

Ross Masonic Club



Supporting Local Freemasons

The Craftsmen

Week Commencing 27th July 2020

Issue Number Seventeen

Welcome to the seventeenth edition of the Ross Masonic Club Weekly Round-Up.

Welcome to the seventeenth edition of ***The Craftsmen***.

We have articles on the Isle of Man remembered by John Thornton, Patrick Eyre recounts his early career and the influence of his father and Glyn Edmunds shares the view from his garden. We also have a few brief sound bytes and I take you through the use of the 'liberal arts and sciences' in taking this cover photograph.

A special thank you to all those that contributed.

Keep safe Brethren and keep in contact.



Keeping in Contact and Staying Sharp

Facebook



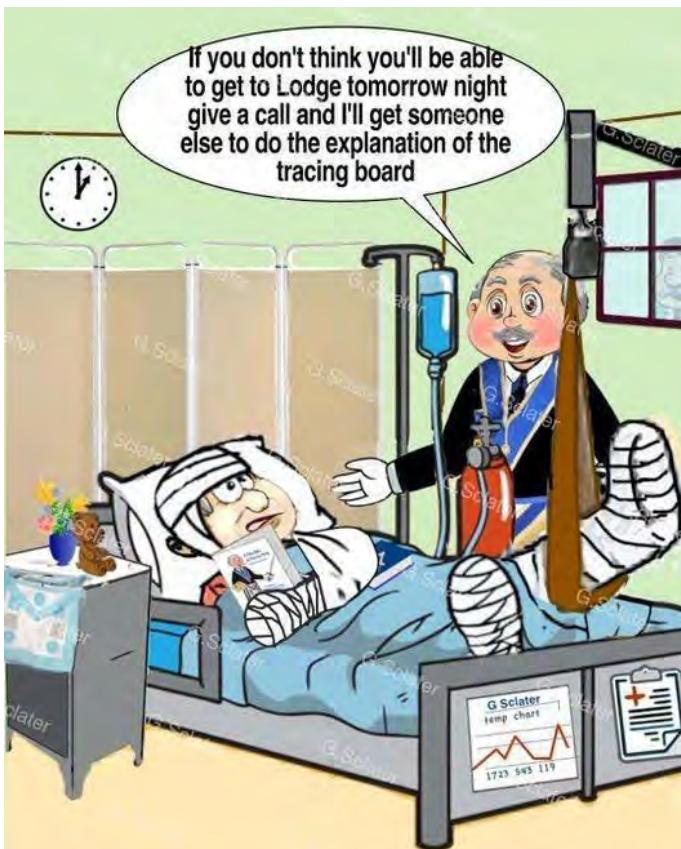
We have set up a Facebook Group for Ross Masonic Club. We currently have 28 members across the Lodges and Chapter. Any members of Lodges or Chapter that meet at Ross Masonic Hall are welcome to join in.

More opportunities to Zoom together

If you have not previously joined in, we now have a meeting that starts earlier on a Friday at 7:30pm as well as the 8:45pm meeting for the 9 o'clock toast.

You can come and go during these times as you please.

It's simple to setup and Billy can help with support if you need it.



A Poem from Pam Ayres

I saw this on Pam Ayres 'Twitter feed' and thought I would share it with you as the rules have now changed and we discussed the perils of the face mask and glasses or hearing aids on our Zoom call.

Oh, somebody make me a beautiful mask,
Of shimmering silk, or brocade, or damask,
Sequinned and spangled, my visage to cup,
In fabric that won't make me glasses steam up.

Yeah, give it some frills and some lace furbelows,
Frolicking playfully over the nose,
With entry to viruses firmly refused,
Or is it for keeping them in?
I'm confused.

Would I know the answer? Did I know the answer?

Don't forget to go back to W Bro Dennis on his question posed in the last issue.

Why do we wear gloves?

You can always check your thoughts by visiting 'Solomon' of course! <https://solomon.ugle.org.uk>

By Dennis Roberts - Group Leader Information and Guidance Group e-mail: roberts.greeba@btinternet.com

Coffee Break and T@3

This week Aeron Lewis provides us with a curiosity to name and the answer to last week's question which was an Apprentice Piece.



