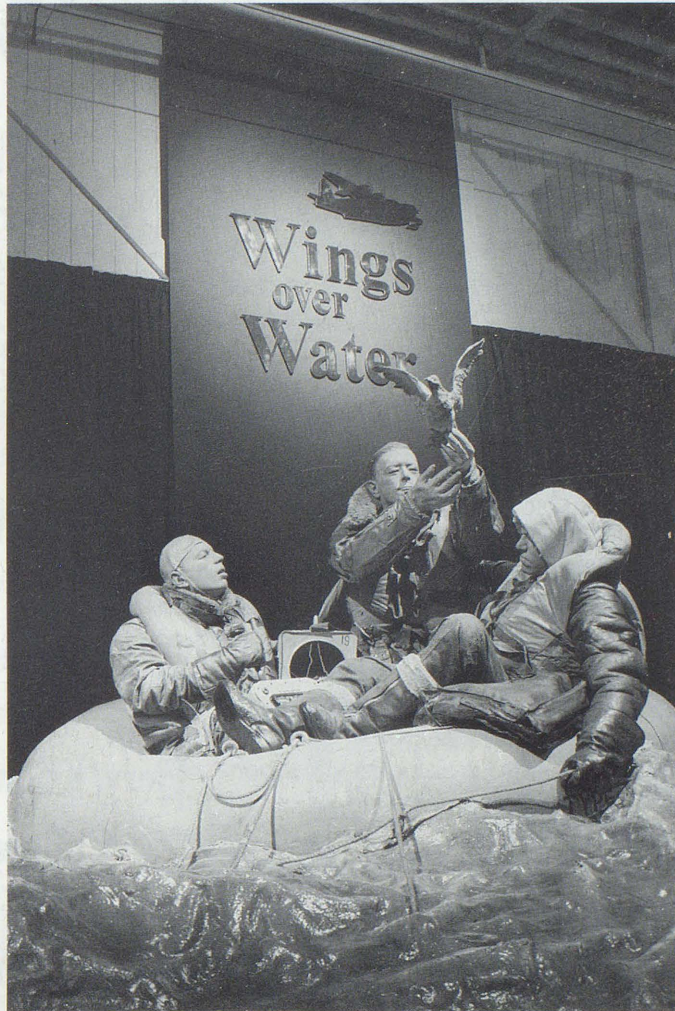


No. 11

October 1997



ISSN 1355-0233

**J**OURNAL  
The Association  
for Historical &  
Fine Art  
Photography

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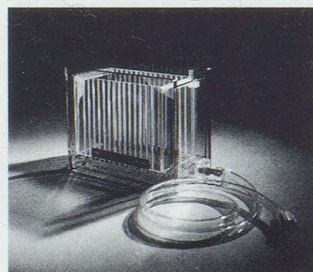
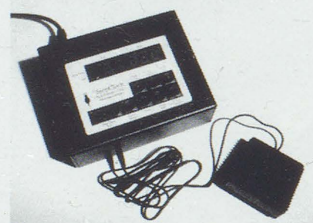
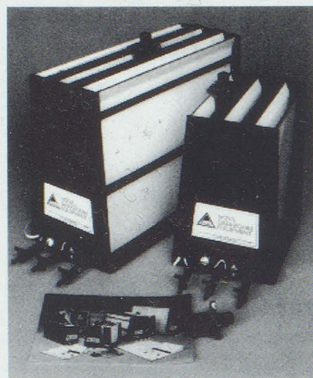
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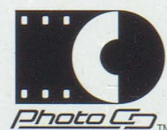
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# JOURNAL

ISSUE NO 11 OCTOBER 1997

## OPENING ADDRESS

*Paul Gardner, British Museum Photographic Services*

The Association has had yet another successful year, with the Ilford/AHFAP competition and the Fuji/AHFAP Bursary. The year will cumulate at our Annual Conference which I hope will be enjoyable and educational for all who attend.

I extend warmest thanks on behalf of the Association to Trevor Drake of Fuji for all the help he has given to AHFAP this year. Trevor has worked hard with Andrew Renwick of the Royal Air Force Museum, Hendon to ensure that our conference this year will be a great success.

It is down to Trevor's perseverance and ability to secure funding from Fuji that the Fuji/AHFAP Bursary has and is continuing to support our work for the Country's Institutions allowing projects that would not be done, come to fruition. Included in this edition of the Journal are examples of the work that the Bursary has made possible. These will also be on display at our annual conference.

Trevor also put on a number of seminars at Focus 97 at the NEC, Birmingham, to which we were invited as well as ensuring that one of them was specifically targeted for the AHFAP membership. The Association is very grateful for his tireless efforts and Fuji's continued support of our activities.

I also extend the Association's sincere thanks to Dr Michael Fopp MA FMA FIMgt, Director of the Royal Air Force Museum, for allowing us to use the Museum's excellent facilities to stage the 1997 AHFAP Annual Conference and to all of the Museum staff who will contribute to the days' success.

I also wish to thank Keith Davidson of Ilford for all of the work and effort he put into this years Ilford/AHFAP competition. The awards made at Focus 97 further enhanced the Association's standing within the photographic profession.

Finally, I wish to express my gratitude to all of the members of the AHFAP Committee for giving up their time and all of their hard work during the course of the year.

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## The Association for Historical & Fine Art Photography

### CONSTITUTION

1. That the Association shall be called "The Association of Historical and Fine Art Photographers".
2. That it shall exist for the furtherance of photography in the field of History, Fine Art, Archaeology, Museum and Gallery display and related fields.
3. To encourage the interchange of ideas and general support amongst photographers practising in these fields and to promote access to departments thereby increasing wider opportunities for experience.
4. The membership shall be available to those who predominantly practise in the above fields of photography.
5. The business of the Association shall be conducted by a committee comprising : a Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer plus up to seven other committee members with a facility for co-opting other members as required.
6. That this committee be voted to serve for a thirty-six month period for the officers and twenty-four months for committee members. The officers shall be elected at an annual meeting open to all members.
7. That the management committee require a forum of five members, two of whom shall be office bearers, to convene a meeting.
8. That the Chairman shall have the power of vote and that he shall have the power of casting vote.
9. A quorate committee shall have the power to dissolve the Association upon notice of one month with any funds being held, distributed to a charity or organisation named within the same notice to dissolve.

