

JULY 2015

Outings are a great way to visit places of interest with others wanting to take photos – a safe way to share and learn. As such, BMPG offers a variety of outings through the year, our next being Sunday 19th July for a dawn shoot at picturesque Yarramundi. Yes, dawn is early, but it is also wonderful light and maybe mist as well. An email will be sent separately with all the details. The end of August brings the weekend away (see Shirley if not already registered). So the next short excursion is planned for probably October at Mt Wilson – spring, to compliment our visit in autumn.

There are no doubt other great locations as well, and this is where we all come in – where do you suggest? Do you have any places, urban, natural, events ... you could suggest. Please see the committee at meetings.

Although we have our membership and club program working on a calendar year, our management and administration runs from and to the end of July each year. This means that our AGM is on Monday 27th. For new members, please don't think this is a night to avoid – our AGM is always very short, then followed by a presentation by one of our members. This year Greg Farmer will give insight into his photographic practice. Greg has been very generous with his sharing of knowledge, through workshops and excursions as well as general conversations. He is always very interesting to listen to, speaking from his own experience of developing skills and style.

WHAT'S ON THIS MONTH

Monday 13th Exhibition Night: **NATURE**
Judge: Graham Cam

Monday 20th PROJECT OF PASSION
Mentors Geoff Beatty & Dot Radley

Sunday 19th OUTING – early morning,
Yarramundi (email to follow)

Monday 27th AGM followed by
GUEST SPEAKER:
Greg Farmer

& NEXT MONTH - AUGUST

Monday 3rd WORKSHOP: Dave Glazebrook
- MACRO Photography
(must be pre-booked)

Monday 10th Exhibition Night: **IN THE
STYLE OF ...**
Judge: Susan Buchanan

Monday 24th PROJECT OF PASSION:
Presentation of Projects

Weekend 28-30 CLUB PHOTOGRAPHIC
EXCURSION away



Blue Mountains Photography Group

The Blue Mountains Photography Group aims to support our shared love of photography, by providing a forum in which to learn, develop skills, discuss images and encourage each other. Meetings are held on the second and fourth Monday nights each month at the Presbyterian Church hall, Macquarie Road, Springwood, 7.30 for 8pm. Visitors welcome.



Guest Speakers: SMH PHOTOGRAPHERS WOLTER PEETERS & BRENDAN ESPOSITO, with Clique Coordinator TIA McINTYRE

We were really fortunate to be included in the Sydney Morning Herald Clique talks series, with the latest presentation being held at club night and with visitors for us to welcome to our group. Two of the SMH photographers shared their images, experiences and practices with us, and it was a wonderful opportunity to be able to hear about professional news photography and to be able to ask questions.

WOLTER PEETERS

Wolter discovered photography in Year 9, joined Fairfax in 2000 and the SMH in 2010, covers breaking news and weather events, and won a Walkley in 2013 for sport photography. His average day could be anything!

As a news photographer, Wolter has had training from the RFS, and covered the Blue Mountains fires in 2013. He wanted his images to tell a story, to show the fires in context with the fire, and have viewers feel and smell the fire. Some of his shots were taken while running, so are full of action and immediacy.

His Walkley was for a shot of the rowers at the Regatta Centre, early morning. He looked through and past some of the figures to focus on a more distant person, all backlit with glowing sunrise. This was a great example to explain what he is thinking and looking for when taking a shot – trying to make the composition work, having something happening, looking for foreground, middle & background to create interest and depth. He often employs an out of focus figure in the foreground to give context.



With experience has come the knowledge and confidence to be able to work more quickly. If taking planned portraits of performers, for example, he needs to be ready, set up and knowing what he wants. Media time slots can often only be 5-10 minutes, so there is no time to waste. As soon as he has the shot, he finishes. He showed a photo of performer Mark Ronson, one of many of the subject taken by media that day, and where he spent only two minutes to get what he was happy with. That only happened because he was prepared, ready to suggest how he wanted the shot, and finished as soon as he had what he needed.

