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# e-news

from the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain

e-news 381 extra one

## FIVE NEW MPAGB



Ken Gillies, Laurie Campbell, Sandy Gilroy, Dave Gibbins President, Tori Andrews, Steve Proctor

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On the drive up to Dunblane in Scotland I saw a car number plate which initially amused me then eventually summed up the whole experience for me – Y1KES. Maybe it was an omen. Now, Steve Proctor MPAGB gives me a feeling of 'Imposter Syndrome', it was always the ultimate aspirational photographic goal, but seemed so far away and so difficult to achieve – after all, this is the level at which my heroes operate, those that constantly inspire me.

Throughout my life I have had many hobbies and pastimes and have usually been fairly average at them all, I've been playing guitar for nearly fifty years and I'm still

making mistakes. Photography seems to be the one thing though that allows me to express myself and wander off in different directions combining both technical skills and creative thoughts, so it fits me well.

When I achieved my EPAGB in November 2023, I gave myself 18 months to get my act together, refine some of the stronger prints and create some new ones. It seemed a long time away, then suddenly it was three months to go and I still needed to finalise an entry. Two things were a must for me, firstly that the images had to have a sense of 'story telling' about them and secondly that attention to detail is paramount. There is no room for mistakes at the Masters level. I used an online mentoring system and requested feedback on several new images alongside some updated ones too. As I finalised the selection, I again called on the expertise and guidance of my two excellent L&CPU mentors, Adrian and Jane Lines, who really went the extra mile in supporting me and being not only honest with their opinions but offering challenges and ideas to boost the potential of each print.

**There is no room for mistakes at the Masters level.**

a particular area or maybe just to try a different paper. I then had a pile of prints that weren't quite there but hopefully twenty that did. The final selection was a mixture of portrait, creative and wildlife images, three of which were taken in the camera club on model nights, so you don't need expensive or elaborate set-ups. Once I had made the selection it was out of my hands, my expectations were low,

I just didn't want to completely bomb! I am my own harshest critic at times.

I attended both days of adjudication as there were a small number of people present who I had mentored or offered advice to, and I wanted to support them. Plus, it is always good to keep an eye on the various levels so that you can provide useful advice.

When day 2 came along and my assessment was to begin, I didn't have any nerves as I didn't expect to pass, I was there to see which prints would hold up and which wouldn't in readiness for attempt two. Well, after the first three prints were assessed and I'd scored 22, 24 & 27, (of course they're not scores but a summation of Yes/No votes), I suddenly thought there's a chance here! I very quickly got nervous. The positive votes kept rolling in but there's always a chance that a print will not be at standard and bring the whole set down, but could success happen, really, to me? Well, it did. And I am still in shock.

A key learning point for me has been the realisation that fellow photographers are not competition, they are inspiration. I really do have to thank some wonderful people who cajoled, challenged and supported me throughout this process and my success says as much about them as it does about my photography. I will be eternally grateful to these inspirational people. Steve

**Fellow photographers are not competition, they are inspiration!**



## NOT QUITE IMPOSSIBLE

The number, MP371, indicates that Steve is the 371<sup>st</sup> person to apply for MPAGB in Prints. There have been 375 such applications to date and less than one third have been successful. That's why I subtitle it "Not quite Impossible".







