

Newsletter for Week Ending 28th January 2023



Collage produced using Pixlr Smartphone App

Welcome to the First Newsletter of 2023

As this is the first newsletter of 2023 let me wish you all a very happy New Year.

For me 2022 was not one of the best years and on Christmas day night I ended up in the accident and emergency department of our local hospital after my wife called our emergency services as I was suffering violent headaches, abdominal pain, shivering and running a temperature of 39.7C.

The Paramedics who attended that night were first class. They set up an IV drip of paracetamol to reduce my fever symptoms and gave me a thorough examination.

After much consultation with the doctor's in A&E they decided that I would be better to go to hospital and have all the inflammation markers taken. Being Christmas day night

they were a little concerned that waiting times might be quite excessive. My son drove my wife and I to the hospital.

After a quick triage we settled in for the wait! We saw all sorts comings and goings during our 9 hour wait to be seen by a doctor.

We subsequently learned that the triage system ranked us level 1 (the lowest case situation) and any subsequent admission with a higher ranking took precedence over us.

Eventually after several blood and urine samples it was suggested that the fever was due to a possible urinary tract infection and I was prescribed a very strong dose of a broad spectrum antibiotic.

Having to take this for 7 days proved an extremely challenging time as my bodies reaction to it was to keep me very much local to the bathroom! It took several days for the symptoms to diminish.

So I'm hoping 2023 is going to be a better year. I've got a referral back to the original consultant who was investigating my breathlessness and should he think that there are no cardiology conditions then there will be a referral to respiratory medicine.

As our health service is under extreme pressure I have decided that if I do not get seen within the next month that I will ask for a private referral to another consultant at a local private hospital.

Spam Bombing

A couple of newsletters ago I mentioned that I was getting bombarded with all kinds of "spam" email on my Yahoo+ account.

I followed all the recommendations of setting filters and blocking some domains but they still keep coming through at a rate of about 80 per day.

It's pretty annoying as it detracts from any genuine email that might be nestling amongst them so I cannot just bulk delete them.

I contacted Yahoo customer service and they responded by just copying out the "help pages" that I had already read to try and find the key to stopping this trash!

My Gmail accounts never show this level of activity so I'm going to look at closing the Yahoo account and using another alias account on Gmail.

I have lots of sites where I use my Yahoo mail account for communication and for software registrations etc so it's not going to be an easy task.

My Mailchimp newsletters are also linked to this account as well as my website domain registration.

It is really annoying that these people have not found legitimate uses of their talent rather than being just annoying pests!

My Latest YouTube videos

After a lazy start to the Year I decided to concentrate and try and get out a couple of videos that I have wanted to produce for a while now.

As the topics could be potentially “nerdy” I also decided to publish a PDF downloadable booklet to go along with each video. These are all available from [link to download](#)

The first one was about using supplementary lenses to get close-up and macro shots with bridge cameras. [link to video](#)



Figure 1 [click for video link](#)

The second was about Extension tube and bellows for close-up photography whwn using mirrorless or DSLR cameras.

[link to video](#)

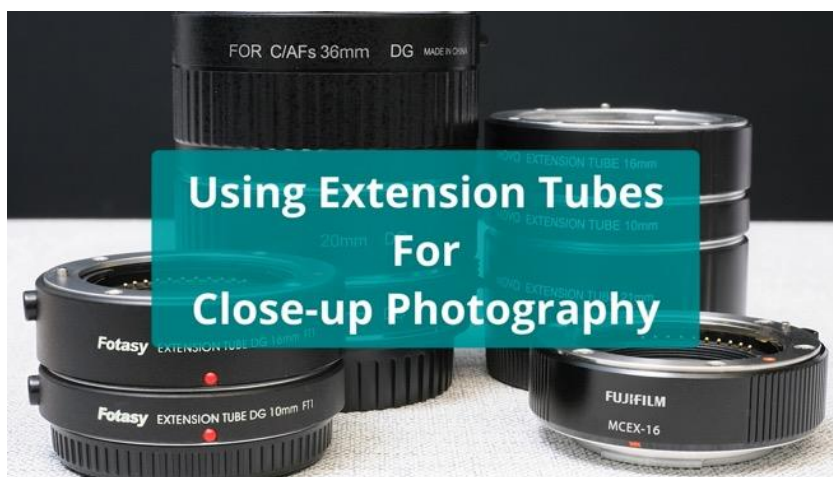


Figure 2 [click for video link](#)

I also produced a video looking at the issue with the dioptre adjustment wheel on the FZ80/82 camera.

