



Mold In Focus

Volume 1, Issue 4

November 2009

Dai Price – Lady Lever Exhibition (By Heather Price)

Some of you may remember Dai Price, David's predecessor as Chairman. Dai and I joined the club about 20 years ago. Dai's love affair with photography began when his uncle gave him a camera when he was 7. He soon had a darkroom under the stairs and his passion grew from there. About 25 years ago his interest widened to include the history of photography and he joined the Photographic Collectors' Club of Great Britain. Over the years he acquired a diverse collection of everything photographic from toy cameras to half plate brass and mahogany, darkroom equipment to magic lanterns and stereo viewers to Daguerreotypes.



He was always keen to share his knowledge and passion with anyone who would listen and he found many captive audiences when he became a lecturer and speaker at clubs in North Wales and the Wirral.



Over 20 years ago he was given a large quantity of glass negatives, more than 550. The images appealed to his imagination as they chronicled the life of a Wirral family during the first quarter of the 20th century. He always planned to do something that would allow people to share these images, thinking he would have more time to devote to it when he retired. To this end a few months before leaving work he started to organize an exhibition at the Lady Lever Art Gallery at Port Sunlight but unfortunately he passed away before it came to fruition.

Planned Events (**Hand In Nights)

November

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

December

- 7th Christmas Dinner
- 14th **Internal Competition 2 – Tree Triptych**
- 21st **Christmas Lecture - TBC**
- 28th Christmas Break – No Meeting

External Events

- Edwardian Family Album Exhibition – See Page 8
- 24th Nov - Gwyl Fama Friends Supper

To keep his dream alive the exhibition is going ahead and will run till May 2nd, 2010. The gallery is open from 10 till 5 every day and entry is free; it's well worth a visit as it shows fine examples of photographic composition in a number of situations. If you consider that all the photographs were taken with glass negatives you will understand why getting it right first time was important – he didn't have 36 exposures to play with and didn't have instant feedback either.



There is also a small display of the typical equipment that he would have used, including a camera.

As a more lasting memorial a book has been published to accompany the exhibition. This contains the pictures from the exhibition and others from the collection.

The book is available from The Bookshop, Mold and Mold Camera Club members will get a 10% discount if they mention the club.

an
**Edwardian
Family Album**

A photographic portrayal
of a Wirral family in the
early 20th century



David and Heather Price

**The Edwardian Family Album
Photography Exhibition
Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight
until 2nd May 2010
Admission Free**

To suggest any articles or ideas for the newsletter please
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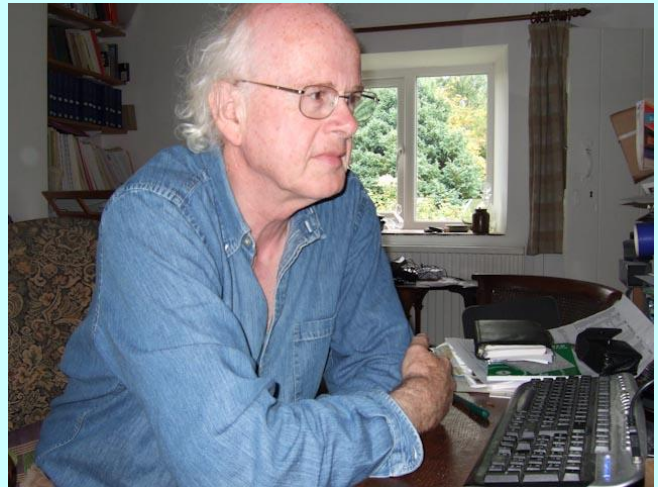
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MEMBER PROFILE

Chairman Allen



Name: David Allen (not Dave, I still have all my fingers)

Camera: Canon EOS 5D and Fuji f31d. I am still looking for the perfect compact!

Lenses: All Canon. Thinking of switching to using mostly primes.

