



Meeting Date:		2026	Contact: Mike O'Connor mail@mikeoc.com 0408325025			
Judge:		Dave Sumner Faps				
Subject:		The Paatsch Shield 2026				
1		G'day Frank, hey Barry - Jessica Wells WACC	pts	13	Place	
1. G'day Frank, hey Barry: The timing is impeccable and you have to love the title. I am giving this a merit and 13 pts because of the timing. The only thing I would say is I wish the fish had been going the other direction and not out of the shot. There is a story of bravery in regards to the fish and the obviously startled Pelican although the pelican does not look startled. I have to wonder why because the fish only risks getting eaten as it cannot get any benefit for risking itself like this, unless it was being chased under-water however it does not look that stressed. Depth of Field field has been missed on the fish but I would think you didn't have not much time at all to adjust the settings. The Pelican creates the suitable interest and qualification whilst the fish just adds interest and shows huge patience. Even if the fish was not there in the original shot Then this image still looks brilliant and if that is the case then turning the fish around would be best. The problem I have is that the image shows two areas of sharpness and the blurred head in between which is not how Depth of Field works and the more I look at this image, I can see no reason for this fish to do this at all, so I reckon this is a fake but nonetheless allowed for this competition. Well done if it is edited and if not even better done. However you need to pick a fish that would normally be out of the water like a flying fish would. I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?						
2		Reflections on Things Past - Mike O'Connor BCC	pts	10	Place	
2. Reflections on Things Past: All I can say is if you had controlled the exposure, you might not have so many dark, under-exposed areas in your shot. The Exif or Metadata has been removed but I reckon that auto exposure was set and the single exposure point was on the brighter areas of outside which is why the outside is exposed correctly and everything else is under-exposed and there are a lot of shadows. I am not sure about other cameras but on a Canon it is the asteryx marked button. Point your camera at something middle grey and then press the Asteryx button and hold it through shooting the shot. An exposure set on automatic left to its own devices will always darken an image to turn everything it can to middle grey. I cannot see the Exif data so I am not sure what camera was used here but I can say the image is not level. It definitely slopes to the left. I do hope this was a camera and not a mobile phone but this would allow for the images darker areas. I have seen the same subject done differently in a later image which won the competition. Which shows you had the right subject but, unfortunately missed seeing it. Thinking out of the box is what gives an image its potential. Remember think outside the box to win. I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?						
3		Pelican - Joe Bourke BCC	pts	14	Place	2nd
3. Pelican: I don't know why but I think this is only place to shoot a Pelican from because they are to me, not very photogenic. The problem is the closer the image the better it is but then that means it is extremely hard to tell a story. Had there been a story then this would have had a better place. Also the title tells us nothing because we know it is a Pelican. Had the title tried to tell a story it would have scored less but I think that getting this image to first place is the timing and the title that may have changed the outcome a little and likely enough to elevate it to first? I do like the blue and grey background that works really well. Great sharp image that just needs slightly more to be spot on. At least you refrained from calling it 'window to the soul'. I hate that sort of title and would have reduced the score to 10 or 9 so well done for not doing it.						



