

Viewfinder

THE NEWSLETTER OF FIELD END PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

**February 2008
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read about FEPS
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sions 2007.**

F v D - Film versus Digital or should it be Film ver- sus the Delete option.

In the good old days of film, in which some of us still dabble in this old and ritual art, did your process of photography roughly follow this sequence.

Having loaded your preferred film stock and exposed it in camera you then sent it off to the processing house of your choice, or even developed it at home yourself. When the returned film or box of trannies arrived back you gave them a quick look and immediately 'binned' the apparent no hoppers, you then put the remaining ones aside to look at later on a light box for further 'editing'.

When that time came, out came the light box, the loupe (a magnifying glass for examining slides or negatives) and off course the compulsory glass of something to help in the process. The room lights were dimmed and you spent the next hour or so examining each image in turn. At this stage you may have, like myself, taken out those images which were not technically up to the mark. They might have been a bit soft on focus or even out of focus at the critical point. These were then discarded into the bin and everything put away with a view to repeating the exercise the following evening or at a time to suit.

On the last editing exercise the whole procedure was repeated, except this time only the best images were kept and filed. The rest were either binned or some were relegated to a 'I'll keep them just in case' file. This usually meant that of a roll of 36 or so exposures only a few made it to the very end. This meant, that if like me, after many years of photography you ended up with more 'I'll keep them just in case' than you did of the very best. Why was this, well to be truthful you didn't want to throw them away 'just in case'.

The point that prompted me to write this was an article that I read not long ago about the Bill Clinton and Monika saga. The photograph that was taken of Bill Clinton greeting her in a crowd of supporters was taken on film, by a photographer, who, at the time didn't think much of the image, but kept it 'just in case', only later did the full impact of that image come to light and no doubt allowed that photographer a very good pension.

(Continued over)

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What would have happened today would no doubt have been along the lines of shoot, review and either at the time or later as in film, edit and delete. That image would then have gone forever, unless of course you have some form of image recovery software. The moral of this story is delete at your peril, you might just want to employ a backup disc of 'just in case' images. Not that we are going to be in the position of a Clinton / Monika image but of friends and family yes.

Just a thought that whilst on the subject of 'editing', what do you consider to be your perfect image, one that you are 100% completely satisfied with. One that if you could repeat it, there is no way that you think it could be any better. Well Ansell Adams once wrote that if you took 12 images per year that were absolutely perfect in every way you should be pleased with yourself, but what is the perfect image.

Ted Weller

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Winner's Enclosure

Norma Bateman Rosebowl

Winner – Frosty Morning by Marilyn Dennis

I have to admit that this is a composite of 2 images, but both were taken in the same location within a few minutes of each other, so the lighting conditions were identical. They were taken from a woodland path near Christmas Common fairly late one November morning. There had been a heavy frost and the air was still quite misty, although the sun had broken though. I was drawn to the frost patterns left in the grass by the shadow of the trees, in contrast to the golden glow of the leaves highlighted by the low sun. I could hear the red kites 'mewing' in the trees above me and every now and then one would fly over the adjacent field, but it was difficult to get birds and landscape together in a decent composition. Fortunately one of



my shots of the kites was against a plain background so I was able to carefully select it and place within the landscape of my choice. The kite had to be 'transformed' to downsize it and the landscape needed a bit of subtle tweaking in 'levels' to improve the contrast without losing the misty atmosphere. I was quite pleased with the end result and delighted that the judge Sarah Sands also found it to her liking.

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Congratulations to Baj Mathur

Congratulations go to new member Baj Mathur on being awarded an MBE in the New Year Honours list. According to the local press Baj has been honoured for his volunteer work with Hillingdon Carers and more recently Hillingdon Crossroads.

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LIGHTENING SHADOWS

For those people who have the full version of Photoshop CS the problem of shadows with insufficient detail is resolved by using the Shadows and Highlights filter, but for those people without this facility there are other alternatives.

I recently discovered an easy and very controllable way to bring detail into shadowy areas, not by my own experimentation but by an article posted on the RPS Digital Imaging Group website. The person who posted the tip had in turn seen it on the Smethwick Photographic Society website, so it is obviously in the public domain. As it does not appear to be on the site any longer I am passing it on to you.

N.B. Even if you have the shadows and highlights filter it is also worth giving this a try:

It is an easy 4 step process to bring out the shadow details.

