



SPA President's Newsletter

September 2025

Back in April I had the pleasure of being a guest of **Windlesham & Camberley Camera Club** at a dinner to celebrate their 90th anniversary. With early royal patronage and international salon hosting, the club (initially without Camberley in its title) flourished. As evidenced by the excellent turnout and atmosphere that evening, and my judging visits to the club, W&CCC continues to be a dynamic and welcoming organization. Such are the most pleasurable aspects of the position of SPA President.

It also gives me pleasure to report on individual and club successes. In the **PAGB's GB Cup** ([details](#)) Open section **Reigate PS** finished a creditable 17th out of nearly fifty clubs with **Nick Rogers** receiving the Chairman's Silver Medal for his image "Life's a Beach". Also, receiving a PAGB Medal was **Brendan McIlhargey** of Woking PS for "The Boy and the Bird". There are no qualifying hurdles to overcome for a club to enter the annual GB Cup. It offers a great chance to show off your best images at a national level with minimal expense.



Molesey PC and **Godalming PC** did well in the Nature section with **Thinesh Thirugnanasampanthar** (Woking PS) and **Mike Rowe** (Godalming PC) awarded PAGB Medals for, respectively, "Running Wild Kestrel" and "Helina Impuncta on Bracken".



At a more local level, our **Inter-Club PDI Championships** in May were very well supported with a full hall in East Horsley, 27 SPA clubs represented, and over 600 images enlivening our afternoon. Many thanks to Annie Healey and David Chiverton on their unfailingly thorough and unstinting work on the event. In the Nature section **Bookham CC** were worthy winners and you can see their winning images on the front page of the [SPA website](#).

CLUB	SCORE	Ave Mark
<i>Bookham Camera Club</i>	101	12.63
<i>Molesey Photographic Club</i>	97	12.13
<i>Godalming Photographic Club</i>	95	11.88



Richmond & Twickenham PS had a good day, placing 4th in Nature and 1st in the Open Section. Together with **Reigate PS** they are invited to represent the SPA at the PAGB's Inter Club PDI Championship held at Warwick in June.

CLUB	SCORE	Ave Mark
<i>Richmond & Twickenham Photographic Society</i>	189	11.81
<i>Reigate Photographic Society</i>	188	11.75
<i>Molesey Photographic Club</i>	184	11.50

Equally impressive was **Molesey's** 2nd and 4th placing, demonstrating that smaller clubs can excel in our inter-club championships. Our rules seek to encourage and accommodate clubs with fewer active members by permitting more images from each individual photographer. Check out the rules [here](#).



After together accumulating many years of sterling service to clubs, **Jay Charnock, David Eastley, Marcus Scott-Taggart and Bob Webzell** are retiring from the judging circuit. We can be very grateful for the countless evenings given over to freely sharing advice and expertise, supporting a pivotal activity of clubs. I'm sure that I'm not alone in my many memories of being entertained and inspired. We hope that without those nighttime journeys in all weathers, they will find even more time for their own photography and leisure. Training days for **potential new judges** have been arranged (26th October, 30th November). If you're someone who has toyed with the idea of judging but have not yet declared an interest then do get in touch with me directly: we offer an online, commitment-free taster session to sample what is a very rewarding activity.

In the rapidly evolving technological world we inhabit, most advances help us to better capture and process our images. One thrust of the SPA's work this year has been to highlight the role of artificial intelligence (AI) in our photography. At the Club Officers' Meeting in March I outlined some of the uses of **Generative AI** that are prohibited in SPA and PAGB competitions. A presentation on this subject is being made available with the expectation that clubs will find it useful in their efforts to inform and educate their members on these matters. Your committee members need only contact me to get the PowerPoint file.