Software: Adobe Lightroom 2.4, Adobe Photoshop CS3 and Proshow producer

Photography: Depends on the mood of the moment mostly landscape and some reportage for the Llangollen Railway

Website: www.pistyllphoto.org.uk

I still have my first camera a box Brownie given I think on my 11th birthday. Since then photography has come and gone as a hobby depending on work pressure - what was that! and also whether music was in the ascendancy. Music is the other interest so as well as my involvement in MCC I am also president of the North West Early Music Forum - punishment for having stood down after being chairman for eight years.

As well as doing occasional photography for the Llangollen Railway I am also developing their photo archive.

Chairman's Address - *On Taking Less Pictures*

My favourite method for taking less pictures is to forget to put my pocket camera in my pocket. My second unfavourite method is to pack all my gear very carefully and then forget to pick up my camera bag with my DSLR body and only remember when I am half way to Scotland. A pocket camera on a big tripod looks silly but it does even then improve the pictures.

More seriously the problem with modern digi cameras is the temptation to press the shutter too frequently. For some subjects it is what you need to do, sports and action photographers may take multiple exposures and use the fastest drives to get them. However slowing down in my view can and should lead to better pictures for the most of us. One of the world's leading wedding photographers will, even though he is now completely digital, only take about 180 images in the course of a days work.

So how to slow down. First, and this particularly applies to landscape photography, leave your camera in its bag and take about half an hour just looking at where you are. Look for shapes, patterns, colour, tonal range, everything you can think of. It could be that you come away without taking a single picture. Try thinking like a large format photographer who will only press the shutter if she knows the picture is going to work. Try and imagine what the scene you are looking at will look like as a print or projected.

When you are ready, then get your camera out and think how you need to capture what you have seen so you can create the final picture. What choice of focal length, what depth of field, what exposure do you need to capture the tonal range of the scene that can be used to make the image you want. Then and only then having set your camera up to do what you want it to do, press the shutter.

Now most of what I have written obviously applies to landscape photography but think of the wedding photographer who just takes 180 pictures in a day. This can only happen with the sort of systematic approach to developing both technical surefootedness and an eye to composition that comes with patient work. Slow down and give yourself time to think and see. Try going out for a day's photography and just press the shutter ten times or even less!!

Oh and do remember to take your camera.

Gwyl Fama Highlights (By Nia Lynn Jones)

This year's **Gwyl Fama – Music and Arts festival** has been hailed a huge success with people from communities across the area joining events held between 3rd and 11th October. Twenty four events were staged over a period of ten days in towns and villages around Moel Famau in Flintshire and Denbighshire. The events included classical concerts, a poetry evening, community art events, a photography exhibition, folk evenings, a music cafe for primary aged musicians, a youth music and arts village, scriptwriting workshops and fun-filled Jamborees.



“As a committee we are delighted with the response and grateful to people for supporting the events” said Keith Redfern-Humphreys, Chair of Gwyl Fama. “This year’s programme offered something for everyone. It included professional musicians and has also provided a platform for local talent. We have also succeeded in our aim of including more communities in the festivities and bringing more volunteers on board”

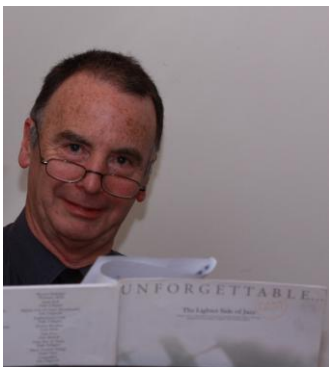
Mold Camera Club staged an exhibition of the National Eisteddfod Project at St Marys’ Church Hall in Mold and also held an exhibition of members’ work at The Northern Aisle, St Mary’s Church, Cilcain. Club members also joined all of the events to create a photographic record of this year’s Gwyl Fama.

