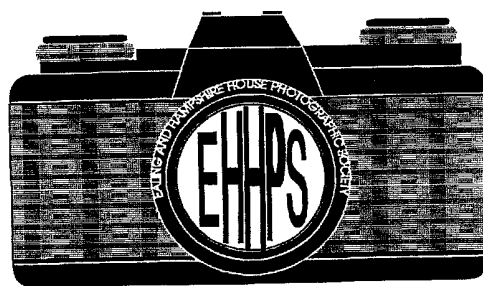


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MARCH 2003

The Journal of the Ealing and Hampshire House Photographic Society

Members are advised that the closing date for submission of prints and slides for the 2003 Annual Exhibition is 1 May. The rules are published within.

Notice is hereby given that the 112th. Annual General Meeting of the Ealing & Hampshire House Photographic Society will be held on Thursday June 26th at 8pm in Ealing Town Hall.

Resolutions for the meeting, and nominations for election to the Council - (4 vacancies) - must be with the Secretary (Phil Binks) no later than June 19th - i.e. the previous Thursday meeting.

LETTER from the PRESIDENT

Dear Member

At this coming AGM I will have served my two years as your President and so stand down to let someone else have a go. As it happens, two members of the Council have resigned recently, for unconnected reasons, and a third has moved away, so there are now four vacancies to be filled at the AGM.

Please do consider standing for election. We really need your support and fresh ideas in order to keep the Society active and innovative and to keep providing you with programmes you enjoy and want.

Council membership is not particularly onerous. We meet on a weekday evening for a couple of hours or so, about 3 or 4 times a year. Newly-elected members tend to be without portfolio for some time in order to settle down and learn the ropes, and we have a great tradition of passing the torch with a lot of support in the early stages, so you are never left to "sink or swim", but always have easy access to advice and experience. And if no one does the jobs, we don't have a Society; so please step up and take part. You will be very welcome!

Another way in which everyone can join in is to put in entries to competitions. As explained within, the in-house competitions serve as a showcase for our work, and the selection for

external and national competitions is primarily done from that. We are now getting record entries on print evenings and the continually rising standard of work is most encouraging.

I know many of you have not tried using slide (positive) film. Why not learn how to use this challenging, but very satisfying, medium and put some of the results into our slide evenings? Digital techniques are now economically available in slides - the

Society has access to a digital slide writer and commercial services at a similar economic price are now freely available. If you are new to using digital bureaux for printing or slide writing, you will find several members here with the experience to guide your first steps in this exciting area.

It has been most encouraging to see the increase in membership numbers over the last two years. Much of that is down to Brian Seabrook and Ray Varney, who have kept steady pressure on key points where our leaflets and details of our meetings are advertised. And more is down to many of you who tell your friends that we are worth supporting - and that is the best recommendation of all! Thank you for the accolades - but please be sure to tell us in good time if we fail to meet your



expectations so that we can do something about it quickly.

Thank you all for your support and encouragement while I have been President. It has (mostly) been good fun and I am sure you will support my successor with equal enthusiasm.

The President

What on earth is "The North-West Fed."? Keith Adams LRPS.BPE3* enlightens us.

I'm sure that many of our newer members have asked themselves this question when we make announcements on a Thursday evening. It actually is an abbreviation of "The Federation of North-West London Photographic Societies".

Although the title says North-West London, the member clubs have expanded to include societies from Hemel Hempstead, Watford, Amersham, Chesham and High Wycombe as well as Kodak Works, Field End, XRR (ex-employees of Rolls Royce), Pinner, Harrow, Northolt and of course ourselves. These clubs include some extraordinarily accomplished photographers and it is normal to see some very high quality work during the course of this competition.

The 12 clubs compete annually and are selected randomly into 4 groups each of 3 clubs. Each of these 3 clubs must host a home round. The total scores achieved by each club are carried forward to the next two rounds and the winner of each group is the club with the highest aggregate points. To confuse the matter, in the first round each club must produce 6 prints and 6 slides; then 5 prints and 5 slides in the two subsequent rounds. Each image of the 16 prints and slides must be different, and it is not allowed to have a print of any of the slides included in the three rounds.

