

HISTORY OF IACC



Written by Mufty Mathewson, IACC Historian

1975 to 2015

Images Alberta Camera Club (IACC) was officially 40 on February 6, 2015. On that day in February 1975, 44 people signed the guest book with their addresses and phone numbers (no e-mail addresses in those days!). The guest book was an 8½ by 11" coil, Keystone, wide-ruled, three-section book with a price tag of \$.89. People donated \$2 for that meeting, but later membership was determined to be \$10 for the year. The book included the names of the guests and members who attended from that first date to April 1977.

On the third meeting, March 6, 1975, our own current slideshow maker extraordinaire neatly signed his name, Barry Headrick. I didn't join until Spring of 1978, so have just been a member for 36 years—we are the only two members from that first five years who still love the Club.

One of the goals of the Club noted in our first constitution was to provide services to the community. Our President's present focus on "Give Back" has been a consistent theme during the years. In those early days, Barry Headrick taught a free course at the Boys and Girls Club on 109 Avenue and many of our members volunteered for Edmonton Historic Sites to record Edmonton's housing structures that were being demolished in old neighbourhoods. We also had a public exhibit of 20 photographs at the Muttart Conservatory.

The dates of the second and fourth Thursday of the month were set and have continued ever since. Competitions began right away, as did workshops and outings. I note that I entered five different selections in my first competitions when I joined in 1978 and got the lowest marks of anyone that year. Some of the workshops in those first five years were portraiture, still life, slide and print retouching, slide duplicating and mounting photographs.



© David Aldana



Cake for the 40th Anniversary Party
© Barry Headrick

Club members from four different Edmonton Camera Clubs came together to organize and deliver a day-long seminar with Freeman Patterson. It was a huge success with 500 people attending. Imagine bringing together 500 people today for a photo seminar. In 1979, IACC also organized a seminar at the Convention Inn South attended by 160 people.

Early presidents were Mo Constantine, Helen McArthur and Saul Rabinovitz.

1975

1980



1980

1985

The years 1980 to 1985 saw some great photographers join the Club—Flo Duggan and Max Wilke (both charter members)—and Gerry Harris took on the role as president. Mike Grandmaison and Val Horne joined and edited *Imagery*. Ilona Ryder and Barry Headrick organized the workshops and I wrote an article in each *Imagery* called “Around Town” highlighting different photography galleries and shows in Edmonton.

New members that contributed greatly to the Club were Drew and Elaine Jeffries, Frank Marsh, Leotta Cummins, Bill Hogg and Gerry Horne.

In 1981, the Club met at the Southwest Culture Centre; in 1982 we moved to the Belgravia Community League; and finally in 1983 we moved to the John Janzen Nature Centre.

Members were unhappy when the price of film went higher than \$.75 a roll. There were warnings about what airport X-rays would do to film, and an article in *Imagery* suggested that we keep film in our pockets when the weather was cold so it wouldn’t snap when it went into the camera. There was a warning, as well, to check your slides when you got them back for fingerprints that ruin the emulsion on the slide.

International Year of the Disabled Persons was 1981 and Mike Grandmaison, Saul Rabinovitz and I made a special slideshow with a song called “Look Beyond” (by Pat McKee) that was submitted to the National Association for Photographic Arts and won great accolades.

In 1982, the May Awards banquet was held in the Griesbach Officer’s Mess, with cocktails and dinner for \$12 per person.

In 1984, the Pope’s visit to Edmonton brought a request to the Club to shoot 50 rolls of film for the chance to be in a book called “Celebrate Our Faith.” Many members covered the Pope’s special mass, his procession down Jasper Avenue and the packaging of 10,000 rosaries at Big Sister House. Bill Wyshynski and Linda Lee Nichols had their work accepted and were paid \$50 for each photograph in the book.

In 1985, we had an outing to photograph the Legislature. We had the run of the whole building, including the Speaker’s Gallery, the Carillion Room and the Top Gallery. There were two security guards to watch us; however after 9/11 and in today’s world the Government would never allow us to do that again.

