



IRENE FROY - A LIFE IN PHOTOGRAPHY

I cannot remember a time when photography was not an all-consuming passion. I have enjoyed photography since I was a schoolgirl, making my first contact prints, aged 11, in the garden shed and hand colouring them. Unfortunately, none have survived!



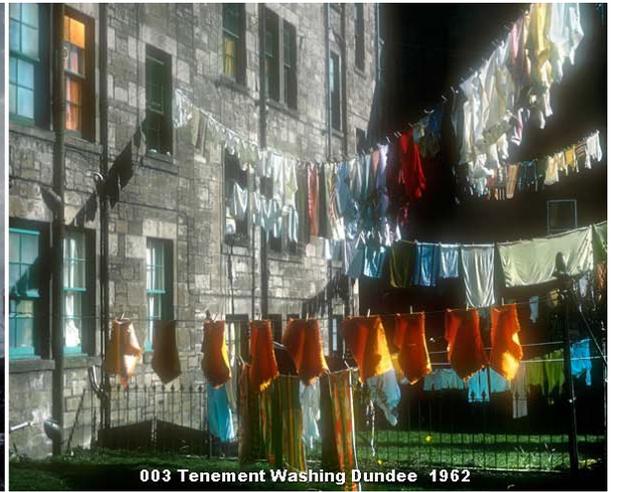
During my school holidays I worked for the local photographers in Pittenweem, Fife, and, just before I left in 1960, I bought a Kodak Retinette, which enabled me to get into colour slides. (Image 001)



Image 002 was taken at Pittenweem Harbour on that same day and after my move to Dundee, where I joined the Dundee PS, I used this shot in the first slide competition. The judge was Fred Duncan who commented on the framing at each side and the chap on the outgoing boat hailing the incoming boat to ask where the fish were today. The shot had been helped by the contre-jour lighting. I was stunned, having only seen two boats and not having a clue what contre-jour lighting meant. It was all luck, but it did convince me there was more to photography than I had realised.



002 Boats, Pittenweem -1960 copy



003 Tenement Washing Dundee 1962

003 is at the back of some Dundee tenements where the colour was the attraction and I used back lighting again.



004 Irene @ DPS 1963 Scan @

Dundee PS owned their own premises in those days and I spent many evenings at the club, at the beginner classes, using the darkrooms and even modelling for the portrait classes. Sometimes, simply sharing the shilling for the gas fire with other members and talking photography.

In the 60s I also started lecturing for the National Trust for Scotland but I insisted on using my own images, rather than their stock ones. I did get early access to many properties that way. Kellie Castle (005) near Pittenweem and 006, The Georgian House, Edinburgh

In September 1965, I went on holiday to Dubrovnik and there I met Gerry, who was a professional rose grower from Hitchin in Herts.



005 Kellie Castle for NTS 1963



006 The Georgian House scan, 1964



007 Gerry Dubrovnik 1965

Gerry in 1965

This picture of "the gang", at the airport as we were leaving, shows the fashions of 1965.



008 Dubrovnik 1965 the Gang



In my AA uniform at the opening of the Tay Road Bridge in August 1966. Although I had passed my driving test in 1961, I did not buy a car as the Tay Ferries were disrupted by the building of the bridge, so getting home to Fife had to be by train. I had planned to buy one as soon as the bridge opened, but was thwarted by that meeting with Gerry!

My Wedding on 17 September 1966. Apart from five weeks together our courtship was by letter as Gerry was in Hitchin, whilst I was in Dundee.

400 miles was a long way in those days.



010 Wedding Day 17th September 1966

Our honeymoon was a slow journey from Fife to Hitchin.



011 Gerry honeymoon 1966

<< Ingleton in the Dales

After trying various camera clubs in Herts we joined Shillington & DCC in March 1967. I was on the committee at the very next AGM, where I remained for 38 years!

(012) My stepfather died in 1971 leaving me £500 which we spent visiting my great aunt in Arizona. Gerry suffered kidney stones while we were there and was in hospital, so we stayed for 6 weeks instead of the original 3 we had planned. I was into lith masks at the time. >>



012 London Bridge, Arizona 1973 copy

(013) Holidays followed to the Greek Islands in late March. Corfu first, and then Crete. (014). We loved Greece and would have continued going but they stopped the early flights during a recession and, as Gerry had to be back to prepare for Chelsea Flower Show, in May of each year, we could no longer be away during the Spring.