Judges are normally selected from the Chilterns Association Handbook and, where possible, from the clubs involved in the competition; not, of course, to judge any round in which their own club is participating.

From this, you will see the importance of having competent judges for this competition, especially as the selection of the judges is done by the NWF Committee and is entirely out of our hands.

This year, at our home round, we had an excellent judge who is well known to our Society, and another equally so in the third round. Unfortunately, in the second round, we suffered from a most incompetent judge which prompted me to complain to the committee of his lack of knowledge and experience of all the technological innovations that have come to our hobby in the last 20 years!

As it happened, we won the first and third rounds but came last in the second. Fortunately, our aggregate scores were still sufficient to win us through to the semi-finals in spite of that 2nd round judge - and we wound up in a match against Field End (our old enemies!), hosted by Harrow.

In the first three rounds, the judge is asked to "star" what are in his/her opinion the best two prints and slides of the evening. These are all produced at the final to find the best of each for the whole competition. That means that each group at the

end of the preliminary rounds will have six starred prints and slides. In our first round, both Colin Ember and Phil Binks had a print starred each and Phil had a slide starred as well. In the second round, despite the dreadful judge, both Janina Kruzewska and Alan Hubbock had a slide starred each. In the final round, Jon Hibberd and Paul Joachim each achieved a starred print with Brian Seabrook deservedly getting a star for his slide. This means that from a possible 6 prints and 6 slides to be awarded stars (amongst all the competitors), we achieved a total of 4 of each!

We went into the semi-final full of hope, but aware of the quality of our opponents' work. Unfortunately, we did not win through to the final. The judge was both well-known and respected, but in my opinion was rather erratic on the evening. This is not to say that I think we should have won, but I do think that the result should have been a much closer thing than it was.

The way we select our entries is that I watch all our print and slide competitions, plus the entries for the annual exhibition. I do this job because I am now the only member of our club who is in the Chiltern's Association Handbook as a photographic judge, and for the last two years have been selected to judge

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Phil Dean, EHHPS Programme Secretary, fills in some background to our competitions

Have you ever wondered why Ealing and Hampshire House Photographic Society features so many competitions during the year? We have our internal monthly print and slide competitions as well as an occasional special such as the Dell, Pietruski and Centenary competition night. We also host a number of external competitions such as the rather serious North West Fed and light hearted Ealing v Galimgay evenings.

Well, the prime reason is because these events prove so popular with the Ealing membership. You only have to look around on a Thursday evening to see for yourself. People are pleased to have their own work on display, hear comments by a judge and to see the work of colleagues. It all makes for a popular night out. But it also is a gallery, if you like, for sorting out our best work for those external competitions and exhibitions. The Portfolio and Competition Secretaries use the internal competition nights to audition your work. The more you put in, the more likely you are to find your images being shown far and wide!

Work is underway preparing next year's programme. Your comments and suggestions are always welcome. Perhaps you know of someone who can do an interesting evening's talk at the club. Is there a photographer or lecturer by whom you have been impressed? If you pass their details to me, I'll do the rest. Have a think about the future of your club and what you would like to see on a Thursday night. Because together we can make further improvements.

... from page 3

N.W.Fed rounds. Also, Phil Binks is in the book as a speaker as am I. When I've made my tentative selections, I liaise with Phil Binks and Jon Hibberd for their opinions and, eventually, we arrive at a selection on which we all agree.

I can only select the work that is shown at club so if you wish to have your work representing your society, it is up to you to show us the best work possible.

I have been on this Society's Committee now for about 15 years and during this time we have been in the semi-finals four times. It would be lovely to get to the finals!

As your Programme Secretary, I have tried to introduce a new kind of evening this season. I have arranged a couple of recorded lectures. The first was about a club's experience of obtaining different levels of achievement in the PAGB Awards scheme. The second was entitled "The winners". The best slides and prints from the PAGB 2001 exhibitions.

