

Presidents Report

This has been another great year for the Preston Photographic Club which started with our Exhibition at Michaels in November.

We also held an ideas night in November 2013 to elicit feedback and suggestions from club members. The most striking feedback we got from club members was that they wanted more hands-on activities at club meetings – and less guest speakers that didn't allow for much interaction. This and other feedback helped us set a program for 2014. I believe that the program we have put together has addressed that feedback and I look forward to getting more feedback from the members.

This year we were fortunate to have a new member **Cosette**, who with **Theo** has done a great job in redesigning and revitalising our on-line presence. We now have an up to date and vibrant website and Facebook page which I am sure is not only helpful to members, but has been instrumental in attracting new members to the club. We are also working toward moving the Facebook group to be a members' only area where members can share their views without worrying about whom else may have access to the page. This will come fully into effect in April 2015.

We also reviewed and upgraded our Shutterbug newsletter which gives it a new streamlined look, and improves our management of lists.

This year we had a range of workshops and activities at club meetings. The highlight for me was the Lighting workshop which we held around the corner at the intercultural centre, where we set-up 5 different lighting scenarios and members and visitors were able to try each of them. Thanks to the members who shared their equipment, skills and experience with other club members – Stephen C, Steven P, Fabian, Joe and Alison, as well as all the other members who helped make it happen.

Other workshops and activities were:

- Hunt and Shoot at Edwardes Lake Reservoir
- Camera Controls Workshop with Jonathon Ho
- Night Photography Workshop
- Photobooks demonstration
- Light Painting activity

Competitions and Judging nights were also an important part of our program with a great variety of competitions arranged by Sonya. As usual we had a range of judges, and their comments at times stirred up plenty of debate. Although we might not all always agree with our judges, it is always good to get a different point of view on our images and we appreciate the time and effort they put in to help us grow as photographers and artists.

We also participated in some other competitions/exhibitions as a club.

- VAPS interclub
- International Competition with Preston Photographic Society in UK
- Interclub with Parklands – hosted at one of our meetings – where we won back the trophy.

In addition we have had a good program of activities outside of club meetings. Including:

- A President's BBQ in February
- The 5th Monday social nights in March, June and September.

- A weekend away in March at Rye which was a great event to get to know each other better and spend time taking photos in a scenic environment.
- A Lightroom self-help workshop at La Trobe University in June. Another great opportunity for members to share their skills and help each other. Other activities included:
- Werribee Wetlands Phot walk (April)
- Fireworks (July)
- Tramways Museum (August)

The club also acted as judges for 2 different competitions. One was the Impact photography competition for youth photographers hosted by the Darebin Library, and the other was an interclub competition hosted by Essendon Camera Club. I'm sure the members involved learned a lot by their involvement in this.

Our club library has continued to grow this year with more titles from inspirational photographers being added to our catalogue as well as a new calibrator available for loan to club members to calibrate their monitors and laptops.

I'd like to thank the Darebin Council and the Preston Library for their continuing support in providing the venue for our club and committee meetings. It's great to have a stable and central home in Preston, at no cost to the club.

I'd also like to thank all the members of the committee, who have given up their own time to help this club to remain the active and vibrant club it is today. It has been great to work with you, with terrific ideas and enthusiasm for photography and this club.

I'd like to say a special thanks to Sonya O'Brien, Joe Conte and Stephen Currie. Sonya and Joe resigned from the committee during the year and Stephen will be retiring from the committee tonight. All three have made great contributions to the committee and the club, in this year and previous years, and I'm really pleased that all will still be around to be active members of the club in the future.

We also introduced two new members to the committee during the year - Sam Mariana who has stepped up to take on the Competition Steward role and Cosette who has joined the committee and also acts as our webmaster. Thanks too to Robin, Theo, Cosette and Michael who pitched in to help with the transition of the Competition Steward's role from Sonya to Sam.

I have always hoped that this club is an active and friendly club where new people are welcomed and there are challenges and opportunities for people at all levels of photography and I believe that that is what we have.

So I'd especially like to thank the members of our club. Thanks for being friendly to members, visitors and guests. Thanks for embracing the program put forward by the committee. You have supported the activities and pitched in when needed, and shared your joy in photography and your friendship and lives. It is the people in the club and their passion for photography and learning that makes me proud to be club president.

Deborah Keir
President 2014