7\_MP371\_Ballet Puppeteer



8\_MP371\_The Lavender Maid



9\_MP371\_Lesser Kestrels Breeding



11\_MP371\_Myth of An Cailleach



10\_MP371\_Majesty





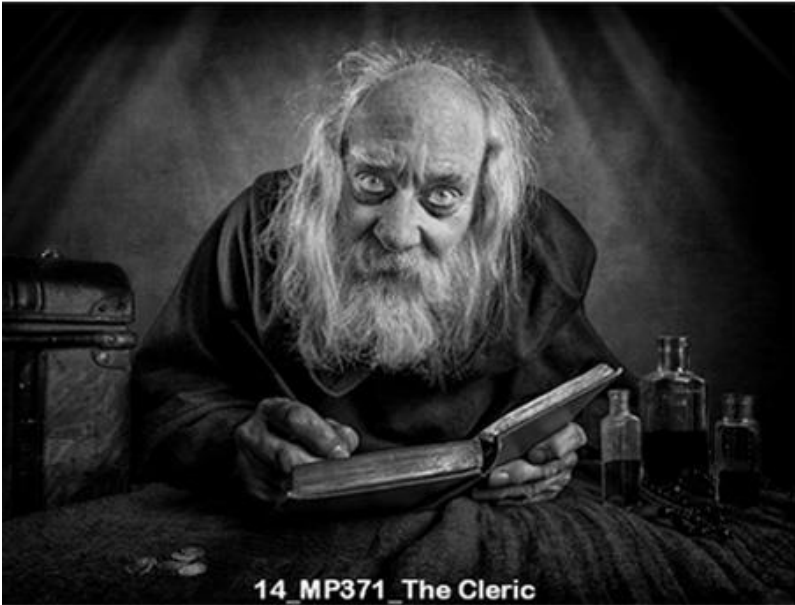


**12\_MP371\_At One with Nature**



**13\_MP371\_Solitude**





14\_MP371\_The Cleric



15\_MP371\_Reminiscing



17\_MP371\_Redemption



16\_MP371\_When Doves Cry



18\_MP371\_European Rollers Compare Catches



20\_MP371\_Whispering Waifs



19\_MP371\_Sombre Skies



1. MP372. Exploring the Wreck

My journey to MPAGB started back in 2015 when I attended my first SPF/PAGB workshop to gain some feedback on my images. This led to my CPAGB in April 2016, DPAGB in November 2020, and finally my MPAGB in April 2025.

Achieving these accreditations is certainly a source of pride but they were not the main reason for embarking on this journey. I wanted to improve my skills as a photographer and the SPF/PAGB workshops were the main draw, where I was given invaluable feedback on my images. The constructive comments I received at these workshops allowed me to continually improve my images.

When I had made the decision to go for my MPAGB, I found choosing the 20 images for my panel to be one of the most challenging aspects of the process. My panel was composed of 18 underwater images and 2 landscapes. Only 4 of my previous DPAGB images met the required standard, albeit with a bit more work and the other 16 were more recent additions. 5 of them had not even been entered into exhibitions or been shown at a workshops, so they were the unknown quantity. However, it was a risk I was willing to take as I felt it to be my best work and the best panel I could put together at that time.

**Choosing the 20 images for my panel was one of the most challenging aspects of the process**

When judgement day finally arrived, my print entry had been sitting in its box ready and waiting for 4 weeks, along with my growing sense of anticipation and apprehension. The day passed in a blur. The DPAGB and EPAGB panels came up first and viewing these made me appreciate the complexity involved in judging and the standards that had to be achieved. The MPAGB panels were shown. It seemed to be over in flash and I still wasn't sure if I had made the grade.

It was only when they announced the awards that I realised I my success and that my images had met the standard. My sense of delight was overwhelming, and I was so happy that I had been successful. *Ken*





