

Viewfinder

November 2016



Intro:

Welcome to the November edition of Viewfinder. Many thanks to those members who contributed to, and/or commented on, the October issue.

Philip

News & Info:

At the end of October, like many other members I was looking forward to enjoying an interesting presentation with the title, "The Beautiful Light", about capturing the fleeting moments of light and tides. Unfortunately, the speaker failed to turn up. As there was no notice of this, there was nothing else planned for the evening, so it was decided that we would have a discussion of the new way of presenting our images during league competitions, and of the suggested method of organising the leagues at the end of the 2016-17 season. This was a good use of the time, with much support for the new systems, and very positive and helpful contributions from many of those present.

This month began with our second **Projected Image League Competition** with 57 good images from 29 different members. We are grateful to Peter Prosser for coming along to judge and give us his comments on our images. The results recorded by the Projected Image Competition Secretary, Richard Anthony, are on Pages 4 and 5.

The second November meeting was a new event for the members of HHPS - a **Mobile Phone and Tablet Picture Competition**. This was run in a similar way to a projected image competition, and we thank Jim Nemer for coming to judge the entries. Many millions of photographs are now regularly being recorded on these devices by users all around the globe, so it should not be surprising that many of our members are also involved. What is perhaps more surprising is the high quality of the photographs that were displayed during this evening, serving to reinforce the notion that most of the responsibility for making good photographs lies with the photographer rather than the equipment used. The judge's top choices were:

'Flower' by Sophie Saunders,
'Preparing to curry flavour' by Dennis Barlow,
and 'Above the lunch table' by Richard Anthony.

'Misty Sunrise' by Ian Daily,
'Madonna's Bra' by Peter Cotton,

This month HHPS also took part in the **North West Federation** external competition, hosted by Chesham and also including the Ealing Club. We are delighted that our entries were very successful, giving us a clear win by 12 points (186,168, and 174 resp.). All four of the judge's top 'Star' awards went to HHPS images:

'Little Owl' by Cathy Stamp,
'By the Ocean' and 'Lone Tree' both by Sophie Saunders.

'Sweet Pea' by John Humphrey,

In the third meeting this month, we had our second **Colour Print League Competition** with an entry of 53 good prints from 27 different members. Many thanks to the judge, Colin Mill, for coming along to critique and assess the entries.

Philip

Images:

This month we have more details about some of the top scoring images in the October Colour and Mono Print League Competitions.

Feathers Flying by Graham Ford:

This image was taken on a trip to “Icarus Falconry” at Holdenby in Northamptonshire last May. I used my Nikon D7000 DSLR (APS-C) at ISO 640, with a 70-300mm Nikon zoom lens at 195mm, hand held. The exposure was 1/1000 second at F/5.3.

The Peregrine Falcon had given us a flying display (which I did not even attempt to capture) and was getting down to a well-deserved meal of Wood Pigeon and had started to pluck the bird. I was waiting to see it with food in its beak when I realised that the feathers were flying everywhere, and that was too good an opportunity to miss. This image did not need a lot of work in Photoshop, just removing the small radio aerial mast on its back, plus cropping etc.



‘Tennyson’s monument’ by Richard Anthony:

This is at The Needles Headland, Tennyson Down, on the Isle of Wight. I walked up the coast path from Freshwater Bay, and could see the Monument against the sky, seemingly at the top of the next rise. I reached the top of the rise and, low and behold, it seemed to be at the top of the next one!! Eventually I made it to the Monument, enjoying a panoramic view of most of the Island along the way (and on the way back). I looked for a 'non-conventional' shot which avoided including the other visitors. I used a Sony Alpha SLT-A65V (DSLR with APS-C sensor) hand-held, set at ISO 400 and spot metering, and a Tamron 18-270mm zoom lens at 18mm. I took the shot as a silhouette but later decided I wanted some detail in the Monument. I need to get into the habit of exploring more photographic opportunities than I currently do, for example, in this instance I should have also tried taking non-silhouette shots. For processing I used both Snapseed and Lightroom, and also opened the JPEG file in the Camera Raw module in Photoshop Elements where I managed to recover some details.

‘Jump for Joy’ by Linda van Geene:

This photograph was taken using my Pentax K20D (an APS-C DSLR) hand-held, at the Espinosa Studio in Berkhamsted. The camera was set to manual mode and ISO 100 with auto white balance. The lens attached was a Tamron 18-200mm zoom, set at a focal length of 28mm. The scene was illuminated by a lighting set-up using studio flash units. The image was taken using exposure settings of shutter speed 1/125 second and aperture F/13. I converted the captured image into black & white using Lightroom, and I cropped it from landscape to portrait format for this final image.



