

Hird About The Place

The Scene by Hird Newsletter.

Edition #15: August 2005

Dear Friends,

The time has come for yet another exciting episode in the monthly saga that is "Hird About The Place". Read on as we take you on a wild ride of travel adventures, news from far and near, thrilling gift ideas and interesting facts. Well, that's the plan, anyway. I'd better stop right there, before they take me to court for false advertising.

Canada II – The Sequel

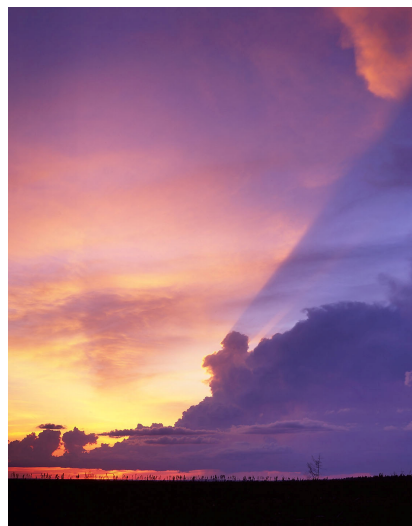
As I think I briefly mentioned last month, I was forced to spend a fortnight during late June and July in NW Ontario. I didn't want to go – they put me on the plane kicking and screaming, trying to stay in Kalgoorlie. No really, they did. Honest..... Anyway, I'm back now and raring to go. Where do I start?

When I last wrote, I was still in Balmerton, a small mining town near Red Lake. The fishing in the area is spectacular, and Americans drive to the area for no other reason than to sample the local piscatorial delights.

Balmerton also has a gold mine which is owned by Placer Dome, and that was the *real* reason I was there. I was sent to gather data with which to build their virtual geological model. I found 50GB of data, so my next few months are going to be filled with number-crunching and virtual triangle pushing. The ~~good~~ bad news is I will need to go back in October to deliver the model. That's bad - very, very bad. How will I ever endure another trip to Canada?

While the fishing might be fantastic, the photographic opportunities were not quite so great. I still managed to get some passable shots, but it's not like the magnificent Rocky Mountains in British Colombia. That is the are they always show on the TV as the archetypal "Canadian Experience". Luckily, I met some new friends who

knew their way around either a camera or a canoe. We spent several evenings making photographs of the local scenes, some of which I've included in this newsletter.



A Canadian sunset ...

When the time came to finally leave Canada, I was almost eager to jump on the plane – I was missing my family terribly. With a 40 hour trip to look forward to, I bid the Campbell geology team farewell and headed for the airport. The news that morning was more than a little disturbing: there had been a series of bombs set off on the London Transport system. Knowing I was about to travel through US Customs filled me with apprehension (more for the heightened state of alert they would be in than the remote threat of terrorism).

The US security people did not let me down. After waiting an eternity in another of those oddly familiar queues, the officer in charge read my T-shirt aloud as I approached.

"I was born intelligent but education burned me" he recited. I don't know who was more embarrassed when I corrected him, but I knew immediately we were not going to be on good terms.

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"Actually, it says "ruined", not burned" I corrected, without thinking. "Education ruined me ..." I was obviously in the presence of a true genius who had received a better education than myself – I only have a degree in Applied Science. This bloke must, at the very least, have a PhD.

"Hmm. Right, well, where's your Green Form? You better go over there and fill out the Green Form, or I can't let you through. Come back when you have completed the Green Form"

C. Have you ever been or are you now involved in espionage or sabotage; or in terrorist activities; or genocide; or between 1933 and 1945 were you involved, in any way, in persecutions associated with Nazi Germany or its allies? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Question C on the Green Form must catch quite a few terrorists!

"Right, I'll go over there and fill in the Green Form then" I said. When I came back to his desk, I didn't need to wait too long. He quickly dispatched another couple of hapless travellers to the table with the Green Forms and I was back in front of him.

"You certainly chose the wrong day to wear that shirt, didn't you sir?" he said, somewhat aggressively.

"What do you mean?" This was not going well at all ...

"With the bombings in London this morning..." Great. Here I was with an intellectual giant who wished to debate the relevance of an ironic T-shirt slogan to an act of barbaric terrorism 8000km away.

I thought to myself "What to do? I could get into some serious trouble here for no good reason." When in doubt, engage the person in language they will understand clearly so there is no confusion on their part.

"Huh?" I grunted with a vacant expression on my face.

"Never mind. Your passport please Sir?"

Until then I had not believed those who told me the best part about travelling is interacting with other people along the way. Now I see what I've been missing! Of course, it was my good fortune

to be seated next to a primary school teacher on the flight, so I was able to continue discussing the merits of a quality education with her for several more hours.

The flight from Sydney to Perth was mercifully uneventful. I don't think I dozed, but the flight seemed to take only about an hour. So either I slept, or we travelled through a worm hole somewhere over Canberra (which wouldn't surprise at all, come to think of it).

Perth

This month's Photo of the Month was taken in Perth on my first morning after landing from Canada. I was unable to sleep because my sleep patterns were still on Canadian time, so I climbed out of bed at 4.30am and walked to Kings Park. I had visited the evening before, so I knew exactly where I wanted to be to make my photograph the next morning.