5

Last year saw a most excellent AHFAP Conference take place at the National Maritime Museum with the very welcome sponsorship of Kodak Professional. Shortly afterwards another Ilford/AHFAP Annual Photographic Competition was announced, the winners of which were declared and exhibited at "Focus on Imaging" at the NEC, Birmingham earlier this year. The Association is very grateful to Ilford and Mary Walker Exhibitions for their sponsorship of the AHFAP stand at Focus. The competition was judged by Heather Cooper, Head of Photography at Sotheby's, each category winner was presented with a certificate, book and a selection of Ilford "Goodies" by Ian Pilkington - Ilford's Head of UK Sales and Marketing. Gratefully, entries came in from members working at institutions large and small and from those working commercially in smaller businesses, the overall winner being awarded the ILFORD/AHFAP Cup. For those who missed it there now follows a list of the prize winners:



**ILFORD/AHFAP Cup** Winner and Creative Colour category winner - congratulations to **Tina Chambers** from The National Maritime Museum with "Colourscape in Blue".

Creative Monochrome winner was **James Davis** from The Royal Commission for Historical Monuments with "Mrs Truman - Coal Packer".

Applied Colour winner was **Nick Nicholls & Stephen Dodd** from The British Museum with "Marble Greyhounds - Roman".

Applied Monochrome winner was **Brian Tremain**, Freelance for "Igham Mote - Ceiling".

Monochrome Printing Skills winner was **Greg Smith** from The Imperial War Museum with "Ambulance Train".

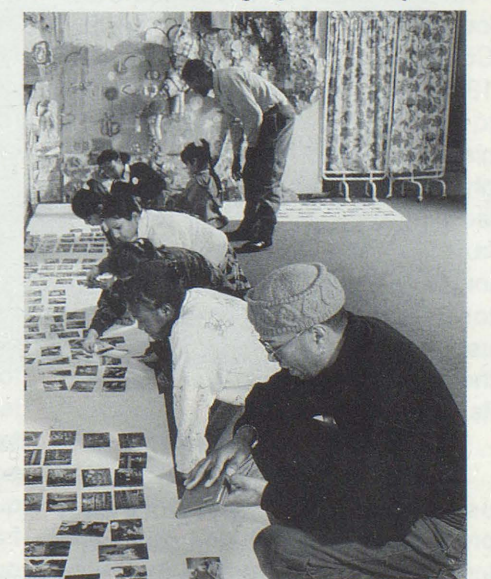
#### Interesting websites to try

- <http://www.mikeware.demon.co.uk> - Alternative Photography Pages
- <http://www.cmp.ucr.edu> - UCR/California Mus. of Photography
- <http://www.zonezero.com> - From Analog to Digital Photography

*"Science presenting Humanity with the gift of flight" - William Zeigler, 1940. Copy 1/545 Public Record Office.*



*Photographers Nigel Madhoo and Vanley Burke editing photos for the New Handsworth Photographic Survey.*



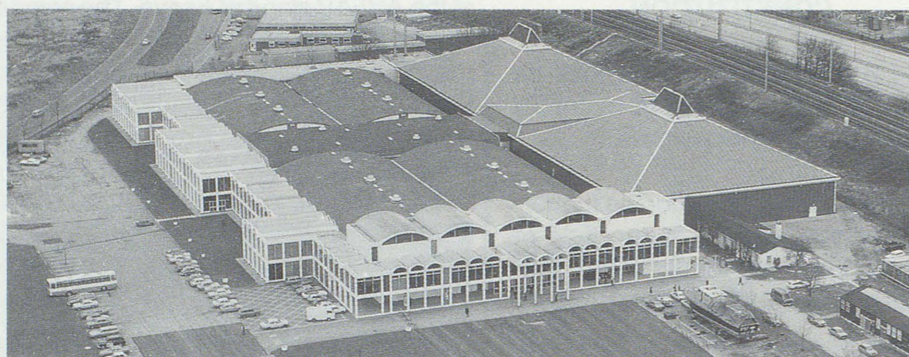
The Association  
for Historical  
Fine Art &  
Photography

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the opening in 1972 of the RAF Museum to the public. The museum exists to preserve, conserve and exhibit the history of the Royal Air Force and its relationship with aviation. It aims to promote the public's understanding of the role and achievements of the Royal Air Force for the benefit of present and future generations.

Collecting objects for the new museum began as early as 1965. These encompassed a range of items, varying in size from jacket buttons to a Lancaster bomber. Photographs were among those early acquisitions and continue to be an important part of the collections. A valuable feature of the photographs is that many were taken by serving personnel, often showing aspects of service life ignored by the official record.

The Photograph Collection contains an estimated 250,000 images. A variety of formats and media are present but most common are monochrome prints and glass plate negatives. The earliest date from 1890 and show Royal Engineers balloon experiments. The Charles Brown Collection, which was acquired in 1980, was the largest single addition to the collection from a man recognised as one of the best photographers of aircraft. Another large collection acquired by the museum came from the former British Aerospace factory at Kingston-on-Thames. This factory produced many of the aircraft used by the British armed forces from the days before World War One up to its closure in 1990.

Commercial laboratories are used today for copy work and processing. When the museum was formed we had access to the facilities of the Ministry of Defence in Cen-

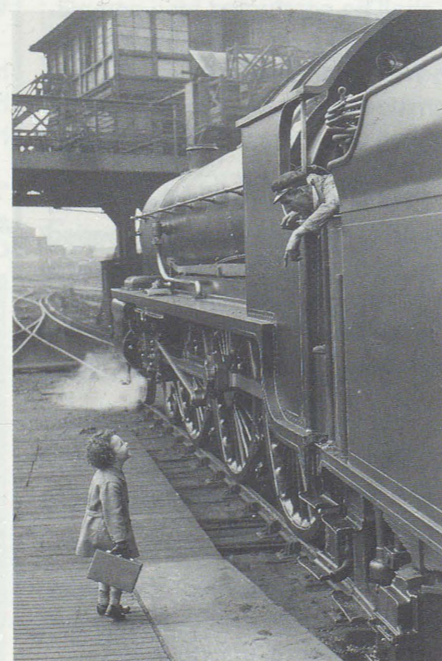


*Royal Air Force Museum, Hendon*

tral London. As a result the museum has never had its own in-house photographic unit but some photography is done in-house, especially at the reserve collection at Cardington. The main role of the Photographic Section is the preservation of historical photographs therefore photographs of objects in the collections are retained by the department responsible for the originals. More will be required as part of the transfer of object records to computer.

It is planned that 1998 will see the transfer of object records into a computerised Collections Management System. It is planned that the system will include images as part of the object record for most of the collections, including the photograph collection. A pilot scheme has been undertaken with the art collection which involved the photography and digitisation of 5,500 works. These are stored on CD-ROM pending the acquisition of the new system.