2\_MP372\_Northern Prawn



3\_MP372\_Grouper on the Attack



5\_MP372\_Hermit Crab



7\_MP372\_Goby fish on a Sea Pen



4\_MP372\_Western Clown-anemonefish



6\_MP372\_Peppermint Shrimps inside a Sponge

**CLICK ON any image to view it on our website**





**8\_MP372\_Clownfish with Eggs**



**9\_MP372\_Green Sea Turtle**





10\_MP372\_Stormy Myrland Beach



11\_MP372\_Wreck Diver



12\_MP372\_Spotted Cleaner Shrimp



13\_MP372\_Secretary Blenny in Brain Coral



14\_MP372\_Bridled Anemonefish



17\_MP372\_Red Striped Goby on a Sponge





15 MP372 Porcelain Crab Feeding



18 MP372 Anemonefish



16 MP372 Peacock Mantis Shrimp with Eggs



19 MP372 Octopus out of its tin can home





20\_MP372\_Vestrahorn from Stokksnes Beach



13\_MP372\_Secretary Blenny in Brain Coral

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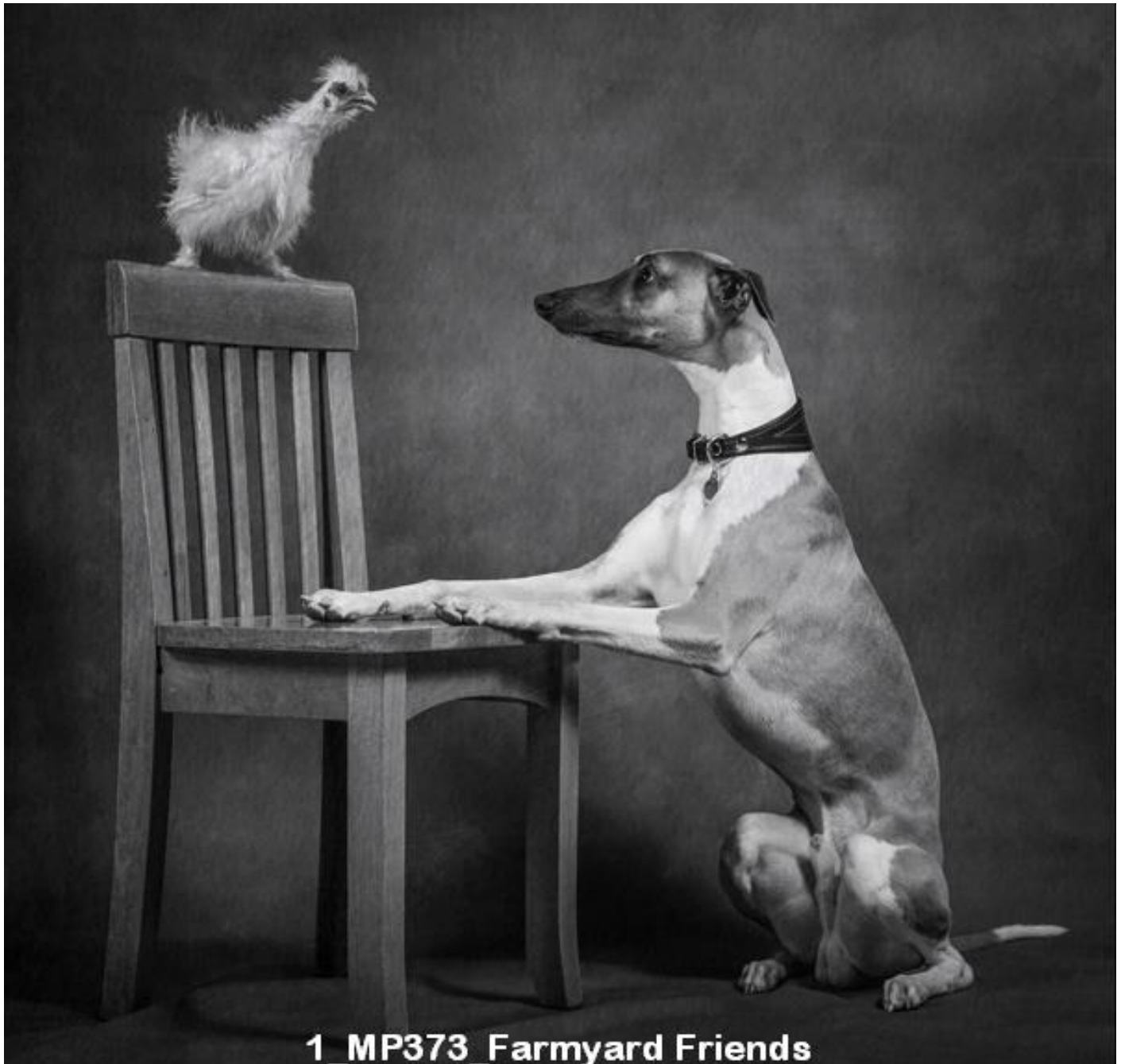


# Tori Andrews MPAGB

(MP373)

I have been preparing for this weekend for some months! Lots of prints, lots of advice, lots of work and lots of making photos! Yesterday, in Dunblane, Scotland, I gained my MPAGB, the Masters and final level with the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain. Twenty prints were required and after carefully preparing them, they were stored away safely in my spare room until this weekend! It was a tough day. The judges had a really hard job with so many amazing images, and two very long days to decide who had made the grades.

