



# MCC News

Volume 1, Issue 3

October 2009

## 65 Not Out – Happy Birthday Bob



Photo by Andy Polakowski

Well the Mystery Night at the Butchers Arms on 7<sup>th</sup> September turned out to be one of the best kept secrets of the century. Despite plenty of enquiries from members, Bob just would not let us know what was planned. What a surprise to us all when the ruse was discovered to be the 65<sup>th</sup> Birthday of our ever colourful Programme Secretary. Many thanks Bob for organising such a wonderful evening and Happy Birthday.

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### Planned Events (\*\*Hand In Nights)

#### October

- 5<sup>th</sup> Phillip Lloyd - Forward to the Past
- 8<sup>th</sup> Opening of Eisteddfod Exhibition
- 12<sup>th</sup> Internal Competition 1
- 14<sup>th</sup> Wepre Park Walk
- 17<sup>th</sup> Night Photography in Chester
- 19<sup>th</sup> Members Evening - Project Images AV or Panel of 10 Pictures
- 26<sup>th</sup> A Night With Fred Snowdon – \*\*
- 28<sup>th</sup> Greenfield Valley Walk

#### November

- 2<sup>nd</sup> Members Evening – Lighting & Imagination
- 7<sup>th</sup> Visit to Bodnant Gardens
- 9<sup>th</sup> Internal Competition 2
- 16<sup>th</sup> John Roberts - Portraits
- 18<sup>th</sup> Visit to Owl Sanctuary in Corwen
- 23<sup>rd</sup> Members Evening – Practical Portraits
- 30<sup>th</sup> Mick Blackburn Development of Transport – \*\*

#### External Events

- 4<sup>th</sup> Oct NAWAVG Workshop – Capel Curig
- 24<sup>th</sup> Oct PAGB Inter Club Championship – Deeside College
- 25<sup>th</sup> Oct Welshot Imaging Open Day – Chester Zoo

### Newsletter Name Change

It was suggested to the editor recently that “MCC News” is not an ideal name for the club newsletter. It is not very catchy and could lead to confusion with a certain cricket organisation.

As the editor I totally agree with the sentiments and so am turning to you, the members, to come up with ideas for a name for our newsletter. Please pass your suggestions to me before Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October. I will then arrange for a vote to take place at the club meeting on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October.

The name chosen will then be used from the November issue of the newsletter onwards.

# 2008/09 AGM Report

It was a very well attended AGM this year and David Allen opened the evening by apologising for the late running of the meeting which should have been held back in May. David went to talk about what a successful year it had been with more practical evenings being held as well as the variety of lectures. He also pointed out that the club had had a very successful summer during 2008 with the outings organized by Bob. David then thanked all the members of the outgoing committee for their work and support in what had been a difficult time for him.

Peter Thomas then reported on the financial situation of the club and stated that the club was in a healthy position. David again took to the floor to report on the competition season which had been well supported. After a short debate, it was agreed that for the coming year slides would be dropped in favour of digital images in all competitions. The Programme Secretary Bob Morgan reported talked about the successful programme of 2008 and made particular reference to the very successful Llangollen Railway Outing.



Andy Polakowski reported on the club's performances in external competitions. In the Chester Photographic Society Inter-Club Competition we finished second behind Heswall with strong scoring pictures from Kevin Hirst and Stuart Worrall. In our own Slide Battle we were beaten on Penalties by Chester who also took the best picture award on the night. In the NWPA inter club competition held in Llandudno we again finished second overall, but the event was capped with Chris Davies winning the Best Slide Award for his "Summer in Sienna". Our final outing of the year was to Whitby but although we did only finish 6<sup>th</sup>, two club members were successful in winning prizes in the raffle.

Andy was followed by Rishi Sharma's report on exhibitions and that we had just completed an exhibition of 84 prints at Buckley Library. There were then brief reports from Bea Ringrose on the raffles, and Eric Keen on publicity and catering. Bea Ringrose stated she wished to stand down from her role with the Raffle and Eric too asked to hand over his catering responsibilities. David talked both for their hard work and support in the many years they had carried out the roles.

After the reports the committee elections took place and the following people were elected of the 2009/10 season: David Allen (Chairman), Jonathan Frings (Vice-Chair), John Rutter (Secretary), Peter Thomas (Treasurer), Chris Noble (Competitions), Andy Polakowski (External Competitions) Rishi Sharma (Exhibitions), Stuart Worrall (Membership), Janet M. Davies (Raffle), Eric Keen (Publicity), Mike Ingman (Catering). The final item of the evening concerned the price of membership and after a short debate it was agreed that all members should pay £15, with families set at a £30 maximum.



