

SC SOUTHERN COUNTIES PF PHOTOGRAPHIC FEDERATION

NEWSLETTER – NOVEMBER 2025

Welcome to another bumper edition this month - there is a lot to get through, and I hope you will stay with us to the end.

First up, we held the SCPF AV Championship at the end of October, with a record number of entrants. We were blessed with a highly experienced AV judge, who presented some guidelines for creating an engaging AV sequence, which he has kindly allowed us to share here. Many people were curious about how the winning sequence was created and, again, the author is generous enough to explain here how he made it.

We held a well-attended and well received print workshop on 2nd November which offered something for new and experienced print workers alike, as well as appraisers of prints. I certainly feel that the reception this workshop has received is a clear demonstration of interest in the SCPF organising similar future events. We always welcome ideas for such activities from any quarter, and even more so offers from any volunteers who are prepared to help facilitate such activities.

This month we also meet Farnborough Camera Club, who tell us how they have refreshed their internal competition activities with positive results.

Read on...

Stewart Lacey
Editor

AV Championship



Basingstoke CC turn out in force

The SCPF AV Championship was held on 26th October in the clubhouse of Blandford Forum Camera Club. This year we had an increased field of 31 entries from 15 clubs, 8 of which competed for the coveted Oak Leaf Salver. The sequences had been judged in advance by Ian Bateman FRPS MPAGB APAGB AV-AFIAP. Only the 19 highest scoring sequences were shown to ensure an entertaining and informative programme for the event.

Ian gave an authoritative introduction on what makes a good AV and we were able to see three of his own sequences before the results were announced.

Thanks, as always, to Suzie Kirkby for all the effort she put into making this Championship a success. To Ian Bateman for his excellent positive appraisals and sound advice. To Blandford Forum Camera Club for the use of their facilities, with particular thanks to Ian Ferris for technical support and to Denise Halford and Rachel Cooper for their excellent catering, particularly the cakes!

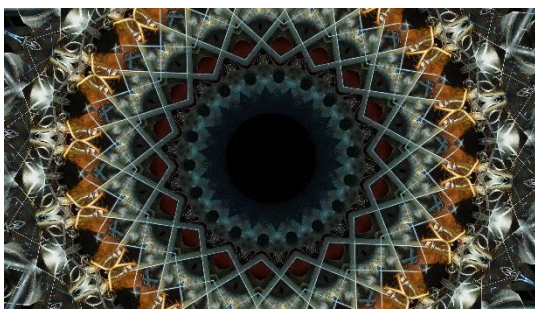
Thanks, of course to all the entrants and the support of the CompSecs of all the clubs who participated.

The top three sequences, including the judge's comments were



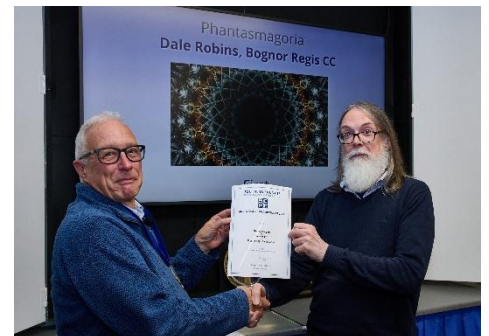
Denise and Rachel doing an excellent job with the catering!

1st Phantasmagoria by Dale Robins of Bognor Regis CC



"This is always going to be a 'Marmite' sequence with no middle ground. I thought it was great! I loved the fact that the whole thing seemed to be made from a single image, with the kaleidoscopic presentation making good use of the metallic shapes. The music was an excellent fit - and

kudos to the photographer for creating it! The whole thing was mesmerising, and I found it almost hypnotic to watch the engine dance across the screen. I have said that you should have fun and embrace new techniques, and this one does it in spades!"