The museum is a member of the British Association of Picture Libraries and Agencies. Preparations for the Collections Management System has taken curatorial staff away from normal tasks. It has still been possible, however, to maintain an enquiry and sales service. Volunteers from the Society of Friends assist with enquiries from members of the public. As with copy work the printing of



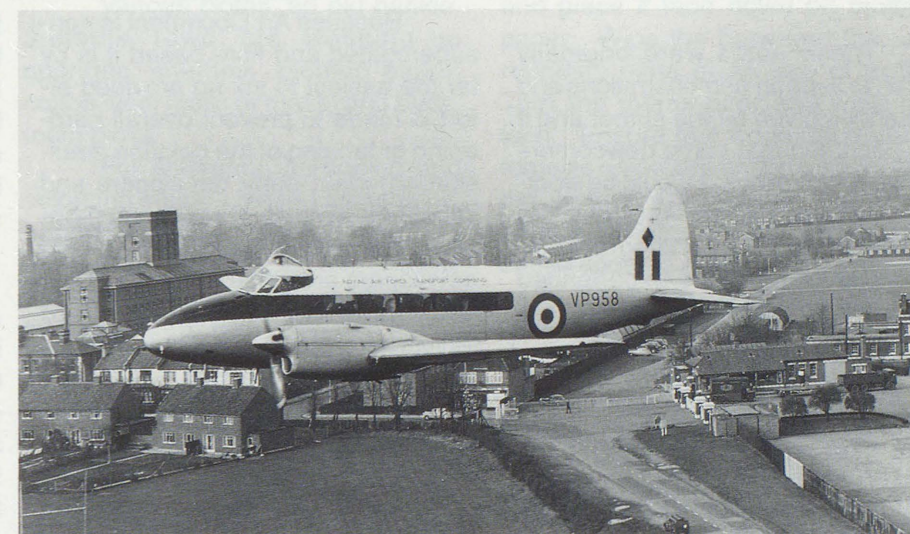
*Ronald Witt talking to fireman  
William Woolf,  
Waterloo Station - 7/6/24  
Photograph by Charles E Brown*

orders is undertaken by commercial laboratories.

Access to many items in the museum's collection has been difficult. The project will allow wider access than has previously been possible. Thus the difficulties caused by the imaging project will be outweighed by the advantages of the future.

The Association  
for Historical  
Fine Art &  
Photography

PORTFOLIO



*de Havilland Devon flying over RAF Hendon Main Gates - 1940*



*Captain Pauline Gower and First Officer Lettice Curtis about to take off in an  
Oxford - Air Transport Auxiliary ..... Photograph by Charles E Brown*

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# The Association for Historical Fine Art & Photography

## BROMOIL NOTES

These notes were originally written to support demonstrations and workshops given by the author and it was assumed that some newcomers to the Bromoil process would be working in their own homes. Apologies are therefore offered to photographers, technicians and other experienced workers if some of the following appears patronising!

### Health and Safety.

Consult current legislation and if you are untrained in handling chemicals please seek advice.

Assume all chemicals are hazardous, unless you know for sure that they are not. Wear protective clothing, gloves, goggles and mask when making up or handling chemicals and solutions, as appropriate. Work in an area that may easily be washed down or on scrap paper. Avoid drafts and handle dry chemicals and pigments so that you do not spread or inhale dust. Do not handle food or drink whilst working and ensure that food cannot be contaminated. Label all containers with warnings and first aid procedures where appropriate and use and store chemicals safely away from children and untrained people.

### GETTING STARTED.

#### The Negative.

Start with a soft negative with a good range of tones and preferably no large areas of blacks and whites.

#### The Print.

Make a flat print no larger than 8 x 10 on Kentmere Art Document paper grade 2 in the normal way, burning and dodging for detail and leave a plain border of about 1 cm or more. Some workers prefer a half to full stop extra exposure so the print is a shade darker than usual. A printed pen line/ no whites bleeding into the border is helpful. Avoid any other papers until you have mastered Kentmere Art Document.

## THE BROMOIL PROCESS

Dave Francis, Exhibitions Organiser, The Bromoil Circle of Great Britain

### The Developer.

Because Art Document is non-supercoated and fibre based it is by far the easiest to ink up provided effort is made to prevent overall hardening or tanning of the gelatine emulsion. Certain early developers and substances like alum will cause problems, but most modern ready mixed developers are suitable (D163, ID11, D76, Jessops Econoprint, Ilford Multigrade, etc.). I prefer to double dilute (1:18 instead of 1:9 in say Econoprint) and fully develop for 2 to 4 min at 200C.

### First Wash.

Even in recent articles bromoilists are advised not to use acid stop bath. I use Jessops Econostop for 30 seconds, so acetic acid does not cause a problem! (After this stage the "Short Method" may be used. See below.)

### Print Fix.

Again writers seem to insist on fixing in plain 10% hypo for 5 minutes but there seems to be no problem in using any non hardening fixer e.g. Hypam, Econofix or other weakly acid hypo. There may be archival problems or longer washes but I have not noticed any differences in leaving the print for 10 minutes or more.

### Final Print Wash.

Wash for 15 minutes in running water or in several changes of water over that time. The print may now be dried and put away until a more convenient time or bleached immediately.

### Bleach solution.

There are many formulae for bleaches including separate bleaching and tanning solutions and all have their advocates. Most compute to a ratio 1:20:20 potassium dichromate:copper sulphate:potassium bromide but working concentrations used by experts vary considerably by as much as 5 times!

I make up 10% solutions of the three chemicals listed below and store these as stock. When required for use I dilute them as explained. Omitting the acid recommended in most formulae result in the solution soon going cloudy but otherwise does not seem to cause a serious problem!

### Concentrated Stock Solutions

A	10% Copper Sulphate
B	10% Potassium Bromide
C	10% Potassium Dichromate
For use take	and add to
50 ml of A	400 ml of
50 ml of B	distilled
3 ml of C	water

This is a little weaker than Syme's bleach but stronger than that recommended in the booklet written by Gilbert Hooper, FRPS, President of the Bromoil Circle of Great Britain. After experience you can double the dilution and at 880 ml the strength will be the same as Gilbert's (who uses one-shot).

### Pre-soak and bleach.

Pre-soak the b/w print for 5 min at 200C.

Drain the surplus water and add the print to the bleach bath. Agitate several times over 10 min. The image will almost completely disappear and the term - matrix - is now used.

Some experts insist on treating one print at a time using the one-shot method and if you experience problems, follow that advice. I get impatient and bleach a dozen or so 8 x 10 prints in 2 litres at the above dilution. I try to keep the prints moving for the full 10 minutes using rubber gloves. If I am called away I extend the time to 15 or 20 min! Occasionally I lost the odd print at inking-up time which can be frustrating but the time saving is worth it!

### Matrix Wash

Wash thoroughly until free of bleach and signs of dichromate have

gone (5 min).

### Final Matrix Fix.

Re-fix for 10 mins in any of the above mentioned fixers. Again experts recommend one-shot but I fix a dozen at a time, agitating frequently.

