

## November meeting

by Dave Blair

Our last meeting for 2007! The November meeting was a fairly informal affair, but one I think (hope!) everyone got something from. We had a look at some experimental images with descriptions on how the makers created the image. I found this an interesting process, seeing how different techniques can be applied to alter an original image or combination of images into one. We saw that this manipulation is certainly not confined to the computer either with some good darkroom created images on show.

Following the manipulation discussion, Neil and I discussed a range of things that judges look for when judging a competition – both technical and compositional. I illustrated the points with a range of photos shown on the laptop/digi projector. The value of our new system certainly came to the fore when Bill was describing how to carry out ‘magic wand’ selection (and other) functions in Photoshop and we



were able to open up PS and do the work right there to show everyone.

Generally I find in

PS there are at least half a dozen different ways to achieve the outcome you want, but it’s really educational to see how others do it as it may be a simpler/more efficient/easier/better way than how

you do it yourself. Sometimes it is simply good to know that it can be done!



To blur or not to blur – that is the question... well at our November meeting it was one of the questions!

In the talk about judging, we covered the technical aspects such as sharpness – or the lack of (covered in more detail by Neil in the April 2005 newsletter and by me in December 2004 newsletter (both available our website). We also covered contrast, colour corrections and white balance and depth of field and how it can be used.

Composition is more subjective, but there are certain ‘rules’ that generally make images more pleasing to the eye that are worth remembering. We played around with the rule of thirds (see right) and having the subject looking into an image or near one edge and also looking left versus looking right (done with a simple digital flip in FastStone). We also discussed leading lines or visual leads, use of silhouettes and keeping the images simple. From the feedback, it



seemed many of you found the session a good one, so we might have to do a few more informal workshops like this. The new laptop/projector certainly make it easier!

Our Member Profile this month is our esteemed Comp Steward and committee member, Kirsten. To get the dirt, I posed a number of questions to which I got replies. This piece is cobbled together from those responses, I apologise to Kirsten if I have messed up in the translation... Dave.

I was born an Army Brat! My Dad was in Infantry at the time training in South Australia, he found it too hard to be in the Army & have a baby so we moved back to both my Mum & Dad's home Melbourne. Once we moved back to Victoria, I went to my Mums old school, Boronia West Primary, can't remember much from there, just know that I broke my wrist so badly that I have to have surgery on it next year to fix the damage!

Then went to Boronia Heights Secondary College the same a my Brother, we were both considered troublemakers (even though that was a harsh generalisation) we both ended up leaving early to go straight into the workforce. I started working from my Work Experience stint in Year 10 at an Aquarium and they asked me to stay on so I did & from the age of 15 kept working there for another 18 months. The school ended up asking me to participate in their Debutante Ball a few months later, I did and it was a great night, I felt like a princess.



From the Aquarium I worked at awful old Macca's! I stayed there quite a while and unfortunately when I was 17 I was involved in a high speed motor accident, which lost me my job and mangled my left knee, injured my neck and lower back. So I was put out of anything for the next couple of years, the accident really rattled me and I had no

motivation to do anything at all, but I did some odd jobs here and there, then once I met my now husband, I found motivation to get back it society and I starting working as an Office Assistant doing accounts. I enjoyed it so much, I'm still doing the same thing and now I work for a computer components manufacturing firm as an Executive Assistant and they are fabulous people.

My cameras are a Pentax 6MP Digital SLR, a Pentax MZ50 SLR and a Canon 4MP compact Digital. I got interested in Photography when I was 12 and for my birthday I received a film compact camera. I took that thing everywhere with me, I took photos of all my school friends, any night or day I went out it came too, I literally took thousands of photos with that poor little camera. Then I finally upgraded after I received some money from the accident and I got my SLR. I was amazed at what I was missing out on and pretty much had it attached to my hand, after I broke that from overuse, I won 1st prize at the Croydon Camera House for a Polaroid camera that they couldn't find when I came to pick it up, so I got my Digital SLR instead and I love it to pieces. The Canon is really my husband's (Daniel) but I use it more than him and have found it very versatile for quick shots.



To entertain myself it used to be going out partying every weekend, but that wore off once I was given the responsibility to house sit for a year and then brought my home in late 2005. My idea of relaxing

now is going for a stroll along the Warby trail with Daniel and our beautiful ratbag of a dog Lucifer. I enjoy doing the gardening and making our home beautiful. Daniel and I want to start to go camping more often now the wedding is over and try to settle and ground ourselves.

Photographic inspiration came to me when I first saw the likes of Ken Duncan & Steve Parish's work with all the intense colour and life like shots; I was hooked. I took photos of anything that had vibrance and strong colours. I love taking photos of flowers and animals (if I can get them to stay still). Many of the photos I have entered in the monthly comps have been suggested that I Photoshop and saturate the colours, but I don't have the patience to alter much on any of my photos, the intense colour that I capture has only been altered in the camera or maybe that's just how I really saw it...



