

NEWSLETTER – MAY 2026

With the AGM, my two years as SCPF President are now over. I am not sailing into the sunset just yet – I will continue on the Council in the new role of “Club Liaison Officer” and plan to continue visiting clubs in this capacity. This is also my last edition of the newsletter as editor. I will be handing my quill to Suzie Kirkby, whose background in journalism will surely add polish to the content.

In this edition we feature the Finals Day results and meet Salisbury Photography Club as well as a trip to photo exhibitions at Petersfield and Winchester.

A member at my own club pointed to a 50 year old piece written by Ralf Hattersley where he highlighted 20 “critic traps”. As we all need the skills to critique our own work as well as that of others, I have included a summary of Hattersley’s observations.

This is something of a mammoth edition, but I am not known for brevity and thought I would go out with a bang!

Stewart Lacey
Newsletter editor



Stewart Lacey performing the solemn act of passing the presidential badge of office to Suzie Kirkby. There are plenty of witnesses!

Finals Day



Our judge, Sue O'Connell with Suzie Kirkby

The Finals Day took place on 10th May, immediately following the AGM. The print and PDI entries are the highest scoring images from each club in their respective leagues. The daunting task of selecting overall winners this year fell to Sue O'Connell FIPF MPSA EFIAP/d3 DPAGB ABPE from Bristol. She was asked to select and overall winner together with a number of commended and highly commended images in each class.

As if judging the “best of the best” wasn’t a big enough ask, we also had her give an hour-long presentation before the awards. We were thoroughly entertained by pictures and stories of her recent travels to Colombia and Bangladesh.



Service with a smile – Napalai and Trevor Cain



Sue O'Connell awarding Linda Gates of Andover CC for her winning print



As well as the judge, I would like to thank her husband, Peter Brisley for print handling in the afternoon; Peter Terry for organising Finals Day, running the competition software, scoring and certificates; Suzie for hosting, allowing me to finally sit in the audience again; and a huge shout out to Napalai and Trevor Cain for once again organising and running the catering for the whole day. Thank you also Basingstoke and Bracknell Camera Clubs for their kind loan of equipment, even if carrying the print stands in my car cost me a cracked windscreen! And now to the winning and commended images...

Commended PDIs

Spotted from the Crowd by Jeff Kelsey of Aldershot, Farnham and Fleet CC
 Taking the Tram Home by Shirley Johnson LRPS of Cricklade CC
 Female Golden Orb Weaver plus male hiding under Web by Paul Hendley LRPS CPAGB of Farnborough CC
 Goshawk Confrontation by Ian Roberts DPAGB of Chichester CC
 Focussed by Bob Bell of Hailsham CC
 My Favourite Bird Sharon Bolt of Newbury PS
 Yes... I am cold by Tony Cole of Alton CC
 Dahlia in Close by Carol Walker of Isle of Wight PS
 Could be a Hard Landing by David White ABPE of Wimborne CC
 Surfer on Emerald Wave by Paul Otoole of Littlehampton and District CC

Kings Cross Curves by Chris Bean of Farnborough CC
They're Behind You by George Reekie of Storrington CC

Highly Commended PDIs

Dancing Dandelion Seeds by Mark O'leary of Overton PC



Up-up and away by Steve Hawkins of Middleton CC



Solitary Journey by Glenys Kill of Horndean CC



Winning PDI

Totally Focussed on his Prey by Pete Whieldon ARPS DPAGB of Winchester PS



Commended Prints

Winter Light on the Dunes by Roger Dixey ARPS DPAGB BPE3 of Fordingbridge CC
Pied kingfisher juggling catch by Ferg Cowhig EFIAP-b DPAGB BPE5 of New Forest CC
Reflected Silver Birch by Ferg Cowhig EFIAP-b DPAGB BPE5 of New Forest CC
Robin over water by Steve Williams of Overton CC
Long Tailed Tit in the Rain by Marilyn Peddle LRPS of Blandford Forum CC

Highly Commended Prints

Still Life with a Hint of Art Deco by Cherry Larcombe EFIAP ARPS BPE5 DPAGB of Hailsham PS



