

Roll: **snasm**

Camera: **Canon EOS 5D Mark III: E53**

Film: **Full frame digital**

Subject:

Book/Song title U3A project.

Notes:

I remember my Dad teaching me two things in my teens. The first was how to drive a gate gear. Although there has been little opportunity to drive gate geared vehicles since, I flatter myself that I learned quickly and well and I am pretty sure that with a few minutes practice I could drive a gate gear lorry reasonably well even now.

The other thing he tried to teach me was to always "read the bloody question paper." I reflect on this admonition frequently and have tried to pass best practice on to my son.

I'm not sure I read the question paper at all on this occasion but members of my book group, Paco and I think John, all sought to remind me of the topic. It was something about book or song titles. "Who's daft idea was that." I wondered. How is it possible to produce 10 pictures of a bloody book title.

Then inspiration struck. "Saturday Night and Sunday Morning" by Alan Sillitoe, one of my favourite books. I first read it in December 1975 when I was much the same age as Sillitoe's central character Arthur Seaton, (I know that because I'm a teeny bit ACDC and make a note inside the cover when I finish a book, and I never throw anything away.) Clearly as it was set in Nottingham it would be easy to find suitable shots that would reflect events in the novel. So I was away, I took off, albeit at a bit of tangent.

I have never worked so hard before on a photography project. To begin with I quickly realised that I could not bring to mind any of the primary locations that I thought I would remember, excepting the Raleigh factory. Even that one was slightly out. Sillitoe locates the bicycle factory in Eddison Street, which does not exist and as far as I can tell and never did. The real factory, where Sillitoe and the hero of his book worked, was in Faraday Road. The factory has gone and has been replaced with Raleigh Park, a mid-rise estate of student accommodation blocks. I did take a mood invoking shot from St. Peter's Church of the nearby "Cotton Mills". "Cotton Mills" is now also student accommodation but it looks right. I left it out of the prescribed 10 but have have put it back for this set.

I suspected that there was sure to be a list of locations, the pubs if nothing else, somewhere on the internet. There was not. I was therefore obliged, happily obliged I might say, to re-read the book to try and identify the other primary locations for myself.

The book opens with Arthur's drinking competition with "loudmouth" which concludes with Arthur falling down the stairs in the White Horse. The White Horse still exists on the corner of Faraday and Ilkeston Road and is run as an Asian Cafe and take-away so I expected to at least get a picture of the foot of the stairs. I might even persuade my 21 year old son to lie where Arthur's fall ends. Unfortunately the cafe is also closed, whether permanently or not I do not know.

That first Saturday night in the book finishes with Arthur in bed with his work mate's wife Brenda.

The affair continues with Brenda taking regular trips by bus to Wollaton village to meet Arthur. In addition to making love in the fields and hedgerows thereabouts, the couple spend the evenings drinking in the Sports Club until one night Jack, Brenda's husband, turns up. Acting on Brenda's suspicions Arthur creeps around the back to look through the window and spots Jack inside thus evading discovery.

The bus to Wollaton that travels through Radford along Ilkeston Road is now a single decker number 30. Brenda's bus was a double decker, almost certainly with a half cab and an open rear platform. My ambitions to find a Brenda getting off the bus while I stood in the shadows further down the road came to nothing.

I am not convinced that the Wollaton Village Club & Institute, despite it's boast to house a snooker table, is the right venue. It's by the sports club grounds but I thought Sillitoe's Sports Club to be more a veranda-ed pavilion. There are though windows around the side through which Arthur could have spied out the lay of land.

During the working week Arthur is at his capstan lathe in the factory. The factory is a short walk from the yard of the terraced houses where he lives with his Mam and Dad and his brother Frank. Arthur and his Dad, Seaton, walk together to work each morning.

In my youth and that of Arthur Seaton, the pub on the corner of South Sherwood Street still retained its proper name of "The Peach Tree". It was not until 1981 when, after more than 200 years with that name, the ignorant, the dull and the marketing impaired, foolishly renamed it "Langtry's". In 2018 after refurbishment the new owners missed the opportunity to reflect the historical, literary, film and cultural importance of the pub by returning it to its 1761 name and choose instead to make the bold and imaginative step of re-naming it "Lillie" Langtry's. It was in "The Peach Tree" that Arthur seduces Brenda's younger sister Winnie.

I tried several pubs over two or three evenings hoping to find a young couple who would agree to be my Arthur and Brenda or Arthur and Winnie or even Arthur and Doreen but it appears that young people no longer frequent pubs or at least not the ones that I visit (unless in rowdy, single sex groups). The shot of Gemma was taken in the Poppy and Pint in Lady Bay on New Years Eve, I think it rather atmospheric, capturing something of the mood of Saturday nights on the town although of course the Gemmas of that earlier epoch would be unlikely to be found at the bar. Gemma, I should mention, for the benefit of the curious, is one half of "Gemma and Franklyn" and sings rather well.

