

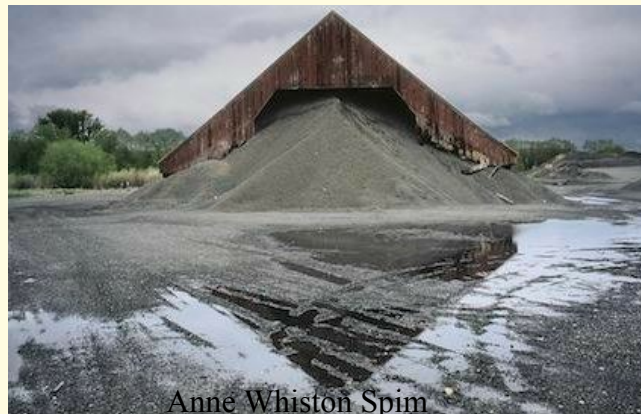


## From the President

Dear Focused Photographers,

While traveling in New England last summer, we stopped to see a photographic exhibition at the Smith College Museum of Art. The featured artist, Anne Whiston Spirn, is a world-renowned writer, scholar, landscape architect, and a professor at MIT. Her books have altered the way people think about city and nature, landscape and language, urban design and planning.

Spirn's exhibition, "The Eye is a Door" opens with the question, why a door and not a window? The photographer's philosophy is that a window is something to look through, but a doorway is to pass through; cross-



Anne Whiston Spirn

ing a threshold, one enters a new place. To see, to really see, is to open a door. To pass through that door is to arrive at a new understanding. Spirn says that "Photography is to seeing what poetry is to writing: a concentrated way of thinking, a condensed telling, a disciplined practice that may produce insight."

## The FGCC Officers and Staff

<b>Cindy Krumbain</b>	<b>President</b>
<b>Bev Nelson</b>	<b>VP and Programs</b>
<b>Stephen Retherford</b>	<b>Secretary</b>
<b>Sid Koerin,</b>	<b>Treasurer</b>
<b>Bob Coles</b>	<b>Chief Editor</b>
<b>Frank Feigert</b>	<b>Copy Editor</b>
<b>Ron Ratcliffe</b>	<b>Publishing</b>

## Committees and Chairs:

<b>Frank Feigert</b>	<b>Membership</b>
<b>Debbie Roberts</b>	<b>Field Trips</b>
<b>Bill Billings</b>	<b>Website Coordinator</b>
<b>Al Warfield</b>	<b>Roundtable Org. Hal</b>
<b>Tyler</b>	<b>Exhibits</b>
<b>Cyane Lowden</b>	<b>Past President</b>

## Meetings

**Club meetings are held second Tuesday at 7:30 pm**

**River Road Presbyterian Church**

**8960 River Road**

**Richmond VA**

**<http://www.focusgroupcc.com>**

## James Center Exhibit

Come one, come all to the FGCC member exhibit at the James Center! Twenty-five members will be exhibiting their latest images beginning the morning of October 5th. While the exhibit officially ends on Friday, October 25, be aware that exhibitors may begin to retrieve their images at 2:00 pm that day!

Our reception will be held Tuesday, Oct. 14, so invite your family and friends to attend. The time is still to be determined, but generally it is held from 6:00--7:30 pm. We won't have a "formal" FGCC evite, but if you are participating, feel free to use one of your images as a preview of the work that will be on display. If you aren't participating, Vicky Eicher can lend you one of hers. Just let her know.

For participants, remember the following deadlines:

Oct. 4: Deliver your images to the James Center between 9:00 and 10:00 am. For this exhibit, each image needs to have hanging wire on the back, and a Post It note with the title information on the front.

Oct. 24: You can retrieve your images beginning at 2:00 pm.

## On the Cover:

Fall and the harvest starts. Here we have a soy bean field with the leaves sprayed with defoliant. This was taken about 48 hours after the crop duster left. The leaves will all fall in the next week and the beans will be exposed to dry out for the harvester.



A picture is not always what one thinks it is.