Photographs by David Allen,

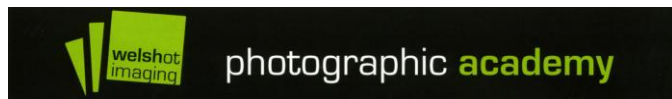
Words by Chris Noble

## Chairman's Address

Welcome all to the start of the new season. Our first full evening went well. It is great that so many members are happy to bring and show their work on these evenings. For those who are new don't be put off by the work you see, you probably can do better, the best way to learn (and show off a bit) is to bring some images or an AV to a members evening.

The coming fortnight is very busy for the club with our involvement in Gwyl Fama. I have got the pictures printed and Bob is getting the mounts cut so barring disasters the exhibition will be ready for next week. The invitation for the club to photograph events is a super opportunity to practice reportage and informal photography. It is every bit as difficult to do really well as fine art landscape work. Do remember to be careful and sensitive when photographing children. I would normally check with the session leader and parents before pressing the shutter.

[www.pistyllphoto.org.uk](http://www.pistyllphoto.org.uk)



Welshot Imaging are holding an Open Day at Chester Zoo on Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> October. The purpose of the Open Day is to give Photographers a sample of the workshops that are available through the academy. On that day professional photographers will give a taster on a number of different workshops.

For more information and to book your place contact Lee Iggulden on 01248-670693 or by email at [info@welshotimaging.co.uk](mailto:info@welshotimaging.co.uk)

[www.welshotimaging.co.uk](http://www.welshotimaging.co.uk)

To suggest any articles or ideas for the newsletter please contact Chris Noble:

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E-mail: [chris@noblemultimedia.co.uk](mailto:chris@noblemultimedia.co.uk)

Website: [www.noblemultimedia.co.uk](http://www.noblemultimedia.co.uk)

## MEMBER PROFILE

The Rainman Commeth



**Name:** Andy Polakowski

**Camera:** Canon EOS 10D and 40D SLRs, Fuji E900 compact and Sony-Ericsson K800i phone

**Lenses:** Canon & Sigma

**Software:** Photoshop 11, PicturesToExe

**Photography:** Sport & Street Photography

**Website:** [www.higher-views.fotopic.net](http://www.higher-views.fotopic.net)

Andy joined MCC exactly 30 years ago this October but started photography many years before, printing in his father's darkroom from the age of 11 or 12, in the mid-70s (the 1970s that is) becoming a member of the Ultra-banalilty Movement which provides the foundation for much of his photography to this day. Apart from his cycling, rainmaking and involvement in club activities Andy has found time over the last 25 years to lecture and judge at clubs throughout North Wales and the North West. His other main interest is music and so really enjoys combining it with his photos by creating AVs.

Photo: a picture taken by Andy's younger son, Alexander, at Eryrys, NB: no rain, or is Andy trying to provoke it?

## An Introduction To Aerial Photography. By Mike Catania



The title sounds grand doesn't it, but in a nut shell, I love taking photos whilst flying around North Wales. There isn't anything grand about it, I bumble along through the valleys or along the beaches and when I spot something that strikes me as interesting then I snap away and hope for the best. Often the results are a bit hit and miss due to flying the plane whilst taking photos single handed and at the same time being buffeted by the wind and air currents, but a few end up being passable.

For me, aerial photography is the natural combination of two of my favourite pastimes. I am very lucky that I can combine two such wonderful hobbies. I get a lot of different pleasures flying my aeroplane, there is the excitement of taking off and landing the craft. The adrenalin can really pump around at these two phases of a flight, especially if you are having to cope with a gusty crosswind or are having to herd the sheep and cattle away from where you want to land the little beastie.

Sheep are awfully stupid and cattle very stubborn! There is also a lot of pleasure to be had, flying low through the valleys of North Wales, seeing the majestic mountains and lakes from perspectives that only a lucky few get to see. Similarly, I can't do justice to the emotions and feelings I get when I'm flying 15 feet above the shoreline, with sand dunes flashing past in my peripheral vision, banking left and right to keep hugging the shoreline, watching flocks of birds wading on the flats. Occasionally, seeing the whole flock, take off on mass and watching them gracefully take flight, making me feel somewhat clumsy in my mechanical flying machine. All I can say is that if you get the opportunity to explore our local environment from the air, please don't pass it up. I'm sure you won't regret it.

From a photographic perspective, it can be quite easy. If you can manage to take a shot that is sharp and exposed well enough, you are likely to have a cracker. This is because, aerial photographs are a snapshot of a view that not many get to see often. This means that even boring flat shots can have enough wow factor to make them at least interesting if not great. What is great is that you share your experience with others through your photographs.

