



ALAN MILLWARD

FRPS FPSA MPAGB MPSA EFIAP

Many of you will be aware that Alan Millward passed away in May after a short illness. His death has closed a door on a rich and varied life, forever etched in family memories and the extraordinary legacy to be found in his photographs. The hurt that his leaving brings to loved ones and friends and most of all his wife Anne and daughters Debbie and Cath is absolute. A feeling of loss of an unassuming, warm hearted, funny and uniquely talented man has touched so many in the photographic world.

Alan was born in Coventry on September 23rd 1941, while his father was fighting in the Middle East. School days involved some hard studying and importantly led to a lifelong love of the natural world, fishing and cricket. He left school at 16 becoming an apprentice at GEC in Coventry, and spent almost his entire working life with them as a telecommunications engineer until retirement in 2000. He played Cricket as a young man and was a member of Warwickshire Cricket Club for over 20 years, someone who understood what a sweet late cut was, leg glances and the lbw laws.

He became interested in photography joining the GEC camera club in Coventry. A long time friend from that era, Dennis Worrall, told me he became a superb observer, a great darkroom worker and a respected competitive photographer. His early work in



monochrome is legendary. Here was a pioneer, working in the journalistic 'Midland Style', helping to revolutionize a particular way of 'seeing' along with his contemporaries Phil Swain, Bob Moore and Roy Thornton.

Glasgow and Manchester provided opportunities to be discovered in areas like the Gorbals, or in Salford. The industrial setting of Moss-side led him to reveal a dusty, urban series of images that epitomised slices of poverty interwoven with scruffy children's optimism and precarious living, 2hoping to find one circumstance of dignity2. His photographs were often structured and scripted and worried into existence with almost a film director's eye. Alan was sure that every picture told a story and he was a compulsive shaper of images that had personal narrative and soul.

His later work in India, in Cuba, Venezuela and more recently in Georgia showed humour, integrity and presence. There was an individuality in his work, particularly in the signature of his Nature images and also in his travel photography. Travel was something he enjoyed immensely, because it brought him closer to people pictures and experiences he could relate in his lectures .

He was heavily involved in so many areas of photography- exhibitions, the RPS, and the PSA and to club lectures and judging around the U.K. Alan joined Solihull PS where a group called "The Midland Dimension" was formed to showcase the work of an ardent mix of photographers who wanted to work in a more significant and telling way within the club circuit. They organised many successful exhibitions, presentations and portfolios.



Alan was a contributor to exhibitions all over the planet. He became the first U.K. Master of the Photographic Society of America, and entered many pictures in PSA and FIAP sponsored salons, amassing a 3000 strong list of acceptances in an era where there were no PDI and none of the luxury of online entry. He received hundreds of awards and many other accolades came his way because he deserved them. He served the PAGB equally well, sitting on the Awards for Photographic Merit panels on many occasions.

If one word could sum up Alan it would be Dedication, in his own work , and in the way he helped others to achieve their goals and score their ‘runs’, through his encouragement and work on RPS distinction panels, or teaching at Solihull college.

He served on several RPS distinction panels – Licentiate, A and F Visual Art, and on Travel, showing a true understanding and realisation of applicants ability.

Alan often told long , involved jokes, and variations thereof. He enjoyed being one of the lads. Some lucid, momentous stories evolved around his ability to enjoy a beer or three, late night sessions in hotels bars after PAGB events or Salon Judging, or after club nights at Solihull or at Bob Dylan concerts – where Alan, not liking the idea of paying bar prices, came prepared with bottles inside his coat! Here was someone who once jumped in a swimming pool in his underpants , to be joined by Pattie Clapton in a bikini!

