

Newsletter of the Hermanus Photographic Society
September 2023

So what's the big picture?

The street,
where three
camera
generations
meet

The rapidly increasing pace of international camera development was conspicuous locally when a group of club members and friends took to the streets on Saturday 16 September.



Part of our group of club members and friends who attended a workshop on street photography presented by Daniel Reddie (centre)

They were armed with three generations of cameras for the practical part of a workshop on street photography – DSLR, mirrorless and smartphone cameras.

One might argue that these three types represent the past, the present and the possible future of equipment for serious photography. But the real past for both popular and serious photography, the film camera, was absent.

1900 has been identified as a major milestone year in the development of the camera. That was when George Eastman, who had pioneered the use of

photographic film, produced the extremely popular Brownie, a simple and very inexpensive box film camera, according to Wikipedia.

Before that it took centuries of experimenting with the natural optical phenomenon whereby an inverted image of a scene can be projected through a small aperture onto a surface opposite the opening.

The film camera lasted for about a century, when digital cameras – ranging from the popular, cheap point-and-shoot to the advanced DSLR (digital single lens reflection) cameras – were invented in the late 1990s – a second milestone achievement.

During 1999 about 10,2 million were sold. Sales reached a height of about 120 million by 2009. As they went up, sales of film cameras came down and virtually stopped.

That record was dwarfed by a sales record of more than 1,5 billion in

2018 for the next newcomer and game changer, the smartphone, which can be regarded as the third milestone in camera development.

It started with the inclusion of a camera in a cell phone by Sharp in 2000, but really took off after 2007, when Apple launched its first iPhone, and others followed suit.

2018 was also a milestone year in a different sense. It was the year when Canon, the biggest manufacturer of standalone cameras in the world, started to take mirrorless cameras seriously by producing its first full-frame model aimed at professional and other serious photographers.

That mostly affected the top end of the camera market, where research and development spent was shifted from DSLRs to mirrorless, and experts predicted the end of the former type within a few years.

Meanwhile, the development of smartphone cameras seems to be accelerating. According to an article on Visual Capitalist's website the impact of the smartphone camera, which has come a long way since the early 2000s, on the overall camera market cannot be understated.

"In fact, modern smartphones have become so sophisticated that the CEO of Sony's semiconductor manufacturing company predicts that smartphone cameras will soon produce better quality images than DSLR cameras.

"Whether smartphones will be able to completely replace standalone cameras is still a contentious debate topic, but one thing is clear – while



The Brownie box film camera, pioneer of mass-market photography, which was introduced in 1900 by George Eastman, and sold until the 1960s

smartphone sales have skyrocketed over the last decade, (standalone) digital camera sales have plummeted,” the article said.

In an article in Wired Magazine, tech journalist Sam Kieldsen explains how the market has shifted:

“(Smartphones have) effectively killed off the cheap pocket point-and-shoot camera already, but there’s still so much they can’t do in comparison to a true purpose-built mirrorless or DSLR camera. Low light image quality, convincing bokeh effects and extreme close-up macro photography are all still significantly better on a real camera.”



Our club's specialist street photographer, Daniel Reddie, delivering his presentation on the subject in the Hermanus Dutch Reformed Church Hall, where we have our monthly meetings on the first Wednesday evening of each month

But even that is changing.

The PictureCorrect website, quoting photographer Phil Steele, points out some of the recent advances in smartphone technology.

They “produce vibrant, sharp, and well-lit images straight out of the camera; (they) offer automatic HDR (high dynamic range) capabilities, and improved shallow depth-of-field simulation; (they have) impressive low-light photography performance; (they have) superior video capabilities, including stabilisation and slow motion; (and they have) easy-to-use photo editing tools right on the device.”

And Petapixel reports on its website that research shows 61% of people use the smartphone on their camera every day.

Another website points out that the smartphone camera is already eminently suitable for street photography, because it is unobtrusive and easy to carry with you.

And there is good news for the many young people who are drawn into club photography through the popularity of smartphone photography. Because of the switch to mirrorless you can now get very good and capable DSLRs, new or used, with lenses, at bargain prices.

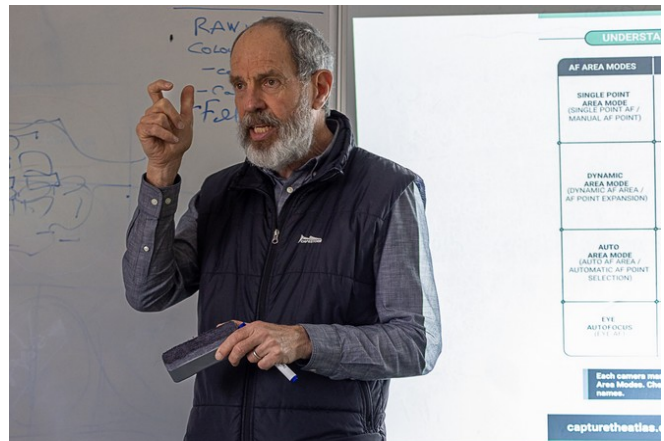
Basics for beginners of all ages



A wave of interest in photography from people of all ages has hit Hermanus.

It could be seen in the number of new members joining our club the past year, and in the activities and successes of Hermies camera club of Hermanus High School.

This new scenario called for an introductory course for the new enthusiasts.



It was duly arranged by our club, in association with Hermies, and presented by Phil Sturgess, our most honoured and highly rated photographer, at Hermanus High on Saturday 9 September.

