

# FOCAL PLANE

Aug 2005



Auckland Photographic Society Inc Est 1883

## News & Muse

Welcome to the August edition of Focal Plane. Most will already know of the passing of one of New Zealand photographic societies most well known and dearly loved contributors, Jack Sprosen. Having been so unexpected, most are still coming to terms with fact. In the coming newsletter we'll take a look at some of Jack's contributions to the PSNZ and APS in particular.

In this edition, Chris Morton kindly shares real life experience of how he has been motivated and inspired to achieve amazing recent success with his images.

There is an article which may be of interest to those who think about the long term stability of their printed digital images.

Next month, due to my absence for a few weeks the Focal Plane will be brought to you by the very capable Robert Jaques. -

## New Members

A big welcome to the new members who have joined the Auckland Photographic Society!

**Glenda Whitehead**

**Rosemary Findley**

**Sara Labrooy**

**Stephen Thoms**

Looking forward to getting to know you a little and trust you will enjoy your time with us.

## Thanks to

Thanks to Ken for judging our August club night competition. The enthusiasm was infectious and the knowledge passed on invaluable. The love of his craft and teaching was very evident.

## Upcoming Competitions, Workshops

**15th Sept** Club Night - Still Life and Open Competition

**20th Oct** Club Night - Landscape/Seascape (Trophy) and Open Competition



'Espresso'

## What's On

### North Shore Salon Accepted Slides Presentation.

A highlight on the calendar is the presentation night of slides accepted for the North Shore Salon. A public showing, any member of APS is welcome to attend. Such a large collection of high quality images projected onto the big screen is not often available for viewing. A night not to be missed.

(At the time of printing, the date of showing is not available. Please contact a committee member if you would like to attend, they will be pleased to assist.)

### PSNZ Central Regional Convention - Wanganui

**03-05 September**

Keynote Speakers: Simon Woolf (Wellington) and Steve McAlpine (Queensland)

More information and registration forms available from:  
Dori McCormick PH: 06 348 4244; mccormick@xtra.co.nz  
Lindsay Stockbridge PH; 06 344 6696; dilinz@xtra.co.nz

### PSNZ Northern Regional Convention - Rotorua

**7th-9th October**

Held at the Millennium Hotel

Speakers including: John Borren an award winning press photographer and Sharon Blanc (<http://www.sharonblanc.com>) a member of the NZ Nature Society who are affiliated to PSNZ.

There will be a visit to "Whakarewarewa Village" , " Te Puia" and the "Hamurana Springs " plus a surprise activity at the springs for you to photograph . A good excuse to escape from Auckland for the weekend.

### PSNZ Southern Regional Convention - Nelson

**14th-16th October**

Keynote Speakers:

Gilbert van Reenan - Wanaka based landscape photographer.

Craig Potton - Internationally known for his stunning images of landscape and wilderness.

Peter Bush - Top sports photographer and columnist for The Photographer's Mail.

Rod Morris - Natural History is Rod's field of excellence.

Kennedy Warne - Former editor of New Zealand Geographic.

Photoshoots including - Nelson Arts Festival giving excellent photo opportunities.

## Photographic Inspiration - Chris Morton

I joined the Auckland Photographic Society in April 2004 as a keen but novice photographer. Recently, I was thrilled to receive two Acceptances and a Highly Commended in the North Shore Salon.

Obviously, I am delighted and have given some thought as to why I might have progressed so quickly with my photography.

I firmly believe that there are five main reasons:

1. A **passion** for the art of photography.
2. **Exposure** every month, to a large number of photographic prints, slides and digital photos of varying quality as well as the opportunity to make personal judgments of these and then compare them with the comments from the evening's judge.
3. The presence in the photographic club of a number of **very skilled photographers** has been quite an inspiration for me. To see the excellent photographs that they take and to be able to imagine taking them myself, as well as to being able to discuss techniques and locations with these "club masters" has been a great opportunity for me.
4. **Club trips**. I have been fortunate to have been on several club weekend trips as well as several day trips. These excursions have given me an excellent opportunity to break the ice and get to know other, very friendly and welcoming club members. I have been able to see first hand how good photographers operate whilst on a photo shoot. Afterwards, there is a great opportunity to compare results and to see the many different photographic opportunities that existed in the one situation.
5. Receiving a **monthly inspiration** has helped to keep my photographic passion alive by seeing what can be achieved by other talented club members.