Arthur's Aunt lived in the Meadows. Arthur goes there to tap into his Aunt's wisdom regarding abortion as she has had so many children herself. His Aunt thinks "his pal" should not go messing about with such things but should marry the girl.

The film, I suspect for very early woke reasons, demonises Arthur's Aunt and locates Brenda's abortion at her home. In the book however, Brenda's self abortion takes place at her own home while her husband Jack is on night shift, Arthur is there and his Aunt is not. The hot bath and mother's ruin are successful in terminating the pregnancy.

Arthur goes again to his Aunt's house to celebrate Christmas.

To get to his Aunt's, Arthur walks past the Castle, crosses Castle Boulevard, walks over the railway bridge, from where he can see the marshalling yards, then along Ruddington Road but there is no Ruddington Road in the Meadows and as far as I can ascertain, there never has been.

The road I guess Arthur to have taken would have been Wilford Street and then Wilford Road. The old houses and shops of those streets are long gone. My substitute terraces I realised on later reflection are also wrong, Arthur's Aunt's house has a bay front. There are those kind of houses still in the Meadows particularly along Wilford Crescent and I might re-shoot that image. I should probably also find a yarded terrace, possibly in Radford, houses with pocket handkerchief back gardens like Arthur's home. I'm sure I've seen such like at some stage in my travels. My Uncle bill lived in one on Holland Street, Hyson Green.

The Peacock is where Arthur goes with his brother Fred to avoid bumping into the "swaddies", one of which is Winnie's husband. He gets a wayward arra in his ankle and the failure of the young darts player to apologise, leads to Arthur taking on a fight with him and his three mates.

Star Pubs and Bars are currently seeking a new tenant for the Peacock so there is still a chance that someone may twig the importance of the venue. I was thwarted in getting an inside shot, although it has to be said that I would probably have been unlikely to have located the dart board.

The last tenant was trying to run an entirely vegan establishment when he went bust and it seems to me unlikely that encouraged the playing of darts. For myself I hope and trust that no public house, trading entirely in ales that resemble nothing so much as dirty washing up water, is ever successful.

As Arthur and Fred pass the alms houses at Canning Circus an old bloke comes out of one of the pubs with a beer mug which he throws through an undertakers window hoping to get hold of a small monument which he wants for his dead wife's grave. The undertakers is no longer there. The pub could be any one of four still present; Sir John Borlace Warren, The Falcon, The Red Lion (now The Organ Grinder) or The Running Horse. I like think it would have been the Sir John Borlace Warren at number 1 Alfreton Road as it's a lovely venue to which I was introduced by my sister in law some 20 or 30 years ago.. I think there may have been least one other pub in Arthur's time.

Arthur is seen by the swaddies out with both Brenda and Winnie at Nottingham's Goose Fair but Goose Fair starts on the first Thursday in October (or should do) and the shoot was at the end of December. I do like think I was able to catch something of the atmosphere of Goose Fair with a night shot of the "Nottingham Eye" and the "Winter Wonderland" in Slab Square.

Sunday Morning I set off in search of young fishermen along the tow path of the Nottingham - Beeston Canal. I had been on the lookout for fishermen all week but it seems no one goes fishing between Christmas and New Year, not in the rain anyway.

It also appeared that I may have set off rather too late. The morning had almost ended and the fishermen I did see, were packing up their rods and nets and preparing to go home for Sunday dinner. Still some must fish in the afternoon, must they not? The rather tiring hike did feature some fishermen later on but sadly only overweight chaps well past their fortieth birthdays. After five and a half miles, with the sun going down and an encroaching sensation of despair, I turned around to capture in the failing light the images of fisherman already once rejected. "Saturday Night and Late Sunday Afternoon"?. As Arthur comments proper fishermen don't pass the time in conversation or ask questions.

It was clearly time to catch the train back to Nottingham to find a decent pub from which I might, in due course, walk home. As I headed on to Beeston Rylands and Beeston Station I took a few last shots as a paddle boarder headed into the setting of the sun.

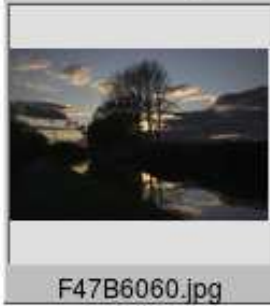
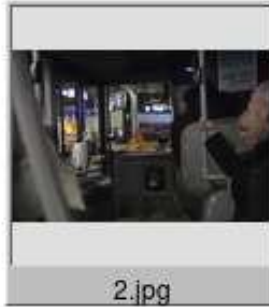
Dates:

Dates and times are verified from original exif data.