“Gwyl Fama has always worked in partnership with the Mold Camera Club and this year saw a number of exciting projects coming to fruition as a result of this positive partnership” said Keith “Our thanks go to all the members who gave their time and creative talents to create a record of the spectrum of cultural activities that brought a wonderful buzz to the communities around Moel Fama at the beginning of October”. The Gwyl Fama festival committee were successful in attracting funding from the Rural Development Plan which is funded by the European Union and Welsh Assembly Government to assist with staging this year’s ten day event. Friends' Supper will be held on Tuesday, 24th November to discuss the festival and start planning the 2010 event. If any Camera Club members would like to come along, please contact the festival office on: 01352 754212

The images shown on these pages were provided by Gary Jones, Ian Parker, Keith Ratcliffe, Pam Ratcliffe, Anne Smith, and Chris Noble



Gwyl Fama Images



Lighting & Imagination

Monday 2nd November will be a members evening with a difference. Bob Morgan is arranging for lighting equipment and various photographic accessories to be available for a night of imaginative photography.

It is therefore vitally important that you bring along your cameras, tripods etc. You will also need to bring along your photographic imagination and potentially the subjects you would like to photograph on the night.

Owl Sanctuary Visit

Anybody wishing to attend the visit to Corwen Owl Sanctuary on Wednesday 18th November needs to confirm their attendance with Chris Noble by Monday 16th. All attendees will be required to make a donation to the Owl Sanctuary. They need a great amount of financial support from the public in order to keep operating.

We will be meeting in Corwen at 12:00 on the day.



I must admit that attending this event didn't fill me with the greatest anticipation of having a very exciting day, but I decided to go along to see what other clubs in the PAGB affiliated regions were up to. I was wrong, the standard of photography was excellent and the competition ended with a very exciting and edge of the seat print penalty shoot out.

It all began with each club showing 10 prints. Considering there was a record entry of 34 clubs (2 from each region), there were a lot of prints to get through. Each club was given a score out of 15 for each print and after an exhaustive first round the scores were totaled. The top 8 clubs would then proceed to the final. A great cheer went up when NWPA representatives, Eryri P.G., were announced as one of the finalists. The other NWPA representatives, Wrexham & District were unfortunately relegated to the Plate Competition.

The plate competition started the second half of the show and after 5 prints per club, Worcestershire CC emerged as the winners with a total score of 71. It was a tight competition and Wrexham had to content with joint 16th place on 61 points. It was then final time and the 8 clubs again had to show 10 prints (not necessarily the same as round 1). To say it was a very close competition would be understating it. The winners scored 203, while the team in 8th was just 17 points behind. As the results were announced, the audience listened in total silence as it was announced there was a tie between the Wigan 10 and Smethwick P.S. with Arden declared in third place with a score of 200.

The two tie-break teams had to then produce an additional 3 prints that had not already been seen before, and to make it harder they had to be from 3 different photographers. There was a lot of rushing about as club members went back to their cars to retrieve the prints already put away.

The penalty shoot out began, and after two prints each the score was still tied. Smethwick were up first and scored 13 for their final entry. The final print was displayed and all waited, total silence descended on the room and you could hear a pin drop as the foreman announced the final score for Wigan 10 as 14. A big cheer erupted from one part of the hall and strange as it may seem its first time they have won this title.

Eryri did the NWPA proud coming home a very credible 7th, their best performance in the competition, and by doing so automatically qualified for next year. It turned out to be a great day and an event I recommend attending next year.

Locomotives, Volunteers & Cameras (John Rutter)



Just to set the record straight, I am not an 'Anorak': my definition of an Anorak is 'someone who watches'. I am well known to get my hands dirty so the term I prefer is 'Working Volunteer'.

There are many reasons for photographing trains, including making money – I'll come back to that later. In my case, it is usually because no-one else has the exact photograph I need to illustrate a point on the Llangollen Railway Website.