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4	Bygone Era - Wendy Slater WACC	pts	12	Place	
4. Bygone Era: The title works and the image almost works. Just think that half of that window and it is still a window. No need to have the entire window and I think that might have been a little better. You only require to have the tricycle entirely in the scene. You have managed the Depth of Field really well it is just you have made the image about the window and the tricycle instead of just the tricycle. I also think your framing is incorrect, The handlebars are a very similar colour to the window so they require some separation. I would have put the window in the right side of the image and moved the tricycle back a little so it has complete separation from the window frame. That would put the tricycle so it has space to be ridden into the image. I might also have found a child to ride the tricycle or at least sit on it. In older clothes if possible but any child would have done to give scale and that human element. The exposure is excellent and is worth a merit. After all it is a bike for humans so why not include one in character or not. I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?					
5	Winged Farm Machinery - Melanie Ball BCC	pts	10	Place	
5. Winged Farm Machinery: If someone read the title, what image would they have thought it looked like. The problem is that the image is built around the dragonfly so, is it the wings or the farm machinery? The issue is you have given us two subjects and used the title to tell us your improbable story. The title is the biggest issue here because it has split the image. The issue is that the dragon fly could never fly this machinery around hence the word improbable. Had you called this 'Rust Licker' or 'Rust Eater' it would have made it about the dragonfly which the image is? The problem is that I received the criteria after the images so, I think the biggest issue here is making this image about the Dragonfly and not the machinery and you have done that in both the image focus and the title where the title tries to tell the story. To anyone looking at this image without knowing its title they would think it is about the dragonfly due to that being sharp and the majority of the machinery blurred. Where in the list did it say 'Old Farm Machinery' it just states 'Farm Machinery'? Again, I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?					
6	Humeville - Bill Thompson WACC	pts	12	Place	
6. Humeville: What a lame title it is far too obvious and calling it no title would have been better. What is Humeville anyway and any title like 'Garden Gate' or 'Old Garden at Humeville' would have been better than the name taken straight from the post? The biggest issue here is Depth of Field, the gate is part of the post which is the object that we are looking at. Therefore it all should have been in focus and it looks to me without the Exif data that the focus point is wrong. The amount of photographers that spoil shots by using auto-focus is staggering. More and more we see just mobile phone shots and they just cannot be controlled anywhere near as well. I am not saying that is what you have used here as I was making a point. The focus point is likely the post and it should have been on the far side of the plant sticking through the gate to allow the Depth of Field to be utilised fully. How many people lose the focus in front of the focus point? So, the issue is that the gate focus falls off due to the Depth of Field. Had you known your Depth of Field full distance was you have wasted what is in front of the focus point? If you did not have enough Depth of Field you could have moved back and used a longer lens because distance to subject is the largest effect on Depth of Field. Or change the F-Stop to something with a much longer Depth of Field if you need it like f.8 or f/11. Still it is a good effort and worth a merit. In future use a Depth of Field calculator because here you may have gotten a place but in my case the subject has been spoiled by the lack of Depth of Field. Sorry, I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?					



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7	Windmill - Joe Bourke BCC	pts	10	Place	
7. Windmill: What a shame that you couldn't catch the wheel turning which would have jumped our image near to the top images. Unfortunately the exposure being pointed at the sky has darkened the Windmill and the tree to almost silhouette. Just change the exposure to the grey cloud might have been enough to light them up. The Depth of Field has worked well but the exposure and the boring and obvious title, spoil this image, sorry. Unfortunately the camera struggles when the sky is so bright in the centre and this is why controlling exposure is essential. If you do not know how then learn. I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?					
8	Ivy Clad Window - Kaye Kennedy WACC	pts	11	Place	
8. Ivy Clad Window: Again, the title is far too obvious, however, the Depth of Field and the exposure are really good. The light has been used very well and what a nice image. Seeing what is inside the window would have been an obstruction to the image causing a distraction. I think calling this 'Poor Security' or 'The Window that is a Door' might have worked better. This causes the viewer to think a bit differently to the obvious 'Ivy Clad Window' as in this state it is more of a door than a window. Still the use of the light has earned this image a merit. There are some technical issues too one of which is the image is not horizontal and leans to the left. Sorry but horizons are there even if you cannot see them. Use the built level in many cameras and a tripod or straighten the image in post-production. Also try lightening the shadows so we and see inside a little more. But do not lighten those leaves as the light is perfect. You can however lighten the top right and left corners a little if you wish. Nice try and a great image. I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?					
9	Two Chimneys - Linda Bourke BCC	pts	10	Place	
9. Two Chimneys: The title here works okay although you can still see the title in the image and it would not take much to guess it. Calling it 'Double Smoker' or something a little hard to guess would be okay. Something tells me that I am unsure why I am looking at an old building with no main subject, please make sure that what you are shooting is obvious because this one smacks of you named the image after you took the shot i.e. this one was last minute to fit the list rather than being thought about. This is definitely one of two images that were seem like they were snapped as last minute decisions. When you have a list like you have here you cannot just shoot something that fits and hope for the best. It still requires to be a good image, sorry if this is your image but I am just thinking what others may think too because we do not know any different. I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?					
10	Window - Helen Repacholi BCC	pts	12	Place	
10. Window: By calling this Window you have isolated the subject and detracted away from the chair and plant pot and its stand and I almost mistook the image for 'Window 2'. The simple addition of 'By the Window' may have saved the image or even. That is not all either because although you have got the Depth of Field good and the exposure is very well handled, the plant disappears into its reflection and we don't know which is real or reflected. I might have swapped the seat around with the plant and giving the plant the wall as a background. Unfortunately the seat is pointing out of the image and needs to be moved right to point inwards to stop people standing up and walking straight out of the shot at this point. Otherwise this may have been a very good image but without a person to add a dynamic it becomes meaningless. Again only half a Window may have got more of the items below in shot. You only require to know what something is and your brain fills in the rest because we have seen windows before. Some character in an olden dress and reading a newspaper is missing here. The seat is made for humans so why not get the dynamic element in there and have one. I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?					



