



New Westminster Photography Club

# Shutter Release

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March, 2011

## Elf editorial

I love this job. I get to rant and reminisce right on the front page.

I photographed a crocus in early February – the **first** ones in my garden (well, soon to be someone else's garden, but never mind). I immediately sent the photo to my friend in Vanderhoof, who reciprocated by sending me a photo of the fresh 10" of snow she got overnight. By the time you are reading this newsletter, all kinds of flowers may be out, so it won't be as exciting as that first one. (I'm sure her snow photograph wasn't as exciting as her first snow either...)

And this brings me to the topic of this month's editorial: who's on first. No wait, who's first. I remember the first "dusty horse" roundup shot I saw. Wow. Perfect backlight, a story, atmosphere... A perfect 10! The first slot canyon photo. Amazing lines and colours. The first camels in the sunset. So exotic. The first shot of a bear catching a fish! The first Photoshop altered reality image that didn't look like a 2 year old's cut and paste job! After seeing many variations of the same photographs, judges tend to not score them as high. No matter how beautiful your perfect pink rose after the rain shot is, we've all seen it before, so it will lose in the impact and creativity department.

I have been told by a friend who resides in Japan that when a well-known photographer catches a great scene, such as fog off a bridge, all the photographers in the city will soon be lined up on the bridge in the fog, to repeat the shot. So have you heard this one?: "One sheep says to another sheep, "You're a natural born follower".

We have so many very creative and talented members in this club and I'm glad to see so many of you have a sense of adventure and like to be the first to try something new. There is a fantastic opportunity coming up in our March 19 "outing" to the Shadbolt Centre for the Performing Arts, where our Outings Director has booked a male model and a studio, with the aim to create some unique nude shots. These are not something that everyone has in their portfolio and it should be an interesting and educational morning. This is a chance to create "firsts". Perhaps the concept isn't new, but your lighting, poses and props may well be. (See "Outings" in this issue or the website for more information). Hope to see you there!

I will miss seeing all of you as frequently as I do now, when I move to Lillooet this month, but my mother lives here and I plan a monthly commute to try to coincide with at least one meeting and/or outing. I will continue to do the themes and newsletter from my new location.

*Shona*

## Focus Groups

Another opportunity for learning about different subjects or styles of shooting is our **focus groups**. They aren't just for those who like that particular area of photography; they are also for those who are interested in learning more. So if you always wanted to shoot architecture or close-ups but don't know where to start, join the architecture focus group (off our website) and shoot off a message to the members. These are **informal**, member-run groups, which means it's up to you to send a message saying something like "It's supposed to be clear on Saturday. I'm thinking of going to Stanley Park to shoot the bridge. Anyone want to join me?"

## What you missed

The **Surprise Challenge** at the first meeting was a lot of fun, as the teams worked together to try to capture perfectly lit and critically focused photos at the various stations. With a 10 minute limit (less per person) at each challenge, there was no time to consult the manual. Strengths and weaknesses revealed! Special thanks to everyone who contributed lighting, equipment and props to help make the evening a success. Also, thanks to Quatchi and his brother, Quatchi, Mukmuk (the “other mascot”), Sammy the Snake and all the other models who were so patient with the photographers.

The second meeting of February was skills sharing, member sharing and digital competition. Good to see some experimental photographs and especially more comments, especially from our newer members. (Competition results elsewhere in this issue).

## Upcoming Meetings

Our first March meeting will concentrate on small things, or parts of big things... close-ups and macros. Please contribute some images if you have them (what has worked or what has not). We will have some equipment and props to try. Come prepared to discuss appropriate subjects, equipment, lighting, etc. and/or bring all your questions! – along with your cameras of course and any macro/close-up equipment you may have.

## Next Outing

The **March 19** outing is a studio model shoot (male nude). This is a rare and excellent learning opportunity to practice posing, props, backdrops, lighting, directing and communicating with a model, without embarrassment and in a professional manner. Please come prepared with sketches, set-ups, light positions, samples, etc. as time will be limited. Remember, the model can't read your mind, so give him a starting point! We have studio 105 at the Shadbolt Centre starting at 10 a.m., and the model will be available until 1:30.

Please see the Outings section on the website for details. Questions about any outing: [outings@nwphoto.org](mailto:outings@nwphoto.org). Or call 778-891-4774.

## February Outing Report (by Jim Furey)

The troops for this outing included Wendy (newcomer), Derek (had another commitment so stayed right up to the start of mounting photos), David Love, myself and, of course, Justin.