Photographs need to have all the usuals; focused, framed, exposed etc, all correctly. There the generalisations can end. Photographs of trains – by that I mean anything on the railways – can be of anything related, from the setting and alignment of the piano wire for setting up the cylinders and slide bars on a locomotive, to views of trains showing how little a railway impinges on the landscape in comparison to a major road.

Most will be Record Pictures, but artistic interpretation is always possible, particularly when let loose in an engine shed or other location where details abound. And then there are the people. Workers at track level on a railway wear orange with fluorescent stripes. The orange can look well set against a green landscape, however watch the sun and/or flash on the reflective strips as these can wipe out the picture. Workers at platform level wear uniforms of various types, heritage railways tend to stick with the navy blue/black of early BR days, where on the privatised railway they seem to want to keep up with the airlines. I particularly liked the Virgin uniform worn by the dispatchers at big stations – BR style but in maroon.



Making money out of photographs of train requires significant study of the railway magazines to see what they will accept. High Quality is a must, little blur, even on fast moving parts and, with steam locomotives, the position of the connecting rods has to be right (difficult if the train is passing at speed). There must also be steam and smoke effects or the train will look stationary.

And that brings me on to photographing moving trains. Never use anything less than 1/250th of a second. Although the train may appear to be moving relatively slowly across a landscape (this is an illusion as it is so big that speed is distorted) there is always a relatively high frequency vertical movement on the springs not visible to the naked eye.

The choice of lens may also be difficult (zoom lenses do help a lot). Each carriage is 60 to 80 feet long, so a train of 5 will be 350 feet long as a minimum, plus the locomotive. There may be a difficult decision whether to go for a standard $\frac{3}{4}$ portrait of the locomotive with a telephoto, or try to get the whole train in focus which will probably need a wide angle.

In the end, like all subjects, there is no substitute for practice. We are fortunate that the North Wales Coast Railway plays host to quite a few steam specials.

One day I'll manage to photograph one from Llandudno Junction up to Blaenau Ffestiniog. A good friend of mine managed to get a shot taken from a hillside of



the train in the landscape into one of the main enthusiasts magazines – probably paid for a new lens!

That One Picture (By Chris Noble)

On 7th October, Andy & I attended a Martin Parr lecture organised by the BIPP. For those who don't know, Martin Parr is a member of Magnum and one of the foremost documentary photographers in the world today. Martin's lecture was both informative and entertaining giving us a brief history of his life as a photographer, highlighting some of the important projects he has completed during that time.

The defining moment, for me, came in the question and answer session at the end of the lecture. Martin was asked to define what he meant by "Good", a word he had used several times during his talk. Basically he was being asked to give the answer to the question that we all want the answer to, what makes a good photograph?

Martin's answer was very similar to all the answers I've heard to this question in the past; it's a picture that is compositionally and technically accurate; it's a matter of opinion, what one person likes the next might not, and so on. With regard to documentary photograph he talked about there being a tension in the image, something that makes the viewer interested in what they are seeing, understanding the story behind the image. He pointed out that there is no formula to finding that perfect image.

And thankfully, he is right. If, somewhere along the way, somebody discovers that formula then photography is finished. That search for what I call the photographers Holy Grail would be over and we can all pack our equipment away and forget about the dreams that have kept the industry going since its inception.

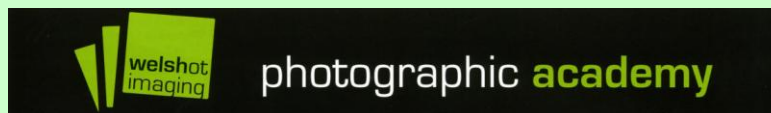
From a personal point of view, I just want to find that one picture, the one that makes everybody go wow, the one that will give me recognition as a photographer. Will I ever find it? I don't know and will I recognise the moment if it happens. In some respects I don't think I want to know as it might stop my search. It's the inquisitive nature of our art that makes us continue and long may it be the case.