013 Spotlit Fisher Corfu 1980



014 Crete Lassiti 1981

<< So we took the car to Sweden instead

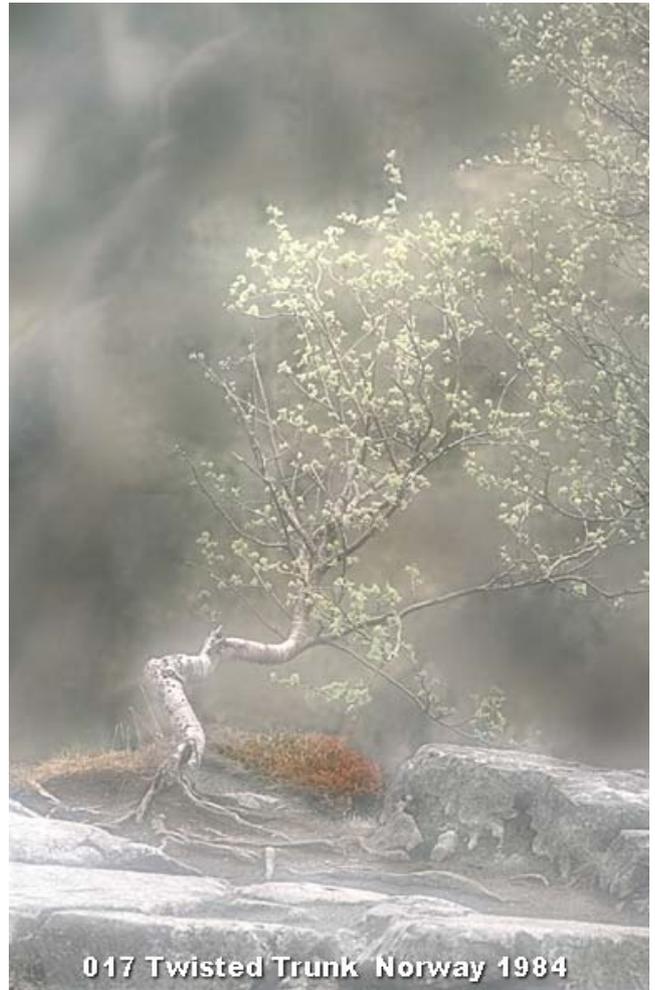


015 Marching Majorettes Sweden 1983

Then Norway in 1984.
I loved the high snow fields and the tree hanging over a ravine.



016 Barns in Snow -Norway 1984



017 Twisted Trunk Norway 1984



018 EAF 75th Anniversary 1985

From 1984 to 1986, I was President of the EAF, coinciding with the Federation's 75th Anniversary.

Assorted Presidents attended the Anniversary Dinner in Churchill College, Cambridge
L to R Irene Froy EAF Barry Evans CA John Hill PAGB & Terry Chapman MCPF

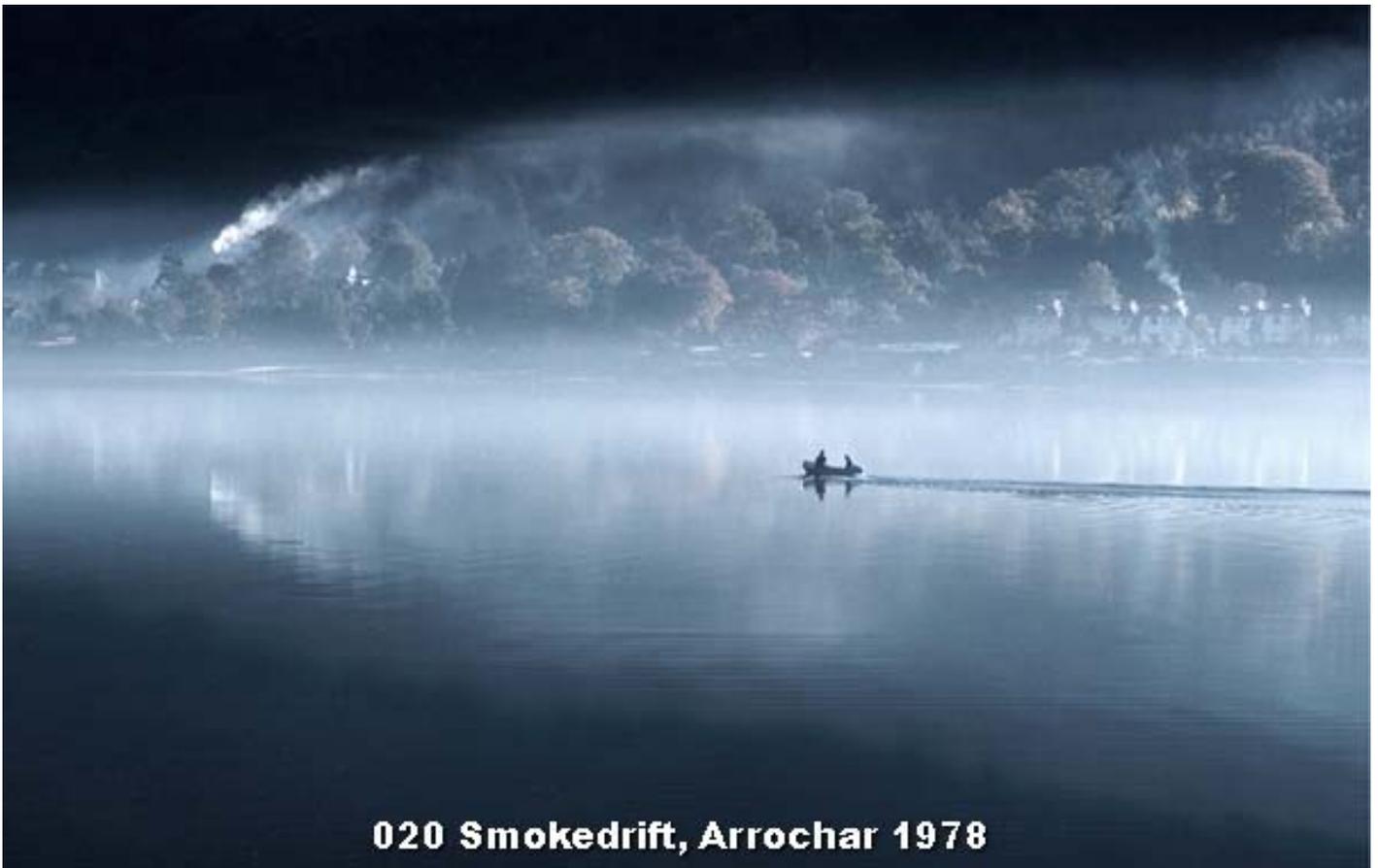
Terry invited me to an MCPF day, where we saw Cliff Steer with his solarisation of slides.

