

# REFLECTIONS



REFLECTIONS

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE STONY BROOK CAMERA CLUB

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## *From the desk of Ray Guillette:*

Hi All !

At the annual banquet this year (6-10-04), we are planning a program to honor the founding members of Stony Brook Camera Club, and to celebrate the rich traditions the club has developed over its 34 year history. Please look through your files for images from field trips, banquets, etc, that show club members, past and present. Slides are preferred, but prints can be copied into slides. Also, copies of the newsletter "Reflections" from all years, but especially from 1990 to the present, would be appreciated. If you have a favorite "Stony Brook Story" please write it down and submit that, too. All submissions will be returned, intact, at the banquet or sooner, if possible. This is a great opportunity to show what has made, and continues to make, Stony Brook unique and beloved by so many. Thanks in advance for your contributions.

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*Here is an interesting article I found in Vivid Light Photography magazine (2003-Vol 23)*

## **What is Hyperfocal Distance and Why Should I Care?**

by *The Staff at Vivid Light*

So what the heck is hyperfocal distance and why should I care?

### **In Plain Language**

If you focus your lens at its hyperfocal distance you will get the greatest depth of field. With a high quality lens you can produce images with your 35mm that people will swear came from a medium format camera.

So what is hyperfocal distance? Whenever you focus your lens there will be an area that is in focus and areas that are out of focus. The area that is in focus is referred to as the "focal plane".

The important thing here is that 1/3rd of the focal plane is ahead of the thing you're focused on and 2/3rds of the focal plane falls behind what you're focused on.

Focus your lens at infinity and the leading edge of the area that is in focus is the hyperfocal point for that lens. Focus on that point instead of infinity and you'll have the greatest range of focus from infinity back toward your location.

### **The Chart**

You can cheat, and many photographers do, by focusing about a third of the way into a scene. This will get you good sharp images with a lot of depth of field. But if you really want to squeeze the maximum depth of field out of that sweeping landscape before your lens knowing the correct hyperfocal distance for your lens is the only way.

You can do some math to find out the hyperfocal distance for any focal length lens at any aperture. But since most of us don't carry around calculators in our camera bags it helps to have a little cheat sheet along. We've included a couple of links below that allow you to print out charts for 35mm, 4x5, 6x6, and digital cameras. There are a couple of versions of the charts. The simplest to use is the PDF version. Just download it and print it. We've also included charts in Microsoft Excel format for the math wizards out there who want to modify the spreadsheets for other formats or to change the value of a constant in a formula (see **Understanding the Math** below).

### **Using the Chart**

The first step in getting maximum depth of field is to use a tripod. The idea is to capture fine detail. Unless you're

**STONY BROOK CAMERA CLUB WEB PAGE**  
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**STONY BROOK CAMERA CLUB**

**PURPOSE:** To promote enjoyment and proficiency in all aspects of photography through education by mutual exchange of knowledge and experience; and, to promote a broad appreciation of our environment.

**MEETINGS:** Meetings will be held on the first and third Thursdays of each month, except for no meetings in July and August. Other Workshops and Print/Slide Study Nights may be scheduled on the second and fourth Thursdays. Consult the SBCC Calendar of Events. All meetings start at 7:30 P.M. The regular meeting place is Stony Brook Audubon Preserve, Norfolk, MA off Route 115. At other times activities are scheduled in other nearby locations.

**DUES:** Individuals: \$30.00, Families: \$40.00, and \$15.00 for students and members over 65 years of age. To be eligible for competitions, dues must be paid by the first competition in November.

**NEWSLETTER:** Published six times during the year for Aug/Sept, Oct/Nov, Dec/Jan, Feb/Mar, Apr/May, and Jun/Jul and solely for the information, guidance and enjoyment of the Stony Brook Camera Club, Norfolk, MA

**OFFICERS:** Elected annually and serve as the executive committee with two past presidents. The Stony Brook Camera Club is affiliated with the New England Camera Club Council and is a member of the Photographic Society of America

using a very high shutter speed and you have the steady hands of a marksman the only way to do this is with a tripod to keep your camera rock steady.