Step 1 – Open your original image and create a duplicate layer. To do this either drag the layer to the new layer icon or click on layer, duplicate layer in the main menu.

Step 2 - Make sure you have the duplicate layer active (it should be shaded blue in the layers palette) and select image, adjust, hue and saturation. Then slide the saturation slider all the way to the left to make a black and white version of your original.

Step 3 – Select Image, adjust and now click on invert. This turns your black and white layer into what looks like a negative.

Step 4 - Go back to your layers palette and on the active “negative” layer change the blending mode by clicking on the down arrow and selecting “soft light”.

You now have an image where detail has been brought out in the shadow areas. The added advantage is that, being on a separate layer, it is still controllable so if the effect is too strong you can decrease the opacity of the layer, or you can increase the contrast of the layer to make the effect stronger.

Once you have understood the method, you will realise that you do not have to do this for the whole layer. Instead of creating a duplicate layer in Step 1, you could just copy the shadowy area to a new layer and then work on that, thus leaving the other parts of your original untouched.

Ruislip Woods Photographic Competition.

Attached to the last page of this copy of ViewFinder are the details of entry to this competition. The rules do not state a print size so I phoned the organiser. She confirmed that the prints will be on display at their open day and therefore should not be too large. Sizes of 6 in by 4 in or 7 in by 5 in are recommended. Therefore everyone can take part as you do not need to produce your own prints. Also note there is a childrens’ competition as well so if you know of anyone else who wants to take part, please pass on the details.

Val Walker

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The following outings are under consideration at the moment:

Shell Wildlife Exhibition

In the past few months we have seen some great wildlife pictures taken by club members and guest speakers. At the Natural History Museum until 27th April are considered to be la crème de

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la crème of wildlife photographs from around the world. Come along and judge for yourselves how close to the best we are. A small group went last year and thoroughly enjoyed themselves considering the merits of the best shots and voting for their favourites. It may be possible later to enjoy a lunch together in the NHM's restaurant or in a café nearby. The day proposed is Friday 15th February meeting at 10am at the entrance to the Natural History Museum.

Bond

You do not have to be an avid James Bond fan to enjoy seeing the film sets and the action taking place, as we know from comments after our last visit to Pinewood to see the making of Casino Royale at Pinewood. We are working towards another visit to witness part of the making of the latest film, Quantum of Solace. No date has yet been fixed but we will let you know as soon as it has.

Savill Gardens

Last year we had a very successful trip to The Royal Horticultural Society's gardens at Wisley. This year we hope to repeat the success at The Savill Garden. These gardens are near Windsor Great Park which gives those with enough stamina a chance to double their enjoyment with extra photographic opportunities. We will probably make this trip in late April. This gives us a good chance of fine weather and the rhododendrons should still be in bloom (they are especially good there).

Do not forget to let us know your choices for the Annual Dinner by 28th February.

Harry Myers and John Berg

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Programme Change

As some of you will have realised there is an omission in the programme and nothing is listed for March 31st.

On this evening we are going to have a showing of the RPS Digital Imaging Exhibition 2007. This is a show of the accepted images with a commentary by Clive Haynes, who is the President of the Digital Imaging Group.

If there is time at the end we will have a discussion about a gallery of images sent to Digital Photo magazine so you can also try your hand at being a judge. This should provide something of interest for everyone whether you capture your images digitally or not.

P.S. we are looking for suggestions for next year's programme from September onwards so see me if you have anything you particularly want included or you would like to volunteer to do a presentation on your own or with others. We also have a member's evening this season on June 2nd for which I would welcome offers to show some of your work.

Val Walker

Programme Secretary

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Travel with the Walkers by Catherine Allen

The FEPS programme for 2008 got off to a great start when members Mick and Val Walker invited us to join them on a photographic safari to Kenya. We were soon transported from the confines of the church hall to the wide open spaces of the Great Rift Valley. Mick and Val made the trip last year, well before the current unrest in this part of the world. As well as being keen photographers Mick and Val have a passion for wildlife and the Great Rift Valley certainly provided plenty of opportunities for some superb photographs.