Daniel and I met at a local Nightclub nearly 8 years ago and we've been together ever since. He asked me to marry him just after my 25th

birthday and we didn't think much about actually getting married, but after I came back from a 2 week holiday in New Zealand last year, that was the longest time we had ever been apart and Daniel and I missed each other so much that a few days after I arrived back in Australia, we announced the date of the wedding, which was the 10th of November. It was arduous planning and trying to find things that I wanted, but I managed to plan what I hope will be the first day of a wonderful life being married to the man I can't wait to grow old with.

Of places I have loved going to, I used to love going over to the Great Ocean Road every summer, but it has been changed so much by having put fences & barriers everywhere that it has lost it's charm.

This is off the track a bit, but the last time I was there, I saw a large group of American tourists that had jumped a fence & were sitting on the edge of one of the apostles that is still attached to the land & although it would have been beautiful to sit there & watch the sunset with all your friends in a beautiful country, I was completely furious!! The fences were obviously put there for a reason and they completely disrespected the fragility of the area and their own safety, so as they came back over the fence I went off at them all about their complete lack of



respect for a place that I was so in love with. Even though I probably ruined their day and I felt like an idiot afterwards, I never really went back, I couldn't stand to see anymore damage to the area.

Back to something more positive, I am completely smitten by Rotororua in NZ. I only got to stay there for 2 days but I could have spent 2 years there as it is the most fascinating place I have ever seen. There is steam coming from up the ground all the time, out of drains in people's front yards and there is no unreasonable fences or barriers to be seen! If you are stupid enough to go near a steaming pit of hot water, that's your own fault and you have no-one to blame but yourself. I was completely blown away by it. Australia has so many warning signs around anything that can hurt you, in Rotororua

you're just expected to use your head and just respect what the land naturally does, I loved it! But apart from that it is like being on another planet, the smell is hideous, but you get used to it. The people there were sooo friendly, the culture brought tears to my eyes many times and seeing a traditional Hakka was something I have never felt before, it brought tears, but a smile, it brought goosebumps all over and I felt cold with fear as it is traditionally a war dance to scare the crap out of the opponent (even though the words sound quite friendly). I was scared when the men made the deepest most guttural noise I've ever heard from a human being, I literally thought someone would be killed! But once it was



over their beautiful smiles came back & they seemed humbled to have made the entire audience cry with seeing something so spiritual to them. They truly still believe in their fore fathers and respect their culture, it was nothing like on the film "Once were Warriors" (which is nearly what I expected when I landed in Auckland). Once I was there, every house that I saw on the North and South Island were so neat with well groomed gardens and lawns, it was great to see an entire country that are very proud of their homes and themselves; they really love being Kiwis and good on 'em.

NZ changed what I think of the world, family is even more important to me, the things I loved before I respect even more. Don't get me wrong I hold being an Australian very dear to my heart, but since



seeing another country that the people love being what they are, I have a deeper respect for what I have in my life. Being from an adopted family (I'm the only one that's not adopted) I don't actually know what my background is. That may seem like a bad thing, but I've turned it around & I can see that I need to respect what I am and what I have... family... and that makes me very lucky, it could have been very different and I may not have got to meet the people I have if it wasn't for my family, even if their blood is not the same as their parents, they still have parents that love them.

Another amazing thing I have seen would be some of the concerts I have been to. Music speaks a completely different language. When I was young I was put in front of the TV when there was a Ballet on and the orchestra would make my neck tingle and my jaw drop from the ups and downs in the emotion, even from seeing a heavy metal concert I have had tears in my eyes from the talent that it takes a human to play an instrument and what they could make the instrument do, it gives me goosebumps all over.

I think Australian's take our country too much for granted, I think if anything needs to change, it's the people, not so much the country. The country will be what it is, the people in it need to pick up their game. We live in what has been proven as one of the most stunning places on earth and yet some people are more concerned about having a flashier car or having more money than their neighbour, if we all just took a step back and forget about politics or how much some people hate John Howard or who's the better state, maybe we could concentrate more on a better future instead of whingeing about what we don't have - this is a lucky country and we have plenty.

What are my future plans? I might start thinking about having kids in a few years, now isn't the right time. I'd love to one day do something more involved in photography, but for the moment I'm happy to plod along. Ultimately I would love to be involved in the RSPCA or be an ambulance officer, hurt animals or people make me so sad and I want to help them. I am sickened by animal cruelty and would like to be better involved in stopping it.