Aeron's Curiosities - Last Week's Answer

According to Aeron: It is a small hand vice but with a difference, it could be used with a brace and bit to cut out circles, if you unscrew the wooden end of the handle there are a number of small tools inside, as you can see from the picture on the right.

I think it could have been a apprentice's piece.

Apprenticeships have a long tradition in the United Kingdom, dating back to around the 12th century and flourishing by the 14th century. The parents or guardians of a minor would agree with a master craftsman or tradesman the conditions for an apprenticeship. This contract would then bind the youth for 5–9 years (e.g., from age 14 to 21). Apprentice's families would sometimes pay a "premium" or fee to the craftsman and the contract would usually be recorded in a written indenture. Modern apprenticeships range from craft to high status in professional practice in engineering, law, accounting, architecture, management consulting, and others.

In towns and cities with guilds, apprenticeship would often be subject to guild regulation, setting minimum terms of service, or limiting the number of apprentices that a master could train at any one time. Guilds also often kept records of who became an apprentice, and this would often provide a qualification for later becoming a freeman of a guild or a citizen of a city. Many youths would train in villages or communities that lacked guilds, however, so avoiding the impact of these regulations.

In the 16th century, the payment of a "premium" to the master was not at all common, but such fees became relatively common by the end of the 17th century, though they varied greatly from trade to trade. The payment of a one-off fee could be very difficult for some parents, limiting who was able to undertake apprenticeships. In the 18th-century, apprenticeship premiums were taxed, and the registers of the Stamp Duty that recorded tax payments mostly survive, showing that roughly one in ten teenage males served an apprenticeship for which they paid fees, and that the majority paid five to ten pounds to their master.

In theory no wage had to be paid to an apprentice since the technical training was provided in return for the labour given, and wages were illegal in some cities, such as London. However, it was usual to pay small sums to apprentices, sometimes with which to buy, or instead of, new clothes. By the 18th century regular payments, at least in the last two or three years of the apprentice's term, became usual and those who lived apart from their masters were frequently paid a regular wage.



Aeron's Curiosities - This Week's Question

This week we publish a further picture of a '*curiously wrought*' item that Aeron sent in. Can anyone hazard a guess at what it is and what it is used for? Answer in next week's issue.



This was sometimes called the "half-pay" system or "colting", payments being made weekly or monthly to the apprentice or to his parents. In these cases, the apprentice often went home from Saturday night to Monday morning. This was the norm in the 19th century but this system had existed in some trades since the 16th century.

In 1563, the Statute of Artificers and Apprentices was passed to regulate and protect the apprenticeship system, forbidding anyone from practising a trade or craft without first serving a 7-year period as an apprentice to a master (though in practice Freemen's sons could negotiate shorter terms).

Source wikipedia



Isle of Man Remembered

Words and Pictures by
John Thornton



Reading Ex Comp Ken Tilley's reminiscences remind me of my times on hockey tour there from the mid seventies until 2013. I was there in Ken's days of glory as the hockey festival ran during the TT practices. I don't remember meeting Ken there. However we had some riders staying at the hotel and as we were staggering home at dawn we often met them on the stairs heading out to practice when the roads were closed.

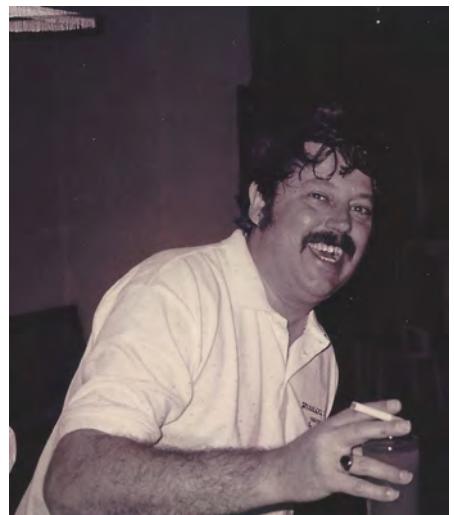
I well remember seeing one of the riders back at the hotel, he having fallen off. His bike was OK but his leathers were badly torn and his back was lacerated.

