

SVNP NEWSLETTER, JULY, 2022

INCLUDING MINUTES OF THE JULY 14, MEETING

The group wish to institute a hybrid process that would allow in-person as well as electronic attendance was frustrated this meeting. Member Images Night was limited to the Zoom platform, not for any Covid concern, but for the technical difficulties we still experience in integrating the room and virtual populations. Member sharing, as it turns out, works a bit better over Zoom.

There was a good deal of shop talk while waiting for the meeting to come to order. Among other things, it came out that both Jean Fain and Anne Umphrey are taking a course given at Lex Arts by SVNP member Nicole Mordecai.

The group exhibit at Trinity Church in Concord, is still up and running. Takedown is expected around the end of August.

There are currently opportunities to give presentations starting as soon as October, 2022. As usual, any suggestions you may have for programs – especially of a how-to nature – would be appreciated. Please email (wah@waynehallphotography.com) or call (978-443-9226) Wayne if you are willing to give a presentation yourself or if you know someone to recommend.

July Presentation - Member Images Night - animals under 50 lbs.



*Growing Up on a Dime;
photo, Barbara Peskin*

Barbara Peskin started the evening by exhibiting images of a goose with four goslings running around followed by the same scene with the goslings safely tucked under the body of the adult, a coyote, first standing then more relaxed, a pileated woodpecker, Barbara's beloved Sheltie, Rorie, ending with four heron chicks sharing a postage-stamp-sized nest, looking for all the world as if they were hashing things out. Perhaps they were...

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Ed McGuirk offered a set of bird twofers - birds with some added element in the scene: these included a plover with a worm at Plum Island, a kestrel with a vole, a tern at Plymouth Long Beach with sand eels, a Heron in a heroic act of swallowing a fish twice the diameter of the bird's gullet (something that Ed assured us the heron did indeed accomplish - patience is the heron's stock in trade), a black-crowned Night Heron in Florida with a crab and, finally, a pileated woodpecker bringing food to two very demanding and large-mouthed chicks.



Feeding Time; photo, Ed McGuirk



Goat, Littleton: photo, Jean Fain

Jean Fain showed images of a cardinal in Concord, day-old chicks in Sherborn, a goat seen in Littleton, a heron at dawn seen at Great Meadows, a male wood duck leading a string of ducklings, a wonderfully composed view of Ponyhenge in Lincoln, a female redwing blackbird in Great Meadows and a cormorant taken from a kayak. These were all taken with a Google Pixel 2, perhaps not a typical first choice of most wildlife photographers. Jean mentioned interest in moving on

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to a dedicated camera and received nearly universal encouragement to do so.

Anne Umphrey had on offer two shots of a rooster taken in Cuba, a squirrel on a snowy background which was shown in two crops, a young hen turkey in the back yard, a perched dragonfly taken at Great Meadows and a goldfinch seen flying away from a feeder that also hosted a titmouse and a sparrow. After some discussion of backyard bird photography led by Barbara Peskin, Anne showed a Carolina Wren at a feeder.

Marilyn Tromer offered a squirrel perched on the stump of an old, pruned branch in her back yard. The very clear image was notable for the patience of the squirrel (Marilyn had first to hunt up her camera) and the fact that it was shot through window glass



*Turtle on Lily Pad;
photo, Wayne Hall*

Wayne Hall started his turn with a 2010 Zion/Big Bend trip image of a squirrel in a tree, a frog on a lily pad in the garden pond at Codman House in Lincoln, a snapping turtle hatchling seen at the Assabet River NWR, a photograph of yet another lily pad at Codman House, however this time with a resident painted turtle, and, finally, from Wayne's back yard, a female fox curled up. After a discussion of the fox picture, Wayne related a sad story of a fox kit found injured in extremis in his driveway.

Everyone must have been having a good time since the sharing continued with some individual, late photos

from various members: Marilyn offered a Pileated Woodpecker at a hole it was working on (shot from across her yard); Jean Fain added a frog; Anne Umphrey shared a snake. And with that, sharing stopped. For a group of photographers who claim not to dabble in wildlife

photography, it was quite a respectable haul of images. Well done, all.

Barbara Peskin initiated a discussion of the desirability of giving the current exhibition at Trinity Church a longer life by putting it up as a virtual exhibit along with the twenty-fifth anniversary show. At first it seemed feasible but, after some later consideration between Wayne and Ed, the grunts that would put in the hours to make it happen, it was deemed a poor use of time and group resources.

