

# Croydon CC Newsletter – 27 June 2021

## Chairman's Viewpoint

Photography has always been a two or three stage process. The initial exposure creates a latent image that subsequent processing reveals. For most of the decades after photography's invention, using film which has to be developed was the only option. Producing prints involves a further round of making a second exposure onto paper coated with light sensitive materials and more processing with chemicals.

For many, this was a fiddly, exacting and time consuming process with few having the facilities or inclination to make their own prints. Even in the early days, most people left the task to specialists. A Kodak advertising slogan from 1888 stated "You press the button, we do the rest". With the exposures all made, customers sent their cameras to Kodak which returned them loaded with fresh film along with the prints. With this innovation, Kodak changed photography from a niche pursuit to one all could enjoy. It was the start from which the company became one of most famous in the world.

Digital imaging has further transformed photography. In its earliest days, it was once a complex activity, conducted with the aid of equipment housed in a horse drawn wagon if out in the field. No longer do people send their films away in the mail or take them to a shop, most create their images with a handheld device. Nor does it take hours or even days to see the results, they are available instantly. Social media makes it possible to share them with anyone in the world within moments. How far we have come.

Yet for all that, many images benefit from adjustments to bring out the best rendering. Ansel Adams famously said that "Dodging and burning are steps to take care of mistakes God made in establishing tonal relationships". Darkroom practitioners such as Robin Bell spent years honing skills that are highly valued by top level photographers. Digital does not alter the benefits of manipulation but it does make the production of well presented photos much easier and as well as introduce new possibilities.

Among the most commonly used programs are Photoshop and Lightroom. The former has become so synonymous with photo editing that its name has entered the language as a verb. I cannot think of any other computer application which has achieved that level of acceptance in our culture. Mike Lawrence, the speaker at our last meeting, gave an overview of both. While it is possible to let our cameras process images to produce a JPEG, saving the data captured by the sensor as a Raw file and editing it on a computer is a better option for optimum image quality.

Mike showed us how Adobe Camera Raw is common to both; it is only the interface that differs. A Raw file is not an image, it is the source data from which to produce a photo. While the methods differ, the process is analogous with processing film as acknowledged in Lightroom with its aptly named "Develop" module.

Photo editors offer a comprehensive range of options that can seem baffling initially. Despite its name and origins, Photoshop can handle all manner of graphic images and has functions most photographers will never need. Adobe created Lightroom purely for photography and often only those images which require extensive manipulation need to be transferred to Photoshop for completion. Neither is better than the other and most will prefer the one with which they are better acquainted.

As with many things in life, photography benefits from experience gained by the practitioner. Whether in the darkroom or sitting at a computer, gaining understanding through practice develops the skills that aid us in producing images. A member who still made his prints the traditional way from film negatives once compared the two approaches. The darkroom, he said, has the equivalent of the undo command in Photoshop except it is called the “redo button” with the wastage that implies.

Therein lies the most important difference. With digital, we can see the results instantly and rework or abandon any changes which detract from the image. Over time, we can become familiar with the controls and there is always help available via the Internet. Truly, digital imaging has changed photography for the better, all we need is the commitment to learn what the technology can offer.

## **Club Matters**

### **30 June 2021 – DPI of the Year judged by Paul Adams**

Paul Adams adjudicates on our best DPIs from this season and will select those he finds to be the best. He will decide on the top three and award three Hon Mentions, with the winner awarded the Mess Trophy for the next year.

### **7 July 2021 – Image Critique with Marcus Scott-Taggart**

For our final online meeting of the season, we have an image critique session with a difference. Our guest judge, Marcus Scott-Taggart, will use his extensive Lightroom skills to demonstrate any recommended changes. Submit a maximum of two images by midnight, **Thursday 1 July**.

### **Links for PhotoEntry and Instructions**

<https://compent.photoentry.uk/compent/>

<http://croydoncameraclub.org.uk/WebSiteArchive/PhotoEntryGuidance.pdf>

### **Mike Farley (Chairman)**