THE LATEST NEWS & VIEWS FROM LAKE MACQUARIE CAMERA CLUB

June 2024, Issue 11.

# WELCOME TO THE JUNE ISSUE OF THE LEADING LINE – Dennis Archibald

It's hard to believe that we are already halfway through the year and in some ways toward the end of our camera club year. We are currently collecting club fees for the year ahead and our Annual General Meeting is looming in August.

We took the opportunity at our May Print night to circulate a feedback form centred around a few questions. The feedback we received will help shape how our club operates in the future. As indicated in a recent post I plan to circulate the feedback to all members shortly. The June committee meeting will consider the feedback we received and will discuss how we best respond.

# Our next club night will be held at the Valentine Bowling Club on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> June at 7.00pm.

# WHAT'S ON IN JUNE – Greg Carruthers

The following activities and tutorials are planned for June:

• Following on from Greg's introductory session on Astrophotography earlier in May a night photoshoot is planned between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> June at Caves Beach headland at 7.00pm. The exact date will be confirmed closer to the time depending on weather forecasts (24hour notice). Come along and capture the stars.





- A Zoom workshop on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June at 7.00pm on **"Selections and Local Adjustments in Photoshop"** by Roy Killen.
- Coffee catch-up at Lake Macquarie Sailing Club at 9.30am.
- A presentation at Valentine Bowling Club at 7.00pm on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> June by Brent Mail **"My Creative Photography Journey".**

The Raw Image Challenge for June is shown below:



# JUDGING AND COMPETITIONS – Roy Killen

Judges for June are:

- PRINTS colour and monochrome Ian English.
- DIGITAL colour Bob Todd; monochrome Sue Slack
- SET SUBJECT Roy Killen

#### June Set Subject – Exploring AI

#### Judging Criteria:

The challenge for this Set Subject is to demonstrate how you can transform one of your photographs into a more interesting and engaging image using any of the AI technologies available in editing software such as Photoshop.



THE LATEST NEWS & VIEWS FROM LAKE MACQUARIE CAMERA CLUB

June 2024, Issue 11.

- You will be required to upload two versions of the same image (not images from two different captures). One image will be a JPG of your original capture resized to fit within 1920x1200 pixels. Give that image a suitable title, such as "Landscape.jpg".
- The second image will be an AI-edited version of the original capture that you have enhanced with whatever AI you choose to use. Give that image a title such as "Landscape-AI.jpg" to clearly indicate it is the processed version of the image.
- If you do not have Photoshop, you can modify your image using any of the AI tools available in other programs or on the Internet—but you cannot submit a totally AI-generated image.
- The original image must be a photograph that you captured. The judging criteria that will be used are:
  - The degree to which the AI processing has added interest and impact to the image.
  - $\circ$   $\;$  The quality of the technical application of the AI techniques.

For purposes of the point score, normal points will be allocated to the processed image (1 for entry, 3 for Merit, 5 for Honours and 7 for Judge's Choice). The unprocessed image will receive 1 point. If you are unsure about any of the requirements for this Set Subject, please email Roy Killen at roykillen@mac.com before you upload your entry.

### **PSA and Interclub Competitions**

#### **PSA INTERCLUB RESULTS**

In Round 3 of the PSA Interclub digital competitions, our club achieved the following results (each image was scored out of 15):

#### Colour

Chris Mannweiller	Stormy weather	10
David Richards	Kelpie at jetty	9
Greg Carruthers	Sideways glance	10
Peter Stanley	Battle of wills	10
Roy Killen, FPSA, GMPSA/S	Merewether morning	10
Stephane Thomas	Serene sunset at Merewether	9

#### Monochrome

Allison Hayes	Devil woman	13	НМ
Bill Chambers	Menacing	12	
Greg Carruthers	Eyes to the soul	10	
Helen Walker, MPSA2	Confronting gravity	9	
Roy Killen, FPSA, GMPSA/S	Ballet class	12	



THE LATEST NEWS & VIEWS FROM LAKE MACQUARIE CAMERA CLUB

June 2024, Issue 11.

