



## Photographic Club

### Newsletter

Issue 8 – 11<sup>th</sup> August 2014

Next meeting 1st Sept, 7.00 – 9.00pm

We are now on our 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Photographic Club, I find it hard to realise we have come so far so quickly. I really do believe we are going in the right direction and with the continued support of everyone in the club we can continue to grow collectively.

I will take this opportunity to welcome Brent Thompson on to the committee as Programme Secretary; this is a temporary appointment until the AGM in January 2015 when the membership will decide the future of all committee members.

Brent has agreed to give the role a go; it will consist of gathering information and planning the practical things to keep us interested on camera nights.

It will also give us the opportunity to look ahead and plan rather than working on a month to month basis.

He has already shown on many occasions he has the knowledge and skills we are looking for to help individuals and the club as a whole to move forward, but above all his enthusiasm is infectious.

On behalf of the committee and I'm sure all of the members we wish him all the very best.

Richard

**'Every Picture Tells a Story'** (aka 'it's the best photo for the job rather than the best ever photo')

Photography is a major part of my daily work- it's also unpaid and I use all my own equipment, but that is another story! I post a website news story every day and feed this into 2 or 3 social media sites daily, so this means I always need a photograph. We also have a newsletter 3 times a year and an annual magazine that asks for the best photographic material, so it's safe to say more than 1 photo is always ideal.

The photography can be sourced from others but over a long holiday, that may not be possible. It also needs to be relevant to the story, planned in advance and not owned by others unless permission for its use online has been granted. As you may imagine, this calls for a lot of flexibility, much pre-planning, a good archive of shots and a lot of thinking regarding the photographs chosen. Some stories are easy, but others need a lot more work behind the scenes. I am a bit of a perfectionist and not wonderfully technically-minded with camera settings but I know it is impossible to find 365+ award-winning photographs every year. What is vital though is getting a shot! Two of the photographs that have been most successful recently have come from my school's annual rugby match v local rivals KHVIII. As you will see, technically they are not the best photos ever, as neither is fully sharp or as well lit as you might want them to be, but they tell the story of the game for the winners and show the joy of winning! So my thought here for the club members is don't worry about every photo having to be perfect! A favourite photo can simply be the one that just tells the right picture for you or your audience.

(<http://www.bablake.com/newsroom.php> has our daily news if anyone wants to see the range of photography called for.) Woody



## Camera subjects – tips and tricks

### Understanding the Histogram

Show of hands: how many of you currently use the histogram to immediately adjust your shooting strategy during a session? If you're thinking "hist-o-what," then this is for you! It explains the basics about a histogram and answers the following questions:

- What is a histogram?
- How do I read a histogram?
- What does a correct histogram look like?
- Why should I use a histogram?

### What is a histogram?

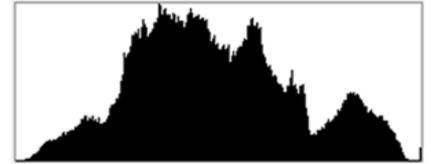
The histogram is the graph that you can view on the back of your digital SLR. It's the graph that looks sort of like a mountain range. A histogram shows you the brightness values of all of the pixels in your image.

Let's explain it another way: imagine that you took every pixel from your digital image and organized them into piles, separating them by how dark or how light they are. All of your really dark pixels would go into one pile, your middle gray pixels would go into another pile, and your really light pixels would go into yet another pile. If you have a lot of pixels in your image that are the same colour, the pile will be really big.

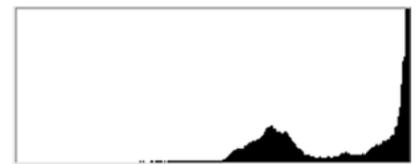
That graph that looks like a mountain range on the back of your camera—which we'll now refer to as the *histogram*—is showing you those piles of pixels. By looking at the histogram, you can quickly determine if the shot you just took is a correct exposure. Read on to learn how.

### How do I read a histogram?

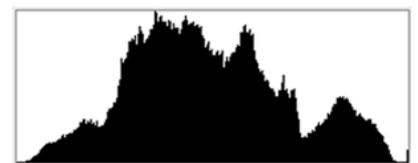
If there is a big peak to the left side of the histogram—or if it is all bunched up on the left side of the grid—it means that you have a really big pile of black pixels. In other words, your image might be underexposed. If the histogram for your image looks like the one on the right, you may need to increase the amount of light hitting your sensor by slowing down your shutter speed, open up your aperture, or both:



If there is a big peak to the right side of the histogram—or if it is all bunched up on the right side of the grid—it means that you have a really big pile of pure white or light pixels. You guessed it: your image might be *overexposed*. If the histogram for your image looks like the one on the right, you may need to decrease the amount of light hitting your sensor by speeding up your shutter speed, stopping down your aperture, or both:



If your piles of pixels are fairly well spread out across the entire grid from left to right, and if they are not bunched up in any one spot, your image is a correct exposure.



### What does a “correct” histogram look like?

There is no such thing as a “correct” histogram. As said earlier, the graph shows you the brightness values of all of the pixels in your image. So while a big pile of dark pixels *might* indicate an underexposed image, it doesn't always indicate an underexposed image. Let's look at a real-life example.

Assume you took a picture of someone holding a sparkler.