Member News

Wayne Hall writes, "A few of you may remember the late **Ed Arees**, who I believe was one of SVNP's original members. Ed passed away a number of years ago. His widow, Jane, is a personal friend and she has a large number of Ed's framed prints stored in her house. She is preparing to downsize and would prefer not simply to throw them out.

"These are fairly large prints, beautifully framed and of excellent quality. Subject matter includes New Zealand, Scotland, the American West, etc., as well as many from the local area and elsewhere in New England. Frames are at least 16x20, and many are larger. Does anyone have any suggestions of organizations which might welcome some or all of them as a donation? If you have any helpful ideas, please let me know, and I'll pass them on to Jane."

August Preview

Ed McGuirk writes, "I've been re-processing some of my older images using the new masking tools in Lightroom. Yesterday (7/24/22), by coincidence, I came across images from the morning of 7/24/17, in Glacier NP Montana. This morning was the most productive session of photography that I have ever done. I would like to share a link to a gallery of shots from that morning. Feel free to think of it as something of a warmup for my August SVNP program, *Lost in the Fog*. The images in the gallery appear in chronological order, earliest to latest. The first shots are from about 6:00 am (just before sunrise), and the last shots are from about 9:40 am.

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<https://www.edmcguirkphoto.com/Image-Galleries/Recent-Work-One-Morning-in-Glacier-NP/>

“We arrived at the parking lot for Wild Goose Island in St. Marys Lake at 5:15 am while it was still dark. There was a grizzly bear in the trees at the edge of the parking lot, so my wife Saranel thought we better try a different location for sunrise. We drove back to the St Marys Lake viewpoint, and were treated to one of the most colorful sunrises that I have ever seen (6:00 am). Once the light show ended, we drove back to Wild Goose Island and the bear was gone. The sky had become very cloudy, making the classic shot of Wild Goose Island not worthwhile. But then a rainbow appeared in the sky over the mountains to the south of the lake (at 6:15 am). When that ended, it grew completely overcast, and we drove to the west end of St Marys Lake and shot scenes of pink fireweed flowers in the midst of burnt trees from a prior years forest fire (7:10 am).

“We then drove up the Going to the Sun Road to the summit at Logan Pass (6,650 ft elevation). It was raining on the drive up, but when we reached the summit the rain had ended, and areas of fog were weaving in and out of the mountains. At Logan Pass we also hit the peak bloom of white beargrass flowers (which we later learned from a ranger was the best display in 25 years). We got there around 7:30 am and spent 2 hours shooting in the fog before it dissipated. At 9:45 am we headed back down for a late breakfast at St. Marys lodge. Quite the morning...”



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Book Review

Short Nights of the Shadow Catcher by Timothy Egan (2012, New York)

Edward Sherriff Curtis was born three years after the end of the American Civil War. Photography was still in its infancy but, thanks to the work of war photographers, already carried a whiff of the documentary about it. Other than that, it was largely confined to the studio where a lot of portraiture was shot, much of it hack work. Curtis would



*Navajo Riders on the Floor of Canyon de Chelly;
photo, Edward S. Curtis*

seem to have been an improbable candidate for the role of consummate portrait and ethnological photographer. After suffering a major injury, he transformed himself into a successful portrait photographer, very much in demand. As a consequence of a chance encounter with the daughter of the chief after whom the city of Seattle was named, Curtis quickly became obsessed by the urgency he perceived in the rapid passing of indigenous culture. He conceived of a project to document indigenous Americans as they had been, before it became impossible to do so. Not just some tribes, but all that still had a robust grasp of their past. This was Curtis' chosen rabbit hole and it proved to be thirty years deep. He possessed a nearly ideal blend of a talent for effective and arresting composition, superb technical skills accompanied by a drive and a work ethic that enabled him to undertake a project vast enough and presumptuous enough that its completion remains a marvel. Think of simple logistics. It's sobering to think that some, if not most, of his most effective portraits were made under field conditions. With bulky, heavy cameras. On large format glass plates. Far from the nearest (relatively) good road or whistle stop.