### Final Matrix Wash.

Wash thoroughly for at least 30 mins.

The matrix may now be dried and inked up months later. Alternatively it may be inked immediately but hard inks may not take easily.

## MATERIALS FOR THE INKING PROCESS

### Worktop

A sheet of scratch-free plate glass, Formica, perspex or similar waterproof material, at least large enough to hold the matrix and if larger could be used to spread the ink otherwise additional tile(s) will be required.

### Brush

A shaving brush would do to start with and perfectly acceptable results may be obtained without any great expense. Made in China and less than £1 in some fancy goods stores. Cut the domed top flat and finish off with an electric razor to get a good even surface. The traditional shape is in the form of a deer's foot (i.e. at a slant with the longer front tips about 1/2 cm to 1 cm more than the rear tips).

I use a Shepherds No 18 Paste Brush (now £10 or so from Cornelissen +pp) and also Stanley Hobby range of brushes from size: 30mm to 15 mm (under £5) trimmed in the above manner. A good alternative is the largest 30 mm copper ferruled hog brush at around £7.50.

Specialist Bromoil brushes, especially polecat or fitch are expensive and not absolutely necessary (although useful for delicate soft tones). Even then they seem to lose shape and hairs quickly!

Four inch foam plastic roller (Moseley-Stone at DIY at around £3.50 complete with two pads).

A two or four inch hard plastic block printing roller is useful for spreading the ink on the tile prior to using the foam roller, or even on the matrix direct!

### Ink

Get the hardest ink possible, it can always be softened with medium, etc. 1796 Lithographic Ink for the beginner. Mander's 44 is much softer and lino block inks are much softer and may be hardened or mixed with harder inks. With experience they may be used alone.

Various cloths, an old hankie, J-cloths, towel etc. washing up sponges, chamois, blotting paper, cotton wool (balls or mass) and buds, tooth picks.

For softening, hardening and colouring inks:- Linseed oil, teak oil, turpentine, artists tube paint etc. Violin rosin, Canada Balsam, shellac, beeswax, candle wax, chalks, pigments, pastels, etc.

### Why it works

Bromoil was introduced in 1907 by C Welbourn-Piper and E J Wall.

The bleach converts the metallic silver back into silver bromide but it differs from that used in toning and reducing processes in that it contains potassium dichromate. This hardens the gelatine proportionally according to the amount of silver present in the print image. Thus the gelatine in the shadows is hardened and that in the highlights is not (or less so). Hardened (tanned) gelatine does not absorb as much water in the swelling process as the un-tanned.

### Swelling the Gelatine

Before inking up, the gelatine must be swelled with water. The matrix is soaked in water at 20 degrees C for about 3 minutes, again opinions range to 35 degrees C and perhaps 1 hour or so. With some papers it is possible to see a relief appear in the surface due to the proportional swelling of the gelatine.

### Inking Up.

Whilst the gelatine is swelling take a pea sized lump of very hard ink (1796 from Intaglio) and spread it with a palette knife or hard (lino) roller onto a clean area of tile, perspex, Formica or plate glass. Work the ink back and forth so that a 5 x 5 cm (for brush) or 12 x 12 (for roller) area is evenly covered. Remove surplus ink and then dab the brush gently onto

this layer so that only the tips of the bristles are inked. Dab the brush down on a clean patch of tile and repeat this until a new area of tile is evenly covered with ink. Again a 5 x 5 square is sufficient. Take the ink from this area for inking up - not from the original patch.

Take the matrix from the water and place it face down on blotting paper. Wipe the back and the surrounding plate glass free of water. Turn the matrix over and wipe the face. Ensure that no surface water remains anywhere on the matrix. Dab the surface with sponge and/or old hankie. Water on the brush may cause spots to occur on the matrix.

Charge the brush with ink and work fairly quickly to cover the whole of the print area, re-charging the brush as necessary. The surface is not likely to look good at this stage. Start at the top and work vertically then turn the print and again work vertically. The proper first action is to dab the brush down, drag it towards yourself a short way and then lift it away from the matrix. This is repeated until the brush needs recharging. Avoid over-inking or concentrating on one patch. Once a shadow area is over-inked it is difficult or impossible to remove unless the matrix is completely cleared and the whole operation restarted.

The image should now show through the ink but will be devoid of highlights. At this stage a dabbing action should be tried and some of the ink laid down will be picked up by the brush from the highlight (damper) areas and re-deposited on the shadows. If your brush has too much ink on it change to a completely dry clean brush. If this action fails to clear the highlights soak a wad of cotton wool in water, remove excess with a gentle squeeze and wipe the surface of the matrix using very little pressure to start with, gradually trying harder if the ink fails to budge. At this stage, there will be a moderate amount of water on the matrix. If things are going to plan the border may be cleaned using the same technique. Lay a damp linen cloth on the print to protect it and position a ruler overlapping the cloth and up to where the border should be.

Use the wet cotton swab to wipe away the ink that will inevitably have got onto the border. (Some workers keep the borders clean throughout by protecting with strips of card or even gummed paper when inking.) If the matrix dries out at any stage it will need to be re-soaked for a short time but remember to wipe away excess water at all times. No attempt should be made to use a brush or roller with any water present on the matrix or worktop.

After re-soaking the matrix must be carefully dabbed dry again. It will now be partially inked so great care must be exercised so as not to disturb the image. When all surplus water has been removed inking may be continued and contrast built up but again be careful to avoid over-inking the shadows. The wet cotton wool, dry brush or clean roller methods may be used to clear highlights again and the borders cleaned as before. The hard ink may be 'let down' either with a softer ink of the same or different colour and/or with a small drop of linseed oil. (Dip a tooth pick into the oil and let one drop down at a time.) The oil should be well mixed in before attempting to charge the brush. If the ink is too soft and seems to take all over try stiffening it with chalk, talc, pigments, beeswax, paraffin wax, rosin etc. Unless you intend to stain the paperbase or tone the gelatine irrespective of the tanning only use oil based inks or paints. Some bromoilists like the effect of coffee, tea, food colourings, dyes, toners etc. and work on the dried Bromoil with these or pastels and chalks. Artist's fixative may be used on a well dried Bromoil if pastels are used but the sine left tends to spoil the matt nature. When inking has been carried out to satisfaction the matrix may be cleaned up and set aside to dry and for the ink to harden. To dry the matrix flat, drive drawing pins into 2 x 1 rectangles of card and use these to hold it onto a large sheet of card. The matrix should then dry reasonably flat.

#### Short Method

After the print has been developed and washed in the stopbath it is rinsed



*Hands and Face - G Proctor-Gregg*

but not fixed and transferred directly to the bleach bath (in the darkroom of course). It is fixed and washed as normal.