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11	Tea Pot Reflection - Glenn Rose WACC	pts	11	Place	
11. Tea Pot Reflection: All that stops this teapot from holding tea is some steam from the spout. I was going to point out the thing sticking up from the rear but it seems that it is a tray that matched the pot. The only thing is the static-ness of the pots and the reflection of all the windows and even the photographer is in the pots reflection, Maybe a suspended sheet may have helped block these out. However, the pot I was thinking is not in the list but now I see why the reflection matters. Even so I reckon a tea pot in use is a better subject that one not in use. Sorry, but, teapots are for humans so they need to be used by one to add that dynamic element to the image. I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?					
12	Chimney - Susan Thompson BCC	pts	9	Place	
12. Chimney: I have to ask what the appeal here is, it is just a chimney? Whilst the chimney does have some character, what makes me stay on this image at all? The image has very little appeal which makes me start looking for mistakes and there are one or two. There is too much Depth of Field yes, too much and there are some vegetation just poking into right edge of the scene. Anything that goes off an image at either side is the viewers' route to their exit to the next image. There is also some vegetation in the bottom left gutter and the trees in the background. This is the other shot that I think could have been so very much better than this. It again gives the impression of lack of enthusiasm, last minuteness and that'll do attitude. This may not be what you were thinking but it is what anyone who sees this is thinking. You must when given a set subject or list of things take an image that stuns and is not ordinary, especially if you want to win. Can I suggest you look at some of the of the other winning shots and try and copy them. Sorry if this is your image I am only trying to help. But think about what I know about this image and the photographer, nothing at about either and that is the problem. Please remember to think about the people who know very little about you or the image?					
13	Repurposed - Mark Slater WACC	pts	14	Place	3 rd
13. Repurposed: I really think that this image is really good. I would have accepted it as is but the two people walking their dogs passed it are just what makes the image for me. Not only do they solidify the subject but they give size and a dynamic element to the image and they have lots of space to walk into so very well done. After all what are shops for if not for people to buy from. I am so happy that you did not use the old banks name or the new shops name for the image. I am giving this a Merit and a good score place well done. I had to think hard about which images won so I gave it third in the hope they may award it and as a just in case. Well done to you for this image I do like it. For those who don't know This was the State bank of Victoria live until 1990 when it was bought by the commonwealth bank.					
14	Chaos - Alan Neander BCC	pts	9	Place	
14. Chaos: Something about this image does not sit right and I am unsure if it is the Pelican or the Ute. Thinking about it, there is a good chance it could be both. However that said the gulls do not seem to be real or shot in this scene as they do not have any shadows but the Pelican does. One thing I hate in images are vehicles unless the image is about the car or vehicle it is just and awful background clutter. I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?					
15	PS Cumberoona - David Woolcock WACC	pts	9	Place	
15. PS Cumberoona: While I see you have tried to shoot something little different, you have made two fundamental mistakes here. First of all is the title, could you not think of a better name that what is written on the boat in two places? Secondly is the line of cars off to the right. Whilst cars are important to all of us, they have no place in photographic backgrounds. Had you taken this shot just a minute earlier they may not have been in your background. Plus the y add to what is a very busy image with posts, poles, lamps and lamp posts and other things like fences and cars in the shot. I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?					



