



The Camera Club of Hendersonville

Steering Committee: Rich DeSimone, Chair Mike Raney, Treasurer Mitchell Randall,
Paul Doeblner, Secretary Gary Lightner
Newsletter by Ron Anderson

September 2014

September Meeting

This month a representative of Ball Photo in Asheville will make a presentation. Sales person Everett Robinson is usually at the counter when I've made purchases there. We have had these folks in the past and they always have new and interesting items to show us. After their presentation we will have one or two videos by Joel Sartore. We have shown some in the past. We have a new DVD of his that emphasizes travel photos and how to get something different and interesting.

August Field Trip

A group of about 15 of us arrived at Bullington Gardens the day after our August meeting at 9 AM. The Dahlias were in full bloom, with a lot of morning dew. Some were in the shade and others in full sun. We all had a great time taking pictures of these varied and beautiful blooms. I suspect we will be seeing some of the images in our October forum. (I have spent hours on my images which I won't show until the Forum).

Featured Photographer

This month we will feature Syd Self's images. Syd provided the following biography:

I became interested in photography at the age of 12. My first camera was a box camera: roll film, no exposure control, no focusing, no aperture control.

My instructor, Paul Childs (who later became the

husband of Julia Childs), taught me how to mix chemicals, develop and fix films, make contact prints and enlargements.

I soon graduated to a more useful camera: a Kodak, also roll film but with exposure and aperture control. To focus you had to know the distance to your subject, which you set on the lens.

My mother taught children how to ride (ponies and horses) and some of the parents wanted pictures of their children so, at age 14, I became a professional photographer. The money I made I used to buy a serious camera — a 3 1/4 x 4 1/4 Series D Graphlex which took cut film. It had a ground glass viewing screen so I could visually set the focus. I also bought my own enlarger. One of the pictures I took was of my two sisters waiting to go to school. This picture, blown up to wall size, was used in the Connecticut state exhibit in the 1939/1940 World's Fair in New York. (first image below)

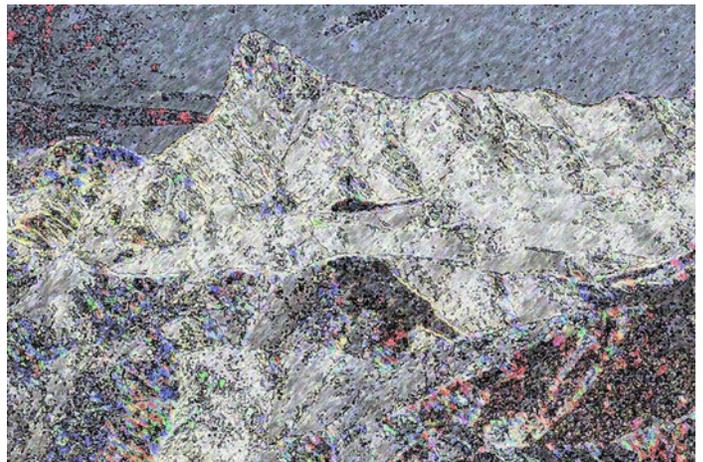
I continued my photography, as my education allowed, until I went into the Army in 1943. When I got out of the Army I went to college and had little time for photography for a number of years. In the meantime, photographic technology had advanced and cameras that took, first color slides and then color prints became available so I got a Voigtlander. However, color prints were expensive and the processor had the control over the quality of the print so I didn't get seriously interested in photography again until Photoshop came along. So, after I retired I took more interest in photography and some of the

results are the illustrations accompanying this bio.

In 2012 I published a book "The Whole Truth, A Fresh Look at Reality", and am currently working on a 2nd edition of it which I intend to distribute as an e-book.



View at Mitla



Death Valley Abstract



Going to School



Ruins of French Church



Spring Trees



Ruins near Oaxaca



View from Roosevelt's Window

October Forum

Forum special topic is 'Chiaroscuro'; as Rich DeSimone announced at the August meeting the dictionary definition is "the distribution of light and shade in a picture; the use of deep variations in and subtle gradations of light and shade to enhance delineation of character and dramatic effect." A mouthful to be sure, but basically the use of variations in light and shadows to enhance dramatic effect of an image.

Tom Nebbia, retired National Geographic photographer will be our critic. Tom has done this before and we have invited him back again. Tom has said he has the reputation of "the art photographer" at National Geographic.