#### Transfers

The most archival effect is obtained by transferring the ink from the matrix, soon after inking, to water-colour paper using a press. Briefly the matrix is soaked in water for a few minutes, carefully dabbed dry and sandwiched between card before passing through a Bromoil press. It may be necessary to dampen the water-colour paper or wipe it over with turpentine first. Proper presses are difficult to obtain so number plate presses or washing mangles have been tried.

The Bromoil Circle are collabo-

rating with Kentmere to produce a double weight matt ripple free matt surface paper. Members of the Circle have tested Semi-matt Smooth (baryta Batch 9743) and Art Surface (Batch 9742). Both have the present non-supercoated grade 2 Art Document emulsion. The 9743 has a slightly shinier surface and is more difficult to ink but having inked is ideal for transfers. 9742 emulsion is coated on the reverse side of Art Classic heavy weight paper stock. There is nothing available in the world wide like it and quite apart from bromoils and gelobromes it offers tremendous possibilities for toning, dying, hand colouring and with the silver fixed out as a base for carbon transfer, etc.

## The Association for Historical Fine Art & Photography

As photography faces a future becoming increasingly involved with the digitally captured photograph, it appears quite odd that people involved with museum multimedia have the photographer so low down the order of importance when it comes to planning and participation.

I will try to illustrate what I mean with the following extract from "Introduction to Imaging" by **Howard Bresser** and **Jennifer Trant**.

"Introduction to imaging is designed to help curators, librarians, collection managers, administrators, scholars, and students understand the basic technology and processes involved in creating an image database depicting works typically found in museums."

It appears from the above extract that the authors either believe we as photographers have a full understanding of all things digital, or that within the museum world it is something that should be of no concern to us. Whichever it may be the digital photograph is something that all photographers should make sure they understand, whether or not it is of benefit to them. The aim of the following article is to briefly introduce what makes a digital file for a digital photograph.

The size of a digital photograph is usually given as its file size. The file size is made up of two major parts:

1. Resolution
2. Bit Depth

The digital photograph is made up of a series of pixels, which can be thought of as the equivalent of the grains in conventional photographic film. The difference between the two is that pixels in the digital photograph are laid out uniformly whereas the

grains of conventional photographic film are spread randomly across the emulsion. The number of pixels that make up the digital photograph is known as the resolution and is usually displayed as a ratio.

#### For Example :

640 x 480 or  
640 x 480 pixels or 307200 pixels.

When you are scanning or capturing a digital file, the resolution you are scanning in at is determined by the pixels per inch (ppi) you are capturing at over a determined area.

#### For Example :

If you are scanning or capturing an area 10 inches x 8 inches at 300 ppi the resolution will be :  
( 10 x 300 ) x ( 8 x 300 ) = 3000 x 2400 pixels or 7,200,000 pixels.

The other determining factor of the file size is the bit depth ( or dynamic range ) which determines the number of possible colours or shades of grey that may make up a particular digital photograph. A bit depth of 1 is usually used when reproducing line work, a bit depth of 8 would often be used when reproducing continuous tone monochrome work, and a bit depth of 24 would usually be used to represent continuous tone colour work.

The line work can be represented by a bit depth of 1 as the amount of options in its reproducible palate would only need to be 2, or black and white.

$2^1 = 2$  or just black and white. 1 bit

Whereas the continuous tone monochrome reproduction would need to be represented by 256 shades from black to white which would need a bit depth of 8, as shown below :

$2^8 = 256$  shades from black to white. 8 bit

The continuous tone colour

representation can be looked on as 3 monochrome continuous tone curves each representing red, green and blue giving a bit depth of 24 and an overall working colour palate to represent the colour photograph of over 16 million colours, as shown below :

$2^8 \times 2^8 \times 2^8 = 2^{24} = \text{over } 16 \text{ million colours. } 24 \text{ bit}$

Now that we have the resolution and the bit depth sorted out we can now work out our file size for any given digital photograph using the following formula :

File size ( bits ) = resolution x bit depth

Now digital file sizes are given in bytes and each byte is made up of 8 bits, so the formula now becomes :

File size ( bytes ) = ( resolution x bit depth ) / 8

Finally an example to show how this all works together :

A 7 inch x 5 inch colour print scanned in at 300 ppi with a bit depth of 24 would give the following file size:  
Resolution = ( 7 x 300 ) x ( 5 x 300 ) = 2100 x 1500 = 3,150,000  
bit depth = 24

Therefore file size = ( 3,150,000 x 24 ) / 8 = 9,450,000 bytes  
now as 1 kilobyte (Kb) =  $10^3$  bytes  
and 1 Megabyte (Mb) =  $10^6$  bytes

The file size can be noted as 9,450 Kb or 9.45 Mb.

What is shown here is the tip the iceberg when discussing the issues involved with digital photography and although I started by pointing out that "Introduction to Imaging" by Howard Besser and Jennifer Trant seemed to neglect the importance of the photographer in respect to museum multimedia it is never the less as good a place as any for the photographers who want to start understanding to begin.

## The Association for Historical & Fine Art Photography

As the national archive the Public Record Office (PRO) is known as the repository of the great documents of British history such as the Domesday Book and Magna Carta. Lying amongst these manuscripts are many thousands of photographs most of which have been largely unnoticed for many decades. However with the launch last year of a professional picture library service these images are now finding their way into many publications, television programmes and newspapers.

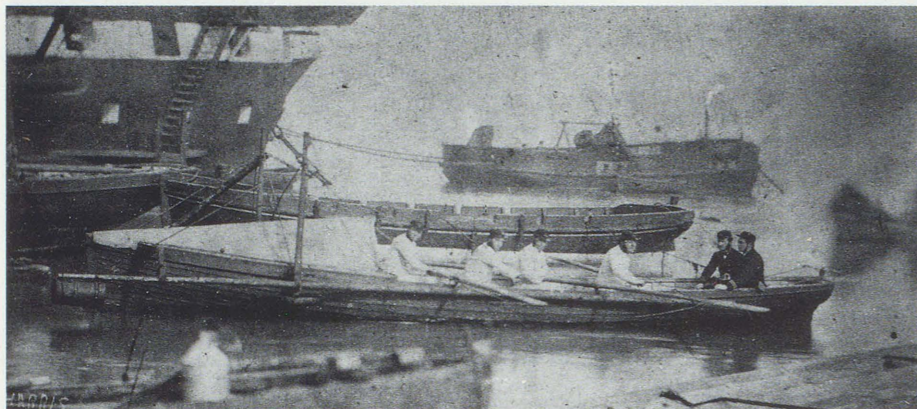
The PRO photographic collection ranges from the mid-nineteenth century to the 1960s (government documents are closed for a minimum of thirty years). They include official shots taken by the military and the Ministry of Information to family snapshots taken by amateur Victorian photographers.

