



Northern Counties Photographic Federation

Northern Focus

The e-magazine of
**NORTHERN COUNTIES
PHOTOGRAPHIC FEDERATION**

Serving the North of England

<https://www.ncpf.org.uk>

Autumn 2021

EDITION No.92



*White-tailed
Eagle Patrolling
Forest*
by
Ronnie Gilbert of
Keswick
Photographic
Society

Individual Image Award - Silver Medal - July 2021 PAGB PDI Competition

Northern Focus

Official magazine of Northern Counties Photographic Federation.

Serving the North of England.

Published four times a year

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This magazine, previous issues and a host of important and useful material are available at www.ncpf.org.uk

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Many items in this e-magazine will point towards work conducted by the NCPF Executive, Committee and Team. NCPF Committee are a small band of dedicated and enthusiastic individuals who guide our Federation on all things photographic. Are you Interested in joining as a helper, understudy or committee member?

Please contact N.C.P.F. Hon. Secretary Margaret Welsh at secretary@ncpf.org.uk for details.

President's Piece

Jim Welsh LRPS, CPAGB, APAGB

Dear Club and Federation Members,

Well, September has arrived, and many Clubs are preparing to cautiously begin opening up and welcoming their members back into their club rooms. In these uncertain times I'm sure, like my own club at Blyth, your committee members will be anxiously waiting for the first night of the season in the hope that long time members will return.

We held our first meeting on 02nd September, and we were pleasantly surprised at the turn out. Three quarters of our members turned up with the additional bonus of two new recruits.

As President of the Federation, during the lockdown I was invited to join a small number of Clubs for their zoom meetings, and I have also judged for several of them.

I have found it an enjoyable experience communicating with club members over zoom. I have just received the entries to judge my first competition of the season and I am now looking forward to visiting the Club and meeting the members face to face once again.

I think I will find it strange to travel to clubs in the winter weather and fight the traffic jams again to judge a competition or present a talk. Personally, I have found it so easy to go upstairs, switch on my computer and wait for the zoom link to open for a scheduled meeting. I am in no doubt that zoom is here to stay, and many clubs will be incorporating zoom meetings into their programmes.

The Federation Executive and Sub Committees have been working throughout to make sure that the Annual Competitions etc. took place, albeit in a diluted format, and the essential business of the Federation was maintained. By now your Secretary should have received information outlining the dates for the N.C.P.F. Presentation Event, Championships and Annual Competitions for the coming year. I am pleased to say that all competitions will be back to normal and include the print sections once again.

Prior to the lockdown a Judges Recruiting Seminar was held to appoint a number of new judges to the list. Unfortunately, due to lockdown, several of these new appointments have never had the opportunity to judge at a club. I would like to encourage your Competition Secretary's to try and include some of these new recruits when appointing judges for your internal competitions.

The Executive Committee and its Sub Committees are all volunteers who give their free time to ensure the smooth running of the Federation. We are always looking for new members to join our Sub Committees. An hour of your time may be given as a volunteer to help out with the running of a competition or policing an exhibition. Every contribution, no matter how small, is always welcome. The N.C.P.F. has been around for 120 years. Good ideas and innovative suggestions have made it what it is today. A good idea is only great after someone has thought of it first and followed it through with action. It could be your idea that takes us forward. If you are interested in joining us contact any Executive Member.

Keep up your enthusiasm and stay safe.

Jim Welsh LRPS, CPAGB, APAGB

N.C.P.F. President



Editorial

Alan Wilson ARPS, AFIAP



Regards the two selfie type photographs!

-

A nod towards calming of mandatory control requirements while maintaining simple and reasonable safety precautions.

Many of our clubs will open-up with highly anticipated live meetings following their Covid control risk assessment.

Best of luck - Let us know how you get on?



Dear NCPF Members and extended friends

I am delighted to publish this Edition Number 92 of Northern Focus (my second as Editor) with the latest episodes of ongoing work including the magical adventures of Steve and Anne Toon and their African adventures, along with Newcastle's "Saint Nicholas Cathedral, Common Ground in Sacred Space's Project" updated and written on this occasion by Whickham member David Richardson.

Receiving brand new work with notes and comments from our photographic world was particularly welcome items include: A short personal note of one persons Covid Lockdown from Tracey Ainsley of Winlaton Camera Club illuminated with photographs plus two very different reviews of July's PAGB PDI championship.

The first is an article "with observations" by Howard Wilson of Tynemouth PS on his views of the day followed by our Front Page Image Story, a heartfelt write-up by Julie Walker of Keswick Photographic Society describing Keswick's fantastic day in detail, capturing some of the clubs excitement and including 9 of their photographs that did particularly well.

Meanwhile Ron Henry – Chairman of the Northern Audio Visual Group shares the groups valuable knowledge on one workable method of showing bandwidth hungry AV's over Zoom.

Snippets

I have introduced a new section titled "Snippets" a place where short interesting facts, anecdotes, comments and opinions can be published. Hopefully growing into a regular section or even lead a forum for discussion.

Thank you everyone who has contributed—please do not hold back on sending in material. We would love to receive your individual, club or Federation stories.

Kind regards
Alan

NB: Hyperlinks are embedded throughout leading to e-mail addresses or web-sites. Ctrl+click the blue under-scored links for access e.g. www.ncpf.org.uk/northern-focus Feel free to forward this e-newsletter to like minded photography readers and enthusiasts - remembering all words and photographs are copyright of their authors.

Looking Back—2020 Lockdown

Tracey and Mark Ainsley - Winlaton Camera Club

Looking back on the 2020 first lockdown

After the initial panic buying was over and thinking what on earth were we going to do, we decided to take advantage and explore our local area. Frightened initially to go further than our estate we eventually decided to spread out to what ended up being a regular two-mile round trip.



At the bottom of our road in Swalwell, Gateshead, where the old fire station was, a stone marks the location as [Cross Lane Meadows](#). Passing by it most days, we didn't realise that this area and the area behind it is a Nature Reserve, known for its wildflowers in particular cowslips. Once walking through the meadow, we came to a path which we followed. Half a bike was abandoned with the topical name of 'virus'. The path led to an underpass under the A1, coming out at the Metro Centre. Who knew? we've only been here 25 years! The car parks were deserted apart from a few cars for the M&S food hall. Taking advantage of the empty carparks we thought we would document this for years to come since it is normally full.