Compose your image. Put your camera into manual focus mode, pick an object at the hyperfocal distance indicated by the chart and focus on it. There was a time when every lens had a distance scale printed right on the lens barrel. Those days are gone so unless you're using an older manual focus lens you'll have to estimate distance.

Use a cable release or the camera's built in self-timer to trip the shutter. Doing it manually by pressing down the shutter release button will cause camera movement and everything you've done so far will have been wasted.

When you get home make a nice big print and enjoy the results!

**Times You Don't want to Use Hyperfocal Distance**

A visual technique that has become common in today's landscape photography is to pick a strong foreground subject placed low in the frame. Your eye naturally goes to that foreground subject and then on back into the image.

Depending on the focal length of the lens and the closeness of the subject, hyperfocal distance may leave the focus on that foreground subject soft. Since that is the first thing the viewers eye goes to the whole image will appear to be slightly out of focus - even if everything beyond that foreground subject is tack sharp. So if you're employing this compositional technique for your landscapes you have to make sure the foreground subject is sharp.

If you have a sufficiently bright viewfinder you can go to your hyperfocal distance and then gradually back the focus in until the foreground is tack sharp.

That's the end of the practical discussion and most of us should stop reading here. Continue on only if you want to get into the math and science behind calculating hyperfocal distance.

***For those of you who want this information, go to: [www.vividlight.com/articles/2314.htm](http://www.vividlight.com/articles/2314.htm) for the rest of the article***

**WAITING FOR THE LIGHT**

by Ray Guilette

"The sun shines not on us, but in us." John Muir

It's a beautiful day, and you've got landscapes on your mind. Your plans have brought you to a promising new or a familiar old location. The early morning light is just right, the wind isn't too strong, and the sky is sprinkled with puffy white clouds. You quickly set up your tripod, frame the image, focus, and attach a cable release. Just as you are ready to shoot, the sun sneaks behind a cloud, one that's larger than any other in the sky. There's nothing to do but wait.

We have all had this experience. A change in light or a shift in the wind can be frustrating, especially when the image before you is exciting, and the light seems perfect. The time spent waiting for optimal conditions is usually worthwhile if the image is promising. But it can also be used to improve the image at hand and subsequent images as well. Here are some suggestions on how to spend this valuable time.

## SBCC SCHEDULE 2004

### WORKSHOPS AND PRESENTATIONS - 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursdays\*

MONTH	PRESENTER	WORKSHOP/PRESENTATION SUBJECT
April 1		Competition
8		Multi-Screen Selection
15	Mike Roman/ Paul Smith	Portrait Workshop
22		Print/Slide Study
29		Open
May 6		Print/Slide of the Year
13	Gail Hansche	"How to Photograph Birds"
20		TBA
27		Print/Slide Study
June 3	Ray Guillette	"The Power and the Glory"
10		Awards Banquet and Member Slide Show

As in past years, the first Thursday of each month will be our Competition night and the fourth Thursday of each month will be Slide Study Night.

Check your camera: Is the tripod secure and tightened? Is the lens clean? Does the f stop give you enough depth-of field? Did you check the film speed when you changed film? Would a polarizing or warming filter help the image? How did you figure out the exposure? Maybe you could check it with the "sunny 16" rule or a gray card.

Take time to look through the viewfinder, checking the edges for distractions and making sure the horizon is level. Maybe the composition needs to be "tweaked" a little. It's fun to imitate Ansel Adams, throw your jacket over your head and, after letting your eyes adjust to the lower light, press the depth-of field button. This lets you spot potentially distracting highlights. This also shows you where the light is brightest and where the viewer will look first.