I disassembled the EVF to determine the possible cause of the EVF not keeping focus once it had been set.

[link to video](#)



Figure 3 click for video link.

In this video I determined that the spring loaded ball & detent had been lubricated with grease. This made it extremely easy for the lens adjuster to shift the detent position.

By removing the grease, and hence increasing the friction of the spring loaded ball in the detents, I was hoping that this friction would stop this from happening.

As once the EVF dioptre has been set it is unlikely that its position would be changed all that frequently that this would cause wear and eventual failure of the detents.

So far I can report that the setting has not changed since I did this repair.

For those with the problem I suggest focussing the EVF and then placing adhesive tape over the adjustment dial or a small blob of hot glue.

This will prevent the dial moving and the EVF going out of focus.

Has anyone else had the EVF screen view look far away and not magnified?

Please let me know if you have [mailto:support@grahamhoughton.com?subject=EVF problem](mailto:support@grahamhoughton.com?subject=EVF%20problem)

Image Size versus JPEG File Size

I had a query from a reader who was wanting to know why the JPEG file that his camera was producing was smaller than what the image size was showing in the setup menu. This was actually for the Panasonic G9 camera but it applies to any camera.



If you look at the image size menu from the Rec set up screen you can see the possible confusion here.

It looks like the L format should give 13.5M images – however you have to remember that this is the **TOTAL PIXEL SIZE** and not the resulting **FILE SIZE**.

The pixel dimensions for this 16:9 aspect ratio image are 4896 x 2752 which does indeed give us a 13.5 Megapixel image.

When this image is converted from its native RAW data format (remember the camera always shoots in a RAW file format) into a JPEG image file it is produced by a image file compression program.

Normally (depending upon the complexity of the image itself) this compression is in the order of between 3 and 4 times.

The result is that a 13.5Megapixel image may only produce between a 3 and 4 MB (megabyte) image file size. If you were to shoot RAW plus JPEG you would see the RAW file is around 11MB in size as this is uncompressed.



My wife received a bouquet of flowers so after they had opened up a little I took the opportunity to take a picture of the flowers so that she could send a picture to the sender to show her how they were arranged.

So not wanting to set up a camera and soft box I decided on a quick capture using my iPhone 13 pro camera just as they were in the conservatory lit only by window light. I used the portrait mode as this uses AI to render a blurred background which was ideal in this case as I wanted the flowers to be the most prominent feature in the image. So the final image was a tight crop from the original capture as shown below.



The blurred background isn't 100% perfect, especially around the outline of some of the flower buds but overall I think that the result is excellent. Even the tight crop doesn't show any of the usual smartphone "painterly look"



One week later using the same technique moving in a little closer around 1 metre away.

Should Photographers Reveal How Much Post Processing is Applied to an Image?