Unknown to us we were being watched on CCTV and two security guards came to ask us what we were doing. This is private property you're not allowed to take photos here! we were told.

It was a bit unnerving, but we continued our route anyway. We went around the centre to Debenhams, back over the eerily quiet A1 and home.



It was a weird walk, but it didn't put us off returning several times for our daily exercise.

We have continued exploring our locality and have found lots of nooks and crannies.

It has been a terrible time for a lot of people affected by the pandemic, but for us this was the most time we have spent together in our married life (as Mark normally works away) and we have enjoyed going out, snapping, talking to strangers and appreciating our locality.

Tracey and Mark Ainsley,
Winlaton Camera Club

Newcastle's St Nicholas Cathedral—CGISS Project

Dr. David L Richardson

St. Nicholas Cathedral, Newcastle – CGiSS Project

The Covid year: Spring 2020 – Spring 2021

In the Spring 2021 edition of *Northern Focus*, Peter Strassheim showed the first stage of the major renovations being undertaken at St. Nicholas Cathedral. The aim of the alterations is to make the building into a much more open space for multiple uses, preserving ancient ledger stones and modernising the heating and electrical services. This was the CGiSS project – Common Ground in Sacred Spaces. Whickham Photographic Club was invited to document the changes photographically.

Sadly, in Spring 2020 the Covid viral pandemic stopped all work, building and photographic! As the restrictions were eased work restarted and we were allowed back onto the site with safety precautions – hard hat, high-vis jacket, stout shoes and additionally face mask and to keep at least 2m away from the others on site, not difficult in such a huge building.

As a photographer, the cathedral project was such a different venture from the usual photographic subjects. I arrived with a bag full of equipment – cameras, lens, tripod, and flash guns, while not really knowing what was needed. I soon learned that photographing inside the cathedral posed many difficulties:



All photographs taken with a Fujifilm X-T4 and XF 16-55 mm lens unless otherwise stated.

Lighting: very bright light through the high windows and open doors (as well as the electric lighting) with dark shadows at floor level and at height creating a huge range in contrast.

Equipment: Despite this I never found my flash useful and soon stopped taking it.



My main tripod was also discarded as too restrictive and a burden to carry around. Though I did find my tiny tripod useful for some longer exposure photographs, particularly at low level.

Hard hat antics: Turning the camera into portrait view (which I liked to use often) while looking up, could end up with your hard hat off your head and bouncing along the echoing stone floor!

Dust: The use of Stihl saws cutting the new stone floor and electric sanders created much dust so care was taken especially when changing a lens.

(L) Western door leading to the busy St Nicholas Street.

ISO 2500, f 3.6, 1/90, 16mm

(R) Groundwork at the new seating area East side.

ISO400, f5.6, 1/1900 47mm

Newcastle's St Nicholas Cathedral—CGISS Project

David L Richardson

Lifting the old floor was a major task ensuring no damage to the “ledger stones” as they were to be re-laid along the edge of the cathedral. Once lifted the preparatory work was started for the underfloor plumbing, heating and electrical cables.



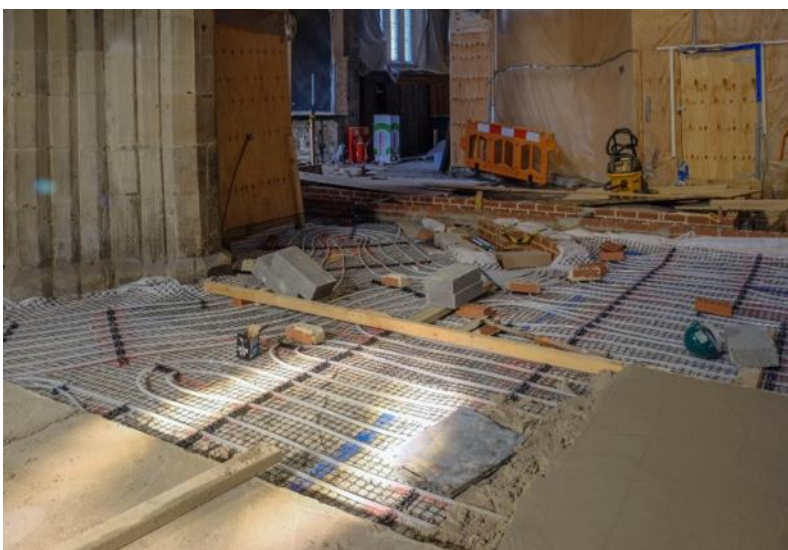
Brick conduits for the services with lifting A Frames

Fujifilm X-T2 ISO 400 f 8; 1/3 sec @ 19mm



A jigsaw puzzle of old and new materials including bump protection coverings to at-risk areas.

X-T2 ISO 400 f13; 3 sec 16mm



Underfloor heating laid

Fujifilm x-T2 ISO 400 f13; 0.7sec @ 18mm

Newcastle's St Nicholas Cathedral—CGISS Project

David L Richardson

The main central floor of the cathedral, where the majority of the wear from thousands of visitors' feet would take place, was replaced with beautiful square stone slabs.



Far (L) ISO 3200, f 5, 1/70, 16mm

(L) ISO 3200, f 4.5, 1/20, 27mm



The precious ledger stones were repositioned around the edge of the building in order to suffer less damage from feet!

Pipes and cables were laid in the brick conduits.

Fujifilm X-T2 ISO 400 f13; 0.8 sec

Newcastle's St Nicholas Cathedral—CGISS Project

David L Richardson

The West end of the cathedral was redesigned for better public access and ledger stones laid around the base of the font. The font had been removed (for safety) with its famous ornate and offset wooden font cover raised.



I was very interested in the font. It was moved around the cathedral as the work progressed before repositioning into its traditional place.

