

Duxbury Camera Club thrives in the digital age

BY JONATHAN PAPPALARDO
CLIPPER CONTRIBUTOR

Nine years ago Duxbury resident Joan Collins was looking for a way to “get shooting and be around others” when she reignited her interest in photography after a 20-year hiatus. Her thoughts turned to the Duxbury Camera Club, which had begun in the 1970s with a dozen members, but had fizzled out and lay dormant for years.

In September 2008, Collins reached out to her friend Kathy Dixon with the idea of reviving the club and bringing it into the digital age, which has made photography more accessible for a wider audience.

“We started with an ad in the Clipper,” explained Collins. “Our goal was to have a meeting about forming the club and discussing how to go about it.”

Collins booked the Setter Room at the Duxbury Free Library, thinking a space with a maximum occupancy of 12 would be enough for the resurrected club’s first meeting.

“Thirty-eight people showed up,” she said. “It was unreal. We were packed in like sardines. People were standing in the hall.”

Participants included folks from Marshfield and Plymouth as well as members of the South Shore Camera Club in Quincy. Collins, a deeply competitive person who served as club president, had imagined the club as a space to hold competitions. The attendees squashed the idea.

“Four or five of them really set the tone,” she said. “They envisioned a club where we could learn about the craft.”

The generosity of club members became apparent when the first order of business was to purchase a digital projector to display and share images at meetings. The cost was \$1,500, which Collins says they needed immediately. They set a price of \$100 for contributing members.

“Within a month we had 20 contributing members and the projector,” she said.

In the years since, the club has grown to more than 80 members who take part in a variety of offerings including workshops on portraiture and lighting painting, small group sessions relating to nature photography and monthly field trips to places like Martha’s Vineyard, the Peabody Essex Museum and the Brimfield Antique Show.

The club’s monthly meetings are held at the Duxbury Free Library in the Merry Room on the first Wednesday of the month at 7 p.m., and the public is encouraged to attend. The meetings feature slide shows, critiques and renowned guest speakers. A monthly challenge affords members the chance to share photos relating to topics like bald heads



Duxbury Camera Club members Frank Moccaldi, left, and Rick Heath at a field trip to the Newport Coaching Show in Newport, RI.

Photo courtesy Duxbury Camera Club

and landscapes without a sky.

Presentations have included talks from Boston Globe staff photographer David L. Ryan, famed night photographer Lance Keimig and Greg Derr, an eager member from the early days.

“He would attend the club as a boy in the 1970s,” said Collins. “His mom would drop him off. Now he’s a photographer with The Patriot Ledger.”

The Duxbury Camera Club’s annual photography show will be displayed at the Ellison Center for the Arts beginning mid-April. Titled “Exposed 2017” the show is a collaborative effort between the club and the Duxbury Art Association, which is rebranding and returning to its roots.

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For more information, please visit the Chandler School website and click on the kindergarten information page.

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The exhibition gives club members the chance to display their work, in town for the first time, without the fear of being judged.

“We’re hoping people in Duxbury will see what members do,” said Ellen Barry, the club’s publicity coordinator. “It’s wonderful to see the Duxbury Camera Club actually having an event in Duxbury.”

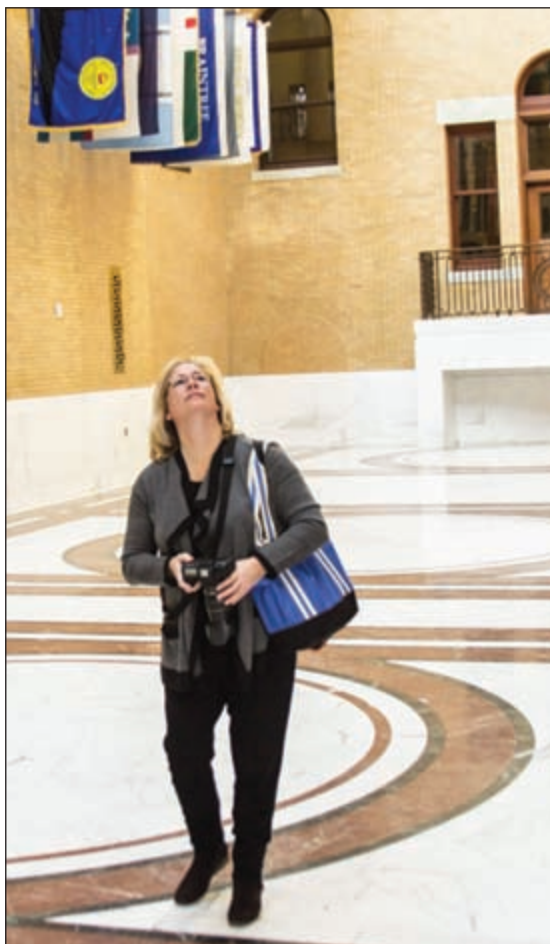


A balloon photo taken by Tara Cartee on one of the club’s field trips.

Current president Chris Ruggio says the easiest way to join the club is to attend a monthly meeting and pay the dues for the season, which begins in September and runs through June.

“We have new members joining all the time,” he said.

Collins, who recently won first place in the DAA’s Winter Juried Show, says the club has fulfilled her original intentions and the small group sessions have “egged her on to get shooting.”



Camille Neville looks for a good photo at the State House in Boston.

Photos courtesy Duxbury Camera Club

“You cannot get to be a better photographer unless you shoot. It’s just a wonderful way of seeing the world,” she said.



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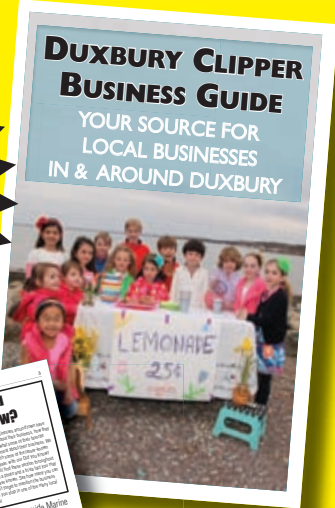
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