Thank you to all the wonderful people who belong to APS, who have been so welcoming, sharing and inspiring. I hope that other club members can be inspired in the same way as I have.

Chris Morton

1.9.05

## Lack of Standards Sparks Inkjet Photo Fade Debate

How long inkjet-printed photos last depends on who you ask, experts say.

**Tom Spring, PC World**

Friday, July 08, 2005

How long can you expect your inkjet-printed photos to last? More and more photo inkjet papers are being touted as "fade resistant" and "archival safe," but experts say these marketing pitches don't always provide good information on how long it will take for skin tones to turn green and paper to yellow on precious family photos.

Because there's no standard for measuring inkjet print longevity, it's difficult for consumers to make apples-to-apples comparisons of photo papers. Consequently, experts say, people may find that some photos expected to last for decades will start to fade in just a few years.

"How long a photo printed with an inkjet printer will last depends on who you ask," says Cathy Martin, an analyst for InfoTrends. She says there are no clear answers for consumers looking for the best, and longest-lasting, photo inkjet paper. Photo paper is considered one of the crucial archival elements for photographs.

The fade debate is growing louder as companies like International Paper, Eastman Kodak, and Staples have begun more heavily marketing their photo inkjet paper for use with printers made by manufacturers like Canon, Seiko-Epson, Hewlett-Packard, and Lexmark.

### Claims and Counterclaims

The latest salvo in the longstanding debate comes from HP and Epson; the companies dismiss claims by third-party paper vendors such as International Paper, Kodak, and Staples that their papers will produce archival-quality prints on any inkjet printer.

Specifically, Epson and HP strongly dispute Kodak's claim that prints made on their printers with Kodak's special paper will last 120 years before fading. Similarly, the printer vendors dispute International Paper's claims that prints made on the company's recently introduced National Geographic Premium Paper High Gloss will last "more than 100 years." (Staples, while claiming that photos printed on its papers "resist fading," makes no specific claims as to how many years a photo printed on its paper will last before showing signs of fading.)

"We've heard a lot of promises from our competitors," says Nils Miller, HP's ink and media senior scientist. But so far he says he hasn't seen a "miracle paper" from a third-party supplier that can deliver the same print longevity and quality with all printers.

Epson says users of its paper, in combination with Epson premium inks, can expect images to last up to 104 years



"Emerald Lake"

For years, under the auspices of the International Standards Organization (ISO), printer makers and third-party providers of digital imaging products have been trying to settle on a mutually agreeable way to predict image longevity. But with no standard in sight, Wilhelm Imaging Research earlier this year announced that it would begin certifying digital imaging products for print longevity in order to assist consumers in making buying decisions. Wilhelm ratings, which will project print longevity for specific printer and paper combinations, are expected to begin appearing on product packages sometime this summer.

Major printer vendors regularly hire WIR, which is run by print longevity expert Henry Wilhelm, to test photo papers, inks, and printers for longevity. (Full disclosure: PC World has never hired or paid Wilhelm, but he has supplied test results for some of our articles about print longevity.) Rob Rosson, an imaging supplies analyst for Current Analysis, says WIR testing methodology has become the industry's de facto standard.

WIR has also tested Kodak and Staples papers, and Wilhelm's print longevity projections for those products fall far short of those achieved by HP and Epson papers. For example, WIR projects that images printed with Kodak photo paper using HP Photosmart 145 and 245 printers will last only 11 years--or 109 fewer years than Kodak is claiming.

In 2002 WIR tested Staples Premium Glossy Ink Jet Photo paper and rated the print life at 1 to 3 years with most printers. Since then, Staples points out, it uses a more advanced paper technology. Longevity for National Geographic Premium Paper High Gloss are not yet available from WIR.

However, some third-party photo paper vendors aren't buying into WIR's testing as a de facto standard. Critics say WIR testing is not only time-consuming but costly: Companies that wish to participate in the WIR seal of longevity program must ante up \$15,000 for testing one type of paper with one specific printer and ink. Vendors also contend that WIR tests don't reflect how prints will fare in a real-world display environment.

### **Testing Differences**

All labs, including WIR, project image longevity based on tests involving exposure to light, heat, humidity and air pollution. And all labs use a procedure called accelerated fading to test for resistance to light exposure. Basically, accelerated fading involves exposing images to intense light and using mathematical formulas on the results in order to project when the picture might degrade to an unacceptable level.

