

Newport

Doc Phot Course 1985-7

The course was started in 1973 by David Hurn, a member of Magnum. Our tutors, all working photographers, included artist/photographer Keith Arnatt, Ron McCormick, Daniel Meadows and Clive Landen. Cultural studies by Anne Baxter-Wright and historian Dr Ian Walker. Photographers John Benton Harris and Sue Packer lectured part-time and Paul Reas was the department's technician.

The cost of renting a place to live in Caerleon with fellow student Steve Barham was a shock to the system. Down-grading, Steve moved into a derelict house that was hidden in undergrowth in a field near Usk. Used to living in confined spaces I opted for a Bedford van. Finding one for hundred and fifty pounds, complete with a cooker, fridge, sleeping platform and deluxe Perspex roof.

First year students, we were given a series of assignments, practising the components of a photo essay. *Establishing shot, person at work, relationship and portrait.* Processing our black and white films in the college darkroom at Clarence Place. In the second year we took photographs for the Newport Survey, a long-term project undertaken annually. I photographed a Travelling Day Hospital caring for Alzheimer sufferers.



My final projects included Traveller's sites and the Krishnamurti Centre at Brockwood Park in Hampshire. The later, initiating a compilation of self-portraits and poems with the students.

The course has since evolved into a BA(Hons) in Documentary Photography, headed by Paul Reas at The University of South Wales in Cardiff.



Visiting lecturers included Martin Parr and Fay Godwin and the department's library deserves a mention, its shelves bowed under the weight of photographic history. Monumental monographs and classics like James Agee's 'Let us now praise famous men' with Walker Evans's photographs and books of his work for the FSA during the Great Depression. August Sander's 'Face of Our Time', typological portraits taken in Germany's Weimar Republic. And Diane Arbus's compelling monograph and biography. Arbus once remarked to Lissette Model "the more specific you are the more general it'll be".

Alumni Exhibition



100 YEARS OF PHOTOGRAPHY AT NEWPORT

November 2012 - January 2013
University's City Campus Wall Gallery