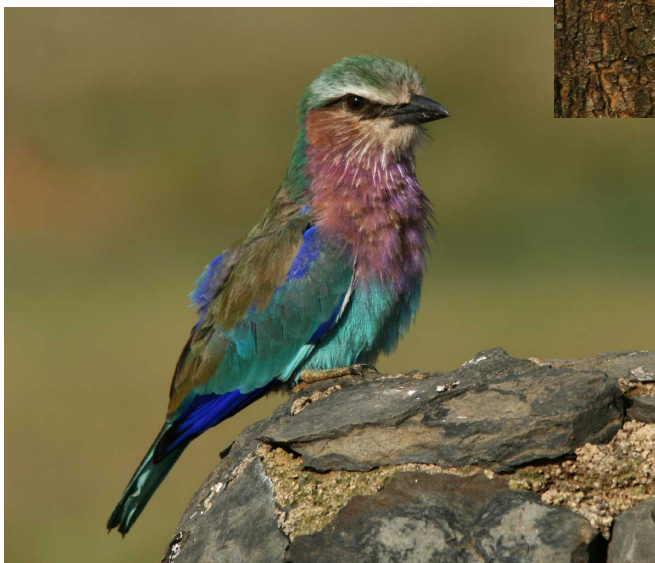
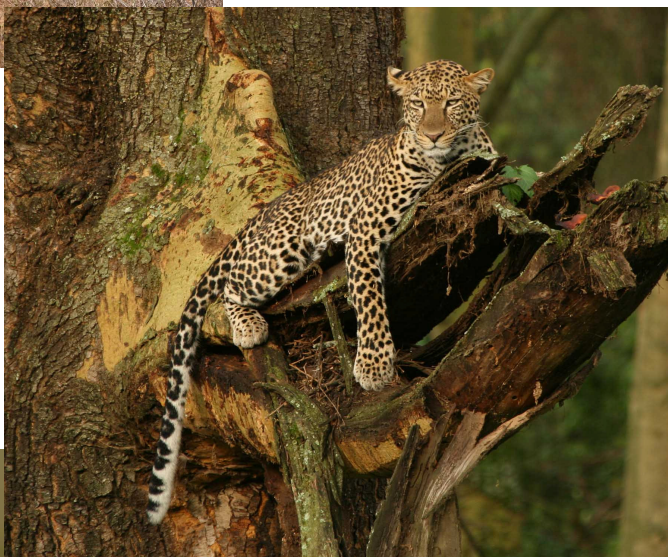


Val was able to capture on camera this lovely family of elephants making their daily walk to a nearby watering hole.

A leopard resting in a tree before going off to hunt also provided Val with this beautiful shot. Mick and Val also saw other big cats such as lion and cheetah in the Masai Mara area as well as the animals they prey on including impala, zebra and wildebeest. They had

hoped to witness the great wildebeest migration across the Mara River. Although this did not happen Mick and Val were compensated by the wide range of other animals they saw.

Mick was fully occupied in capturing on camera the abundance of beautiful and interesting birds Kenya has to offer. They range in size from the two million



greater flamingos which congregate on the soda lake at Lake Nauru to much smaller birds such as the pied kingfisher. Some have astonishing colouring such as the lilac breasted roller, captured here on camera by Mick.

Mick and Val shoot digitally as this format gives them the chance to capture far more images than with film. They very much enjoyed sharing their images with other members of the club as they know we will be interested. Family and friends cannot always be relied on!

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External Competitions.

The end of last year was fairly hectic for competitions. We were entered into 3 rounds of the N.W.Federation consisting of both prints and slides.

Between 22nd October and the 26th November we were matched against XXR and Pinner Photographic Clubs, with XXR winning and FEPS coming second. Unfortunately that means we would not go through to the semi-finals, although we had 5 starred images which would go in to the final.

We also entered into 2 rounds of the Rosebowl slide competition, although in the future it looks like this will become a digital competition. Of the 4 clubs entering, we came 2nd in the first round but 4th in the 2nd round.

The 3rd round will be held at Wantage on the 19th February, but with our marks as they are, it looks like our chances of winning are slim.

Previsions

On the 9th of December, several of us went to Previsions, which is a one off competition, hosted by XXR of prints, slides and digital. This was a big success for us, coming 1st out of 18 clubs for prints with Chris Wallace securing best print of the competition. For the first time we submitted digital images rather than slides and came 3rd out of 13 clubs in this section. This was remarkable when you consider that last year we came 8th for prints and 10th for slides and in 2005 we were 13th for prints and 9th for slides.