Some Time at the Shoreline by Lin Collins LRPS of Horndean CC



Arctic Fox Stepping Forward by Richard Sheldrake of Southampton CC



Winning Print

New and Old by Linda Gates LRPS CPAGB AFIAP BPE2 of Andover PC



A word to appraisers and lecturers

If you are a SCPF appraiser and/ or lecturer, you may be approached by clubs in our region who are not members of the SCPF. If you appraise an SCPF club or federation competition, you are only entitled to charge travel expenses at the prevailing rate, currently 45p per mile. If you appraise at a non-affiliated club, you should also charge for your time, including any preparation such as previewing entries. You should also notify the SCPF of any requests you receive. We intend to create a list of non-affiliated clubs in our region who may be trying to use the services of our appraisers and lecturers on the same terms available to affiliated clubs.

You should also check that the club has public liability insurance in their own name and are not merely relying on the insurance of the club's venue. You may not be properly protected. All SCPF clubs and all clubs affiliated to The PAGB have to have their own insurance to protect their members and visitors. We would urge you not to accept any booking where this is not the case.

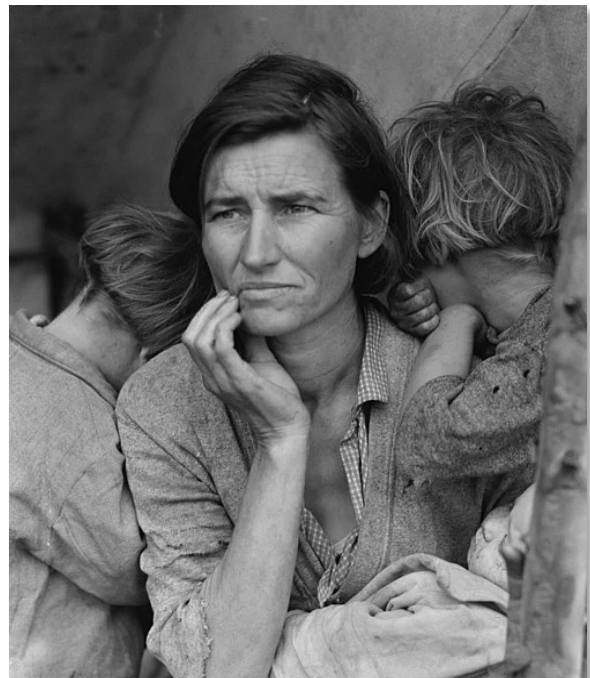
Avoiding the Traps: Improving Our Photographic Critiquing

In the February newsletter I wrote about *communicating expressive quality* in photography – the ability of an image to move beyond simply recording a subject and instead communicate something meaningful to the viewer. If we accept that expressive communication is a central aim of photography, then an important question follows: **how do we judge whether a photograph succeeds?**

This leads us to the subject of photographic critiquing.

For many photographers, criticism can feel uncomfortable. Yet thoughtful critique is one of the most powerful tools we have for improving both our own work and our understanding of photography. The challenge is that criticism itself can easily go wrong. More than fifty years ago, photographic educator Ralph Hattersley described a series of pitfalls – what he called “*critic traps*” – that distort the way we appraise photographs. Although written decades ago, they remain remarkably relevant to club photography today.

Understanding these traps can help us become better appraisers of photographs, whether we are formal competition appraisers, informal commentators in a club meeting, or simply photographers reviewing our own images.



A photograph such as Dorothea Lange's Migrant Mother reminds us that expressive power in photography is not primarily about technical perfection, but about the ability to communicate human experience

The Many Traps of Photographic Criticism

Hattersley warned that photography is “a wily brute” that sets traps for the unwary critic. These traps are not technical mistakes but **psychological ones** – ways in which our own habits, experiences, and biases interfere with our ability to see what the photograph is actually doing.

One common trap is **irrelevant memory**. A photograph may remind us of a personal experience – a childhood holiday, a familiar landscape, a place we once visited. Our reaction may be genuine, but it is not necessarily related to the photograph itself. We may end up responding to our memory rather than to what the photographer has created.