### FINAL FAST FIVE

What book are you reading:

Your favourite movie

What CD is in the player:

Who would you most like to meet/like to have met (alive or dead):

Where would you most like to visit/travel to:

### KIRSTEN GROVES

*Deception Point* by Dan Brown

Blade (I love vampire movies)

something Heavy Metal

Jim Morrison or Jimi Hendrix

New Zealand all over again

## Online Odyssey

by Dave Blair

As we draw towards the end of the year, we sometimes sit back and wonder not only where the time went, but what has changed in the year (ok, there have been a few obvious ones recently!). The website below is totally non-photography related, but I thought some of you would be fascinated by it anyway.

<http://www.poodwaddle.com/worldclock.swf>

It is a statistical world clock which counts a rolling tally of a variety of things such as human population (broken down into births, deaths and population growth rates), how many people have different diseases (infectious and not), the number of injuries from things like traffic accidents, war or fire and then some economic and environment stats such as barrels of oil pumped, hectares of forest lost, species extinctions, global temperature (to 10 decimal places!) or the number of bicycles and computers produced. To check the numbers, you can either set the clock running from when you hit 'now', or you can see the tally to now for the current year, month, week or day.

For instance, in a single minute, about 254 babies are born and 108 people die. This means that so far (from when I checked today, 1 Dec) the global population just this year has increased by 70.5 million people – an *increase* of more than 3 times Australia's total population!

In that same minute, 25 ha of forest were lost (rather careless!) and 68 cars, 209 bicycles and 163 computers were produced (that will keep Labor happy, I hear they are looking for a few laptops...). In that *single minute*, 57,000 barrels (9,000,000 litres) of oil was pumped.

I have seen few examples that show as clearly (just as you sit idly watching your computer monitor), the global scale of the impact of people on the planet – every minute of every day.... definitely not one for the faint hearted.

With the advent to computers – software, scanners and digital cameras, the making of digital slide shows are now very easy.

In the past I collected photos of all my travels and family and placed them in albums. Now I have an entire book cabinet containing rather large photo albums - cluttering up my bedroom.

Recently I have I decided to keep my best photos in slide shows on my computer - as Power Point Shows. I scanned the old photos (prints) and some 35mm slides into my computer. The slides have been of a very poor quality and I have had to jazz them up using Photoshop, to remove scratches, spots and just about everything from them. Actually every photo that I take now days are altered in some way with Photoshop, using the Cropping, Levels, Cloning and Contrast/Brightness tools etc.

**TO PRODUCE A SIMPLE SLIDE SHOW** – The following technique can be applied:

1. Place all your photos in a single folder.
2. Number them so that they will be placed in the correct sequence. Eg. 000 – 001 – 002 etc. do not start 1 -2-3-4 etc as when you get to 11 that slide will appear between 1 and 2.
3. Go to Media Viewer and open the files there.
4. Click on photo 000 to highlight it.
5. Then in the tool bar at the bottom of the screen click the Start slide show Icon.
6. Walla!! you now have a slide show.

(Editor's Note – **FastStone** also has the ability to do simple slideshow, simply follow steps 1 and 2 above, then in FastStone click 'View' up top, and 'Slideshow' from the list. It allows you to easily control transition times and types, whether you want small images stretched or not, random play or in order and even whether you want to add music –all very easy to use).

### **POWER POINT SHOWS**

This has to be learnt. Microsoft has the Power Point Program as a part of its Office Suite of Programs. This program gives the user an opportunity to create really great professional looking slide shows. Complete with music or sound effects, you can also add nice attractive backgrounds, captions and even narration.

The best way to learn this is to get a book from the local library – and wade through the exercises. That is how I learnt this program as well as Photoshop. Both are great programs and a photographer should learn them, and add them to his/her toolkit.

### **SLIDE SHOW DVDs**

Below is really what David wanted me to write about – but I thought there would be some people that did not really want to go the whole hog as I have done recently, and what I detailed above would be sufficient for their requirements.

To get a slide show onto DVD is not possible unless you have specific software. I have recently completed a Power Point Slide Show of a golf course that will soon be dug up and replaced by housing blocks. It is a beautiful golf course with a nice club house and wonderful views. No wonder they got \$50M for the property. Anyhow over about 2 years I slowly took photos of the whole place including night shots.

This is what I did to produce the slide DVD. Because I wanted to sell them the whole package – I needed to produce a slide show that can be played with a minimum of trouble. Both on TV or a computer. So in reality I had to produce a DVD that can be played as a video on a DVD Player.

I first produced a Power Point show – nice background and captions, good fonts etc. I even used Photoshop to create an attractive first introduction page.

***When the slide show was finished - I saved all the images in a JPEG format. And placed them in a convenient folder on my computer so that I could recall them at a later date. This is what I used to produce my Golf Course DVD!***

0-0-0-0-0

At the Inter Club Meeting in Ringwood in September, I was really impressed when Adrian Smith produced his very nice DVD Slide Show – so I asked him about it. He said that he constructed it using Proshow Gold – costing about \$350 for the program. He said that there was a trial version that can be downloaded that will give me an idea of its capabilities.