The year 1985 was the 10th Anniversary of the founding of the Club. To celebrate, I convinced 52 members to shoot for 24 hours on March 7, 1985 to create a slideshow, “A Day in the Life Of Edmonton.” Carousel Photographs donated masses of film and we shot over 10,000 slides that day. Finally, 320 “bests” were chosen for a four-carousel two-projector slideshow with music that was presented as a World Premiere at the banquet in May of that year. Gerry Horne showed it about 50 times the following year. That slideshow is presently in the Edmonton Archives.



1985

1990

The first shock for the membership was that the annual fees went up to \$25. For those who complained, it was pointed out that it worked out to \$1.50 per meeting!!

Among the guest speakers during these years were Brian Keating (of Calgary Zoo fame), Tom Webb (amazing bird photographer), Con Boland (local portrait great), John Lucas (working at the Edmonton Journal) and our own Daryl Benson (working as a mail carrier).

Our presidents were John Mawhinney, Pearl McGill, and Mark Degner. Editors were Marvelyn Albert, Bill Hogg and Michael Plumb.

New members during that time were Gerry Harris, Elaine and Drew Jeffries, Harry Meadows, Pearl McGill, and Guadalupe Buchwald.

Competitions were judged by three judges all chosen from the membership on the night of the competition. The club bought, at great expense, three little hand-held devices that did the math and came out with the winners!

We had some amazing Outings during those five years, including Stampede Wrestling, the Journal Indoor Games, Northlands Horse Show, Hobbema Rodeo and, the best and most popular, an Oilers practice.

Our Workshops were as varied, including Introduction to Colour Darkroom, Cibachrome and Kodalith Film, Observing Halley's Comet, Pet Photography, and Spirals (which were done by Gerry Harris for many years).

In order to increase our membership we set up booths in malls in September and October to showcase our photography and the benefits of the Club. It worked! We got to 100 members for the first time.

We were rich indeed. Several year-end banquets were held at Fort Edmonton. We had a chance to photograph both before and afterwards in the Park.



Presidents of the Club during these years were Sheila Nielsen, Mufty Mathewson and Steve Sutphen.

Editors of *Imagery* were Mufty Mathewson, Bill Hogg and Millie Lust. One of the tasks of the editors in those far-off days was to see to the distribution. We actually took copies to put on the counters of some major photo outlets in the city, like Carousel (now Technicare). We occasionally had advertisements to help with the price of printing so many newsletters.

Our Club saw some new members—Leota Cummins, Frank Marsh, Marilyn McAra, Darwin Mulligan, Larry Louie, Darwin Wiggitt, Shelia Holzer, Gerry Horne, Derek Malin and Carol Rusinek.

In terms of ‘Giving Back,’ many members of the Club submitted their personal images to a collection of the Hope Foundation, called *Images of Hope*. The foundation was an organization that specifically studied the subject of hope. As it is a rather nebulous concept, a call was put out to photographers to submit images that meant ‘Hope’ to them, along with a little blurb to say why the image meant hope to that person. A grand collection of 50 photographs (many by our members) was hung at the McMullan Gallery at the University of Alberta with a grand opening on January 1995. The collection went on to hang in the Grey Nuns, General and Misericordia Hospitals, and the Cross Cancer Institute.

Another project was to assist the Northern Alberta Brain Injury Society with its awareness campaign that year. Photographs were of several activities (a march on the Legislature, an Open House, and Dove Days) to use in future publicity.

In 1991, a most controversial slideshow was shown at the Member Showcase by one of our members, Greg Krasichynski. It was called Road Kill and created all kinds of uproar and healthy discussion about what photographs “should” be shown at our meetings.



1995

2000

These were strong film and slide years when digital discussion slowly moved into our photography lexicon.

In 1995 and 1996, exposure compensation, sandwiching slides to get special effects and filters for different film types were subjects of interest. About 250 Stock Photography businesses were flourishing in North America.

In January 1997 there was a first mention of what is available on “THE NET” and, again, in March 1997, more writing about this new phenomena—“THE NET.”