The images show part of the group in their classroom (top), Phil in action (middle), and club members Roddy Mann explaining something to Anita Joubert (bottom).



From a youthful point of view



These two images are monthly winners in the PSSA (Photographic Society of South Africa) competition for youth photographers up to 19 years old. **Left** is “Colourful ambience” by Enya Zipfel, matriculant at Hermanus High School, which won the set theme of “Bold colours” in June. It was taken “on a chilly October day in Tübingen, Germany”. **Right** is “Sacrifice” by Lwandisenkosi Mkandla, grade 11 scholar at Queens College in Eastern Cape, winner of the set theme “Emotions” in August. It captured the emotion of a school soccer player after winning an important game.

Growing – now six months in a row

Our club membership has grown again – for the sixth time in six consecutive months.

Our latest new member is Peter McMorran.

Upward motion in club competitions



"Madonna and child on a windy day" by Jane McMorran, our entry for the September club competition for junior members.



"Dutch iris" by Daniel Reddie, club image of the month, and our entry for the PSSA's September club competition for senior members.

Our club has moved up into fifth place in the Western Cape in both monthly competitions organized by the PSSA (Photographic Society of South Africa), after doing well in August, the second month.

The top four clubs are Paarl, Fish Hoek, Cape Town and Tygerberg – in that order in both competitions. All four are in the junior national top 10 for photographers up to 3-Star level.

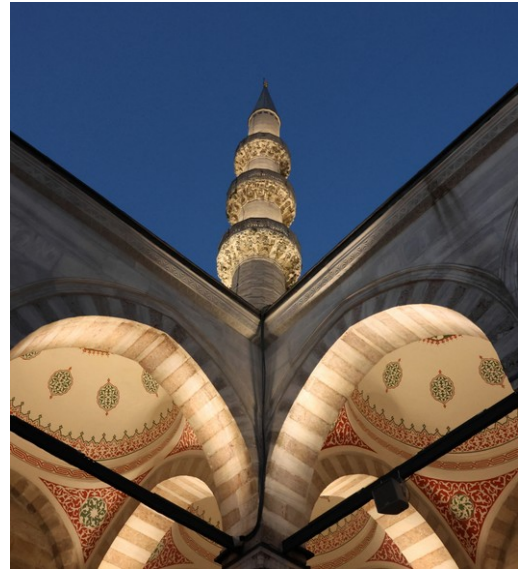
As usual in the early stages, the points differences are still small.

Hermanus has two clubs participating in the junior competition this year after Hermies school club joined in July. Another three Western Cape school clubs, Malmesbury, Charlie Hofmeyr from Ceres and Western Cape Schools from Cape Town, have been participating for some time.

We also have a lone ranger, David Wilson, in the monthly competition for individual PSSA members.



Above: "Sossusvlei shoreline" by Phil Sturgess, which was given a score of 38/45 in the August senior competition.
Right: "Blue hour mosque" by Ingrid Grundlingh (35/45 in the August junior competition).



First salon results of the new year

Participation by our club members in national and international salons in the new year, which began in July, has started slowly but surely.

Highwayclub national salon

David Wilson – 3 images accepted for exhibition

Charles Naudé – 2 acceptances

Sanparks Honorary Rangers national salon

Charles Naudé – 1 Merit award and 4 acceptances

David Wilson – 1 acceptance

Witzenberg club national salon

David Wilson – 2 acceptances

Sandton club national salon

David Wilson – 2 acceptances



"Ralreier" by Charles Naudé - Merit award in open monochrome category of Sanparks Honorary Rangers national salon

International salons

David Wilson – 1 Silver medal, 1 FIP Ribbon, 1 Merit award, 1 Judge's choice, 1 Honourable mention and various acceptances from various salons

Forthcoming events

Our October monthly meeting will be in the Hermanus Dutch Reformed Church Hall on Wednesday the 4th at 19:00. Members may enter up to three images of their choice, and one on the Set Subject, "A photo taken in the rain" / "'n Foto wat in die reën geneem is", all for evaluation. All submissions must be done via Photo Vault Online, and by Wednesday 27 September. All scores will count for advancement.

The guest judge will be Frank Heitmuller from Sandton.

The set subjects and judges for the next three months are

November – Urban regeneration or decay / Stedelike ontwikkeling of verval (Peter Hardcastle of Swartland club)

December – An equine subject / 'n Onderwerp wat met perde te doen het (Robbie Aspeling from Sandton)

February 2024 – Reflections / Weerkaatsing

More information can be found on the club website under Club Notices.

The First Friday Art Walk is from 17:00 to 20:00 on the first Friday of the month. Our club print exhibition which forms part of this is at Hermanus FotoFirst.

Committee

Carina de Klerk – President/Chair

083 631 5743 (hermanusphoto@gmail.com)

David Wilson – Vice chair, art exhibitions and media

064 745 3552 (hermanusphoto@gmail.com)

Phil Sturgess – Treasurer, membership and judge co-ordinator

083 272 2022 (hermanusphoto@gmail.com)

Kobus Botes – Secretary

084 941 1175 (hermanusphoto@gmail.com)

Judy Armstrong – PhotoVault administrator and advancement

(hermanusphoto@gmail.com)

Daniel Reddie – Venue management and club outings

084 642 0038 (hermanusphoto@gmail.com)

Vacancy – Technology and webmaster

All of them are available to assist you with your queries.

Snapshot

Editor: Charles Naudé

083 309 1857 (cmnaude@gmail.com)

Fluit-fluit, my storie is uit