Have you found these recorded lectures interesting? I personally feel that part of the benefit of club membership is regularly to see outstanding photographs, not only from other Ealing members but also from the best photographers world-wide. This can provide inspiration, or help you set higher standards for your own work. Why not let me know what you think?

Now we tell you about the Annual Exhibition.

Please make an effort to put your work forward for this event. It will be on show for a week in Ealing Central Library and the Mayor of Ealing normally does the Society the honour of opening it.

In return we give him a print of the image he likes best in the show - and that could be yours!

This arrangement has stood for many years, so your picture could well become a piece of Ealing's civic history!

ANNUAL EXHIBITION RULES

1 Only paid-up members of Ealing & Hampshire House Photographic Society (E&HHPS) are eligible to enter.

2 All entries must be accompanied by the official entry form (or a photocopy if you do not wish to tear up your Click!), which must be filled in clearly and legibly.

3 All entries must be submitted in suitable containers or reusable packaging, clearly marked with your name and address. Slides and prints should be packaged separately.

4 Slides and Prints should be entered in the class that you would normally enter for the aggregate monthly competitions: i.e. Intermediate or Advanced.

5 You may enter up to 6 entries in each of 4 sections that you are entitled to enter: Either Class A or Class B, Class C, either Class D or Class E, Class F.

Classes are as follows:

CLASS A. Intermediate Open Prints

CLASS B. Advanced Open Prints

CLASS C. Set Subject Prints (one class only)

CLASS D. Intermediate Open Slides.

CLASS E. Advanced Open Slides

CLASS F. Set Subject Slides (one class only)

6 All photographs will be submitted to the judges in the class in which you enter them. In

the event of any mistakes, the judges' decisions will be final.

7 Slides must be correctly spotted in the lower left hand corner as viewed and should bear your name, the class in which they are entered (D, E or F) and the title or identifying description on the front.

8 Prints must be mounted on a medium suitable for placing on the display boards. Please note that Velcro strips will be stuck on the back of the mount for the purposes of the exhibition. The back of the mount must bear your name, the class in which it is entered (A, B or C), and the title or identifying description.

9 Trade-processed prints are accepted in classes A, B and C. The image must measure at least eight inches along one side, (i.e. not including the mount).

10 There is no maximum size for prints, but please note that prints larger than 25 inches along any one side do present a problem for safe handling.

11 The closing date for entries is Thursday 1 May. **LATE ENTRIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** Entries must be handed to the Exhibition Secretary (Colin Ember) at meetings or at other times by prior arrangement with Colin only.

12 All reasonable care will be exercised in handling your entries, but E&HHPS cannot accept responsibility for any possible loss or damage.

13 All eligible entries will be submitted to the judges (providing that they conform to what would normally be accepted as within the bounds of good taste or legality), but if it is not possible to display all entries at the exhibition, some of those that do not receive any mention from the judges may not be exhibited. All of this is at the discretion of the Exhibition Secretary.

14 E&HHPS may wish to use entries in external competitions and entry of this exhibition assumes agreement to do so.

15 Entries that do not conform to these rules may be rejected. Submissions will be assumed as acceptance of these rules. The Exhibition Secretary's decisions and interpretation of these rules is final.

**Annual Exhibition
Slides Judged by
Bryan Powell. Set
subject: Flora &
Fauna.**

**Annual Exhibition
Prints Judged by
Clive Hicks. Set
subject: Best of
Britain.**

... and remember: your picture might be chosen by the Mayor of Ealing to hang in his Parlour!

MOUNTING THINGS

Paul Joachim passes on some notes from "Master Classes" given at previous Members' Nights.

PRINTS

Prints need to be mounted to show them off to best advantage, to facilitate handling and to protect the images from damage. Most purposes in the EHHPS require a minimum image size with the longest side being at least 8 inches. In practise, of course, most exhibition prints will be somewhat larger.

Many external exhibitions specify a maximum mount size of 16 x 12 inches, or its more common metric equivalent of 300 x 400mm. It is essential to comply with this regulation because the boxes in which prints are shipped around to the judges are sized to accommodate this size mount and deviation will result either in rejection or serious damage.