Carousel Photographics came to introduce a big change in its shop—a digital copier that made all kinds of fantastic copies of our printed images. In an editorial in 1998, there was discussion about digital cameras stealing into the mainstream.

In 1999, IACC introduced a “Digital Image” category to the competitions. Members were mixed, and were asking ‘What were these expensive cameras that were changing what we know?’

During these years, our presidents were Steve Sutphen and Derek Malin. The *Imagery* editors were Bill Hogg, who got an IACC Honourable Mention in the Photographic Society of America, then Mufty Mathewson, followed by Carol Gaudet. A new phenomena! Suddenly a contributor could e-mail an article or a news item to the editor and not have to bring it physically to the person.

Sheila Holzer became Membership Chair. Outings were managed by Carol Rusinek, who introduced well-researched summer outings, as well as creative places to shoot during our meeting year.

Noted speakers during these years were Peggy Heather, speaking about the new idea of “Reduce, Recycle and Reuse;” Brian Gavriloff from the Edmonton Journal; and Daryl Benson who spoke about “Digital Images.” We had many questions!

We were also busy with community work. We photographed 12 prospective employment worksites for an organization working to create a promotional package for individuals who are mentally challenged. We also photographed for Crystal Kids and for the Hardisty Nursing Home.

As the end of the millennium approached and IACC approached its 25th Anniversary Year, we made plans for a major project—a book called *Edmonton Focus 2000*. A committee of seven people was formed, with Mufty Mathewson as Chair. Plans were made. Businesses were approached for financial assistance and eventually the project accrued \$32,348 to provide film and editorial support for a book that would document the people, places and events of Edmonton at the turn of the millennium. We got letters of support from the Mayor, the Chamber of Commerce and other notables about town. The project began on July 1, 1999 and ran until June 30, 2000, with an anticipated 50 members of the Club participating. We were off and running.



2000

2005

Our Millennium began with six months remaining on our Y2K project, photographing Edmonton's people, places and events at the turn of the century. To celebrate our 25th Anniversary, we completed the project, and on October 3, 2000 we had a book launch in the City Room at City Hall, with 120 people attending and silver balloons. We give a copy to every school in the city, as well as to the Mayor, the City Archives and the Provincial Archives. *Edmonton Focus 2000* featured 48 of our members. The project was so well sponsored by Technicare and Government grants that afterwards we donated \$7,000 to the Northern Alberta Brain Injury Society.

Our presidents during these years were Derek Malin, Carol Rusinek, Mufty Mathewson and Jim Gaa. Editors for *Imagery* were Carol Gaudet, Carol Rusinek, Cindy Hancock and Robyn Short. The winners of competitions were repeatedly Carol Rusinek, Derald Lobay, and Sheila Holzer, as well as new members Stan Fisher, Darwin Mulligan, Joan Shimizu, Mark and Leslie Degner, Charlene Ball and Ray Rasmussen. Some of our newer IACC members began to shine—Zbigniew Gortel, Miriam Stanisavljevic, Wendy Davis, Sieg Koslowski and Richard Wear.

Our rent at the John Janzen Nature Centre almost doubled, so Carol Rusinek and Sheila Holzer went on a city-wide hunt for a new place to meet. They found Allendale School. The annual dues increased from \$30 to \$40 a year.

Workshops included Kodalith, Wedding, Spirals, Darkroom, and Black Light. Outings included a fencing club, the Sikh Temple, Maligne Canyon in Jasper, a trip to Em-Te-Town and a treasure hunt. Hilary Morin, at the forefront of the digital world, designed our web page and we had a new designer, Hallie Du Preez make it as visible as possible to search engines. This was new language for so many of us hobby photographers. More discussion happened about whether digital photography was a fad or here to stay.

Daryl Benson spoke to us about a new concept, digitally altered photographs. We were impressed.

In February 2001, a new "Special" digital competition was introduced to the Club. The new rules said that "the images must be computer manipulated and consist of a 'Before' and 'After' print." Even later in 2003, the digital competition was still a hot subject. Derald Lobay writes, "I think we all have to accept the idea that digital photography is not going to be another fad." This was the first year that digital cameras outsold film cameras.

