

Aerial Photography

by Allan Goldstein, President
Aerial Images Photography Company

The use of color perspective aerial photography has grown considerably since those early days of yesteryear when a photographer would lug his huge bellows-type camera into a hot-air balloon, light the burners and shoot away.

The last few years have produced a dramatic improvement in the hi-tech design of the cameras, lenses, films, filters and photographic chemistry. The ultimate beneficiary has been the end product: the color photographs.

Aerial photography is a unique exciting branch of the photography profession. Our objective is to show not only your golf courses, club houses, or buildings under construction ... but HOW the subject relates to the surrounding geography.

Ground-based cameras are limited to showing bits and pieces of your golf course. When the requirement is to see large portions, or even all of the property, the airborne camera is the **ONLY** available option.

Aerial photographs serve many technical purposes from engineering and surveying to the more "down to earth" functions of examining the overall health of a golf course.

For example, aerial surveying creates vertical photographs, often in black and white to a specific scale, such as 1 inch equals 200 feet. Engineers and land developers use this resource for creating topographic models and exacting measurements.

The more common of the aerial photographs are color perspective oblique photographs of a specific area, perhaps a golf course, shopping center, or manufacturing plant. We strive to produce a series of highly detailed, color photographs from varying altitudes and directions. For golf courses, we shoot an average of 15-20 pictures from which the client will choose the ones to be enlarged.

The golf course superintendents have the awesome responsibility for maintaining the health, development and aesthetics of a large piece of land. The aerial photographs are invaluable in helping with the task.

The extent of damage of drought stress and flooding can only be seen in aerial photographs. From above, the severity can easily be determined by the different coloration of healthy and unhealthy ground cover. Using infra-red film, dutch elm disease and the overall health of the plant life is seen in various shades of reds and blues.

Irrigation engineers require the aerial photographs in order to plan for proper irrigation and drainage.

Vertical (top down) photographs of portions of the golf course are required by the architects and engineers to plan and design the landscape and buildings. Wide angle oblique shots are used for marketing and advertising and for exhibits in trade shows.

And of course many owners, superintendents and patrons just like to have a picture of their favorite holes on the wall for all to enjoy.

Other than the skill of the photographer, the camera equipment is most important. 35mm cameras produce a negative too small for aerial photography — details come out too small and the color quality is poor. The larger cameras, such as our Pentax 6x7 has a negative 60mm by 70mm and is over 3 times larger than the 35mm negative. Also the lens and overall camera mechanism are of far superior quality.

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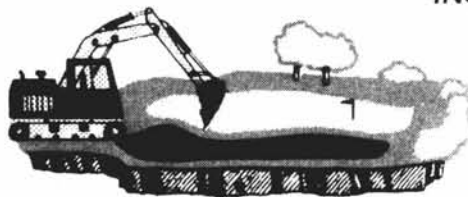
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Of all this, the most crucial element for a successful project is YOU — the client. In order for us to do our job and get the results you expect, you have to communicate what your needs are and what purposes the photographs will serve. You will have to determine what close-ups and wide angle shots are desired, what time of day or specific day is preferred. A good aerial photographer will abide by your wishes and take additional shots of your property as necessary.

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