I was hooked, but it was a further year before I started colour printing in the darkroom Gerry had built for me in the loft. The bathroom was good for monochrome but was not sufficiently blacked out for colour



019 Sailboard Impression 1986

Smokedrift, (020) on the next page, was my first acceptance in an International Exhibition - the Edinburgh International which I now know is one of the most difficult to be accepted into. It was taken at Arrochar on Loch Long



020 Smokedrift, Arrochar 1978

Meanwhile we had met Ken Bryan at a Rushden Event and got to know him well inviting him to Shillington & DCC where he was asked to lead a walking weekend in Derbyshire. The first year 6 of us went and I got this image. (Image 21) 022 & 023 Derbyshire images. There were 22 of us in the party each year by then.



022 Autumn Parkland, Chatsworth 1992 scan



021 Early Morning Edale-1990



025 Bluebells at Hitch Wood, Herts



023 Padley Gorge -1992

024 & 025 are Local Images, and perhaps I am developing a style?



024 Beech Trunks, Ashridge, 1988 scan

026 to 030 (next page). From 1985 onwards we had holidayed in France by car, mostly Provence but other areas too.



027 Vaucluse Farmhouse



029 Vase and Jugs, Provence



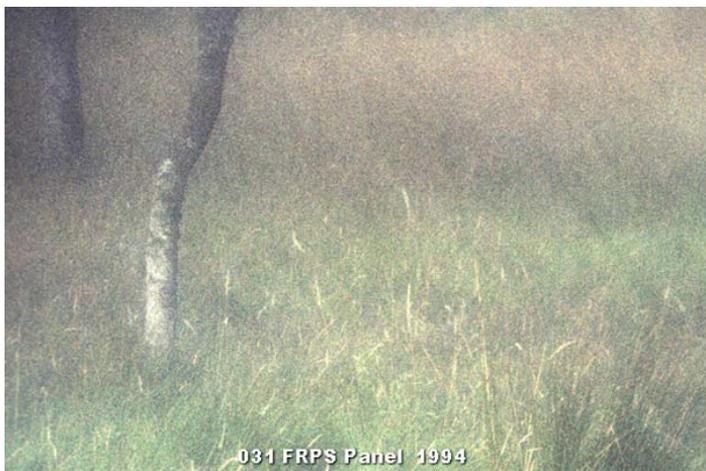
028 Olive and Ochre, Roussillon



026 Lavender Farm near Apt



030 Sunflowers at Moustiers, Provence



031 FRPS Panel 1994



032 Wind Flurry FRPS Panel 1994

In 1994, I had a personal exhibition with David Leathers at Bromham Mill, Bedford and the grasses were included. Hugh Milsom and Trevor Fry spent ages in front of the Grasses (031) and asked if I had any more like that because I had a Fellowship panel if I did. Of course I didn't have 20, but I put together three rows – one of trees, one of grasses and one of walls with sheep. All taken on Scotch 1000 film and printed on Fujichrome in the darkroom. I was successful and, luckily, it was a unanimous decision. Bill Wisden later told me he would not have passed it as he didn't like the bottom row!

033 & 034 Meanwhile we had found Philipou, a wonderful gite in the midi Pyrenees, with views of the mountains from the terrace. First a spring visit, with snow on the mountains and pruned vines, and then again in the autumn.



033 Vineyard Cottage in early Spring 1992



034 Snow at Philipou 1992



035 French Farm from the terrace



037 Philipou Dawn 1994



038 French Farmhouse from Philipou



039 Misty Dawn, Philipou 1993



039 Old Road near caddies

035 – 039, with mist enhancing the views of the neighbouring farms. The owners, Hedley and Margaret, were very friendly. Margaret had given Hedley a camera for his birthday and she asked me to show him how to work it. I suggested they come out with us for a day and at the end of that day Margaret said “You can teach. Why don't you run courses here, we can sleep 8, Hedley will drive a minibus and I will cook”. I didn't really think anyone would come, but showing images from the area in my lectures to clubs obviously helped, and I was swamped with requests. I never had to advertise!

It was a fantastic area for landscape variety, with bare fields, vineyards and villages as well as the high Pyrenees. Images 040 – 052 were all taken on workshops, which continued through the 90s until I contracted Polymyalgia rheumatica, which meant that I could no longer stand around to help.

