

WHAT HAS LOCKDOWN MEANT FOR US?

When you look back over the past four months, what will your lasting memory be? How have you passed the time? Have you been busier than ever: homeschooling children, holding down a fulltime job AND running a home? Or have you felt severely restricted by the lack of companionship that has hit many? Have you benefited from all the online photographic offerings whether from the RPS, your local Camera Club, individual 'gurus', retailers or manufacturers or have you felt hemmed in and lacking any 'mojo'? Maybe your mood changed from day-to-day depending on the opportunities or demands of the day: I think mine has done!



As you will see from John's message below, having had to cancel our Spring Conference, the Committee has been considering ways in which we could hold an AGM. We have also made the hard decision to cancel another event that we were going to start advertising in April. This was an attempt to bring the Travel Group to more members by organising a second Group event in early Autumn with highly regarded speakers and in a different part of the country - on this occasion we had planned to hold it in York to complement the Bristol location of Vision 2020. That, too, has been postponed until next year as we feel it would be unrealistic to go ahead.

If you were due to participate in one of the trips planned for the spring or summer you will know that these have also been postponed with just the possibility that the second trip to the Camargue (in the Autumn) might go ahead this year and the others in 2021.

We are always keen to hear of any ideas members have regarding possible events, so do, please email travelweb@rps.org with your suggestions.

Kath Phillips

Travel Group AGM

The lockdown during the Coronavirus pandemic has caused the cancellation of a great number of events both within and outside of the RPS.

One such event is the Annual General Meeting that, like the other Special Interest Groups and Society itself, the Travel Group is required to hold. Usually, to comply with the Group's constitution, our AGM is held at the same time as the Spring Event to ensure that there are available sufficient members to form the required quorum of at least 15.

This year, due to Coronavirus, we were obliged to cancel the Spring Event – Vision 20/20 – and, with it, the AGM. While there is a general dispensation to delay the holding of the AGM until the lockdown on large gatherings is relaxed, I have been asked by your Committee to establish, if you, the members of the Travel Group, agree that the AGM for the year 2019 continue to be deferred until a suitable other event is arranged or would prefer to our investigating holding the AGM by video conference and making those arrangements if practicable.

Can you please let me have your views, my email address is travelsecretary@rps.org

John Speller
Secretary, RPS Travel Group

RPS Travel Image of the Month-an analysis.

It's been seven months since we began the process of revamping the travel image of the month competition. And it's been interesting what we have learnt during those seven months about the sort of interest people have in terms of travel photography, and how willing they are to engage in competition with other like-minded photographers.

Back in November of last year we [the Travel Group Committee], issued a challenge to people to become more involved with the travel group, and we did this by asking people to submit a travel photograph that met the criteria a sense of place. We had no idea just how many people would take us up on that challenge but we hoped that by regularly updating the website to reflect more rapidly, the photographs that have been submitted, and to offer by the end of 2020 a tangible prize, that we could provide a canvas for people to develop a shared interest.

That first month, November 2019, saw an astonishing 40 entries coming in from all over the world in response to that challenge. This was equivalent to around 8% of the entire membership of the travel group, and far more than almost any other competition that was being run in any of the special interest groups.



The initial winner was **Andrew Brochwicz- Lewinski**, with his wonderful shot 'A Touareg's Welcome'. It was a worthy winner, but our judge Richard Lewis ARPS, recognised that many other shots in the first cohort could have been selected. It was a great start, an indication that there was a real desire amongst our members to show their photographs off to other people within the group.

This was a great start, but with Christmas coming up, the question would people maintain their interest when there were so many other things there were going on in the festive season?

We perhaps shouldn't have been so concerned.