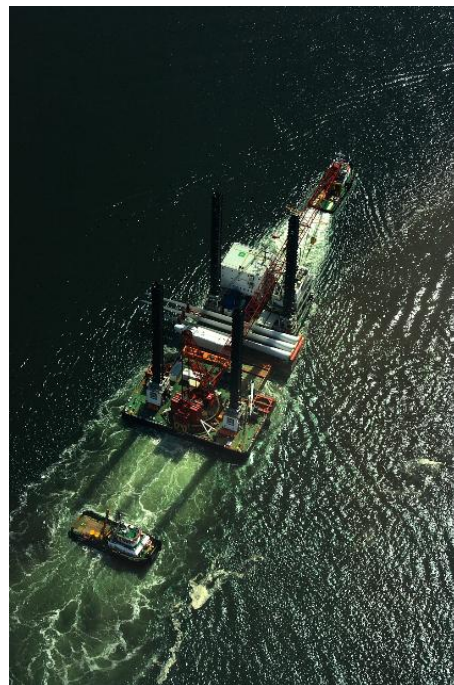
So, 'sharp and exposed correctly', piece of cake apart from one or two things that do their best to frustrate the photographer!

Firstly, I'm right handed. Due to where the shutter button is, I HAVE to use my right hand. This would be fine but my aircraft's control column is on the right also. So the norm is that I fly the plane with my left hand whilst holding the camera in my right. At the same time, I juggle with composing the shot and feeling what the plane is doing through the seat of my pants, (am I rolling left or right, am I gaining or losing height). Not forgetting, keeping an eye on the airspeed to keep me out of danger.

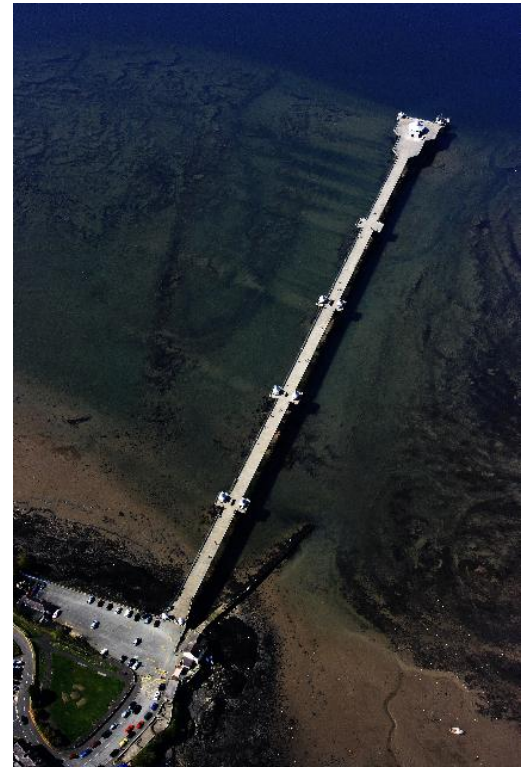
Now imagine all this, and at the crucial point of squeezing the shutter, some rush of air hits the aircraft just like someone nudging your elbow just as you take the shot! Now you will be starting to understand how easy it is to say 'just sharp and well exposed' and in practice, how difficult it can be.

In practical terms, there are a few techniques that I have found that help improve the odds.

1. If possible, I try to fly either early or late. The air mass becomes more stable in the cooler temperatures and you are less likely to get that nudge in the elbow. I prefer flying in the morning, as there is no risk of getting carried away on the sortie and running out of daylight. No headlights see! ☺
2. I tend to shoot in speed priority, selecting typically 1/500<sup>th</sup> to shoot at.



