

President's Message #3 - June 2023

To me, photography is an art of observation. It's about finding something interesting in an ordinary place . . . I've found it has little to do with the things you see and everything to do with the way you see them. Elliott Erwitt

Why does one pick up a camera? What is it about taking a photograph that so captivates some of us that we always must have a camera nearby ready to shoot? What is the philosophy behind photography? I think photographers are different in that they see the beauty in the everyday. In what others see as mundane and meaningless we see symmetry or contrast or irony. We see the world through a lens. We take a photograph with our mind before we press the shutter button. The camera is a tool that allows us to do that.

Photography is adventure. We must go to unusual places and cultures and try to capture what is there, for others or for oneself. We go not just to take a photo, but to capture the feeling of being there and sharing what it's like to be there—something not easy to do. As **Ansel Adams** said, "Photograph how it feels, not how it looks." Adams also said, "If what I see in my mind excites me, there is a good chance it will make a good photograph. It is an intuitive sense and also an ability that comes from a lot of practice. Some people never can get it."

Photography is friendship. The community of photographers is a tight-knit group that is always sharing and comparing. We are always learning from each other. We form clubs and go on field trips. We have competitions and critique each other's work—in a positive way of course—to improve our own art.

Photography is a great mental outlet. It's a great way to relax and have some fun. It's a great way to forget about the annoyances and issues that surround us in daily life and get lost in finding an image in the right place, with the right light, and at the right time to photograph.

Photography is about story telling. "A picture is worth a thousand words" was probably said by a photographer somewhere. We have all taken photographs that told a story. Just look at some of the photos on our website Home page and you will know what I mean. They were chosen for composition and light and so on, but they also tell a story. We are intrigued by them.

"Pictures don't lie" is another saying often heard. A photograph gives a voice to those who cannot speak or can't be spoken of. A photograph can change history and shock the world. Here are some examples that every photographer has seen:

- [10 Photos That Changed the Course of History \(phlearn.com\)](https://phlearn.com/10-photos-that-changed-the-course-of-history/)
- [22 Powerful Photos That Tell a Story | The Jotform Blog](https://www.jotform.com/blog/22-powerful-photos-that-tell-a-story/)

If you want to understand photography on a philosophical level, here are two websites that really get deep into what's behind what we do. As **Eric Kim** ([Eric Kim Photography](https://erickimphotography.com/)) says, "To me, photography is poetry with a camera. To me, photography is writing with light. To me, photography is putting human [emotions](#), perspective, and [soul](#) into an image." A beautiful statement.

- [PHOTOGRAPHY IS PHILOSOPHY \(erickimphotography.com\)](https://erickimphotography.com/photography-is-philosophy/)
- [Know Thyself: The Philosophy Behind Photography - AYP \(silberstudios.com\)](https://silberstudios.com/2013/01/10/known-thyself-the-philosophy-behind-photography-ayp/)

If you have any questions or concerns about our club, my door is always open.

James Dies – President – Victoria Camera Club



Cadillac, Saskatchewan by James Dies