



e-news

from the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain

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100 NOT OUT

An **e-news extra** celebrating the award of APAGB is unusual but how many people do you know who have been active photographers & have supported their Club for almost 73 years?



< BILL ATTENBOROUGH
APAGB LRPS AMPA

BILL ATTENBOROUGH APAGB LRPS AMPA

by Mary Nicholson APAGB Derby Photographic Society

Bill Attenborough bought his first camera from Woolworths, one of their own brands, after saving at the rate of 2d per week. It cost 1/6d. He did not realise that it would not come with a film, so it took him a few more weeks of saving before he could use it. But, as he said, he at least had the camera to play with. It would certainly concentrate your mind to get the best from each picture in those days.

Bill joined Newton's Electrical Engineers, as an apprentice making electrical components for aircraft and worked under Leslie Haskard, a member of Derby Photographic Society, who he describes as a very clever man. It was a 7-year apprenticeship training. Leslie got him interested in the Society and he joined us in 1941.

He volunteered twice during the war but was turned down as he was in a reserved occupation. As soon as the War was over in 1946, he joined the RAF and passed to be a gunner. He was initially part of the ground force, where he met Richard Burton. They were in the next beds to each other and in Bill's words, 'knocked about together quite a lot and he was a good chap'.

After passing exams he became a ground force photographer, up to 300 feet. The RAF gave him many opportunities to photograph different parts of the world with the top latest cameras and lenses that other people could not afford; photography in such places as Port Said, Khartoum, Egypt and Aden.

In 1952 he took and passed the advanced course for RAF photography and in 1953 he had the honour of photographing The Queen, in Northern Ireland, during her

Coronation Tour of the Commonwealth. He was posted to Germany and it is while he was there that he was nearly struck off Derby Photographic Society Membership for not attending the meetings regularly enough. During 1954 he returned to a hospital base and became involved with X Rays, scanners and macro work using a microscope.

In 1956 the RAF sent him to Cyprus, where there was nothing to do photographically and he found it very boring.

During 1957 he was the sole photographer at Old Sarum, which was a Classified RAF Station. There he said he was called in by the local police to do some of their specialised forensic work, because he was able to access better equipment than they had available and this also gave him the benefit of extra pay.

1959/60 took him on a two-year posting to Singapore, in charge of photography and the chance of travelling up as far as Penang. While he was there, he won the Alec Hoare Memorial Plaque, Derby P.S. premier trophy. It had to be sent out to him by registered post and he sent it straight back, as he did not want the responsibility of carrying it with him as he travelled around.

He became a member of the RPS in 1946, when Margaret Arthur was President. The RPS at that time was based near the Albert Hall and he visited often. He continued to support Derby PS and N&EMPF and, in 1959, he became RAF Fighter Command Photographer of the Year. He continued to be successful in the many competitions he entered and, in 1982, he took N&EMPF Colour Print of the Year Award and, in 1986, the N&EMPF Best Colour Panel. This trophy is still proudly displayed on his mantelpiece, along with three N&EMPF engraved glasses. Over the years he has had many acceptances and to this day regularly supports both Derby PS competitions and the NE&MPF Annual Exhibition.

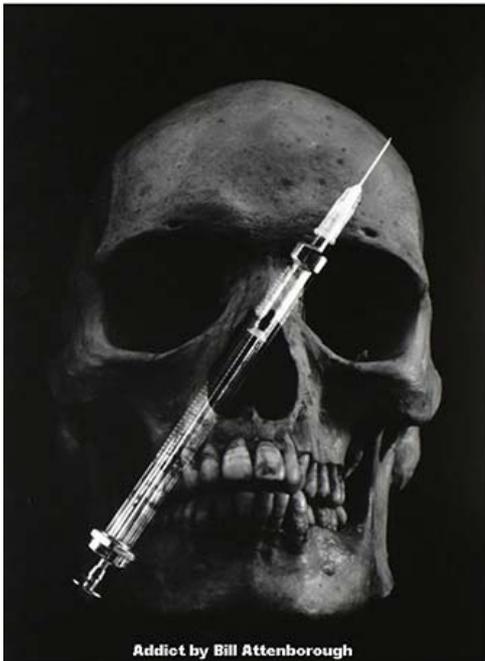
On leaving the Forces in 1968, after 22 years' service he was offered a job at the Denham Film Studios in the film processing department, on the then princely salary of £1,000 per year. Unable to find suitable accommodation with three bedrooms needed for his family, he was forced to turn it down. It proved to be the biggest disappointment of his life.