Another rider was an old gent who had come over on an equally old bike to spectate. He had made a solemn promise to his family not to race the course. In those days they had what was called mad Sunday when the course was closed and ordinary riders were allowed onto it. Ignoring his promise off he went, only to fall off, damage his bike and break his collar bone. He was trying to decide how to tell the family and how to get the bike home. However he was still in jovial mood and decided to stay on the watch the racing!

Turning to the hockey we were all young and rarely lost a match and only had about two hours sleep a night for four days!

It was on the Island when I had my only two encounters with the police. Every night when we arrived back at the hotel at dawn we were disturbed by a seagull that perched on the top of a lamppost directly outside our window. It was decided to climb up and shoo it off. My roommate (another John) jumped on my shoulders and up he went. At this point a voice said "Good evening gentlemen. What are you doing?" We told him as best we could and he advised us to get down and go to bed.

On the second occasion we were heading to a bar on the front which was always crowded.



As we were heading down we saw a large concrete bench and decided it would be ideal to sit on in the garden. Off we strolled until we arrived about 10 minutes later. As we were turning a voice said "Well done lads you have carried that very well. You can now carry it back again" Never has a bench seemed heavier nor a walk longer as we struggled back with a policeman as escort.

In those days about 100 teams from all over the UK attended, but as years passed it became less popular and we got older. We were never from one club and at our height we had 15 players from 10 different clubs, plus some Manx players. Eventually after 40 years and only a handful of teams attending we decided to call it a day. What happy memories I hold of the Isle of Man!

Patrick Eyre recounts his early career moves.

After five years service, two of which were spent in Libya I left the Coldstream Guards in 1953 and at that time there wasn't a great deal of work about but I managed to get a job driving a crash tender at my local airfield. We were a crew of six men looking after the aircraft that came in and out. It was in the days of the first turbojet powered aircraft and one of the first to be built was by Fairy Aviation in the shape of a submarine hunter known as the Gannet. It had a Perspex blister or dome, housing all the detection electronics hanging below the fuselage. This would be lowered out of the fuselage when required but needed to be withdrawn prior to landing because it had to clear the wheels.

The fun began one day when it jammed on the aircraft's approach and that's when my services were required. The test pilot' a gentleman by the name of 'Peter Twist,' did everything he could in the air to dislodge it and made several very low passes across the airfield with the fire crew chasing it each time. Eventually he did get the aircraft down safely with surprisingly little damage and thankfully there was no fire to put out. However, yours truly along with the other guys helped Peter from the plane with the Foam always an option in the event of fire.

Fairy Aviation were also developing an engine called the Rotadyne designed for the helicopter. In its development stage the jet engine was bolted down to a concrete plinth and drove four rota blades that were propelled by power exiting the tip of each blade.

Like a giant Catherine wheel it was housed in a huge circular steel cage.

Extremely noisy, it could be heard for miles around.

It's probably one of the reasons I'm partially deaf today as the crash crew were housed in a concrete bunker close by, with no ear protection. Sadly it never really got off the ground in the UK but I believe the USA took it on and did develop a helicopter capable of ferrying many passengers at a time between Airports.

I left the company after about a year and went to work for my father in Birmingham who owned a factory manufacturing electric fires, travelling between Birmingham and Maidenhead in my 1936 Austin car, a rust bucket which would fly out of second gear if you didn't hold it in, but ran quite well apart from the odd boil up. This travelling took place most weekends after staying with my mother during the week. Suffice to say my parents were living apart at the time.

A very clever man, I learned a lot from my father during the War who spent most of his time in the garage fashioning items from wood and steel mainly for the home, at a time when you could buy nothing from the shops. I would stand and watch him for hours as he even made tools to enable him to manufacture items that were unavailable.

His most successful product was an electric fire and as a fully qualified electrical engineer he knew exactly what he was doing and where to get some of the vital parts required.