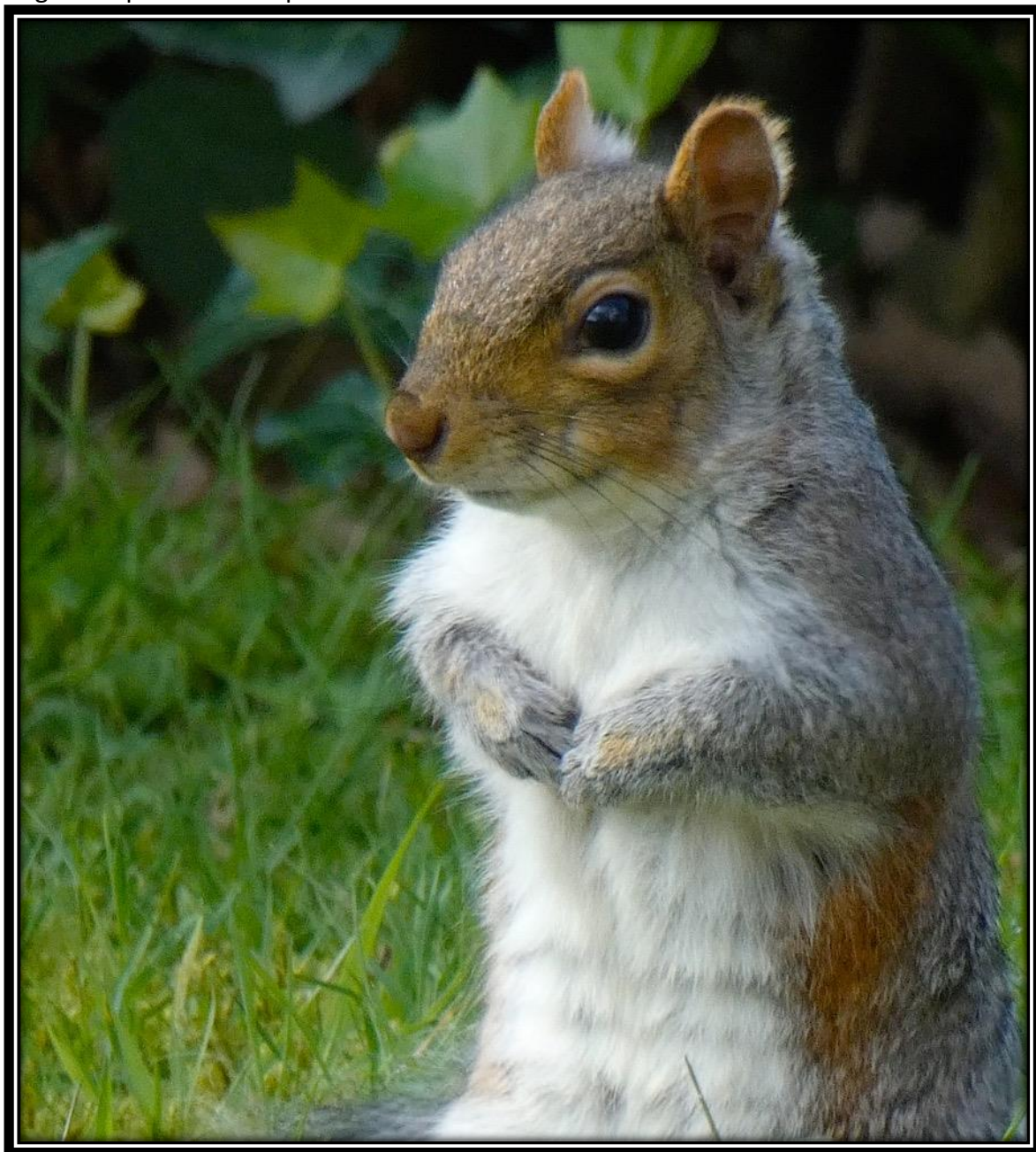
This is an image captured with the Panasonic Lumix FZ80/82 using moderate zoom settings and JPEG only capture at ISO 80.

Looking at the image you would believe that this is the type of quality that you might expect from this camera given good lighting conditions.

Admittedly the JPEG image is correctly exposed with very little highlight blowout even in the fur that is sidelight by the direct sunlight.

However the image has had some post-processing to clean up the noise and add some sharpening.

Now this image is a part crop from a landscape format image which I have shown the original unprocessed crop.



By running the image through the Topaz de-noise program to reduce the usual JPEG noise and then applying a little sharpening to the de-noised image it gives a much cleaner image than the original image above.