Carol Rusinek inaugurated a Mentorship Program. Sheila Holzer inaugurated the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) Student Scholarship Award. We won two awards from the Photographic Society of America for our newsletter, based on the criteria of most "motivational or creative" and on the variety and quality of the information.

In 2002, we inaugurated the first Honourary Member and chose Daryl Benson as the recipient for this award. We purchased a new sound system and the webmaster joined the IACC Executive. In 2003, we began the practice that all members would vote for the winners of the competitions, a change that remains until today.



During 2005 to 2010, the Club reached over 100 members for the first time, the web bringing in many young and vibrant photographers to a Club that had been quietly aging. Edmonton lost its only camera repair shop and, in 2009, gained Vistek. Our webmaster pleaded for members to submit photographs, so he could create a gallery for members on the website. This was new and exciting, but scary for those of us not really up on our computer wizardry.

We were still having slides in our competitions, but the entries were becoming fewer and fewer. In October, there was a new option to pre-register prints and slides for competition to lighten the load for the Competitions Chair. The maximum entries for each category went down from three to two and, in 2009, it became mandatory to pre-register all entries. Looking at the names of those who entered and won competitions over the many years, we consistently saw Sheila Holzer, Carol Rusinek and Derald Lobay.

The first digitized newsletter happened in the summer of 2008 and, since then, copies were posted on our website. The fees went up in 2008 to \$50 per year. The Club had a group Exhibit at the Royal Alexandra Hospital from October to December. That same year we moved locations to our present location at Pleasantview Community Hall. In the fall of 2008, we did a special project with Edmonton Archives called, "Then and Now." About 40 members chose one photograph from the archives and then shot the same location in 2008. There was an opening night celebration of the photographs hung side-by-side, with many members present in the new Archives building.

Presidents during these years were Jim Gaa, Miriam Stanisavljevic, Ray von der Woning and Scott Henderson. Editors of *Imagery* were Robyn Short, Richard Perron, Kathy Newfeld, Rae Emogene and Fred Rushworth. All the other positions on the Board were filled with long-term hard workers, who helped IACC be such a vibrant Club for such a long time.

Carol Rusinek and Sheila Holzer, quietly organized events and gathered people for outings and workshops.

Some of those outings were amazing and included the Citadel, Government House, Maligne Canyon Ice Walk, Orchids at Muttart, Churches of Lamont County and Con Boland's studio. We began going to Aldon's Auto Salvage and going to create downtown 'Reflections.' We went to Holes Greenhouse, Rainbow Valley and Whitemud Creek, the Silver Skate Festival and the John Janzen Nature Center. We had a quad race shoot and dog sled races, a harvest outing, and a barn shoot.



2005

2010

The workshops were equally varied and fascinating. We had our first Photoshop workshop. Our editor at the time wrote, “Photoshop is only a tool and not a replacement for good composition and metering techniques.” (Hmmm, this still remains true I would say.) Jim Ainslie gave his first Flatbed scanner workshop; Gerry Wirun did summer portraits; Marc Cherniwchan gave several workshops on printing BIG prints; Darwin Mulligan did studio portrait and engagement portrait workshops; Zbigniew Gortel did matting; Carol Rusinek gave many Black Light workshops; Robert Goerzen did a portrait workshop; and Mufty Mathewson gave a slideshow-making workshop, as well as her “Flowers Under Water” workshop.

Carol organized participation in World Photography Day (August 19, 2008) in Hawrelak Park. Carol also organized several summer activities for IACC photographers.

During these years, five Honorary Members were named: Leotta Cummins, Max Wilke, Gerry Harris, Steve Sutphen and Sheila Holzer. All most deserved!

New names were popping up with competition wins—Bob Royer, Quincey Deters and Vincent Eyben.

In the summer of 2010, several members of the Club joined Fred Rushworth to photograph the Rona MS Bike Run from Edmonton to Camrose—a two-day event with a slideshow of the riders on the evening of the first day. Now that’s a challenge!

Way to give back Images Alberta Camera Club members!