When the War came to an end he was turning them out by the dozen

for the many people lining up to buy them including electricity shops who couldn't obtain them elsewhere.

My father's business had grown to such an extent he opened a factory, and was developing the product in a more attractive style with an artificial coal effect. Employing more workers, the product was flying out of the door.

I was learning all there was to know about the business and when I suggested to him that maybe I could sell them in the area where I lived near London, he took interest.

I took a sample home with me and on the Monday took it into my local Southern Electricity Board shop introducing myself to the manager. He was very impressed with the product but said he was not authorised to purchase it until it had been approved in their testing house. He made a phone call on my behalf and made an appointment for me to see the manager the following day. I kept the appointment and left the electric fire with him after he explained it would probably take a month of testing to be approved and once it had it would be my job to convince every shop manager to buy it. The letter arrived eventually stating that it had passed all the tests.

My father was delighted as it opened up his market by being able to supply the Midland Electricity Board on the strength of my deal with the Southern.

I ceased working at the factory and once a week collected the electric fires for the orders I had received from my new customers in the van my father had bought for the purpose.

It was not long before it became apparent that the many hours I was putting in was taking a toll on my health and marriage and it was decided that any repeat orders would be delivered by a selected carrier. This meant special packaging would have to be designed to protect them from damage in transit. In short it turned out to be a disaster, not one appliance arrived undamaged at its destination and much to my dismay the whole southern exercise was dropped.

Continued on the next page.....



Sound Bytes

A few memories and short pieces from the members.
If you have a few bullet points - send them in!

Patrick Eyre Recounts

Continued from previous page....

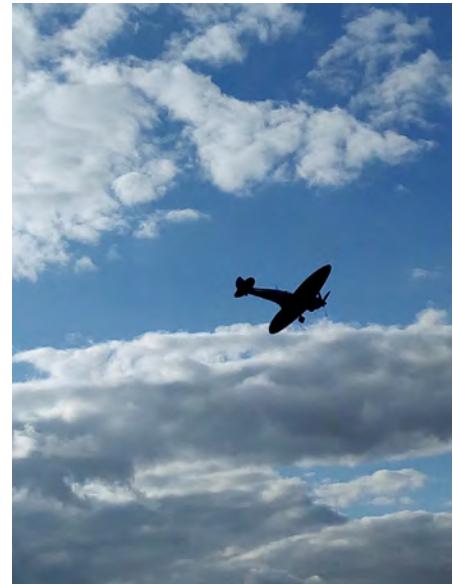
Once again I was out of a job and I needed to find something locally and a friend I knew in the transport business had three vehicles on hire to Thermalite Blocks in Reading. He needed a driver and I was happy to take it on.

The trucks themselves were eight wheelers, very old and continually breaking down and as a consequence he went bust and I lost my job. Seizing the opportunity I approached the Thermalite management and secured a contract to haul for them with my own truck. All I had to do was acquire one and what took place was explained in my previous article for the Craftsman.

To continue on this theme the Company I was contracted to, opened another block making plant near Coleshill in Warwickshire. I moved my business there on the promise that I could add a further two vehicles on my licence. I promptly did this with two eight ton BMC's. I continued to drive the Commer myself and recruited two drivers. I travelled home at the weekend, a distance of some 100 miles.

I eventually tired of this as indeed my family did, and I sold the business complete with the trucks to a local haulier turning my attentions elsewhere to manufacturing.

To be continued in a future issue



Patrick Eyre Writes.

I will have to take you back to a period before my time - in the 20s in fact and the days of the Music Halls.

As well as being a brilliant engineer, my father was a very popular entertainer and half of a double act known as 'Gerry and Franks' who sang and tap danced in top hat and tails, around the Halls and Pubs in Birmingham. A wonderful ballroom dancer too, winning many silver medals. I do remember that in the 50s he opened a ballroom in Birmingham called the 'Carlton' which he was very proud of. He took me there once when it was being developed from a closed down cinema.