Look around and plan your next move. There might be another viewpoint nearby, one with more impact or a better foreground. Would a higher or lower camera position help? Perhaps a longer lens would let you concentrate on details or simplify the composition. Maybe there is another image to the right or left or behind you. And if the light is changing fast, you should think about bracketing your exposures.

Record your efforts in a small notebook; time of day, direction of light, exposures, lenses, and filters. The information you save will be very valuable as you analyze your results when you see your images.

Step up to another level! What emotions does the image create? Think about your subject, what attracted you to it, and how you want your image to look. What do you want viewers to see first, and what do you want them to remember about your image? This is just another way of asking: "what is my message here, what story do I want to tell?" Next, see if your technique and composition support this message. These are not

## Remembering Ed Cohen

**Ed Cohen**, a long time member of SBCC, died on March 13, 2004 at the Youville Hospital & Rehabilitation Center following a 12 year battle with cancer. He was 76 years old.

Ed developed his talents as a photographer as he traveled throughout New England as a manufacturers' representative. Not only was he an active member of SBCC, but he also was a leader of the Norwood Camera Club for many years, and received numerous awards for his beautiful photographs.

difficult questions and you always know the right answers.

Try putting a little bit of yourself into the image. If you are photographing an old farm or a fort, think about what life was like for those who came before you. If nature is your subject, think about your place as a photographer in the natural world. Remember, we are merely visitors here, and nature needs our love and respect.

Maybe the light you are waiting for is inside you, hiding behind all those technical concerns, and not outside, hiding behind a cloud.

**Here is Ray's byline for his new show on June 3<sup>rd</sup>:**

**"The Power and the Glory"**  
by Ray Guillette, MNEC

A three projector dissolve audiovisual showcase: celebrating moments of awe and wonder, when the majesty of the natural world and the inner workings of our own creativity inspire us to be thankful we are present for the great spectacle of life. A search for joy and spirit, from the grand landscape to intimate everyday visions and overlooked details.

## Multi-Screen 2003 - 2004

- |                         |                           |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. BACKLIT              | 13. LUSH                  |
| 2. COMEDY               | 14. MUSHROOM(S)           |
| 3. CURIOSITY            | 15. MYSTERY               |
| 4. CURLS(PLURAL)        | 16. MUSICAL INSTRUMENT(S) |
| 5. DETAIL               | 17. PET(S)                |
| 6. FENCE(S)             | 18. RED                   |
| 7. FLASHY               | 19. SIZZLE                |
| 8. FOOTPRINT(S)         | 20. SLOW MOTION           |
| 9. FRIENDSHIP           | 21. SWING(S)              |
| 10. GLASSWARE REFLECTED | 22. TWISTED               |
| 11. IN THE SNOW         | 23. UNUSUAL               |
| 12. LEAVES(PLURAL)      | 24. WING(S)               |

*For those of you who may not have gotten Bob Sheppard's email about the future of digital cameras (from the BBC World OnLine News-Sunday, March 28,2004):*

## **Bright outlook for digital cameras**

By Richard Taylor  
BBC World ClickOnline

**Digital photography has been around for the best part of a decade, but in the last few years it has really come of age.**

2004 is set to be a watershed year, when, for the first time, we will be snapping up more digital cameras than their analogue counterparts.

Life through a lens has never been more exciting, judging from the range of digital cameras on show at the recent Cebit technology show in Hanover, Germany.

Over the past couple of years, manufacturers have been competing furiously to improve picture sharpness, or resolution, so much so that today even budget models have sensors capable of several megapixels.

In fact the so-called megapixel race has come on so quickly, that it is now running out of steam.

"End users don't need more than four or five megapixel cameras," said Harold Jutten of Pentax.

"They see that that is enough for very good, high-resolution pictures. I think pixel-mania has stopped."

This means that the big players are competing on other territory, such as design. For example one camera has an optical zoom lens, which, instead of coming out of the camera, moves up and down inside the chassis.