There are broadly two approaches to print mounting: the print can be surface mounted, or it can be put inside a "window" which is usually bevel cut attractively. Either way, the mounting board should be carefully chosen and not just any old scrap of card that happens to be around at the time. A mounting board should be:

- * Robust and strong enough to withstand repeated handling.
- * Of a colour and texture to enhance and tone with the image.
- * Of materials that will not degrade the image over time.

Most good art shops stock a selection of card made by companies like Daler or Arquadia. If you are doing a lot of work, it is worth buying your supplies from a wholesaler like Rose & Hollis. Also it is worth buying the museum size and quality board as it is laminated (strong and very attractive when bevel cut), of archival quality, so will not discolour or affect your prints; and comes in larger, more economical, size sheets.

Your tools will include a Stanley knife with a fresh blade (change blades every 10 or so prints) a self-healing cutting mat, and a large metal square and rule. If window mounting you will also need a carpenter's marker gauge and - as you prefer - a bevel cutter - again with a fresh blade. Adhesive is to personal taste, but most people seem to use 3M PhotoMount for the print itself and 3M SprayMount for the labels and any intermounts. The former is both instant and permanent - so you must place your print perfectly first time - there is no way back! The latter allows you to peel and replace several times, but tends to come undone in prolonged heat, so beware in hot exhibition locations like the Questor's Theatre in the Summer! An alternative adhesive is the clear rubber Cow Gum - but this takes a lot of practise to spread evenly. Whatever your glue, you will need lots of old newspaper - a clean sheet every time you coat a new surface with glue. A clean

cloth (OK my next hanky!) for rubbing down is also needed.

Cut your board to size. If window mounting you will need some plain board to back your window mount, a millimetre or two smaller than the window mount.

If bevel cutting a window mount, mark out the window on the wrong side of the board with the marker gauge and use the score lines it has cut to guide the bevel cutter. Use a bit of scrap card (fresh piece each cut) behind the window mount to facilitate a clean bevel cut. Remember to cut from the inside of the window so the bevel slopes outwards!

Mark the position of the print. On a surface mount you can do this with pin pricks or knife pricks at the bottom corners and then place your set square in position to drop the tacky print onto the board. On a window mount you can use the marker gauge or a pencil as the back board is invisible. Alternatively on a window mount you can tack the print into the correct position behind the window with "Magic" Tape or masking tape and then offer up the back board pre-coated with adhesive and rub down carefully.

Don't forget to add a label to the back recording your authorship and copyright, the title of the image and any evidence you want to remember about the circumstances of creation; like exposure, equipment used and printing technique or bureau. Then all that is left is to collect

those accolades and certificates and add the latter to the display of goodies pasted to the back of your picture!

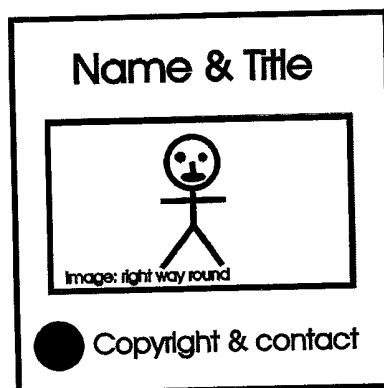
SLIDES

These may be mounted plain, or between glass. The latter holds them flat and protects them from some damage, but if broken in handling can also smash the image itself. Glass, even Newton's rings reduction quality, tends also to trap moisture which can lead to mould growth and unsightly patches of dark moisture which then too slowly dries out during projection. On the whole, take the risk, and mount plain!

Slide mounts of a range of qualities are fairly easy to obtain from Jessops and other serious camera stores. The biggest manufacturer is GePe - and they offer a range of types and shapes of mount. The processing houses return slides pre-mounted, but some cannot be taken apart without destroying them. The Fuji mounts will dismantle easily for reuse, however.