Picnic

The picnic at High Falls is on Sept. 27th from 11:00 - 4:00. The picnic shelter that we will be at is High Falls #1. We will all meet at the High Falls visitors center and a ranger will let a limited number of vehicles in, to drive to the picnic shelter. We probably should all meet between 10:30 and 11:00 so we can decide who will transport the people and supplies into the picnic area.

Library Photo Hanging

Plan Ahead: Don't forget that we have reserved the Kaplan Auditorium in the Henderson County Library for another print hanging. As in January, we have the room for the entire month of November. So pick out a few of your favorite images and be ready to show the community what the Club members can do. Details on date, time and procedures for setting up the 'show' will be forthcoming sometime in October.

Tip of the Month

After our last meeting I sent a note to Bob Coffey with some thoughts about photography in general. Bob sent me a very thoughtful response which I will include here, edited a bit. My note to Bob included a comment about Joe Bester's quote "Equipment Does Matter". I believe Joe is correct in some respects. Let me expand on that.

If you want to take landscapes and in general photos in good bright lighting, equipment doesn't matter nearly as much as if, for example, you want to take pictures in low light where you are fighting slow shutter speeds and high ISO to get an image. Things get worse if you are trying to stop action as at a basketball game. The newer sensors and image processors built into the newer cameras DO make a huge difference in what you can accomplish under adverse conditions.

Personally, my budget doesn't allow the cutting edge technology in my cameras. I tend to run about one iteration behind the latest and best, and to purchase used equipment from reliable sources such as B&H in New York.

I have inserted some comments in Bob's text below, in italics.

Bob's Thoughts:

By sheer coincidence my other club, the Delaware Photographic Society, has recently had a flurry of postings on the club's internal forum about gear vs. photographic expertise. There have been a number of well expressed opinions backed by individual needs and desires. I followed the comments with great interest and was impressed by the comments and logic of each, especially since I've known each of the contributors for many years. I think that you would have enjoyed their string of commentaries.

Generally, they were mostly in favor of searching for and justifying their acquisition of the latest and greatest equipment, but a few others were pointing out that the camera doesn't make the photographer. We've all seen people who fork out the big bucks for the latest and greatest camera and rave about all its capabilities, but they still only produce mediocre images from the standpoint of subject selection, composition, lighting and interest.

Having chased the never ending escalation of added and improved features of evolving cameras for many years in hopes of finding the Holy Grail, I've finally come to accept that the goal posts have been and will always continue to be moved. For a brief period of time I felt that I had finally arrived at the pinnacle of fine cameras when I took the plunge and spent nearly

\$2000 for a Nikon F5. (That was a lot for a camera in 1999). People who recognized the camera that I was using took notice and were impressed. While I was a very proud to have attained that stature in owning such fancy gear, in retrospect it did not inherently make me a better photographer. That came much later after a tremendous amount of trial and error experience in vying for winning scores in monthly competitions against the master print makers in my club along with the feed back from judges and my colleagues plus a lot of seminars, workshops, field trips, critiques and photographic books.

Comment: I was a member of a camera club in Urbana Illinois while employed by the university. One of the staff members, an associate professor, bought an 8 by 10 view camera and took it on a trip to the Rocky Mountain National Park. One meeting at a show and tell, he showed his images. At the end of the presentation he said that he usually thought others' photos were much better than his and he wondered why. He had some technically very excellent images but generally without identifiable subjects and with poor composition. Those were my thoughts but since in effect I worked for this professor in the Chemistry department, I didn't dare comment.

The ever increasing ISO ratings with lower noise levels are probably the most exciting improvement, along with better image stabilization, larger sensor size, higher pixel count and myriad other alluring features. However, I've now reached the point where I cannot afford and do not wish to pursue that elusive pot of gold at the end of the rainbow (read treadmill) and to simply use what I have to my best advantage.

Comment: Essentially this was my point in saying that I agreed with Joe Bester that Equipment does matter. I frequent an online photo forum that I've mentioned before, www.uglyhedgehog.com. Folks in that forum refer to GAS, an acronym for "Gear Acquisition Syndrome" :-)

I like to use an old photography joke that demonstrates this point rather well. At a dinner party it was learned that one of the guests was an accomplished photographer. After some discussion, the hostess remarked, "Gosh, you must have a great camera!". As the guests were leaving, the

photographer thanked the hostess and praised her for her delicious culinary creations. In conclusion he said, " You must have a wonderful set of pots and pans".

Bob Coffey -- edited and added comments by Ron

Bullington Gardens

Gary Lightner sent me some images from the photo outing to include here.

