

BSS PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION 2006

The 2006 BSS Photographic Competition was judged in the run up to the recent Cambridge Conference and the judges' decisions were announced there. This year attracted a record entry, at 31 it was some two more even than last year.

If anything it was generally agreed that the standard of the submitted entries was higher than ever and the judges certainly had a tough time in separating out the best from the rest.

The rules and the approach to marking were generally the same as last year with marks being awarded as follows:

Choice of Dial - 12 Points
Artistic Merit - 12 Points
Focus - 8 Points
Exposure - 8 Points
Illumination - 8 Points
Title - 8 Points
Print Quality - 12 Points
Presentation - 12 Points
Overall Impression - 20 Points

Inevitably some judges consistently mark higher than others but the variations were smaller than might perhaps be expected and, as a careful normalisation check showed, these variations in judging had no effect on the winning order. Again and as permitted last year, judges were allowed to submit images of their own but of course they were not allowed to mark them. Instead they were awarded an average of the other judges' marks for their entry. The normalisation check also confirmed that there had been no bias from this approach.

It was reassuring that yet again this year, there was a clear winner with five out of six judges placing Paul Shaw's *The Answer is Blowing in the Wind* in top or near top place. His imaginative picture combined good balance, interest, sharp focus, an exceptional balance of shades of green and an enigmatic human smile. A well deserved winner. The judges are not required to make short comments but those made in respect of this image were entirely consistent:

- A fine sundial enhanced by the inclusion of the boy with the pipe; well thought out and well presented.
- Well thought out picture and an interesting presentation.
- Well presented.
- Very pleasing cheeky photograph.
- Good presentation and layout.

Congratulations to Paul who receives the winner's trophy, this year one of Green Witch's replica polyhedral dials together with his certificate from our Chairman, Chris Daniel.

Second prize this year, though only by a very short head, went to last year's winner, Ian Butson for his

Shadow from Sunlight. A quite outstanding shot of SRN 5993 a dial by Geo Adams. It too was highly praised.

- Love the Detail!
- Good composition; engraving clear and crisp; a splendid picture of a dial showing how it works started.
- Impressive picture

Hard on Ian Butson's heels came David Hawker in third place with *Fourth Cherub*. A lovely shot of the currently unrecorded, replacement dial at Polesden Lacey.

Here the judges said:

- Good choice.
- Oval cropping makes the picture by concentrating attention on the elegant gnomon which directs eyes to the child.
- A delightful picture.
- Happy photo and title.
- Shame about the person in the background.

As a result of the very high standard this year it was decided also to *Commend* the next seven photographs that, together with the winners, made up the top ten. In order these were selected by the judges as::

The Shadow of St James – Sir George White
Evening Shadows in a Clwyd Churchyard – Dr M Brightmer
The Time of my Life – Mr R Sylvester
The Tendrils of Time – Mr C Davis
Phew! What a job in the Midday Sun! – Mr M Cowham
Time and tide wait for no man – Mr I Butson
Blue Slate – Mr A Wood

I would like to thank all the judges who served this year and who all managed to review the entries both in considerable detail and within a necessarily short period of time

The Competition will run again in 2007 and entry forms will be issued with the September Bulletin. A review of the process this year will be held with the judges and that may result in some small changes to the rules and marking processes for next year. Any necessary changes will be mentioned on the entry form at that time.

So, if after reading this and looking at some of the winning entries you feel you could do as well or better, then please have your camera with you when out and about this summer. We look forward to receiving your entry.

Patrick Powers