Stephane Thomas	Tranquillo	10	

#### Nature

Bill Chambers	Jumper with meal	15	Merit
Bob Todd	In for the kill	8	
Chris Mannweiller	Feeding not so little baby	11	
David Richards	Parenthood	10	
Jennifer Carrigan	Nutty	10	
Roy Killen, FPSA, GMPSA/S	Leopard near Skukuza	14	Merit

### Photo Travel

David Richards	Aiguille de Midi Chamonix	12	Merit
Helen Walker, MPSA2	Welcome to Prague	10	
Jennifer Carrigan	Cuckmere haven	12	НМ
Margot Hughes	On the steps	8	
Peter Stanley	Tiananmen Square	8	
Sheila Stanley	Approaching storm	10	

#### Photojournalism

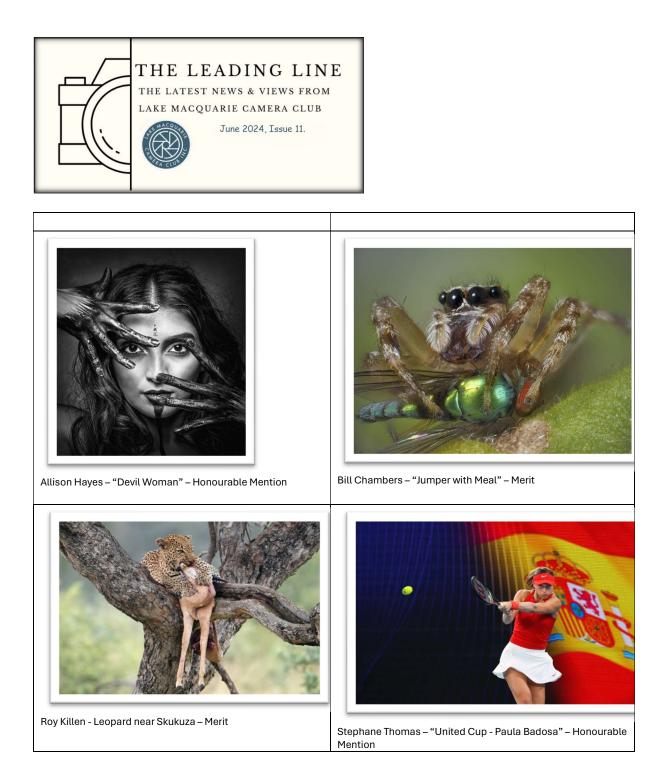
Dennis Archibald	Enough is enough	11	
Greg Carruthers	Prepare for landing	9	
Helen Walker, MPSA2	Trapped and forced to swing	8	
Margot Hughes	Skeletons	5	
Roy Killen, FPSA, GMPSA/S	Safe speed	9	
Stephane Thomas	United Cup - Paula Badosa	12	НМ



David Richards – "Aiguille de Midi Chamonix" - Merit



Jennifer Carrigan – "Cuckmere Haven" – Honourable Mention



Our cumulative results over the three Rounds of the competition gave us the following placings:

Colour  $-24^{th}$  place out of 26 clubs.

Monochrome  $-14^{th}$  place out of 25 clubs.

Nature - FIRST place out of 26 clubs.

Photo Travel  $-11^{th}$  place out of 24 clubs.

Photojournalism  $-11^{th}$  place out of 20 clubs.



#### 2024-2025 PSA Interclub Competition

Entries for Round 1 of the next set of PSA Interclub competitions are now open on the club website and will close on 1<sup>st</sup> October. Please follow the usual procedure for entering club competitions. ALL members are invited to participate.

In addition to the five digital sections, our club will enter two print sections (Colour and Monochrome) in the 2024-25 PSA Interclub competition. Entries for Round 1 of the print completions have to be uploaded to our club website by 1<sup>st</sup> September.

Full details of the PSA Interclub competition, including instructions for entering the print sections, can be downloaded from the "Club Documents" tab on our club website. If you have any questions about entering, please email Roy Killen at <u>roykillen@gmail.com</u>.