Jurassic Coast' by Dennis Barlow:

This was taken during a family holiday when I was allowed out to “do some photography”! It is Lyme Bay taken from the promenade at around midday. The digital image was taken on a handheld Sony NEX-7, a Compact System Camera (CSC) with an APS-C sensor, set to record a raw file at ISO 100 and with auto white balance. I used a prime lens of focal length 50mm (75mm full-frame equivalent) with in-lens stabilisation.



The exposure was made using aperture priority mode at aperture f/7.1, giving a shutter speed of 1/500 second. The image was processed using the Aperture and Topaz software packages to convert to Black and White, and to adjust levels to match how I pre-visualised the scene. It was printed onto Permajet Oyster paper with a Canon Pro 1 printer.



'Isaac' by Sophie Saunders:

This shot was taken at home and the model is my very tolerant son Isaac. A black blanket was hung behind him and he is sitting on a stool with his elbows on his knees. He is lit predominantly from the right by a studio light (Elinchrom D-lite 2 with 130x50cm soft box attached), set up to light the far side of his face and the nearer side eye. Another light was positioned on the left with a small soft box to highlight the back of his head. The camera used was a Canon 5D mark III (full-frame) in manual mode and set to ISO 200. The lens was an EF 24-105mm zoom set to 85mm; exposure 1/125 second at F/8. Post-processing was done using CS6 and included some burning of the background, the back of the t-shirt, and the very distracting bright legs and knees. I also used a Nik filter to increase structure in the hair. Finally the image was desaturated a little for a softer effect.

'Symmetry' by Graham Lindsey:

This is Rebecca Leah at an HHPS Studio session in June 2016. I tried to compose the image to show both symmetry and shape, rather than the model's face or figure, to make the viewer look for the overall view rather than looking straight at the face of the model.

I used a Canon EOS 100D APS-C DSLR hand-held, and set at ISO 100 and with spot metering. The lens was a Sigma 17-70mm zoom lens at 38mm and aperture F/13. The image was taken as a raw file and converted to mono within Lightroom, with just a small tweak to exposure and contrast. I like to think that although the image looks simple, the finished product is a pleasant image for the viewer.



I must say that the model Rebecca Leah was fantastic, and happy to work with both new and experienced photographers. She was more than happy to try any of my ideas, and her experience in making poses can be clearly seen in the small details like the way her hands were placed perfectly.

League Results - November

Top-scoring images:

Competition	Judge	Group	Position	Name	Image Title
2nd Projected Image 07/11/2016	Peter Prosser	C	1st	Cathy Stamp	Little Bustard
			2nd	Cathy Stamp	And then there was one
			3rd=	Steve Ballard	Flower and bee
			3rd=	Bob Walkley	St Michael's Mount
			3rd=	Bob Walkley	Sprinting Springer
		B	1st=	Ian Daily	A sense of scale
			1st=	Michael Mitchell	Mine's the red one
			3rd=	Mary McDowall	Coloured canoes
			3rd=	Hilary Moore	Deep in thought walking the dog
			3rd=	Hilary Moore	Seaweed washing line by Tintern Abbey
			3rd=	Paul Winslow	Lunchtime
		A	1st	David Guest	In control
			2nd=	John Humphrey	Eye
			2nd=	Uily Jorimann	Umbrella Parade
			2nd=	James McCracken	Neist Point, Isle of Skye

(Print Competition results will be in next month's Viewfinder.)

Projected Image

Group C

Name	Round 1		Round 2		Round 3		Round 4		Round 5		Total
Ballard - Steve	16	18	17	14							65
Byford - Philip	19	18	16	16							69
Hutchinson - Graham	19	17	15	15							66
Jones - Steven	20	20	14	14							68
Lindsey - Graham			16	14							30
Reed - Alan			14	14							28
Smith - Ron	18	17	15	16							66
Stamp - Cathy	19	19	20	18							76
Stone - Vincent	16	17	15	16							64
Walkley Bob	17	20	17	17							71

Group B

Name	Round 1		Round 2		Round 3		Round 4		Round 5		Total
Daily - Ian	19	19	15	17							70
McDowall - Mary	17	18	15	16							66
Mitchell - Michael	17	18	15	17							67
Moore - Hilary	17	20	16	16							69
Winslow - Paul	18	18	16	15							67
Young - Brian	17	19	15								51