Closely related is the **stock response**. Certain subjects or visual elements trigger automatic reactions: sunsets are “beautiful”, children are “cute”, dramatic skies are “impressive”. These responses can prevent us from asking the more important question: *what is the photograph actually communicating?*



Images such as those by Daido Moriyama deliberately reject conventional photographic 'rules'. Hattersley reminds us that criticism should focus not only on technique, but on what the photograph is trying to communicate

Another trap arises when critics rely too heavily on **formulaic rules**. Photographic education often introduces compositional guidelines – leading lines, rule of thirds, S-curves and so on. These can be helpful learning tools, but problems arise when they become rigid rules applied mechanically. A photograph may break every compositional guideline and still be powerful, while another may follow every rule yet communicate very little.

Hattersley also observed that criticism can sometimes become a **personal monologue**. Instead of analysing the photograph, the critic talks about themselves – their experience, their preferences, or how they

would have taken the picture. The focus shifts away from the image and onto the critic.

A more damaging version of this occurs when criticism becomes an attempt to **assert dominance**. Instead of helping photographers understand their work, criticism is used to show intellectual superiority or to dismantle the photographer's effort. Anyone who has experienced overly harsh critique will recognise how discouraging this can be.

Some traps arise from what we *fail* to see. Critics may have **blind spots** – aspects of imagery that make them uncomfortable or that fall outside their experience. As a result, they may focus on minor technical details while ignoring the emotional or symbolic content of the photograph.

Another frequent mistake is the **confusion of means and ends**. Photographers use technical tools – lighting, lenses, exposure, editing – as *means* to communicate something. Yet criticism often focuses on the technique alone: whether the lighting is perfect, whether the exposure is correct, whether the sharpness is ideal. These technical factors matter, but they are not the ultimate purpose of the photograph.

Hattersley also noted a pair of opposing traps concerning originality. Sometimes critics **overvalue the unusual**, praising an image simply because it looks different. At other times they do the opposite, **rejecting unfamiliar approaches** because they do not fit established expectations. Both reactions can prevent fair evaluation.

Finally, there is the trap of failing to **experience photographs sensuously and imaginatively**. Photographs are visual and emotional objects. If we approach them only analytically – measuring technical perfection without allowing ourselves to feel or imagine – we risk missing their expressive power entirely.

Hattersley's Credo for Critics

To counter these traps, Hattersley proposed a set of principles – a kind of *credo* for photographic critics. These ideas offer a useful guide for anyone discussing photographs within a club environment.

First, critics should treat photography and photographers with **respect**. Every photograph represents an attempt to communicate something visually, and that effort deserves thoughtful consideration.

Second, critics should begin with the assumption that the photographer **had a purpose**. Our first task is therefore to ask: *what might the photographer have been trying to say?* Only then can we judge whether the image succeeds.

Third, good criticism should aim to **clarify rather than dominate**. The critic's role is not to prove their own expertise but to help reveal what is happening within the image.

Fourth, criticism should **encourage individual creativity**. Photography thrives on diversity of vision. If every image followed the same formula, photography would quickly become dull.

Finally, the critic should recognise the **importance of photography as a form of communication**. Photographs influence how we see the world, how we remember events, and how we understand one another. Criticism should therefore help photographers explore and expand that communicative potential.

A Thought for Camera Clubs

In club environments we frequently discuss images – during competitions, appraisal evenings, and informal conversations. These discussions are one of the great strengths of club photography, but they are most valuable when they move beyond simple judgments of “good” or “bad”.

Hattersley's ideas remind us that effective criticism begins with **curiosity**: curiosity about what the photographer saw, what they intended to communicate, and how the image might be experienced by others.

A transcript of the full article from the 1962 edition of Aperture can be found [here](#).

Stephen Marsh

It is with sadness that we report the recent passing of Stephen Marsh of Chichester Camera Club. Stephen was a “people” photographer – he took delight in portraying the world and its human inhabitants with a gentle yet quirky style. You could see this in his competition and exhibition entries. His example encouraged others to “have a go” in a similar vein.



Stephen contributed much more to the CCC.

- He was on the Executive Committee of the Club.
- He was challenged by, but much enjoyed, being the Annual Exhibition Secretary. He always organised a great show.
- And who could forget his persistent calls for the North Mundham “bios” that he then mounted for that exhibition.
- He was a thoughtful member of the Print Group. His experience in teaching in London gave him the ability to contribute his praise, comments, and encouragement to its members. He was always considerate and constructive. Others have commented that he had given them a personal, photographic boost when they needed it.