Birmingham Town Hall by Bill Attenborough



House of Lords by Bill Attenborough



Addict by Bill Attenborough



His Finest Hour by Bill Attenborough



Old Lincoln by Bill Attenborough

Photographs by Bill Attenborough

Bill returned to Newton's and eventually took charge of the department where he had first worked. At the age of 60 he left to join the Railway, with a view to getting the travel concession. He had to retire from the Railway at the age of 65, but he had achieved the concession, awarded to retiring Railway workers, allowing him to travel the country and pursue his photographic interests. While he was at the Railway, as a machinist, he was often called away to photograph components and items being sent for export abroad, such as Space Dishes. He organised regular photographic competitions for the works, plus their Open Days.

Following his Railway retirement, he re-joined Newton's on a part time basis, while also specialising in his favourite architectural subjects. He was asked to take the photographs for a book on organs, one of his many interests and enjoyed taking the architectural images he is noted for of places such as Westminster Abbey, The Palace of Westminster and the Albert Hall. His LRPS Panels were of architecture and, among his memorable images, are those of the interiors of the many Cathedrals he visited, using his Railway concession.

He held solo exhibitions at St Michael's Gallery in 1985, 1988, 1992 and 1993.

Since his retirement he has given his time freely for slide shows in village halls and old folks homes. He accompanied Ron Horsfield all over the country as a PAGB lecturer and judge, including places as far afield as Birkenhead and Farnborough. He helped Roy Deeley give presentations and demonstrations and became President of Derby PS, after Newham Riley died whilst in office. He has also served as the Derby PS Competition Secretary.

He is still an active member of “The Welcome Team” at Derby Cathedral, where he can be found on Wednesday mornings. He is regularly called upon to record the Cathedral daily life and events that are taking place and has had his pictures on the front of their CDs, Guide Books and Cards. He has received two “Bishops Badges” for his services there and also, Maundy Money from The Queen.



Bill Attenborough celebrated his 100th Birthday on 13 March 2019.

On the 11th March, Carol and I visited Derby Photographic Society who were celebrating Bill's 100th Birthday, just a couple of days early. I was delighted to present Bill with his PAGB Award for Meritorious Service (APAGB). I also contacted the RPS via a friend and ex-Trustee, Geoff Blackwell, also attended to make a presentation on behalf of the RPS.

Peter Cheetham PAGB Past President and EC Member



Presentation of the APAGB to Bill Attenborough by Peter Cheetham, PAGB Past President



BILL ATTENBOROUGH
COURTESY OF DERBY EVENING TELEGRAPH

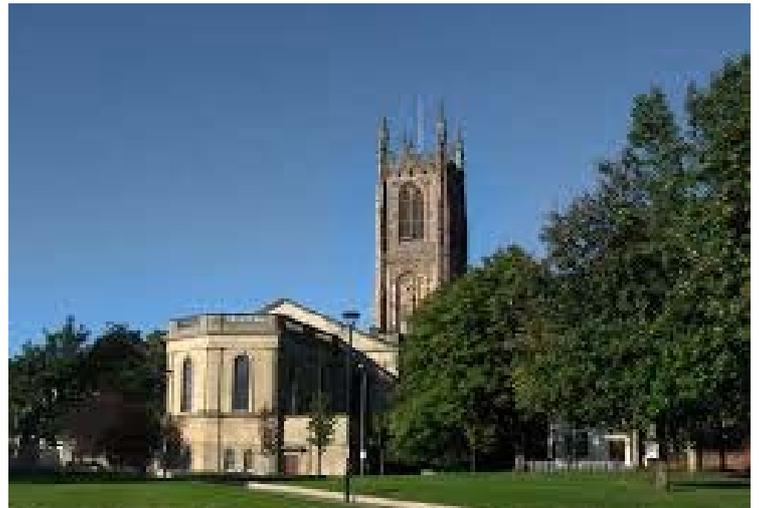
< Presentation on behalf of The Royal Photographic Society by retired Trustee, Geoff Blackwell

On Wednesday morning, we arrived at Derby Cathedral at 10am and Bill was already there. His trusty electric chariot had got him there, as it does most Wednesday mornings, for him to meet and greet visitors for a few hours.

There was an exhibition of his photographs taken over the years, many from his time as an official RAF photographer.

Birthday cake and champagne was produced to celebrate his 100 years.

Peter Cheetham PAGB Past President and EC Member





Pictures by Carol Cheetham, Ken Walters from Derby PS and Peter Cheetham.