



A Vibration Reduction Lens in India

Jane H. Black, APSA
United Kingdom

The Gossips

India and a visit to the Taj Mahal have always been on a long list of possible travel destinations. As a devoted slide worker of some 30 years, resistance to the electronic imaging revolution and the return to prints was strong. But air travel these days presents a problem due to the restrictions implemented at airports on hand baggage,

especially the weight. With two Nikon bodies, lenses and a considerable amount of film to carry on board, one hardly has room for a passport, never mind other necessities and a paperback for a long flight was certainly out.

After lengthy consideration a decision was made to indulge in a D-SLR—settling on the Nikon D70. I had Nikon lenses, but wanted the Nikon 18-200mm, which proved to be what all other Nikon owners wanted. Every retailer contacted had a very long waiting list. Fortunately, the lens arrived a short time before leaving for Rajasthan. Reluctant to leave the slide camera home, both cameras were reduced to one lens—a 28-300mm for slides and the 18-200mm for the D70, plus lots of film. Even so, problems were encountered at the check-in desk at Heathrow.

India proved to be a photographer's delight with an exciting, restless, vibrant, and colorful mass of people and places. The hotels were luxurious and traveling by car with a great driver and a charming guide proved beneficial. In January it was warm and sunny along the countryside, but smog was a serious problem in the cities, especially early morning. The Taj Mahal was shrouded in smog





To Evening Prayers



The Scribe

at first light but the sun did come through and allowed a glimpse at the mystic icon, from which nothing can detract.

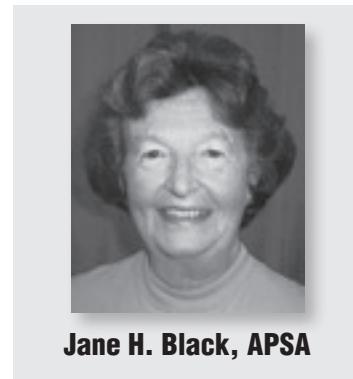
In countries such as India, it is beneficial to take the time to watch the locals performing everyday tasks, while looking for interesting faces. Capture moments that are part of the people's everyday life, such as the two sweepers in the Amber Fort having a rest and a good gossip (*The Gossips*). This image was photographed from a distance so they did not see the camera and pose. The photo was shot on both cameras and after comparing the results the conversion to digital was complete. In situations such as this a tripod is of little use. It attracts attention and is much too slow to manipulate, so it is handheld for speed to capture the moment. I used to have a very steady hand for such situations but anno domini now plays a part and this was where the 18-200 lens on the D70 triumphed because the lens has a Vibration Reduction (VR) system, which worked superbly. It was the digital image that was sharp—the color slide was not. I was of course very much aware of the VR facility and was testing and exploiting it, so I found that I was using the D70 and leaving my faithful old 801 in the bag.

The lady in red entering the mosque was a situation that required swift action in low light and the lens again performed well. (*To Evening Prayers*) By the entrance to the same mosque, where we were required to leave our shoes, I noticed the elderly man and a young boy recording with great concentration. (*The Scribe*) The light was very low. I took a couple of shots hoping he would be distracted and look up. The boy got up and moved into the background because he realized I was concentrating on his elderly companion. I was able to get a picture of that wonderful face.

Another photographic opportunity presented itself in an unlikely place. An attendant was looking after the ladies wash room at one of the places we stopped for a lunch. (*The Attendant*) She was so beautifully dressed and obviously did her modest job with tremendous pride. She immediately consented to have her photograph taken. I do not remember ever being refused a photograph and many times was asked, "Please take my picture."

So the conversion to digital happened painlessly, almost without planning, because the latest Nikon lens has vibration reduction and less hassle at the airport with just one camera and no film. ■

Any mention of products or services in this article or anywhere else in the *PSA Journal* does not constitute an endorsement or approval of those items.



Jane H. Black, APSA

*Photos ©
Jane H. Black, APSA*



The Attendant