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1\_MP373\_Farmyard Friends

I would just like to say a few thank yous, because I had so many people giving me advice and supporting me. Firstly, to [Rod Wheelans](#) and his excellent team, the judges and of course the Scottish Federation who made us all feel very welcome.

Also to Vic Hainsworth for the EAF support and to [Bea Bujtar-Barath](#) who trawled through hundreds of photographic papers and mount colours with me until I could decide which ones would work the best. Her patience was unwavering!



To those who gave me their advice, my friend [Martin Patten](#) who always supported me and to [Colin Westgate](#) & Chrissie Westgate for their invaluable advice. A very special thanks goes to my camera club buddies at PICO. Without you all, I would never of got this far and I have always felt that you have believed in me! [Andrea Hargreaves](#) & Phil, who came all the way from Yorkshire to support me! Even though we were a bit noisy with the support, I think we got away with it! I have saved the champagne as I had a long drive home but it'll go down lovely later, thank you so much x.

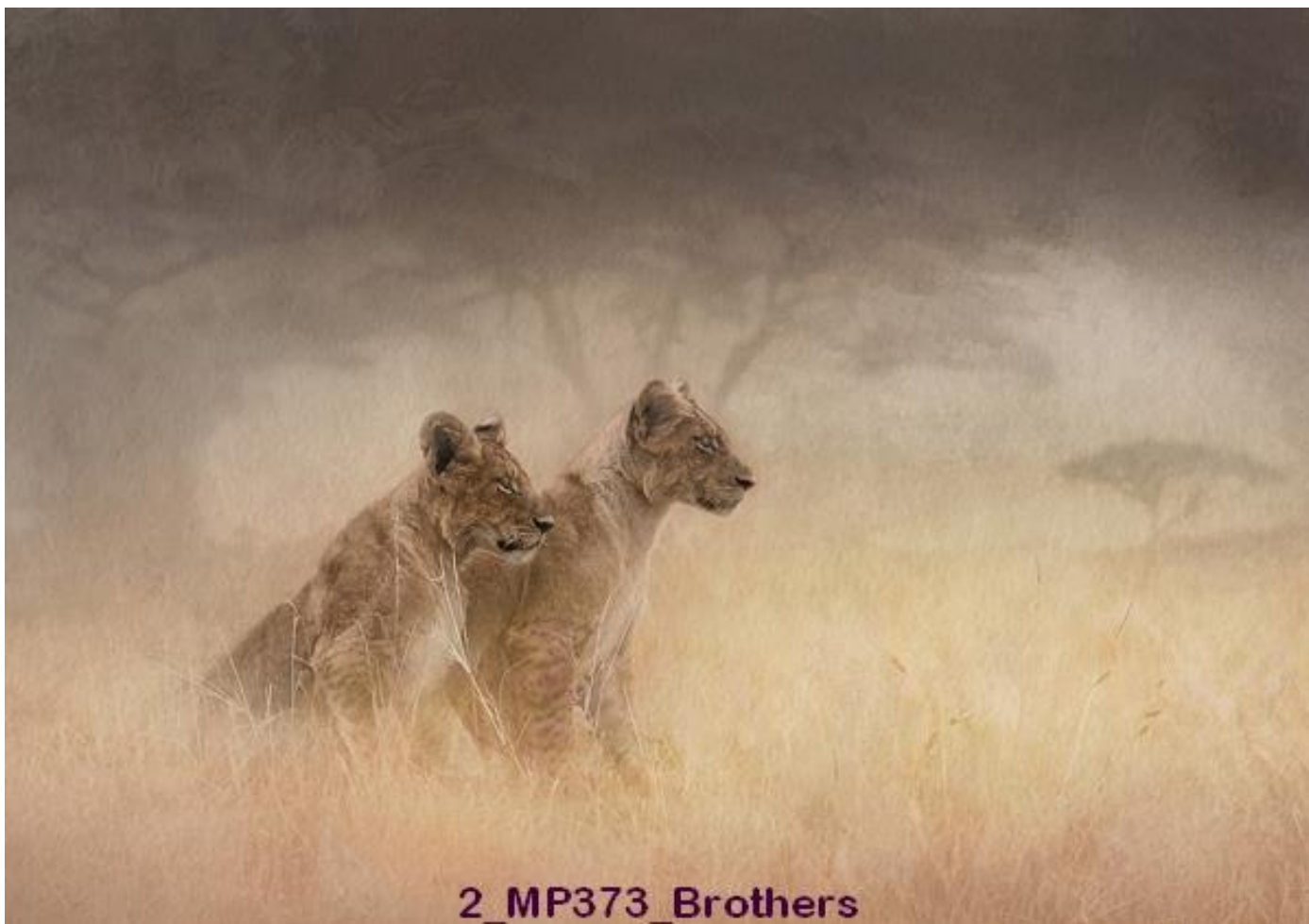
The biggest thank you has to go to my best buddy, [Kathy Aggiss](#).. I send Kathy nearly all of my images for critique, and she is the most honest person I know. She gave up her long weekend and came up to Scotland with me just to support me. She has always 100% been the best friend anyone could have.