Martin Parr finished answering that question with a statement that I will try to quote as best I can and it is this: "I don't think I will ever find out the answer to that question, and I hope you don't as well". And so, we must all keep searching in what will be an unsuccessful quest, but one that I'm sure will give us all many hours of enjoyment and frustration.

For more information about Martin Parr and his photography visit www.martinparr.com

Newsletter Photo Competition

Sponsored by Welshot Imaging



All members of Mold Camera Club are invited to enter our special Newsletter Christmas Competition. Each member is asked to submit one digital image depicting Christmas. You can choose any subject you like as long as the image has a Christmas feel to it. Images must be in JPG format and no longer than 1050 pixels on the longest side.

The prize will be free entry to one of the Welshot Imaging Photographic Academy evenings at the Gateway To Wales hotel in Garden City. This is an excellent opportunity to attend a photography event which is both informative and fun.

The judging will be done by the Newsletter Editor along with one of the directors of Welshot Imaging. Closing Date for entries is **Friday 27th November**. Send your entries to the editor at photo@noblemultimedia.co.uk.

For more information about Welshot Imaging contact Lee Iggulden on 01248-670693 or by e-mail at info@welshotimaging.co.uk.

www.welshotimaging.co.uk

Letter to the Editor

I can't speak for other people but I suspect others share my views; that is, I find the tendency when a picture is displayed for the author to go into minute detail of the adjustments they have made in Photoshop or the like, to be very boring.

For people new to digital photography the terms used must appear like a foreign language and must be very off putting. To me it is similar to an artist describing how they used a No.3 brush for this bit a No6 for that bit etc.

I know that to 'improve' our digital pictures we need to learn new techniques, but this can be learnt from books, specialised courses or from other knowledgeable photographers. When viewing a photograph the only thing that matters to me is the end result and whether I like it, and my appreciation or otherwise of it is not affected by knowing that the author has spent an hour or more fiddling with the image.

Ken Sweetman (Grumpy old man)

Camera club's stunning exhibition

THIS year's annual Mold Camera Club exhibition takes place at Buckley Library.

More than 80 prints are on display at the Central Precinct venue.

They feature some of the best work of club members over the past 12 months.

Exhibition secretary Rishi Sharma said: "The standard is just as good, if not better than usual.

"There's a mixture of work, some portraits and some prints.

"Wildlife features predominantly."

The exhibition got under way on Monday, August 17, and will continue until Saturday, September 12.

Some of the work on show is available for purchase.

■ For more information call 01352 755793.



DISPLAY: Chris Davies with his photograph *Summer in Siena*, with other Mold Camera Club members, from left, Rishi Sharma, Andy Polakowski, Chris Noble and Eric Keen at Buckley Library.

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East Side Story (Andy Polakowski)



"Oy mate! Is that a Leica?"

The estuarine accent reminded me that I was in the East End of London. That a complete stranger had recognised my over-priced jewellery surprised me. That he was now calling out to me jogged that part of photographers' brains that enables them to assume the roles of shadowy, characterless individuals: taking only photographs, leaving only footprints. That sort of thing. But now I was vulnerable. What were this stranger's motives? Why was he interested in my camera? What was I doing in the East End?

By answering the last question first I'll start at the beginning. Eleri and I were staying with Julian and Penney, an old schoolmate of mine and his wife, in Walthamstow. On Saturday the four of us decided on a liquid lunch and inevitably Julian knew of a good place halfway between their house and Walthamstow Market, and it had a snooker table. And so it was a couple of hours later that we emerged, blinking, into the daylight.

We decided to go on to the Market, an archetypal London street market, but Penney wanted to return to the house to start the evening meal as she thought we ought to have some solid food before the evening session. It was then that I noticed that the area we were in, which had looked so drab and uninteresting before "lunch", was now looking positively photogenic but of course "Beauty is in the eye of the beer-holder".

