they were firmly glued into the holder. Agfa and Fuji slides tended to shrink fast and the mounts also melted.

The colour tended to alter with higher temperatures so I added retouching dyes which melted into the surface to give varying effects.

Sometimes holes appeared so I found pictures to put into the holes. No computer tricks at that time so slides for sandwiching were briefly soaked in water and the unwanted areas scraped away using a sharp blade. This slide was then registered behind the hole in the burnie and again copied in the slide copier.

What about different flames? The gas flame was very hot so I tried a much cooler meths flame which tended to just melt rather than blister.

A candle flame left a layer of soot but after a few seconds the slide shrank and lightning-like cracks appeared in the deposited carbon. Again a simple montage gave a great picture.

My slide-copier only works with cameras which take manual lenses so I am looking for a way to use the above as I gradually convert my slide collection to digital format and throw away a few oldies. Don't we keep a lot of mediocre pictures in our collections!

Extra tips:

With plastic mounted slides, open the mount and secure the trannie on all sides with cellotape.

Melted plastic can be very hot and burn you as can the flames so use pliers to hold the mount and drop the heated end product onto a sheet of cardboard to cool

Slide 1: I call this one GENESIS as the face seems to be emerging from a primeval broth.

Slide 2: This is my ANGEL FACE in a sky created by a candle flame.

Slide 3: The Devil himself! The devil is the Printer's Devil on the old government printers in Brisbane.



## O-Flash - a budget priced ring flash.—David Douglas Martin

This clever device has been designed to utilise the flash emitted by the external flash units on Nikon & Canon cameras. It is virtually foolproof having no circuitry of its own & therefore requiring no power source. Instead light from the main flash passes through a series of internal mirrors to spread the light evenly around the subject to provide virtually shadow free illumination that is controlled by the cameras TTL sensors.



It is easy to fit as shown in the accompanying images. Slightly cumbersome it is best used with the camera mounted on a tripod for support & this may limit its useability in a field situation, however it has no other disadvantages that I have been able to identify. This unit was obtained on eBay for a post paid price of \$25 from a Chinese supplier & took approximately 4 weeks to be delivered.

I do not have a macro lens so have only been able to use the O-Flash for close up work & have been pleasantly impressed by its performance. The sample picture of a Yar Dragon figurine that is approx 7cm high was shot at f16 from a distance of 45cm with a 17-80mm lens on my Canon 550D with a 420EX flash.



David D-M

### The Upside—

O-flash is cheap and will fit most flash units. It allows the camera—flash combination to adjust the light intensity through TTL metering.

### The Down side—

Although O-flash fits most flash units, the fit may be tight and the ring is not perpendicular to the axis of the lens. Some reviewers have found the light may have a mild blue cast. The biggest pitfall is that there may be a 3 stop drop off in light intensity making it difficult to use for portrait work. (As opposed to the more expensive Ray-flash with only 1 stop drop off)

A **ring flash**, invented by Lester A. Dine in 1952, originally for use in dental photography, is a circular photographic flash that fits around the lens, especially for use in macro (or close-up) photography. Its most important characteristic is providing even illumination with few shadows visible in the photograph, as the origin of the light is very close to (and surrounds) the optical axis of the lens. When the subject is very close to the camera, as is the case in macro photography, the distance of the flash from the optical axis becomes significant. For objects close to the camera, the size of the ring flash is significant and so the light encounters the subject from many angles in the same way that it does with a conventional flash with soft box. This has the effect of further softening any shadows.



Ring flashes are also very popular in portrait and fashion photography. In addition to softening shadows and creating circular highlights in the model's eyes, the unique way that a ring flash renders light gives the model a shadowy halo that is a common feature of fashion photography.

There are also passive light modifiers, (O-flash or Ray Flash) which will shape the light from an ordinary (shoe mount) flash into that of a ring flash. The adapters use a series of diffusers and reflectors to "bend" the light in an arc around the lens axis. The light is then emitted from that arc. This maintains any through-the-lens (TTL) lighting functions that may be shared by the camera and flash, as the actual light source has not changed.

