

SILEBY PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

Simon Van-Orden, based in Dartmoor, was the guest speaker at the Zoom meeting of Sileby Photographic Society held on Monday, 27th September when he presented digital images under the title 'Chasing the Lights'.

Simon's presentation gave an insight into the natural phenomenon of the Northern Lights (Aurora Borealis) with images, personal anecdotes and advice on photographic techniques when capturing them on camera, based on his knowledge acquired over many years.

He described the myths and legends surrounding the Aurora, and explained some of the simple science which enabled the Lights to appear, always striving to obtain the perfect image and explaining how he did so.

Simon had made many trips to the Arctic during its winter months, September to late November, and February to March, months which usually provided the best opportunities for stunning images. He explained that it was not always a straightforward exercise, requiring patience, ensuring that fingers continued to function despite the cold, and avoiding lights from other peoples' torches and vehicles, sure indicators that would ruin many a good shot.

Simon went on to describe the photographic equipment and techniques he used in his quest for the perfect image. A good solid tripod, a camera that coped well with high ISO settings, correct shutter speed, a remote release and a fast wide-angle lens which, when combined with his vast knowledge acquired over many years, served him well.

The sight of a 'cloud' was usually the first sign of the beginning of an Aurora and capturing the 'Lights' in all their glory required planning, surveillance, patience whilst waiting for a sighting, and hopes of success when making the final strike!

Simon illustrated his in-depth lecture with excellent images of the Aurora Borealis and his captive audience had certainly learnt much of this natural phenomenon during his presentation.

John Hoogerwerf, President, thanked Simon for a great evening and it certainly appeared that practice makes perfect when attempting to photograph the spectacle of the Northern Lights.

The next Zoom meeting will be held on Monday, 11th October, when the Society's annual 'Graham Johnson 12-Shot Challenge' will take place. The judge for this competition will be Dave Hollingsworth, CPAGB.

Anyone wishing to become a member of Sileby Photographic Society should visit the contact page on the SPS website, <https://silebyps.org.uk/> when further details will be issued. The programme for the current photographic year is also available to view.