



7_Autumn_09 NEWSLETTER

Digital Photography/Digital Art & Training News

• News about Photoshop Elements • News about training • News about digital cameras & local digital services.

New Version of Photoshop Elements Launched

A new, and further enhanced version of the Elements software, version 8, has just become available. Also a new version 8 for Apple Macintosh users has been launched at the same time.

I have been testing out version 8 for PC windows for a few weeks now. As you would expect, this latest version has some additional features, some of which I like very much. However, if you have version 7, unless you particularly want to use some of 8's new features, you probably won't want to make the move up to PSE 8. It is more debatable if you have version 6, since both 7 and 8 have additional features over that version which are well worth considering. If you are still using an earlier version than 6, then the time to upgrade to 7 or 8 is definitely here! Hopefully, no one reading this Newsletter is using any version less than version 5, as all the earlier versions before PSE 5 are more difficult and fiddly to use. The reason I am suggesting possibly holding back on buying version 8, at least just for the present time, is because the price is currently high and my recommended supplier for a budget priced copy of PSE 8 (see below) isn't offering it for the time being. However, with version 8 out, their price for version 7 has dropped. (The only version on sale now in the shops like PC World will be version 8).

So why am I so enthusiastic about versions 7 and now 8? Well, they offer a more sophisticated and useful choice for editing and enhancing images. They offer a huge choice in what you might like to do with an image over and above just printing. The scope for storing and very quickly finding your images held on your PC, and/or an external hard drive, CD or DVD is really impressive. I have more than 17,000 images on one of my training PCs and using the Organiser part of Elements to store and tag them with titles like the name of an event or family, any single or group collection of images can be found and shown on my PC in about a couple of seconds - it's that quick and easy! PSE 8 includes auto face/people recognition organisation. The other wonderful part of the software is that as the editing features have increased and become more sophisticated, so too has the simplicity of using the program. Offering a choice of **Guided Edit**, **Quick Edit** or **Full Edit**, you really can become familiar with what the software offers and how to use it. The Guided Edit provides exactly what its title implies. It provides a way, whilst you work on improving your image, for Elements to guide you through with helpful step-by-steps. It is absolutely brilliant!

I like the new features for: - *slideshows *combining the same image whilst making improvements removing unwanted details *combining differently exposed but similar images to automatically or manually put together the best detail captured in each exposure *the ability to quickly reposition parts of an image to improve the composition *the many previews of adjustments before choosing the one you like the most. The creative options such as Photobooks & sharing over the Internet are great too.

If you buy a new computer running Microsoft's new operating system Windows 7, then you will need to buy a copy of PSE 8 as this is the only version written for Windows 7. Check out the special price "upgrade version" on Amazon.co.uk if you have an earlier version of PSE (or some other Adobe products). If you need or want to go ahead with upgrading to version 8, then use this link to see a comparison features list of versions 6, 7 & 8 and then use the second link for the system requirements for your PC: -

<http://www.adobe.com/products/photoshopelwin/upgrade/?view=compare>

<http://www.adobe.com/products/photoshopelwin/systemreqs/>

If you are interested in upgrading cheaply to version 7 of Elements there are some issues to be aware of concerning the recommended processor (microchip) for your PC and the amount of RAM (memory) required. See Newsletter 5 for the full details and the details of my recommended seller on Amazon Marketplace where you can buy the software for a substantial saving. If you no longer have Newsletter 5, you can read it (as all previous edition of Newsletters) on my website, click on the link below.

http://www.digital_photography.talktalk.net/docs/DigPhotArt_Newsletter5.pdf

Contact me if you would like some further advice about the various versions. If you would like some introductory training using version 7 or 8, then see the training section below.

Training Opportunities

FREE digital photo surgeries & short demo sessions at the Devon Camera Centre, Exmouth

Once again, I will be available in the Devon Camera Centre, The Parade Exmouth, tel. 01395-275016 for drop-in photo surgeries and demonstrations aimed at sharing hints and tips about improving digital photos. We have chosen December, as maybe you will be considering a Christmas purchase concerning digital photography. I shall be in the shop on **Tuesday 1st, Thursday 3rd, Friday 4th and Saturday 5th December between 12 noon to 4.30pm. Sat, will be 10.30am - 4.30pm.** If you can, please drop into the shop, as well as tell your friends about the event for which I receive no payment at all. It's purely a promotional activity for me, along with a chance for the Devon Camera centre to show off their latest stocks of cameras and useful accessories. Some advance notification - I will be demonstrating a really new neat and convenient product for lighting and improving your macro shots. It will be worth dropping in just for that!