2010

2015

To complete the historical review for the last 40 years, I re-read all the issues of *Imagery* for the last five-year period and much has happened from 2010 to 2015, with Presidents Scott Henderson and David Aldana at the helm. Fred Rushworth and Barbara Morban served as editors of *Imagery* during that time, with Gilles Simard as assistant editor.

For the first time in our history, our membership climbed to 191 in 2015.

IACC has a Facebook group of 105 members to regularly post images and receive feedback on the work.

We changed our website domain to www.imagesalberta.ca.

And while I'm at it, I might as well list some of the Workshops over the past five years.

- Lightroom (several)
- Portrait
- Digital Darkroom
- Making Photobooks
- Flowers Under Water
- Off-camera Flash
- Black Light
- Light Box and Scanner
- Night Sky, Low Light
- Matting
- Landscape Editing
- First Shoot and Critique

All these workshops were given by IACC members, who generously shared their talents with other members.

Just for fun, I listed below many of the Outings we had during these years (some several times). I may have missed a couple because the activity of the Club is amazing.

- Aldon Auto Salvage
- Fort Edmonton Christmas
- Refinery Row
- Clifford E. Lee Sanctuary
- Aviation Museum
- Birkebeiner Ski Event
- Pro Show Gold
- Silver Skate Festival
- Equipment at Vistek
- Churchill Square
- Enjoy Centre
- Devonian Botanic Garden
- Salisbury Greenhouse
- Edmonton Skyline
- Halloween Alley
- Sikh Temple
- Legislature at Xmas
- Orchid Fair
- Edmonton Radial Railway
- Muttart Conservatory (for Sony Mirrorless)
- Coyote Lake Nature Preserve
- Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village
- Nature Conservancy Canada
- Chickakoo Lake



2010

2015

The Competition process became more and more streamlined, now allowing only one entry per member per category. The work that was submitted got better and better each year.

During these last five years we had some shining winners (i.e., Sieg Koslowski, whose strong images won month after month). He moved to Calgary, and Bob and Wendy Royer, Linda Treleaven, Vincent Morban, and Bruce Smith were shining along with the stalwart oldtimer, Carol Rusinek.

The Club was incredibly active in giving back to the community during these years.

- A project with the Provincial Archives called 'Then and Now' where 21 members chose a photograph from the early days in Edmonton and replicated the very same location now. Fascinating results!
- The MS Bike Tour, with Fred Rushworth as the IACC contact, which has become an annual event producing a fabulous slideshow for those who fundraise by biking for two days to Camrose and back.
- Portraits of "Homeless Connect" have been done several times to produce Christmas portraits for those who cannot afford a portrait.
- We photographed the Alberta Youth Robotics Society with their inventions.
- We photographed locations for the North Saskatchewan Watershed Alliance book.
- We photographed red dresses for the REDress project, honouring the 1,181 Aboriginal women who have vanished (are missing or murdered).

In 2014, we began our Special Interest Groups (SIGs). There were seven groups: Night and Low Light; Landscape; Portraits; Abstract; Travel; Photoshop, and Macro. All of these groups were up and running allowing a smaller group of members all interested in the same branch of photography to meet and exchange ideas. This was and continues to be immensely successful.

Images Alberta Camera Club celebrated its 40th Anniversary with a bang-up party on April 9, 2015. Former members were invited, and Bill Wyshynsky, Barry Headrick, Saul Rabinovitz and Donna Fong represented the original starters of the Club. Many former members came to renew old acquaintances. I spoke as Historian and as someone who has been a non-stop member for 37 years. Everyone spoke! The common theme was about the friendships that flourished in the Club, along with the learning of photography.

As a fitting end to the year, we had a print Exhibit at Jake's Framing & Gallery during the entire month of May, highlighting the present work of 40 IACC photographers. We also prepared and published a 40th Anniversary photobook that contained the work and thoughts of 57 photographers.

A new executive took over as the Club headed into its future years enriching Edmonton with its continuing excellence and phenomenal photography.

Congratulations to Images Alberta Camera Club. Happy 40th indeed!