3. I also tend to try to shoot at the sharp sweet spot of my lens which is about F11. This speed and aperture combination invariably leads to a high ISO setting. This ultimately gives the aerial shots more of a 'grainy' feel but for certain images, I think this adds atmosphere to the shot.
4. I tend to always shoot with a polarizer on, especially if I'm near water. Even if I'm not, I find the depth of colour is always improved with a polarizer. Now the problem comes, holding the camera in one hand and rotating the filter whilst looking through the camera to get the best result. Er... that's 2 hands on the camera! Whose flying the plane? Well I tend to do this as fast as possible to catch the plane should it drop a wing. I have 'tuned' the filter on the ground and put tape on it to stop it rotating, but the draw back is when I want to switch from portrait to landscape, the filter will need adjusting so I don't bother taping it up any more. I have thought of tying the stick to the side of my knee with a belt, but never summoned up the courage to do this, yet.
5. I always shoot on continuous mode. Typically I only shoot single shots anyway, but occasionally it comes in useful to shoot a burst.
6. I always select the central focus point for the AF. I tend to focus then recompose, then shoot. This way I know which point will be used to focus.
7. I always have the meter mode to be 'centre-weighted'. This way, my main subject will be exposed best. The rest can be worked on in photoshop. ☺
8. I have modified a hard lens hood with draught excluder and black tape to give the hood a soft edge. This allows me to push the lens against the glass and so try to kill any reflections in the screen. This can be a pain, you have to manoeuvre so that the sun is behind you and slightly to the left. I shoot through the left side of the canopy, with the sun being in the 4:00-5:00 o'clock position to the aircraft, I get less internal reflections on the canopy.
9. Finally, I tend to fly around the subject, trying to keep the subject in the centre of the circle. This reduces your apparent velocity around your subject, and so you are less likely to get motion blurring in your shots. This is a technique that the C130 gun ships developed in Vietnam. However, in their case, they weren't shooting digital images ....

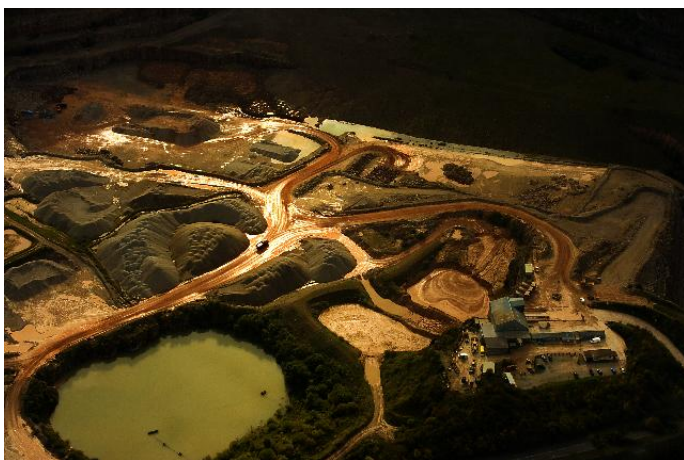


I've not gone into any of the flying technical stuff like checking weather forecasts, planning routes for safety, sorting out radio frequencies, working out fuel requirements etc as I think you guys are more interested in the photographic aspects.

I have tried to communicate through my ramblings what a fantastic experience flying can be and what a lovely additional cherry it is to take photos at the same time. In addition, I hope I may have inspired some of you to try it, so I've tried to share those hints and tricks that I have learnt through my sorties.

I've included some sample images, but if you would like to see more visit my aerial collection on the web.

<http://michaelcatania.fotopic.net/c1660524.html>





# gŵylfama

## Music & Arts Festival

### Gŵyl o Gerddoriaeth a Chelfyddyd

3RD OCTOBER – 11TH OCTOBER 2009

#### **Cilcain Show** (By Phil Parsons)

Cilcain Show (August Bank Holiday Monday) has run a popular photographic competition for many years and such has been the interest that the number of categories has in recent years been reduced to keep entries down to around 100. This year saw the Show's first photographic exhibition by Mold Camera Club. 38 prints were exhibited alongside the Photographic Competition, in the North Isle of the Church and drew a lot of attention from the C.4,000 visitors to the show. The exhibition was not however without its problems. The location was rather cramped for the number of people visiting, the light was less than ideal and because nothing could be attached or fixed to the walls of the venue, erecting the exhibits proved difficult. If I arrange a similar exhibition next year I shall propose that it (and the Photographic Competition) may be located in the Village Hall, which offers more space and better lighting. Thanks to Bill Furse for his help in erecting the exhibition and to member who loaned photos. Phil Parsons.

P.S. Two of our Club members were successful in the Show's competition with Bill Furse taking a First for a rather super "watercolour" in the "Digitally Altered" class and one other member (who for modesty reasons I can't name!) took a first with "People at Work" won "Best in Show" with his "Low light" entry.

#### **Summer Into Autumn**

Well summer is now turning into autumn and on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September we held the last of our successful midweek summer walks. Over the summer we have ventured throughout the county of Flintshire visiting The Limestone Path at Eryris, Gwaenysgor & Llanasa, Greenfield Valley, Talacre Beach, Wepre Park, Caergwrle & Hope, Cilcain and Hawarden. We've had various numbers on the walks but overall 24 members and guests took part at different times, some stalwarts even made it on most walks.

While on these walks we have been talking and the general feeling is why we shouldn't continue these walks into the autumn. Well work is underway to get a calendar together and we are planning to visit Bodnant Gardens, The River Dee in Chester for some night photography, and there will be revisits to Wepre Park, Greenfield Valley and Cilcain.