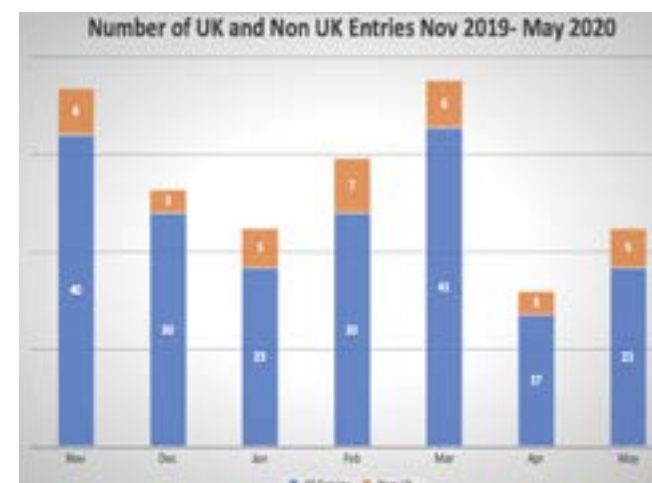
Although there were the distractions of the season to contend with, there were still 30 great shots for the December entry with Ian Wright's Orchha Sunset being selected as the best shot of a very good bunch.

As the new year dawned, the competitions only seem to get stronger in terms of the number of outstanding shots that were being produced by people from all over the world.

We were getting shots from the United States, Canada, Hong Kong, Australia as well as RPS members that are living in Europe. Sitting behind a computer watching these shots come in ahead of me placing them on the competition website, has been a real privilege. I am in awe at the sheer number of places people have taken photographs of, and the quality of the shots has been little short of outstanding.

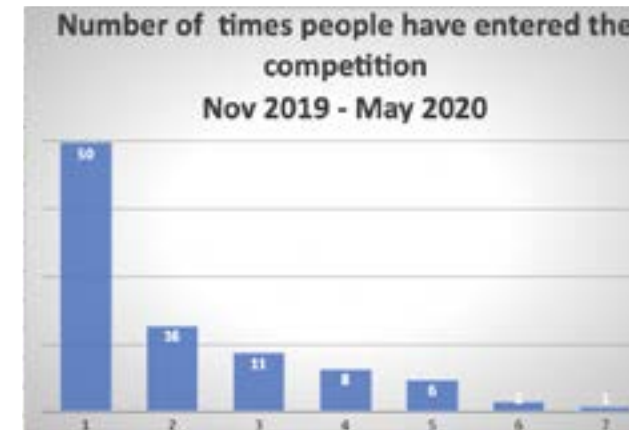
Between January and March the numbers entering the competition gradually increased, until by the end of March we had 41 photographers who, in our coronavirus times, were taking solace in sharing their photographs through the competition.

As I mentioned before, the reach of the RPS is a worldwide, and it's good to see an increasing number of photographers from outside of the UK adding their contributions. Currently those contributions are running at around about 20% of all the entries that we are getting into the competition each month.



But it's also encouraging, just how many of our travel group members have taken the time to enter the competition at least once in the last

seven months. To date, June 2020, we have had entries from 97 different photographers, 20% plus of the entire membership. Whereas some of the photographers have only entered once, we have some regular contributors to the competition, and it is being good from my point of view, to be able to build up a relationship with those people.



It wouldn't be fair to do an article like this without making recognition of our judges, who have done an amazing job of being able to select and explain the rationale behind their choices for each of the months. It's certainly not something to be taken on lightly, but it is good from my point of view to get in contact with those photographers who have been recognised as having the best shot of each month, and sharing in their pleasure of having being chosen for that particular month.

A photographic travel competition is always going to pose questions about which shots could be included. Our initial thought was that they should be photographs of a more recent standing, but with the impact of the coronavirus on global travel, the choice of images that could be entered has become simplified.

So now the competition allows people to dig into their older shots and share with the rest of us some wonderful images, which although they may not necessarily win in a particular month, do meet that criteria of a 'sense of place.' If you haven't entered a shot as yet, why not have a go by going to our website and posting your image.

Each of the month's winners, go forward to our travel image of the year competition to be judged at the end of the year. Given the quality of what we have so far, again I am pleased that it's not going to be me that have to make the final decision. Happy shooting.