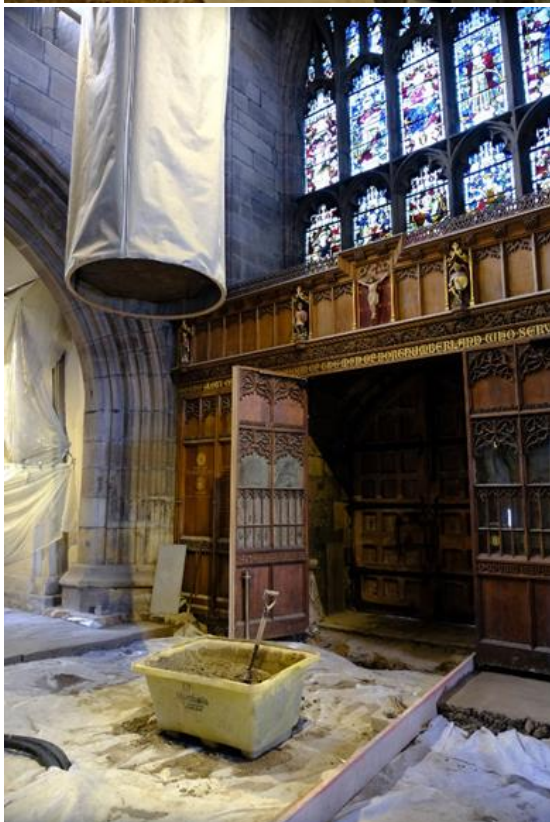
As the work came close to the end, the font was carefully replaced.

Top (L) Burying overly worn and incomplete ledger stones for use as font foundations

ISO 3200, f4.5 1/60 23mm

Top (R) Font returned, still covered makes a useful shelf.

ISO 4000 f4 1/100 at 21mm



Far (L) The yellow tub of cement making a poor font replacement!

ISO 3200, f4; 1/58, 16mm

(L) The water in the font will constantly circulate and flow with hidden plumbing and a remote controlled device. Here the still waters make for great reflections

ISO 3200, f 2.8; 1/120, 16mm

Newcastle's St Nicholas Cathedral—CGISS Project

David L Richardson

I really enjoyed photographing the workers. We were warmly welcomed each time we visited, and they would happily and patiently explain what they were doing, how they were doing it and why. In turn site personnel were interested in our photographic project and where the images would end up.

We have greatly enjoyed this photographic challenge and opportunity and proud that many hundreds of our high resolution photographs will be available to the cathedral as a historical digital record or for publishing.

We are very grateful to all involved – to the builders, contractors and the permanent cathedral staff.



Far (L) Chippie X-T2

ISO 800, f8 1/120

(L) Taking a rest X-T2

ISO 1000 f9; 1/120 @ 50mm

Bottom: Space opening-up

X-T2 with xf 10-24 mm

ISO 1600 f5.6 1/8 @ 10mm

The Cathedral opened on August 12th to the public and is well worth a visit: See details [here](#)

Ed: This historical photographic story shall continue in Northern Focus with Photographs from work



external to the (E) and (S) sides with seating leading to landscaping of the small gardens.

Hidden spaces we were allowed to access.

Christine, Bishop of Newcastle and her team leading the beautiful and colourful rededication ceremony

Abstract and unique images as work progressed and opportunity presented.

PAGB PDI Championship - Observations

by Howard Wilson CPAGB/AV APAGB of Tynemouth PS

The notes below were received by the NCPF from Howard regards Keswick Photographic Society doing so well in July's Photographic Alliance of Great Britain, Projected Digital Imaging Competition.

Howard suggested neither Stan Bewick or himself can ever remember an NCPF club doing so well and thought it would be good if the Federation were shouting this from the rooftops. So here we go:

From Howard - Good Day All.

Yesterday (18th July) I zoomed in to the PAGB PDI Championships. Start time was 10.00 for 10.30am and initially I was a bit annoyed it was happening on such a nice day, but as it turned out, it was far too warm to do much, so in our north facing front room with windows open, and watching the laptop, the temperature was ideal.

37 clubs took part (all except last time's winners (2019) being chosen by their Federations, as I understood it). Keswick and Gosforth clubs represented the Northern Counties Federation. After an initial hold up when one of the judges had difficulty getting in, we got underway at 11.10am. The morning session would decide on the top 8 clubs to go through to the afternoon final. The first round comprised 8 pictures from each club. At that stage, Gosforth were 30th and Keswick joint 9th. A short break followed and then a second round of a further 8 from each club. The pictures for these rounds had been pre-submitted, but not seen by the three judges, who each marked the entries out of 5.

At the end of round two, the total scores were totted up and given almost immediately. Rolls Royce Derby were in the lead by a bit of a margin. Gosforth were 29th, so did not make the final.

Keswick came 7th and were in the final!! We broke for lunch at 12.50 and the top 8 clubs had to choose their 20 pictures for the final. Previously used could be resubmitted or replaced. Marking started again from scratch.

Throughout the morning we had seen some really super work, and the afternoon was not just the cream, but the double thick cream. A few replacement pictures scored badly and therefore dimmed that club's chances but in the end, the usual suspects generally fared well.

1st Rolls Royce Derby 270

5th Arden 251

2nd Wigan 10 262

6th Keswick 249

3rd Catchlight (N. Ireland) 257

7th Smithwick 243

4th Chorley 253

8th Bristol 242

Each judge gave a medal for their chosen best image and Ronnie Gilbert of Keswick received one !! Well done to him. The event ended at 3.20pm. Interestingly, RR Derby included 7 sports pictures in their final 20.

Afterwards, I emailed Alan Walker of Keswick to congratulate them and Ronnie. Alan replied saying they were still in shock, that at last an NCPF club had been able to put up a good show with the 'big boys'.

To put things in context, Gosforth are currently the club to beat in the North Tyne Area, and came second in the NCPF Championships, to qualify.

You can see a Gallery of the winning images at <http://www.thepagb.org.uk/competitions/inter-club-pdi/>

Keswick Photographic Society reach the Final of the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain PDI Club Championship

by Julie Walker DPAGB ARPS EFIAP EPSA



[Keswick Photographic Society](#) has been privileged to represent the Northern Counties Photographic Federation four times in the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain's Club Championships in the past few years, but until this year had not achieved a place any higher than joint twelfth in the PDI competition and tenth in the Print Competition. These results were achieved in 2017 but in 2018 and 2019 we did not do so well only managing a 24th place in 2018 and a 17th place in 2019 in the PDI competitions.

The PAGB Club Championship PDI competition is divided into three rounds. Competing clubs must submit eight images for the first round and then another eight for the second. The scores from these two rounds are combined and the eight clubs with the highest combined scores contest the final. In a normal year the remaining clubs compete in the Plate Competition but this year this was not held. Once through to the final, twenty images must be submitted of which no more than ten can have been entered in the earlier rounds. There are also restrictions on the number of nature images, and the number of images by the same author, that can be entered in each round.

