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Members interested in attending any of the following workshops should confirm interest by emailing [aps.nz@clear.net.nz](mailto:aps.nz@clear.net.nz) or phoning Peter on 6200222.

Workshops - Night Photography, Close-Up Photography, Portrait/Lighting. Minimum numbers are required to run these and dates will be advised once attendance numbers are known (1st or 4th Thursday of the month).

Jack Sprosen has kindly offered his assistance to members wishing to develop their digital photography skills. Jack may be contacted on Ph 4862844

Any members currently planning to enter an Audio Visual in the club competition on November 21 should contact Peter immediately at [aps.nz@clear.net.nz](mailto:aps.nz@clear.net.nz) or Ph 6200222

*Opinions please.....It's voting season afer all! The committee would appreciate your feedback as we consider re-introducing meeting fortnightly. This would allow more room for discussions and informal workshops etc, alternating with monthly competition nights. All ideas for possible agendas, venues etc welcome.*

*Invitations*....to present a 5 minute slot at the beginning of each monthly meeting. Any subject of your interest is interesting. Show us your best – or your worst – a little about you, your passions, your photography. All levels welcome – see a committee member!

APS email address: [aps.nz@clear.net.nz](mailto:aps.nz@clear.net.nz)



Auckland *Photographic Society Inc.*  
Established 1883

# Focal Plane

July 2002

A big welcome to new members and your fresh enthusiasm. Congratulations on the great work coming in! While it's a couple of months before our next club competition, this is all the more time to get out and capture images to put the rest of us to shame.

Congratulations also to those members who had work accepted in the North Shore National Salon: Alan Cham, Jack Sprosen & Peter Merrick. Prints are to be exhibited at the Aotea Centre 25 Aug - 9 Sept, slides at North Shore Photographic Society 14 August.

THANK YOU to Nicki who has informed and entertained us with her editing of the Focal Plane over the last 18 months. Nicki is heading south to Dunedin and is looking forward to new challenges – and a fresh palette of photographs! Terry Bowyer is the new Editor of Focal Plane and we look forward to his first issue due out in August.

THIS MONTHS MEETING: July 19<sup>th</sup>  
**Maurice Petchel I**

Presentation on Digital Cameras – pick up some tips before you come in this months newsletter

**and**

PSNZ recorded lecture APPLES - Confessions of a colour slide worker - Newell Grenfell

NEXT MEETING: August 15<sup>th</sup>

**Felicity Rogers**

Bring a friend and settle in for the night to be inspired! Wine and cheese provided.



**Note: no competition July and August  
Nature Trophy and Birds moved to September**

## Out & About



### PSNZ Outing –Auckl and Region

**Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> August**

*Meet at Toby's Kitchen 2pm*

120 Park Road – Titirangi Village (Opposite the Fire Station)

**All photographers welcome, amateur and professional,  
members and non members.....**

Come along and buy yourself a coffee and listen to Robyn Forryan APSNZ speak to us about her photographic philosophy and creating a seeing eye! Meet fellow photographers and then at 330pm go outside and photograph the very picturesque Titirangi Village *or* view the art at Lopdel House *or* drive onto the West Coast for some scenic photography *or* have another coffee!

Decide on the day or phone first.....no rules except to enjoy the outing!

Phone Lynn 4184380 for any queries - & it does help predict the café numbers.

If the weather continues it's wintry wet and windy way, check out what's around on the web.....and share your success stories with other members.

## Exhibitions

**John Pilger's  
Great Eyewitness Photographers**

Collection of photojournalism works from various photographers in countries around tension zones in the world. One member says:

"The exhibition also includes a 1 hour video of the human rights abuses in Burma/Myanmar. I was so moved by the whole lot that I commented in the visitors' book "My God, why have you forsaken these people?"

Countries included in the photo portion were South Africa, East Timor, Kenya, USA (the South Bronx), Cambodia, Vietnam, Japan & so on. Anywhere people have been oppressed. He may have a bit of a left-wing attitude, but as a well-respected journalist, the stories he has to tell make for a wish to have the second coming.

From the viewpoint of both photography & human rights photojournalism, you need to set aside 2 to 3 hours. The video is about 1 hour of this.