Group A

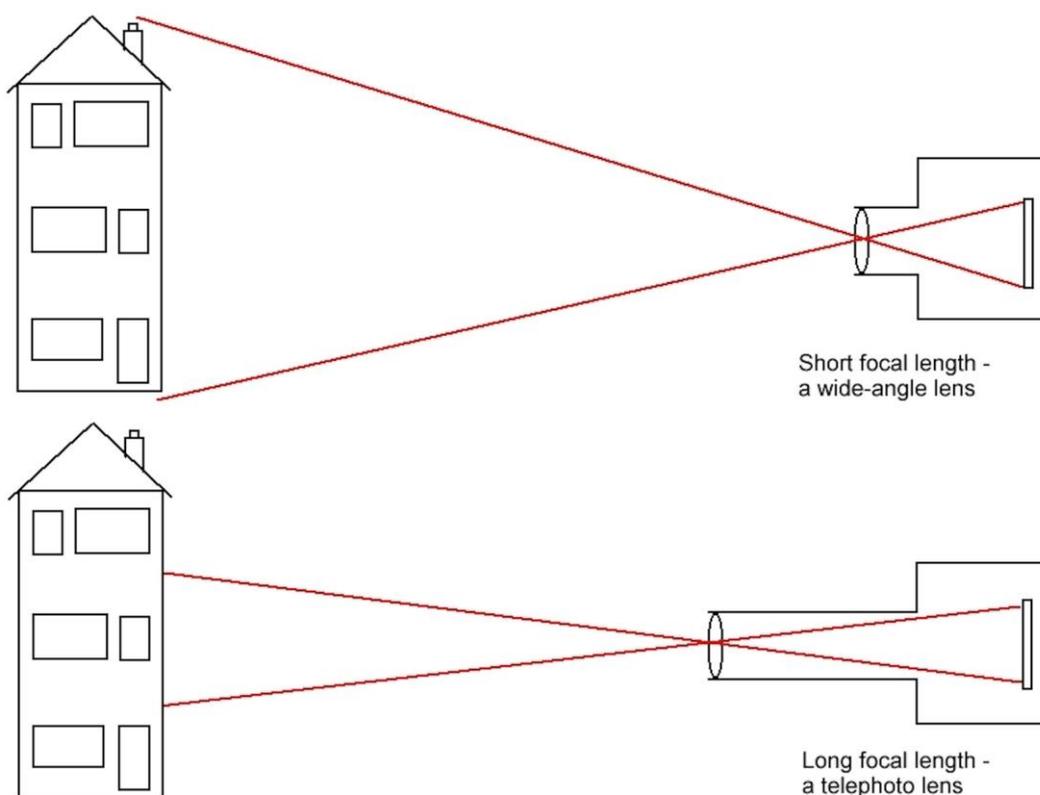
Name	Round 1		Round 2		Round 3		Round 4		Round 5		Total
Anthony - Richard	15	20	17	15							67
Barlow - Dennis	15	18	16	17							66
Cotton - Peter	19	16	16	14							65
Derbyshire - Tom	17	17									34
Guest - David	15	18	16	20							69
Harley - Rob	17	19	17	17							70
Howard - Brian	16	16	15	14							61
Humphrey - John			16	19							35
Jenkins - Alan	16	17	14	14							61
Jorrimann - Ullly	16	18	19	17							70
Marshall - John	18	20	17	17							72
McCracken - James	17	19	19	14							69
Shaw - Ian	18	18	15	15							66
van Geene - Linda	17	17	14	15							63

P.S.

For this month, here are some more of the basics, and again this is for the benefit of those new to photography, or for new members, or perhaps for anyone who might be considering an upgrade or some additional gear or requests for Christmas, or for anyone else interested. It is written with reference to digital cameras and is certain to contain simplifications and generalisations!

Lenses transmit the light from the scene into the body of the camera, to produce an image of part of the scene on the electronic sensor. The amount of the scene that appears in the image depends on both the physical quantity known as the ‘focal length’ of the lens, and on the dimensions of the camera’s sensor.