Dale receiving his award from SCPF President, Stewart Lacey

2nd The Great Yew Forest by Dean Sephton of Storrington CC



"Excellent documentary sequence, telling the story of how the yew forest came to be planted, and the tangle of trees that still exist 1,000 years later. Well narrated - possibly by an AI voice (maybe Eleven Labs?), but enough inflexion to maintain interest. The gentle zoom-in helped to draw us into the forest, and the sombre music suited the subject and pace. Good use of a black slide to separate out different aspects of the story."

3rd The Streets of Malaga by Alex Zapata of Gibraltar PS



"AV can be used to showcase any genre of photography that interests you, and this is very much a set of street images. I like the gritty mono style, and the fact that we saw the back streets of Malaga with people going about their day-to-day business. The music worked well, and the pace and style suited the subject. The only suggestion I'd make is to bring in the final shot of the Christmas lights in a fraction earlier to match the final note of the music."

Highly Commended awards went to

The Eagle Hunters of Western Mongolia by Colin Ridley of bh pc
Young Kingfishers by Nick Leonard of bh pc
Defending Heritage by Victor Hermida of Gibraltar PS
Cool Curves by Mike Barton of Gosport CC

The Oak Leaf Salver was closely fought for, with a single point separating the leading contenders. The trophy went to Storrington CC with Gibraltar PS gaining the edge over bh pc through a countback.

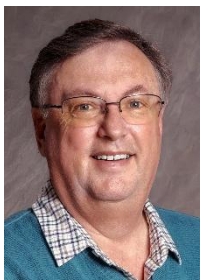
Full results can be found at <https://southerncountiespf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/AV-Championship-2025-results.pdf>

Our Championship even made it into the October issue of the RPS publication "AV World e-xtra". We are on pages 5, 6, 50 and 51 in https://issuu.com/royalphotographicsociety/docs/rps_av_world_-_october_2025

There will be an opportunity to see all 31 entered sequences in a Zoom session, run by Suzie Kirkby on Sunday 30th November, starting at 7:30pm. The meeting link is <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82734656564?pwd=Iw6mGmVWqENn1xeWUST4T4q3F3cpax.1>

Please note that this session will not be recorded for copyright reasons

Ian Bateman: What makes a good AV?



The intention when creating an audio-visual sequence is to achieve a harmonious blend of images and audio. It is not a new idea and AV sequences have been created with magic lanterns, slide projectors and tape decks. The more recent means to create digital sequences open new creative opportunities.

Ian Bateman, in his introduction during the AV Championship, outlined 10 guiding principles for creating AV sequences:

1 **Don't overstay your welcome**

AV sequences are rarely criticised for being too short, but they are frequently criticised for being too long

Never bore your audience!

2 **Garbage in, Garbage out**

Never be tempted to pad out your sequences with poor quality images

The audience (and judge) will always remember the sub-standard ones

Less is always more!

3 **Remember IBM**

Avoid being *Imprisoned By the Music*

If the music is too long, remove some from the middle

Use the music's natural ending

4 **The music has to suit the sequence**

Fast tempo music needs fast changes

Slow tempo music needs slow changes

Anything else causes a mismatch

5 **Keep in good shape**

Choose an aspect ratio that suits your images

Crop all of your images to the same shape

Avoid the edges crossing over!

- 6 **Give your sequence a structure**
Try to have a 'start', 'middle' and 'end'
Even short "photo harmony" style AVs will benefit from this
- 7 **If possible, attach a hook!**
Something that the audience will remember
An image, a special effect or piece of information that is unexpected
- 8 **It's a balancing act**
If you are narrating a script, inject some light and shade into your voice
Underlying music should be very low in the audio mix
- 9 **Remember your objective**
AV is not a genre in itself
It is a way of presenting your images in a creative showcase
- 10 **Have fun!**
Embrace new technology
Lots of AI tools now available!
Narration and music as well as images and audio
Enter competitions!

Dale Robins: The making of Phantasmagoria

For a while now, I have been fascinated by multiple exposure photography. *Phantasmagoria* approaches this from a contrary perspective: here, a single image is overlayed on itself multiple times, and instead of the camera moving around the subject, the photograph itself is in motion while the camera remains stationary. This results in a photographic kaleidoscope.