# MASTERING LIGHTING TECHNIQUES WITH C.R.KENNEDY

Our 2nd tutorial in May saw lighting expert John Wallace from C.R.Kennedy come along with Brad LeBroque to demonstrate lighting techniques using a range of studio lights. John gave a great presentation. **Members also should be aware that C.R. Kennedy were offering "a special price" to club members for any equipment that was demonstrated on the night.** This was a great opportunity to see how these studio lights can be arranged to obtain a wide range of lighting effects. The presentation was timely with the 2024 Northern Federation Photographic (NPF) Conference approaching on the weekend of 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> July.



Like last year a portraiture competition will run through the weekend with the winning entry taking away the lighting studio used over the weekend. Information about the NPF Conference, Competition and Photoshoot will be available soon.



THE LATEST NEWS & VIEWS FROM LAKE MACQUARIE CAMERA CLUB

June 2024, Issue 11.

# **CLUB MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS**

It's time to renew club membership for the coming year, up until 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025. Membership fees remain unchanged at \$50.00, payable by electronic funds transfer to the club account. To find the club's bank details please go the grey **MEMBERS** button on the Home page which you will find on the top right side of your screen. Open the **MEMBERS** page and then click on the blue **MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL** button. It's on the left-hand side toward the top of the screen. A page will open, and you will find a link that will take you to the club's bank account details.

If you are a new member who has joined the club since 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 there is no need to renew your membership. Your current membership will continue till 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025.

In conjunction with our membership fees, we encourage all financial members resident in Lake Macquarie City and Newcastle City Council areas to also join the Valentine Bowling Club (VBC) as a social member. The annual fee is \$10.00, and renewals commence in May.

If you have any questions, please contact our membership coordinator Joy Thomas.

# **APS AUSTRALIA CUP ENTRY**

Thanks to all club members who submitted entries. The final images selected for our club entry are listed below:

Kangaroo dominance - Roy Killen Kookaburra with Blue tongue - Sheila Stanley Wisdom - Jennifer Carrigan Outback Sky Silverton NSW - Alison Hayes National Pride - Chris Mannweiler Feeding my not so little baby - Chris Mannweiler Digger - Greg Carruthers Painted - Greg Carruthers Spotlight on the Three Sisters- Chris Prior In for the Kill - Bob Todd Approaching Storm - Sheila Stanley Storm over Mt Connor - Ruth Keech



THE LATEST NEWS & VIEWS FROM LAKE MACQUARIE CAMERA CLUB

June 2024, Issue 11.

- Rusting Relic Lake Tyrell Vic Alison Hayes
- Ormiston Gorge David Richards
- Dusty Yard 2 Dennis Archibald
- Surviving Roy Killen
- Floater Chris Prior
- Taking in the view Bob Todd
- Outlook Bill Chambers
- Emus Toni Conquest

THE LATEST NEWS & VIEWS FROM LAKE MACQUARIE CAMERA CLUB

June 2024, Issue 11.

# JUST 3 – Sheila Stanley

# Aurora Borealis

A spur of the moment decision to visit the Arctic Circle to try to see, and photograph the Aurora Borealis, just a few months before we emigrated to Australia, turned out to be one of our most memorable week's holidays.

Beyond our expectations, we were lucky enough to witness the phenomenon five nights out of the seven we were there. You never know if the "dancing lights " will show up, it can be anywhere between 9pm and 2am and they can either be spectacular, fleeting or not even appear at all.

Photographically it was a big learning curve, different to anything we had tried before, obviously tripod work, with different long exposures depending on the intensity of the aurora's brightness. Add to that the aurora is dancing, moving, and changing all the time, so full image sharpness can seem to be less than ideal.

This image was the aurora at its most spectacular for us, I am aware it is not competition work, but that night we were on a skidoo ride down a frozen river, so were not prepared, no tripod etc, it was just a quick grab shot, resting the camera on anything I could, to capture the unforgettable moment.





# Mast Above the Mist.

Taken many years ago, on higher ground in the Pennine Hills of Yorkshire, very near where we lived. I love atmospheric, misty mornings and situations like this one, where you can be actually above the mist looking down on a scene.

