

OSPS newsletter

The newsletter of the Ordnance Survey Photographic Society
In its 66th year.
Spring / summer 2019



28mm

Night of year results

Been there, done that, got the photo: Barbara

Editor's thoughts

There are certain basics in photography that you can't avoid. Yes, you've got to get the exposure right, focus correctly, use a flash if necessary, though so much can be automated nowadays. But there's one thing computer algorithms can't do; put you and your camera in front of the picture. You have to do that. You have to work out where the picture is and when it's going to be there, and then fly, drive, sail, walk, crawl or climb to get in the right place. Sometimes it might be a pleasant stroll, sometimes it might be an arduous endeavour. Think of how much was involved in getting a few Hasselblads to the moon, or Edmund Hillary hauling his little Kodak Retina 118 to the summit of Mount Everest. Or how about Herbert Ponting and his plate cameras in Antarctica?

Mike Stacey

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Cover image: 'Rocky and choppy' © Barbara Beauchamp

Nights of year results 2018-19 season

Yes it's that time in the year, when the best images from the monthly competitions gather in the meeting place of the ancient ancestors to battle for the ultimate prize. Here are the results for the 2018-19 season.

Trophy	Winner	Runner-up
Primary colour prints (for the Colour Print Trophy)	No qualifiers	No qualifiers
Senior mono prints (for the Metcalf Trophy)	Martin Buckley <i>Kongsfjorden, Svalbard</i>	Barbara Beauchamp <i>On the stairway</i>
Senior colour prints (for the Colour Print Tankard)	Roy Fisher <i>Insect on knapweed</i>	Barbara Beauchamp <i>Off the wall</i>
Primary PDI (for the J. Leisnam Cup)	Roger Beauchamp <i>Ice pattern 2</i>	Ian Miller <i>Glass bricks</i>
Senior PDI (for the Premier Colour Award)	Maureen Toft <i>Young elephant dusting</i>	Mike Stacey <i>Push push push</i>
Open print competition (for the Open Print Trophy)	Not held	Not held
Open PDI competition (formerly Herbie Cox Trophy)	Maureen Toft <i>Young calf</i>	Mike Stacey <i>110 percent</i>
Panel of 3 print competition	Not held	Not held
Panel of 3 PDI competition	Mike Stacey <i>Push push push</i>	Roy Fisher <i>St Ives</i>
Most prolific worker (The Bill Bessant Print)	Roy Fisher	Barbara Beauchamp
Most consistent mono printer	Roy Fisher	Barbara Beauchamp
Most consistent colour printer	Roy Fisher	Barbara Beauchamp
Most consistent PDI worker	Mike Stacey	Jenny Harding
Derek Travis Trophy	Kevin Ramsell	

Been there, done that, got the photos

This is the second in an erratic series about photographic travels. The first traveller was Mike and this time it's Barbara. The questions are similar while the answers are very different, but journeys are variable and we all travel with our own outlook and curiosity.

Do you have a favourite mode of transport?

Once I have arrived I enjoy travelling by the local public transport. I rarely take tour coaches or taxis.

Of the places you have visited, what is:

a) the most memorable (wow!) place you have visited?

Memorable? Very difficult, lots for different reasons, probably New York.

b) the strangest place you have visited?

I cannot think of a strange place, places are different to our norm, but not strange in their context, although actually Los Vegas was strange.

c) a favourite place?

Favourite, Scotland, but I cannot choose a particular bit. There was a hot sunny day I went to Sanday, one of the Islands in Orkney, that was particularly fine.

Is there anywhere you would like to visit but haven't?

I would like to go to New Zealand.

Is there anyone, living or dead, who you would like as a travel guide?

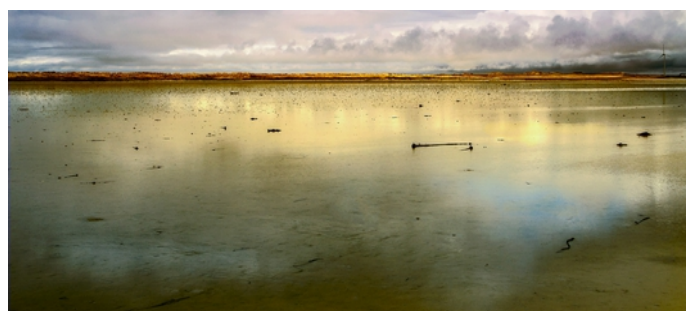
Mainly I travel on my own, Roger doesn't like long journeys, and I am quite happy with that. When I can, I listen to Simon Calder the Travel editor of the Independent, I think he would be a good guide, and he uses public transport.