The competition held on 18th July, was one of the hottest days of the year so only three club members, all from the Selection Panel, watched the competition. After the first round, with a score of 95 out of a possible 120, Keswick was in joint ninth place and it suddenly dawned on us that we might be in contention for the final.

Our excitement mounted as the second round progressed and we appeared to be doing well with most images achieving scores of twelve or more. With a total score of 99 from the second round it seemed possible that we might have made the final and when the combined scores from the first two rounds were announced Keswick was lying in seventh place and we realised that we would be competing with such prestigious clubs as Rolls Royce Derby, Wigan 10, Catchlight, Chorley, Arden and Smethwick.

It has to be said that this came as quite a shock and led to a degree of panic, partly because we hadn't received the necessary documentation for entry into the final from the PAGB partly due to confusion regarding our contact details and partly because of difficulties in communicating with one another and the PAGB via Zoom and mobile phone.

However, once we recovered from the initial surprise and sorted out the procedure for entry, we were immediately able to select nine images that had scored twelve or more in the first two rounds. This left us with another eleven images to find. Fortunately, we had already identified the best of the remaining images at our initial selection meeting and so it was not too difficult to find the balance. We managed to submit our final twenty just within the strict deadline.

Keswick Photographic Society reach the Final of the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain PDI Club Championship by Julie Walker



In the final we continued to score well with nine images scoring thirteen or more.

Ronnie Gilbert scored 15 for his “White-tailed Eagle Patrolling Forest” for which he was also presented with an Individual Image Awarded Silver Medal.

Of the nine photographs featured, all scored thirteen or more in the final.

Keswick Photographic Society reach the Final of the
Photographic Alliance of Great Britain PDI Club Championship
by Julie Walker



Alan Walker also scored 15 for his
"The Tackle" (above)

and 14 for two further images:
"I See You" (L) and
"Apprehension Before Take Off".

(Next page)

Keswick Photographic Society reach the Final of the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain PDI Club Championship

by Julie Walker



"Apprehension Before Take Off" (L) by Alan Walker

Another 14 was awarded to Robert Given for his *"Together"*. (below)



Keswick Photographic Society reach the Final of the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain PDI Club Championship

by Julie Walker

Nevertheless, it was still a surprise when the final places were announced and we had improved on our position by one place, eventually finishing sixth. In total the images of thirteen Keswick members had been included in the competition. We were delighted with the result and quickly let other Society members know about our

success.

In the end it had been worth staying glued to our computer screens for most of the day. Our experience did emphasise the importance of being organised and ready for the unexpected.

(L) *Deepdale*
by Ken Rennie

(Below) *No Turning Back*
by Sue Rug



Keswick Photographic Society reach the Final of the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain PDI Club Championship

by Julie Walker



Having now entered the championships four times, we have also learned the importance of keeping accurate records of all the images used in the first two rounds together with those in the final rounds, including the Plate Competition, as these are not eligible for entry in subsequent years.

The eight clubs that reach the final are automatically invited to participate in the competition the following year so there is no need for Keswick to enter the Northern Counties Photographic Federation's PDI Club Championship in 2022.

We look forward to joining the two other clubs which will be selected to represent the NCPF at the PAGB PDI Club Championship next year and we hope it will be possible to hold this live rather than via Zoom.



Top (L) *Grecian Beauty*
by Julie Walker.

(L) *Goshawk with Prey*
by Ronnie Gilbert.

Keswick Photographic Society reach the Final of the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain PDI Club Championship

by Julie Walker

Keswick has a Selection Panel comprising four members, Tony Marsh (External Competition Secretary), Alan Walker (Programme Secretary), Keith Snell (Committee Member) and myself (Honorary Secretary), who select entries for all external competitions. These are usually chosen from images that have achieved high scores in the Society's open competitions. In order to select our entry, the panel met, via Zoom, in June. It was necessary to select 40 images in total. We also had to specify which of these images would be entered into the first and second rounds. This is always a difficult choice as we have several strong nature specialists in the club but we can only select a very few of their images. We had no expectation of reaching the final but chose our preferred twenty images anyway although we knew there might have to be some last-minute changes depending on which ones performed well in the first and second rounds.



Some of the Keswick committee members in attendance for their first club night of this season - 1st September.

From (L) to (R)

- Tony Marsh (External Competition Secretary and member of the selection panel).
- David Woodthorpe (Chairman).
- (Julie Walker Hon. Secretary and member of the selection panel) and
- Alan Walker (Programme Secretary and member of the selection panel).

Written by Julie Walker on behalf of Keswick Photographic Society

Ed: Very well done Keswick - and a huge thankyou to Julie for creating this excellent and informative article. We very much look forward to next season when 3 of our NCPF clubs will be eligible to represent our region.

Ann and Steve Toon

Second instalment of a four part series— Finding our Feet

Our career switch from journalism to wildlife photography had one driving motivation: spend as much time in Africa as possible. We were wildlife-lovers first, photographers second. We wanted to ditch deadlines, leave behind our journalistic careers and immerse ourselves in Africa. We'd fund our travels with the sale of our images. Fat chance.

As we started to establish ourselves, we quickly realised two things. The big pay cheques from photo agencies that sustained the pro wildlife photographers before us were about to become a thing of the past and that saying goodbye to our journalism completely would be madness.

Our journalistic experience was our biggest asset, our unique selling point. It was our means to earn a crust doing freelance stuff for our old bosses when things got tight, but in the main it was our ability to write in a concise, cogent way, packaging words with wildlife images, that made us attractive to magazine editors across a range of sectors. We could recycle and repackage one set of images several ways for different magazine titles to really make our pictures pay. We began to get repeat business from a number of magazines, not always because they thought our images were the best, but because they knew our words didn't need much cleaning up and because we'd angled the articles to suit their readers.

Our work as editors, commissioning work from photographers for the magazines we worked on, had given us an insight into just what editors on magazines required in terms of visual content. We would shoot to suit magazines; leaving space when framing for headlines and text; providing a variety of image formats and styles and always including a shot that was a candidate for the cover, which meant extra cash if the image was selected.