I hope I haven't forgotten anyone!

When I gained my DPAGB in 2019, I never thought that I would ever attempt the MPAGB. My camera club (PICO) encouraged me to give it a try and I am so pleased that they did. It was a fun process, even though it is really tough to achieve. I would encourage everyone to attend the actual assessment day, because everyone was so supportive and I met many people I only knew via the various facebook pages.

After the last few days I need to go and have a lie down and let this all sink in!

Anyway, I know it's a long article, so here are my images which achieved the MPAGB standard. I'm not going to post the scores, not because I don't want anyone to know, but because this judging is a summation of Votes - Yes (4), No (2) or Very Near Miss (3), so it's not as helpful as some may think! *Tori*



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3\_MP373\_Leading The Herd



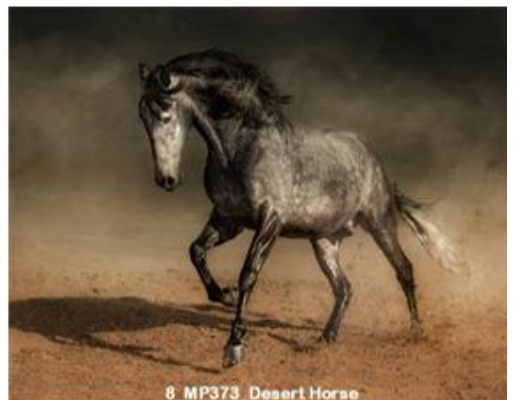
4\_MP373\_Flying Cockers



5\_MP373\_Wild European Black Bellied Hamster



7\_MP373\_Bonellis Eagle fends off Iberian Fox



8\_MP373\_Desert Horse



6\_MP373\_Kemi



12\_MP373\_The Barrel Racer





**9\_MP373\_Corner Pep Talk**



**10\_MP373\_Make The Rain Stop**





13\_MP373\_Borzoi Portrait



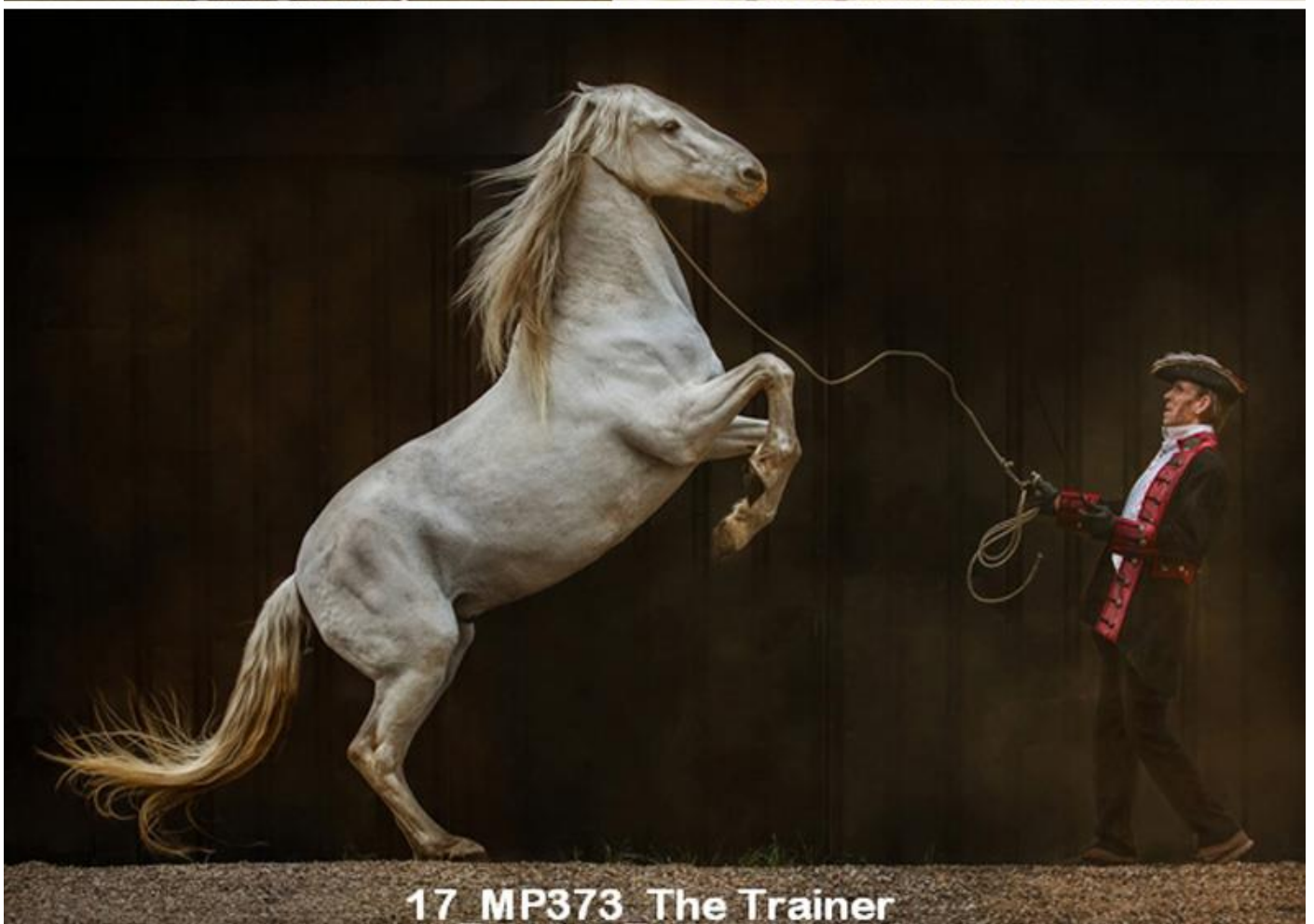
11\_MP373\_Hiding



14\_MP373\_Two For Joy



15\_MP373\_Wild Austrian Ziesel with Clover



17\_MP373\_The Trainer





**16\_MP373\_The Ugly Sisters**



**18\_MP373\_Wild Ground Squirrel with Dandelion**



**20\_MP373\_Red Colobus Monkey with Infant**



**19\_MP373\_Off On The Corner**



# Sandy Gilmour MPAGB

(MP374)