Consider carefully whether your picture would be enhanced by sympathetic masking. You might use one of the pre-cut shapes offered by GePe, or you can do your own. If a significant proportion of the image is to be masked, remember to shift the resulting image as closely as you can to the new centre of the slide, so it does not look lopsided on the screen.

The best way to mask a slide is to use ordinary aluminium cooking foil cut into strips. Fold the strip double, so that you get a perfect straight edge, and - on the light box - place it in position.



I use a tiny piece of double sided archival Sellotape to hold the mask in place against the slide mount. Press the cover home and trim excess foil and you are done!

Remember to label the slide. Computer labels are available from Avery together with software that will allow you to print labels with titles from a database. Always use Laser quality labels so that the adhesive will stand the heat of the projector. If a label peels off in the heat it can jam the projector and damage other slides.

Finally, the spot! On the light box, place the slide so that you are looking at the picture the way you want it to be shown - i.e. right-reading, correct way round, correct way up. The spot (you can buy these too or use a permanent marker pen) goes on the bottom left hand corner. When you load the projector carousel or tray, the spot goes in the top right hand corner as slides are projected upside down (because the projector optics invert the image).

See you on competition night!

CHRISTMAS CAKE

By Robbie Hildred

Here, in plenty of time for the festivities next winter, is Robbie's very own recipe for Christmas Cake. Why not make it early and allow it to mature in good time for Christmas?

Ingredients: 1 cup of water, 1 tsp baking soda, 1 cup of sugar, 1 tsp salt, 1 cup of brown sugar, lemon juice, 4 large eggs, nuts, 2 cups of dried fruit, 1 bottle Vodka,

Method: Sample the vodka to check quality. Take a out a large bowl, check the vodka again. To be sure it is of the highest quality, pour one level cup and drink. Repeat.

Turn on the electric mixer. Beat one cup of butter in a large fluffy bowl. Add one teaspoon of sugar. Beat again.

At this point it's best to make sure the vodka is shtill OK. Try another cup just in case.

Turn off the mixerer thingy. Break 2 leggs and add to the bowl and chuck in the cup of dried fruit.

Pick the frapping fruit off floor. Mix on the turner. If the fried druit gets stuck in the beaterers just pry it loose with a drewscraver.

Sample the vodka to check for tonsisticity.

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Back from the Drink

By Phil Dean

There we were, enjoying a winter break, sat on the beach in Portugal when suddenly, a gigantic wave appeared coming straight for us! Instantly, we sprang to our feet, turned away, and were drenched from head to foot. We were soaked through. I combed the sand out of my hair and began to drip dry. It could have been worse. I then discovered my little compact camera in the sea-soaked jacket pocket, which it shared with a handful of sand.

I let the camera dry out overnight and gave it a try. Nothing! It appeared completely dead.

Inside the camera was one of those special lithium batteries. They normally last several years, and as this one was fairly new, it couldn't be at fault, could it? I made a makeshift battery tester using the bulb from Valerie's torch and a metal corkscrew. Heath Robinson would have been proud of me. The battery was dead, a victim of Portuguese seawater. The local camera shop confirmed my findings and supplied a replacement.

I switched on and watched as the camera switched itself off again. Not a good start. It took a few goes to get the camera to stay in the "on" condition. I took a picture. It seemed to work but the flash didn't fire. Then I noticed a strange ticking noise coming from inside the camera. Something was wrong. I decided to remove the battery between photographs but managed to finish off the remainder of the film.

Back in Blighty, I was pleased to see that the photographs had come out OK, except for the ones where the flash hadn't fired. These were under-exposed.

I decided to investigate. Inside the camera, tiny circuit boards were crammed with surface mount components. Using the standard lens from my SLR as a super strength magnifying glass revealed three areas of corrosion caused by seawater attack. I scraped off the corrosion and cleaned each area using a cotton bud and WD-40. I tried fitting the battery. The ticking noise was still there and the flash wouldn't fire. I had to go in deeper...

I concentrated my efforts around the flash circuitry. Further corrosion was likely beneath the flash circuit board. It would have

to come out. This was a daunting task as it involved unsoldering two miniature foil ribbon cables, the removal of a preset adjuster and undoing two supporting connections to the board below. It was like performing open-heart surgery on a Swiss watch!