More importantly, our journalism gave us access to photographic opportunities other wildlife photographers didn't get, allowing us to explore behind the scenes on game reserves, to meet conservationists, researchers and wildlife managers, giving us the inside track and opening us up to important stories we just had to tell.

When we weren't busy photographing iconic big game in golden light we found ourselves photographing elephant vasectomies, rhino horn DNA testing, lion dentistry in the Namib desert, and stories closer to home: captive breeding of Eurasian cranes, water vole reintroduction, dormouse monitoring, puffin counts.



We built a stable of regular magazines outlets, not just photography magazines and travel titles, but natural history, rural affairs, serious conservation titles and lighter lifestyle magazines. Some were local, some national consumer titles and a good number were overseas.

(Far L) Steve photographing white rhino surgery.

(L) Researcher measuring teeth of

Ann and Steve Toon

Second instalment of a four part series— Finding our Feet

Starting our photographic career in the days of slide film gave us a valuable technical grounding: we learnt to get things right in camera, to take care with exposure, composition, quality of light. But the advent of digital brought new possibilities. No longer were we restricted to sending one portfolio of images out at a time. Early in our career we lost 20 of our best slides to a black hole at The Independent newspaper – they finally reappeared 18 months after publication. Slides were often returned from magazines still sticky from the gum used in old school printing processes, sometimes with scratches. Now we could send sets of images to multiple clients, without fear they would be lost or damaged.

But the digital revolution brought a huge challenge too. The market quickly became flooded with pictures, and the price clients were willing to pay for stock images plummeted. Fortunately, our business model, such as it was, didn't depend on stock sales. Now it definitely never would. In common with other professional wildlife photographers we began selling our knowledge as much as our imagery – running photo workshops and residential courses in the UK, lecturing on a wildlife photography BA course at Blackpool and the Fylde College, writing 'how to' photography books.



(Top) *Ground squirrels at burrow*



(R) *Lioness stalking*



(L) *Honey badger eating a leopard tortoise*

Ann and Steve Toon

Second instalment of a four part series— Finding our Feet

We learned to juggle many balls at once, balancing the need to earn a living with our continuing passion for time in the African bush. Africa was where we spent our money, but also where we captured our best images – even if they didn't always pay their way.

Wildlife photography was never going to make us rich, and we were working harder than we'd even done as staff journalists. But the lifestyle rewards were incomparable. Nights under the Milky Way, listening to the far-off roar of lions, the whoops of spotted hyena, the churring of nightjars, more than compensated for the frustrations and insecurities of freelance photojournalism.

The freedom of self-employment meant we were able to pursue projects that mattered to us, even if they didn't make financial sense.



(Top)
Sampling museum black rhino horn for DNA analysis

(R) *Northern white rhino with armed guard*

Rhino conservation for example: we'd written a book about rhinos and donated many images to leading wildlife charity Save the Rhino over the years, but when rhino poaching became a massive problem we embarked on a personal campaign, travelling to remote parts of Africa to interview conservationists and researchers on the frontline, and highlighting the complex issues in publications around the globe



(L) *White rhino bull with dust.*



Ann and Steve Toon

Second instalment of a four part series— Finding our Feet

Most of our time on location in Africa we travelled on a shoestring: roof top tents, run-down national park chalets, self-driving and self-catering was the norm. Occasionally a journalistic commission would see us invited to visit a luxury lodge, to report on some worthy conservation initiative. We got to see how the other half lived on safari – luxurious suites, champagne and chocolates, fine dining and feather pillows, driving off-road and after dark to search out rare and exciting subjects.

They were fun interludes, and sometimes produced images we'd have struggled to achieve under our own steam, but usually after a couple of days of the high life we'd be glad to get back to self-sufficiency.

Then a couple of magazine commissions came in that would herald a brand-new chapter in our photographic careers. We were about to embark on something we'd always sworn we'd never do. But more about that next time.



(L) *Dr Jeff Zuba of the EPMP assisting at wild elephant vasectomy.*

(Below) *Ann photographing elephant vasectomy*

All words and photographs by Ann and Steve Toon.

Next issue of Northern Focus – Part 3: A New Challenge



The Northern Audio Visual Group

Excellence in Sound and Vision



The Northern Audio-Visual Group

By Ron Henry ARPS – Chairman of the NAV Group

In the last issue I said that because of the pandemic The Northern Audio-Visual Group had not held a 'live' meeting for over a year, and due to the difficulties of screening a-v over Zoom, we had not had the chance to meet at all. The bandwidth of broadcasters had to be better than that available to us otherwise our lovingly produced programmes would 'jerk' and 'stick' and act annoyingly.

Following precise analysis by our techies (or trial and error by the committee) we found a solution to the problem and were able to hold an excellent and enjoyable 'virtual' meeting in March. Thirty of our members spent the day on Zoom which incorporated seventeen members a-v sequences of exceptional high quality, we chatted with friends, in what otherwise was a strange and sometimes difficult pandemic situation. It was the next best thing to a 'live' meeting. Although St John's Hall in Snods Edge is booked for our next meeting on Saturday 23rd October 2021, we now have the confidence to meet 'virtually' if we must. Log on to <https://www.thenorthernavgroup.co.uk/> and near the time we will let you know which it is.

So, what is audio-visual? A question I also left hanging from the beams of the last issue. I have been a member of a great camera club for many years and initially slide/sound programmes were considered a mystery, then considered the latest craze, and latterly a-v is deemed an excuse to show hundreds of 'snaps' helped along by jolly music and not acceptable to serious photographers.

Well, I refute that notion. I have been involved in making audio-visual programmes for over fifty-years and, to me, A-V is the *ultimate project*. No one would accuse the late lamented Alan Potts or Anne S A-V wearman of being takers of 'snaps' yet they were both members of the NAVGroup and producers of great audio-visual programmes.

Audio visual came about because photographers were keen to tell a story using images, sound effects, commentary and music. That seems a bit like film, but in the early days the quality of amateur film, was poor so dioparama was developed in France. It utilised 35mm slides for high quality and often good colour. It was the likes of Richard Tucker, Michael Tickner with his Audio Scope and Sir George Pollock with his Purlock Duo-Fade Fader who, in the 1970s, made a-v popular in the UK.



I am currently working on an A-V of Alcatraz and I have discovered many things about the place which I did not know That fascinates me and hopefully will fascinate people who watch the result. I often pause as I write the script to consider what I felt when I visited (as a tourist I hasten to add) and what the sum of the constituent parts will convey to the audience. Now if that is not an all-fulfilling 'project' I do not know what is.