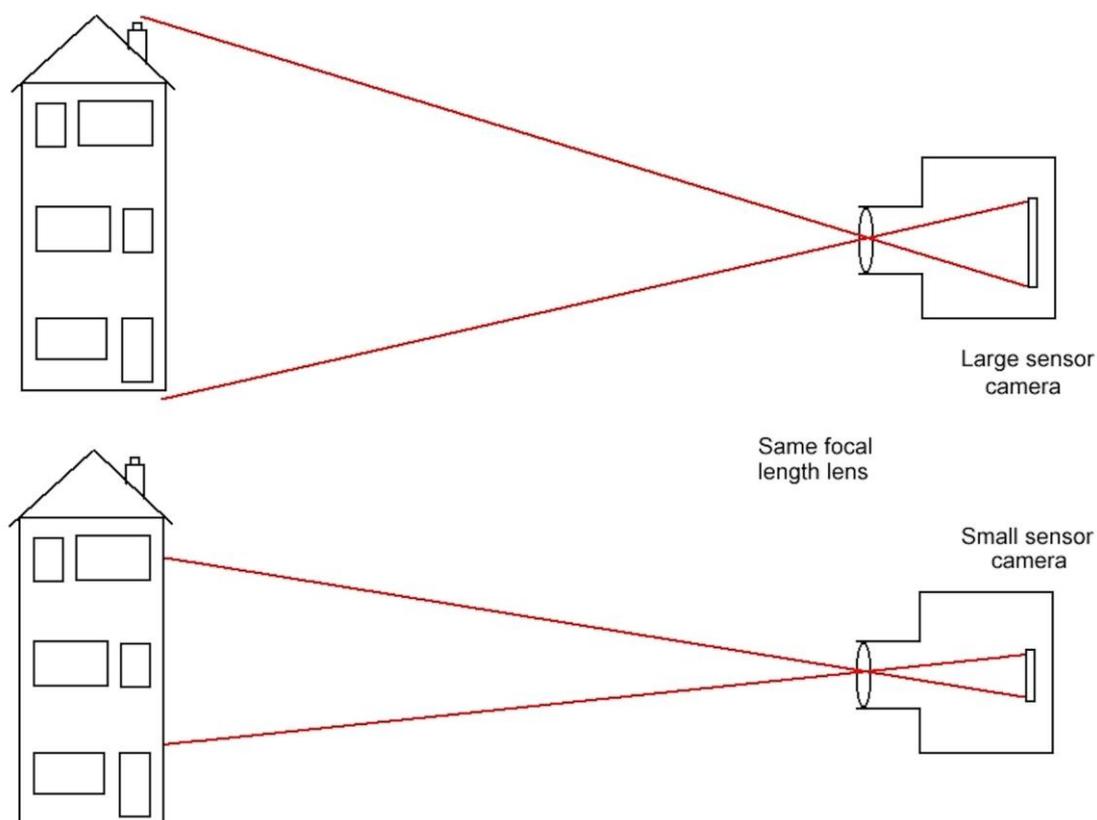
A lens with a fixed focal length is called a ‘prime lens’ and one with variable focal length is called a ‘zoom lens’. The focal length of the lens affects its angle of view - as focal length increases, angle of view decreases. This causes a magnification effect because, as focal length increases, the field of view decreases, so that a smaller part of the scene fills the sensor, so it looks big in the photograph.



Lenses with short focal lengths are known as ‘wide-angle lenses’, and the images from them not only include more of the scene, but also make distant objects appear smaller and further away than they look when the same scene is viewed with our eyes. Lenses with long focal lengths are usually called ‘telephoto lenses’, and the images from them make distant objects appear larger and nearer, compared with our normal eye view. Somewhere in-between there are lenses with focal lengths giving a similar view to that which we perceive when viewing a scene with our eyes - these are called ‘standard lenses’.

The lens focal lengths that give these three different visual effects depend on the size of the sensor in the camera. Currently the base line used for comparison purposes is the full-frame sensor - this is the same frame size as the previously very popular 35mm film camera frame, 36mm x 24mm. The standard lens for this camera is somewhere around 50mm focal length. Lenses of focal length shorter than about 40mm would be in the wide-angle range, whereas those longer than about 60mm would be in the telephoto range. A typical standard zoom lens for a full-frame camera would allow a range of focal lengths either side of the typical 50mm standard prime lens, e.g. from 28mm wide-angle to 85mm short telephoto.

If the camera's sensor is smaller than a full-frame sensor, however, it will 'see' a smaller angle of view, and so it will have the effect of cropping a smaller rectangle from the image which the full-frame camera would have captured using the same lens. This also causes a magnification effect - the smaller sensor frame is filled up with a smaller part of the scene, making that part look big in the photo:



This effect is known as the 'crop factor' of the camera/sensor. There are currently two quite commonly used smaller sensor sizes for interchangeable lens cameras: APS-C and Micro 4/3, which have crop factors of 1.5 and 2 respectively. Multiply the focal length by these factors to give the equivalent full-frame focal length - e.g. The image produced by a lens of focal length 24mm on an APS-C camera would appear to be similar to the image of the same scene captured by a 36mm lens ($24\text{mm} \times 1.5 = 36\text{mm}$) on a full-frame camera at the same shooting position.