The TV transmitter mast is a very well-known landmark in the area and visible from many miles around (also seen daily out of my kitchen window nearby, at the time .) I won a photography competition with this image, which in turn got me a trip to the viewing platform at the top of the mast, a rare privilege and much sought after by locals in the area.

The transmitter company, coincidentally Australian owned, actually used this image and another similar one, on its corporate Christmas cards that year.

I love the beauty of the different seasons and marvel at the splendour of Nature in all its diverse forms.





# Snowy Day on the Great Wall

Our elder son lived in China for 4 years, back in 2000-2004 and we were lucky enough to visit him 3 times. Amongst other things we did and saw over that time, was to visit 3 different parts of the Great Wall. Further away from more "touristy" sections of it was this one which, at the time, was more uncommercialised.

As we drove into the mountains the rain turned to snow, which, thankfully, had stopped as we arrived, but the effect was just stunning as we saw the snaking monolith from a completely different perspective. Walking on those ancient ramparts just gave you the immense sense of history and grandeur of it all, but, equally important to us - we shared such a magical, special day with our son, one all three of us will always remember.

Technology has moved on dramatically since the days of transparencies; on that day, the lighting was poor photographically and many of our images were also grab shots, it was about capturing the moment and great memories.



THE LATEST NEWS & VIEWS FROM LAKE MACQUARIE CAMERA CLUB

June 2024, Issue 11.

# **LEARNING FROM IMAGE CRITIQUES**

### Roy Killen, APSA, GMPSA, EFIAP, APSEM

Regardless of how experienced you are as a photographer; you can learn from getting critiques on your images. One of the main advantages of a good critique is that it can provide a fresh perspective on your work, helping you to see your work in new ways and to consider new possibilities for image capture and processing. This can be an incentive to improve your technical skills, your approach to composition, and your image editing skills. Critiques can be particularly helpful if you are in a creative rut.

Receiving positive feedback on the strengths of your images can be a great confidence booster, particularly if it helps you see your work in a new light. This can encourage you to develop further the things you already do well. But the goal should not be to get your ego stroked; it should be to improve your photography. Any critiques that you initially consider negative should be considered with an open mind. No critique will be of any value if you are unwilling to learn.

Ideally, you will be able to receive feedback from several photographers with varying styles and experience levels to gain a wide range of perspectives on your work. This is important if you want to develop a well-rounded approach to your photography.

So, how can you get useful critiques? A good starting point is to seek feedback from people whose work you respect and who have expertise in the areas you want to improve. In our club, there are experienced members willing to help you – you just need to ask. Before you ask someone to critique your images, you need to do some preparation. Start by asking yourself what you hope to learn from the critique. Are you seeking feedback on capture techniques, composition, editing, overall vision, or something else? If you are clear about what you want to improve, you can ask for feedback on specific things.

At some stage in your photographic journey, you have probably received critiques that you did not like or agree with. This is not an uncommon situation in photography clubs where the critiques are being provided by judges who are under time pressure. Regardless of what a judge says about your images, don't be too quick to assume that they are wrong and you are right. Always listen, try to understand why the judge has made a particular comment, and learn from the experience.

Another way to get constructive critiques on your images is to join a group that exchanges images and feedback. You can do this in the Photographic Society of America Study Groups - you can find out more about them here: <u>study-groups (psa-photo.org)</u>.

Recently, it has become possible to get AI-generated image critiques. Your first reaction to that might be: "There's no way AI can critique images" - but you would be an incorrect assumption. Two systems that are currently available for free are "Brent's Friendly Photo Critique" (<u>https://photocritique.app/</u>) and Google Gemini (https://gemini.google.com/). They operate in a similar way - you upload an image and request "feedback". The critiques are generated in a matter of seconds.



PhotoCritique provides a summary critique and gives you the option of asking for more detailed feedback. Gemini allows for more flexibility in the prompts that you can use to get feedback but is limited in terms of the types of images it will accept - for example, at this stage, it will not accept images of people. Both critique systems rely on identifying the elements in the image, so they can give strange results if there is unusual content.