The largest and most varied collection came into being as a result of Victorian copyright legislation. Between 1862 and 1912 anyone wishing to register copyright on a photograph had to fill in a form, attach a copy print and a shilling and send it to Stationers Hall in Ludgate Hill. On the form the person registering copyright (frequently not the photographer himself) 'hereby certified that I am entitled to the copyright in the under-mentioned work'.

The result of this procedure was several hundred boxes full of photographs and forms which were left for many years gathering dust at Stationers' Hall. These boxes were eventually transferred to the Public Record Office. Once at the PRO they attracted little attention until recently. The PRO Image Library and Conservation department decided that the collection merited closer inspection. As a result a project was set up to edit and conserve the collection. An editor has been employed to go through the collection and select those prints

### PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTIONS AT THE PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE

*Paul Sinnot, Picture Researcher*



*ADM 1/6045 Torpedo gig, HMS Excellent - 1864*

that merit special attention. The criteria for selection covers shots that stand out in their own right, the works of famous photographers and those that cover major historical events of personalities.

The fact that these images were ignored for decades meant they were protected from the effects of sunlight and handling and are, in the main, in excellent condition considering their age. Those requiring attention are separated from their form and encapsulated, any prints that need further conservation work are referred to the Conservation Department. The

selected prints are also photographed and added to the picture library on 35mm.

The copyright collection forms a rich and diverse social history of the period that saw the peak of Britain and her Empire. One unique feature of the collection is the fact there was no editorial process involved. The only qualification for a photo was that someone, be they Frank Meadow Sutcliffe or a local vicar, thought their image was worth registering. This means that alongside works by Emerson, Muybridge, Ponting, Bassano, Thomson, Evans, Sims,



*"You like haka, pakeha?" - Maori boys, Thomas Pringle - 1907*

## The Association for Historical & Fine Art Photography

Mayall, Downey, Rejlander and Nicholls lie shots of village fetes and small town mayors. Some famous characters also registered their photographic efforts. George Bernard Shaw registered a photo of himself and wrote on the form the photographs were taken by me on my camera, on my plates with my lens; I chose the subject, posed for them, fixed them....and printed them. If I am not the author who is? - sentiments that have been echoed by photographers denied the profits from their work through the decades.

The second most extensive photographic collection at the PRO is known as the 'Dixon-Scott collection'. John Dixon-Scott travelled the length and breadth of Britain in the 1920s and 30s taking his camera with him. This resulted in a collection of over 13000 photographs. The collection is mainly topographical but also supplies a useful social history of the period covering rural and urban life in exhaustive depth. Every county is covered in detail and the collection is indexed by county, so anyone wishing to study a particular part of the country can instantly tap into a ready made photographic resource.

The other photographs at the PRO come from a wide variety of sources. The military took many photographs from the 1850s onwards. The Admiralty records contain a gem of a collection which covers every Royal Navy ship of the period 1856 - 1945 from destroyer upwards, on high quality 10" x 8" prints.

RAF records include shots of all the major marques from Royal Flying Corps days to the 1960s plus many World War II action shots, bomb damage and gun camera photos.

There are also several smaller collections that relate to specific events. There is a detailed series of shots of the 1951 Festival of Britain,

a collection of Cecil Beaton photographs of India taken in 1944 on a Ministry of Information funded tour. The marking out of the Canadian/US border in 1874 was recorded in an album showing the Royal Engineers team working on the frontier and their dealings with native Americans around the Red River. The Royal Engineers also produced the earliest known photographs held at the PRO during the Crimean War. A series of photographs was taken at Kertch in 1856 including panoramas and portraits of RE and Turkish officers and a captured Cossack colonel. This was the first time the camera was used for intelligence purposes by the British military.

Beyond the photographs gathered in specific collections are many shots included in reports and files created by the various arms of government. One of the most interesting is the file on the fate of the Russian Royal Family executed at Ekaterinberg, Siberia in 1918. The file was compiled by the White Russians after they had temporarily recaptured the town. It was smuggled out of Russia through China and ended up on the shelves of the PRO via the Foreign Office who added an English translation. It includes rare photographs of the family before and after their capture and shots of the gruesome excavation of their grave. The most recognisable (the bodies were burned and then had acid poured over them) were of the jewellery stuffed down their corsets by the Tsarina and her daughters.

As well as all this wealth of material there are many photographs awaiting discovery or rediscovery lying on the shelves of the PRO.

### The Marketing of the Image Library

All these photographs have been at the PRO for many years but until recently have been largely unnoticed. The Office decided to remedy this situation by setting up a commercial Image Library service. The motives behind this were twofold, firstly to raise money in accordance

with the policy of central government which encouraged government departments to raise as much revenue as they could by exploiting their resources, secondly the success of a commercial service would help to raise the profile of the Office and its holdings.

A launch party was held at the Chancery Lane site in September 1996 where the Image Library's CD-Rom was previewed. This CD was designed to give commercial image users a taste what the collection holds (including graphic art, designs and documents as well as photographs). Production costs were kept low so that the CD could be given away free of charge. It contains 650 images; these are divided into ten subject categories (such as People & Places, and Travel & Transport). There is also a 'guided tour' - an automatic slide show of images and captions which shows the viewer around the PRO and the various image collections.

Other marketing activities included mailshots (using postcards) to designers and publishers and placing adverts in and writing articles for the trade press. We have also produced a thirty page brochure for those who still prefer to see their images 'In the flesh' rather than on a PC screen. The Image Library had a section within the BAPLA (British Association of Picture Libraries & Agencies) stand at the 1997 London International Book Fair and the Creative Show, the latter proved to be particularly successful.

We have learned that as the picture library market is a crowded one you have to be prepared to spend a significant amount of time and money to raise your profile. Once people are used to using you and know they will get a good service they will come back and it is possible to build a customer base in this way. Anyone contemplating commercial exploitation of their photographic collections, as a diverse range of institutions are now doing, should realise there is no 'fast buck' to be made but that, with enough investment, significant revenue can be raised.

The Association  
for Historical &  
Fine Art  
Photography

Having spent eleven years with Leicestershire Museums and Art Galleries as photographic assistant and then photographer, the time had come to move on. My husband, Chris, had reached a similar point in his own career. We had recently sold our house and moved onto a 55' narrowboat, and so were in an ideal situation to take some time out to travel the country's waterways system.

This was a perfect chance to develop my personal work by making a photographic study of the trip. With the help of Fuji and Trevor Drake, their Local Government Market Sales Manager, this was enabled by providing a sponsorship. As it would be necessary to produce black and white prints on the boat, the galley could be blacked out, giving a good sized darkroom.