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049 Gold in the Mist 1995



043 Vines and Olive



042 Lauragais Landscape



041 Mirepoix Trees



044 Rooftop & Balcony, Seix, Ariège



045 Boule Oust, Ariège



046 Bike at Chalabre



047 Shutters & Ivy near Mirepoix



048 No.40 Rue d'Église, Samon



049 Antique Shop Doorway, Mirepoix



050 Blue Bike St-Sulpice

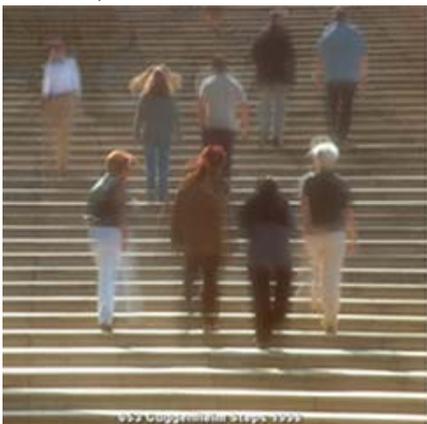


051 Bike Art

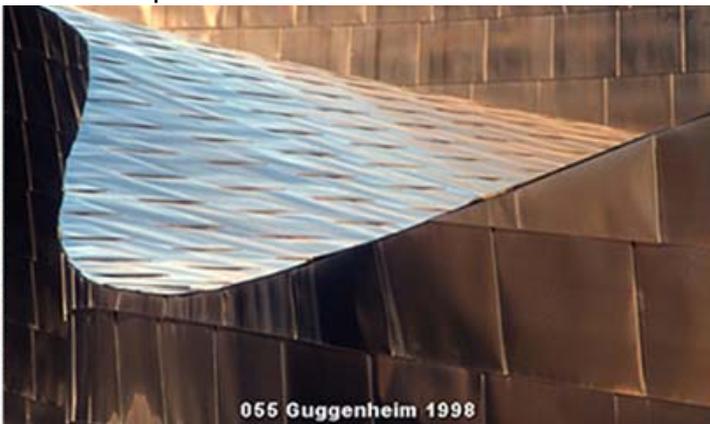


052 Multi Poplars, Canon

Gradually we expanded our holidays to other areas. Northern Spain one year, the Guggenheim in Bilbao, and the Fete de Pommes at Mirepoix with a Jazz Band and a window display



053 Guggenheim Steps 1998



055 Guggenheim 1998



054 Guggenheim 7



056 Jazz at Mirepoix 2000



057 Apple Festival, Mirepoix 2000

In 1998, I bought my first computer and gave up the darkroom. "Entertaining the Crowd" was my very first composite. He was in Sarlat in the Dordogne and the wall painting was near Belpech. >>



059 French Fields, 2000



058 Entertaining the Crowd 2000

< French Fields was in the Midi Pyrenees, probably the Ariege, captured just while travelling around.

In early spring, in the Auvergne, I was taken with an interesting bathroom in the gite we had rented. 060 & 061 below.



060 Pastel Curves Auvergne 2001



061 Splash of Yellow, Auvergne 2001

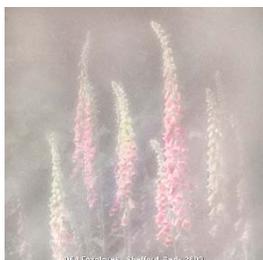
The weather was very cold and snowy and, of course, the Auvergne is high, but we drove up the Puy de Sancy! The road had been cleared but the weather was rapidly closing in again.



062 Snow & Sunshine, Puy de Sancy, Auvergne



063 Snow Fence & Barn Auvergne



< Back home and an image of the foxgloves – the last of my Scotch 1000 film.

Ken Bryan moved to Skye in 2000 and we went up in December with lovely winter light. >



066 Isle of Skye 2000

2000 was the start of my support from PermaJet, who have supplied me with superb paper and inks ever since. All thanks to Adi Sethna, who gave me one sheet of paper and told me to ring Robin Whetton if I liked it!



John Gravett bought Lakeland Photo Holidays and asked me to run workshops for him. The first was 2001, the year of foot and mouth so we had to be imaginative, as walking was not an option. But by 2002, I was crippled with polymyalgia and couldn't cope. Steroids did improved things for a while but my walking has deteriorated since.

In 2002 we took the car to Tuscany, staying in a farmhouse in the Val d'Orcia, where we had mist almost every morning! This was late May, so we had to be in situ by 3.30am! We just switched the day around and slept in the afternoon! The middle Sunday saw us driving into Siena where we thought it would be quiet. The flag waving parade started up just as we were leaving and was a real bonus. We drove home via Venice where we spent three nights, a rainy day in Venice and a sunny one in Burano. With hindsight we should have done that the other way around, but I'm still waiting to get Gerry back there.