As an engineer involved in designing, marketing and selling industrial equipment and processes, I was required to produce site photographs for presentations and publications. The camera equipment was provided by the employer and the image taking was very much reliant on 'auto'.



As retirement loomed I wanted a hobby that would keep my mind active, provide technical interest and be stress free. In 2015 I applied to join Queen's Park Camera Club and after a year I was accepted. I quickly realised that stress would be involved if I wanted to learn the intricacies of photography! Fortunately the club convened several special interest groups and after a couple of years of attending the classes and watching social media videos I felt I was starting to get to grips with composition, perspective and exposure.

Between 2021 and 2023 I gained a Licentiate and Associateship from the Societies of Photographers, in 'International Nature and Wildlife'. Mentoring was frequent but remote, all panels requiring 20 digital images judged as an entire panel. This was useful for my ongoing development.

In 2021 I had prequalified in Scotland to attempt the CPAGB with Prints and was successful with a mixture of nature, landscape and street images. Buoyed by my success, in 2023 I attempted the Distinction award, again with the blend of genres used in my 'C'. I was again successful and the results were encouraging. (Two of the prints in my CPAGB entry were included in both my Distinction and Masters submissions).

There are many people who have freely given me their time and advice and I can't thank them enough. In terms of 'giving something back', I have been Vice President and President of my club. I am still a committee member and convene an instruction group which is rewarding and enjoyable.