See page 4 for the rest of the story.

*Con't from page 1*

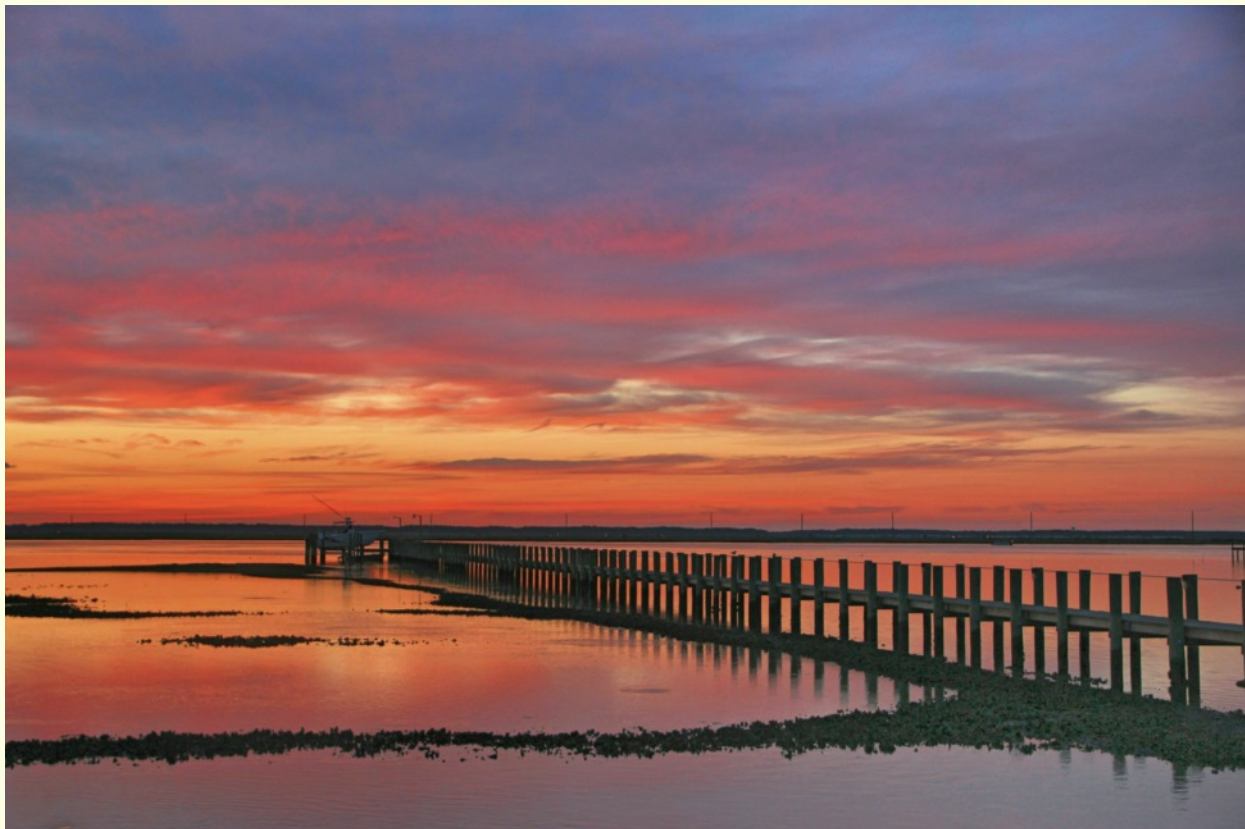
In her show, the photographer's message continually challenged us to 1) **Observation:** What do you see? Take a visual inventory and make note of details that stand out to you. 2) **Interpretation:** What is going on in the image? How do the details you noticed connect to create a larger whole? What patterns or anomalies can you discover? and 3) **Building a Narrative:** What story does the image tell? What can the connections and patterns you discovered tell you about the history and life of this place? What parts of the story do you still wonder about?