Petersfield Photographic Society Biennial Exhibition 11th April 2026



We all agreed that we had a good and successful exhibition. But what is good and successful?



Well for starters, we are lucky to be able to hold our exhibition in St. Peters church, on the Petersfield town square. Perhaps not designed as an exhibition space, it nevertheless made a great venue, making a great backdrop to our prints and so accessible for people in town. We were fortunate that it was market day in the square, so plenty of people in town. So, we had a really good number of visitors from Petersfield and further afield. This included a good spread of ages of visitors, which is always

encouraging. We had a total of just over 400 visitors, which considering that we were only up and running for one day, was a successful result, an average of one visitor per minute!



Chris Jeffrey with his panels



The members of the Society put up a good display of prints, which were very relatable for the public viewing. They put in a lot of thought to make good panels of prints, and of great interest was that members put up more of what they liked and were proud of, rather than what they would enter into a competition. This gave us some lovely prints that we had not seen before, and also some very creative panels.

Also, one member John Wigley, put up a panel of four of his excellent prints, one of which was generated by AI, and challenged us to determine which was the AI generated image. This generated much interest and discussion across a wide range of the visitors, as no one could determine for sure which was the AI image. John kept us on tenterhooks, but he has now made the big reveal! Judging by the number of wrong guesses, it was not obvious which was the AI generated image.

The society has always been strong for wildlife images, and this was certainly true in the range of exhibited prints. I am sure that this made for success by being very relatable to and appealing for the general public who came in to view the exhibition. The connection was well demonstrated in the results of our public vote for the favourite print. The winner was:



So, we all agreed that we had a good and successful exhibition, and a big thanks to all of those who worked hard to make the success!

Chris Jeffrey

Winchester Photographic Society Annual Print Exhibition 2026



The 93rd Annual Print Exhibition is currently running at The Arc, Winchester until Sunday 31st May 2026. This exhibition has been one of the cornerstones of the society's 100-year history. This year, from 489 entries, 120 exceptional photographs and six Sets of Three have been selected to represent the finest work produced across the society.



*Gordon Brown receiving the Hampshire Chronicle Bowl
from Suzie Kirkby*

The awards were decided by a panel of three experienced judges, but there is one award yet to be decided – The Public's Choice.

As always, the exhibition owes much to the hard work of many people and particularly to Trevor Morecraft for leading the exhibition team.

Why not make your way to The Arc before the end of the month to see the exhibition for yourself.

The catalogue is available [here](#).

Images courtesy of David McKib



Basingstoke Camera Club



6th-28th June

11am-5pm

Wed, Thu, Sat & Sun

Free admission

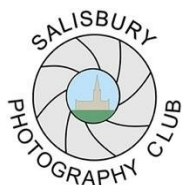
Festival Place

upper level, next to Apple Store
basingstokecameraclub.co.uk

festival
PLACE
BASINGSTOKE

cewe

ANNUAL EXHIBITION



Meet Salisbury Photography Club

It's Monday!

A day for us to look forward to as Salisbury Photography Club meets near the centre of Salisbury at the Baptist Church, Brown Street at 7.30pm.

We chose this venue for its spacious hall and range of facilities together with easy access and free parking - which makes it a perfect place for all our members to gather, enjoy photography and socialize.

Our Club can trace its history back over more than 125 years. It was founded in its current form in 1936 and, apart from a short break during the war, has been in continuous existence since then. We may be a small club of 40 plus members, but we are always striving to develop and improve our photography and, most importantly, our enjoyment of photography. As a club we like to take part in competitions and are perennial competitors in the SCPF Leagues (with varying results each season!) As a member of the Federation since 1971, we participate in the annual competitions with our top selection of PDIs and Prints. We enter a panel in The SCPF Exhibition held in Salisbury Library where we also run our own exhibition of Members' choice images in a Gallery alongside each year.

Our membership covers Salisbury and the surrounding area, in which we are lucky to live, with so many opportunities for all types of photography in the city and countryside beyond. We are spurred on by those members with special interests who share places to visit locally or further afield in groups throughout the year including the summer break.