Several members of Bognor Regis Camera Club saw a 2022 blogpost by Julieanne Kost entitled '[How to make a "Smoke Flake" in Photoshop](#)', and made some very interesting images, so I thought I'd have a go myself. I'd previously created images using reflection and rotation techniques, so I dived straight in without reading Julieanne's post first (I recommend that you take a look at her post, as she does great work). It turns out that I used a slightly different method to build the image, which would eventually become *Phantasmagoria*, but that's part of the fun of Photoshop - there are many ways to accomplish the same goal.

I didn't have a smoke image to try, so I searched through my archive for something suitable and eventually found a photo of the connecting rods of a steam locomotive I'd shot at the Bluebell Railway. This proved to be a great choice, and as soon as I'd made my picture, I thought, "I could animate that". So, I set about reconstructing the image in Adobe After Effects while thinking about what to do with it once all the layers were in place.

You can see my original "Smoke Flake" image on Flickr here: <https://flic.kr/p/2n4NDSv> I'm not sure that 'Smoke Flake' is the best description of the image - it looks more like some kind of 'Cyber-Flake' to me.

And now, the technical bit: it might be worth watching the sequence now, if you haven't already done so (see the link below):

Only one photo is used in the whole piece. That single photo is first mirrored three times, to give a group of four images.

The original single photo is then made to rotate in a clockwise direction and, because they are mirrored copies, the other three images in the group appear to rotate in contrary directions. This sets up the basis of the kaleidoscope effect.

Eight copies of that group are then overlayed on top of the original group using the 'lighter color' blend mode and a rotational offset of 40 degrees (this is how the mandala-like effect is achieved).

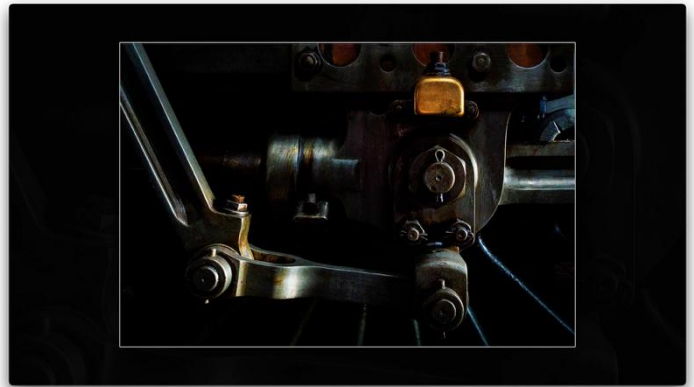
This gives a total of thirty-six copies of that original image, arranged in nine groups. Because each of the eight overlayed groups is a duplicate of the original group, their images also rotate in the same fashion as the original.

Then the whole collection of nine groups is set rotating in an anticlockwise direction.

Finally, the entire rotating set of nine groups is set in motion, moving left and right, up and down, zooming in and out beneath the stationary 'camera'. As the sequence progresses, groups are shed at various intervals, changing the patterns generated by the rotation.

It's worth noting that the rotational speeds of the original image and the collection of nine groups are constant throughout the length of the sequence, bar the 'eased' beginning and ending. I mention this because there are times when it seems like the spinning is speeding up and slowing down, but this is merely a function of the interacting elements of the many layers.

Nearly there now... Once the sequence was completed, it was time to create the music to accompany it. I took a short orchestral piece that I'd written a year or two earlier, divided it into a beginning and an end, and then set about writing some new parts to fill in the gap. The original piece was just over one minute long, so that left around two and a half minutes to fill in. I used Apple Logic Pro for writing the music and the instruments are from Spitfire Audio's 'BBC Symphony Orchestra' and 'Eric Whitacre Choir' sample libraries; if you're not familiar with these, you'll find links to more information below.



Timewise, I think the animation part of the project took about thirty hours (after all the tweaking!), and writing the music took about the same, although I didn't really keep track of how much time was passing.