You won't come out smiling!"

**Top floor, Auckland War Memorial Museum, Auckland Domain  
daily, until: 31/7/2002**

**Chris Sisarich's** photography exhibition at **Peter Webb Gallery** (18 Manukau Road, Epsom) tells stories of the forgotten Age – opened on July 1 to officially launch the Auckland City Mission's 2002 winter appeal. A presentation of black & white images of our older generation

**Epson NZ Professional Photography Awards 2002  
exhibition. FREE**

*daily, . Until: 14/7/2002.*  
BNZ Foyer, Aotea Centre,  
ph 307 5060.

Auckland Photographer **Serena Stephenson** featured in June's Air New Zealand Panorama magazine. She says "If a picture educated one person, or changes one person's views, then it has done its job". Serena phototgraphs people, professionally and for the sheer love of it.

You can view Serena's work on [www.serenastevenson.co.nz](http://www.serenastevenson.co.nz)

## Slide Photography Points Table - 2002

NAME	GRADE	TOTAL POINTS TO DATE
Darmendra	Novice	24
Alka Krisson	Novice	26
Janet Mcleod	Novice	12
Alan Bilham	Novice	12
Terry Johnson	Advanced	44
Ruth Norman	Advanced	47
Krishna	Salon	69
Daphne Carter	Salon	24
Peter Merrick	Salon	71
Tim Rixtrott	Salon	5
Martin Kitzen	Salon	55
Robert Jaques	Salon	45
Brian Cudby	Salon	24

In preparation to catch the jargon for this months presentation, some background reading:

### DIGITAL CAMERAS

1. Instead of film, a **CCD** (charge-coupled-device) records the image. This is a chip composed of an array of **pixels** (picture elements) The number of pixels determines the camera's **resolution**, which corresponds to the fineness of grain in a film camera. Pixels numbers may range from 1 **Mb** to 10 or more ('**b**' means a **byte** is a unit of digital data; **M**- mega- is one million). The larger the number of pixels, the greater a camera's resolution. ie, the more data is captured and stored.
2. Recorded images are stored as digital files on a removable memory device eg a **Smart Media Card**- used in Olympus, Fuji, Leica and many others; **Compact Flash Cards** - used in Nikon, Canon and some others (there are Types I and II which are not interchangeable); and **Memory**

**Sticks** exclusive to Sony. Memory cards range in capacity - 8Mb, 16, 32, 64, 128. A digital camera usually comes with an 8 or a 16Mb card. (You usually need to buy more). After their data is downloaded the card can be erased or re-formatted and used again.

3. A digital camera may offer a range of resolutions and your choice determines the number of images that can be stored on the memory card. For example, a camera with a resolution of 2Mb, shooting in Normal mode, will store around 32 images on a 16Mb card.
4. In order to store more data on a card, a digital image is **compressed** and stored in a file format known as **JPEG**. Typically, an image which opens in Photoshop in **PSD** format as a 5.5Mb file has been stored as a 500 Kb file in JPEG format on the memory card. When data is stored in JPEG format, there is some loss of data. An image may be stored on the memory card without compression loss as a **TIFF** file, but you may get only one or two images on the card.
5. Data stored on a memory card may be down-loaded directly into a computer, or via a **card reader** which is plugged into a computer. Some cameras will connect directly to a TV. Some labs will now accept digital files on memory cards or CDs and print from these eg Browns Bay Photo and Video 18 Clyde Rd (near BNZ), and DoubleJ in Barrys Pt Rd - they are offering a free Agfa CD which loads a small programme into your computer enabling you to email your files to them for processing and printing. Memory cards are not affected by airport X-rays.
6. Batteries. Digital cameras use much more battery power than film cameras. Rechargeable AA **NmH** (nickel metal hydride) batteries are being increasingly used but non-rechargeable AA alkalines are acceptable in some makes for emergency use. NmH battery capacities vary from 1200 mA to 1800mA.. Some cameras can be plugged in directly for re-charging; others require a separate charger. A charger, including 4 NmH batteries costs \$70 - \$80. Slow chargers can take up to 14 hours, others are faster. Rechargeable **lithium ion** batteries are used in some cameras but these must be charged exactly as specified; there is a risk of explosion otherwise.