Part of the news work flow is the variety of platforms that need to be considered – the daily paper, the web and tablet versions that are constantly updated, and audio-video clips as well. With breaking news there is a need to get the images out quickly, so no time to spend in editing. This forces the need for shooting so that there is not much additional to be done beyond maybe slight dodging and burning to bring out the image. If there is time before pushing the shutter to remove rubbish from the shot, then that can be done, but certainly not in editing. He also considers which images he sends – if not happy with the shot, don't share it, send the ones you are happier with.

As for equipment, Wolter finds fixed lenses helpful in that they make you move your position and to consider where you are and what you are looking for. For breaking news, a zoom works best.

When doing planned portraits, he takes lights and a large soft box with a double baffle so that he can bring it in close. Also sometimes a backdrop. It is also good to scout around for interesting locations to be able to situate the person.

Wolter also explained how one of the most important aspects of news photography is the need to make decisions on the run. That can be helped by constantly thinking about his practice – even when out with the family with no camera he is looking for interesting light!

BRENDAN ESPOSITO

Brendan began as a photographer in the late 1980s and has worked for the Daily Telegraph as an investigative and crime photographer, and for the SMH on sport, news and assignments. He has won Nikon Awards, a Walkley and National Portrait Photographer.

Brendan began by declaring that he loves photography and he loves his profession. Visual language is used to tell the human story. And that as a press photographer he has a responsibility to report and present what is happening truthfully, honestly, respectfully, letting the world know what is happening. Photos can help decision makers understand events.

Two aspects of his work were presented – his news “press photographer” work, which is immediate and rapid, and his more extended “photo journalist” stories.

Press photography is being a conduit of events, and the need to assess things with little time. Particularly with crime photography, there is a need to identify the ‘target’, then get in and get out quickly. Having a variety of clothes to change appearance can help. Sometimes there is the need to wait for the figure where you want them, then get out quickly. When doing dangerous work it is important to do your homework and trust your instincts.

It was obvious that Brendan treasures his extended stories, some done in vacation time as a break from the stress of news work. He shared images taken in a favourite location – India. He went for several weeks, stayed in a cheap hotel, took only one camera (small, with 35mm 1.4 lens) and was out walking from before dawn to after dusk every day. He learnt early on that backgrounds make or break a picture, so set himself in interesting locations, watched the light, and waited patiently for people. It is good to isolate subjects against clean environments. You may need to move yourself while shooting to better compose the shot. One trick is to find a coffee / chai shop and sit, watch and wait for interesting moments. It takes skill and practice to blend in and be ignored, but making repeat visits to a place helps.

Technically, Brendan said he tends to spot meter off highlights then underexpose, sometimes 2-3 stops – he is not worried about shadows but wants light and colours to be saturated. He also shoots with manual focus to test himself.

Photography is about communicating and emotional response. True artists shoot what resonates with them. So, he shoots moments that feel right, aiming to be the best interpreter he can be. He looks for the ‘zen’ moment and tries to shoot so he does not need to crop.

One of the most important considerations is the ethics of photography. It is a duty to be true, honest, respectful. Gaining access to a subject is a real privilege. So ask yourself – what am I going to do with that access?

A huge thank you to Tia, Wolter and Brendan for sharing their knowledge and wisdom, and thanks to Anne W for liaising.



EXHIBITION REVIEWED

Crowd Source. Candid photographs of Sydney life at the end of the 19th Century taken with a hidden 'detective camera' by amateur Arthur Stryer. New glass plate technology in the 1880s made photography more practical. Although many of the photos are not sharp and taken from a low angle they are nevertheless intriguing. This exhibition also raises questions about privacy which is currently still a relevant issue in our digital age. *Exhibition Rooms, Level 1, State Library of New South Wales, Macquarie Street Sydney. Weekdays 9am-5pm; Tue 9am-8pm; weekends 10am-5pm. Untill 23 August 2015. Free.*

SHOWING

Flashback. Australian fashion photography over the past 160 years. A travelling display from the State Library of NSW. *Springwood Library, 104 Macquarie Rd Springwood. Mon-Fri 10am-5.30pm; Sat 9am-4pm. 11-24 July. Free.*

Wildlife Photographer of the Year Exhibition. Annual world exhibition of over 100 wildlife photographs and is co-owned by the Natural History Museum and BBC Worldwide. *Australian Museum, cnr College & William Sts, Sydney. Daily 9.30am-5pm. Until 05 Oct. Entry fee into Museum.*