While we may not always have time before clicking the shutter to consider each of these questions, perhaps these are essential points to consider when we critically examine our own images after a shoot.

The Smith College Museum has a beautifully designed space for large exhibitions. For this show they hung 46 large color images, in sets of two, from different parts of the world yet related by color, composition, and/or form. While few of us mount such an extensive exhibition, we can consider the three questions even when we hang only a few images, in a show or at home.

When is a door not a door? When it's ajar, leading us to see the world in a concentrated and insightful new way!

**Cindy**



Pam and I were at Chincoteague this past July and I went to the bay side (looking west) hoping to get a sunset shot. Wow, was it a pretty sight and I captured almost what my eyes saw in this HDR image. I submitted it to the Scenic Virginia photo contest and was fortunate enough to receive an honorable mention in one of their categories. As many of you know, the Richmond Times Dispatch publishes an image from the Scenic Virginia archives each Saturday on the editorial page. I am told that they draw one 'at random' from the Scenic Virginia files. In September, the 'at random' one was this one - I am thankful!

Gilpin



Here we have a rare and beautiful  
*Callosamia angulifera*, Tulip-tree silk moth

*photo by J.A. Ratcliffe, Wake County, NC*



*Frank Feigert*

## ***Dropbox offers 1TB Pro plan for \$9.99***

The new Dropbox for Business plan does away with previous options maxing out at 500GB

By Zach Miners | IDG News Service

Dropbox is consolidating its three Pro account options into a single plan that's priced at \$9.99 per month and includes 1TB of storage and added controls for document sharing and security.

The Pro plan is aimed at freelancers, contractors and other workers who want more storage and tools than come with the free Basic plan, which starts at 2GB, but for whom a Business account might be overkill. Previously, Dropbox had three different Pro plans with 100GB, 200GB and 500GB of storage, priced at \$9.99, \$19.99, and \$49.99 per month, respectively.

In addition to a terabyte of storage, the new plan includes several features for collaborating with clients. There's "view-only" permissions, which an interior designer could use to let a client see a mockup of a design but not make changes to it, for instance.

Users can also password-protect links to documents and folders, and apply expiration dates to links, so a wedding photographer could provide access to a group of photos for a limited amount of time. Finally, there's remote wipe feature. If a user loses their mobile device, they can log on from another computer and have Dropbox stop syncing to that device and delete the files on it the next time it comes online.

The new Pro plan aims to provide a more compelling option for those willing to pay for online storage, but Dropbox is competing with larger competitors like Google and Amazon who continue to slash prices and increase the storage they offer.



© Robert Coles 2014

*Art Lovers*



*Sunsations in the Rain*

*Frank Feigert*

## People Taking Photographs



At local school function during the program, a mother gave a child a camera to occupy him by scrolling thru the pictures. He immediately jumped up and went to the front and started taking pictures.



© Robert Coles 2014

*Ron Ratcliffe*



© Robert Coles 2014



*Jimmy Roberts trying to catch the grandson.*

**More people taking photos**



*Will the wide angle make me look fat?*



*Photographing mountain avens in Wood Fjord1, Svalbard Norway Vicky Eicher*

## ***"Faces from the Field Day of the Past"***

It's always a pleasure attending this annual occurrence and although many of the events, exhibits and displays are generally unchanged, the ever changing faces make for interesting subject matter. In the spirit of bygone days, I processed the images using a faded, antique matte look. Hope you enjoy

*by John Garofalo*







## Improve your Riverside Landscapes by Softening the Water

by Durwood Felton

Many of us enjoy making landscape images along Virginia's rivers and waterways. For me, photographing nature's beauty is a pleasure, and these images are an interest that I've pursued often in recent years. Normally, I look for appropriate light and time of day, use a tripod religiously, employ focus stacking to optimize sharpness throughout the images, and combine multiple images, where appropriate, to create panoramas in Photo-Shop. However, after taking many photographs along the rivers flowing from the Blue Ridge, and around the shores of the Chesapeake Bay, I've begun to seek out ways to further differentiate my work from the usual ways these images appear.