But WIR and others don't see eye to eye on how to test for light fading. Kodak, for example, says its tests assume the room where the photos will be displayed is much darker than the brightly lit room on which WIR tests are predicated. Kodak and Staples say WIR's methodology places too much weight on fading due to exposure to light. They argue that WIR doesn't sufficiently factor in the importance of an image's resistance to heat, humidity, and ozone pollutants.

Wilhelm counters that Kodak's tests aren't sufficiently stringent, and that Staples has provided no scientific data whatsoever to back its claim that its photo paper is "fade resistant." In general, Wilhelm says, consumers should be wary of vendor claims that aren't explained in detail or supported by independent testing.

"If every manufacturer was responsible for making their own longevity claims, those claims would mean nothing," he says. Third-party inkjet paper suppliers counter that, if an international standard existed, they would gladly base their claims on that standard.

"It's an industry-wide problem we did not create," says Tim Whelan, director of marketing for coated digital papers at International Paper. Whelan says International Paper has made a significant investment in testing its paper for quality and longevity.

Packaging for International Paper's National Geographic Premium Paper High Gloss states that the projected 100-plus years of print longevity applies to images displayed "under glass with the latest photo inkjets."

But International Paper officials say the claim only applies to prints made using the HP 8700 series printer and HP Viverra inks. The claim is based on the company's own testing. International Paper says more comprehensive testing of its paper with a larger selection of printers is in the works.

"Longevity is not the most important reason our customers buy Staples' photo paper," says Jevin Eagle, senior vice president of Staples brand group. He says the quality of the image, how quickly the image dries after printing, and price are what Staples customers value in its brand-name inkjet photo paper. Eagle wouldn't comment on Staples' "fade resistant" claim or the testing processes it bases the claim on.

But "Marketing claims are extremely confusing for customers to untangle," he adds. "Until there is one unbiased standard for testing, we plan to keep things very simple for our customers." Staples offers a money-back guarantee on its photo inkjet paper if consumers are not satisfied.

### **More Claims**

Some vendors toss around terms like "archival quality" without making any promises regarding image permanence.

For example, Paris Business Products touts its Glossy Ultra Premium Photo paper as "Acid-free archival paper for long lasting prints" on product packaging.

Sharon Hennelly, Paris Business Products spokesperson, explained that the "archival" claim refers primarily to the fact that the paper is acid-free. Acid-free paper lasts longer than other papers and holds color well, she said. Paris Business Products makes no claim as to how long the image will maintain its color vitality before noticeable fading occurs.

Ultimately, the best way to extend the life of your images is to keep them in a photo album or even a shoe box. Displayed on walls, images are affected by light and air pollutants. And it's best to keep digital copies of pictures on a CD or DVD, says InfoTrends' Martin.

"Consumers can't put all the responsibility on preserving images on the photo paper," says Dan Burge, a scientist with the Image Permanence Institute.

"It's up to the consumer to take good care of their images if they want them to last," Burge says. ↪



"Time"

## Congratulations

Contratulations for all APS members who had images accepted in the Shore Salon of Photography. Special congratulations to those who are relatively recent members and to those who attained ribbons.



Pepper #30 - Edward Weston

## Labelling Prints

Proper labelling of prints, slides and digital files makes the Convenors jobs much easier!

Please include:

Name

Grade (*Nov, Adv, Sal*)

Title (*optional*)

*"Set Subject" (or) "Open"*

**Magazine Swap Table** Are you a magazine nut? If you are, chances are high you'll have a collection of previously thumbed editions taking up space in a cupboard, spare room or bursting out of the garage windows. Starting next month we'll have a table set up for a magazine swap. Simply bring along some mags that you think may be of interest (to photographers!), and take away some editions you have not read before.

Don't forget - if you have something that could be of interest for Focal Plane readers, drop an email to [editor@aps.net.nz](mailto:editor@aps.net.nz) or post to 'Ed', 3B Webber St, Coxs Bay, Auckland.

*'till next month - Ed*

*"It takes a lot of imagination to be a good photographer. You need less imagination to be a painter, because you can invent things. But in photography everything is so ordinary; it takes a lot of looking before you learn to see the ordinary."*

*- David Bailey, In "Face," (London), Dec 1984*