Ex & Post – Eastern Europe under the lens and The Outside Land. The 'Ex & Post' exhibition is work from 14 contemporary photomedia artists in Eastern Europe while 'The Outside Land' is new work from Stephen Dupont focusing on landscapes of Papua New Guinea. *Australian Centre for Photography, 257 Oxford St, Paddington. Tue-Sat 10am-5pm; Sun noon-5pm. Until 16 August. Free.*

Rosemary Laing: transportation. This exhibition explores Laing's long-term interest in place and landscape particularly such relationships as technology, labour and time. Includes works from her series 'greenwork' (1995) and 'brownwork' (1996-97). *Art Gallery of NSW, photography gallery, Art Gallery Rd, The Domain Sydney. Daily 10am-5pm. From 11 Jul-20 Sep. Free.*

OUT OF TOWN

Keepsakes: Australians and the Great War. Marking the centenary of the First World War through diaries, photographs, letters and mementos. Photographs are a strong presence. *National Library of Australia, Exhibition Gallery, Ground Floor, Parkes Place, Canberra ACT. Daily 10am-5pm. Until 19 July. Free.*

Colour my world: Handcoloured Australian photography. This is a significant aspect of Australian photography particularly from the 1970s that is often overlooked. *National Gallery of Australia, Parkes Place, Canberra ACT. Daily 10am-5pm. Until 30 August. Free.*

GOING

Myth and memory in recent American landscape photography. Re-evaluation of the American wilderness and the 'wild west' by some contemporary American photographers. *Photospace (level 1), National Gallery of Australia. Parkes Place, Canberra ACT. Daily 10am-5pm. Until 13 July. Free.*

Compiled by Ted Szafraniec

EXHIBITION THEMES:

“Doors” is one of our interesting, non-standard themes this year, offering a chance to challenge ourselves with different thinking. This doesn't just mean a collection of doors (though it could), but the chance to also look through doors to the world beyond. Judy T-M has given a list of ideas on our website, so check them out (www.bmpg.org.au - on right hand side under Latest you will find the link to definitions). She also suggests searching images on-line for more ideas.

UPCOMING THEMES:

August – In the Style of ... Dorothea Lange, Irving Penn, Freeman Patterson, Dianne Arbus – this gives us the areas of documentary, fashion, nature, impressionism and portraiture. Judy T-M has given some really helpful information in the theme definitions on our website

(http://www.bmpg.org.au/resources/BMPG_Theme_Definitions_2015.pdf)

September – Kids

October – Shot in the Blue Mountains

November – It's Starting to Feel a Lot Like Christmas

Of course, every exhibition night also includes an open section for images of your own choice. Don't forget to check the website for the rules for exhibitions, such as image sizes, prints and digitals.

MACRO WORKSHOP:

Dave Glazebrook's macro session will be on Monday 3rd August. Booking essential. There are still a couple of spots available, so be quick.

LIBRARY:

Over the past few years we have been building our library of photography related books covering technical aspects, history, creativity and individual photographers. These are all available for short-term loan by members on an honour system. Please make sure you write your borrowings in the book and bring back next meeting.

If you have any particular requests for acquisitions, please let Judy Thistleton-Martin know. We have a small budget, so within reason!

MATS FOR DISPLAYING IMAGES:

Mats are being accessed and will be available on a regular basis at BMPG meetings. These will be initially free for new members and a small charge for others (around \$3-\$12).

WEEKEND AWAY:

Following previous weekends away which were very successful and much appreciated by those who attended, it is proposed we have another this week – in the Hawks Nest / Myall Lakes area on weekend of 29-30 August. This will be a chance to practice our photography, work with others, enjoy the variety of sea / landscapes, still crisp enough for morning mist.

Your BMPG Committee are:

President – Shirley Steel

Vice President – Robyn Cook

Secretary – Mandy Ferretti

Treasurer – Anne Baker

Public Officer – Ted Szafraniec

Member – David Jenkins

Member – Jeannie McInnes

Member – Ann Wharton

Committee Meetings held 1st Monday evening of the month.

BMPG
WE ARE:

**Blue Mountains
Photography Group**

The Secretary

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articles, information, photos
are very welcome.