A significant event in the life of the SPA is the **Biennial Exhibition**, which will be on display at the Guildford House Gallery, on Guildford High Street, from the Official Opening at midday on Friday 10 April until Saturday 02 May 2026. Full details will be sent to club officers in September, for dissemination to club members, with the entry system staying open until the closing date of 31 January 2026. Your entries must be collected at club level by the end of January. In addition to the established 5 categories (3 in print and 2 in PDIs) and associated awards, a **new category** has been introduced for the 2026 Biennial Exhibition, for club members who hold no distinctions or accreditations nor have ever had an image selected to represent their club in external competitions. This will be PDI only and will have a separate column on the entry forms. We hope that this will encourage less experienced members to participate in the Exhibition.



I include here an image that I expect we will be enjoying at the exhibition. I spotted it in the national press and was delighted to realise that I recognised the name of the photographer. Winning the 'people' category and the overall, **Grand Prize** in the 2025 [National Geographic Traveller photography competition](#), **Justin Cliffe ARPS** (Woking PS) took this image in the village of Thanh Kim, in northern Vietnam, close to the border with China.

Justin writes "The Red Dao minority people of Lao Cai Province are one of Vietnam's most distinctive ethnic groups, largely due to their headdresses. Here, an elderly woman, with her great-granddaughter, sits at the door of her property, working on her embroidery. This intricate work is a skill passed down through the generations from mother to daughter and considered extremely important in ethnic minority life."

I think we can agree with the comments of the competition's judges: "This is such an intimate moment between generations that captures so much beauty and humanity. The colours, light and textures work really well."

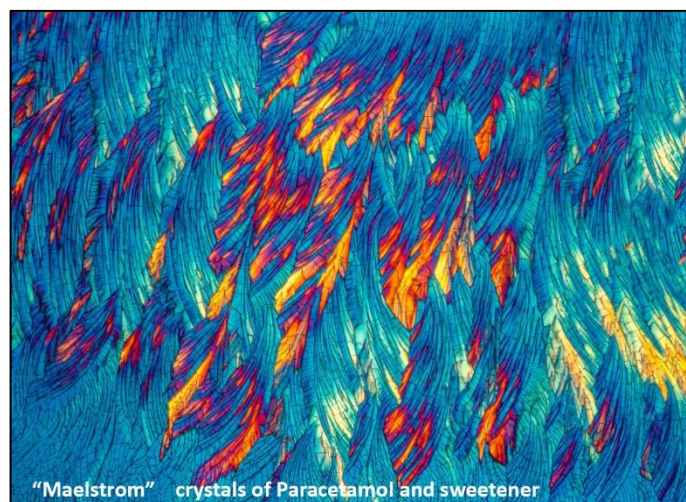
In this edition of the newsletter I've chosen to highlight the stunning work of **Bevil Templeton-Smith** (Molesey PC). His work illuminates the beauty of everyday compounds, expertly prepared, lit and captured at a microscopic scale. Bevil, in addition to many magazine features, has won numerous [awards](#), and is represented by [Alveston Fine Art](#) in Notting Hill. You can keep track of his achievements on Instagram [@beviltts](#).



Profile: Bevil Templeton-Smith

In 2021 I was given a microscope in exchange for some IT work. This saw me DEEP dive into the world of microscopy. As a very keen amateur photographer, I embarked on my microscope mission and spent the following few years finding and buying - what eventually amounted to 17 of the wretched things, each better suited for photography than the last. I finally settled (for my main photography instrument) on a beautiful Leitz Orthoplan polarising microscope made in 1970. With the microscopes, I make and explore a world of beautiful shapes and patterns in crystals made from household substances, including sweeteners, acids, and as many other chemicals and compounds which can be crystallised that I can find.

The subjects, although only millimetres in dimension are all entirely real and physical things. Their endless permutation of shapes are created by the angle I have chosen for each crystal in the beam of polarised light. The addition of a wave plate produces a rainbow of colour. The scenes in my photographs are carefully discovered through a process of visually scanning through countless microscope slides, each coated with a variety of melted or evaporated substances. The actual photographed scene covers a tiny fraction of the area of the 75mm x 26mm slide which contains it. The resulting photographic finished works have no recognisable subject to hint at their scale. The result is a colourful vista of shape and pattern, inviting exploration on a visual adventure, but intentionally leaving the viewer questioning what they are looking at. They must take it or leave it on this basis. Those familiar with my photographs are often forgiven for accidentally referring to them as my "paintings". However they are not paintings. They are absolutely photographs of absolutely real subjects.