2\_MP374\_Cormorant Wing Drying



1\_MP374\_Egret With Prey

From that point and after some encouragement I decided to print my own images. I believe that this was extremely beneficial to my photography as it gives me full control of the process.

**About the day.** Although I had attended numerous Scottish Photographic Federation (SPF) events over the years as our club digital exhibition secretary and was familiar with the salon judging format this was the first PAGB APM Adjudication I had attended in person. As it was in Scotland it was a no brainer and, as I was delivering my prints on the day, it took the pressure off somewhat. Notwithstanding, that pressure soon built,



especially as some of my early images were voted at lower levels. However, I was particularly pleased to have an image scored at the top level by all six judges, 'Stonechat with Juvenile' achieving the magic 30 points! My mental maths was put to the test and by the end of the judging I believed I had made the grade. A quick score summation confirmed my success and my delight.

**About the images.** My images were captured either from hides, holidays, boat trips, from the car or by walking in a local park. My most successful image, 'Mallard Duckling Chasing a Mayfly' was from the latter. Many of the images had been judged at club and national level so that knowledge, plus valuable advice from Advisory Days, helped me pick the final twenty. My macro images of flies and the 'Frosted Fungi' image had never been judged externally until the day. I have recently started using a hand held macro four thirds setup which is very light and much easier to position when shooting insects. Sandy







7 MP374 Three Into One



10 MP374 Common Robber Fly



11 MP374 Mycena



12 MP374 Herring Gull Gets In First



15 MP374 Goshawk on Pheasant



14 MP374 Egret with Dragonfly



13 MP374 Long Horned Beetles



18 MP374 Marsh Fly





16\_MP374\_Golden Eagle With Prey



17\_MP374\_Stonechat With Juvenile



19\_MP374\_Frosted Fungi



CLICK ON any image to view them all more comfortably on our website.



# Laurie Campbell MPAGB

(MP375)

Little did I know it back then, but joining Catchlight camera club, would turn out to be the start of what has become an incredible journey, for both me and my photography. With support and encouragement from many in the club, and the occasional push in the right direction, I found the much needed confidence to pursue my artistic & photographic aspirations.

A journey that has resulted in an MFA in Photography, an MFIAP, an FRPS, and finally an MPAGB: the highest level of distinction awarded by the PAGB. That journey has always been an exploration of who I am as a photographer, even though I still hesitate to call myself one! We all stand on the shoulders of giants, those whose work has inspired us, and I am forever grateful to those in Catchlight Camera Club, and in the wider photographic community, who have encouraged and inspired me.

**“Almost  
but not quite  
impossible”**



When I achieved my DPAGB in 2019 I was unable to attend the Adjudication, so when I applied for the MPAGB I was determined to be in Dunblane in April. I can honestly say it was THE best day. Meeting lots of wonderful folk and seeing lots of really inspiring work at all distinction levels made it extra special. And all within a really supportive atmosphere. Everyone wants you to succeed, including the PAGB organisers. Yes it is a real roller coaster of emotions, with lots of nail biting moments, but we were all swept along on the tide of support from the audience on the day. The thunderous applause when each person was successful was like being at a cup final and scoring the winning goal!

**“... swept along on the  
tide of support from the  
audience on the day”**

Why, some might ask, would you put yourself through all the endless hours shooting, editing and printing images. My answer is simple. If you want to improve your photography, then go for distinctions run by recognised bodies. Yes it requires a lot of effort, and attention to detail, to create images that meet their exacting standards. That in itself is part of the challenge, and at the MPAGB level nothing says challenge more than “not quite impossible”. I encourage everyone to give it a go!