Each member and new member enhances the Club spirit and brings a new view to our attention. We aim to encourage membership through the community via our website at <https://www.salisburyphotographyclub.com> and Social media. We are also part of 'Experience Salisbury', Wiltshire Radio interviews and write ups for publicity including open days at our venue. Please contact us if you would like to join us as a visitor.



Programme & Activities

Each season from September to May our new Programme offers our members something to explore over a range of image genres with new talks, lectures, competitions, club critique evenings and hands-on practical workshops; including Macro, Still Life, Portrait as well as creative and experimental evenings to discover new ways to develop our photography and 'have a go'.

Open Competitions are encouraged for PDIs and Prints with cumulative scores forming leagues towards winning a Club Trophy for each at the end of the season, as well as 'Best of Year' for all entries.

Our trophies, some given by past members, still award merit in recognition of technical and creative skill in photography. Trophy competitions for this year included 'Wiltshire Landscape' Prints, 'Mono' Prints, 'Panel of Three' Prints and Set Subject 'Water' PDIs.

We share friendly competitions with photography clubs in the area so we can see and appreciate other clubs' contributions and widen our horizons. Groups of special interest spring up and can be joined outside Club evenings and at present several members are contributing to a WhatsApp night-time group called 'Nightjars'

Our SPC Flickr site gives a window for members to upload images for friendly critique and challenges including the latest one-a-day 365 Challenge completed on New Year. Comments were as important as the actual images to keep us going.

Workshop Ideas



'White Tulips' by Sarah O'Reilly LRPS, CPAGB

One of the joys of still life photography for me is that it doesn't need to be complicated or expensive, you can use everyday objects found in your home. For this image of white tulips, I put a simple bunch of flowers in a vase I already had and stood them on a table with a piece of black card behind them. The only lighting came from a side window, or you could use a lamp if no window was available. The beauty of the flowers speak for themselves and in this case are enhanced by the monochrome treatment. Tulips keep on giving.. from the upright stems of early blooms, through the graceful curves of the maturing flowers to the droop and fall of petals, you can make many beautiful images through the life of one small bunch of flowers, with different vases and backdrops giving a different look each time. So, look around your house, see what you can find and try the absorbing pleasures of still life photography.

SPC The wider picture

You will have already seen the range of activities within our thriving club. However, we have always tried to expand further into the photographic world, both as a Club and as individual members.

We are regular supporters of all SCPF competitions, from print and PDI leagues, to the

Championships and beyond. We were joint organisers (together with New Forest Camera Club) of last year's prestigious PAGB InterFed competition and can be regularly seen providing a glass of wine (or two) at the SCPF annual exhibition preview evening.

Supporting our own Federation is important to the club. We currently have one past President and two active judges within our membership.

Many members have been successful in attaining photographic awards to further expand their photographic journey. These have often been supported by our "Thursday" club, when we meet outside the framework of the regular season's programme. Our members possess a range of awards including ARPS, LRPS, CPAGB, DPAGB and BPE qualifications.

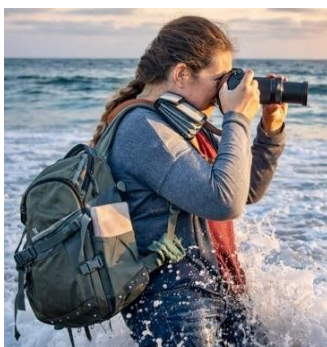
Finally, we have been putting on successful external exhibitions for the last 20 years. These have been at various venues throughout the city, from Waterstones bookshop and a local solicitor's premises, through to the prestigious Salisbury Guildhall and Arts Centre, and most recently in Salisbury Library. Last year five of our members staged their own successful exhibition at Langford Lakes, which will again be held this year. We have found that these events provide a great opportunity to share our photography with people outside of the club and have often provided the catalyst for new members to join the club.

Tony Oliver ARPS, CPAGB, BPE5



Jane Osborne ARPS, CPAGB:

'This project has shown me that our decisions to create specific images, and our subsequent relationships with them, can reflect our individual internal worlds. Like dreaming, I believe photography can be a mechanism for our subconscious minds to process experiences in a way that we can observe.'