Brodie Old Town, California



Card playing, China



Uist beach

What is your most travelled possession?

Travelled possession, I am always pleased to find I have my passport with me, and a means of listening to a UK radio, and of course my camera.

Do you collect souvenirs from your journeys?

Do I collect souvenirs? Not particularly.

Do you have a useful hint or tip for travel photography?

An open mind, remember to rest at times, research before you go.

Barbara Beauchamp

28mm

I started a bit of a clear-out recently, going through cupboards, cases, boxes, and I noticed something surprising. I seem to have accumulated a number of 28mm lenses, or equivalents depending on format. I've never really thought of myself as a 28mm sort of photographer. 24mm? Yes, I've had a couple of those and I wore out the first one.

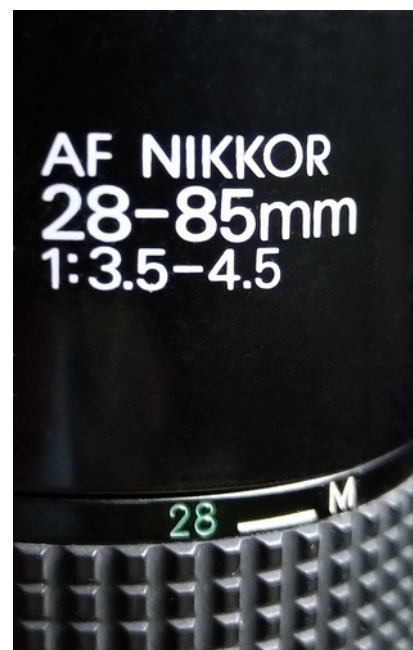
Odd things focal lengths. There are the sort you might expect, like 20mm, 50mm, 200mm and the like. Nice round numbers. But then there are the oddities, such as 18mm, 21mm, 28mm. Where on earth did they come from? The earliest example I can find for the 28mm on the 35mm film format is the Leitz Hektor 2.8cm f6.3. I thought I had read somewhere that this was the widest focal length that could be used on the rangefinder camera of the time, but I can't find confirmation of that. Whatever the reason, it seemed to set a trend for other optical manufacturers, such as Zeiss who followed with a 2.8cm F8 Tessar in 1937.

The early 28s were for rangefinder cameras, but were quickly reformulated for the single lens reflex cameras that largely replaced them. All the major 35mm format camera manufacturers had at least one version; Nikon, Canon, Pentax, Topcon, Konica, Minolta. So too did the independent lens companies, such as Zeiss, Tamron, Sigma, Cosina. Maximum aperture was usually f3.5 or



f2.8, though a quirky f3 would appear now and then.

The reason I've picked on the 28mm focal length is because of smartphones. For various technical reasons a moderately wide angle lens, equivalent to 28mm, was chosen by many smartphone manufacturers. If you take the Apple iPhones 7+, 8+ and X (10), the production figures (while difficult to pin down a precise number), exceed 100 million. Of course it's not just Apple. Samsung, Nokia and others chose a 28mm equivalent for some of their smartphones models. The Nokia 9 has five of the things! If you take these smartphones together with the output of the camera and lens manufacturers, 28mm is possibly the most used focal length in photography.



And it's not just the fixed focal length lenses of course, there are all the zooms. The 35mm / full frame format has seen a lot of zooms that start at 28mm and end up at 75-85mm, and that range has been followed by APSC, 1 inch and 4/3 formats. Medium and large format cameras have many lenses that give a field of view equivalent to 28mm, but at least two medium format manufacturers have 28mm lenses. Phase One have a 28mm f4.5 and Hasselblad a 28mm f4. 28 is everywhere!

But it's not just volume or universal appeal. The 28 has diversified and evolved in many directions. The average 28mm lens on the full frame format has a maximum aperture of f2.8, while the fastest is currently F1.4 (for example the Zeiss Otus). However, Sigma has patented a 28mm design with a maximum aperture of f1.2. Mind you, if you want to push what's possible, you could use a Metabones 0.71x Speed Booster Ultra with a mirrorless APSC camera combined with one of the f/1.4 lenses to give an effective f/1.0!