If you have any suggestions for good autumn venues please advise either Bob Morgan or Chris Noble.

Thanks to all who took part on the walks, your company and involvement made them all worthwhile.



# Martin Parr - Life With Magnum

Wednesday 7th October 2009, Statham Lodge, Lymm, Cheshire, WA13 9BP  
8pm - late, BIPP members & students £5, non members £10

The BIPP North West Region is very proud and fortunate, to be hosts to the world renowned iconic contemporary photographer Martin Parr, who has been hailed as a "sharp-witted genius producing satirical masterpieces and a revealing portrait of British life".

Martin has had almost 50 books published, over 80 exhibitions worldwide and been the subject of several television documentaries. Although born in Surrey, he has an affinity with the North West, having studied photography at Manchester Polytechnic in the seventies.

Martin's approach to documentary photography is intimate, cynical and fearless, bringing him wide acclaim both in this country and internationally. His unique style of photojournalism takes a critical look at family life, consumerism and food, along with other every day topics, and provokes both positive and critical reaction amongst observers of his work.

Come along to hear Martin talk about his life and work, how he approaches a commission, working with the picture agency Magnum and about what makes him tick. Whether you applaud his work or condemn it, you can not ignore the fact he has been very successful at what he does, winning many awards and has carved a name for himself in the annals of history amongst other famous photographers.



Visit Martin Parr's website at - [www.martinparr.com](http://www.martinparr.com)

## Summer Project Deadline

In order to give us time to review the images that have been submitted, a deadline of **Monday 19<sup>th</sup> October** has now been set for any further submissions. Please send low resolution images to [photo@noblemultimedia.co.uk](mailto:photo@noblemultimedia.co.uk) on or before that date. Alternatively you can submit your images on CD at the club meetings.

Once we have reviewed the images we may then make requests for additional images to fill any gaps in the project. Work is still on-going to find a sponsor for the book and plans are going ahead to create an AV of the images.

Many thanks to all who have taken part in the project so far.

This autumn/winter, leading UK photographer [John Beatty](#) will be touring around UK theatres, art centres and concert halls with his audio-visual show **Wild Vision**, sponsored by leading outdoor brand Rohan and supporting the UK's leading conservation charity, The John Muir Trust.



John Beatty is widely acclaimed as one of the most exciting and stimulating nature, travel and adventure photographers to have emerged in recent years, his multimedia presentations receiving accolades from the media, the public and from leading brands in the photographic industry. Over the last 27 years, John has adventured to 38 countries always returning with stories of his experiences of the wilderness which few have encountered. He has been to the Himalayas, the Pacific Islands, East Africa, the American Deserts, the Galapagos Islands and the Andes, Namibia, Alaska, the European Alps and has photographed almost all the wild land locations in Britain from the windswept tors of Cornwall to white strands of the Outer Hebrides. He spent 4 years working as a stills photographer with David Bellamy and has worked on advertising campaigns with leading brands in the outdoor design & manufacturing sector, also supplying photographs to Getty Images for worldwide corporate advertising and features.

As well as being a fantastic photographer, John is also a captivating and inspiring storyteller and **Wild Vision** is a chance to hear about his extraordinary life. As he explains, his work aims to capture “*the timeless rhythms of the natural environment, its beauty and simplicity, and man’s place within it*”. **Wild Vision** promises to be a fantastic audio-visual presentation which will leave audiences infused with energy and wonder at the beauty of our planet.

“It was brilliant. I have to say it was art...the whole audience responded with immediate and lasting applause...See it if you can.” **Climber Magazine**      John's dates in WALES:

Sat 3	<a href="#">MACHYNLLETH</a>	<a href="#">Moma Wales</a>	01654 703355
Thur 8	<a href="#">RHYL</a>	<a href="#">Pavilion Theatre</a>	01745 330 000

## 2008/09 Presentation

On Monday 28<sup>th</sup> September, David Allen presented the winners medals for last season’s competitions. Most prolific of the winners was Stuart Worrall winning no less than four medals while Pete Thomas, Brian Lowens and Mike Catania were also successful. Below is the full list of winners. Congratulations to all our winners.

Beginners Prints:	Brian Lowens
Beginners Digital Image:	Mike Catania
Advanced Prints:	Stuart Worrall
Advanced Digital Image:	Peter Thomas
Print of the Year:	Stuart Worrall
Digital Image of the Year:	Stuart Worrall
Photographer of the Year:	Stuart Worrall



David & Stuart (Photo by Bob Morgan)