075- 078 (above). We went to Sigoyer, in northern Provence in spring 2003, visiting the lavender fields of the Vaucluse and Sault

In the summer of 2003 I bought a Canon digital camera and that autumn we found ourselves in a stunning area for poplars. I took a great many of them and thus started my love of poplars in France! Waking early, in our overnight stop at Anet, I found more misty poplars and we nearly missed the ferry as I wouldn't leave them till I got the picture! (Pictures on the next page)



< Our Golden Wedding Anniversary in 2016

Gerry at 73, taken with my digital camera. >





079 Poplars Lines



080 Misty Poplars



081 Misty Poplars 3



082 Mist and Cobwebs



083 Poplars & Bramble, Eure

Sunflowers are irresistible, especially as they are the PermaJet logo

Six of us from SDCC hired a cottage on North Uist in June 2004.



085 Sunflowers Burgundy 2004

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086 Valley Strand, North Uist



087 Triagh Ear, North Uist

September 2004 saw our first trip to Ireland with a cottage at Inch Beach. Mum had just been diagnosed with cancer and came with us. And then, a Scottish lecture tour in October



088 Couples, Inch Strand



089 View at Inch Strand



090 Glen Morrison



091 Elgg from Elgg



092 Dawn, Isle of Skye

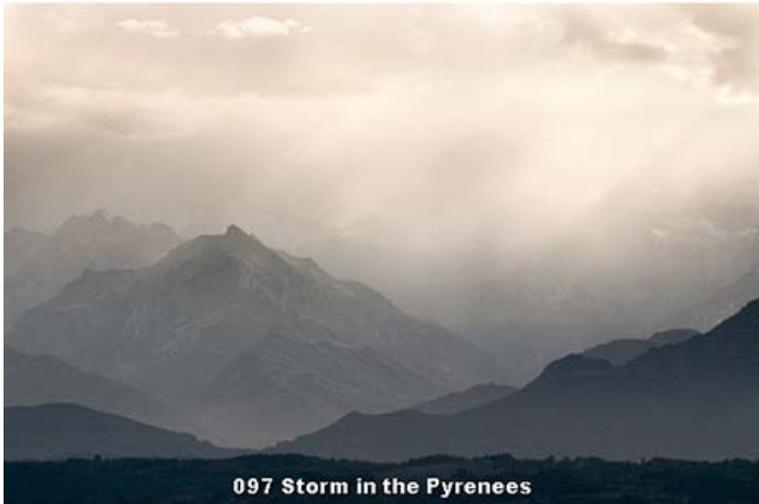
We had decided to move to the Midlands with my Mum, to be nearer to my sister, and realised that the best photo club was an essential part of the move.

We chose Wrekin Arts in Wellington as I had lectured there many times over the years on our way to Cheshire. But we couldn't sell our house, and Mum died while we were still in Hitchin.

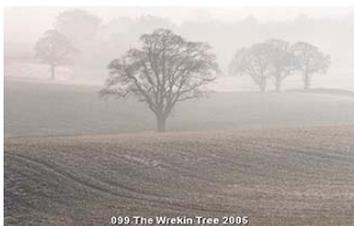
Provence in March and the Herault in October 2005 followed by yet another week at Philipou, with a storm in the Pyrenees which we thought was rain but turned out to be early snow.



We are starting from Shropshire now, but still loving France.



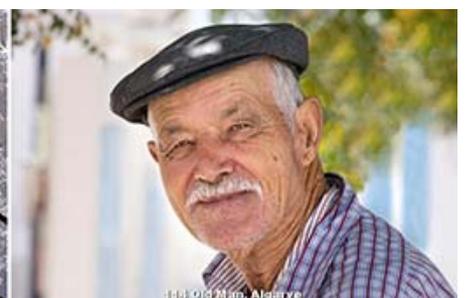
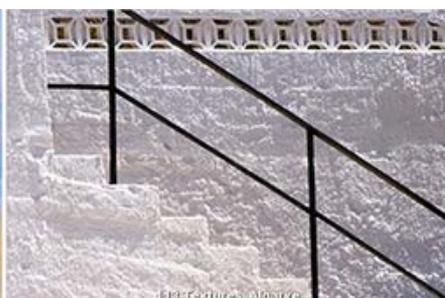
Winter outing since moving to Shropshire – found the Wrekin Tree! (99). (100) A foggy Day in Shropshire and then, a visit to Vince Rooker in Cramlington, who took us to the Sage at Gateshead



A holiday in Holland, two weeks surrounded by the bulb fields.



I was Invited to judge the Algarve Salon and we hired a car for a couple of days to see the area and to take a few photographs.





115 Ben Nevis Rainbow

We were in Glen Garry in November for the deer and, also, a visit to Fort William because we had a puncture and had to take the tyre to be repaired.

Then, coming home, slowly, through the Cairngorm, after a talk in Inverness.



117 Beech Trees by Loch Oich



118 Glen Garry Stags



119 Female Red Deer, Glen Garry



120 November-Sunset, Fort William



121 Cairngorm Spindrift



122 Silver Birch, Cairngorms

Cathedral Chairs (Alsace) has done very well for me although it was really in the church at Benwhir. Cathedral chairs tripped better off the tongue!



124 Boutique Entrance, Kayserburg, Alsace



125 Cathedral Chairs, Alsace



126 Cafe Entrance, Alsace

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Wildflower meadow, Ironbridge, Shropshire

Belsay Hall, visited with Vince Rooker >

In October 2007, back to the French Alps, with another 2 weeks in Italy planned to follow. Brilliant conditions in the mountains but on the 3rd day, Gerry slipped on a rotten apple and broke his ankle.

