



# Vignettes 255

January 30th, 2025

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## Club News

Hi everyone. I hope you are all well. Sorry I couldn't be with you on Monday night as I'm on hols and for those who say 'please no more bloody crab pics' - here's one I grabbed this morning on the beach! iPhone SE (2019) with a bit of standard 'Apple Photos' processing. Yes, you've guessed it - this time an Atlantic Ghost Crab.



Back to Monday club night, from the WhatsApp Group feedback, it looks like it was a very successful evening. Here's Dave with a useful comprehensive round up and next week's programme.

## Programme Secretary's Review

### Last Week/Next Week

*Hi everyone. I hope you all enjoyed the Speed Learning evening. It was hard to gauge how it was going from the vantage point of just one table, but I got the impression it went very well and the two hours really flew by. Many thanks to the other facilitators and thanks too for the WhatsApp feedback. Sorry there wasn't the intended 'wrap up' session at the end but I've summarized below all the findings from the various topics we covered. I hope it's helpful and a good resource to access if you need to in future.*

## **Phone Cameras – Colin Hoskins**

*The vast proportion of people use iPhones, with a small proportion using Samsung. One person uses a Nokia, nobody reported using a Sony phone. The oldest iPhone model being used is the 6S, the newest one being the very latest 16 Pro. Everyone uses the native phone camera app to capture images. There was only a handful of people who use their phones as their main camera. The bigger proportion use Canon, followed by Nikon. Sony and then Fuji were only mentioned once.*

*Of those that use their phones to edit photographs, the vast majority use the Snapseed app. Some use the native camera editing option within their photos app. E.g Apple Photos. A small proportion use Lightroom. Here's a few phone photo apps that were mentioned and which people might like to investigate further:*

- *Picsart,*
- *Be Funky,*
- *White BG,*
- *LiDAR,*

*Also of interest might be Grock's AI image generator, which is only available via Threads apparently.*

## **Software – Dave Cahill**

*As far as editing goes nearly everyone is using the Adobe software package, mostly Lightroom Classic and Photoshop, mostly together though a few members were predominantly using just one of the two programs to meet their needs. One member was using Photoshop Elements (I think there are others who do too, they just weren't there on the night). A couple of people were dabbling with Luminar, the attraction being that it was a one off purchase rather than a subscription. DxO and the Nik Collection were also used, and Topaz, Helicon and Photomatix were mentioned.*

*Regarding organizing I got the impression that not many were using the full potential of Lightroom (collections, keywords etc) so that could be something we cover in a future evening. Bridge and Photo Vault were also mentioned so they could be included too. Adobe Lightroom (not Classic but the version which is cloud based) was also mentioned though there was some confusion about storage allowances. Something else to consider in a future club evening I think.*

*Last but not least, a lot of members were using Snapseed when editing phone camera images, and one member was using BeFunky to do nearly all their editing.*

## **Dealers (Buying & Selling) – Mike Cheeseman**

### Buying New

*The most popular way of buying was using grey importers. Several members had not heard of grey imports before so here is a definition:*

*“A ‘grey import’ camera refers to a camera that has been imported from a different region or country without the permission or support of the manufacturer. These cameras are usually sold at cheaper prices compared to those purchased through official channels in your country”*

*Here are a few key points to keep in mind regarding grey import cameras:*

- Cost: They are often more affordable due to lower regulatory and labour costs in the country of origin.*
- Warranty: They usually do not come with the manufacturer's warranty valid in your country. This means you could face challenges getting repairs or replacements from the local manufacturer's service centers.*

- Support: Documentation and manuals might not be in your preferred language and plugs or accessories might not be compatible with your local standards.*

*The main (only?) reason that Club members bought grey imports was cost savings which were around 25%. The most popular grey importers were Cotswold Cameras and Panamoz with HDEW getting a mention. Members' experience of these suppliers was 100% positive. Most of the members who used grey importers were reasonably confident about the warranty offered (in some cases longer than the manufacturer's warranty) and felt that the equipment was unlikely to develop a fault anyway. One member reported that he had been able to register his grey imports (from both Canon and Nikon) in the UK implying that the usual manufacturer's warranty would apply. Some members much preferred using UK-based official dealers so they could visit a showroom, try out equipment and get the benefit of the dealer's expertise. Clifton Cameras (recently moved to Cheltenham), T4 (Swindon), WEX, LCE, Park Cameras, Castle Cameras all had very positive feedback. Wex (London) had a black mark for lethargic sales staff.*

*Another approach was to look for deals at photography shows where special offers are often available, and dealers may compete on the day (ask Lawrence for tips!).*

