

# Hird About The Place

The Scene by Hird Newsletter.

Edition #14: July 2005

Dear Friends,

Where, oh where is my fairy godmother? June has been an incredibly disorganised month. Michelle and the kids went to Victoria for a surprise visit with her parents, while I had a huge surprise sprung on me. Read on for more information.

**Oh Canada.**

The world spins so quickly! One Friday in mid-June, I'm at my day job discussing a possible trip to Canada with my boss, planned to take place in late July. He says "Late July doesn't suit, can you go this Wednesday instead?"

So five days later, I'm on my way to NW Ontario! Luckily, my camera is always ready to travel and all I had to find were some summer clothes and my passport. Apparently, turning up wearing only a large format camera is not considered good etiquette in some parts of Canada. Who would have guessed?

On the flight from Perth to Sydney I was seated next to a pair of gigantic elbows attached to a man. With another 35 hours of travel in front of me, this was not a favourable omen for the remainder of the trip. I still have a numb leg from pinching a nerve on that flight.

Next stop on this whirlwind tour of the globe was Honolulu in transit to Vancouver. I guess the plane could not make the flight directly to Vancouver, but why did we need to stop in a part of the USA? Their paranoid immigration rules make any transit through the country unpleasant, to say the least.

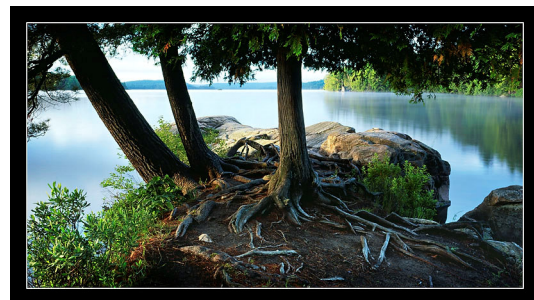
We all queued to get off the plane while it took on more fuel and passengers. Then we queued for an eternity to get through immigration after answering some bizarre questions. We then queued to get back through the security scans, then again

to get back on the very plane we just got off. I was free in Hawaii for about 30 metres.

And where were the friendly greetings and floral leis? Where were the smiling faces of the Hawaiian people? My whole midnight visit to the island paradise consisted of waiting to find out if I am a terrorist. As it turns out, I'm not. Or at least, I wasn't at the time: I have to go through it all again in a week. Chances are, I won't be by then either ..... I'll let you know next month if I have become one.

I landed in Vancouver and quickly made my way to the connecting flight for Winnipeg. When we landed at Winnipeg, we were told we'd be sitting in the plane for a while longer – the terminal was not accepting planes while a thunderstorm was nearby. This weather seems to follow me! As it turns out, I was lucky to be landing in Red Lake later that evening too – the same storm system caused havoc minutes before we touched down.

On Friday morning (the day after I arrived) I started work gathering information to build the geology model for the mine. At lunch time, they tell me they don't want to work over the weekend and that I *must* go fishing and canoeing for two days. Since they are paying for my time here anyway, "*It's your party!*" I think to myself, and so I spent the weekend doing things most people pay for. It's times like this that remind me of why I still keep my day job .....



*Lakeside Retreat.....taken on my last trip*

© Scene by Hird, 2005

Cassidy St, Kalgoorlie, 6430

Ph: (08) 90 911 611 Fax: (08) 90 911 711 Mobile: 0408 95 11 76

Email: graeme@scenebyhird.com Web: www.scenebyhird.com

Oh, and I've been making photos along the way, so you can expect to see some of them in the coming months too. The trip is not over yet: I'm still in NW Ontario while I write this newsletter, so watch this space next month for the last instalment in the saga: "The Return Of The Hird".

## Matted Prints Now Available

During the month we acquired the equipment to do our own mounting of prints in matts.

The matt board is the piece of coloured cardboard which surrounds the print before it is put in the moulding (the frame). Mounting prints in a matt and substrate protects them from impact and from bending, and also prevents the surface of the print from coming into contact with the glass in the frame.

Although having our prints mounted in this way is nothing new for us (all our framed prints have matts) we can now do it ourselves. From later this month (after I return from Canada) we will begin selling prints without the moulding for those who would like to choose their own frame. Matted prints will be a cheaper option than a framed print, but will offer better protection than a completely unmounted print.

The matted prints are wrapped in a protective plastic cover to ensure the matt stays clean and fingerprints don't appear on the print during handling. Since we can protect prints in this way, we now offer a much greater selection of prints than we've ever had displayed before. I'm expecting to have around 200 different photographs to choose from, ready to purchase, as Christmas approaches. We are no longer restricted by the available wall space when we select which of our prints we offer for sale.

## Leonora and Beyond

On my way home from Cue at Easter time, I found a spot which I thought may give me a great photograph if I were to return at the optimal time of the year. That time was mid June, so during the month, I took myself on a long drive.

The spot is an outcrop of weathered rock 70km north of Leonora, making it a 600km return drive

for one photograph. Now do you believe this is an obsession I live with?