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16	Watching Over - David Willis WACC	pts	11	Place	
16. Watching Over: I have to say here "How do you know" that the standing bird is 'Watching Over' the other one? Also from what I have read online, these are both male birds making it less obvious that one of them watching over the other. Or is it that they are just hanging out waiting or looking for food. Similarly if the name was not read out would the image have the same meaning, maybe, maybe not? So be careful when naming images especially when the title tells a story that would not be there without the title. The depth of Field is good as is the exposure, it is often very hard to not have the white overexposing. I would say this is a good shot but watch the title. I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?					
17	The Family and Friend - David Skinner WACC	pts	11	Place	
17. The Family and Friend: Nice to see a straight horizon. There are two criteria in this image, the Pelican and the two dog walkers. That said there would have been better with just one dog walker, then you would not have erased the guy's wife's identity by covering her face. The image would have been much better if we could have seen her or she was not there at all. What a shame about the circular shadow with the dogs ID tag right in the middle of it under its head. Once seen it causes a distraction. What I do not understand is why both have unless the Pelican had attracted you and then the walkers came along. I like the composition apart from the Pelican as it just seems a little over the top. I have to ask how you know that these are family and friend. Depth of field and exposure are all great bit is just the composition that leaves it somewhat odd. I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?					
18	Another Pelican - John Barry BCC	pts	10	Place	
18. Another Pelican: I have to say that the Pelican looks a little photo-shopped in to me as it has very sharp features. That said I had not seen the bird right behind the Pelican I have to confess to seeing its shadow the spotting the bird. I think you are owed an apology because nobody in their right mind would add in a Pelican with a bird behind it like this so I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?					
19	Window 2 - Mike Bourke BCC	pts	11	Place	
19. Window 2: This is exactly the same shot as earlier only not taken as well. Gone is the nice light and whilst this image has a slight bit more visible inside it is virtually identical to the earlier image. I have to say I think had this had the same nice light I may have thought it was here twice. Looking at images side by side I can see this one is slightly zoomed in compared to the other. All that said the lighting on the leaves and this penetration would have made a nicer image but title does this image no justice at all and also as the 'Ivy Clad Window' does not either. I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?					
20	The Cookhouse - Bill Cleverly WACC	pts	11	Place	
20. The Cookhouse: Whilst it may be a cookhouse, without the title what is it? It is a nothing house so show us what it is rather than trying to tell us with the title. The shot itself is well composed with good exposure and good depth of field. But, you missed the target with the title. Maybe a maid in character carrying a kettle or something along those lines might have helped after all the building is made for humans why not have them in character in your shot to tell the story. I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?					



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21	Mirror, Mirror on the Wall - David Willis WACC	pts	14	Place	1st
21. Mirror, Mirror on the Wall: What a much better shot of the same scene as earlier. However, I have no idea if this was a model worker or the photographer or a partner but he is definitely not the fairest of them all and without the title it would definitely not be Cinderella. However I think it may have been guessed by judges in this case. Very few nasty shadows this time likely because there is nothing to stop exposure like the outside light. This was a fantastic idea and has turned a boring shot into something quite nice and something to talk about. It might even have the makings of a story. The mirror is for humans to be looking into and the photographer has done that so well done 14 pts, 1st Place and a merit for your efforts. Well done here by the way I love what you thought here. I am sorry to berate the bearded Cinderella but, without this man this picture would be not in first place, he is perfect. Well done to the photographer and a well-deserved 1st Place.					
22	Farm Gate - Judy Barry BCC	pts	11	Place	
22. Farm Gate: Whilst I see the appeal of this what is not needed in this shot are the shadows and the dead tree. What a shame you could not chop down that dead tree or cut it out altogether or even come at this when the light was in the correct direction. Whilst this is a nice image it smacks of someone looking for a reason to shoot a gate and this competition may be just the reason why? Good depth of field and nice lighting spoiled by the direction. Again the list states 'gates' not 'old gates' or even old farm gates, so why pick this particular gate? I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?					
23	Sun Seed & Fertilizer Drill - Judy Hofmeyer WACC	pts	11	Place	
23. Sun Seed & Fertilizer Drill: If you are going to use a name plate as your title, please ensure you read it correctly. As it states it is a 'SUN Seed fertilizer Drill' there is no 'and' in there. Clearly this is an American device because they have spelled fertiliser incorrectly. This is clearly because I am not American, or Australian I am English and that is what I speak and write. This is yet another good shot ruined by the boring title. Maybe if you are shooting away from a museum, maybe not including three advertising boards through the wheels is maybe a better idea. If not then no issue. However the list states 'farm machinery' not 'old farm machinery'. I might have talked to a local farmer ploughing a field? I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?					
24	Reach for the Sky - Mike O'Connor BCC	pts	11	Place	
24. Reach for the Sky: Another chimney but this time the title is better and I might have got it right then I may not. Chimneys do not reach for the sky so better title might have been 'to the sky' or 'into the sky' Depth of Field is good from front to back even the sky has interest. I think I may have avoided the tree twigs to the right. Exposure is good but that is it, what else can look at it is a chimney at the end of the day. This and the two other chimney images are a prime example of shooting a shot that is on a list without a thought for a good picture. I apologise if I have this incorrect but I have to react to what I see and do not know what your intentions were?					