We had to be flown home and the car recovered by transporter.

Returning in the following spring and we had a dramatic storm. The wildflower meadows were superb in June.

Pictures below



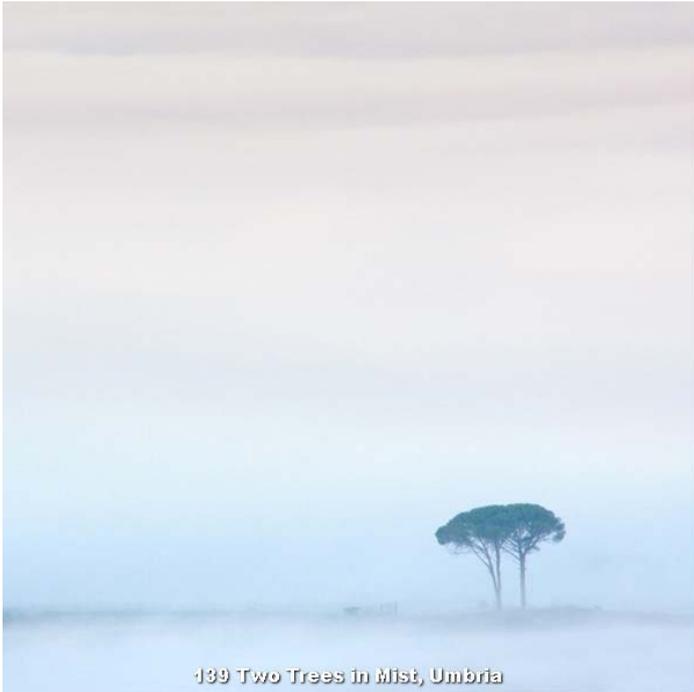
This is one of my favourite stops in France, just south of Reims, at the Mont Aime, with a vine covered slope and the patchwork of fields behind.

We always stop at this spot and, as you can drive up the Mont, we can still do it!



136 is a shutter with creeper on our travels through France, heading for Italy this time. 137 is a texture shot travelling the Route de Crete in Tuscany and I loved the autumn colours (138) as we travelled through Umbria

Our house in Umbria had a roof terrace and this was our first morning! The Olive Grove (140) is a picture I have just recently processed, using a technique I have just learnt. It often pays to revisit older images with new ideas.



139 Two Trees in Mist, Umbria



140 Olive Grove, Umbria



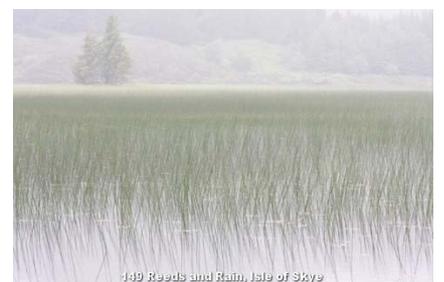
142 Frozy Morning, Shropshire



148 Luskentyre, Harris

< Our first visit to the island of Harris in June 2009. We simply loved Luskentyre

Reeds and Rain, Skye >



149 Reeds and Rain, Isle of Skye

I persuaded Gerry to fly to Malaga and hire a car in November. Great for bare fields and, with the right angle, a diamond shaped olive grove. (143)

We loved Spain so much we took our car in the following spring, and drove from Bilbao down to Andulcia. We stayed 3 nights on an almond farm where we were able to see the dawn on the Sierra Nevada.