The critiques provided by PhotoCritique are usually very detailed and include comments on numerous aspects of the image. I have tried it with various images, and every time, it provides at least one suggestion for improving the image in a way that I had not considered. Invariably, the critiques are more detailed than I would expect to get in a club competition when the judge is working within a strict time frame.

The Gemini system provides three critique drafts for each image you upload, and sometimes they are quite different – much like getting opinions from three different people. In some cases, they go beyond commenting on just the photographic aspects of the image.

Of course, you cannot expect that AI will provide a perfect critique of any image - just as you cannot expect a perfect critique from a human. When a judge (or friend) tries to interpret one of your images, they will call upon their knowledge, their memories, and their culture. These things give them a way of seeing the world and expressing their views. The AI equivalent is the way in which the system was 'trained'. Consequently, the critiques from any AI system can have a characteristic style. The PhotoCritique site always tends to give very positive, encouraging comments because its 'training' was based on that type of critique. The Gemini system tends to give less emotive responses.

It is crucial to approach AI critiques as supplementary feedback and not as a replacement for human judgment. Humans can obviously provide valuable insights and opinions that consider subjective aspects and artistic intent in ways that AI cannot currently provide.

We generally accept that judges have opinions based on their experiences, preferences, photographic knowledge, etc., and that they vary in their ability to provide constructive feedback on images. We could view AI systems similarly - they are not perfect, and the feedback they provide depends on how they were 'trained', but they can be helpful. If you look beyond the shortcomings (which are sure to diminish in the near future), AI image critiques can help you consider possibilities and try new things. It can be fun to find that AI sees things that you did not see in your image or expresses feedback in a way that you would not use to express your opinion of an image. Give it a go!



# **BILL'S QUIZ – Bill Chambers**



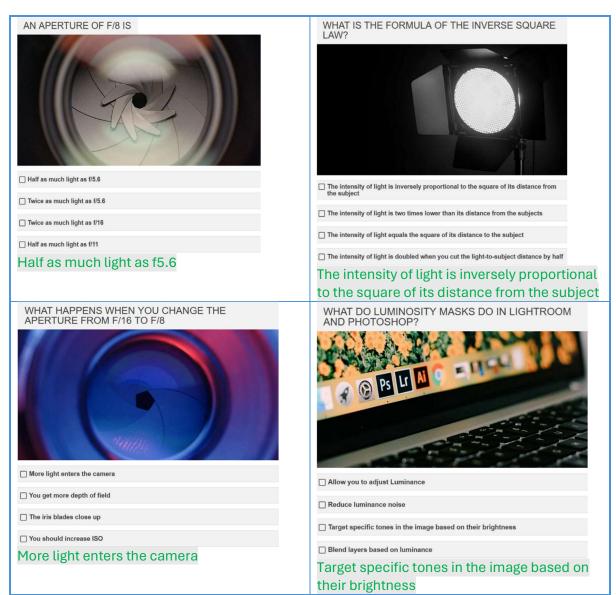
#### Answers to May Quiz





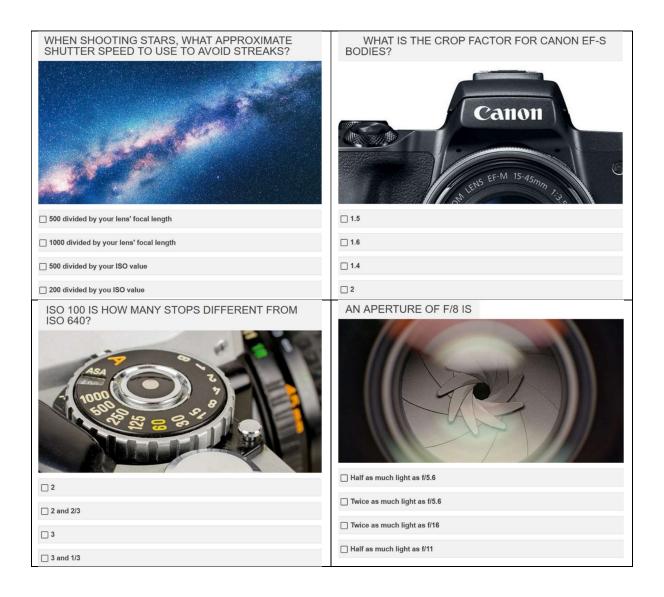
THE LATEST NEWS & VIEWS FROM LAKE MACQUARIE CAMERA CLUB

June 2024, Issue 11.