*Laurie*





1 MP375 Pairing Off



2 MP375 Playing Dress Up



4 MP375 Like a Little Doll



**MPAGB**



3 MP375 The Useless Tour Guide





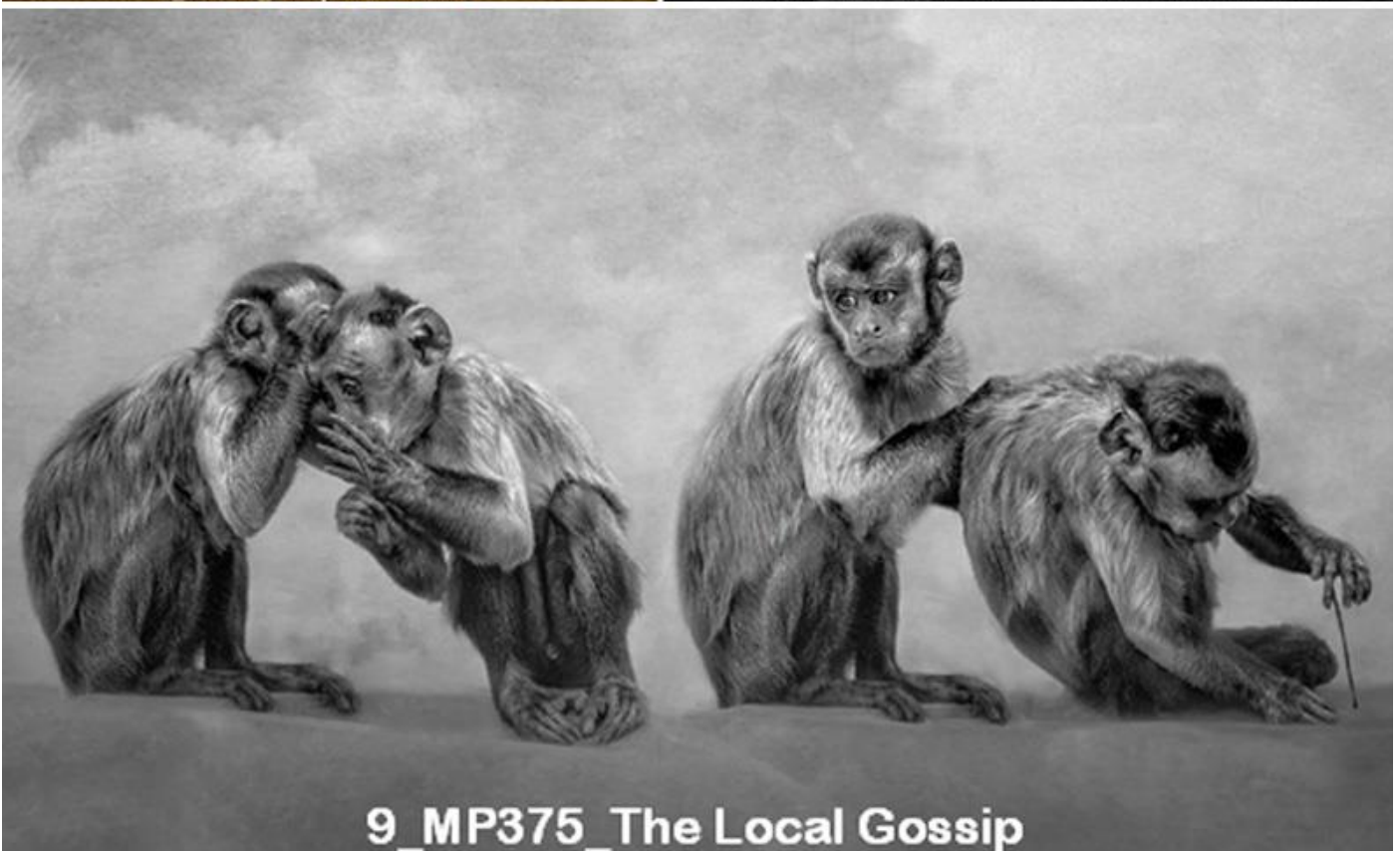
6\_MP375\_Blonde Gelding



8\_MP375\_Competitive Rivals



7\_MP375\_Mona Lisa with Vulture



9\_MP375\_The Local Gossip





10\_MP375\_Flamingo Stroll



12\_MP375\_On Guard Duty



11\_MP375\_The Rhythm of the Dance



15\_MP375\_The Waiting Game



13\_MP375\_Master of All He Surveys





14 MP375 The Bashfull Brother



16 MP375 Inspired by Vermeer



18 MP375 Les Demoiselles



19 MP375 Hold onto Your Horses



17 MP375 Girl with Piercing Eyes



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20\_MP375\_Seeing Eye to Eye

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"Kapow" by Maybeth Jamieson