

Contact Sheet

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The Love of Barns

It may go down in history as one of the great unsolved mysteries of the universe: Why do photographers love barns? Most of us who take these images of the same subject repeatedly really don't have an answer for anyone else. We just love our barns! But this also will usually bring us a pang of sadness since so many of the barns that we have enjoyed over the years are no longer with us. Many of our "friends" have passed away. **Roger Heng** gave us a presentation about our friends.

Unfortunately, this must remind all people with cameras that we have a mission to be better documentary photographers and must try to get the best images each time we are out on a shoot. We all have those shots in our portfolio that we are especially proud of because we recognized a good photo

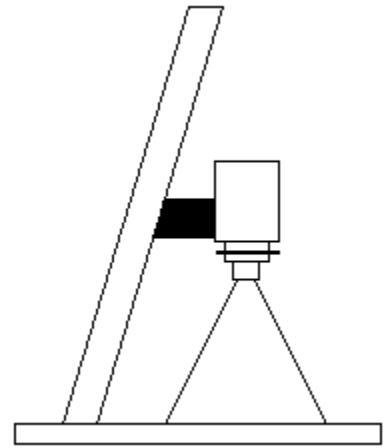


opportunity; and we spent the time and effort to get the right light on the image, the correct f/stop was used, and the proper shutter speed was chosen. And we pressed the shutter release button at precisely the correct instant. And we are rewarded with a prize winning effort.

But in reality almost every image that we take has that same potential. Yes, even a barn can give you that same feeling! We see a barn and say that the sky is not correct, there's a tractor in the wrong spot, and we'll just come back another time. But do we? Probably not. And will that barn still be there the next time you are by that location? Probably, but **maybe not**.

A few years ago I wrote a 400+ page book about photographic opportunities in this southeastern section of Idaho. (I thought there would be a market for this type of endeavor, but the dozen or so publishing houses I

contacted felt otherwise!) In this effort I listed as many of the barns that I could find since many people like to photograph them. I listed where you could find various wildflowers, wildlife, interesting rock formations, etc. Each year I tried to update what was happening to these photographic



opportunities. But the section I had most trouble with was the barns! Over 20% of them disappeared in the few years I was trying to write this book.

Developers put in subdivisions, and the family farm barn was gone. Vandals burned down two of them. Two were replaced by modern horse stables with metal roofs, metal siding, metal doors, plastic fences, etc. Yes, they were clean and efficient, but where was the character in the wood texture, the door askew, the broken hinge, the hole in the roof with some missing shingles.

It was some of these realities of life that made me realize that I truly was becoming a documentary photographer - whether I liked that concept or not - and that many of my subjects were not going to be there in the future. And I began to take more time in shooting the photographs that, before, maybe were just snapshots. I didn't care about the proper clouds in the sky as much, or that the lighting wasn't as perfect as I might like. I began to try to get the best image that I could on film at that particular day and time. Before this realization, I worked very fast as a photographer, just quickly looking at a subject. If I liked it, I fired off a couple of frames and then moved on to the next thing that caught my eye. But now, I began to look at each object with more of an analytical approach: How can I best present this object? Is there an angle that will reveal its beauty better? How can I make this subject more appealing to those who will see my images in the future? Yes, there are still many things that do not get their picture taken, and I go on to the next subject - - but at least my mind has processed some information and critically analyzed the subject in a much better way.

One of the advantages of this approach is that I saved on film since I had a higher percentage of good shots. With the purchase of my digital camera, I noticed that I began slipping in to some of my bad habits and just started firing away at a subject again since there were no longer any upfront costs in buying and processing film. Fortunately for me, I don't like to spend time sitting in front of the computer working in Photoshop, even if it is just pushing the delete button; and so the last year or so, I have reverted back to "film" mode when taking pictures.

Thank you, BARNS, for making me a better photographer, and forcing me to evaluate all photographic potential for each subject that I approach. Thanks, Roger, for making us realize the beauty in a very mundane subject.

Club Notes

Special thanks to Farr's Jewelry for the use of the digital projector at the last Advancement Program. We learned a lot!