Roger Kent LRPS

I have been a member of the Salisbury photography club for almost 40 years. I joined at the point of my retirement thinking that it would keep my mind working and keep me physically active. In fact, it has done more than that. The club offered talks, ran competitions, arranged visits to different parts of the country and generally widened my scope enabling me to understand photography in a far deeper way than I would have done otherwise. Photography has certainly changed immensely in the time that I have been involved in it and the club has helped me into the digital age.



Carlyn Robertson

I had always enjoyed taking photos using my mobile phone, but when the photographer handed me a lovely camera to take a picture of him and his wife at a wedding - I thought how nice it was using a proper camera! That spurred me on to buy myself a decent camera and so my journey began.

I have been a member of Salisbury Photography Club for 18 months and joined thinking that it would help me get to grips with the more technical aspects of my camera rather than always using auto mode. I am still very much learning and SPC are a really friendly bunch, helpful and welcoming.

I love seeing the diverse range images that fellow members submit into competitions and really enjoy the breadth of speakers that come along to share their stories and images. For me it's all very inspirational and thought provoking joining in with SPC Flickr 365, Club outings and the social cup of tea and raffle!



Looking to the Future...

Consistent and reliable support is essential to the success of any club or society. After 20 years' service on the Committee and several spells, including this year, as Chairman, it is time to hand on to someone with fresh ideas and energy. In addition, it gives the opportunity to reflect on how individuals contribute to the success of the Club.

Past officers, such as Peter Read and Richard Temlett gave their time and expertise to both the Club and SCPF, providing an example for current committee members to follow.

Today's Committee reflects the variety of roles to help the club run smoothly and serve its members. My personal thanks and those of members are due to all who take on responsibilities.

Thank you all.

Peter Woodhouse,
Chairman, Salisbury Photography Club.



- **Kevin Payne** as Secretary is vital for keeping members in touch with events and providing a link to the club for potential new members.
- **Jeremy Court**, Treasurer, has the excellent attention to detail to enable us to fund our activities with security.
- **Tony Oliver** encourages us all to improve our photography through his own photographic achievements. It supplements his own tireless energy in organising all our competitions, internal and external and obtaining appropriate judges. His outward looking approach ensures the club's support for SCPF activities.
- **Richard Ramsey**, current Vice Chairman and past Chairman, also inspires us with his photography. He is keen to get us out making new images by organising visits and day trips, most recently to Bath and London.
- *Often overlooked and unsung are those who work behind the scenes and are liable to be taken for granted. Examples are:*
- **Simon Butler**, Projectionist. Members can often assume the technology will always work and that he will be there to sort it out.
- **Emma Webber** organised an excellent programme of speakers for this and last season: little thought is often given for how this happens.
- *Everyone today expects to find information on a website or via social media.*
- **Robin Gemmill** Webmaster and **Emma Webber** Social Media work hard to ensure that they provide the regular attention necessary to ensure Club competitions and all Club information is up to date and accessible and relevant to members and non-members.
- **Rachel Allcock**, as a relatively new committee member, has provided that fresh spark; looking from a different perspective at our marking system, for example.

The aim, of course, is to make Salisbury Photography Club activities accessible and enjoyable for all members, both new and old. It has been a privilege to be part of a team working together to do just that and to encourage us all to both enjoy and to try to improve our own photography.

SPC History & Archives

Peter Read LRPS, DPAGB

Club Archive

Peter is our longest standing member and has contributed enormously, together with Sheila, over the years to the success of our Club. Working as a team their shared experience in photography and dark room printing celebrating every aspect of photography from analogue to digital. Sadly,

Sheila is no longer with us but Peter continues to explore new ideas.

Around 2000 He produced the Club's first SCC website and Blog managing both for 15 years and was always looking for things of interest to inspire and motivate Club members.

Through Peter's interests he has given us an insight into our Club's foundations and history that is recorded for posterity in his SCC website at the National Archives.



A photograph of two sailboats on a body of water under a blue sky with scattered clouds. The sailboat on the left has a large white sail, and the one on the right has a large red sail. In the background, a city skyline with several tall buildings is visible across the water.

Photography Exhibition Four Photography Friends

F Tony Oliver
P Linda Oliver
P Sarah O'Reilly
F Tony O'Reilly

The Kingfisher Gallery
Langford Lakes

June 1st - 28th 2026

(Subject to Gallery opening hours)