

BCC News January 1997 Issue no. 69

The newsletter of Basingstoke Camera Club

Welcome, albeit a little belatedly, to 1997. I tried to get the newsletter out earlier, but failed miserably as I have been too busy tending to all manner of other things, like getting over flu and sorting out my slides. Both of these little jobs turned out to be much bigger projects than I had bargained for! But I trust we are all in fettle fine enough to be able to get on with the business in hand, and take lots of pictures during the coming spring.

Speedibrews Evening

Although certain members of our club have been known to dabble in the art of print toning, the session put on by the Speedibrews team seemed to go well as members both new and old got to grips with dunking their pictures into strange-looking solutions, some of which seemed to wipe out all the hard work by killing off whatever image there was. But thankfully, everyone stayed sane and hung on until the toners brought back their little gems of work and quite often improved the results, too. I was particularly taken by the way they made toning a sky and a foreground in different colours look so easy. It makes me wonder if sometimes I'm guilty of trying too hard and making things too complicated in my search for

As we know, in the past a certain member or two have been able to, shall we say, extend the useful life of a negative, by creating more than one version of a print by creative use of toners and dyes, or even that unpredictable stuff Jessops sell which gives the added excitement of never producing the same results twice. But the lesson to be learnt here is that with the wealth of materials available to the amateur photographer these days, ranging from film types, through papers, chemicals and the like, the world is very much our oyster, and it is really only a matter of trial and error to get a result with which you are pleased and so can set your own

My thanks to Mike Farrow for the following article of an event last November.

Digital Imaging

This month's update on Digital Imaging finds me not a lot further on in the tale. If someone had come along and said here is a computer enhancement which turns things green, I would have known where I was, it would have been easy, because there would only have been one choice. But no - the introduction of DI has give me a wealth of choice. So much so that I am now thoroughly spoilt, and just can't get used to having my own way. The possibilities are endless. So I start working on a particular image, enlarge a portion of it, solarise the colours, paint out the traditional lamppost from the top of someone's' head, and there you are, finished!....but what if I did this, or that, or went back a stage and turned it blue.... by the time I've got that far its way past bedtime and I'm too tired to care whether the result is any good or not.

It was the same when I first started printing. I got so excited with the actual mechanics of the process, I didn't have enough steam left to get a good result! Keep watching, I'll get there!

Trade Processing

In a recent issue of a well known photo mag, there has was a comparison of the results produced by various high street D&P outfits. Not so long ago, there was a similar article on the processing of APS films. I suppose it will come as no surprise to hear that the quality was very inconsistent, not only from firm to firm, but also from week to week within the same firm, many of whom you may have hoped would have been better value for money.

So what value then can we place on the prints produced commercially by these types of outlets? If you are expecting first class prints it would seem you may be disappointed unless you go to a specialist lab. But I've found that there are more pitfalls here, as even these places seem to have the knack of producing colours which weren't there, or exposing the prints in such a way you don't get the results you wanted. All in all, a very hit and miss business even then. But they are often very good at giving you personalised labels for your next order, or bombarding you with offer leaflets. The photographs almost seem secondary!!!