Don't forget to get in the fall and winter images for the Idaho Falls Magazine to Roger. Look in your archives for your past images since the magazine deadline is three months ahead of the season. Remember, they want things that will interest people to think about coming to this area. A little humor can sometimes help also. They give us free advertising in their magazine and you get your images into a publication. It is definitely a win-win situation for our group and each person who participates. So get the images into Roger NOW!

Field Trips

Our next field trip will be to Bannack State Park in southern Montana. Bannack was the first territorial capital of Montana, back at the height of the gold and silver rush in this region. The people in charge of this area have done an excellent job of keeping what structures are left, and still allowing people access to the buildings. Most of the roofs have been well maintained in such a fashion that the interiors of the buildings remain intact; but they have refrained from putting “brand new red metal roofs” on the architecture and have used materials that appear more compatible with the building itself. There are probably 30-50 buildings in the town (a large several story brick hotel, a school house, church, bar, merchant buildings, jail, houses, outhouses, a couple of barns) with a board walkway down both sides of the dirt street so that even if the weather is raining or bad, you can usually get to the buildings.

There is a couple dollar entry fee at the start of the town. No vehicles are allowed on the street and you will have to carry all of the equipment you want from your car to the place you want to photograph. But this is usually not a problem since the town is only a couple blocks long. There is no food available at the Park although there is a campground attached for those who want to come Friday night. Dillon is about 30 miles away and could be purchase point for a box lunch for you. There are picnic tables in the parking lot for this purpose. There is drinking water at this location also, but I usually bring fluids with me since I always seem to be at the opposite end of the town when I get thirsty.

We will leave from the quick stop in Roberts at 5 a.m. on Saturday June 9. If there is interest, there is an old school house at Dell that serves breakfast, or possible a supper on the way home, that we have used in the past.

Advancement Program

The theme for June is: **Fog**. Please bring three of your favorite slides, prints, or digital files on that subject and join us on 21 Jun 2007 at 7:30 p.m. in the Conference Room at 1900 Grandview. Everybody learns when we share images and discuss them!

For our new members the remaining themes for the remainder of the year are listed below. We want to see your interpretation of these subjects. If you don't have anything for that subject, just bring your recent images since we know that we didn't give you enough lead time.

June – Fog

July – Photographer's Choice

August – The Past – (this is one of the reasons that we planned the field trip to Bannack!)

September – Photographer's Choice

October – Critters

November – Photographer's Choice

December – Color Explosion

Cabin Fever

Winters are long in Idaho and we want to get outdoors and enjoy our summers. Don't forget to take your camera with you on each of your outings. Your “Picture of a Lifetime” will only happen if you have your camera with you. **You get better in photography as you exercise your mind and photographic eye.**

Monthly Meeting

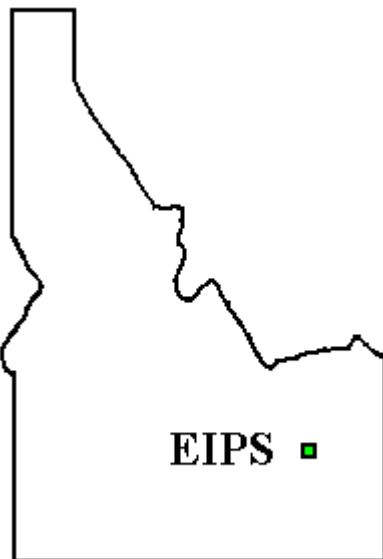
Date: June 7, 2007

Time: 7:30 p.m.

**Location: Conference room
at 1900 Grandview Avenue**

Program: You've shot film for years and are just going to shoot digital photographs in manual mode. **Rodney Jack** will explain why we need to change some of our thinking processes to get better images with our digital cameras.

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Graffiti

EIPS is a group of amateur and professional photographers who have joined together to further the art and craft of photography. Please join us and expand your horizons. Sharing knowledge makes all participants better at their craft. We meet on the first Thursday of each month for our educational lecture. Then the third Thursday is our Advancement Program where we share some of the images we have done. We meet at 7:30 p.m. in the 1900 Grandview Ave conference room. We all become better photographers!

Start looking at the stars. We will show you how to photograph them in your July EIPS meeting.