Enter the July competition at

<https://rps.org/groups/travel/july-2020/>

Steve Day: RPS Travel Image of the Month coordinator.

A selection of winners:



November:

Touareg's welcome
Andrew Brochwicz- Lewinski



December:

Orchha Sunset
Ian Wright



May:

Closed for the night
Justin Cliffe

Digital communications which meet Group needs

One of the most challenging things I have been asked to do in the Travel Group is to manage the website - and that's closely followed by the Facebook Group!!

I firmly believe that both the Group website and the Facebook page should reflect the prime interests and needs of Group members. So, what are the Group needs and how can we meet them?

Just as the new website was being developed one of our members, Graham Vulliamy, described his process for creating photobooks on Facebook and sparked interest. He agreed to develop the information into a form that could be presented as a webpage and together we made that happen. Similarly, a few members of the committee have produced articles for the website which give little insights into them and their photographic interests: Bob Akester wrote about Lunar Rainbows and Richard Lewis has described one of his favourite locations. I have a third item - from Steve Day - ready to roll.

But where is the input from members of the Group?

I am wondering if we could build our section of the website into a resource which can be accessed by members seeking information about places they are planning to visit or a particular skill they might wish to develop: does anyone make AVs out of their Travel Images? That's something where specific expertise could be shared.

We would also like to develop a section which is helpful to those considering applying for a Distinction. This would focus on ARPS and FRPS in Travel and I would welcome input from any members who feel able to contribute. This would not be a 'Do this and you'll succeed' but more an 'I did this... and learnt this...', acknowledging that no two people's experience is the same. If you feel able to help with this, please contact me by email travelweb@rps.org.

Maybe you could offer a photographic guide to places of interest near your home, possibly helping to arrange a visit to the area.

I have heard a number of 'photographic' friends say that they have used this period of enforced inactivity to sort through their images and do some selecting and re-organising. Do you have any tips for an effective way to save images so that you can find them easily? How many key words do you use and what cross-referencing?

Apart from the Monthly Competition - which Steve has done a great job in re-energising - our web content is fairly static and, while I have no desire to be changing the content weekly, I would be very happy to find ways in which to better meet members' needs.

You will have seen the results of the Projected Image posted on the site a few months ago. Do, please, look from time to time and see what's going on and share ideas for improvement with us.

Similarly, the Facebook Group has an occasional interesting discussion, often started by an image which brings back memories for another member.

It would be really great to see that discussion involve more members of the Group. At present there are just over one hundred members in the Facebook Group - but many are onlookers!

A series of recent postings which have made me smile have been the images posted by Paul Sansome in recent weeks. Paul has posted 100 images over 100 days with neither a frown nor a tear in sight. Projects are a great way to begin to think about panels, too. And in our Facebook group we have had some good discussion and sharing of information recently, including again 'What makes a Travel photograph?' - a subject which always lead to more discussion!



The first and last of Paul's 'Smiles' which have brought smiles to the Facebook group since March.



Currently, every member of the Facebook group is being encouraged to share one travel image a week and we have seen a huge variety of images: much as Steve has described for the competition.

Why not think about joining and adding your twopennorth to the discussion? And if you are already a member, do participate actively so that we really build a community of Travel Photographers.

But now the problem for us all must be how to make great travel images nearer home: might that be our lockdown challenge?

Many of us have been enjoying the Thursday night programmes run by the Distinctions Department and we've already had some great travel photography from David Noton, Will Cheung and Joe Cornish. If you have missed out on those, you can find them and all the other conversations on the RPS YouTube Channel.

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9ft-jVyEVg9pXWvxgDLsuA>

Enjoy!!

Alongside the digital communications we have the Travel Log and one of the things I have tried to do is not to repeat in the newsletter or on the website things that are contained in Travel Log. Back issues will be added to the website -but are not there yet!

AND FINALLY, CONGRATULATIONS to Graham Vulliamy on winning the June Travel Image of the Month competition. Steve has updated the website today..



<https://rps.org/groups/travel/june-2020/>

Kath Phillips