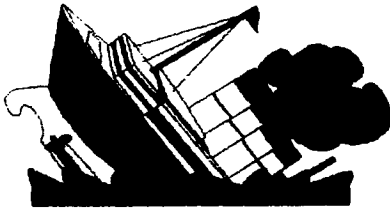


THE FIRST FORTY YEARS by ARTHUR GREEN

This is not a history of the Club: that can be found in the minutes of meetings and the programmes. It is a collection of memories of some events during the forty years of the Club that has given so much enjoyment to me. As far as I am concerned it all began one Wednesday in the Summer of 1952, when a paragraph in Amateur Photographer stated that it was proposed to start a club in Sevenoaks, and anyone interested was asked to attend a meeting. I was unable to be there so wrote to say that I would be very happy to join. At the meeting a club was founded, rules agreed and a committee formed. Fairly soon, a programme was produced and the first meeting was held on Monday 24 November 1952. I attended but, if I remember rightly, did not pay my subscription until the second meeting. That subscription, by the way, was £1pa. Since then meetings have always been held on Mondays, varying from one to three a month at various venues, including members' homes and a school in Oakhill Road.

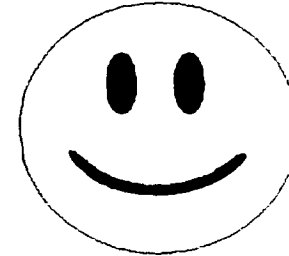


It was while we were at Friends Meeting House that a crisis arose in the 1966/7 season. A new club was formed at Tonbridge and many of our members who lived near there moved to the more convenient club. As a result our membership fell away and, at a special general meeting, a

motion was passed to wind up the club. Peter Searle, however, collected those of us who were willing to carry on and, at another special meeting, that motion was over-ruled before it could be carried out. It was lucky that Peter realised that a club could function with such small numbers although it required great keenness on everybody's part.

For some years the membership stayed at 12-15 (this was the period when so many people were glued to the box). It was a struggle to keep going as such a small membership did not justify asking judges or lecturers to attend. Talks and demonstrations were given by members. I remember giving a demonstration on contact printing in the room above the old library. Many members will never have done this as chloride paper, once known as gaslight, is no longer made. Competitions were held regularly

with entries being judged by members, after comments had been given, alternately, by two (their own entries being criticised by the rest). The bad period was successfully overcome and the club is now on a very firm footing.



There have been some memorable incidents like the time when we were in the front room of the Constitutional Club and another society was in the next room. They finished first and, not realising that we were still there, switched off the lights in the corridor and locked the door. There was no telephone to call for assistance and, in any case, the front door would be locked. Finally one member climbed out of a window and, with others holding him, edged along a ledge and managed to open a window into the lavatory and climb inside and get to the locked door.

In our early years with entries based around the landscapes of R T Vincent and the portraits of H Goldsmith, both ARPS, we won the Ross Cup twice. With the standard of entries now in club competitions, it cannot be long before we are once more the holders. For a few years there was a portfolio, which was a good means of hearing other people's ideas about prints not entered in competitions. This broke down as some members were very slow at moving it on.

TO BE CONCLUDED IN THE NEXT ISSUE

DON'T FORGET:

An evening with **BERT HARDY** on Monday 23 November 1992. The world famous former "Picture Post" photographer comes to Sevenoaks.

THE FIRST FORTY YEARS by ARTHUR GREEN (continued from the previous issue)

While George King was alive he allowed us to use his studio once or twice a season. A model was obtained and much was learned about portraiture and the use of lights. An interesting evening was a visit to a colour laboratory at Crockham Hill and, two years later, to the new premises at Edenbridge. It was amazing to see how such perfection was obtained. All processes were accurately controlled where possible but, for complete accuracy, the human eye was necessary for judging filtration and for dodging and spotting in colour. To get the results that they required film came from one manufacturer, paper from another and the brew was made up to someone else's formula.

At first all work was in black & white although there was a colour evening given by Major Garrett in the first season and in November 1953 there was a demonstration of colour printing by the Trichrome Carbro process. Ron Vincent, the Chairman, gave a talk illustrated by his colour slides. By 1956 members were showing their colour slides with the first colour slide competition on March 4 1957. Colour may have largely taken over since then but b&w prints still have a good showing, far more than the occasion during our struggles when my prints were the only entry.

There have been some well known names appearing as judges or lecturers. I can remember Karl Pollock ("the hands"), Dr Jouhar, J S Lewinski and Lancelot Vining in the early days. Members will remember others who have helped the club by giving up their time to lecture or act as judges. I will not mention the names or comment as some of them will be returning to judge in the future. Two of our ex-members have kept in touch with the club. Michael Busselle has returned on several occasions with talks based on his books and shown some of his excellent slides. Frank Coppins FRPS has given talks on stereoscopy and has been an excellent judge on several occasions. AV enthusiasts may be interested to know that the club had a demonstration by Michael Tickner in 1965 of his way of showing slides with accompaniment of music or talk to

enhance the effect. This was very shortly after the first reports in the Amateur Photographer. The show was called Audioscope and AV has developed from this.

These are a few memories of specific events. Equally there will always be the memory of companionship and fellow interests that have made the success of the club. Long may it thrive.

In recognition of his membership of the Club from its founding, and his regular support of all Club meetings, the Committee has decided to give Honorary Membership to Arthur Green. Arthur, from all members over the last 40 years, a big thank you.



AN APPEAL

As many of you will by now be aware, I am interested in Sevenoaks local history. If you, or anyone you know, has any old photographs of Sevenoaks which I may either have or copy, I should be very grateful to hear from you.

ERIC KEYS