

PHOTOGRAPHY STATUETTE TO VICTORIA

The Statuette winner of the Grenfell Henry Lawson Festival of Arts Photography Competition is Darren Stones from Glenroy, Melbourne with his lovely photograph “Dog Rocks” This photo was also the winner of the Open Colour category.

Whilst having an interest in photography since the age of 20 – now 42 – he only in 2006 decided to actively pursue his photography. He has undertaken various correspondence training courses Which have provided him with an insight into the art of photography. He states his photographic inspiration is derived from the work of Australian photographer and publisher, Steve Parish. Darren admires the way Parish sees Australia through his lens.

“Dog Rocks” is merely a dot on the Australian landscape located at Batesford in Victoria. The granite boulders and the weather beaten deciduous tree have provided photographic inspiration to those who know the area exists. Darren explained “My inspiration for producing ‘Dog Rocks’ was directly fuelled as a result of a photography meeting which was organised in support of my photography associate, Joe Mortelliti. On that sunny August day in 2007 around Geelong and surrounds when the photograph was taken, approximately 30 Victorian photographers rallied their support for Joe and attended the gathering.

Joe is dealing with a life-threatening condition acute myeloid leukaemia. As I write this, Joe is on the eve of undertaking a bone marrow transplant in Melbourne. It’s an operation Joe must undertake to save his life and his bone marrow donor is his brother. Joe is in his mid 50’s and is quite frankly not ready to leave us as he has plenty more miles to travel the Australian outback in his four- wheel drive. He is a well respected and successful photographer who has provided guidance to many.

Joe’s enthusiasm for landscape photography has rubbed off onto me. I have never thought of myself as a good landscape photographer, but I’m, now on a path to rectify that. I believe Joe’s influence and his body of work have stimulated me to improve my landscape photography work.

On a personal level, ‘Dog Rocks’ is virtually a testimony to friendship, more so than a photograph of boulders, a tree and the sky. It represents hope and an inner feeling that personal health is more important than anything. It’s a photograph that symbolises a friendship developed between two like-minded men.

I’m honoured to be awarded the Grenfell Henry Lawson Festival of Arts photography statuette, and dedicate my achievement to fellow photographer Joe Mortelliti.

Thank you to the organisers of the 51st Grenfell Henry Lawson Festival of Arts Photography Competition sponsors, judges and co-ordinators.”

Darren will be travelling to Grenfell to accept his Statuette at the Awards Dinner on Saturday 7th June. The Competition was judged last Saturday with the judges travelling from Sydney and Orange. Some 126 photographs had been entered in the five categories with the judges comments at the conclusion of the judging complimenting the committee on the excellent standard of the photographs and expressed it was a pleasure and privilege to be asked to judge.