Now for the Oscars speech: (you can turn off at this point or just go and make a nice cup of tea and then come back for the links) Many thanks to all the Bognor Regis CC members for their encouragement and to Suzie Kirkby, Stewart Lacey and Ian Bateman for a great event. However, *Phantasmagoria* wouldn't be nearly as good if it weren't for The Wife, who is particularly good at saying what needs to be said about these things.

That's it, really. Simple!

Oh. The name of the project was inspired by the many ephemeral creatures and macabre faces that emerge from the swirling interactions of the superimposed layers; those of you prone to pareidolia will know what I mean.



Links:

My original 'Cyber-Flake' image on Flickr:

<https://flic.kr/p/2n4NDSv>

Phantasmagoria on YouTube:

You can see *Phantasmagoria* on The Wife's YouTube channel, Shameless plug: She is an author who writes under various pen names, and her channel includes original stories as well as readings of classic ghost/horror stories. As she appears as 'Miss Worm', *Phantasmagoria* is credited to 'Mr Worm' (that's me!) and therefore the end credits of the video on YouTube are different to the version entered into the SCPF Championship; everything else is more-or-less the same. Don't forget to like and comment if you like what you see!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4dZ7Wfgkz7M>

Julianne Kost - How to make a Smoke Flake:

<https://jkost.com/blog/2022/01/how-to-create-a-smoke-flake.html>

Spitfire Audio:

BBC Symphony Orchestra:

<https://www.spitfireaudio.com/products/bbc-symphony-orchestra-professional>

Eric Whitacre Choir:

<https://www.spitfireaudio.com/products/eric-whitacre-choir>

Dale Robins

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Jurassic Coast International AV Salon

The last of Ian's guidelines was to have fun and enter competitions. He has asked me to promote the Jurassic Coast International AV Salon, held annually in Exmouth. It is the only international salon held in the UK and even if you don't enter, it is a great opportunity to see the standard of international AV creation.

Exmouth Photo Group
www.exmouthphotogroup.com

Jurassic Coast International Audio Visual Salon
Entries open: 1st January 2026
Entries close: 31st March 2026
Zoom Session: 23rd May / 24th May 2026
Gala Day: 13th June 2026

JUDGE

TOP TRUMPS
NAME: Jeff Mansell
LIKES: Giant Fairies
EXPERIENCE: International AV Judge, AV Producer
STRENGTHS: Not always grumpy!

JUDGE

TOP TRUMPS
NAME: Marion Waine
LIKES: Moths
EXPERIENCE: AV Producer, International Judge, Peter Coles AV Competition Organiser
STRENGTHS: Sense of humour (hopefully)

JUDGE

TOP TRUMPS
NAME: Luca Aleotti
LIKES: Rocks
EXPERIENCE: Director of San Donato Milanese AV Festival
STRENGTHS: Speaks excellent English!

And here is a link to the salon's promotional AV -<https://youtu.be/V08mYmbweU4>

Print Workshop Success



The SCPF held our long-anticipated print workshop in Littleton on Sunday 2nd November as part of our drive to get more clubs and members (back) into printing. This was very much a trial on our part to see how well received such events would be. We had something like 65 participants, gratifying though somewhat lower than the 120 who had originally expressed an interest. We had 2 attendees from the Isle of Wight and even one from Guernsey, suggesting that people are prepared to travel if the subject matter is sufficiently interesting.

Our aim with the workshop was to encourage new and reluctant printers by demystifying the subject and arming them with appropriate knowledge; to inspire more advanced print workers by, for instance, showing the impact of paper choice on the mood of the image; and to arm appraisers with the tools to provide informed feedback and advice on print technique and presentation.

The day was facilitated by two passionate presenters, Chris Palmer FRPS EFIAP DPAGB APAGB and Tim Jones, Technical manager at Fotospeed.