The Northern Audio Visual Group

Excellence in Sound and Vision



At a recent Zoom talk to Hexham Photographic Club's Audio-Visual Group, one member asked me 'What do you find most difficult to do when making an A-V?' Initially I said 'Thinking up the idea in the first place' was most difficult but with time to reflect, the biggest problem with my latest production has been reducing a script which read at 13-minutes down to my preferred 5-minutes. I always think that 5-minutes of script with space to 'breathe' will result in a comfortable 7 to 8-minute , A-V but what to leave out is, on this occasion, a problem.

Of course, not all a-v programmes have sound effects and voiceovers. Some are pictures cut to music whatever tells the story, but we always strive for quality in every aspect, especially the images. We can talk about the constituent parts of an a-v next time.

Meanwhile the problem with screening fast moving a-vs over Zoom 'share screen', is the familiar stuttering and sticking of the action. This depends on how good the speed of the host's internet upload is. I was going to be host and on the first trial, a-vs played from my Zoom shared screen were not 'fluid' on the recipient's computer. I contacted my internet supplier TalkTalk and was able to increase the upload speed from 11 to 19Mbps. The problem was that it looked good to me on my PC but to the audience who had to upload *and* download, it still did not look quite so 'smooth'.

I know that many people will say that they showed pictures, PowerPoint and even audio-visual programmes on the Zoom platform and they were fine, and they often are, except, of course, the host does not see what the audience are viewing. We were afraid that either the internet or the host PC would let us down— it even happens in the BBC. As programme makers we are members of the IAC Film & Video Makers, Ian Bradshaw wrote an interesting article in their magazine about internet speed and Zoom but, if you do not have a reliable internet there is nothing you can do about it. The Darlington Video Makers had hosted an excellent evening of a-vs presented by two of our members Anne and John Harbron, so we tried their method.

We created a YouTube channel for the NAVGroup, uploaded our member's a-vs, which they had sent us as MP4 files (easy to do in our PTE software) it did not matter how good or bad my upload speed was they just had to get there safely. Our programmes were 'unlisted' in YouTube so only people who had the link could find them. On the day we happily chatted and cajoled each other and when it was time to view the first programme, the host copied and pasted the link in the Zoom 'chat', all our members clicked the link, and we watched the a-v on YouTube, individually, but at the same time. Most people have good download speed, so it worked a treat with the double advantage of being able to send the links beforehand to a couple of other committee members as a backup. Perhaps our next meeting will be 'live' but it does not really matter – now that we have the knowhow.

In the meantime don't forget to log on to <https://www.thenorthernavggroup.co.uk/> or, better still, drop our secretary, Anne an email: secretarynorthernavggroup@gmail.com and append you email address to our contact list. If you are interested in making audio-visual programmes, you'll learn it all at Snods Edge.

NCPF Members Distinctions and Awards



PSA DISTINCTIONS

Nil noted



FIAP DISTINCTIONS

Stuart Edgar, Penrith and District Camera Club	EFIAP
Sue Rugg, Keswick Photographic Society	EFIAP
John D Tillotson, Penrith and District Camera Club	EFIAP
Steve McLellan, Penrith and District Camera Club	AFIAP
Donald Stuart Smith, Gosforth Camera Club	AFIAP



PAGB DISTINCTIONS and AWARDS

Nil noted



NCPF DISTINCTIONS and AWARDS

Nil Noted.

Congratulations to all 5 FIAP successes

Obituary

Brian Wright

[Mr Brian Wright of Whickham Photographic Club](#)

Sadly, Brian died on the 24th April aged 87. Brian and his wife Audrey were founder members of the then Whickham Camera Club. In 1973 Brian became our first Chairman with the late Tom Heads of Head Photos as President.

He was later made an Honorary Vice President in recognition of his contribution to the Club. Brian continued to attend until a few years ago and was one of only two that have done so since our first year. Audrey predeceased him.

Roy Elwood



Brian and Audrey during a WPC club outing to Robin Hood's Bay photograph by Trevor Ermel

Obituary

Mr T.H. Morrison

Mr. Morrison contributed greatly to the organisation we know as the Northern Counties Photographic Federation. He died two weeks before his 100th birthday.



**Tribute to Thomas Henry Morrison, M.Sc. ARPS
1921 - 2021**

Thomas Henry Morrison, (Harry) was born on 25th April 1921 in Downpatrick, Northern Ireland. After graduating with a Masters Degree in Mechanical and Electrical Engineering from Queens University Belfast, just as the 2nd World War ended, he quickly sought out new challenges on the mainland, in the growth area of power stations as the nation rebuilt and modernised its infrastructure. His life-long love of the countryside persuaded him to settle in Newcastle rather than to take opportunities offered to him in London, on the basis that the quality of life in the north east would be better than London suburbia. He moved to Tyneside in 1948, being joined by Nora after their marriage in 1950, and he has lived in Jesmond and Gosforth ever since. His early work with Merz & McLellan and later Reyrolle Parsons saw him designing and developing the mechanical and electrical systems for coal fired power stations. Alongside his technical engineering skills, he had a gift for project management and, after moving to NEI on Tyneside in the 1970s, he led major projects such as the new power stations at Torness and Peterhead, controversial in their day for the use of nuclear energy. Always ahead of his time, Harry's major contribution lay in computerising the whole process from design and technical drawings through to ordering and invoicing, enabling the process to flow seamlessly and more cost effectively as a result.

Obituary

Mr T.H. Morrison

As a young boy, Harry was given a 'brownie' box camera by his Uncle Clifford, and a lifelong passion was kindled. He had an eye for a great photo, and would spend hours waiting for the right level of daylight to capture his perfect shot. In his early years in Tyneside from 1948 until the mid 1950s he captured some of his most enduring images and created much of his best work, rising early to capture the docklands in the early morning light before starting work, and spending hours in the evening developing his photographs in his attic dark room. Many of these photographs won awards in amateur photographic competitions around the world, and an honorary fellowship of the Royal Photographic Society followed.

One of the highlights of the last decade of his life, was seeing his collection of Tyneside black & white dockland photographs displayed in a special exhibition at the Amber Gallery in 2018. These attracted huge acclaim online, where they continue to be available to view, and some of the originals are displayed in the vestibule of Jesmond United Reformed Church, where his funeral was held on 30th April.