I went back with Penney to pick up my camera and meet the other two later in the Market. So I set off with my Leica looking for some Decisive Moments and was only round the first corner when I met my inquisitive interrogator. "Yes it is", I replied. "It's a 3F", I added, anticipating his next question. "Black or red?" he countered. He knew his Leicas; earlier 3Fs had black numbers around the shutter speed dial for setting the flash synchronisation delay, later models were red. "Black dial". "What lens have you got there?" "Five centimetre Elmar" (Leica aficionados never seem to bother with millimetres).

I was now more relaxed as he eulogised about various precision and miniature cameras and the intimidation I felt from his opening remark seemed to be receding. It transpired that he had been into photography some time ago but it was now model railways(!).

"Got much equipment?", he enquired, casually. "Quite a bit". "Would you like some more?" Now the alarm bells were ringing. Here I was, obviously a Northerner, being offered photographic equipment on the street by this Crafty Cockney; was this where it had all been leading? "Er, no thanks, I'm OK, I'm just on my way to meet my wife", I blurted. "No", he said, "Don't get me wrong, I'll give it to you. Come back to my house with us".

I now looked around at the odd assortment of people I was walking with, from his grand-daughter to his mother, apparently, and realised that events were now taking a very funny turn.

At his house my new found friend disappeared into the attic, Mother and the others went into the back to make some tea and Grand-daughter entertained me with a pink Emu hand-puppet. I was then presented with various bottles of chemicals, dishes, tongs, developing tanks (one stainless steel), guillotine and more. Offers of payment were flatly refused as I was helped out through the front door. His parting words capped this bizarre encounter: "Enoch Powell for Prime Minister, eh?"

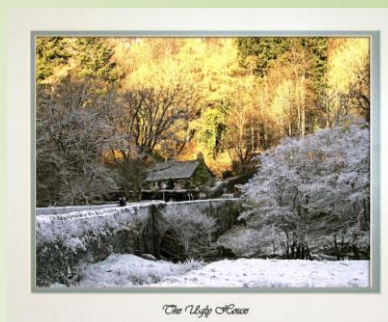
I was in a predicament: I was carrying the major part of a darkroom and it was now the time I should have been meeting my wife and Julian. But I had no choice, I had to return to the house. Penney was amazed by my story but quickly entered into the spirit of the episode by asking if I could try and get a chest of drawers and an electric potato peeler next time, this latter request clearly being coloured by the task of the moment.

I found Julian sitting on the Library steps. I was half an hour late and my wife was somewhere down in the Market and not very pleased. I related my story to him and he gleefully praised my powers of fabrication. Until they saw the equipment neither of them believed me.

And the moral behind this rambling: always carry a camera. As Sevvie used to say: Don leaf hom wizout eet.

Competition 1 - Results

Monday 12th October saw a very successful first competition of the year with 46 entries in the Print competition and 61 for Digital Projection. Special thanks to Chris Kay for judging, over 100 images is a lot to get through.



The results were as follows:

Beginners Prints:

1 st	The Lighthouse (Above Left)	Jude Lloyd-Johnson	20
2 nd	Gloomy Mill	Ann-Marie Metcalfe	19
3 rd	Towards Gordale Scar	Doreen Boswell	18

Advanced Prints:

1 st	Winter At The Ugly House (Above Right)	Phil Parsons	20
2 nd	The Winner – Cilcain Mountain Race	Andy Polakowski	19
3 rd	Moonlit Tide	Stuart Worrall	18
	Emperor Dragonfly	Bill Furse	18

Beginners Digital:

1 st	Bald Eagle (Below Left)	Ann-Marie Metcalfe	20
2 nd	Long Tailed Tit	Jacky Shennan	19
	Old Porsche	Ian Parker	19

Advanced Digital

1 st	Tours Chester (below Right)	Kevin Hirst	20
2 nd	Happy In Retirement	Chris Davies	19
3 rd	Double Dutch	Kevin Hirst	18
	Kathryn In Flight	Jonathan Frings	18

