

# Focus

## The Photographic Guild of Nova Scotia

This month the *Journal's* occasional article entitled *Focus*, which features a member or member-club, turns to **The Photographic Guild of Nova Scotia**, which is the largest club in Atlantic Canada.

### History

The Photographic Guild of Nova Scotia (PGNS) is the largest photographic club in Atlantic Canada with over 140 members. The club was founded in 1947 to help foster and encourage the art and science of photography among members and the public. Its founders agreed to call the organization, *The Color Photographic Guild of the Maritimes*. Early members were quite active in the Guild and field trips were held throughout the province. That first fall, the Guild ambitiously decided to “go international” and the first *Halifax International Salon* was planned for the following spring, which ultimately included 988 monochrome prints and 996 color slides. Fourteen Guild members received acceptances with several earning honorable mentions. In the early 1970's, the club's name was changed to reflect interests in both color and black and white photography by dropping the word “color” from the name and it became “The Photographic Guild of Nova Scotia.”

Hazel Meredith

Photos © Elio Dolente

Court Milley



As time progressed, the Guild grew and prospered. It remained very active in area events and produced award-winning shows of member works. One of the most notable was the show produced from Tall Ships 2000, a visit by most of the worlds remaining tall ships. A large number of Guild members seized the opportunity to record the event on film. A major audio-visual show was planned and under the guidance of **Fred Greene, FPSA, EPSA** (Executive Producer) and **Pat Wall** (Producer), an impressive show was produced. “Sails in the Wind,” a 38-minute, seven-projector, three-screen A/V production utilizing 475 slides from 38 Guild photographers, received a standing ovation and rave reviews. It was shown three times as the headliner event for the 2001 *New England Camera Club Council Conference*, as well as being a key event at the 2001 *Photographic Society of America Annual Conference* in San Diego, CA.

If that venture weren't ambitious enough, in 2001 the Guild also undertook another huge project. It would have been the year for the Guild to host the *Bi-Annual Halifax International Exhibition of Photography*. However, with the support of two other local clubs the *Great Eastern Canadian International Exhibition Circuit of Photography* (GEC), one of the largest photographic exhibitions in North America, was born. The GEC was a special kind of International Exhibition called a *Simultaneous Exhibition Circuit* and consisted of three concurrent International Exhibitions – the 1<sup>st</sup> Bridgewater, the 13<sup>th</sup> Halifax, and the 1<sup>st</sup> Moncton. The event required twelve judging panels, offered 120 medal awards and up to a possible 48 acceptances for an individual entering all four sections! Although many recent International Exhibitions had seen declining

entries, the GEC Exhibition Committee was delighted at both the size and quality of the participants. GEC received a total of 4073 images from 45 countries, consisting of 1811 Color Slides, 664 Color Prints, 982 Nature Slides and 616 Photojournalism Slides. It took a group of 28 judges with international and national reputations to judge the competitions. The winning images were shown at the Maritime Fall Fair with as many as 150 visitors in the gallery at one time and up to 2500 visitors per day!

### Current Activities

Club members compete with images within the club, locally, nationally and internationally. PGNS is affiliated with the Canadian Association for Photographic Art (CAPA), as well as the Photographic Society of America (PSA). The guild is well represented in many PSA Division Competitions for Camera Clubs.

Guild programs consist of seminars, evaluations, instructional seminars, workshops, shows, field trips and presentations by outstanding professional and advanced amateur photographers. Programs are designed to inspire and motivate members and guests with a varied range for everyone from amateur through professional photographers. PGNS also holds competitions throughout the year in slide, digital and prints, which include a variety of topics such as pictorial; nature; photojournalism; photo travel; creative; portrait; humor and various themes. Each year the club also presents a Fall and Spring Show to provide an opportunity to present member's work to the public.

The Guild has an arrangement with the Shubenacadie Wildlife Park where they are allowed to photograph wild animals inside cages with park supervision. In return, they maintain an Exhibition for the Park where the public and school children can see excellent images of many kinds of animal species. A yearly competition is held to choose the best images for the Gallery.

There are three other annual competitions that the club participates in. The first is held at the Guild sponsored by the Atlantic Geological Society (AGS), where they award a trophy for the best geological image either in Nova Scotia or worldwide. The AGS arranges field trips open to the Guild providing both photographic opportunities and geological knowledge. The Nova Scotia Bird Society sponsors another, where the winner is awarded a trophy for the best image of a Nova Scotian bird taken in the wild—no cages or restraints allowed. Thirdly, the mayor of the city gives the *Mayor of Halifax Trophy* award to the photographer who has the



*Geological field trip*

best image on an annually selected theme, in order to promote knowledge of the city.

PGNS produces its award-winning newsletter, the *Bluenose Focus*, three times per year. It has won four prizes including two first place awards from the *PSA Newsletter Contest*, with editor **Elio Dolente**.

The Guild membership claims many well-known individual PSA members: PSA President **Fred Greene, FPSA, EPSA**, and Exhibitions Services Vice President **Terry Carroll**, are members of PGNS.

To learn more about the Guild, visit their website at [www.photoguild.ns.ca](http://www.photoguild.ns.ca). ■

**David Dobson**  
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for Photographic Guild  
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*Nancy and Hubert at the wildflower field trip at Cape Split*