One of the procedures that I've employed recently is to soften the appearance of flowing water by extending exposures beyond the time that's actually necessary to make properly exposed images. The effect of these longer exposure times is that moving water develops a smoothness, or softness, that's quite appealing.

How to do this? It's obvious that, during daylight hours, it can be impossible to make a *properly exposed* 10, 5 or 1 second exposure, even with the lens fully stopped down, and with an ISO setting of 100. Rather than waiting for actual darkness, we need a means of further darkening the *image itself*, so that it's properly exposed at the longer exposure time necessary to produce a softening of moving water. Enter the circular neutral density filter. As you probably know, neutral density filters darken an image, without coloring or otherwise affecting it. They come in individual degrees of darkness, measured in stops, and they attach to the front of the lens. Variable neutral density filters are also available, and they're adjustable for the needed number of stops, up to 9 or 10. Graduated neutral density filters are not used in this process.

After doing some checking on the qualities of various types brands, and degrees of neutral density filters, I decided on two separate, individual filters that were thin enough to be stacked as necessary, without vignetting, when used with my normal landscape lens, a 24-70mm f/2.8 L. I settled on one 3-stop and one 6-stop B+W ND filter, which could be combined to give 9 stops, if necessary. I've had good luck with other B+W filters, including circular polarizers and UV filters, and so far, their ND filters don't disappoint.

Deciding on the amount, in stops, of neutral density filtration for a particular image is a trial and error process, but it becomes intuitive pretty quickly. Normally, I shoot in manual mode, from a tripod, metering *through* the neutral density filter(s) once installed on the lens, and adjust the exposure time (generally in a range of about 5 - 15 seconds for slow moving water) to obtain a pleasing exposure. I've heard that some cameras won't meter correctly with an ND filter installed (too dark), but haven't experienced this personally. Some times, it gets pretty dark in the viewfinder, and you may need to compose your image before installing the filter on the lens. After a test shot or two, you can further adjust the exposure to fine-tune the brightness, and softness, you want to have in the final image.

Attached is a recent image I made of the James River, at Pony Pasture, using the process described in this article. This photograph was made at dusk, using a 15 second exposure at f/16, and ISO 100. It's focus stacked, and I used a single 6-stop ND filter for this shot.

# What is a Tilt-Shift lens, and What Can you Do With It?

By Al Warfield

You may have heard talk about tilt-shift lenses, and you probably wondered why someone would want one. Well, tilt-shift lenses are really worth looking into because you can do stuff with them that you can do with no other lens.

Figure 1 is an example of a tilt-shift lens shown in the centered positions. The tilt and shift mechanisms are separate and can be rotated in several different directions. The knobs control the amount of tilt (T) or shift (S), and there are tabs that allow the mechanisms to be locked or rotated to different positions. On the back side there are smaller knobs that allow the amount of tilt or shift to be locked at a specific position. It is possible to have both tilt and shift activated at the same time. The manual focus ring is below the red line.



Tilt-shift lenses have two very different capabilities: 1) the ability to tilt part of the lens up or down to change the angle of view, and 2) the ability to shift part of the lens to one side, center, and the opposite side to create adjacent views **without rotating the camera on the tripod**. The images can be stitched together to create panoramas.



In Figure 2 the shift mechanism is centered, and the tilt mechanism is tilted all the way to the right. In Figure 3 the shift mechanism is shifted all the way to the left and the tilt mechanism is centered. The shift feature can also be used to eliminate parallax distortion.

Basically these lenses can accomplish what view cameras were designed to do. However, they do take a lot of getting used to. One

feature that a lot of previous view-camera photographers use TS lenses for is creating images with a normal aspect ratio but very high pixel count by mounting the camera vertically and taking three shots by shifting to left, center, and right. These are then stitched, resulting in images that compare with those taken with a 4x5 camera with swings and tilts. They can be used to make huge prints.