### **Permanent memories**

New technologies are playing their part too, like a so-called optical image stabilizer which helps alleviate the effects of camera wobble and the resulting blurry photos.

There is also a push to get us printing our photos. Around eight out of 10 digital pictures are thought to never make it into printed form at all.

"In the world of photography we're dealing with emotional moments, it's a memory. Something I want to keep," said Patrick Bluhme of Kodak. "I want to touch it, I want to feel it. That's even true in the digital world."

You do not need a PC any more to join in the revolution. If you are at home, simply docking your camera into a dedicated printer will do.

On the High Street, watch out for retail kiosks where you put in your memory cards and see the results seconds later.

And with cameras making their way onto mobile phones, solutions are even appearing for DIY printing while you are out and about.

The other noticeable trend is towards convergence. Many digital stills cameras offer video as a bonus, just do not expect great quality.

"You are definitely getting convergence, but there's a difference in performance," said Brendon Gore of Panasonic.

"The type of quality still picture you can get with a digital camcorder is not as good as a dedicated digital camera."

### **Saving the past**

Interestingly, it is the camcorder makers who seem to be taking convergence seriously.

Some camcorders have better sensors so you can get higher resolution stills, and there is even one which has two lenses to cope with differing requirements.

More generally, though, the watchword in the camcorder world is evolution not revolution. The main battleground is over recording formats. A few players have gone the recordable DVD route.

"It's much more easy to use, you get higher performance, you don't get the degradation that you get with tape, if you want to go to a video clip you go straight to that clip through an icon," said Mark Wilkin of Hitachi.

The 8cm discs come in different varieties and not all will play back in a regular DVD player.

They are also more expensive and smaller than regular DVDs, each storing 2.8 GB of data, only about 20 minutes of really high quality footage.

No surprise then that, for the time being, most manufacturers are sticking with tape-based systems.

But there has been progress on other fronts, in particular little features, which help us on our way to producing better movies, like enhanced filming mode.

"We've added a feature which allows you to record in a very dark environment, but still you have colours in your picture," said Jean-Baptiste Duprieu of Sony.

At the end of the day though, there is no getting away from the bare facts. If you are hopeless behind the lens, not even technology can save you.

***This year three of our members will be presenters.***

***Andre Bourque will present "Digital Images", Ray Guillette will present "The Power and the Glory", and John Fuller will present "Tropical America". Come and support our club members!***

***For those who have never attended, the New England Camera Club Council is one of the largest in the country. The yearly conference attendance is about 1300!***

***This year's shows include general photography, nature photography, print making, travel, digital imaging, and lighting/portraiture. Throughout the weekend there will be opportunities to photograph models, set-ups and nature subjects. Attendees can enter competitions with slides and prints. Medals and honorable mention ribbons will be awarded, and winning entries will be shown on Sunday at the NECCC Competition Awards.***

***Also available will be special programs for Canon and Nikon equipment, as well as a camera testing clinic. As in past years, many vendors will be present in the Campus Center selling their products at greatly reduced prices.***

***Attendance can be for either all three days or just Saturday and Sunday. Housing is available in the dorms. There is also an optional meal plan.***

***About 30 members of our club attend every year. It's a great weekend to get together with fellow photographers...don't miss it!***

***For more information about NECCC, visit their web site at: <http://www.neccc.org>***



## **59<sup>th</sup> Annual Photographic Conference July 16,17,18, 2004**

**UMASS - Amherst, MA**

***Don't miss this fun and educational weekend!***

***Have any photographic equipment to sell?  
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- Direct Prints From Slides to 12 X 18
- Prints From Digital Media on Photo Paper!



STONY BROOK CAMERA CLUB members who present upon purchase their SBCC Membership Card are eligible for a 10% discount on film, E6 and print processing.



**STONY BROOK CAMERA CLUB "REFLECTIONS"**

*A PSA Award-Winning Newsletter*

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