The histogram for the image on the left looks like this:



A lot of the pixels in this image are dark, which means that the histogram displays a peak on the left side of the histogram.

Underexposed? Not for the desired look of this particular image. The same limitations using a histogram might occur on a bright day, especially with a scene such as snow.

### **Why should I use the histogram?**

Some of you might be thinking, “*Why do I need to bother with the histogram? Can’t I just tell by the LCD monitor on the back of the screen if I have a correct exposure?*” Well, sometimes your shooting conditions aren’t great. Bright light or dim light will make it hard to see the thumbnail view on the back. Have you ever looked at an image on the back of your camera and thought you nailed it, but then you upload it and it doesn’t look so hot on the big monitor?

Sure, you can adjust exposure in image editing software, such as Photoshop or Elements. But isn’t it better to capture the image correctly in camera? Taking a peek at the histogram of your image while you’re shooting helps you figure out if you can tweak the exposure of your image while you are shooting.

### **What about clipping and blown out highlights?**

No, the following section is not about hairstyles; it is *still* about the histogram, promise.

Some of you might have your camera set so the LCD blinks at you to warn you if you have completely overexposed your highlights. If you have this feature on your camera, I have absolutely no doubt that at least one time in your life you looked at the back of your camera and saw that the sky in the image that you just shot is blinking wildly at you. *Why is it doing that?!*

Your camera can only successfully capture detail within a certain range of dark to light tones. This means if a part of your image has a tone that is outside of the range that your camera is able to capture, the sensor will not be able to capture detail in that part of the image. The blinking is trying to tell you, “*Hey, look! The area that is blinking madly on your LCD will not have any detail in it!*”

If you have ever taken a picture and the sky is blinking wildly at you, it is because that area of your image is so overexposed that the sensor has rendered it as one big blob of solid white pixels. In technical terms, this means the highlights are “clipped” or “blown.” In more realistic terms, it means that no matter what you do in your image editing software, like Photoshop, you will never ever be able to pull out detail from that section of the image.

It’s probably ok if the highlights are blown out in the sky of your family snapshot at the beach on a sunny day. Not so great, however, if the highlights are blown out and lose the detail on a bride’s wedding dress. Instead of relying on the blinking, you can also use your histogram to quickly see if there is any clipping. If you have a big pile of light coloured pixels piled high to the right side of the histogram, the detail in your highlights will be clipped, blown out, and completely lost.

### **In summary...**

The histogram—like so many other areas of photography—allows **you** to determine what is correct for the type of image you are trying to capture. The next time you’re taking a shot, take a look at the histogram of your image to see if you have room to make any adjustments to your settings while you’re shooting.

Histograms are also useful in post processing when using various adjustment layers.

## **Important announcement regarding the October competition**

### **‘Celebrations’**

**This competition will be digital, the images will be displayed on the night 6<sup>th</sup> Oct via the projector.**

**Therefore I must have them in one format or another no later than the options below.**

**Dropbox - Friday 19<sup>th</sup> September**

**Email [rh50@talktalk.net](mailto:rh50@talktalk.net) - Friday 19<sup>th</sup> September**

**Memory stick – 1<sup>st</sup> Sept Meeting**

**CD disc - 1<sup>st</sup> Sept Meeting**

**Hard copy - 1<sup>st</sup> Sept Meeting**

- **Any images received after this time may not be submitted due to time restraints.**

## A bit of fun. 20 Questions.

Name – Steve Jenkinson

1. Where were you born? **Coventry**
2. When did you get your first camera? **When I was about 10**
3. Can you remember what it was? **Kodak**
4. Money no object, what camera would you buy? **D7100**
5. Did anyone in particular inspire your interest in photography? **Not really ( Just looking around and seeing what could make good photos**
6. Best photo you have taken **I think this would be a macro picture of dragon fly**
7. Favourite photo subjects **Macro insects birds wildlife**
8. Favourite all time TV programme **Around the world in 80 days Michael Palin**
9. Favourite current TV programme **Benefit Street**
10. Favourite type of music **All Types but Soft Rock**
11. Favourite song **Two Of Out Three Ain't Bad**
12. Favourite singer **Phil Collins**
13. Favourite film **Saving Private Ryan**
14. Favourite actor **Anthony Hopkins**
15. Favourite place in the UK **Lake District**
16. Favourite place anywhere else **Thailand**
17. Favourite photographic season **Summer**
18. Traditional or modern photos? **Traditional**
19. Do you have any pets? **No**
20. The one thing you would like to photograph anywhere in the world **The Grand Canyon**

## Coming Months

<b>11.8.14</b>	7.00	Competition - Close up/Macro – Independent Judge	9.00
<b>1.09.14</b>	7.00	Practical evening – to be decided	9.00
<b>6.10.14</b>	7.00	Competition – Celebrations - Guest Judge and speaker	9.00
<b>3.11.14</b>	7.00	Photograph of the Year	9.00

## Stop Press

- **Reminder, August meeting is on Monday the 11<sup>th</sup>**

## Competition Themes for 2014

11.08.14	Close up/Macro	Club Competition	1 b&w, 1colour
06.10.14	Celebrations	Club Competition	1 b&w, 1colour
03.11.14	Photograph of the Year	Best Photographs from the monthly winners	
01.12.14	Autumn Landscape	Club Competition	1 b&w, 1colour

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