Tilt-shift lenses do not have autofocus built into them. It is important to have a way of viewing the image magnified to achieve accurate focus. I have found that loupes like the Hoodman are very useful for this. I have used my 90 mm tilt-shift lens for handheld macro shots very successfully. The reason to have a range of tilt-shift lenses is the same as the reason to own several overlapping zoom lenses. You need several different focal lengths, and they don't come in a zoom version. If you do a lot of wide-angle shots you should start there. If you want to do macro shots or vertical panoramas of cliff faces, start with a longer focal length. Then build your arsenal later.

Being a Canon man, I have started acquiring Canon tilt-shift lenses to see if I can master them, because I like a challenge. I don't know much about the Nikon lenses, but if you are a Nikon person, go with Nikon, and vice versa. Canon makes 4 tilt-shift lenses - 17, 24, 45, and 90 mm. Nikon makes 24, 28, 35, 45, and 85 mm versions of their PC-Nikkor lens.

Some examples of images made with tilt-shift lenses are shown here:



Figure 4. A lighthouse on Chambers Island, Wisconsin, that was at the top of a hill, and taking a picture with a normal lens would have resulted in extreme parallax distortion due to the camera position being below the center of the building. With a tilt-shift lens, the camera is placed so that the sensor is parallel with the building, and the lens is shifted up so that the building comes into view as shown. The lines are perpendicular.

Figure 5. Photo of a lily taken with a Canon 90mm TS lens, selectively focused to allow the back portion of the flower to be in focus as well as the front portion, while the background is out of focus. In this case a 6 degree downward tilt was required. It gave a 3D look to the photograph.



Figures 6, 7, and 8. These were 3 landscape images of Sunrise Mountain near Hoover Dam, taken with the 90 mm TS lens shifted into the left, center, and right positions. The result was Figure 9 (*Sunrise Mt Pano 2*).

When the camera is in the same position for three successive shots while shifting the lens back and forth, no geometric distortion occurs. The Photoshop "Photomerge" software has an easy time aligning and merging the images into a panorama. The "auto" radio button is used. There is only a slight loss of image area at the top and bottom of the resulting panorama, which can usually be corrected using Content-aware fill or the clone tool.

is



9

What if you want to create a wider panorama than this? There is no information out there telling one how to do that. I have tried several different ways. Here is one that worked.



10



11



12

Figures 10, 11, and 12 were 3 landscape format shots of Red Canyon near Las Vegas, shifted left, center, then right, from one camera position, using a Canon 5D Mark III and Canon 90 mm TS lens. Then the camera was rotated to the right a few degrees, and Figures 13, 14, and 15 were taken similarly, overlapping with the first set. Figures 10, 11 and 12 were processed into a panorama, and then the other three images (Figures 13, 14, and 15)



added one at a time to create Figure 16 (*Red Canyon Pano 4*). This image at full size was 13788 x 4596 pixels.

When a normal lens is used to create a panorama, there is considerable geometric distortion because of the varying camera angles for each shot. But the software is capable of correcting for that to some extent.

A good example of a panorama taken with a normal lens is Figure 17 (*Desert Pano*) by Linda, which is the same scene as used for

was considerably greater than in Figure 16. This is mainly due to the fact that the 3 shots with the TS lens are more overlapped than 1/3, resulting in less width of the scene being captured per shot. The quality of the final product is greater for Figure 16, but there were other factors that caused that. The images were taken from different positions, and at a different distance from the structure. The main lesson was the greater width with fewer shots using the normal method. More rotations of the camera using the TS lens would be required to equal the width of the image obtained using the normal lens. It will take a few more attempts to really determine how to get the most out of tilt-shift lenses in these situations.



