

APCS



NEWS

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President's Column

The year 2015 is coming to a close. It is not the end of a financial year so this is not a presidential annual report, but rather a status commentary on where we are headed. After the 40 years that the APCS had been with us it is time revitalise, to respond to the significant changes in photographic equipment collecting and to provide the next generation of APCS members with the support and experience expected of a society that brings those collectors together.

We launched a "renewal program" a couple of months ago with letters going to all those who had been members back to 2012, updating personal details and requesting membership renewals from those who had lapsed. The process was successful and we have new subscriptions from about 40 former members. We also have a dozen new eMembers who we hope will become full members in due course. However good that appears, it is not a long term solution to a continuing drop in membership. We need new members that will be the vibrant society of the future.

The nature of photographic collecting has changed and will continue to change as eBay and similar on-line resources replace the second hand shelves in the camera shops of yesteryear, and the perceived monetary value dominates over technical attraction or history in the eyes of investing collectors. Just how the APCS implements a strategic approach to this change is not yet fully evident, and the committee is working to discover which will be the way forward for this society. We note that the APCS is not the only incorporated association based on a hobby that has to respond to such a major change in focus, and maybe we can learn from the experience of others.

But we have to start somewhere – check out the program for 2016 and you will find new meeting items, and you can expect to see changes in the traditional meetings and events. We are not talking about dramatic change in 2016 but we will have to become more proactive to attract the next generation. A couple of the events should be attractive to all. We believe that the members-only market-day in May will be a hit, and the presentations in February and

October are being planned to approach camera collecting from angles that are very different from traditions. Expect to see attractive publicity on-line and fliers aimed at the new collectors. You can help by putting fliers where prospective members might see them, and by forwarding on-line material through your own social media outlets.

For the latest on the activities of the APCS, watch for the monthly newsletters, announcements on Facebook (simply search on "APCS" from your own Facebook page) and keep an eye on the APCS webpage – www.apcsociety.com.au

Rod Reynolds
President

2016 Calendar

21 February: Meeting - Trends in photographic collecting
13 March: Public Market - Box Hill Town Hall
16 April: Members only auction
15 May: *NEW* Members & eMembers Mini-Market
19 June: AGM - Photographic competition
17 July: Members only auction

21 August: Meeting - Collecting digital cameras & technology
18 September: Public Market - Box Hill Town Hall
16 October: Members only auction
20 November: Social meeting for members and friends AMRA

November Social Meeting

I was unable to attend the November social meeting due to work commitments, and would like to thank Margaret Mason who was kind enough to send me the following report:

November 15 was the final meeting and our Social Meeting. Numbers were disappointingly low but it turned out to be a very good meeting.

As a treat we had a mystery auction; cameras were sealed in boxes with the contents described as ranging from gold Leicas to Hanimexes with hives. No Leicas but the first bidder walked off with a Voigtlander Vitessa for \$10 and after that the bidding really picked up. Everyone was happy and one member actually did a deal. A request has been made for a repeat.

It is under consideration.

I'd like to thank both Ian Carron and Ken Anderson who took photos on the day – these will be uploaded to the club's Facebook page shortly.

Bringing back memories



In the last newsletter we reported on the closure of iconic Brisbane camera store Photo Continental.

The news brought back memories for club member Bruce Thomas, who shares the following memories with us:

Dear Andrew,

Thank you for including the note on the closure of Photo Continental in the latest newsletter. I would not otherwise have known since I now live in Perth.

Although the company is known as a major photographic retailer that pioneered mail order sales in Australia, its origins were in school and wedding photography. Photo Continental was founded by a post-war Polish immigrant, Witold Tadrowski, who ran a wedding photography business called Rembrandt Studio which was located in an arcade in Adelaide Street, Brisbane. In 1961, I noticed an advertisement in his window seeking part time photographers for wedding work. I was just 17 years old and in school uniform, but I went into the shop anyhow and offered my services. Surprisingly, he agreed to give me a try. I had recently acquired a driver's licence and could borrow my mother's Morris Minor, so I started covering weekend weddings, initially on 'spec'.

In those days one or more photographers would turn up at weddings uninvited, even though there was an 'official' photographer engaged by the couple. We 'spec' shooters would concentrate on photographing the guests, handing out our cards, but would also take a few formal group shots as well. The studio would give us film and a modest petrol allowance, and we would be paid on commission for any resulting sales. We would have to supply our own camera equipment, typically a Rollei or Yashica TLR and electronic flash. When I had shown I was a competent photographer, I was also given weddings where I was the official photographer for Rembrandt Studio.

Mr Tadrowski had a couple of other small outlets in Brisbane at the time, Rubens Photographers and Canberra Photographers, but they

all led into the same darkroom facilities in the Tadrowski family home in Kangaroo Point. Mr Tadrowski had also worked as a school photographer when he first came to Australia. For this work he used the name Photo Continental and he had an old pre-war Leica camera which he had apparently used in Europe when he made a living there in candid 'street photography', which was quite common at that time. I discovered many years later that my class photograph for 1951 at the Camp Hill State School is stamped on the back 'W. Tadrowski, Photographer' and in 1952 'Photo Continental', I think – it is very faint!

In the mid-1960s, Mr Tadrowski decided to try selling photographic equipment from his Rembrandt Studio store, initially in a small way. He also began to curtail 'spec' shooting of weddings, concentrating on only commissioned work. Eventually he decided there was more money in photographic retailing than wedding photography and moved entirely into the former, for which he decided to use his original business name, Photo Continental. He opened a store in Queen Street, Brisbane, opposite the old Customs House, but later moved out of the city to larger premises at several locations in the suburbs, most recently Mt Gravatt.

I have been speaking of Mr Tadrowski, the elder, of course, as his son Vit later ran the business for many years. I worked for Rembrandt Studio for over three years. It provided me with a welcome income while I studied geology at the University of Queensland and also financed my personal photography. I still have a Nikon F I bought second hand in 1963 – it is a very early one from 1959, no doubt one of the first to come to Australia.

*Best regards
Bruce Thomas
Member 178*