Armed with boat, cameras, film and plenty of enthusiasm we began our trip on 1st of June 1996 from Foxton in Leicestershire, heading to Oxford and then on to London via the Thames. It took a leisurely five weeks to reach Little Venice in London. Here we stopped for two weeks, during which we adopted a rescue dog, Jake, from Battersea Dog's Home to accompany us. We then headed north again up the Grand Union Canal. After a ten day hold-up in Braunston, Northamptonshire, to fix a bad oil leak, we continued north to Birmingham taking in a two week detour to Stratford. Our original plan was to continue up to Yorkshire. However the winter canal maintenance schedule meant that this would not be possible until the spring. So on reaching Llangollen in North Wales we then headed south again, to spend a month over Christmas and New Year back in Leicester. The few weeks in Leicester allowed us to spend time with friends and relatives, also to unload and put into storage an old spare engine that we had bought and carried from Wales. It had

also become apparent that the darkroom set-up we had installed was not working. So we set about some major internal alterations that enabled us to install a permanent darkroom. This now meant that I could go straight into the darkroom without spending an hour setting it up and blacking it out. I could also stay in there as long as the battery, water tank and waste tank capacities would allow.

By this time I was becoming happier with my photography. Initially I had started to take some commercial type photographs with a view to publication in the waterways press. However the delays caused by waiting for the correct light and conditions ( which could be days rather than hours ), were impeding our progress. I had also been taking portraits and interviewing some of the more interesting characters who live and work on the canal. But everyone I approached seemed to have been "done" several times before. I therefore concentrated on what I enjoyed most: strong landscapes, architectural and industrial images. Most of the photographs I took would often require a long walk back to somewhere we had passed previously or I would take whilst walking the dog. My Mamiya RB67 was simply too heavy and cumbersome for this purpose. This was revolutionised when Fuji lent me one of their 645 rangefinder cameras. Enabling me, in effect, to carry a medium format camera with me at all times without intrusion. So with renewed enthusiasm we set off north for a second time travelling initially with another boat as we tackled the winter floods of the rivers Soar and Trent, often delayed by up to a week as some of the winter maintenance work ran over schedule. During such delays we usually caught up with some repairs, made friends with some of the other folk waiting or found that we had met some of them before. We then travelled up the Trent and Mersey

Canal past Northwich onto the Bridgewater canal. This took us through Manchester into North Lancashire and then onto the Leeds and Liverpool Canal.

By mid-May we had reached Skipton and were beginning to realise that the year we had allowed ourselves was coming to an end, and so Chris started to make job enquiries. Then, all within the space of two weeks, Chris had accepted a job in Manchester, we had bought a car and had found a permanent mooring on the Macclesfield Canal. One week later we had moved the boat to its new mooring ( a trip that takes two hours by car but took us eighty hours in six days ). With some sadness we realised that, for the time being at least, our travels had come to an end. I have gained a lot from the past year and have few regrets. What did surprise me was how busy I was: travelling, baking bread, collecting fire-wood, boat maintenance, exploring and photographic work left few idle moments at the end of the day. After some early hesitation, I now feel pleased by the direction my photography has taken, and am now following up these ideas to develop my career.



### LOCKING UP AND STOPPING DOWN

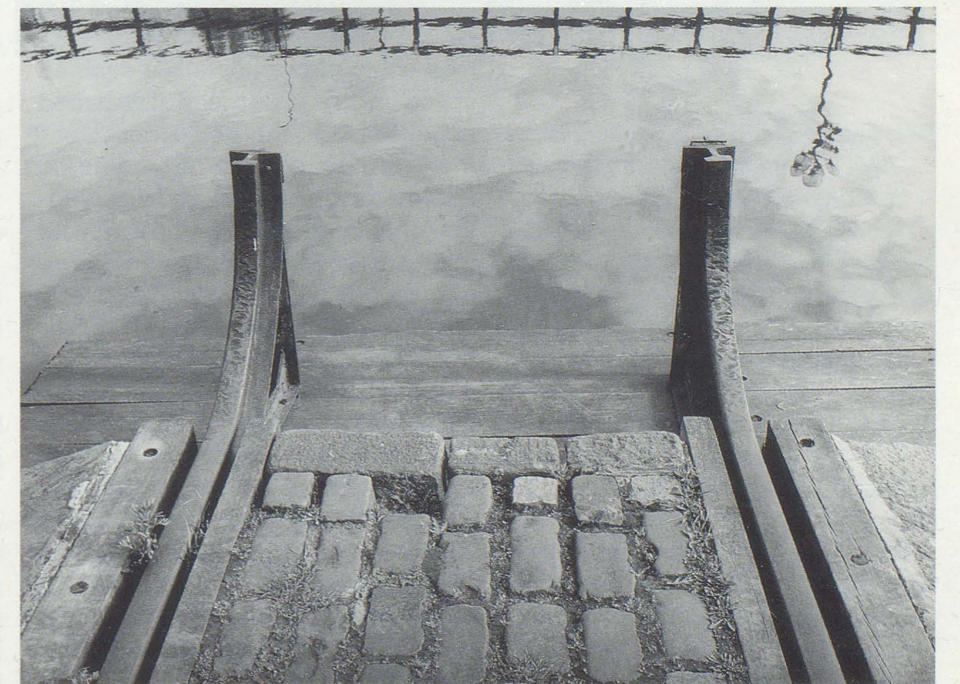
*Catherine Lines, Photographer*

The Association  
for Historical &  
Fine Art  
Photography

# PORTFOLIO



*The Fender Maker - Cropredy, Oxford Canal*



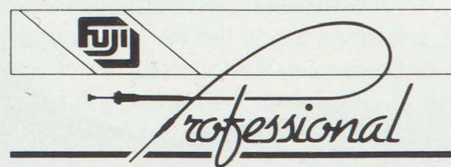
*Wigan Pier - Lancashire*

*Opposite page  
Silsden Swingbridge - N Yorks  
All Photographs Copyright Catherine Lines*

JOURNAL



# BURSARY BULLETIN



## FUJI BURSARY

Within AHFAP there have been many successes but none more so than the yearly Fuji Bursary Award scheme. Here follows outlines of the 3 projects sponsored so far.