Frames:

Frames:

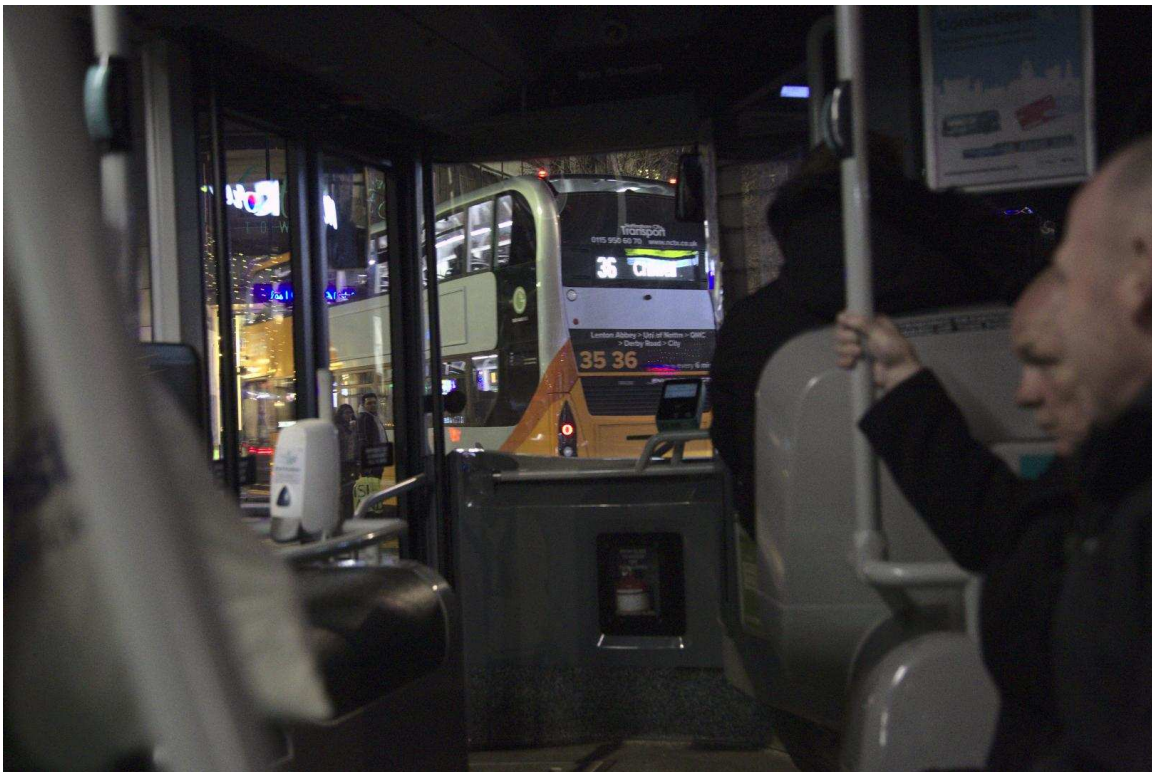
1	20221230	13:33:45	The White Horse
2	20221228	18:51:24	On the bus
3	20221230	14:33:15	Wollaton Village Club and Institute
4	20221230	13:04:06	Cotton Mills
5	20221228	15:51:13	The Peach Tree
6	20221231	23:03:51	Gemma
7	20221230	16:05:02	Terraced Houses
F47B5948	20221228	16:19:16	The Peacock
F47B5951	20221228	16:47:45	Alms Houses
F47B5961	20221228	18:45:53	Slab Square
F47B6044	20230102	14:44:25	Sunday Afternoon
F47B6059	20230102	15:14:04	Willows
F47B6060	20230102	15:30:01	Setting Sun
F47B6084	20230102	15:37:18	End of the Day





1 - The White Horse

F47B5951 - Alms Houses F47B5961 - Slab Square



2 - On the bus



3 - Wollaton Village Club and Institute



4 - Cotton Mills

F47B5948 - The Peacock F47B5951 - Alms Houses F47B5961 - Slab Square F47B6044 - Sunday Afternoon F47B6059 - Willows F47B6060 - Setting Sun F47B6084 - End of the Day



5 - The Peach Tree

F47B5948 - The Peacock F47B5951 - Alms Houses F47B5961 - Slab Square F47B6059 - Willows



6 - Gemma

F47B5961 - Slab Square F47B6044 - Sunday Afternoon F47B6059 - Willows F47B6060 - Setting Sun
F47B6084 - End of the Day



7 - Terraced Houses

F47B5948 - The Peacock F47B5951 - Alms Houses F47B5961 - Slab Square F47B6044 - Sunday Afternoon F47B6059 - Willows F47B6060 - Setting Sun F47B6084 - End of the Day



F47B5948 - The Peacock



F47B5951 - Alms Houses



F47B5961 - Slab Square



F47B6044 - Sunday Afternoon



F47B6059 - Willows



F47B6060 - Setting Sun



F47B6084 - End of the Day