A special gift of personalised training for Christmas

With Christmas getting closer please consider giving a course of my training as a really special and personal gift. Alternatively, ask someone to give a course of training as a present to you! Gift voucher courses are a doubly special gift; a personal gift made up of a personalised course. A printed and personalised gift voucher provides something tangible to give on Christmas day. As gift voucher courses are paid in advance they attract preferential rates. If you know someone getting a new camera, please suggest that one of my gift vouchers is included in the box to provide help setting the camera up and to get going with it. Alternatively, the voucher could be just to brush up a particular skill or improve overall awareness in digital photography. Other ideas are • personal starter lessons in PSE Elements, • combinations of camera-shoot projects linked with critical appraisal • managing and backing up photos with Elements Organiser.

Follow this link for more information: - http://www.digital_photography.talktalk.net/giftVouchers.html

Telephone Tutoring

I have added new features to my telephone tutoring system where I can quickly share images that are to be edited, as well as see changes that have been made. This service was introduced to be a useful way of helping and training ex-clients without them feeling guilty of asking favours of my time. Also, as a way of continuing to train and work with some of my clients with whom I work on my residential courses but live far away from Devon. The Telephone Tutoring & Help Service is available for only those people who have had some previous training with me **and** have Elements 6, 7 or 8 on their Windows PC. It's very reasonably priced involving an advance payment that's topped up when necessary. This service has also proved useful for ensuring that Elements is correctly installed and set up on a PC, whilst tweaking various preferences to make it work better. It's also proving good for specific training, brushing up on some part of the software, or learning a new skill or particular feature of Elements.

Some Advance Notice Of My Residential Courses, 2010

2010 will see three courses. The first takes place over the weekend 19th - 21st February. This course is based upon using PSE Elements to edit, improve, and organise photographs. Last year's course was oversubscribed; so if you are interested, don't risk missing out.

<http://www.ammerdown.org/DigiPhotoSoftware.htm>

The second course is a week's photoshoot course spent learning how to use your camera better (plus a little work with PSE). This course will run 21st - 25th June. Now in its third year this course has previously been exceptionally popular. <http://www.ammerdown.org/digital2010.htm>

The third course is also a week's course. This is all new, aimed at using digital cameras better to shoot some work based around the theme of autumn. Through project work, each person will develop some work to being print or AV-ready. The dates for this course are 1st - 5th November 2010.

<http://www.ammerdown.org/autumnphoto2010.htm>

The venue is the **Ammerdown Retreat & Conference Centre**, located in idyllic Somerset countryside near **Radstock**. This is a really beautiful and picturesque location boasting its own stately home. For more information phone **01761-433709** or email **centre@Ammerdown.org**. Each course represents excellent value for money. Use this link to find more about these courses from my website: -

http://www.digital_photography.talktalk.net/residential.html

Accompanied photoshoots

Have you considered learning about using your camera on an accompanied photoshoot with me on hand to help advise with camera settings, techniques and composition? I know of lots of good locations but am happy to use a local photoshoot subject of your own. Follow this link to see some of my own and client's images captured on photoshoots. http://www.digital_photography.talktalk.net/galleries.html

Interested in learning how to put your photos into slide shows along with accompanying music that you can watch on your TV?

I have really enjoyed working with several of my clients recently using PSE to share family and holiday images in slide shows that are burned to CD or DVD to watch on a TV. Perhaps this is just the kind of thing that you would like to do. My normal training rates apply to this kind of work, just telephone or email your interest.

Illustrated Talks and Demonstrations

If you know of, or belong to, a club or organisation that uses after lunch/dinner speakers or arranges a programme of events with guest speakers, then please consider recommending hiring me! I offer illustrated talks based upon digital photography with digital slideshows making use of a digital projector that I bring with me. Good value, good entertainment and loads of good ideas for those who enjoy digital photography!