Other digital camera features:

All but the most expensive do not have inter-changeable lenses. Some offer supplementary lenses for wide-angle or telephoto use. Zoom ranges are commonly rated as 2X or 3X which means double or triple the lense's basic focal length (it is often difficult to discover what this is). So, for a 35mm focal-length lens, a 3X **optical zoom** gives focal lengths from

35mm to 75mm. A few offer 6X optical zoom; the Olympus C700 has a 10X optical zoom ie 38mm - 380mm.

**Digital zoom** simply enlarges the image already captured - a function more capably handled by the computer.. Ignore digital zoom.

**Start-up time** after switching on is a feature of digital cameras, so generally, they are not available for instant action as a film camera is.

**Depth-of Field** is much greater in digital cameras which has its advantages and draw-backs. It is thus much more difficult to isolate a subject by means of selective focussing. However, in the computer the background can be blurred as much as you want.

**Exposure Compensation** is available on middle and upper price-bracket cameras but again, these adjustments can be made in the computer.

A digital camera will come with a programme on a disc which you load into your computer to enable files to be downloaded (usually these days, through a USB port).

In all but the lower end price-bracket cameras, digital cameras come with a huge range of features, covering every conceivable photographic situation, so there is a lot to learn with this new type of equipment.

### **Why change from film to digital?**

Unless you like manipulating or altering an image, have a computer and a suitable graphics programme such as Photoshop, Paint Shop Pro or Picture Publisher, there is probably not much point. Following a fashion is a very poor reason.

### **The advantages of digital**

Mostly light-weight and smaller in size.

Can review and erase unwanted images in camera.

Memory cards are re-usable time after time.

If you have a computer and relevant software, you can crop, increase or decrease saturation, alter colour balance, add or remove items, correct perspective, create 'painterly effects' etc.

You have immediate access to pictures taken - a print within minutes. Don't have to wait to finish a roll of film.

Digital cameras have greater depth of field so focussing is less critical.

Much more versatile in low light and artificial light.

### **Disadvantages**

A big initial cash outlay

Need to get to grips with a whole new technology. Most mid and upper-range cameras have multi functions and a multi-page manual.

You have, with most cameras, a limited optical zoom range - eg 3X, equivalent to about 38 - 70mm.

In all but the most expensive, lenses are not inter-changeable.

There is usually a more limited range of lens apertures ranging from about f/2.8 to f/8 Selective focussing is not generally, practical, but can be applied in the computer.

There is a start-up time after switching on, so instant 'grab-shots' are less likely.

Software supplied with the camera must be installed in the computer before you can download.

So, have weighed up the pros and the cons and you decide to go digital -

**How to choose** from the huge range of makes and models available? Some suggestions:

Stick with a well-established brand - re-sale is likely to be easier and the makers are well-established: **Nikon, Canon, Olympus**, Pentax, Minolta, Fuji. The lens-quality of the first 3 is probably superior - more pixels will not give a sharper picture if the lens does not perform.

The **number of pixels** - between 2 and 3 megapixels is adequate, with reasonable re-sampling in the computer, for prints to A3 size. The larger number of pixels per image, the fewer that can be stored on a memory card.

**Price** will affect your choice. Expect to pay \$1000 and \$2000, although you can easily spend much more.

Sony **memory sticks** are more expensive than their counterparts and can be used only in Sony.

Consider the kind of **batteries** used and whether a charger is an added cost. NmH are probably the best to go for and choose 1600mA capacity or better. Select a charger with a faster charge-rate and a second set of re-chargables.

**Size, and ease-of-use** should be considered.

Consider the range of **optical zoom** offered and whether this matches what you have been accustomed to using.

If you visit the website [www.agfanet.com](http://www.agfanet.com) you can select camera make and other parameters to view the range and specifications of available models.

This website also gives the location of other Agfa labs in other countries to which you can email your digital files for local printing and delivery.

Finally, talk to other digital camera owners to get their views on the performance of their own model.

Maurice Petchell

North Shore Photographic Society

June 2002.