Tim gave two excellent presentations on the technical aspects of printing; much aimed at the beginner but also with some pearls of wisdom aimed at more experienced workers. Much of Tim's first presentation is covered in Fotospeed's free eBook, which can be downloaded from <https://fotospeed.com/ebook/artofprinting>.



Tim Jones covers the basics and not so basics of successful printing



Chris Palmer inspiring us with his mastery of prints

Chris is a Fotospeed Ambassador but his presentations, which were all print based, evangelised print as THE medium in which to enjoy photographic work, rather than promoting the products of a particular supplier. He demonstrated how important paper selection was and he finished the day sharing his FRPS panel of images of monuments on Isola di San Michele, the cemetery island near Venice.

Both Chris and Tim demonstrated their profound knowledge of printing, and a generosity in sharing this knowledge with others. Fotospeed's generosity

extended to offering a 25% discount on the day to all present. To those of you who missed out, we have secured an ongoing discount of 15% for all members of SCPF clubs – simply apply the voucher code **SCPF15** at the checkout.



Chris Palmer and Tim Jones with Sue Sibley and Stewart Lacey in front of Chris's fantastic FRPS panel

Events such as this only come about through the generous gift of time and effort by many volunteers. Thanks to everyone who contributed to this successful event but a special mention to Sue Sibley who conceived the workshop and brought all the moving parts together so successfully. She even hosted Chris in her own home to keep the costs down for the federation and makes a passable tea lady!

The SCPF Annual Exhibition approaches

Entries for the exhibition are now closed, and the judging will take place at Sparsholt on 16th November. Note that this is closed event, though we will be happy to hear from anyone willing to help out on the day!

Our judge for this year is John Tilsley of the Western Counties Photographic Federation, who has kindly stepped in at the last minute as our previous judge was forced to step down due to health issues.

This year we have digital entries from 33 clubs and print entries from 28. The exhibition will be running in the Young Gallery at Salisbury Library from 7th to 31st January. In a departure from previous years, we will holding a private viewing and awards event on Saturday 10th January from 11am to 1pm. Hopefully, this will accommodate those of you who have previously found it difficult to get to a Friday evening event. Salisbury is a lovely place – why not make a day of it, visit the cathedral and take another picture of the font!

The stewarding rota will shortly be live on the website, please sign up for at least one session, particularly if your club is one of those exhibiting.

The results of the exhibition judging will be in the next newsletter.

PAGB Inter Club Print Championship

The annual PAGB Inter-Club Print Championship was held in Blackburn on 18th October. The SCPF was represented by Chichester and Yateley Camera Clubs, having respectively come 1st and 2nd in our own Print Championship back in March. This competition is a good opportunity to see how we fare on a national stage, where each federation fields their two strongest clubs.

Our clubs didn't make the northern-dominated final but returned a very creditable performance in the plate competition. Chichester finished in 12th place and Yateley in joint 13th. In fact, this contest was very close - Chichester was a mere 4 points off the leader and Yateley only one point behind that!

The full results can be found on the PAGB website at https://thepagb.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/interclub_prints_2025.pdf

There is also an online catalogue at

<https://pagbhost.co.uk/main/catalogues/test.php?hash=ae7eb19a3a84026b06bceca6ca08111ba5a5e7131e736dcafb624bcabdac313>

Celebrating DPAGB Success



The last PAGB Awards for Photographic Merit event was held in Dunblane, Scotland, back in April. There were five entrants from our federation, the reduced number being due to the rather northerly location. We only had one success on this occasion – A DPAGB for prints awarded to Tony Cowburn of Winchester PS. I finally managed to present Tony's certificate in October at a club meeting in Winchester's new home, the Tower Arts Centre. As it was a members' presentation evening, I got to see two very inspiring talks from Tony and from Martin Farrow.

Meet Farnborough Camera Club



Our potted history: - It all started in 1936, when amateur photographers who mainly worked for the Royal Aircraft Establishment, RAE, formed the RAE Photographic Society. It started with circa 42 members and an annual subscription of 3/- (15p). In 1941 the RAE PS became the Farnborough & RAE Camera Club and cost 6d to join and a weekly fee of 6d. Not a lot but then room hire was 3/6 (17½p)! In 1983 the RAE withdrew its support and as a result the club became known as Farnborough Camera Club. This was no surprise as very few members worked for the RAE by then.