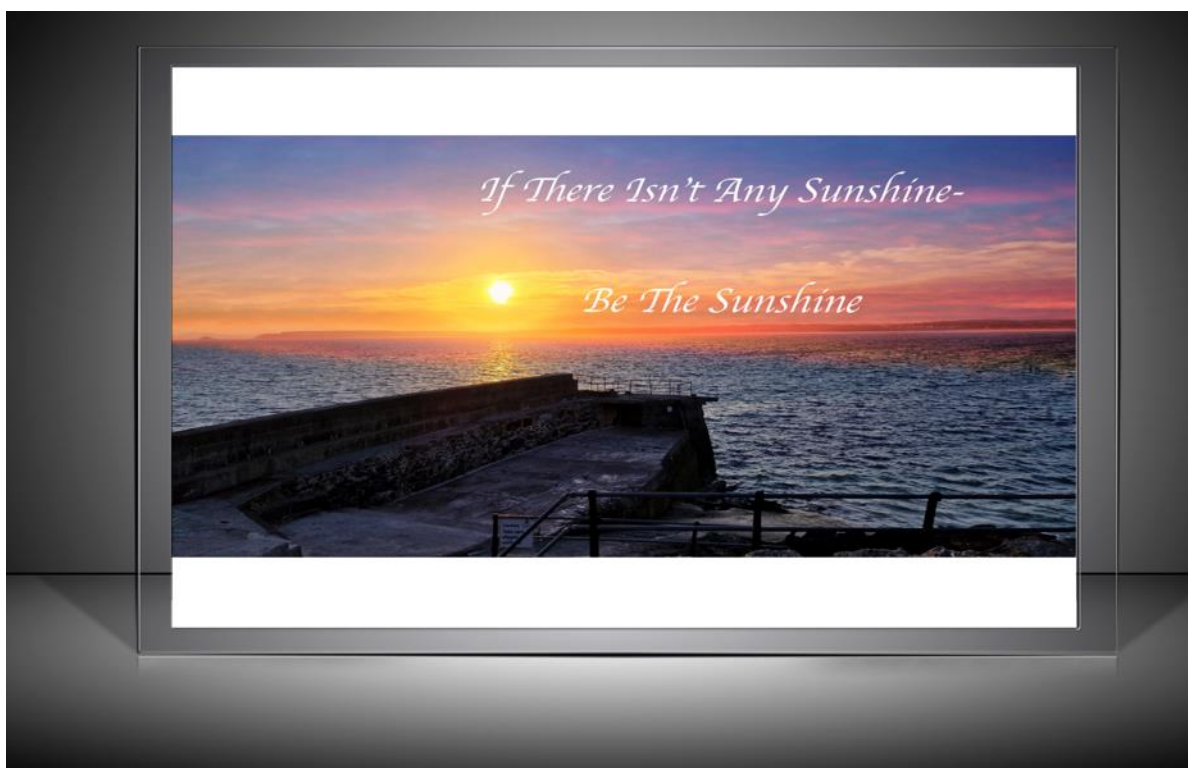
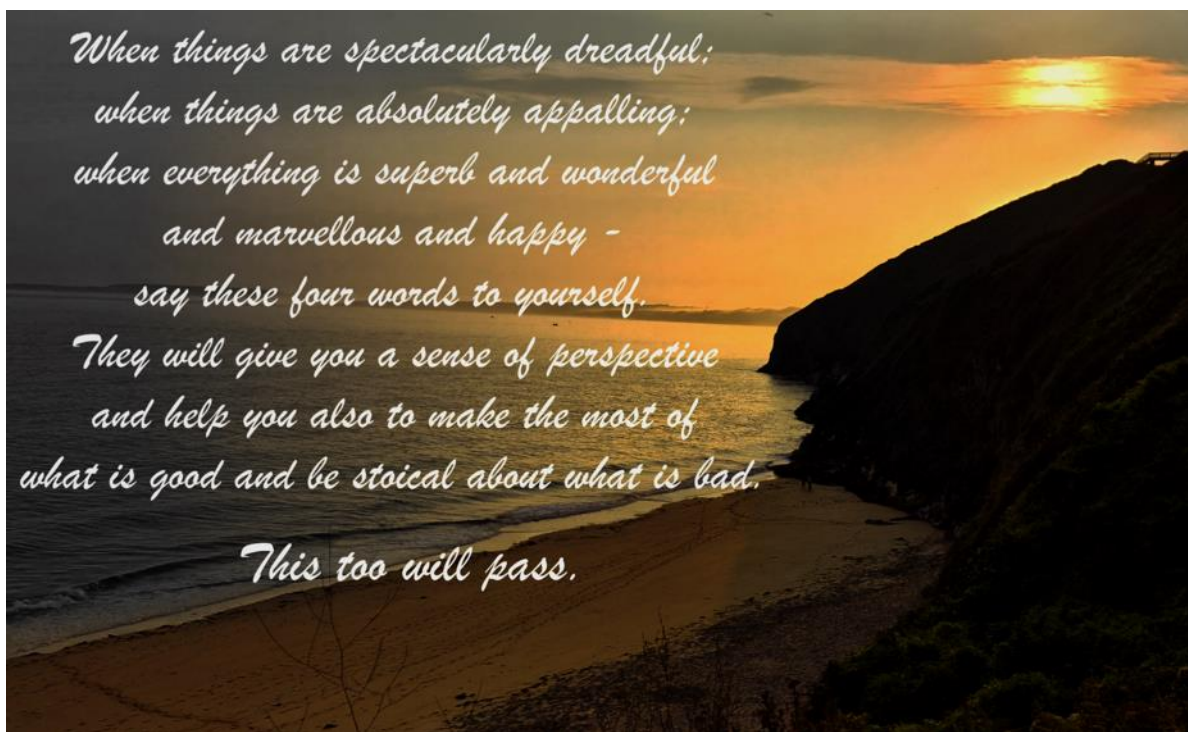
Some viewers may be very happy with the out of camera image however nearly all images can be improved with some post processing providing that this is not overly done.