I know many photographers have been there before me, but I couldn't resist putting my own spin on this classic image of Perth. I made this shot by "double exposing" a piece of film: the first exposure was taken at 5.30am, and the second was made at 6.40am, when the sun illuminated the clouds just before sunrise. Using this technique allows me to show detail in both the city and the sky on one piece of film.

If you would like to try this method, you need a tripod, a camera which has a manual exposure mode, manual focus and a function allowing multiple exposures.

If shooting in the morning, you need to be there when the sky is dark and the buildings have lights shining on them. About 2 minutes should be enough time for most cameras to make a decent exposure of the city-scape at about *f*11. This exposure will add details to the city.

Without moving anything, wait until the sun lights the clouds up and set the exposure for about half a second at *f*11. This exposure will add detail to the previously dark sky.

If shooting sunsets, you'll do the shorter shot first.

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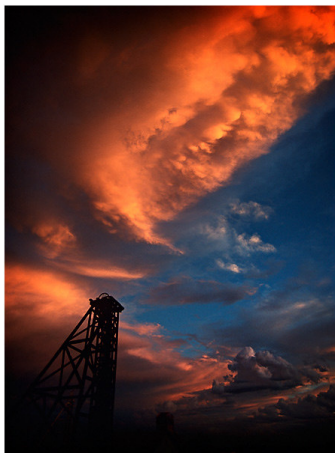
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You only get one shot at it, so be very careful with every move you make. However, the rewards are well worth the effort.

“Anvil”

While it's not Photo of the Month, I've released another image this month which I just love. It's a shot of a headframe dominated by a storm at sunset. For me, it shows some of the things I love about the Goldfields: the stunning colours and amazing weather dominating the best efforts of people.



“Anvil”

I made the shot about 2 years ago, but had forgotten it was in my files. It was shot on 35mm Fuji Velvia, so it's quite a small print by comparison with many of my other prints. We are selling it in its frame for \$195.

Vi Magazine

I received an email late in July from an assistant editor for a Swedish magazine (Vi Magazine). They asked if they use one of my lightning photos as a “welcome image” in their August. Well, if Vi Magazine would like to say “Hi” with all hell breaking loose in a storm, who am I to argue? So now about 42,000 people in Sweden are going to be “Thunderstruck” from Kalgoorlie.

“In Case Of Emergency”

During July, a friend of mine sent me an email which contained an idea which I believe may save lives and cost nothing. So I'm passing it on to everybody I know.

Essentially, it involves placing a contact number in your own mobile phone under the name of “In Case Of Emergency”. Under that name, you place the number of a person who you would like emergency personnel to contact should something awful happen to you. The idea is that the Ambulance paramedic (for instance) searching through your phone's contact list will dial that number to find out if you have any medical condition of which they should be aware, or to otherwise keep that person informed of your condition.

Personally, I think it's a great idea and I have put several numbers into my own phone under that contact name.

Presentation Gift Vouchers

We have a new service which I believe is unique to Scene by Hird – well, at least, I've never heard of anybody else offering it! So I'd like to think it's my own invention

Scene by Hird is now offering a Presentation Gift Voucher. It's a framed certificate suitable for awarding someone leaving your office at their “Going Away” function, be that a morning tea or a get-together in the fanciest restaurant.



*The Certificate
(you'll need to imagine the frame.)*

Simply put, the voucher is a framed 40x50cm print which says “Thankyou” and shows several of my photographs. It comes with a card on the rear to be signed by the people in the office. The card will later be attached to the rear of the photograph chosen. The Presentation Gift Voucher is valued at \$100, and can be “boosted” to any greater amount.

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The employee later brings their voucher in to Scene by Hird and we exchange it for an original print (framed or unframed) to the total value of the voucher. We also attach the signature card to the frame (if a framed print is chosen).

I think this new service will greatly benefit companies who want to show their appreciation for valued members of staff but can't afford to spend time finding that perfect gift. It allows the staff member to choose a gift they will love, while also providing a personalised gift suitable for presentation at their going away function.

We don't charge any extra for this service, so please give us a call next time one of your workers is leaving.

Odds and Sods

- The film from my trip beyond Leonora is still being processed, so I can't show you the promised shot this month.
- I have a couple of prints being auctioned at the Goldfields Arts Centre to raise money for Rotary.
- If there is enough interest shown, I'll be running another photography workshop towards the end of August. Call me to register your interest if you'd like to learn how to use your camera.
- The North Kalgoorlie Primary School is having a Quiz Night on 12/08/05. Tickets are available through the school or Scene by Hird – call us on 90 911 611.
- And lastly, another miscellaneous image taken recently in Perth:



Back to my roots

Thanks for reading all the way to the end of my little newsletter – you really are to be congratulated for your persistence. There aren't any more jokes left. Sorry.

I'll write again next month. Don't forget: you can ask me any questions about photography you'd like to see answered in these newsletters. Email me on graeme@scenebyhird.com

Cheers,

Graeme Hird