Ring flash as a lighting technique has enjoyed a strong resurgence over the last few years, as photographers realize that it is far more useful than the one-look way in which it has been used for decades. Specifically, it is now being used primarily as a fill light to raise the illumination level of shadows created by other, off-axis lights. It is considered to be a particularly good source of fill light, because it does not create harsh shadows.

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ring\\_flash](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ring_flash)

## Sergei Mikhailovich Prokudin-Gorskii



This month Howard drew my attention to this collection of extraordinary colour photographs taken between 1909 and 1912 in Russia. The photographer Sergei Mikhailovich Prokudin-Gorskii (1863-1944) undertook a photographic survey of the Russian Empire with the support of Tsar Nicholas II. He travelled the length and breadth of the then Russian empire. He used a specialized camera to capture three black and white images in fairly quick succession, using red, green and blue filters. The intention was to later recombine and project the three plates with filtered lanterns to show a coloured composite image. Many of the images however were never shown, but were in storage for many years. The US Library of Congress, purchased the original glass plates back in 1948. In 2000 archivists invited photographers to recombine the images using computer technology. The resultant high quality images, often with bright colours, make it difficult to believe that these images were taken over 100 years ago, at a time when neither the Russian Revolution nor World War I had yet begun. A time warp.

# Excursion—Port Adelaide



Reg

Last weekend we had an excursion to Port Adelaide. This was the second of two expeditions, the first being a joint outing with the Tea tree Gully Camera club in April. Heather Conolly summarised the first excursion:

“We found it a pretty quiet place. Initially we were entertained by Morris dancers. Richard and I both agreed that we did not really want their photos, so we moved on. There was nothing especially of interest on the waterfront, apart from the ONE AND ALL and the YELTA. There were quite a few TTG people, and from our club, Richard, Ashley, Chris, Reg and myself. Reg took the photo of the Yelta with the sun ring. It was quite misty cloud.

Detail of old buildings had us all clicking, as well as the knitted trees and posts in Lipson street. I do hope that Ashley and Richard got good shots of the lovely sky, that Reg and I missed because we were driving home.”



Gloria



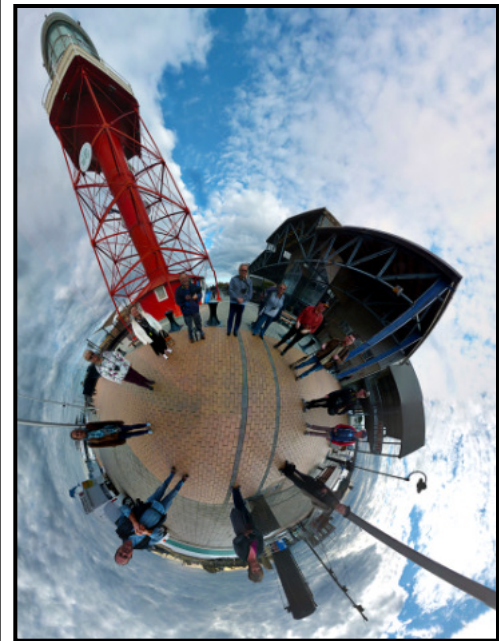
Ken



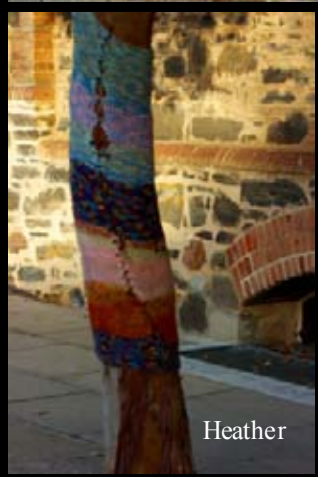
Anne



Eric



On the second expedition, we started with a group photo, standing in a circle (above). I processed the image as a “little planet” You can see we numbered 13 plus 2 (My daughter Charlotte and Kerry’s husband). Ashley was shooting with his medium format camera, Les had a huge telephoto, while Jo had her tripod in action as the sun set around 5.20pm. We wandered off in small groups. I started off with Eric who is always full of good ideas, like getting down low to photograph the old tugboat, the Yelta. This is one of the best things about excursions, sharing ideas. I have no idea where Gloria discovered a blackboard covered in philosophy. Great shot. I love the diversity of subjects. Overall it was a good event and well attended.



Heather



Kerry