Once out, the predicted corrosion could be seen and dealt with. It was impossible to test things with so many connections broken and parts scattered around my kitchen table. It would have to be completely reassembled to see if I had succeeded.

Behold a triumph! My little pride and joy was back to full working order. The ticking noise had stopped, the flash fired and...

... only two tiny screws left on the table! Where on earth had they come from?

Christmas Cake from page 8

Next, sift two cups of salt. Or something. Who givesh a s hit.

Check the vodka.

Now shift the lemon juice and strain your nuts. Add one table. Add a spoon of sugar, or somefink. Whatever you can find.

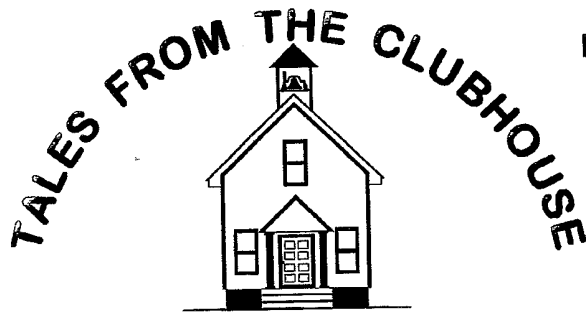
Greash the oven. Turn the cake tin 360 degrees and try not to fall over. Don't forget to beat off the turner.

Finally, throw the bowl through the window, Finish the vodka and

hic...

tip over the crat.

CHERRY MISTMAS END A NAPPY HUE DEER - Brobrie



Number 28

By f Stop

"I could tell you some stories about her," said Jamal. "But you all need to be a bit older to understand them."

"I've had my moments," hissed Peregrine, whilst desperately dredging the depths of his memory trying actually to remember doing something that was even slightly risqué.

The first cold breezes of autumn swept across the desolate area surrounding the derelict buildings that had, in more prosperous times, housed the local garden gnome factory. The down and outs who now inhabited the area were starting to gather after another fruitless day spent begging in the town centre. Braziers were burning. The contents of bottles of cheap drink were being spilt down the fronts of persons too inebriated to work out where their own mouths were: - it was another normal night in down-and-out-land.

Slightly apart from the huddled masses was a small group of people who moved uneasily and who were clearly unaccustomed to their present surroundings.

"Shit," growled Josh, inspecting the sole of his boot.

"Probably is..." hissed Peregrine.

"What are we doing here anyway?" asked Basil, who was still relatively new to the local Photographic Club, and who mistakenly believed that excursions away from the Clubhouse were for the purpose of taking photographs.

"I don't know!" muttered Jamal. "But this does bring back memories."

"Were you once down on your luck then?" enquired Basil.

"Far from it," said Jamal. "When this factory was thriving I was the star model. And I didn't half have some good times behind the bike sheds with the birds who modelled the little fairies they used to make here."

"I don't want to hear about your sordid past with loose women," exclaimed Percy.

"We do!" grinned Josh, Jamal, Basil and Peregrine in a brief moment of unity.

"I remember that little fairy with the wonky wand. Was she a goer?" asked Peregrine.

"Enough of this," said Josh. "We're here trying to find Kevin."

"Kevin..." exclaimed Jamal. "But it was the trial last week, surely they threw away the key!"

"Haven't you heard?" exclaimed Peregrine. "He's out!"

"He's out?!" squealed Percy. "Are we going to see him soon? Ooohh! This is so exciting..."

"What happened?" questioned Basil.

"The CPS lost the file," Peregrine replied. "All the charges were dropped."

"So that explains it," exclaimed Jamal.

"Explains what?" Peregrine asked.

"Why there has been no sign of Roger for the last few weeks," continued Jamal. "I heard that someone had sorted out the harshest judge and the worst defence barrister that a rolled up trouser leg can buy. Even if the jury had found him 'not guilty' the judge would have locked him up on some technicality."

"So if Kevin is on the loose," reasoned Basil, "then Roger must be on the run."