We met at the New West Skytrain Station, where Justin explained some of what we would be doing. We then headed for Waterfront Station, but the long way, via Millennium to Commercial, then transferring back to Expo line. The reason for this was the likelihood of getting a train with few passengers, which we did, and Justin used the travel time and the empty train to explain the Holmes process in detail and to show us a number of stereograms using his antique Holmes viewer, which looks a lot like this:



We got off the train at Waterfront, grabbed a few shots in the SeaBus walkway, then moved to a viewing area adjacent to the Sun Province building. There was a nice plaza overlooking the harbour with lots of near and far elements. We practiced the Cha-cha, which is taking two shots with the camera moved approximately eye width (about 65 mm) between shots. This provides the stereoscopic vision and therefore depth perception common to animals with front-facing eyes. This spacing works well for objects up to about 3 m, which coincides with the optimum ratio between object distance and eye spacing, which is 30 : 1. In order to achieve a stereo effect for objects that are somewhat further away, it's necessary to increase the camera shift. More about this later.

After snapping away and practicing shifting the camera without tilting, turning, twisting or otherwise messing up the alignment, we moved on. We had to rouse David, who was lying on his back shooting almost straight up, with a unique "morning star" bit of statuary in the near foreground. This one, it turns out, turned out very well.

We moved along to Gastown and looked for alleys filled with overhead cables, graffiti or anything else that would give us an interesting depth.

We also dropped into an amazing little shop where, down the stairs and along between close spaced shelves packed with curios, there were lots of stereograms for sale. I got the feeling that Justin is a regular visitor here.

When we felt we had enough shots to develop, we made our way up to Georgia and Burrard to London Drugs and dropped off our film (for those using disposable film cameras) or uploaded images from our digital discs. Justin cajoled London Drugs into 1/2 hour processing, so we drifted across the street for a truly forgettable lunch at Burger King, then back to get our developed prints. We then hot-footed it to the food court near the Waterfront station. We all purchased a coffee to, as Justin said, pay rent for the tables we were about to occupy.

Next, out came the prints, the rulers, the cutting boards, the exacto knives, the cereal boxes and the glue. Justin chopped up one photo pair and mounted them just so on cardboard. I won't go into details, but the process included finding a common horizon then selecting the best part of the images to retain. It was also VERY important to mount the left photo on the left. The result was, when viewed in the Holmes viewer, as promised, the image jumped right out - very impressive.

We all got gratifying results, with two interesting variations. On the way to our meeting in the morning, David stopped by Begbie Square and got a dual shot of ole Beg himself. However, he used very wide camera spacing of about 75 cm. The result, when these were mounted, was that the background was too jumbled for the eye to resolve, but if you were able to relax the automatic focusing impulse and find the middle of the three images in the viewer, it popped right out. The Holmes process has some give to it.

The other interesting shot was Wendy's, taken early on in the SeaBus walkway. The pedestrian traffic, of course, moved between shots. The result was that they appeared as ghosts - not gone but not quite there either. A very interesting effect.

Thanks, Justin, for a great outing.

## **The Date Book**

Photo activities and photo ops coming up. Some of these are also posted on the club's website, in more detail, under Announcements.

**March 5:** North Shore Photographic Challenge. We will not have an entry this year, but it's a great evening of viewing photographs from clubs all over BC and second-guessing the scoring by the experienced judges. Thirty clubs have registered, and tickets may be obtained from the Kay Meek Centre website at [www.kaymeekcentre.com](http://www.kaymeekcentre.com), or by calling 604-913-3634. [www.nspcs.ca](http://www.nspcs.ca)

**March 4 and 6.** Birds on the Bay events include a presentation of bird photography on Friday evening and a half day workshop, including practice photographing raptors, on Sunday. Both require pre-registration as space is limited.

**March 25-26:** Delta Photo Club has replaced their November print challenge with an open to all **Delta Photo Inspirations**, with a print competition, courses, workshops, keynote speaker Wendell Phillips and a trade show. Friday is free; Saturday is \$55 and Wendell Phillips only is \$20. [www.deltaphotoinspirations.com](http://www.deltaphotoinspirations.com)

**April 17 (Sunday) has choices.** There is the big camera "show" (more like a flea market) at the Cameron Centre. Always worth a look, especially if you have older equipment or like to collect ... It opens around 10. Usually about \$5 or so to get in. To book tables: Siggie Rhode 604-941-0300. Our own Peter Ellis may have a table again, so stop in and say hi.

On the **same day**, the 25<sup>th</sup> annual **Classic & Vintage Motorcycle Swap Meet and Show ‘n Shine** at the South Delta Recreation Centre. Great **photo ops** whether you ride or not... some unique bikes and if you just hang around outside, no charge. **And wait, that’s not all!** It is also the date of the Pacific Zone Print Challenge judging in Richmond, at the Arts Centre Lecture Hall, starting at 1:00. Admission to that is \$7. Clubs from all over BC participate and it’s well worth attending.