NASA's use of Nikon equipment over many decades has seen 28mm put into orbit, while divers have taken it underwater in the form of the 28mm UW Nikkor on the special Nikonos cameras. And of course there have been lots of 28mm perspective control lenses for use in architectural photography.

But if you want something exciting, how about a radioactive 28mm? Yes, really! Don't worry though, they're not dangerous. The reason you'll get a reaction from a Geiger Counter if you put it next to some old camera lenses is that in the 1940s-1970s there was widespread use of thorium glass elements. Thorium oxide is highly refractive and low dispersion, which meant that the lens designers could create better-corrected optics at a reasonable price. Such elements were used in a wide variety of lenses and

that included the 28s, for example, the Minolta MCW Rokkor-SI f2.5 28mm, Olympus M system G Zuiko Auto-W f3.5 28mm, Yashica Yashinon DX f2.8 28mm and Vivitar Series 1 f1.9 28mm.

And one final thing to ponder. If you put a 28mm lens on an APSC format camera, you get a field of view equivalent to 42mm. Any Douglas Adams fans will know that 42 is the answer to life, the universe and everything..... Just saying.

PS: a word about equivalent field of view. If you're wondering about this, for reasons probably resulting from its deep roots in photography, the 35mm format (or full frame as it's become in the digital era), has become a reference point. While a few film formats smaller than 35mm's 36x24mm existed, digital sensors have seen far more and they can be almost any size. They could be anywhere from 6x4mm to 25.1x16.7 mm, in smartphones, through bridge cameras to APSC mirrorless. Each sensor size has different focal length lenses for a given angle of view. For example, a micro 4/3 sensor has a quarter the surface area of a 35mm/full frame sensor, and this means an equivalent view of view will need a lens of half the focal length of that for 35mm/full frame, so 14mm would be equivalent to 28mm.

OS Runners

At the turn of the year OSPA was asked to take part in another of the lunchtime promotional events for clubs at Ordnance Survey. So on the 29th January I arrived just before midday, and was let through the security barrier by someone who seemed to remember me – except I didn't recognize the voice at the other end. And I only left OS 4½ years ago! I got my visitor's pass from reception and found Roy Fisher and Andrew Mills were already there, in the process of setting up at the stand provided. We had 2 laptops so Andrew started showing the selection I put together on a big screen and I ran a selection of images on my Linux tablet. Roy had bought a collection of prints and RPS journals.

There were a total of 14 clubs in the big utility room, most of which I had encountered before. The 'craftography' club next to us was a new one to me, as was 'Boot camp'. No chess club though – wonder if they still exist? Anyway, we got a reasonable amount of interest and we thought we might get one or two new members. We were also approached by the OS Runners club, who asked if we might be able to shoot some images for them at one of their lunchtime runs.



And so, on a bright, sunny Tuesday lunchtime in March, Barbara, Roger and I arrived at Adanac at 11.50am, met up with our 4th shooter, Dave Perkes, and presented ourselves at the reception desks where we were given visitor passes and waited for shooter no5, Kevin.

At midday we were at the north end of the big brick wall, where the runners would be starting, and I bumped into the Facilities Manager Greg Tumilty. I told him about being there to photograph the OS Runners and he made a generous offer of access to the roof for an interesting photographic viewpoint. We didn't have time to take the opportunity this time, but worth bearing in mind for the future. Ian Robinson, who was on admin / race support detail, gave us a quick overview of the route and timetable. The runners would be starting at different times, depending on ability. The route was 5 kilometres (3.1 miles), so wouldn't take the more capable athletes even 30 minutes. That meant we couldn't get very far to vary location, so we shot the runners as they left, then Dave and Roger walked over to the path from Nursling Street to catch the runners as they were coming south. Barbara, Kevin and I stayed where we were to shoot them as they approached the finish line.



Once everyone was back, Barbara and I asked if they would pose for the group photos in front of the big OS logo. We had been fretting about a suitable location, but the logo seemed the best backdrop. With that done, Greg asked us if we would like to have lunch while we were here. Well it would have been rude to refuse! If you go to osrunners.uk and search for 'March Handicap 2019', you'll find an article about the day and the photos used.



Mike Stacey