In *Short Nights of the Shadow Catcher*, Timothy Egan tells the story of this very American man, self taught, who rose from a blue-collar nowhere to reinvent himself as a photographic giant and his efforts to produce his magnum opus. The prose is lucid throughout and appears to be exhaustively researched. I certainly never experienced any hesitation in turning pages! Perhaps too little time is spent on the pathos of Curtis' years following the wrapping up of his labors, which efforts, superhuman at the time, proved afterwards (along with critical neglect) to have drained him, rendering him something of an ineffectual crank if not quite a complete physical and mental cripple. Curtis risked everything for his idea. He succeeded at that but, at least within his span of years, and incomplete genius that he was, lost nearly everything else (he did retain the loyalty of his children!). Though he died in poverty and forgotten, we can hope he was comforted by the possibility that his place in history might be secure. It is. The ultimate triumph is his.

Hendrik Broekman

Around the Web

Continuing with the subject of the review above, it is difficult to access full size, first quality reproductions of Curtis' work in print. However, there is a trove of materials at the Library of Congress, all downloadable and out of copyright. To explore and see what some of the fuss is about...

<https://www.loc.gov/collections/edward-s-curtis/>

As a sidelight, here's a short (71 second) trailer for Curtis' groundbreaking film of 1914, *In the Land of the Head Hunters*.

<https://youtu.be/QB93E0Ct3W8>

Marilyn Tromer writes, "I'm forwarding this e-mail from the National Audubon Society in case other members didn't receive it directly from the Society. It shows their top 100 photos from the past year. Enjoy. Please forward it to others who might also enjoy it."

<https://www.audubon.org/news/the-2022-audubon-photography-awards-top-100>

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UPCOMING SVNP PROGRAMS

August 11	Ed McGuirk; <i>Lost in a Fog - Photographing the Foggy Landscape</i>
September 8	Suzanne Révy (guest speaker); <i>A Murmur in the Trees: On wandering in the footsteps of Thoreau with a camera</i>
October 13	TBD

Please Note - All meetings are held on the 2nd Thursday of the month, at 7:00 pm, either via Zoom or at our location (or both):

Great Room, Newbury Court
100 Newbury Court, Concord, MA

The decision to hold in-person meetings will be made on a month-to-month basis and communicated approximately a week before the meeting.

Updated directions to the Great Room and instructions for underground parking (to be available starting at 6:10pm on meeting evenings) may be found at the link immediately below.

http://svnp.homestead.com/files/Directions_to_Newbury_Court_Great_Room.pdf

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SVNP EXHIBIT CALENDAR

Group Exhibits

Ongoing/ On Hiatus	Newbury Court - Community Room, 80 Deaconess Road, Concord, MA rotating exhibit
May-August(?), 2022	Trinity Episcopal Church, 81 Elm St, Concord, MA; <i>25th Anniversary Exhibition (Belated)</i>
December, 2022	Wayland Public Library - Raytheon Room, 5 Concord Road, Wayland, MA

Individual Member Exhibits

SVNP members - please notify Wayne Hall (wah@waynehallphotography.com) of your upcoming individual exhibits for posting on the SVNP website.

Date	Member	Exhibit Location
Ongoing	Marijke Holtrop	Online Exhibit on the website of the Friends of the Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge (http://farnwr.org/gallery.html)
Ongoing	Betsy Moyer	Newbury Court Senior Living, Concord MA <i>Neighborhood Flowers</i> , 5th floor, south bldg
Ongoing	Bob Cooke	Maynard Public Library, 77 Nason Street, Maynard, MA

An Invitation from your Editor

If having a meatier monthly read is of interest to you then, please, I invite you to send anything you may wish to contribute to future newsletters (a précis of an upcoming presentation, photos, personal news, reviews, neat tricks you find worth sharing, etc.) to me at henkbroekman@gmail.com. Please include SVNP in the subject line.

I especially invite presenters and members sharing images to select and submit files for illustrative purposes. I expect it would be possible to accommodate two images or so for main presenters and one each for after-presentation sharing. Generally, expect to see half-column layout along the lines of this example. If you have photos you may wish to share, please submit jpg files sized no smaller than 1200 px on the long side. Submission deadline will be 11:59 pm on the Monday following the meeting. Inclusion in any particular newsletter will be at my discretion based on newsletter length, distribution file weight, current workload, etc.

Hendrik Broekman



*Bluebird in the Garden;
photo, Hendrik Broekman*