During his long retirement from engineering, Harry became a regular contributor of lectures to the Newcastle Lit and Phil Society and many local clubs, with his highly informed and beautifully illustrated talks using his own photographs on subjects ranging from the history of post boxes to prehistoric Orkney.

Harry's curiosity and perception supported his parallel gifts in arts and science – his photography was artistic but also technically sure footed; likewise his professional work was technically advanced and also creative. He was something of a renaissance man.

Harry's love of the countryside and the outdoors gave him a great appetite for walking, whether the fells of the Lake District or the wilds of Northumberland. One of his first adventures was exploring Hadrian's Wall on his own, in the early 1950s, long before it was a manicured national trail. He and Nora also loved to travel, exploring continental Europe in the 1960s, 70s & 80s with endless curiosity and returning with fabulous photographs, stories of exotic places and beautiful pottery and artwork that adorned their very individual home, and kindled my own desire to explore new countries and cultures. Yet he never forgot his roots, and returned to NI regularly throughout his life, keeping in touch with family and friends.

Just two weeks short of his 100th birthday, Harry lived life to the full, and accomplished much both professionally and personally. He was always gentlemanly, courteous, wise, considered, modest and earnest but with an occasional droll sense of humour. His family had plans for his 100th birthday on 25th April, but it wasn't to be, and he passed away peacefully in his sleep, at his care home in Gosforth on 10th April.



Snippets

A place where short interesting facts, anecdotes, comments and opinions can be published.

A look back to the [NCPF Annuals](#) allows huge congratulations to Gosforth Camera Club who having recently got so close to winning finally hit the top spot.

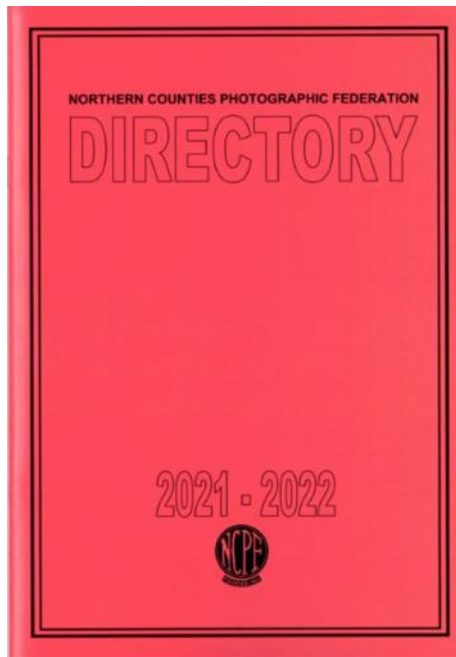
Competition was not without some external excitement though, a spreadsheet formatting error allowed a cell to disfunction initially giving a joint winner score between Gosforth and Keswick

The day was saved however when a number of internal and external checks and balances spotted the error with quick remediation by hardworking Gerry Adcock NCPF Competitions Officer and the team with Competitions Committee Chair John Twizell confirming Gosforth CC scoring 79 coming first with Keswick PS and Saltburn PS scoring 78 sharing joint 2nd place. The top six clubs Gosforth CC - Keswick PS - Saltburn PS - Gallery PG - Amble PG - and Blyth PS being separated by only 3 marks.

Top images will be shared in next Northern Focus. Meanwhile our Portfolio Secretary advises the quality Audio Visual show with Awards and Alliance Entries and Selectors Choice photographs with voice-over will be with all NCPF clubs as an MP4 App shortly, being forwarded as a free WeTransfer and via [NCPF Web](#) — Club Secretaries watch your in-boxes.

The Northern Counties photographic Federation Directory 2021-2022 should soon - (if not already) be with your clubs secretary.

Managed by our Publications Officer and PAGB Representative Pax Garabedian, this annually printed document holds a wealth of up to date information and guidance.



History:

The Directory has multiple lists honouring Past NCPF Presidents, Life Vice-Presidents, Roll of Honour recipients and Secretaries of the NCPF, all the way from the Federations inception in 1901.

But of more immediate reference is the current lists of Executive Members and Officers of the NCPF advising their roles and contact details including Sub-committee's and their make-up.

Plus: all 48 Member Clubs with websites, venue's, membership numbers and their main committee contact details.

Plus: Federation Lecturers, Federation Judges and those recently retiring from position (with thanks), are also advised.

Ed But (to me) the most important section's are the guidance pages which include the Constitution and Rules of the NCPF, and a page detailing Conditions for the Booking of Lecturers and Judges.

285 Copies have been printed and distributed to clubs, and to those listed in the directory.

This is an incredibly useful document that all club Chairs, committee's and especially club competition secretaries are encouraged to reference and utilise.



Snippets continued.

An offer from Howard Wilson: Who writes:

Here at Tynemouth Photographic Society, you might know that we have an extensive archive of old monochrome local photographs / glass negatives and slides, going back to the late 1800s. Over the last decade or so they have been digitized amounting to several hundreds, and many of them have been put into recorded shows, via Pictures to Exe. Titles include 'Old Shields', Tynemouth Borough, Cullercoats, and 'Whitley Bay'.

We thought that these may be of interest to clubs - especially those local, as many clubs may well have cancellations in the present circumstances. We can present the shows via Zoom. If anyone is interested, they could in the first instance email or ring me. My details are in the Directory. email: howard.wilson440@btinternet.com Thank you.

A Strange Request

A recent NCPF Executive Meeting discussing the Spring Edition, included remarks on the fantastic tribute presented by the family of the late Allan Potts, where facts, photographs and the immense pride on his work shone through. A question and comment from the group lamented on how it can be difficult to create a worthy homage to club members who we think we know so well, when on their demise find it difficult to find suitable words, history and photographs worthy of their memories and photographic contribution.

A suggestion was— (hence the strange request)—wouldn't it be marvellous if clubs kept a small ongoing biography of their regular members or even asked them to maintain something within a club magazine scenario. Helping make a relevant, factual photograph filled biography. - Over to clubs on this one.

Our PAGB Awards Officer Gerald Chamberlin is on a mission.