Now it might not be apparent just how much post-processing goes on with images published on the internet. Some are professionally edited and look amazing but is this really fair when we are looking at the expected image quality if we are considering purchasing a new camera, for example? So should we always display the editing information so that viewers know if the image has had some extensive post-processing?



The first image of the set above is the out of camera image, the lower image is the result of using an AI based program to correct out of focus areas and re-light the image. Had I not disclosed this you would assume that camera had done a great job!!!

Make Your Photographs Into Wonderful Cards



I was in a local bookshop and noticed some credit card sized keepsake cards with wonderful words printed on them. I thought that they would be a catalyst to look through a few of my images to see if they could be used as personal gifts, birthday or anniversary cards etc. Something to think about on wet or cold frosty mornings?

Close, But No Cigar, iPhonography Explored!

Enthused by the flower portrait I thought that I would try the iPhone on some still life pictures. Just a single soft box lighting to provide the illumination. All images just had the usual little tweak to brightness and saturation.



The doll captured with the x3 lens of the iPhone 13 pro camera



The Dragon, same settings as for the doll



The plant pot, again x3 lens.



The twins, again the x3 lens.

Since the x3 lens doesn't have the same resolution as the main lens I repeated the shots with the X1 lens to see if there was any appreciable change in image clarity and resolution. Obviously the working distance was much close and that meant that the background blur was almost none existent.





Looks slightly better but a little “gritty” with the basic camera app. Maybe controlling the exposure with a third party app to allow better control of the basic parameters would help.

Finally the doll captured again with the basic camera app and x1 lens.

Looks again slightly better but again a tendency for the highlights to blow out.



Shot again using the HEIC format and the x1 lens and the standard camera app.



The final image captured using a third party camera app called Halide which allows shooting in RAW (DNG) format and edited with Photoshop. Looks better highlight control.

Are Early iPhone Models Better than the Latest Ones?



iPhone 12pro Max Halide app DNG processed with Photoshop.

I remember reading that at least one report suggested that the latest cameras and associated processing engines were actually a step backwards in quality. The reason given that was the 'computational' element to these images needed fine tuning and subsequent software upgrades would improve on this. Well let's look at this.



iPhone 12 Pro Max



iPhone 13 Pro

So given the same crops from both images with this single test image the later iPhone 13 pro has a higher visible sharpness and from the thickness of the eyelashes it looks like the camera is able to resolve detail at higher resolution.



iPhone 12 Pro Max



iPhone 13 pro

Based on just a couple of images shot under identical conditions it would appear that, in this instance, the iPhone 13 pro camera with the x1 lens produces a better image.

Maybe the F1.5 lens of the iPhone 13 pro delivers more light than the F1.6 lens of the iPhone 12 pro max but other than that the sensors look to be the same.

Sample variation can come into play.

Maybe I have a iPhone 12 which is at the lower end of the quality control limits?

What about other manufacturers? How do they compare?

Well to test this I have the Samsung Galaxy S22 Ultra and here is the same test shots firstly using the default camera app using Expert RAW (DNG) output processed in Photoshop.



Samsung Galaxy S22 Ultra Expert RAW mode





Samsung Galaxy S22 Ultra Basic Camera App - JPEG



To my eyes the Samsung is producing slightly better images than the iPhone 13 pro (which is what I have previously believed – but never tested in any controlled way)



Samsung Galaxy S22Ultra JPEG x1 Camera



Samsung Galaxy S22Ultra JPEG x3 Camera



iPhone 13 pro X1 lens DNG file processed in Photoshop



Phone 13 pro X3 lens DNG file processed in Photoshop

So after shooting these outdoor scenes (plus video comparisons) there is very little difference though I do prefer the JPEG images from the Samsung Galaxy S22 Ultra.

I not fully got to grips with the Samsung Expert RAW program yet. I thought that I had selected RAW + JPEG for the file output but I only found JPEG Files. As the Samsung doesn't yet have AI background blur I could not get a shot with a blurred background as with the iPhone camera.



Samsung Galaxy S22 Ultra x 3 Camera JPEG

Well that's about it for this newsletter, thanks for your continued support. Until the next one, take care. [Graham](#)