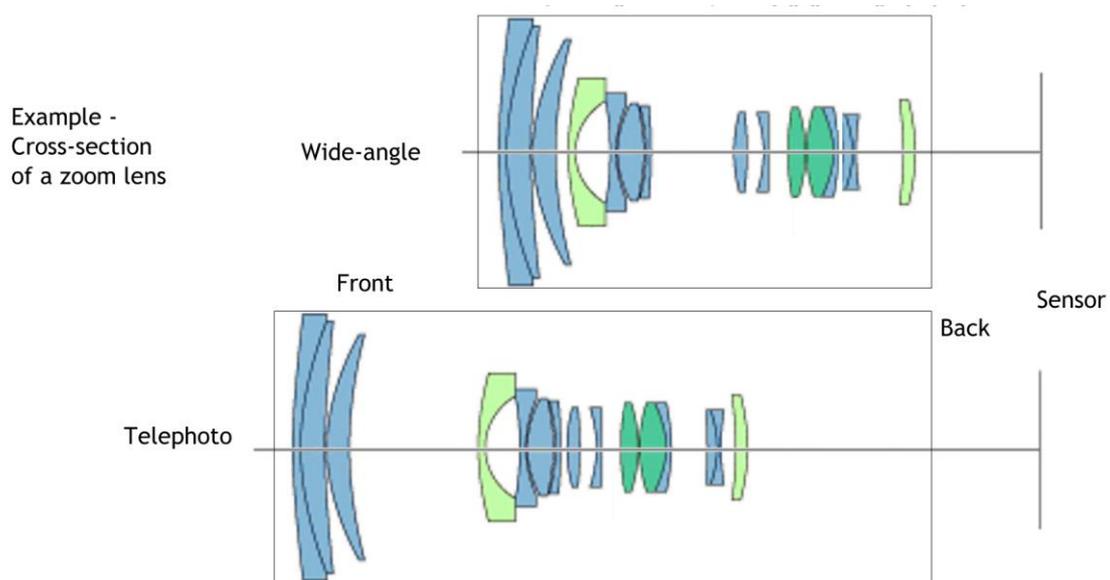
The lenses described on the previous page would have approximately the following focal lengths:

Camera/sensor:	Full-frame	APS-C	Micro 4/3
Sensor size	36x24mm	24x16mm	17x13mm
Standard prime lens	~ 50mm	~ 35mm	~ 25mm
Wide-angle lenses	< 40mm	< 28mm	< 20mm
Telephoto lenses	> 60mm	> 42mm	> 30mm
Standard zoom lens	28-80mm	18-55mm	14-42mm

The lens in a magnifying glass or in a pair of spectacles is just a single piece of glass with curved surfaces. However, the lenses we use in our cameras are actually much more complex, and even the cheaper models are examples of amazing precision technology. They are designed to try to reduce to a minimum the optical distortions and imperfections produced using a single curved piece of glass, and to capture the image as accurately as possible from corner to corner across the frame of the photograph.

They are comprised of several single lenses called 'elements'. Some elements are made of different types of glass, some are bonded together, some work together in groups, some are fixed, and others move around differently inside the lens barrel as we focus and/or zoom the lens. Many lenses now have electric motors built into them, capable of moving the elements to focus the image very accurately. Some can even rapidly move an element or group of elements in several different directions, to compensate for camera movements during hand-held shooting - this is an example of 'image stabilisation'.

This diagram shows in simplified form the complex structure and movement of the lens elements inside a typical camera zoom lens, as it is extended from wide-angle to telephoto:



Philip

Contributions:

If you have any stories to share, or some useful hints and tips to pass on to other members, please think of Viewfinder. Maybe you have an image that tells a story, demonstrates a photographic technique or the use of a much-loved piece of equipment. If there is anything that you would like to describe or explain for the members, you might consider doing an article for inclusion in a future Viewfinder. In particular, it would be great to have something to interest the more advanced members, as I would still consider myself to be a novice, so the level of Philip's Snippets (P.S.) in Viewfinder will probably reflect that status!

If you have anything to contribute, please email using the address in the footer, or see me on a Monday evening. Keep those articles flowing in! Thank you.

Philip