I closed the gallery at my normal time of 1.00pm on Saturday. I had already prepared for the trip the previous evening, so all I had to do was go home and pack the car with the swag and my camera and hit the road. How can it take so long to do two tasks? I was on the road by 2.30pm .....

The night was clear and cold, and the alarm woke me at 5.00am. A heavy dew had settled during the night and my boots and jumper, which I had placed on the seat beside my swag, were both drenched. However, I could see the eastern sky was clear and it looked like wonderful light would be my reward for an unpleasantly cold night out in the open.

Donning my clammy jumper and boots, I climbed the nearby rock with my camera and began setting up. Goats, which have made the rock face their home, were startled by my presence and turned to stare at me. They soon resumed their head-banging battles for a higher station in goatish society and I watched in amazement as they jumped all over the steep rock, chasing each other.

I soon had my camera ready to make an exposure and I waited for the light to become perfect. It never quite made "perfect", but it did become pretty good, so I made my shot just after sunrise while the light was glowing red.

I made a couple more shots during the next 15 minutes, but I knew I already had the shot I drove three hours for, so I returned to my camp for a light breakfast of fruit and a cup of coffee. I rolled up the swag, threw the whole lot into the car and drove home.

I still haven't seen the shot I took - it's in Kalgoorlie and I'm not.

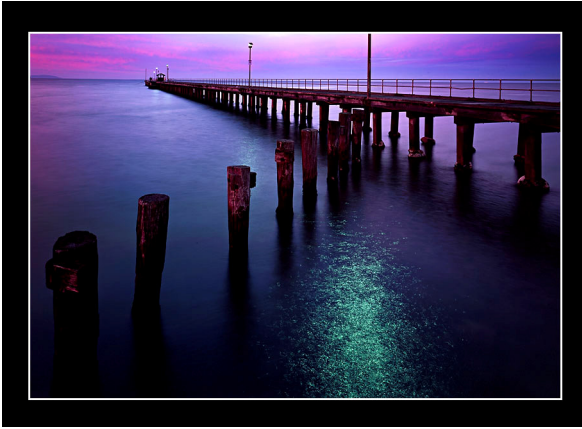
The things I do for my art ....

© Scene by Hird, 2005

Cassidy St, Kalgoorlie, 6430

Ph: (08) 90 911 611 Fax: (08) 90 911 711 Mobile: 0408 95 11 76

Email: graeme@scenebyhird.com Web: www.scenebyhird.com



*Mordialloc Pier, Victoria*

## An Apology

Due to my unplanned Canadian trip, I was forced to cancel my attendance at the opening of the John Paul College Year 9 Photographic Exhibition. Cancelling this engagement was by far my biggest regret about travelling over to Canada – the kids had put in so much effort and I was going to let them down with very little notice.

So, a public apology is in order: To the Year 9 students of John Paul College and John Stachlewski (their teacher), I offer my most sincere apology for not being there to help celebrate your achievements. Having seen the work you put into the exhibition, I hope you feel proud of your efforts and I hope you continue to express your thoughts in the medium of art and especially photography. Congratulations to you all.

## Photo Tip

It's getting hard to come up with new tips each month! I do many of the things I suggest in these tips without any conscious thought of doing them: they just happen. No tip I have suggested before illustrates this (for me) automatic function more than the one I'm about to offer.

When a subject is taller than it is wide, select a "portrait format" for the camera before pressing the shutter release. By that, I mean turn the camera on its side so the print is on its side when you view it.

It's called "portrait format" because this is the way most portraits are framed. People are taller than they are wide (well, mostly) so professional photographers choose to frame the sitter in a taller format picture.

Portrait format is well suited to subjects such as a person, a single tree, a tall building and so on.

On the other hand, if you were about to photograph a group of people, or a forest or a cityscape, all of which are wider than they are tall, a "landscape format" is the best one to choose.

Next time you have your camera out, try one of each format on a given subject and compare the prints.

## WOW!

Last month's Photo of the Month was an amazing success: we had so many requests for it that we were overwhelmed. I must admit to being very surprised by the response, and it was my fault that we were not able to supply all who came into the gallery. We have been filling back orders, and slowly playing catch-up. All mail orders will be in the mail by 8 July.

By the time you get this newsletter, I expect demand will have been somewhat satisfied and we'll have the print on display again. If you missed out during June and would still like to buy it at the special price, please bring your "fridge magnet" print in and place an order – we'll let you have the full-sized, framed print for \$225 until July 16 if we see your small print.

---

Well, that's it from us for another month. This issue has been a little short, because I'm still in Canada and Michelle has been busy doing the yearly stocktake and jetting about the country. I'll write again next month, finishing the saga of the sudden Canadian trip and showing the photo I took on my Leonora trip.

Cheers,

*Graeme Hird*

© Scene by Hird, 2005

Cassidy St, Kalgoorlie, 6430

Ph: (08) 90 911 611 Fax: (08) 90 911 711 Mobile: 0408 95 11 76

Email: [graeme@scenebyhird.com](mailto:graeme@scenebyhird.com) Web: [www.scenebyhird.com](http://www.scenebyhird.com)