There are recollections of accidents involving showing just fixed images ,up-right in the fixer tray while unwittingly pouring the liquid contents down the stairs, or memory lapses about dates for judging a couple of exhibitions, or on his knees trying to unlock a hotel bedroom in Dumfries with the “wrong” keys after a few in the bar! These are memories that those that knew him will treasure and recall in years to come. *(Your Editor remembers this incident well and that the door was still wide open in the morning.)*



We are very grateful to Anne Sutcliffe for allowing us to use Alan’s prints and to Bob Moore who scanned them all for e-news

Everyone who knew Alan remembers him as a genuine person, well liked and never confrontational. He had an uncanny knack of being able to side-step the politics involved in committee meetings , for instance at the London Salon, where he would make tea or more often pour glasses of wine for those fading in the heat of ‘discussion’. His way of saying “lighten up”. That said, he had a fierce loyalty to The London Salon, of which he was Chairman in 2002 and 2003.

Outside photography Alan had a great love for his family and his grandchildren. He avidly watched Test Cricket and spent hours in his rather large garden, which became an urban 'nature reserve' for the birds, badgers and foxes. He enjoyed music in many forms- from American Folk to Classical , his favourite singer was Bob Dylan. Probably only Alan could have fallen asleep during the mind numbing noise of a Black Sabbath concert.

He spent four years living in Nova Scotia after the tragic death of his brother Colin in 1985, caring for his young nephew and niece, making new photographic friends and working on wildlife pictures. On returning to England he re-established himself in the circle of photographers, clubs and organisations and learnt the craft of digital photography. Alan met Anne Sutcliffe in 1989 and they lived a wonderful, full life together in Solihull. They married in November 2009, when he could be seen singing in the rain waving an umbrella with his new bride.

So we have to say goodbye to Alan , saddened by the fact that he departed the crease too soon, scoring a highly notable 71. We are left in the pavilion to commend him on a wonderful innings. The photography world in which he was held in such high regard will miss his enviable contribution, proud in the knowledge that we saw in Alan so much of what we all hoped to be.

Alan's memory will live on because he was very human, not remote in the way he captured a luminous world and lived a life that he wanted us all to belong to.

Leigh Preston FRPS



Alan liked a joke. So perhaps you might like this footnote from me.

Alan had no firm religious beliefs and never considered what death would mean for him. After his younger brother's tragic death at an early age he preferred to live life to the full and not to worry about the future. I don't have firm religious beliefs either but I do believe that those who go before us find a care free home where they can rejoin lost relatives and I am sure Alan is happily reunited with his brother Colin and his much loved parents and Aunty Joan.

I am sure he is enjoying himself free of the worries of worldly life and that he is watching over those left behind. If the after life were perfect nothing extra would be needed. I was different from Alan in that I need to plan for the future. Even after he died I needed to make sure I sent Alan on his way with essential items. So those who feel as I do will be happy to know that at his funeral he wore his London Salon tie, a Warwickshire Cricket Club tie was in his pocket and his coffin contained a copy of the Wisden Almanac for 2005 when England won the Ashes kindly given by his best cricketing friend Arthur Conduit and movingly inscribed by him.

Sorting out a pint of his favourite Doom Bar beer was more problematic. Metal cans are not allowed at cremations so we thought about about getting a take-home carton from his favourite pub in Knowle. In the end we chickened out fearing that the carton would leak and Alan's coffin would enter the crematorium dripping beer over the carpet! So his daughters and I sent him on his way with the latest CAMRA Real Ale Guide.

Alan loved CAMRA but they have let him down badly by failing to provide a guide to good drinking houses in the afterlife!

His family miss him terribly but so do his friends.

Anne J Sutcliffe

Alan was elected a member of the London Salon in 1982. He was a keen supporter of the Royal Photographic Society whom he served for 7 years on the Licentiate Panel and several years on the Visual Arts Associateship and Fellowship Panel. He was awarded Fellowships of the RPS in both the Applied and Pictorial Sections with monochrome environmental people images, but also enjoyed working in colour on landscape, nature and travel photography. He has lectured throughout the UK, and in Eire, Canada, India & the USA and has judged at over 50 international exhibitions. An enthusiastic exhibitor with over 2500 international acceptances. His work is represented in permanent collections including the RPS Tyng Collection, Photographic Society of America and the Australian Photographic Association.

<http://www.londonsalon.org/#!/alan-milward/4570409933>