



THE SOUTHERN COUNTIES PHOTOGRAPHIC FEDERATION NEWSLETTER - DECEMBER 2023

HAPPY CHRISTMAS!

So we come to the end of 2023 and Wham have finally made it to the Christmas number 1 slot! Photography wise it has certainly been an interesting year, not least with the question of AI raising its head.

In this edition James Macon ARPS from Guernsey shares with you his recent and stunning successful panel from the RPS distinctions.



Added to which, hot off the press is news that Julia Wainwright from Chichester Camera Club has not only had a print accepted by the PAGB, but her image Fight for Life was also awarded a silver medal by Gordon Jenkins. This means that Julia has had 6 acceptances from 6 years of entering. A magnificent achievement, I'm sure you'll agree. And, drum roll please:

Nigel Bealey from Overton Photographic Club and Nigel Byrom from Spectrum Guernsey are both now CPAGBs following the recent PAGB adjudications at Smethwick.

We are preparing for our annual exhibition which will be held in January at the Young Gallery in Salisbury, and I am very much hoping that you will find time to visit. In 2023, we also held our first A.V. championships in nine years at Basingstoke and this was so well received, we are planning on making this an annual event. Behind the scenes Jason has worked tirelessly on the competition uploader, and despite a few initial hiccups the feedback suggests he has certainly made your lives easier, so it's probably a good time to say, that once your seasonal festivities are over, the uploader for the 2024 Championships is now OPEN! After fifteen weeks of Strictly Come Dancing, I feel like I should be making more of an event of that announcement, so just imagine I'm waving flags etc. Remember the Championships is earlier than usual next year (17th March) and so is the closing date. Don't get caught out! You can find full details on the next page.

Also, the PAGB Awards for Photographic Merit are coming to our region next April. So make sure the weekend of the 27th and 28th April 2024 is in your diaries and if you are thinking of applying for an award, or just interested in what is involved, then please have a look at the Southern Counties Photographic Federation website. At the moment, I understand, there are spaces in all categories, but don't wait too long.

Finally, thank you to you all for your support during the last year and particularly everybody who has contributed to the newsletters. I look forward to hearing of many more members' successes over the coming months. And all of us on the Southern Photographic Federation Council, wish you a very merry Christmas and a happy and healthy 2024.



Southern Counties Photographic Federation

Founded 1963 as the Southern Photographic Federation

SCPF Print and PDI Championships 2024

Sunday 17th March 2024

To be held at:
St. Mary's Centre,
Grassmere Cl,
Bognor Regis PO22 7NU

Judges: Professor David Wheeler FRPS MFIAP EFIAP/d3 DPAGB (MCPF)
Cherry Larcombe EFIAP ARPS DPAGB BPE5* (KCPA)
David Smith LRPS CPAGB BPE1* (SPA)

The SCPF Print and PDI Championships are held in March each year.
This is a one day event hosted by a different club within the SCPF area.
There are three judges, who score all images between 2 and 5.
All images compete for the individual Gold medal winner and one of three
"judge's choice" medals in each class.

It is an inter-club event, run under PAGB patronage, open to all member clubs.

We have now taken the requirement for clubs to submit 15 images away.
Clubs may now submit **up to** 15 images in each of the print and PDI classes.
There is no longer a minimum number!

The uploader can now found in the online directory for comp secs' login and is open for entries.
This year's closing date for entries is 18th February 2024.

All the image scores are totalled by club and the winning club and the runner-up in each class
go on to represent the Southern Counties Photographic Federation

at the Inter-club Championships organised by the PAGB .

The Inter-club PDI Championships are usually held in in July,
with the Print Championships in October.

In 2023, this was at Warwick and Blackburn respectively, but the locations may vary.

2023's winning clubs in the PDIs were Blandford Forum and Fordingbridge
and, in the print section, Chichester and New Forest.

Because of PAGB restrictions on these competitions, the rules for the SCPF Championships
differ slightly from other federation competitions with a restriction
on the number of nature images that can be submitted.

Full details of rules and how to upload images can be found on our website:
<https://southerncountiespf.org.uk>

And now, as promised, James Machon ARPS shares his recent successful Associateship panel.

Statement of Intent for ARPS Submission – James Machon - 15 November 2023

Guernsey Unloved

I have lived on Guernsey for 53 years and its gradual degradation is noticeably depressing. This once vibrant island had a thriving tourism industry filled with hotels, restaurants, parish pubs, extensive retail outlets and numerous visitor attractions.

We had a successful growing industry with flowers and tomatoes being our biggest exports. The offshore finance industry grew rapidly, and Guernsey really was an amazing place to live. Nearly all those industries have now disappeared under the burden of regulation, competition, and a lack of investment. Guernsey's buildings and general appearance have become unloved, unkept, functional and ugly.

Many parts of our once beautiful island are now neglected, and if something isn't linked to the 'self-important' offshore finance industry, then appearances are consistently overlooked. I feel it is important to document this degradation, and my panel aims to convey my sad observations of the place that I call home.



ASSOCIATE Presentation Layout



Congratulations, James, on your ARPS and thank you for sharing your images and statement of intent with us this month. I was fascinated by your images and the emotions that I can really feel coming through them. This feels like a very personal project. But, I have to ask the age-old question. Which came first – statement or images?