Keep up the good work.

Peter Trowell

External Competitions Secretary.

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Snips and Cuttings from the Darkroom Floor

All you snappers may be interested in the following link.

<http://www.microsoft.com/prophoto/downloads/default.aspx>

John Berg

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Want A Ring Flash

Want a ring flash? Got a flash? Got cardboard, sellotape AND scissors... ?

Then want no more! Copy and Paste this link into your browser for Samuel Potter's marvellous device: <http://www.flickr.com/groups/strobist/discuss/72157603455708647/>

Chris Palmer

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Free utilities and programmes to download courtesy of Phil Chapman

Security Products

AVG Anti-Virus <http://free.grisoft.com/doc/2>

AVG Anti-Spyware <http://free.grisoft.com/doc/20/us/frt/0>

Windows Defender

<http://www.microsoft.com/athome/security/spyware/software/default.msp>

If you think you have a problem download Dr Web cureit and scan your PC

<http://download.drweb.com/drweb+cureit> if you're not sure about anything it finds I suggest you type the filename into Google (www.google.com) and see what it comes up with. This is not a substitute for having anti-virus software installed. Always remember to update your anti-virus and anti spyware programmes regularly.

Applications

If you don't fancy paying for Microsoft Office then have a look at Open Office from <http://www.openoffice.org> which is free. If you, or your children, are students then you may be able to get a Student version of MS Office much cheaper than normal.

If you need relatively simple photo editing software then you could try paint.net from <http://www.getpaint.net> but this does require the .net component of Windows to be installed (this is usually installed as part of Windows Update)

To create .pdf files without buying the full version of Adobe Acrobat you can download Primo PDF from <http://www.primopdf.com> which is a quick & easy .pdf creator

Multimedia

There are a number of programmes you can download for playing, editing, and converting multimedia files.

Winamp (<http://www.winamp.com>) is a replacement for Windows Media Player and VLC (<http://www.videolan.org/vlc>) plays just about any sort of multimedia file but looks very basic.

Audacity (<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/>) is an mp3 audio file editor which allows quite complex manipulation of mp3 files and will allow you mix audio tracks together. It's not hugely user friendly and does take some getting used to.

In a similar vein Super (<http://www.erightsoft.com/SUPER.html>) is an incredibly versatile multimedia file converter but is extremely user unfriendly. I've used it to convert video from one format to another, strip audio out of a video file and convert mobile phone video footage to different formats. If you're interested in doing that sort of thing it's very good but not that easy to use.

Utilities

As standard I would usually install Acrobat Reader, Adobe Flash Player and Adobe Shockwave player all from www.adobe.com and Java from www.java.com

Communications

Skype www.skype.com is a free download which allows you to use your PC to speak to other Skype users for free. If you have a webcam you can see them as well. You do need to have speakers and a microphone on your PC (or a headset) and have a broadband connection.

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Finally if you are bemused by all the jargon or want to know what something means then here are a few sites which might help

www.google.co.uk

www.dhubert.co.uk

www.helpwithpcs.com/index.html

Or you can try & catch me in the coffee break. If you want to e-mail me my address is

phil@philchapman.co.uk

Phil Chapman.

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FEPS Member in Amateur Photographer.

Just for the information of members, there are supposed to be 2 shots of mine in AP Gallery section next week (February 14th).

Mike Longhurst.

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And Finally

Many thanks to those of you who have sent in submissions for this edition. A newsletter is only as good as the articles that are sent in, so please keep them coming. It is better to have too much than not enough, I can always carry articles over to the next issue.

And Finally Yes Really This Time

If you are reading this as a printed copy courtesy of Ray Staff then would you please pass it on to other members who cannot get it by email, or leave it at the back of the hall when you have finished with it. There are always new or prospective members arriving who would like to read a copy but as is the usual by that time there's not always one available, not only that it helps to keep wastage down.

For technical reasons which I will not bore you with, or to be truthful I couldn't get it to work I've included the Ruislip Woods Photographic Competition Entry Form as a separate sheet at the end because 'Publisher' wouldn't accept an Adobe Acrobat file to insert. That's my story and I'm sticking to it.

See you all at the next print competition on the 18th

Ted Weller

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