And finally, some training reminders about: - _

- **Travelling laptop service** is when I bring a laptop with me for training use - I don't charge anything extra for using one of my Laptops and software.
- **2-person training** with a like-minded friend. All that is needed, is a large enough kitchen or dining room table to sit around with 2 laptops. Speak to a friend so that you can get started. Alternatively, get your name on my list to put people in touch to form a 2-person training session.
- **Digital Interest Group: DIG** - becoming part of a **D**igital **I**nterest **G**roup for a modest membership fee is an informal way of getting together to continue developing your interest in digital photography. Meeting bimonthly DIGs meet in the home of one of the members to share latest images and ideas and to receive advice. With an agreed programme of photographic themes, I provide some in context/by request demonstration training using a digital projector. Additional Photoshoots are included too. **My first DIG has an exhibition "Through Our Eyes" booked for 24th April - 5th May 2010 at the National Trust's A la Ronde, Exmouth. Please make this a date in your diary to visit to view and enjoy their photography.**

If you are interested in a daytime or an evening DIG, email me to get your name on a list to form according to interests and numbers. The ideal number for a DIG is 6 persons.

• **Freebies and Links to useful Internet Resources** - in addition to providing information about all the different kinds of training I can offer, my website has some really good links to follow. Click on this link to get you directly to the links section: - http://www.digital_photography.talktalk.net/links.html

What's New in Digital Cameras & Digital Services?

News about digital cameras & the Devon Camera Centre (DCC), Exmouth

This section of the Newsletter is especially expanded with Christmas in mind!

A huge number of new cameras have come on the market since the last Newsletter. Canon, Nikon, Panasonic and Sony has been particularly busy bringing out new compact cameras as well as Digital SLRs (DSLRs). So if you are looking to replace your camera or maybe add to it with a DSLR or a bridge-type camera or a Super Zoom camera, there is a very good choice available. Now there is even one camera with a built in projector! Yes, the Nikon Coolpix S1000pj doubles as a portable digital projector to project images direct from the camera to a wall. Astonishing! Watch this video: -

http://content.hmxmedia.com/nikon/s1000pj_video/index_en_GB.html

Check out the Devon Camera Centre for all the very latest models and prices. Of the Super Zoom cameras, I particularly like the Canon PowerShot SX20IS. It has image stabilization for good, sharp, shake-free images and a lens that offers capturing anything from a wide-angle view to a huge long shot view through its 20x Optical Zoom. The big new feature working its way through the new DSLRs is the function to shoot in High Definition video (to view on a HD TV). The Canon SX20IS includes this too. I regularly use an earlier version of this camera that is still giving excellent results but it is now looking quite dated by the specification of its latest generation. Canon also offer a number of smaller compacts that have a pretty useful optical zoom which although not as extensive as the bigger Super Zoom camera, are very convenient to carry in a pocket.

The highly acclaimed Canon G10 'bridge camera' is now the G11. I really like the appeal of the swivelling LCD that Canon has introduced with this version of the camera. It's a great improvement and can only add to the appeal as the second camera of choice for many DSLR owners. With a 5X optical zoom and many identical settings and features similar to Canon's DSLRs, the G11 should be a real winner. Devon Cameras has sold out of the G11 twice since its introduction!

If you are looking to spoil yourself, the all new and very fast Canon 7D DSLR is superbly built and very well featured. Nikon's D300 has undergone a minor upgrade into the D300S to offer some new and improved features. The Nikon D300 has proved a real trailblazer in respect of camera build and quality of images and many regard it as a standard setter amongst DSLRs. The D300S is well worth very serious consideration. If you are looking for spending less, and want a lighter-weight DSLR, the new Nikon D3000 is a very good introductory level camera that you won't be disappointed in owning. Nikon has ensured some good and user-friendly SCENE settings for this camera along with a well-designed user interface. If you like the idea of articulated (moveable) LCDs then the Nikon D5000 (featured in the last Newsletter) is well established and available at good prices. Sony have led the way for some while with articulated LCDs and Live View which is probably set to continue with the Alpha range being replaced with the Alpha 230, 350 & 380, Apart from the Alpha 230, these cameras come with a slide & tilt LCD to use in Live View. I have been really impressed with the results of the earlier models, so this new family is very promising. Sony's excellent 'SteadyShot' image stabilisation is a development of Minolta technology operating inside the body of the camera (rather than in the camera lens). Several of my clients have cameras with this form of IS and it never ceases to amaze me how steady their handheld images can be. This feature could be another reason for you to check out the Alpha range.

