



Melbourne Ascending Photographers

NEWSLETTER

9th December, 2002

Hello again,
Thanks for attending the meeting last Tuesday. It was a real privilege to have Bill come and share his experiences with us and we're sure you would have got something positive out of it.
Have a great break over Christmas and we will look forward to seeing you all next year.

Cheers,
Erin, Lizzie, Robyn, Sally & Teresa

Next Meeting

Tuesday February 4th 7pm start.

Prahran Neighbourhood House
40 Grattan St Prahran

Speaker to be confirmed

Minutes of Meeting: Dec. 3rd, 2002 @ 7pm

Open Discussion:

Georgia Metaxas's exhibition was a success. It is still open, and may turn into a permanent exhibition. If you are interested in seeing it, contact the Greek Welfare Society on 9388 9998 or agws@agws.com.au.

PSC final year exhibition is coming up. We will let you know when soon.

RMIT students also have an exhibition soon at Bright Gallery.

Discussion of rates for studio space. \$100- \$150 per week for most spaces. Half day rates can be as much as \$150. Robyn Rosenfeldt knows of office space available in Richmond for \$66 per week and a studio space rented out at \$20 per hour.

House Keeping:

Announcement of ACMP support. ACMP gave us the seed money for our first meeting. They will give us space in the public area of their website where we can have a discussion billboard, updates on our meetings, a trading post and exhibition news. We can get information and advice from them. Also by being involved with an established body, MAP will exist after the current organizers move on.

Guest Speaker:

Bill Bachman spoke, answered questions and then showed a slide show of his current project. See below for a full description of this. Bill was thanked and given a bottle of wine.

The meeting finished around 9:15pm.

Guest Speaker: BILL BACHMAN

Bill Bachman's career began with a passion for writing and publishing. One day his editor told him it would be great if he could also take pictures and this was the beginning of his photography. Bill has now been a freelance photographer based in Melbourne for 25 years, and has had no formal education. From his wealth of experience, Bill has much advice for photographers starting their careers. Bill stressed that we must **take responsibility for our own education** and that we should **photograph what we know**. He also spoke about shooting **stock** and his most **current project, photographing Melbourne for a guide book**.

TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR OWN EDUCATION:

Bill believes that photography is about creating niches and that peer groups such as MAP are great. We should participate in them and he reminds us to be open, not to be secretive and to share information. There is a strength in numbers, and the support is important. However, Bill insists that success, like his, comes largely from self motivation and self sufficiency. One of the most important aspects of this is taking responsibility for your own education and by this he means the continual education post-formal study.

Bill suggested some ways of how to do this:

Firstly, **learn from your mistakes**. The two most important items to have with you when shooting is a tripod (for obvious reasons) and a notebook. In the notebook write down everything you do. Bracket your photos and write down what exposures you took and which one you expect to be correct. After processing film go back and check and learn from it. You must know the rules before you break them.

Secondly, **use all resources available to gain information**: newspapers, magazines and the internet. Read the newspaper so you know what is happening in the world. Read all sorts of magazines. Read photographic magazines for technical and consumer information as well as what is happening within the photographic community. Look at all ends of the spectrum from your peers to the top end; it is important to have a vision of where you are, but also where you are going. There is an American publication called Picture Magazine that is written specifically for professional photographers starting out. Look at photo magazines from other countries such as American Photographer, and the French magazine, Photo so that you get different cultural views. Look at magazines specific to the area of photography you are most interested. For Bill this includes magazines such as Outdoor Photography, Australian Geographic and National Geographic. Read computer magazines and even the green guide to keep up to date with the digital world. Also read specialty magazines in your area of interest, that are not photography magazines. Bill is a passionate skier and thus reads skiing magazines. This last type of magazine is important for Bill's second major point that we should photograph what we know.

PHOTOGRAPH WHAT YOU KNOW:

Throughout one's photographic career s/he will shoot all sorts of things, but a good starting place is photographing what you know. Bill stressed the importance of experiencing life because that is where photos will come from. You must have a life beyond photography. Draw on these loves, passions or even addictions to create your photography. From Bill's passion for skiing he became the number one skiing photographer. He could ski better than most of the people he photographed and knew much more than the audience of the photographs. Photographing what you know may mean photographing a sport like Bill, or cars, or music events, or even your girlfriend; it doesn't matter what it is, but photographing something about which you are passionate and knowledgeable will work in your favour.

STOCK:

Bill contributes work to half a dozen stock libraries around the world, in the UK, Japan, USA, and Australia. For 20 years he has had work in Photo Researchers stock library in the USA earning him around US\$80-100,000 over the entire period. Two Melbourne based stock libraries he contributes to are ANT Photo Library and Stock Photos. Through these libraries he sells a wide variety of images, and not just from his specific areas of interest. One point to keep in mind when working with foreign companies is to always quote in US dollars, Euros, or British pounds. Bill also raised issues of double taxation. Countries such as Germany and Japan will withhold 10%, but this should be a tax credit so always keep records of this. Also when sending originals to people always have a contract that clearly states the penalty for lost or damaged transparencies. In the past Bill has received up to \$1,000 per image.

In addition to the stock libraries mentioned above, Bill and his wife run their own stock library. This is only possible because Bill has always retained his copyright. The Web has created a fundamental revolution. Bill is currently having to put all his images, ten filing cabinets full, in digital form for the web, to basically do the same job that they have already been doing. All the scanning is being done in house, with 50MB Tiff files for each image: 12 images per CD, 150 CDs thus far --- scanning will continue throughout the next year.

CURRENT PROJECT, PHOTOGRAPHING MELBOURNE:

Bills current project is for an English company that publishes guidebooks. They wanted photos for their guidebook of Melbourne. It was important to have a uniformity in the photographs and they approached Bill. The initial contract was for not enough money, the photographs were needed by the end of December, and they wanted complete ownership of the photographs. Bill negotiated this contract to be changed so that he got their \$X amount plus 25%, the deadline was extended to February, and they can keep the photographs in their library, but can only use them for their publications and cannot sell them to others.

Bill shared a slide show of what he had shot so far. He advised to not only shoot what you know, but to return to the same location over and over. Also when shooting for a job like this one, or for stock, avoid taking photos that will be dated. Lifestyle images don't really work. You will make more money from non-remarkable photos that are shot well, are clean with nice lighting. Images with information are more successful than arty ones.

Bill also discussed his shooting style: he doesn't use an assistant (they want to be paid!) and uses minimal equipment. Keep it simple and only buy what you need. Bill passed around his tripod, Manfrotto's new Digi791B, a small light weight tripod. Bill meters with an incident light meter reading and then off a grey card. Bill also passed out copies of a recent article with advice of how to get started in photography from the Careers section of The Age, titled "Picture perfect requires focus" by Sophie Toomey.

Bill's final word of advice was to not be afraid to ask questions, but that you should be smart about it. Don't ask a photographer how you can be them or how you can be successful. Ask specific questions.

Exhibitions

Celebrating The Greek Welfare Society's 30th Anniversary

Photos By Georgia Metaxas

Opening Tuesday 26th Nov, 7pm

7 Union St, Brunswick.

RSVP 9388 9998 or agws@agws.com.au

Trading post

If you want advertise gear for sale please email all details to MAPhotographers@yahoo.com.au

Note: If you have any details about exhibitions, seminars and any other relevant info please forward it to MAPhotographers@yahoo.com.au