143 Diamond Field, Andalusia



145 Spring Meadow, Andalusia



146 Almond Grove, Andalusia

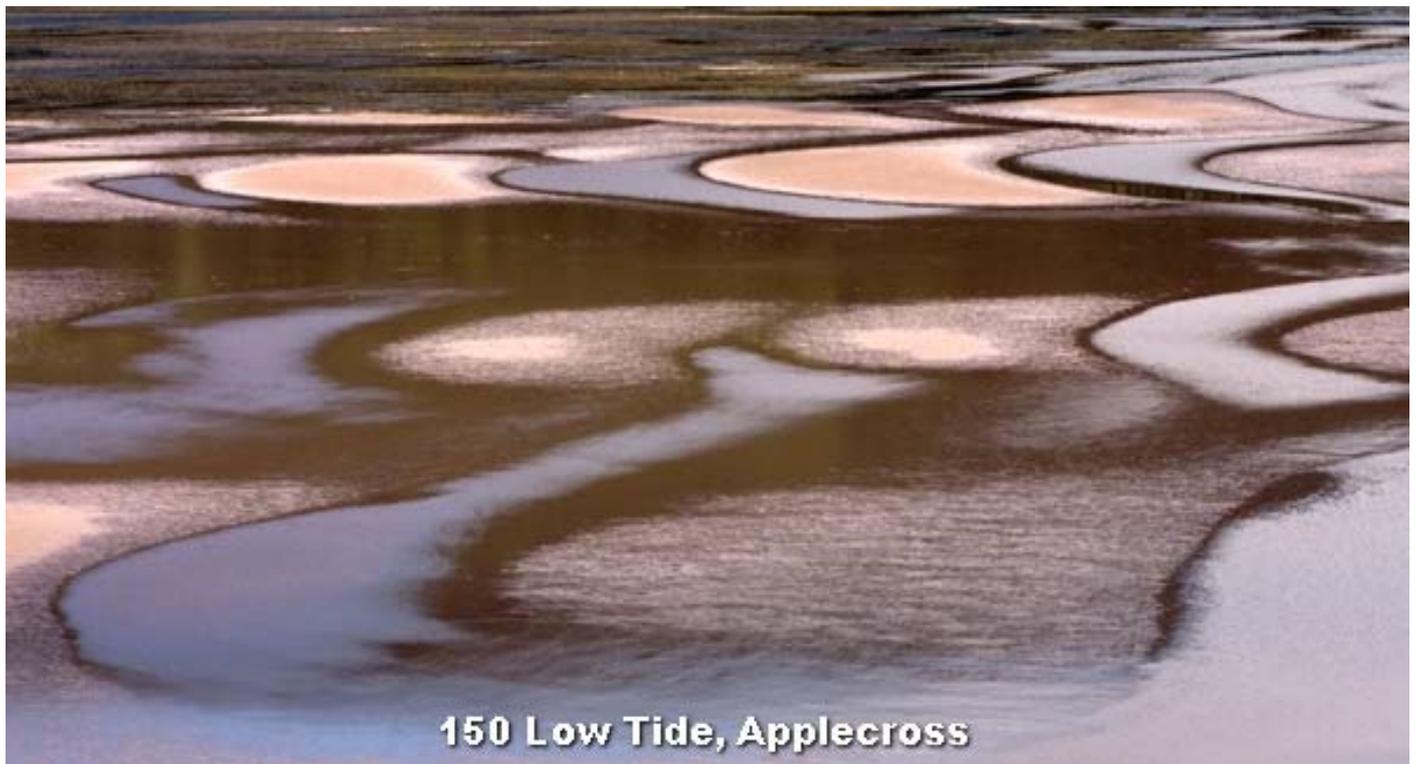


144 Silver Fields, Andalusia

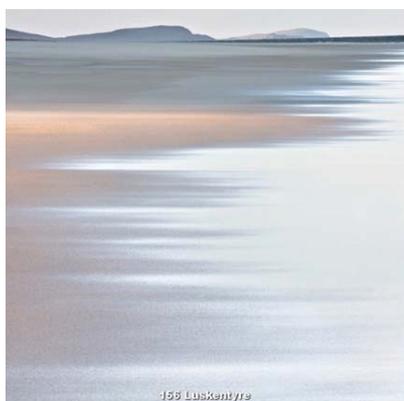


147 Panorama Dawn Sierra Nevada, Spain 2009

Dawn on the Sierra Nevada (147) is a combination of 14 portrait format shots



150 Low Tide, Applecross



156 Luskentyre



155 Shifting Sands, Luskentyre

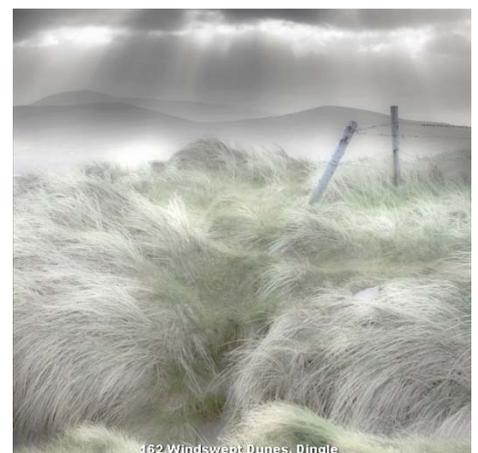


157 Horse in the Dunes, Luskentyre



158 Sunset, Luskentyre

October, and back to Luskentyre, Harris, followed by a few days in the Cairngorms before a lecture and a workshop in Inverness.



162 Windswept Dunes, Dingle



152 Shropshire Poplars in Mist



151 Falling Leaves, Correze, France

October in the Correze and worst weather we ever had in France! We found a big empty shed with plastic windows and vegetation growing through. It was dry in there and I did a whole series of pictures!

Daisies in Vendee >



153 Daisies, Vendee



154 The Path to the Woods, Vendee



159 Snow Fence, near Aviemore



160 Sand Surfing, Picardy



161 Fence & Grasses, Baleshare

A holiday in the Vendee, France in May 2010 and Spring in Picardy 2012



164 Arran Rocks

< A week on Arran with the wonderful rocks at Imacher. I took so many that I had to make panels!

Noyers in Burgundy >



165 Noyers, Burgundy



167 Shop Front, Talmont sur Gironde



169 The Yellow Jug



169 The Pink Tree, Normoutiers, France



170 Abbey de Bonne Esperance



168 Storm Brewing, Gironde



171 Gallery Shadows, Arcis



172 Fishing Hut, Talmont sur Gironde

166 taken on an overnight stop on our way south to the Pyrenees, 167 & 168 from a couple of nights in Talmont sur Gironde on our way north. 169 - Another journey through France with a detour to Normoutiers where I found the pink tree. The Abbey de Bonne Esperance (170), in the Poitou Charente – after the service. An artist's studio in Arcis (171), where couldn't resist the shadow from the bars on the window. 172 - A day trip to Talmont for more fishing huts.