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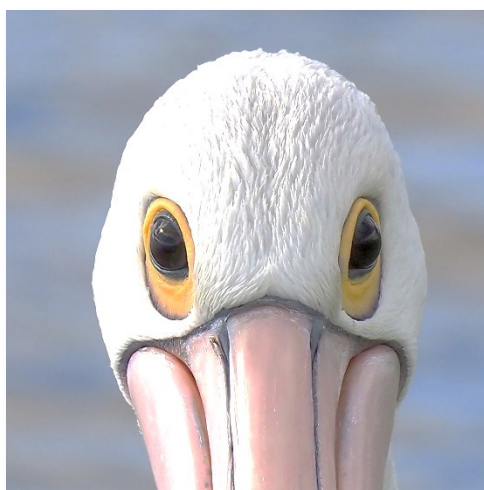
Individual Placing's

Best Image	Mirror Mirror on the Wall – David Willis - WACC	pts	14
2nd Place	Pelican - Joe Bourke - BCC	pts	14
3rd Place	Repurposed – Mark Slater - WACC	pts	14
Merit	G'Day Frank, hey Barry - Jessica Wells - WACC	pts	13
Merit	Bygone Era - Wendy Slater - WACC	pts	12
Merit	Humeville - Bill Thompson - WACC	pts	12
Merit	Ivy Clad Window - Kaye Kennedy - WACC	pts	11

	BCC	WACC
Total Score:	BCC = 127	WACC = 140



Best Image ~ Mirror Mirror on the Wall – David Willis WACC



Second Place ~ Pelican - Joe Bourke - BCC



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3rd Place ~ Repurposed – Mark Slater - WACC



Merit ~ G'Day Frank, hey Barry - Jessica Wells - WACC



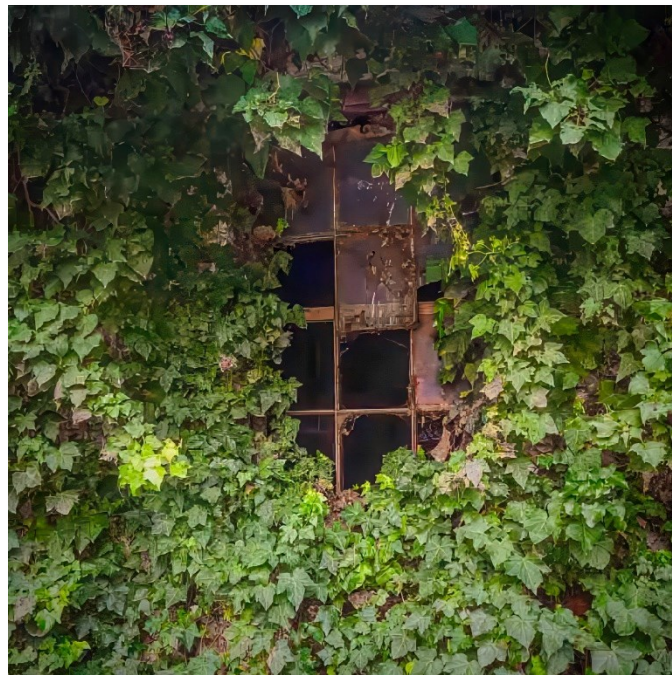
Merit ~ Bygone Era - Wendy Slater - WACC



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Merit ~ Humeville - Bill Thompson - WACC



Merit ~ Ivy Clad Window - Kaye Kennedy - WACC