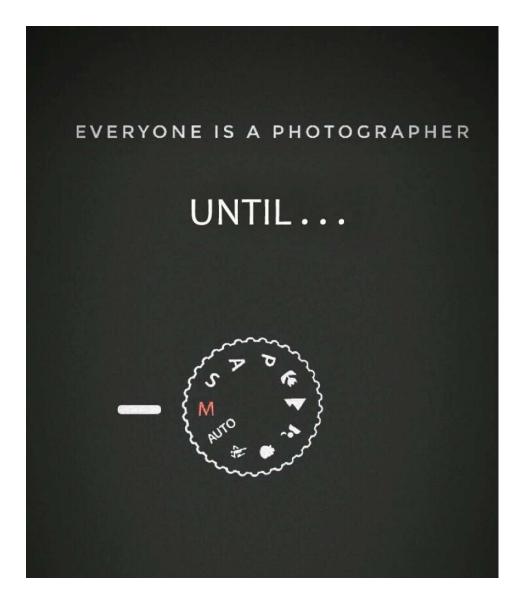
### Bill's Quiz – June













THE LATEST NEWS & VIEWS FROM LAKE MACQUARIE CAMERA CLUB

June 2024, Issue 11.

# DO SMARTER CAMERAS MAKE SMARTER PHOTOGRAPHERS? – Bill Chambers

Did Ansel Adams use a 200 fps Autofocus 8x10 with eye control focus, TTL exposure, a choice of 15 metering patterns, a wide to tele Zoom, with GPS and computer interface??

If you believe all the camera advertising thrown at you, you'll know in your heart that the latest All-Everything-Kiss-Your-Bank-Account-Goodby **Firstflex** with its 5-2000/f1.4 APO Zoom is your answer to photographic nirvana. Your shots will never look so good, or be so great, as when you possess this latest computerised wonder. You KNOW this is what you need. Your pics will be better, automatically, because that wonderful camera will be doing wonderful things without you even having to think about it.

I mean, after all, that's what the ads tell you, and they don't lie, do they??

So, you walk on up the camera counter, part with your hard-won loot, and then go off to make the world forget Eugene Smith. You and your new all-everything camera can now take more pictures faster. So what?

Are your pictures any better?? Not likely....

Now comes the hard part. Place all your new wonder pics on a table and open some books or go online to show the works of Mr. Smith, or Capa, or Cartier-Bresson, Stieglitz, or Margaret Bourke-White. Now then, do your pics compare well with theirs? Possible, of course, but not very likely.

https://www.magnumphotos.com/photographers/

https://www.wardynskiphoto.com/gallery/the-best-photographers-of-all-time/

https://shotkit.com/famous-photographers/

https://www.skillshare.com/en/blog/17-famous-photographers-whose-work-will-inspire-you/

The amazing thing about this little test is that most if not all the above were shot with NO TTL metering, NO Autofocus, nor motor drives or TTL flash, and heavens forbid, outdated lenses no self-respecting refugee from the monthly lens tests would allow themselves to be embarrassed with.

How could they do it? Do they know something you don't? Yes, indeed, they knew how to think for themselves, instead of having the camera think for them.

A good argument can be made that part of their greatness was because **THEY DID THE THINKING, NOT THE CAMERA**. Funny thing, the more automatic features the camera has, the less the photographer have to think. The less photographers think, usually the worse their pics, and the surer they are that they need the newer even more automated thingamajig to get better!