Attaching my modern camera to my 55 year old microscope (a complicated and still evolving process with much experimentation, trial and error, and handmade parts) has allowed me to go as far beyond macro as it is possible to go, into the world of photomicrography, exploring and capturing a set of what I think are beautiful and captivating scenes. Many thousands of photographs later, I settled on a selection of 16 of these which were shown in a successful joint exhibition at Alveston Fine Art in London in March 2023. A further set of them was submitted to the IPA and I was very proud that they were awarded non-professional Fine Art Photographer of the Year 2023, for which I was flown to New York to celebrate. I again entered the IPA this year, and have been awarded 3rd place - again in the Fine Art - Abstract category. It was a long shot as it seems unlikely that they would allow the same person to win a category twice in two years. I was told by the head juror in 2023 that there are over 260,000 images entered every year, so placing 3rd in my category is a win to me.

I am very enthusiastic about my ongoing project to make photographs that continue to defy norms and expectations in contemporary photography, and show a unique and completely fresh perspective on the world. I also enjoy bringing to light a set of real subjects which are otherwise hidden, and are very difficult to find, see and photograph, but still absolutely real.

A few more individual achievements to celebrate. I include all the images from SPA members that were selected for the **PAGB Exhibition**.



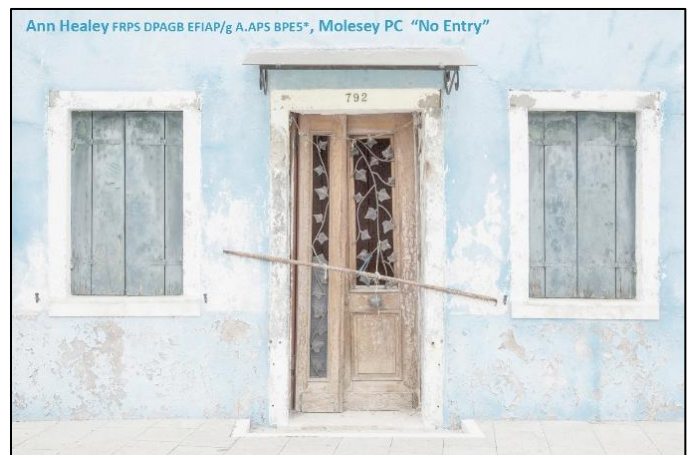
John Phillips, Richmond & Twickenham PS "Commuting with City Traders"



David Wragg FRPS, Godalming PC "Downforce"



Peter Bowles, Guildford PS "Polar Bear leaping over Water"



Ann Healey FRPS DPAGB EFIAP/g A.APS BPES*, Molesey PC "No Entry"



Nicky Rochussen ARPS, Epsom CC "San mother & child"



Randal Tajer ARPS, Bookham CC "Whitethroat"



Mike Farley LRPS, Croydon CC "Urban Foxes"

Finally, many congratulations to those featuring in the 2025 list of **FIAP distinctions**.

David Lyon	EFIAP/d1	Reigate PS
Elizabeth Edie	EFIAP/g	Richmond & Twickenham PS
Darren Pullman	EFIAP/s	Carshalton CC
Graeme Wales	AFIAP	Kingston CC

At the start of a new season (for most clubs) I wish you all a successful year with growing membership and a continuing flow of great images. Please keep up your work of inspiring and educating new members together with providing a social hub and positive presence in the community.



Tim Morland

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Upcoming SPA Events

25 th October	AGM + Individual Print & PDI Competitions	East Horsley
6 th December	Inter-Club Print Championships	East Horsley
10 th April - 2 nd May	Biennial Exhibition	Guildford
24 th April	Biennial Exhibition Awards Dinner	Reigate