Though it is marvellous when we get to congratulate NCPF members who have done well in achieving designatory photographic letters after their name usually via PAGB, FIAP, RPS or PSA routes, it is acknowledged our Federation lags behind in quantity (not quality), of awards received overall and even how some clubs have continual member successes while others do not seem to enter the Awards route.

Photographic Alliance of Great Britain Awards for Photographic Merit

1. The PAGB Awards for Photographic Merit (APM) team
2. A very brief history
3. How the PAGB Awards differ from RPS Distinctions
4. How our Adjudications work
5. Three levels of Awards
6. Advice and Information
7. How to apply



Welcome **workshop**

A recent NCPF Committee meeting discussed: "How can we help?" with Gerald advising: First option would be to ensure people and clubs are aware of what is available through information discussion and training opportunities, including standards required and mentoring opportunities.

The next pages offers that opportunity—in this instance for Photographic Alliance of Great Britain Awards with more information on other routes to follow. This may be of great interest to any members considering or curious about attaining PAGB distinctions.

Of note also was the fantastic and regular PAGB e-newsletter which is a great way to obtain information and follow what is going on in UK photography. Sign-up [here](#) for this periodic and FREE e-magazine.



Future Events

Dates for your Diary and Club Events

Northern Counties Photographic Federation

Book Now Limited Numbers

Presents (and it's) **FREE**

Book Now Limited Numbers

Photographic Alliance of Great Britain Awards for Photographic Merit

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Welcome **Workshop**

When.

Sunday 23rd January 2022 from 1pm to 3pm

Where.

No Travelling it's ALL online via ZOOM

To Take Part.

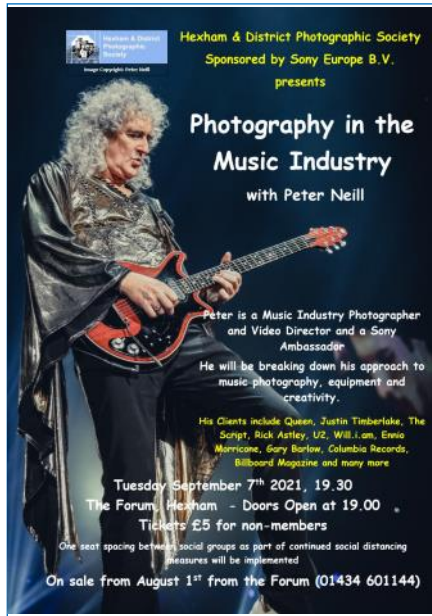
Email your name & your clubs name to:-

NCPF Awards Secretary Gerald Chamberlin

gmcimages@gmail.com

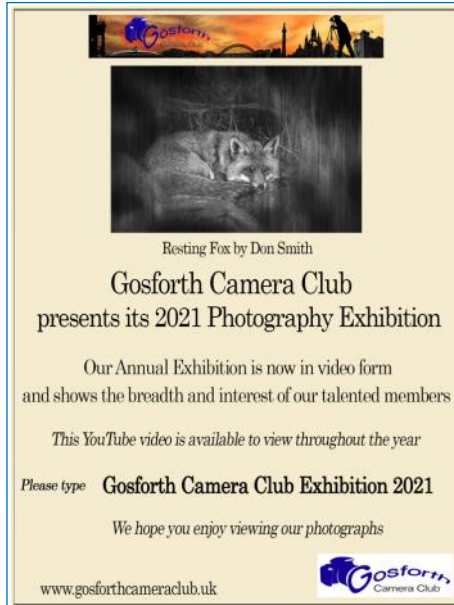


Future Events continued



Keve Hilton of Hexham and District Photographic Society. Says:

This is a flyer for the HDPS opening evening with Peyer Neill. Seats can be booked at the Forum using this link: <https://bit.ly/3rHd7Zs>



Lesley Hughes of Gosforth Camera Club points to YouTube where GCC this year presents its 2021 Photography Exhibition.

Lesley advises “each year we usually hold an exhibition of photographs in Newcastle City Library but now have a 24 minute video showing our members’ wonderful contributions”.

The exhibition images were received and coordinated by Lesley and set with music into a video by David Cottrell.

For Gosforth Camera Club Exhibition 2021 click [here](#)

Joe Duffy (Competition Officer Beamish Trophy) advises:

We are delighted to extend an invitation to all affiliated NCPF Club members to take part in our 2021 Beamish Trophy competition.

Due to the 2020 lockdown the NCPF Beamish Exhibition and Trophy Competition were cancelled. In view of this, the Competitions Sub Committee has decided that **FOR ONE YEAR ONLY**, the Beamish Trophy Competition will be held in 2021 with an extended photographic time period from **31st August 2019 to 31st August 2021**. Images **MUST have been taken at Beamish Museum** within this period. As in recent years the competition will be PDI’s only.

A copy of the entry form can be downloaded here <http://www.ncpf.org.uk/beamish-trophy-2021/>



Future Events (NCPF) continued

Gerry Adcock advises on behalf of NCPF:

Please note that NCPF events for the season 2021-2022 have been arranged as follows: –
All are planned to be held at Clara Vale Village Hall, South View, Clara Vale, Ryton NE40 3SY
Details regarding Rules & Submission dates for the competitions will be announced nearer the dates.

Gerry finishes with these marvellous words: “It is anticipated that all (NCPF) events for the forthcoming season can go ahead as normal with the resumption of physical meetings & the return of print sections”. Relevant covid measures will be in place.

Awards Presentation Day:

Sunday 21st November 2021

Club Championship Competition

Sunday 13th February 2022 commencing 12.30 pm

NCPF AGM

Sunday 3rd April 2022

NCPF Annuals Competition:-

Saturday/Sunday 23rd /24th. April 2022

And that is all for this issue - except to say - Wanted, Wanted, Wanted

Information, anecdotes, club updates, personal success stories, tributes, events, photographs, learnings any and everything in-between to share across our region in Northern Focus.

Please send to Alan Wilson at northern.focus@ncpf.org.uk or discuss on Mobile 07814333844

Official magazine of Northern Counties Photographic Federation.

Serving the North of England - Published four times a year.

NCPF – The Northern Counties Photographic Federation serves Cleveland, the greater part of Cumbria, Durham, Northumberland, Tyne & Wear, and part of North Yorkshire.

We hope you have enjoyed this, the 92nd edition of Northern Focus
Thank you for reading and feel free to pass on to like minded photographers