Figure 16. This one was taken with a Canon 5D Mark II with Canon 28-135mm lens at 56mm, using 4 consecutive shots overlapping about 1/3rd, but the images covered a wider total area than those used for Figure 16. Basic adjustments to the images were made in Camera Raw, and the files opened in Photoshop CS6. Photomerge was used to create the panorama, but it was necessary to check the "reposition" radio button instead of "auto" as done for the images made using the TS 90. (*If the "auto" option was chosen it resulted in misalignment of the 4 sections and loss of some of the sky*). The panorama that resulted was 12952 x 2604 pixels, although the width of the scene captured

TS lenses are definitely worth considering if you are into landscape or architectural photography. While not inexpensive, they are the only way that a DSLR can be used to create very high resolution images that can be made into extremely large prints. They are not exactly the most popular lenses that photographers buy, but to me, that's a reason to explore them, especially when I find out that several photographers I admire use them all the time for landscapes.

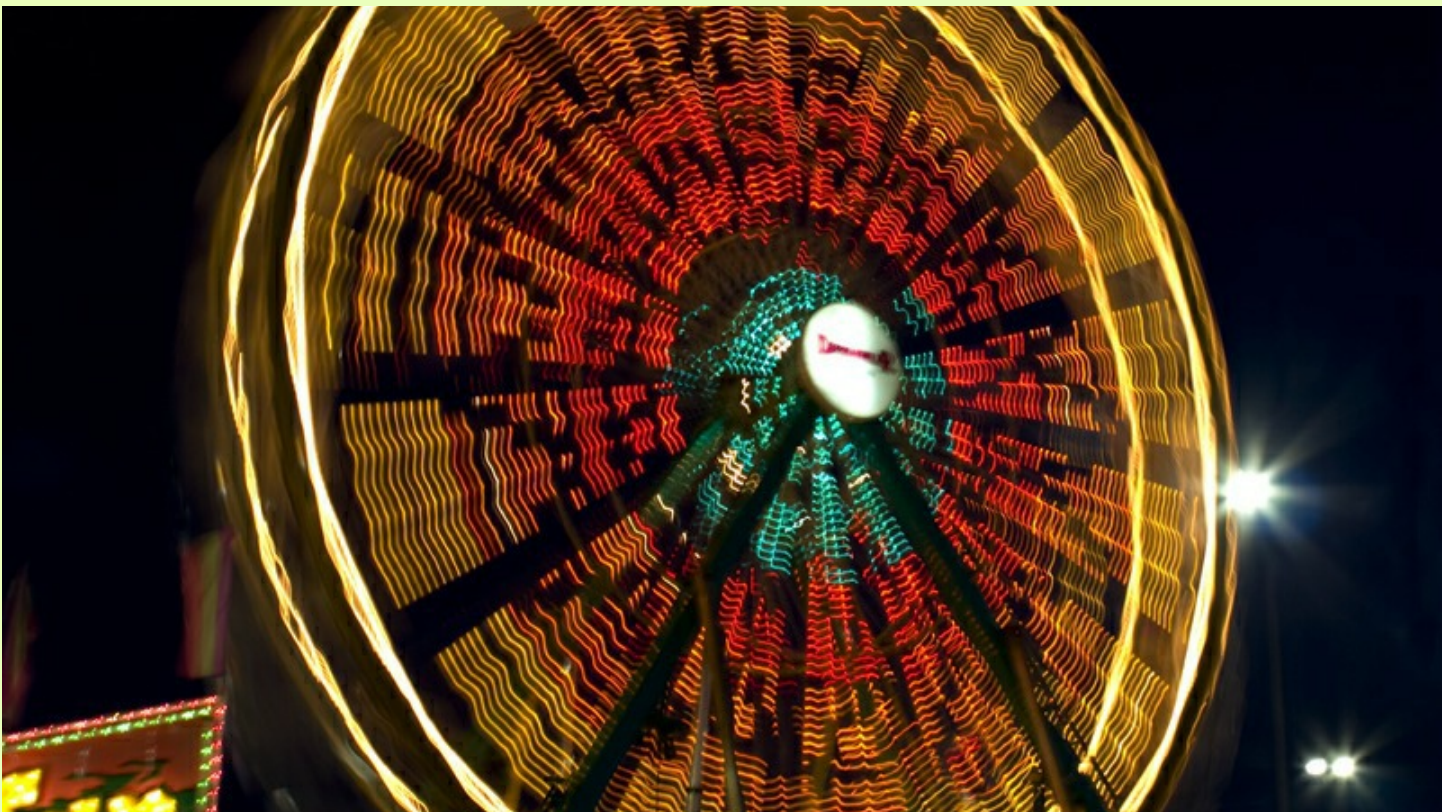
Some other experiments with tilt-shift lenses will be described in a future article.

