The 24ᵗʰ May Zoom virtual meeting went well and with 14 Members and 1 guest from the Mill Hill group on-line.

Brian introduced the meeting and then passed it over to Andrew for his presentation "Watery Worlds".

The Presentation: " Watery Worlds" by Andrew

Andrew's presentation "Watery Worlds" was partially based around the ideas and suggestions in the ePhotozine email of the same name which was circulated after the meeting and incorporated many appropriate photos from both Freda's and his local walks and explorations, as well as from their holidays in the UK and in Europe as well *(plus some members' shots from previous Group competitions and presentations).*

A pdf of the presentation *(NB several images were deleted due to potential copyrights issues)* is attached, and is also now on our website page here https://u3asites.org.uk/hillingdon/page/84586 *(although Tony had to split it into 2 parts as the file is large).*

The presentation addressed a range of themes often associated with "Water", notably:
- Wildlife on Water
- Reflections
- Moving Water
- In Landscape
- Rain
- Cold
- Steam
- Water Sports

Andrew gave examples of shots illustrating each theme & we discussed various aspects of many of those, e.g.:

- Where and what time of day they were taken – and many of the most impressive ones were taken very early or very late in the day when the light was "good", and/or late at night *(e.g. "tourist" locations after all the rest of the other tourists had gone to bed, and when the artificial lighting lit up the buildings and rivers to spectacular effect &/or was reflected off the water in interesting patterns!)*

- Appropriate camera/phone settings *(NB: many simpler cameras, and most phones, don't allow you to change many/most settings – so experimentation is required!)*, notably:

  • Aperture settings – large/wide *(i.e. a "low" number) f*or reduced "Depth of Field" &/or low light, or small *(i.e. a "high" number*) for increased Depth of Field &/or to allow a high Shutter Speed

  • Shutter Speeds – a high number *(**at least** 1/500ᵗʰ second) to freeze fast moving objects/animals, or a low number (**less than** 1/10ᵗʰ second) to blur water (but you may then need a tripod or other camera support or else images will suffer "camera shake" and the* whole image *will be blurred!)*

  • ISO settings – a low number *(e.g. 100 ISO)* to allow long exposures with low shutter speeds, or a high number *(e.g. 1000 ISO or higher)* to allow high shutter speeds
(NB image quality can suffer if you are using a very old camera/phone where the sensor sensitivity is relatively poor and you then try to enlarge or heavily crop photos taken in poor light – OTOH, this should not be a problem with most modern devices).

  • Focusing: accurate focusing can often be very important, so make sure you check what the camera/phone considers to be the "focus point(s)" as its autofocus "brain" may think differently to yours and so focus on different points to the one(s) that you actually want!

- White Balance – this wasn't really discussed but adjusting it (at the time, or during "post processing") can make considerable differences, especially in cloudy weather or for scenes are lit by artificial light.

"Computer Backups - Do you backup your computer?" from Brian

Many members are (hopefully!) concerned about backing up their photos *(and other "important" stuff, of course!)* and may how to do that, and therefore Brian gave a short presentation *(attached herewith with the details in it, and now on our website pages)* which outlined the following areas:

- The various types of backups that can be made, what they do, and when to make them – and you should check whether you can restore the files in case you actually need to in the future!

- Backing up requires an external storage device, i.e. one that **IS NOT** inside your actual computer, tablet or phone because, if that stops working, then your data & photos may not be retrievable – so what could/can you use, or NOT use and why?

- The pros & cons of various types of local and/or "cloud" backup, and indications of the costs

- Issues with some types of backup devices *(e.g. DVDs don't hold much data by modern standards – and they deteriorate over time; USB "sticks" can fail, &/or simply get lost as they are so small; will your cloud storage still "be there" in the future as that depends on whether the provider is actually still in business!)*

Members were then asked if, how and where they did backups, and how confident they are that they can retrieve any files/photos that are stored there – the results were very variable, and so comments were "interesting"

- **Thus, PLEASE, think about how & where YOU backup your files, AND how you can access those backups in the future *(and then test the latter!)*!**

The May Competitions

Brian circulated the list of winning entries in the May "**Spring Time Photographs**" and "**Shot of the Month**" competitions, and he has sent them to Eirwen and Tony as appropriate, and so they will soon appear on our website pages as normal.

Andrew led discussions in which he "Shared "the Google Photo albums of the two competition entries and we discussed the circumstances and locations where shots had been taken, and the following comments were interesting!:

- Andrew's "Great Tit on Feeder" was actually shot through a window after he grabbed the camera whilst practicing with his ukulele!

- Janet found "These boots aren't made for walking" in the display window of Selfridges in Central London.

- Malcolm's "Is it real. Black Park" is actually of **model** boats on Black Park lake.

- Andrew's "Young Photographer" shot is of his granddaughter – apparently, she (and many other young kids) is so used to using touchscreen devices that she seems to be having little trouble getting used to using that quite complicated camera.

Comments were made that, with a little bit of "post processing" *(e.g. cropping, changing colours, lightning shadows/raising highlights , etc.)* some of the competition entries could have been improved before they were uploaded to Google Photos – therefore, remember that you *(or a Committee members on your behalf)* can always delete and replace a shot that you later don't like, as long as that is done **before** the competition entry deadlines.

The June Competitions

Following on from Andrew's presentation, the June themed-competition will be "Watery Worlds" and you can submit your shots into Google Albums as follows:

- **106C – "Watery Worlds" - 26 June 2021**

   https://photos.app.goo.gl/bFD1ZJdEWbotm3AY9

- **106S – "Shot of the Month" - 26 June 2021**

   https://photos.app.goo.gl/xsUeZx88BN4NCHK98

The deadline for all **entries** will be: **midnight on Saturday 19th June**

The deadline for **voting** will be: **midnight on Thursday 24th June**

Members are now encouraged to upload their photos directly to the relevant albums (*see Brian's 23rd March email – but, if you are uncertain about doing that, then NORMALLY continue to send them to Brian).*

HOWEVER, as Brian will be on holiday in the week before our next virtual meeting on 28th June, please DO NOT send your JUNE shots to him if you can't upload them to Google Albums as that task will be handled by one of the other Committee members – in early June we will announce relevant instructions for that and for then submitting your votes!

The 28th June presentation

The June presentation will be "**Outdoor Event Photography**" by John.

Monthly meeting Diary Dates for 2021 - the 4th Monday of each month *(at least for the immediate future)*

As you will all know, the H u3a meeting programme for 2021 is currently "fluid" due to the ongoing pandemic and restrictions, and thus we aim to have **Zoom meetings on the 4th Monday of each month** until such time as opportunities for face-to-face meetings at the Baptist Church *(or maybe elsewhere &/or as "photo-shoots??)* become much clearer and more stable (but that seems very unlikely before September/October at the earliest).

Well, that's all for the moment, and so all the best and hope to see you all on **MONDAY 28th JUNE at the next ZOOM Virtual Meeting!**

Brian

And on behalf of the other members of the Steering Committee: Andrew Longhurst, Judy Peddie & John Allen!

NB: you will soon be able to see these Notes on-line at https://u3asites.org.uk/hillingdon/page/61662, where you will also find those from previous meetings, and there is also much information & guidance there on many aspects of photography, learning how to use your camera, image processing and printing, etc.!