For many years Farnborough Camera Club met in the Farnborough Community Centre. We had many happy years there; we even had a darkroom. In the late 2018, Rushmoor Borough Council decided to close the centre and demolish it. To this day it has not been replaced. After an extensive search we took up residency in the Cody Sports & Social Club at the beginning of 2019, and we have been there ever since.



*First Ever Critique with a Judge – Mark Buckley Sharp
ARPS CPAGB*



Club outing to Noor Hill Nature Reserve

Our club is like many others. We have a mixture of competitions, both internal and external, speakers, practical evenings and workshops. Our internal competitions consisted of PDI and Print trophy competitions, mostly open in theme, Annual competitions, which were originally created to find the best from the trophy competitions, a PDI Set Subject competition, a Creative competition, a Portrait competition and a Print Panel Competition. Some of these were held on the same evening.

In 2023 we, the committee, started the process of changing our competition structure. Why would we do this? There were a couple reasons. Firstly, there was a feeling that there were too many competitions towards the end of the season. The annual competition could only be run after the end of the trophy competitions. And secondly, we were seeing the same image too many times throughout the season. We could see the same image up to 5 times or more in a season. We also saw a problem with seeing too many images of the same genre crowding out other genres and possibly not helping membership. We were known as a nature club and - don't get me wrong we have some cracking nature photographers in the club - but we also have excellent photographers in other genres.



Having Drinks after an outing to Old Down

So, what did we do? We decided that we only wanted one competition evening a month, so we now have 8 trophy rounds a season, 4 PDI and 4 Prints. Each round consists of two sub-competitions, and each sub-competition would have a theme, although at present we start the season with both sub-competitions having open themes. In the first year we used our old competitions as themes, Creative, Portrait, Print Panel but now we have broadened the scope and introduced themes like sport, still life, landscape and mobile phone images. In addition, we have put in a rule that a member's entries in the two sub-competitions must be of different genres. We also put in a rule to limit, though not eliminate, images being used in both PDI and Print trophy competitions, by stating an image can only score once for our Photographer of the Year (POTY). So, what have we seen so far? The images in each sub-competition have a much wider spread of genres. We are pushing members out of their comfort zone. We are challenging members. We are seeing fewer images being reused.

The process also led us to two other changes. Firstly, our POTY competition was weighted towards members doing well in external competitions, often with images used in our Trophy competitions. We changed all that. Our POTY now only uses scores from our own internal Trophy competitions, and an image can only score once.

The second change was more to do with finance. Like a lot of clubs, we were having to deal with falling numbers and rising costs, while at the same time put on a programme that was diverse and interesting. We were paying over £200 annually for engraving our trophies; the cost of a good speaker or two. We do not engrave any internal trophies anymore. We do present all winners, seconds and thirds with certificates and our handbook records the clubs' full records. Every image that scores a 10 now gets a certificate for the author.



Lesley Taylor our First POTY winner under the new system



Neil Purcell receiving his Roll of Honour from SCPF President Stewart Lacey. Neil was the club Chairman during the implementation of the new system

The start of the first season brought in another change; one the committee asked the members to back but failed. We became a classless club. Like a lot of clubs, especially after Covid, our membership was shrinking and the members entering the Club Class competitions was just too low to make it worthwhile. So, we united the two classes, and their results showed it was worthwhile, as they could compete well scoring many maximum marks.

We believe, so far, that the changes have been a success. Not all things we wanted to do were accepted by members. We wanted to change the scoring system from marks out of 10 to first, second,

third etc but that was rejected by the membership, but you never know in the future.

We now look to build up our membership, currently around the mid-thirties, to keep this club active and reach our century milestone.

Kerry Turner
Secretary, Farnborough CC