During the war there was a lunchtime radio program called Workers Playtime which required a compère to introduce the acts. I believe my father played the role a couple of times

Brian Auty Writes.

Our son Charles is a pilot for Eastern Airways. He took this picture of the NHS Spitfire just before landing at Humberside Airport after flying in tribute to the NHS.

A restored Spitfire dedicated to the NHS aims to lift spirits as it flies over our local hospitals throughout the UK.

The iconic aircraft has the handwritten names of countless nominated heroes on it with the words 'THANK U NHS' emblazoned across its wings.

Hundreds of people have already made donations to the NHS Charities Together to get the name of their lockdown hero written on it, whether it's a family member, neighbour or keyworker.

There is space for a total of 80,000 handwritten names on the Spitfire, which is usually based at the IWM Duxford Airfield in Cambridgeshire.

People will still be able to make donations until September 20 as it continues its tour around the country.

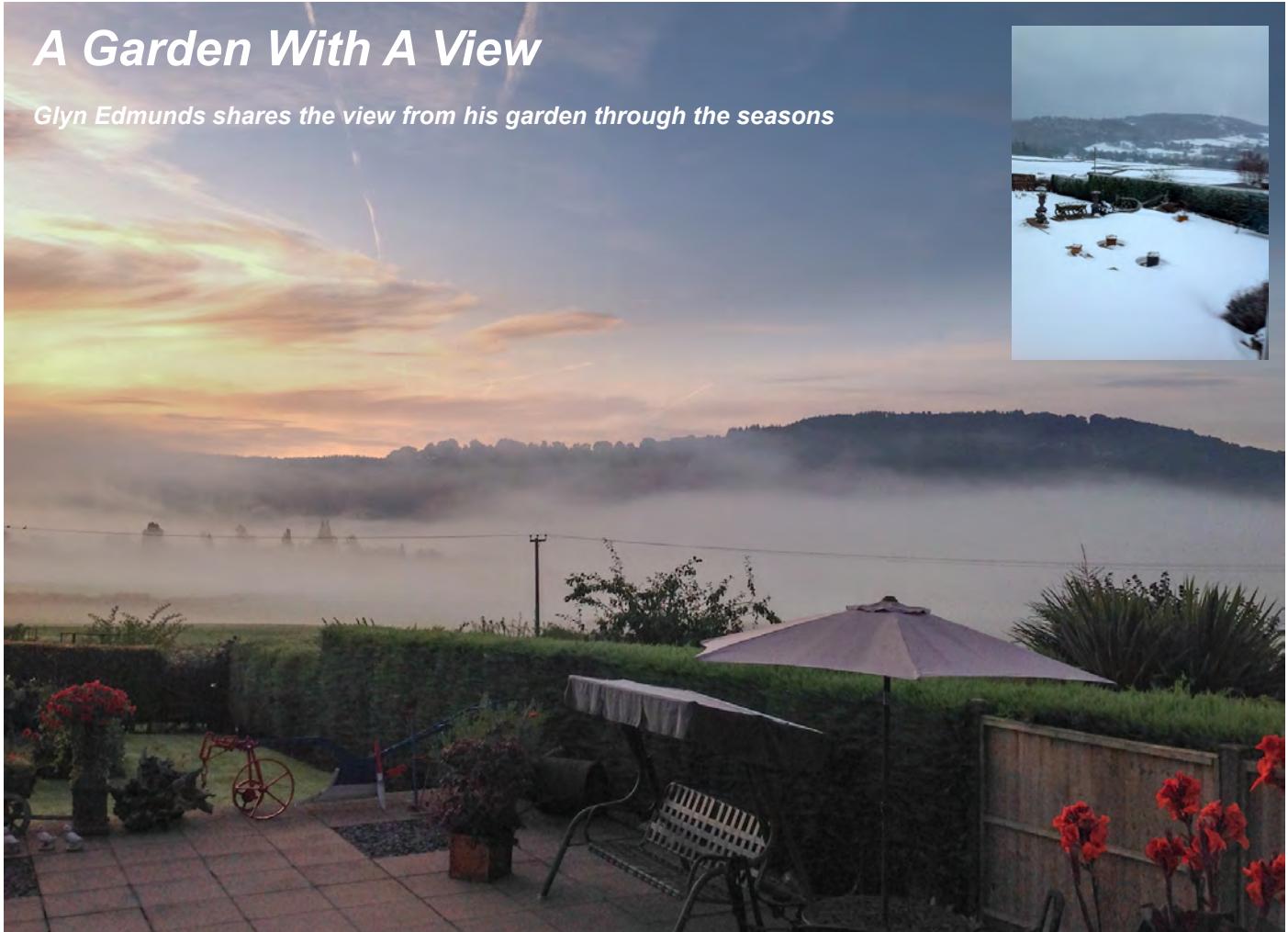
There's a women in the park who sells batteries,
She sells C cells by the seesaw

