

U3a DIGITAL PHOTOGRAPHY GROUP

Notes of a meeting held in Louise House on 14th August 2024

1. Membership

Sallyanne was welcomed as a new member of the Group.

Mike Etchells has resigned due to his other U3a commitments.

Nick and Heather have resigned because they felt that the Group has now moved on beyond their capabilities or what they might wish to achieve with their photography.

Following Nick's comments, it would be useful for the Group to debate whether our activities continue to meet the needs of the members. Some time will be set aside at a future meeting to do this

ACTION - DSF

2. Review of Birmingham Field Trip Photos

On July 10th, five members of the group took part in the Birmingham Field Trip - during which, they visited the Jewellery Quarter together with two Victorian Graveyards.

The photos taken on the trip, together with some that had been taken on another date, were reviewed (a total of 48). Comments were made on the suitability of cropping, the extent of editing, use of AI etc.

Although the members had travelled around as a group, it was interesting how varied were the photographs – similar locations but very different interpretations.

There was some discussion on how lens aberration can alter perspective and how this can be corrected if required in PS or LR

3. Street Photography

Mark gave a presentation on the principles of Street Photography and exemplified his work with a wide variety of photos taken under different headings.

It is not against the law to take photos of people in a public place. People may object and get aggressive, so you have to take care – it may be prudent to ask permission first. Conversely, there are many situations where people welcome having their picture taken.

It is important to 'be prepared' because opportunities can arise suddenly. It is important to capture the moment - at the expense of the quality of the photo if necessary. Best results are obtained by being obtrusive. Mark uses a compact camera with a 50mm equivalent lens and has it set to take 2-3 images of each scene.

Dic and Gail took some Street Photos on their recent visit to France. The plan had been to review these as part of Mark's talk but time did not permit – instead these will be viewed at the next meeting

ACTION – DSF

4. Field Trips

Following a discussion over lunch in Birmingham, it was suggested that we took the field trips outside of our normal meeting schedule to free up more time for technical learning. This was put on the agenda of the meeting to allow discussion by the wider Group.

Field trips plus the subsequent photo reviews take up around 40% of our annual meeting time. The point was made that in the past, field trips had been focussed around particular photography skills but this has changed. Currently locations are selected because of their photographic potential.

Many members expressed concern about their ability to fit in additional days yet continue to support field trips .

It was agreed that we should revert to past practice – which would address both issues by facilitating new technical learning coupled with its field application.

The new arrangement will be put in place for the October field trip. It was agreed that we should visit Ellesmere where we can photograph the lake wild life plus birds in flight. In the September meeting, Dic and Peter will make a presentation on the skills, techniques and tips required for these subjects in preparation for the trip.

ACTION – DB / PF

5. U3a Computer Equipment

U3a has been conducting an audit of computer related equipment held across the organisation (although have not requested our information). There may be an opportunity to upgrade our ageing laptop and projector – both of which are 5-10 years old. The resolution and colour fidelity of the projector are proving to be significant issue, given the capability of modern cameras. A request will be sent to Frank Verlander with a copy to the Coordinator for the Performing Arts. Peter offered to draft an appropriate form of words

ACTION – DSF / PF

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be at 2pm in Louise House on 11th September

The main items will be

- Review of Quarterly Themed Photos on the topic of 'Books'
- Photographing wildlife and birds in flight
- Arrangements for Ellesmere trip

Regards, David