# Virginia State Fair

*By Durwood Felton*



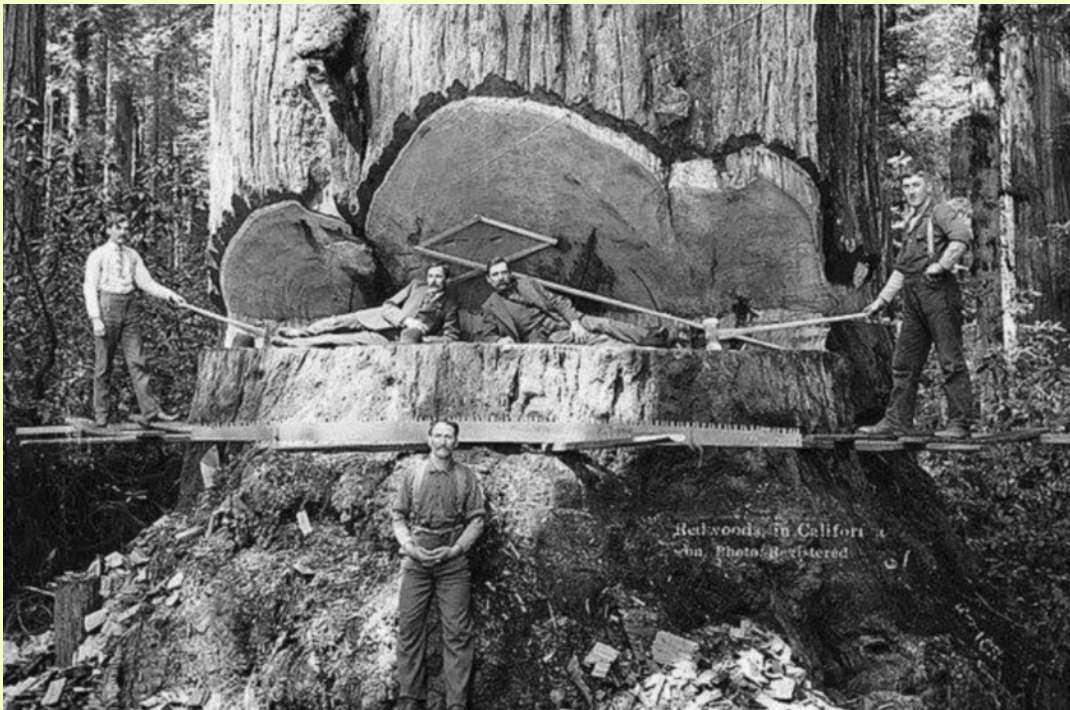
Con't page 14



***Some old pictures of historical significance.***



Grand Central Station before adjacent buildings blocked the light.



A group of lumberjacks cutting down a giant California redwood tree, about 1900.



Transporting a Rolls Royce in Nepal, 1950

## Focus Camera Club Calendar

<b>October</b>	4	Show	Deliver to James Center 9am	Vicky
	5	Show starts	James Center 10/5 - 10/26	Vicky/Peggy
	9	Board meeting	All are welcome	Cindy
	14	Meeting/Reception	James Center 6 PM to 7:30 PM	Vicky/Peggy
	24	James Center	Pick up work after 2 PM or on 25 <sup>th</sup> before 10 AM	Members
	27	Deadline	November Newsletter	Ron
<b>November</b>	6	Board meeting Club meeting	All are welcome Taylor Roberts - Examples of his portfolio	Cindy 11