This is an interesting question and I guess it would be my statement. This project was never meant to be my ARPS distinction, I did it for a number of different reasons initially, and it was only when I was halfway through that I started to contemplate using this project for a panel. I

love photography, but I was getting very bored with the same old thing and I often found myself wombling around with my camera without any real purpose. So, via the power of YouTube, I started looking for some inspiration, and I stumbled across a chap called Alex Kilbee and his thought provoking channel called The Photographic Eye. Watching his numerous videos and learning about past masters was the push I needed to rethink my approach and try something different. I have never met Alex, but I am extremely grateful for the huge mindset change that he has helped to install in me. So yes, I would say my project became my statement which then became my panel.

And second question – prints or PDIs?

For me it was PDI's. Whilst I love prints, the logistics and cost of getting them to arrive safely in the UK is not worth the risk.

Can you tell us something about your process? You've shown some really different angles and focussed on different perspectives, which adds to the feeling of desolation and isolation?

Because this is part of a wider project that I am working on, I had approximately 150 photos to choose from on this theme. However, having previously failed on my first ARPS attempt, I realised the importance of having a panel of images that displayed some uniformity and consistency so that it looks like an intentional body of work. My panel from 3 years had some very strong images, but on reflection I can see that they were only strong individually and didn't look like part of a panel. So this time I was extremely selective and only chose images within this theme that were taken in exactly the same way. For example, my shots were all taken very square on at normal standing height with all verticals and horizontals being precise. I also shot everything in square format so that I could compose every image as I wanted it through the viewfinder.



How did you identify the buildings to photograph?

Well I did not exactly struggle for choice, sadly there are now numerous areas like this located around Guernsey. Being a small island of 24 square miles, you regularly get to pass the same places and hence notice the changes. I also like to explore on foot and on my bike, so I have been making a note of all the places to target for my project.

I know for an RPS distinction you don't need titles, but what titles would you give to each image?

Never thought about giving these images titles, but here we go;

1. Slam Dunk
2. Steps to a Better View
3. No More Bikes
4. Bloody Signs!
5. Closed for Business
6. Boarded School
7. Sack the Gardener
8. So Tempting



9. Die Guernsey
10. Easy Access?
11. Dare to Enter
12. Feng Shui
13. Yum
14. Forgotten Exit
15. Officially Sunk



I know you say you've lived in Guernsey for 53 years, I am guessing that you have witnessed the dilapidation at first hand. Can you say something about what each building was?

Within the panel there are images taken from an old secondary school, an art centre, our leisure centre, some local businesses that are still in operation and our old aquarium which is no more. The majority of these places are in clear view which is rather depressing, and given that we still attract the odd tourist I can only imagine what goes through their mind when they see areas like this. As you can see, being a successful offshore financial centre does not automatically mean that the wider

community benefits from that success, on the contrary, the wider community is typically forgotten.

Which is your favourite image? And why?

It is a tough choice between 2 images, number 3 and number 8. Number 3 is the old bicycle park taken at an old secondary school and it was the very first image of my project. This place caught my eye ages ago and really got me thinking about the islands general appearance. But, if I had to pick, then number 8 titled 'So Tempting' is my favourite. Believe it or not this is the gable end of a working kiosk at St Peter Port Harbour. From what I can see they do a good trade as there always seems to be people there. Yet the knackered old bench and tired signs would have you believe that this place has been closed for years, even the pigeons don't look impressed!



All your images have a very moody, uncomfortable feel about them, which must have something to do with the lighting, what period of time did you take the pictures over?

I actually took all these photos during the summer and, wherever possible, I chose grey days with flat diffused natural lighting. I didn't want high contrast so as to avoid strong shadows, about the only image taken at a slightly sunnier time was number 10 'Easy Access', although it was dull when I started.

Do you do much in the way post processing?

Very minimal editing has been done on these images. I set the camera up to shoot in square format and I also preset some desaturation. These settings were utilised throughout, plus



everything was shot on a 35mm equivalent lens with a selected aperture range of f4-f5.6. This was all done to create consistency so that the project looked like a body of work.

So James Machon ARPS, what's next? Have you another project in mind?

I am definitely going to have a go at obtaining my FRPS distinction and I am very motivated to achieve this. For the time being at least, I want to think long and hard about a project to work on that is worthy of FRPS accreditation and it will most likely be a documentary

themed panel again. It is a massive step up so I am not going to rush it, and I will certainly be getting some advice from those extremely talented folk who have already achieved this.



If you had to choose one building anywhere in the world, that you still love, where and what is it?

I have been very lucky to have travelled extensively over the years, but when it comes to buildings then my love of modern history tends to dictate my preferences. As such, out all the places I have visited, I would pick the city of Pripyat within the Chernobyl exclusion zone. I know it is not an individual building, but as a site of historical importance it is a haunting reminder of how life can change overnight. Most people won't know that Pripyat was an extremely affluent area within the USSR and it was the place to be, until April 26th 1986.



And finally, I've always had an idea about deserted office chairs too, do you think it's got mileage?

Definitely! When I started out I was given an awesome piece of advice which was "take the photos you like, and if anyone else likes them then that is a bonus".

So if you fancy doing deserted office chairs, then go out and do it for yourself and get the pleasure of achieving your own photographic goals.



Thank you so much for talking to us this month James, good luck with any future photographic projects and Happy New Year. I look forward to seeing your F panel in the future.



SOUTHERN COUNTIES PHOTOGRAPHIC FEDERATION

54th ANNUAL EXHIBITION
at the Young Gallery,
above the Library,
Market Place, Salisbury SP1 1BL

Saturday 6th January 2024 - Saturday 27th January 2024



FREE ENTRY

Viewing Times

Monday 10am - 7pm

Tuesday and Friday 9am - 7pm

Wednesday and Thursday 9am - 5pm

Saturday 9am - 5pm

<https://southerncountiespf.org.uk/exhibition/>