### *Buying Used*

*Members' favourite for buying used was MPB with excellent service and a good warranty being mentioned as the main reasons. LCE and Ffordes were also highly rated. One member had a poor experience with Mifsuds.*

*Another popular way of buying is eBay. Items are often a lot less expensive than from camera dealers such as MPB which some members felt more than made up for the lack of a warranty. All members using eBay had positive experiences. The main reason that some members avoid eBay is scammers and the risk of faulty equipment and the hassle involved in sorting out problems.*

### *Selling Used*

*Members' preferred method is using the reputable dealers (MPB, WEX, LCE etc) and recent experiences were nearly all positive. The process of selling is straightforward, and prices paid are felt to be fair. One member offered an item of equipment to four*

dealers to compare quotes and found a wide range of offers – the highest being 30% more than the lowest.

Ffordes was highly recommended, and they offer two selling options. The first is (like most other dealers) immediate cash. The second is to wait until Ffordes sell your item before you get the cash. Usually this means you will get more money in the end. Facebook Marketplace was also recommended as being effective and free.

### **Courses/Workshops – Stephen Chapman**

- *About 50 % of members had attended courses or workshops.*
- *no pressing need or potential high cost were main reasons why not.*
- *important to be clear about objectives to choose the best format.*
- *Detailed instruction/technical -> workshops/seminars /1:1 /on-line resource*
- *Location/new opportunities/genres -> tours/ workshops /re-enactments*

### *Positives*

- *effective use of time - dedicated photography no distractions or other obligations.*
- *taking advantage of others expertise on best locations/opportunities.*
- *access to opportunities / locations difficult to obtain on your own.*
- *on some workshops opportunity to try out different camera lens /accessories.*
- *tips from “pro” users on camera etc helps cut things down to critical items for effectiveness.*
- *meet/share experiences with like minded people*

### *Risks*

- *though leaders actively get around everyone, if you need specific attention/advice may need to ‘compete’ with others for attention.*
- *depending on format may need to wait turn for specific spots or equipment.*
- *helps to be flexible in approach to make most of the days - make most of location not just the sought after “trophy” images.*
- *dynamics of group / course leaders particular style may not suit everyone - research ahead of time - maybe try a single day / 1/2 day workshop first to see if it’s a “fit” before bigger courses?*
- *popular destinations/courses can be booked up very far in advance (years...)*

*Some suggestions from members*



- *Art of photography - Cirencester college course.*
- *Skillshare - on line resources on wide range of subjects for a small annual subscription.*
- *Terry Vander Heiden - photoshop on-line tutorials.*
- *Adobe press - books and on-line resources.*
- *Nikon School - free q&A sessions /on line videos / on line and physical camera /technique tuition, and location/subject workshops. (other manufacturers probably do same)*

*Workshops (very many providers available !)*

- *Captivelight.*
- *Image seen.*

*During discussions one suggestion raised whether the club could consider running longer half day/ 1 day internal workshops expanding on the “social” summer events to provide a similar experience ?*

### ***Accessories – David Wallis***

*A lively discussion on the accessories that members considered “essential”. As expected the common items were tripods, bean bags and remote triggers. Post processing appears to have reduced the use of filters.*

*Novel items that sparked an interest were photographer’s gloves and neoprene camera cases. Camera straps might be a topic for Martyn to explore along with his camera bags!*

### ***Locations/Guidebooks – Paul Norris***

- *Overall, a wide-ranging topic across the 6 groups, each of which focused on different areas and topics. I believe this represents the diversity of photographers, interests and favourite locations within the club*
  - *Over 50 separate locations (near and far) were highlighted as favourite haunts to visit at different time of the year to pick up different moods, light, time of the day and seasonal colours*
  - *Additionally a wide range of genres were discussed as great locations including cities, architecture, buildings, country walks, rivers, wildlife, sport, coastal and some = time just going for a drive round to find out what is out there!*
  - *Most agreed pre-planning and using some of the weather and lighting apps (e.g. Helios Pro) to help with that research.*
  - *A range of guidebooks or other social media is used to identify good locations as well as where to position your camera at the location. A number highlighted that some photographers are quite shy about revealing a specific location to stand!*
- I am going to summarise everyone location into a separate list and will supply if anyone is interested*

## Next week

Here's a reminder that next week we have the **Travelogue Night**, 7:30 pm start. There will be five presentations:

- *Borneo – Mandi Horwood*
- *Namibia – Nigel Rogers*
- *Icelandic Horses – Tricia Lindsay*
- *Andalucia – Dave Cahill*
- *Mountain Landscapes – Paul Jones*

See you there.

Cheers

Dave Cahill

Thanks Dave. A great and really useful summary. Not really sure about Camera Straps but happy to oblige. Unlike my bags, I've only ever had one strap and I swap it between cameras. I've had more cameras than straps!