What do you call a philosopher that makes people jump
Aristartle

Source Humor Train Facebook Page

A Garden With A View

Glyn Edmunds shares the view from his garden through the seasons



Looking down the Wye Valley towards Redbrook with a view of the Kymin. The Round House is hidden at this time of year.

In 1802 The Kymin in Monmouth played host to Admiral Horatio Nelson, who to this day remains the most famous guest to have dined at the Round House. During their two-day stay in the town, on 19 August 1802, Nelson and the Hamilton's breakfasted in the Round House and admired the views.

Craft Provincial Gardening Competition

Don't Forget To Enter!

If you are in the Craft in Herefordshire you will have received details of the Provincial Gardening Competition.

Send your entries by email to pco@herefordshiremasons.org.uk

You can send up to two photos, no larger than 2MB each.

Give each of them a title, and give a short description of what you have done in the garden during lockdown to get the results shown in the photos.

Don't forget to add your name, and which Lodge you're in. Closing date 12th August.

Good luck!

The Masonic Photographer

Photographing comet c/2020 F3 (Neowise)

Discovered on 27th March 2020

Article by Andrew Moore

The story behind the cover photograph



As the distances in space are so large we cannot use the conventional methods of measuring the distances between them.

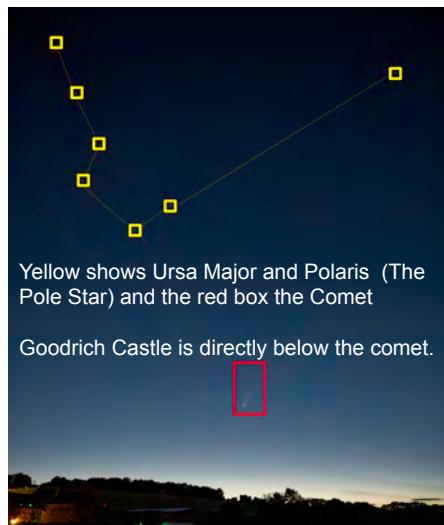
This is why astronomers use a method based on the angle the objects make, relative to an observational point on earth. These are known as angular distances and are expressed in terms of degrees, arc minutes and seconds.

The angular method is based on a sexagesimal system (obviously!) – a numeral system with 60 as its base. There are 360° in a circle or sphere, each degree is divided into $60'$ and each arc minute is further divided into $60''$. The whole concept of longitude and latitude is based on this.

(An angle of 90 degrees or the fourth part of a circle)

If you are hunting for a comet to photograph you need to know where to begin to look! You can use an App to find out it's 'latitude' or degrees above the horizon and 'longitude' relative to north, south, east or west etc to narrow down the search.