"And just when his exhibition should have been pulling in the crowds," smirked Peregrine.

"Exhibition! What exhibition?" Josh asked.

"He conned the library into letting him put on a one-man show," Peregrine explained. "It all went well until the day of the hanging clashed with his lodge meeting."

"Get to the point," hissed Jamal.

"I am," huffed Peregrine. "Well; being a bit of a skinflint - you've seen the way Roger mounts his prints on the back of old cornflake packets - "

"We know that," hissed Jamal, even more exasperated than before.

"Shut up and let me finish!" shouted Peregrine.

"Ooohh!!" Percy squealed, "I do like it when you stamp your foot like that, it's so manly!"

"If you lot don't stop interrupting, I won't tell you what happened."

"Carry on, please," said Percy. "I do so like to hear a manly voice."

"Well, Roger did the same sort of mounts for the exhibition," explained Peregrine, "and when Roger could not turn up, the librarian had to hang them himself."

"So what happened?" questioned Josh.

"Well," said Peregrine, "it seems that the librarian had just finished reading a book about Andy Warhol. So when he saw the cornflake pictures, he assumed that Roger was doing an art exhibition themed around cornflakes, inspired by soup cans. He hung the whole lot back to front..."

"So the library had - " started Percy.

" - forty-nine packets of cornflakes," chuckled Peregrine. "You should have seen Roger's face when he turned up to the opening!"

"I bet he was a bit miffed," said Jamal.

"Not half as miffed as the Mayor." Peregrine grinned. "He thought Roger was taking the piss, and it's even more funny as they belong to the same lodge."

"So what happened then?" asked Jamal.

"Suffice to say, the library sued and Roger had to flog all his Leica gear to cover his legal expenses." Peregrine replied.

"I never saw the gear advertised," said Josh.

"I wish you had," muttered Peregrine. "Then I would not have spent a bloody fortune on it. My bank manager was none-too-impressed - and Madge was bloody furious."

"Why was that then?" Asked Jamal. "It was all Leica gear, so it is top of the range stuff."

"We thought it was Leica gear," Peregrine said.

"If you remember, he never used any of it in our presence. It was only when the deal was done and I got the gear home and inspected it that I realised I had been conned."

"Conned? How?" asked Josh.

"The bugger had a kid's plastic camera outfit he had painted black and written the word 'Leica' on the front," sobbed Peregrine. "It is completely worthless."

"So does this mean that you and Kevin see eye to eye for once?" Jamal suggested.

"Damn right it does," snarled Peregrine. "We both want to knock his lights out."

"Kevin..." said Basil. "That's why you say we are here: but I don't understand why!"

"Because I wrote to him, when he was on remand, and told him what I saw when I went round to his house," said Peregrine. "The van taking stuff away, the rubbish piled high... Louise has to have sold the place, so he will be on the streets."

"And this is where all the homeless people hang out," said Josh.

"Here lads," shouted Josh, who had wandered away from the main group. "What do you make of this?"

Peregrine, Basil, Josh and Jamal stared in amazement at what Josh had found. A carefully constructed shelter made entirely out of empty lager cans.

"Look at this!" exclaimed Percy. "An electric lead that seems to go over to that line of pylons."

"And isn't this a computer lead?" asked Basil.

"Well, all the signs are that he has been here," said Peregrine. "But where is he now?"

...

Meanwhile, on the other side of town, in a warm and, up-to-now, friendly public house ...

"Two pints of lager and a packet of pork scratchings please," said the derelict.

"Where's all your mates?" said the landlord. "You've been here day and night for five days now, surely one of them would have come in to see you?"

"Dun'no'," said the derelict. "They don't come here any more. Not since you ponced the place up."

"We were trying to go upmarket," said the landlord. "Until you moved in."

"Well you're now open 24 hours a day," said the derelict. "I can live here if I want to."

"Not if you fall asleep," the landlord advised. "One little nap and you're out on your ear."

"In that case," said the derelict. "I'll have a box of matches as well. Something to prop the eyes open with!"