In 1994 Peter James of the Birmingham Central Library received the award for -  
**OUR TIME, OUR PLACE: THE NEW HANDSWORTH PHOTOGRAPHIC SURVEY**

**Peter James**

Head of Photography  
Birmingham Central Library

In the last twenty years of the nineteenth century the introduction of new photographic materials such as collodion dry plates and film-based negatives, and the parallel development of new easy-to-use cameras spawned the growth of a new generation of amateur photographers. Like their predecessors these amateurs formed themselves into societies and sought to devise practical projects to which they could apply their photographic energies. The widely held belief that photographs bore truthful witness to history encouraged many to establish projects which sought to preserve photographic records of their locality for the benefit of posterity. In 1896 members of the Handsworth Photographic Society established one such project: The Handsworth Photographic Survey

Following detailed planning and research undertaken in the Local History Section of their local library the Handsworth Surveyors secured over 200 unique records of significant buildings, locations and people

in and around their homes. The resulting prints were mounted and captions giving precise details of the date, time, location and subject of the photograph were added before the prints were finally donated to Birmingham Central Library.

Nearly one hundred years later staff at the Library used the Handsworth Survey as the foundation for a new project aimed at promoting the use and critical study of photography in local schools. Using modern colour negative film and disposable cameras provided by Trevor Drake, four schools worked with three professional photographers and a film maker to make a modern record of Handsworth.

From the outset it was decided that the project should have five keys aims:

- \* to develop practical photographic skills in groups of Junior and Secondary schoolchildren through partnerships with professional photographers
- \* to make a modern record of Handsworth from a child's point of view
- \* to raise awareness of local history and to imbue pupils with a sense of pride in their community
- \* to raise awareness amongst education professionals of the cross - curricular applications of photography
- \* to produce a cultural and historical resource for schools, libraries and the local community

To begin with all the participating children were introduced to the first survey, exploring the ideas and methods which drove the project and the (original) images which resulted from it. The professional photographers, all of whom worked in and around Handsworth then showed and discussed their own work, highlighting the technical and aesthetic differences between taking photographs now and a hundred years ago. Once the children had a good grasp of the

background material each school was encouraged to devise their own approach to the Survey to tie in with planned curriculum or examination-based work for that term.

Foundry Junior School backed up the term's planned topic of Tricks, Toys and Games by exploring the games children played in school playgrounds and local parks. Westminster Junior School developed a cross-curricular theme of Customs, Culture and Food, visiting local markets, allotments, and food shops in the area. Hollyhead Secondary School used the project to compliment their GCSE Media Studies Syllabus: the students updating photographs from the original survey by recording present-day streets and buildings, also taking cameras home to make images of objects, sights and scenes of their ordinary lives. Finally English and Drama students from Handsworth Wood Girls School used the project to explore themes of friendship, families and sisterhood by making photographic storyboards around these subjects.

All the pupils were taught basic photographic skills and were involved in planning and preparing shoots to fulfil their specific requirements. They made written records of all the photographs taken and then worked closely with the photographers to analyse the images they produced, selecting the best for inclusion in a final exhibition. Finally the negatives produced were added to the collections held at Birmingham Central Library so that future generations of Handsworth children could be inspired and informed by the work of these New Handsworth Surveyors.

In 1994 Our Time Our Place: The New Handsworth Photographic Survey was awarded the first Fuji AHFAP Bursary. The prize money was used to support the production of an exhibition which was shown at the four participating schools, Birmingham Central Library, and Soho House Museum, Handsworth. ~



*The A5 Holyhead*



*Sea Front, Terraced Housing - Saltburn*

In 1995 it was the turn of the National Railway Museum at York with -

## BEYOND THE END OF THE LINE Chris Hogg & Lynn Patrick

Photographic Department  
National Railway Museum

Terminus: Our initial objective when we applied for the bursary was to return to the days of experimental photography. Gaining a freedom of expression in our photography which, due to professional constraints, is no longer possible during our daily working lives. We decided to undertake the project on colour negative film - a medium with which we were unfamiliar.

Our project was simple, to photograph three towns at the end of railway lines showing the impact, if any, of the railway on the communities. We chose three contrasting towns: Saltburn-by-the-Sea on the Yorkshire

coast, Holyhead in North Wales and Wemyss Bay on the Firth of Clyde.

We originally estimated that it would take us two years to complete. However, once started, we realised that we would take the project farther than our original idea and include aspects with no obvious railway connections. Today the project is in a state of metamorphosis awaiting its final direction.

It was also clear that the initial time scale became impossible due to an increase in work load from the department's venture into commercial work with the Railway businesses.

We have found the project exciting, intense and at times exasperating but, most importantly of all, photography has become part of our personal lives once again.

We are grateful to Trevor Drake and Fuji for giving us the spur to get out and do something different.

## The Association for Historical & Fine Art Photography

Last year it was awarded to Robert Sivyer of the Marlborough Museum and I leave you with his application letter in order to inspire you to apply for the coming year's award. THE MERCHANT'S HOUSE (MARLBOROUGH) TRUST  
**Robert Sivyer**

I work as the Photographer and Photographic Archivist for the Merchant's House Museum and the Museum of Marlborough and District, which are both housed at 132 High Street, Marlborough, Wiltshire.

Our photographic archive contains several examples of Victorian Photographs of Marlborough High Street showing the shops of the time with the shopkeeper and his staff proudly standing outside. A friend, John Taylor, a local professional photographer, who gave great support to the local museums, also came across similar examples of the photographs described above, in the course of his business.

We talked about this early in 1995 and decided to bring the idea to the present time and photograph all of the shops in Marlborough High Street with shopkeepers/managers and staff standing in front of their places of work. We delayed starting this until later in the year when we would have more time and would have some possibility of obtaining financial support for the project. Unfortunately John Taylor died suddenly at the end of 1995 before we had a chance to start.

I would now like to revive the project and create a record of the commercial and trading activities in the shop premises in Marlborough High Street and of the persons involved, to be kept by the Museum of Marlborough and District as the John Taylor Memorial Collection. Unfortunately financial support is still a problem and this is why I am applying for the Fuji/AHFAP Bursary.

I have approached the

Marlborough Civic Society about this and they indicate that they would support the project by staging a Millennium Exhibition of the photographs in the town - in the Town Hall or the Museum.

The modern photographs will be in monochrome, sepia or selenium toned. The exhibition as far as possible will additionally include copies of as many original photographs as can be traced, to serve as a comparison with the present.

One last comment. Certainly the information about the present use

of shop premises will be of future interest to Social Historians but, to local residents the future interest will be to recognise parents, long-forgotten friends and even themselves in the photographs. This is evidenced by the local interest generated when the Museum displayed, forty years after the event, a collection of one hundred photographs depicting all the celebrations in Marlborough on Coronation Day 1953. We now know the names of the majority of the people in these photographs and this is one function of a local museum.



Marlborough High Street - then and now



FUJI PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHIC DIVISION are pleased to support the AHFAP with the FUJI BURSARY and would confirm our continued sponsorship of an Association Members Project with this annual award

Please contact : - **Trevor Drake**  
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