## **Our Club Themes**

This is strictly a website competition and any member may enter three images in each theme (you may upload your entries yourself), comment on images any time during the competition or voting phase, and of course vote for the Photo of the Month (for the honour of being on the home page for a month **and** getting great virtual trophies next to your name on your profile page). Good inspiration and exercise in interpreting the monthly themes. Contact [themes@nwphoto.org](mailto:themes@nwphoto.org) if you have questions and [webmaster@nwphoto.org](mailto:webmaster@nwphoto.org) if you experience any uploading difficulties.

If you should happen to mistakenly upload the wrong image, e-mail the themes coordinator with a copy to webmaster, and we will fix it as soon as we can.

### **Current themes:**

“Dreams” closes March 20

“Abandoned” opens March 1 and closes April 17 (See Date Book: many other things on closing day so don’t leave it for the last minute!)

## **In-club Competition Results**

There were 15 images entered in the March competition. Scores (in no particular order) are:

<b>Title</b>	<b>Photographer</b>	<b>Score total followed by breakdown by judge</b>
Motorcycle	Justin	19 (6,6,7)
Vancouver’s Second Skyscraper	Robert	20 (8,5) *
Ice Castle	Jim	15 (4,6) *
Year of the Rabbit	Robert	18 (6,6) *
Quayside Sunset	Jim	20 (5,8) *
Rain in the City	Keith	23 (6,8,9) <b>tied for 2<sup>nd</sup></b>
Zen Morning	Keith	15 (4,6,5)
Bottles with Siding	Karen	19 (5,8,6)
Christmas Lights Whalley	David L.	17 (4,5,8)
Dancing Duck	Peter	24 (8,8,8) <b>1<sup>st</sup> place</b>
I Love a Rainy Night	Shona	22 (6,7,9) <b>tied for 3<sup>rd</sup></b>
Odd Flower	Shona	22 (8,7,7) <b>tied for 3<sup>rd</sup></b>
Smiley VW	Peter	23 (9,7,7) <b>tied for 2<sup>nd</sup></b>
Sure Shot Sheep	Karen	21 (6,7,8)
Surrey Docks Winter Night	David L.	19 (7,6,6)

\* Scores are out of 30 (10 per judge). Were an entrant is also a judge, the other 2 judges’ scores are averaged. Our club competitions are more to keep us used to the types of images that do well in competitions. Those are not necessarily the same images that might show well in a gallery. Don’t take your scores too seriously; remember, not all our members are experienced judges, but do feel free to talk to some of the more experienced members, **or**, even better, show the image as one of your “member’s choice” images at a future meeting, and ask for some feedback.



## **March shooting**

“March comes in like a lion...” goes the saying. Here on the coast, sometimes the lamb part of March comes first. It is definitely a month of change, but it is a month that really starts to feel like spring, and many potential shots, such as the soft spring greens, are quite fleeting. Best bets are cherry blossoms and the earlier bulbs. At higher elevations you can catch some snow. It’s still dark early enough for some night or twilight photography regardless of the subject... foggy mornings or flooded fields. Events? St. Patrick’s Day parade in Vancouver will be held

March 20. On the same day, a model railroad show at the Cameron Centre. Yes, tiny trains going through tiny landscapes... very cool.

## **www.nwphoto.org**

Our club’s great site and you can make it better! Here are this month’s **featured features**:

### ***Member Galleries***

I observed that one of our newer members has created her member galleries inspired by past theme challenges. What a brilliant idea! Don’t know who that is? Check out the member galleries!

As long as you are a member, you may have as many galleries on our member photo pages as you like. This is another way to share images with members, friends, talent scouts... and you’re not lost in the immensity of Flickr...

But wait, there’s more! You can not only add a note to your images (what you were trying, where it was, etc.) but you can comment on the images of others!

### ***Subscriptions***

A good way to ensure you don’t miss any comments by others is to adjust your **subscriptions** so you are notified when someone comments on your images. And if you don’t know what subscriptions are, you are missing just one of the coolest things on our website. Log in, select “My Profile” from the bottom row of selections at the top of the page, then click on the “Subscriptions” page. You can get reminders of when themes open and close, when someone comments on your theme, member or outing image and so on, as frequently as you like.

### ***Announcements***

A sometimes under-used component of our website, all kinds of events can be listed there, from photo ops to workshops. More current than the newsletter Date Book. Executive member can post announcements so if you’re not on the executive, send your information to any executive to post.

## **Next issue**

Submissions anyone? Share those coffee-break ideas with everyone.