What an amazing marketing scheme. First you undermine the photographer's ability with automation, then you sell him more stuff to overcome his newfound shortfalls!

Of course, there are exceptions. If your application is fast moving and once in a lifetime, such as sports or true photojournalism, the photographer probably is helped by the all-everything-doesn't-have-to-think cameras.

On the other hand, if you want to approach photography as an art form, perhaps a more intelligent and informed approach is needed. Maybe, the photographer's images are bettered by taking the time to think, more time to understand, more time to **SEE**, more time to feel.More time to become one with it. What a weird concept. Perhaps the photographer should understand what they are doing more than the camera?

If you want to take lots of mediocre pictures quickly, modern cameras are great. But, if you want to take GREAT pics, the cameras need to leave you alone long enough to **THINK**. What's that you ask?

Photographers must think to get the best results. When cameras think instead of the photographer, mediocrity is often the result.

I know a lot of you will disagree, and that is fine. I would argue the point, but I don't have time since I have to go and try to figure out my exposure. Hmm, how does that f/16 rule work indoors?

I didn't say it was easy.







# Frame Today Club Sponsorship

June 2024, Issue 11.

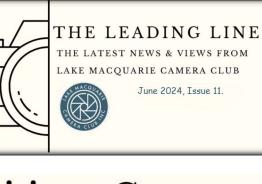
We are pleased to announce that our club has accepted a sponsorship arrangement with Frame Today at Warners Bay. In return for promoting Frame Today at our club events, on our website and in our newsletter, Frame Today will provide:

- one monthly print voucher of up to A3 size.
- an annual ready-made frame to fit an A3 print valued at \$129.
- a 30% discount on printing, backing and mounting services to members of our club when they join the free Frame Today's Art Society.
- Members can apply on the following <u>link</u>.

Each month the print voucher will be awarded by lucky draw to one of the Judges Choice winners for that month, includes all EDI and print competitions.

The annual frame prize will most likely be awarded as part of the prize for the overall Image of the Year (IOTY) winner at the end of the year.

If club members have any specific questions about the services that Frame Today offer, they can have a chat to Peter Treloar and Laurie Connolly.



# **Critique Corner**

<u>Critique Corner</u> aims to help members to fine-tune potential entries by gaining feedback from other members before the image is entered into a competition.

All members, regardless of experience are encouraged to upload images and make comments on images. The aim is to help each other to develop both your image capture and processing skills, and to take the judges' point of view when assessing an image. There are no grades within this activity.

Each member can upload one image per category. Once uploaded you can use this image in an upcoming competition. You can remove the image and replace it with another image whenever you choose.

The critique corner is accessible from the Members page as shown below or click on the image and it will take you there!

	Lake Macquarie Camera Club Inc.	DENNIS ARCHIBALD	TACT -
Members	Page		
VIEW ALL MY EP		CRITIQUE CORNER MEMBERSHIP RE	NEWAL
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2024 collec	tions ready to view and comment on		
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WHO?	Who's who in the L	MCC Zoo
President: Dennis Archibald	Vice President: Greg Carruthers	Secretary: Susan Slack
Treasurer: Ruth Keech	EDI & Judge Co-ordinator: Di Schofield	Membership Co-ordinator: Joy Thomas
Zoom & Workshop Co-ordinator & Club Equipment Loans: Greg Carruthers	Social Activities: Barb Hunter & Katherine James	Leading Line Editor: Julie Brooks
Committee Members: Barbara Hunter, Bill Chambers, Bob Todd, Diane Schofield, Greg Carruthers, Julie Brooks, Katherine James, Phil Whiteman, Lynda Beeston, and Roy Killen.	CHACOUTE CHA	Please feel free to contact any of the Committee members to discuss Club matters and to have those matters raised at a Committee meeting.
The Committee meets, via Zoom, at 7pm on the first Wednesday of each month. Annual General Meetings are held in August each year.	Club Patron: Les Porter 4958 5840 www.lesporter1.com.au Webmaster: Colin Woods	Any Lake Macquarie Camera Club member who wishes to be involved in Committee activities please contact our President or Vice President.