Anyhow I did that – trialled the program but unfortunately was unable to create a DVD. So I decided not to invest in something that I was unsure of. Whilst looking, I spotted a program called “QR PhotoDVD Slideshow” I tried this out and found it to be perfect – just what I wanted. Cost AU\$47. – “Big Difference”

This program really does not format a slide show - but it does create a great DVD slide show.. All you have to do is open the previously created Slide show file that you created with JPEG files produced from Power Point, then just follow the instructions:

1. Set DVD to PAL format.
2. Slide duration eg 6 seconds each
3. Slide transition time eg 1 second
4. Slide transition design (take your pick)
5. Pick your music – I used MP3 (Chariots of Fire)
6. Creation of DVD
7. Burning of DVD (yes it also burns the disk) DVD+R and DVD-R both seem to work.
8. Saving and naming of project.

*The only problem I encountered was the sound breaking up on certain DVD Players – Why I do not know! (I now have the Manufacturer research this).*

Well that is what I did and it worked OKAY for me.

**Have fun, any problems ring me, John Hughan 97233501**

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**for printing our club's newsletter.**

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*“They call me the breeze...  
... I keep blowin' down the road...”*

J.J. Cale – *Naturally*

Well another year has just about wrapped up. There have been fairly major changes across the country, none the least being a new federal government, but within the microcosm of our own club, it's been a good year with some good new additions such as our data projector, new members (and not many leaving), some great new images and (way back at the start) a mostly new committee.

For a club with so many people involved, I think we have a wonderfully harmonious group who seem to relish sharing all things photographic... and the odd thing not! It is certainly a group that has 'many hands' who help out with all kinds of things to lighten the load – whether that is organising our weekend away, setting up the chairs, doing a talk, bringing some supper, suggesting a guest judge, meet any new comers, driving the bus, pack away the chairs or hanging some prints at the Lilydale Show. I would like to thank each and every one of you who has helped out this year, it makes our club tick along easily and enjoyably.

I would like to express my special gratitude to the committee members – Neil, Jeanie, Bill, Joe and Kirsten, without whom your club would not run. Having joined them at the meetings each month, I know how much they provide, particularly of their own time to the club. It's a big job and I thank them for helping make the group the success it is.

As we look forward to next year, I hope you all feel empowered to get involved and let the committee know what you want out of your club. If something goes well, we want to hear about it, but likewise if something turns you off, let us know about that too. I hope you all have a lovely and peaceful Christmas and a bit of time to pause and reflect over the New Year. Best wishes, Dave.

### **GM PRESS RELEASE RE MICROSOFT:**

In case anyone missed this, General Motors issued this press release in response to Bill Gate's comments saying GM were a little behind the times with their technology and innovation. GM responded stating that if GM had developed technology like Microsoft, we would all be driving cars with the following characteristics:

1. For no reason whatsoever, your car would crash..... Twice a day.
2. Every time they repainted the lines in the road, you would have to buy a new car.
3. Occasionally your car would die on the freeway for no reason. You would have to pull to the side of the road, close all of the windows, shut off the car, restart it, and reopen the windows before you could continue. For some reason you would simply accept this.
4. Occasionally, executing a manoeuvre such as a left turn would cause your car to shut down and refuse to restart, in which case you would have to reinstall the engine.
5. Macintosh would make a car that was powered by the sun, was reliable, five times as fast and twice as easy to drive - but would run on only five percent of the roads.
6. The oil, water temperature, and alternator warning lights would all be replaced by a single "This Car Has Performed An Illegal Operation" warning light.
7. The airbag system would ask "Are you sure?" before deploying.
8. Occasionally, for no reason whatsoever, your car would lock you out and refuse to let you in until you simultaneously lifted the door handle, turned the key and grabbed hold of the radio antenna.
9. Every time a new car was introduced car buyers would have to learn how to drive all over again because none of the controls would operate in the same manner as the old car.
10. You'd have to press the "Start" button to turn the engine off.

## Coming up...

**Next meeting – 20<sup>th</sup> February.**

**March meeting – AGM.** Please think about nominations for committee positions – both nominating and being nominated! There will be a few changes to the committee next year with some not standing for re-election, so if you would like to be involved and have a few ideas, please nominate.

**Syllabus topics for 2008.** These will be posted on the website so you can get underway shooting for the next year of competition!

## Christmas lunch

Our end of year function is being held at the Singing Gardens, 1694 Main Road in Toolangi on Sunday 2 December (tomorrow!). It includes our end of year presentations and kicks off at 12 noon. The details were recently emailed out to everyone, but are also on the Calendar section of our website. Thanks to all those involved, particularly Cindy, Kirsten and Jeanie for doing the bulk of the organising. Hope to see you all there.



Pick a scene – from last month's meeting, viewing a scene to find where good images may lie...