Modern apps such as 'Stellarium' or 'Photo Pills' have an augmented reality feature where you hold the phone up to the sky and it uses the GPS and compass to identify where you are and what you are looking at and then takes the image from the camera and projects a star map onto



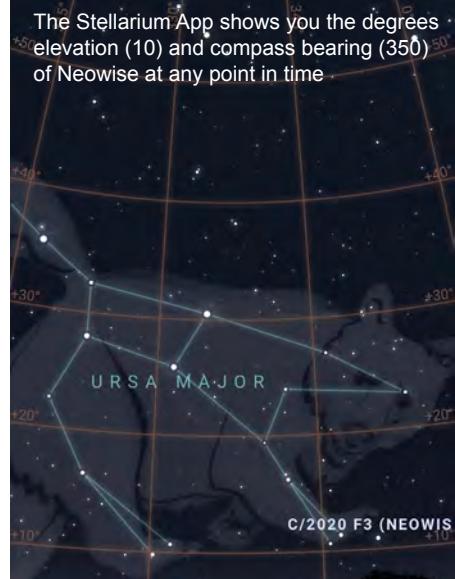
the screen blended with the image from the camera. This makes it relatively easy to find any particular star but it is not foolproof. You can also use them to plan ahead by understanding where the comet will be, its elevation and direction. It would be a real bummer if you turned up in the pitch black only to find the comet was behind a hill!



Apps such as Photo Pills enable you to visualise an image and scout out a location before setting off.

Here I am visualising the field of view of a lens when taking a shot of Goodrich Castle while standing on Kerne Bridge.

The Stellarium App shows you the degrees elevation (10) and compass bearing (350) of Neowise at any point in time



So now we can see how wide the shot will be with various lenses and also the elevation of the comet in relation to the castle.

By using the Stellarium App pictured above, I knew that the comet was going to be around 10 degrees above the horizon at 1am on the 18th July at an angle of around 350 degrees.

When you reach the location, it is always a good idea to have a manual backup in case you don't have a phone signal or there is some form of interference. Time to use my hands!

Four inches or a hands breadth in thickness.

An adult's fist is approximately 10 degrees across. If you hold out your fist with your palm against the horizon then the top of your fist is approximately 10 degrees. Using a compass you can get the bearing of 350 degrees so you now know exactly where to look for the comet.

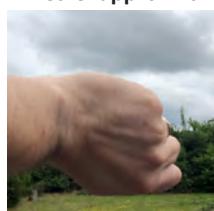
Three fingers are approx 5°



One finger is approx 1°



A fist is approx 10°



Approx 25°





Comet taken over Monmouth Sunday 19th July 2020.

Nikon Z6 17-35mm Zoom @ 30mm

20sec @F3.5 ISO 1600

Post processing in Adobe Lightroom

How do you make Darkness Visible?

The obvious answer is to use a long shutter speed, large aperture and a high ISO number. An aperture such as F2.8 lets in a lot of light, but gives you no depth of field. Any foreground interest may become out of focus and a high ISO number provides a lot of 'noise'. Luckily most modern digital cameras can cope with that and post processing software enables you to reduce the amount of noise (speckles) in the photograph. However shutter speed is a whole different issue.

The earth constantly revolving on its axis in its orbit round the sun....

..... is a particular problem for astro

photographers. If you take a picture of a celestial object, then after a few seconds the earth's revolution turns pinpoint stars into blurred trails.

We can overcome this by using a star tracker which rotates at the same speed as the earth, therefore the stars stay in the same position. Typically if taking long exposures of celestial objects we use the '300 rule'. Divide 300 by the focal length of the lens you are using to give you the maximum number of seconds for exposure before you get star trailing.

So if using a 24mm lens you would use a maximum shutter speed of 12.5 seconds ($300/24 = 12.5$).

I didn't want to use my star tracker so

I set the camera up on a tripod with the following settings.

10 second exposure Aperture F2.8

70 - 200mm lens set at 75mm

ISO 1600

Yes I broke the 300 rule but the stars are still sharp(ish). Rules are to be broken when it comes to art, right?

So anyone that thinks masonry is outdated and there is no use for the 'liberal arts and sciences' is clearly wrong.

Perhaps Grammar, Rhetoric, Logic, Arithmetic, Geometry, Music and Astronomy have in fact never been more relevant! Especially if you have no phone signal!



Night Lights of Monmouth Wednesday 22nd July 2020.

Nikon Z6 70-200mm Zoom @70mm

30sec @F4 ISO 1600

Post processing in Adobe Lightroom. Foreground lit by passing car headlights