173 Panned Fields, Poitou Charente



174 Emerging from the Mist

Two different techniques. Panned fields – loved the colour in my “Panned Fields” but they were covered in cables which the panning removed. “Emerging from the Mist”, near Lochinver, is a composite landscape with some zoomed in camera.



176 Golden Wedding Lunch

< Our Golden Wedding in 2016
Cannot believe it is already
fifty years!



179 Tulip Dancer, home



180 Oite Interior, Vauclottes sur Mer, Normandy



182 Walking the Tide Line, Donegal



183 ICM Bare Trees, Donegal

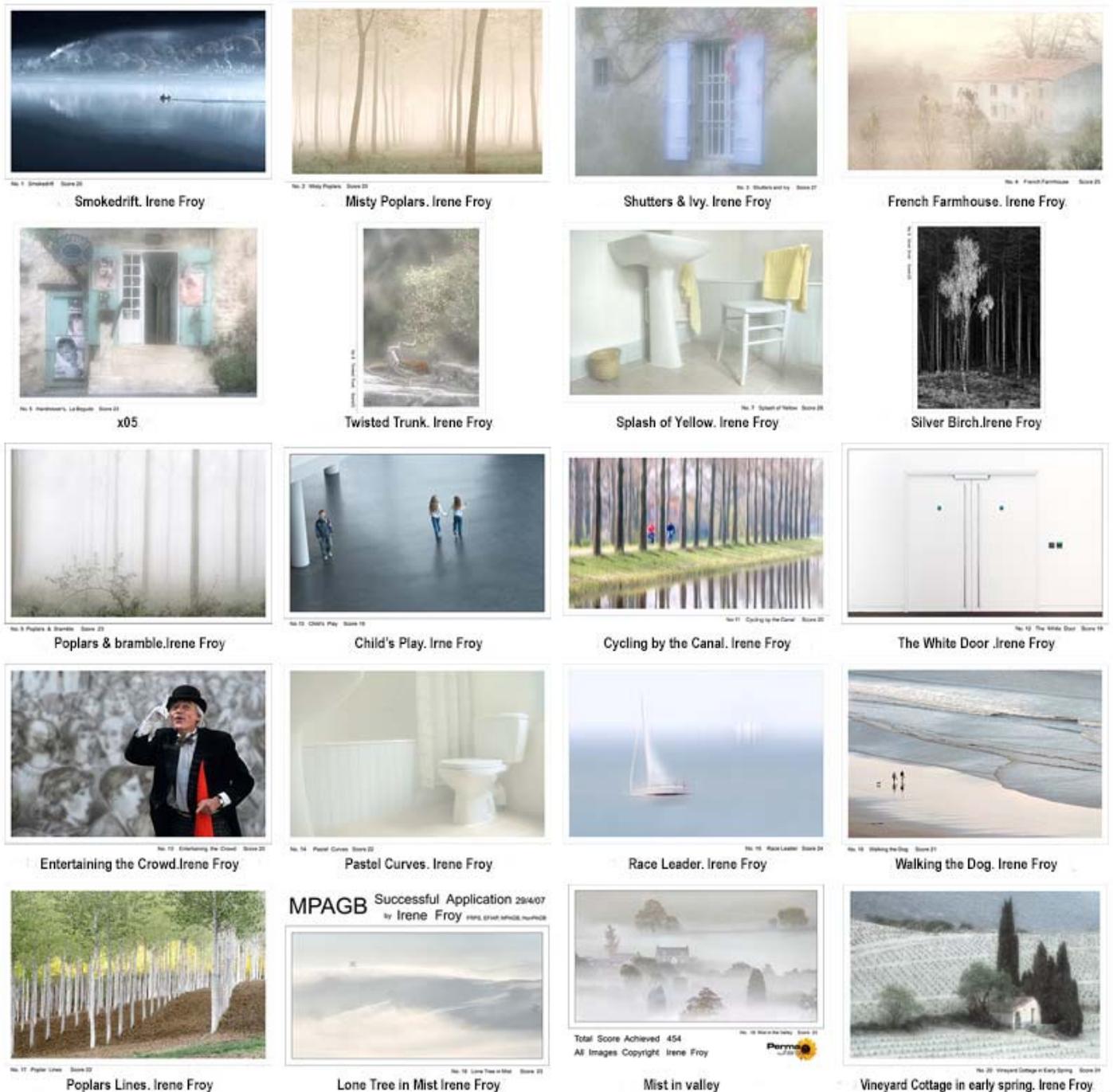


184 Dancer, Donegal



181 Poppies, Donegal Cottage

In her notes, Irene modestly omits any mention of the many distinctions and awards she has received, such as her FRPS, which she has now given up, and her MPAGB from 2007. Her successful entry is shown below and, although it is more than a decade ago, it stands up well today.



Remember to click on any of the pictures to view this extensive gallery more comfortably on our website.

Your Club can also book a wonderful show by Irene from our Recorded Lecture Service at <http://www.thepagb.org.uk/services/recorded-lectures/>

IRENE FROY MPAGB EFIAP HonPAGB
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