## **BBC pictures**

As usual some great images from across the globe from the BBC's website:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy9lp0z3edqo>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy5kr390n11o>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c805k8vxn0no>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/ckg07g8lzv7o>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c2l0exzyp74o>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c0e4l2pw159o>

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c7vd7gvrndvo>

## **Competitions and info**

### **Definitions of Set Subjects**

**JOURNEY:** A journey photograph is an image captured during the course of a journey or expedition, typically depicting scenes, landscapes, people, or moments encountered along the way. These photographs often aim to convey the essence of the journey, capturing the spirit of exploration, discovery, and adventure.

**UK Flora, Fauna, Fungi:** A flora, fauna, fungi photograph is an image that showcases plant life (flora), animal life (fauna), or fungi found in a particular ecosystem or habitat. These photographs aim to highlight the diversity, beauty, and intricacies of the natural world. They can range from close-up shots of individual species to wide-angle landscapes that capture entire ecosystems.

**Golden/Blue Hour.** During the golden hour, the sun is low in the sky, casting long shadows and creating a warm, diffused light that can enhance the colours and

textures in a scene, often producing a soft, flattering glow. In contrast, the blue hour occurs just before sunrise or after sunset when the sky takes on a deep blue hue, creating a serene and tranquil atmosphere.

**Still Life :** A still life photograph is an image that portrays inanimate objects, typically arranged by the photographer to create a visually compelling composition. It can range from simple, minimalist compositions to more elaborate and stylized scenes, depending on the creative vision of the photographer.

**Closed:** A photograph with the title "closed" could depict a variety of subjects or scenes, but the title suggests a theme of closure, restriction, or inaccessibility.

**For all Competitions please upload images via Pixeroo link below: -**  
[pixeroo.com/public/account/login](https://pixeroo.com/public/account/login)

### 2024-25 Competitions and information

Cirencester Camera Club General Competition Schedule 2024/2025			
	Competition	Submission date	Judging night
A	Journey + Open	30/09/24	28/10/24
B	UK Flora, Fauna, Fungi + Open	28/10/24	02/12/24
C	Golden/Blue Hour + Open	02/12/24	13/01/25
D	Still Life + Open	13/01/25	17/02/25
E	Closed + Open	17/02/25	24/03/25
Annual	2024-25 Annual competitions	24/03/25	14/04/25 and 28/04/25

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#### **Summer Cup** (judged by members)

This is an informal competition which takes place during the 'off season' between June and September. Members can submit an image on one or all of the three subjects, which must be taken between end of May and beginning of September. These will then be judged by the other members at the start of the season. [Exact dates and subjects will be confirmed each year at the AGM]

#### **Ted Parrott Memorial Trophy** (judged by members)

This Trophy is in memory of a long standing and valued member of the Club, Ted Parrott who passed away in 2019. Images must be of 'Sporting Action', and be submitted by the start of the season. This image must have been taken between the start of the current season and the start of the following season. [Exact dates will be confirmed each year at the AGM]

CCC Annual Competition categories - submission deadline 24 March 2025		
Award	Subject	Format
Pitchers Trophy (Topic chosen by Club President)	Family in the Cotswolds	DPI, 1600 x 1200, sRGB
Dennis Moss Trophy	Open	Print 1600 x 1200, sRGB
Leonard Jones Cup	Open	DPI, 1600 x 1200, sRGB
Cavendish Cup	Black and White Open	Print 1600 x 1200, sRGB
Miles Shield	Open (Club outing)	DPI, 1600 x 1200, sRGB
Gladiator Trophy	Aviation	DPI, 1600 x 1200, sRGB
Pitchers Cup <u>Open to new members only.</u>	Open	Print or DPI, 1600 x 1200, sRGB

For all Competitions, please upload images via Pixoroo link below: -

**[pixoroo.com/public/account/login](https://pixoroo.com/public/account/login)**

### **BBC pictures**

As usual some great images from across the globe from the BBC's website:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy9lp0z3edqo>  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cy5kr390n11o>  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c805k8vxn0no>  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/ckg07g8lzv7o>  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c2l0exzyp74o>  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c0e4l2pw159o>  
<https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/c7vd7gvrndvo>

### **Quote of the week**

*Unlike any other visual image, a photograph is not a rendering, an imitation or an interpretation of its subject, but actually a trace of it. No painting or drawing, however naturalist, belongs to its subject in the way that a photograph does - John Berger.*

That's it, have a good week.

Cheers

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Dave ([dave.cahill975@btinternet.com](mailto:dave.cahill975@btinternet.com))