

**From:** [Evan Dawson](#)

**Sent:** 06 November 2020 17:13

**Subject:** Snapshot - No.13

Dear RPS trustees, staff, volunteers and friends

Crumbs - the world has changed since my last Snapshot email two weeks ago! I sincerely hope you're all keeping safe and cheerful, in spite of the new restrictions in place in England, and the limitations in place throughout the rest of the UK and abroad. **Thank you** so much for continuing to support the RPS throughout this time. I know how much it means to so many people to be able to stay creative, active and connected through photography.

**Last week**, I was away on leave for much of the week, although we had an excellent **Council Meeting** on Wednesday. We discussed the latest accounts, agreed the budget for next year, considered our volunteering structures, comms planning and more. Also that week, the new issue of **The Journal** hit doorsteps. I do hope you've all received your copies. I think it's a truly stunning piece of work, packed with really powerful photography and insightful articles. Congratulations to the editorial team, including **Simon, Michael, Rebecca** and those at **Think. Jo** was also heavily involved, given the emphasis on award winners.

This week, on **Monday**, I started with catchup calls with everyone as usual, and (together with **Michael** and **Nikki**) we had to think quickly about how we will handle the new **lockdown** arrangements being imposed in England. I also had a really interesting conversation with **Peter** and **Andy** about Distinctions. Later, **Andy** sent me several pieces of very moving feedback he's received recently from people who have undertaken distinctions during these challenging times. Below is just one of these, received from a member in India:

Sir, I was first excited to hear that even in the times of this global pandemic the ROYAL PHOTOGRAPHY SOCIETY is still going to offer services.

I am very honoured that i got a Associate qualification from the No.1 institution of photography in the whole world. It is my dream and I am so glad to achieve that. It wouldn't have been possible if RPS has stopped its services during this pandemic for which I am so grateful.

Ben Fox has been so respectful and so supportive and kind during this whole procedure by responding to my mails to him. Thank You Sir. I will never forget it.

Andy Moore is the one who brought me the good news and also responds if anybody has problems. Thank you Sir. I will never forget it.

I am also very grateful for RPS for accepting my photos and giving me this honour which I wanted to get since the first time i read/hear about it.

On **Tuesday**, we had another Council meeting to focus on the emerging work on our **governance** and **strategy**. In the afternoon, I had a great conversation with **Liz** about our education work, and with **Janet** about how we could collaborate more with the PAGB. Also, **Kate** and I wrote together to all

the groups, regions and chapters to update them about our ongoing response to the Covid restrictions.

On **Wednesday**, I spoke with panel member **Cathy Roberts** about her long involvement with the RPS and on the distinctions assessments. I also “sat in” on several **assessments** taking place in the building and online that day, and was really fascinated to watch successful and unsuccessful panels being discussed. I was really impressed by the professionalism of everyone, and learned a lot about how Licentiate level images are approached. It gave me a lot to think about for my own photography! I met **Ray Spence** during the lunch break, who showed me some of his wet collodion plates, which are beautiful. During the afternoon I spoke with a very experienced fundraiser about the potential for the RPS to make more progress in this area, and (with **Rebecca’s** help) we wrote to all members, to reassure them that the RPS will continue to support them during the weeks and months ahead.

During the day, **Michael** drove to collect a rather special donation to the RPS. He writes:

The grandson and family of Sir Robert Bird, Bt. KBE (1876-1960), a RPS member from 1915 until his death in 1960, have donated Sir Robert’s Autochrome slides – some 224 in number, to the RPS. The Autochrome was the first commercial colour process and Sir Robert, mastered the process and exhibited some of his slides in the RPS annual exhibition from 1915 until he gave up colour photography around 1920. The slides provide a remarkable insight into a well-to-do family at the time and further emphasise the important role RPS members had in using nascent colour processes. The collection is being preserved at RPS House and a feature on it will appear in the RPS Journal and website at a later date.

On **Thursday**, the new lockdown started, so I was working from home of course, with lots of paperwork to catch up on, including some interesting work on our new Inclusion Policy, a distinctions issue to consider, and some time to read the brilliant new “**Decisive Moment**” publication from the Documentary Group.

**Today**, I had a long call with **Ken** and **Suzanne** from Western Region, during which we covered a lot of ground, talking about different strategic aspects of the RPS’s work. It gave me a great deal to think about! During the afternoon, I spoke with landscape photographer **Thomas Heaton**, who has over 425,000 followers on YouTube (see his page [here](#) . It was really useful to hear his views of the RPS, and to talk about possible collaboration next year, once we’ve published our new strategy.

**Next week** (providing the world doesn’t change again), I’ll be working from home - but with lots of calls scheduled including with all the staff together on Tuesday morning, and all the managers on Thursday afternoon.

I hope you’re enjoying my weekly *Snapshots*, and please do send me anything you’d like me to share. **I would be grateful if chairs and ROs could circulate this to their group members, if appropriate - and if you are receiving this indirectly, do drop me a line if you’d like me to add your email to the circulation list.**

As always, please keep in touch, and do let me know if you’d like to discuss anything.

Happy weekending!

Evan

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