Panasonic are blazing a new trail with their Lumix G1, GH1 & GF1 cameras that offer compactness with the flexibility of interchangeable lenses. Like a baby-sized DSLR but big on features, these cameras are receiving fantastic reviews. They are clearly breaking new ground and it will be interesting to see how some of the other big names in cameras respond.

For more detailed information about these and many other cameras, visit **LINKS** on my website where you can go directly to a very good and detailed source of camera tests and reviews.

http://www.digital_photography.talktalk.net/links.html

What apart from a digital camera might you be interested in either for yourself or to buy as a Christmas gift for a keen photographer? Here are some suggestions. Although focused upon Exmouth's Devon Camera Centre, I hope for those of you living in other parts of the UK, that you find it of interest: -

Lighting

If you want a really good set of lights then consider a set similar to the one I bought through the Devon Camera Centre earlier in the year. The reasonably priced **Interfit Super Cool-Lite 5** uses new energy saving studio light bulbs. It's easy to use and versatile enough for first time users. It packs away too. If you don't want a set like mine that provides 2 sets of lights to use with 4 free-standing lighting units and a choice of Softbox, Flood reflectors and Diffuser accessories, you can start off more simply and cheaply. The **Cool-Lite 103** comes with one light set and stand to use as a flood reflector or with a nylon 'shower cap' diffuser. Either set are well worth checking out.

Fabric Reflectors & Diffusers

A single or set of collapsible reflectors as an accessory for the creative photographer can be really useful to better control lighting conditions. Used with or without a lighting kit, fabric reflectors come in different sizes and colours usually including their own small bag that the sprung reflectors fold into. For example, silver ones keep highlights looking crisp, gold ones are useful to warm up cool skin tones in portrait photography and plain white reflectors can bounce and spread light. Reflectors can be used with natural or artificial light. Useful too out on a photoshoot as well as in the home. As a solution to the common problem of harsh lighting caused by DSLRs popup flash units, Kenro market a mini reflector/diffuser. There is a huge choice of sizes and types of fabric-based reflectors marketed to suit different budgets.

Gorillatorch

I predict that a very useful bit of kit that will quickly become very popular is the new '**Gorillatorch**' mini lighting gizmo. I will have one with me during my **drop-in photo surgeries and demonstrations**. This is an inexpensive and exciting little product. Come in and see it. Devon Cameras have several on order, should you want to buy one.

Tripods

Devon Cameras have a special offer on a really sturdy but lightweight tripod from GIOTTOS. A high quality product, it comes with a 5-year warranty. The offer tripod is the MH5001 3-way head that includes the essential quick release plate for your camera, and the MTL9251B Aluminium Tripod legs. This has a folded size of about 63cm with a maximum height of 161cm plus the additional height of the 3-way head. If you don't fancy the offer tripod, then you can choose from an excellent choice of tripod heads, legs, monopods and other accessories. Remember, a good tripod is essential for long shutter speeds and getting up close for steady subjects.

LENSES

Another idea for Christmas if you have a DSLR is to add to your choice of lenses; maybe, for example, your interest in photography could benefit from the use of an ultra wide-angle, superzoom or macro lens? Maybe you are becoming dissatisfied with the kit lens that came with your camera or finding it a bit restrictive in terms of the kind of photographs you like to shoot and capture? This is when a visit to the camera shop can be fruitful with both expert advice on hand as well as the chance to try different lenses on your camera.

The Devon Camera Centre sells at Internet prices - make Exmouth's Devon Camera Centre your first and only point of call. Support our local digital store - Exmouth and you need it!

NEWSLETTER 8 will be out during the spring in 2010