



**Antarctica at Sunset © Kevin Gibbin**

## **Submissions**

The copy date for submissions to the next newsletter is Friday 5th March 2021. Please note that it may be necessary to hold some submissions for a future newsletter.

If you have an idea for an article, please send a brief synopsis (up to 50 words) of the purpose and content of the piece.

Please submit your images as jpeg attachments, sized to 72 dpi with 1200 pixels along the longest edge and borderless.

Do not embed images in an e mail.

Please send all submissions to:

**[landscapenews@rps.org](mailto:landscapenews@rps.org)**

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# Editorial

By Peter Fortune

Well the shortest day, Christmas and New Year are all behind us. Happy New Year to all readers and your families. It is about ten weeks to go to the start of British Summer Time, even if there may be some cold and snowy weeks before then! Maybe sometime soon we can stop thinking about Covid before we do anything. Those of us who prefer strong light and warmer weather for our photography can plan the checking out of equipment, charging of batteries and making sure our sensors and lenses are clean - in a few weeks, the enforced covid “hibernation”, may be less restricting hopefully, and we can think about where we are going to take pictures in 2021 after the near wipeout of 2020. Personally I have a week’s trip to Sicily and a week’s trip to Spain planned as well as 5 separate weeks in the UK. Those 7 weeks will probably generate close to 3,000 images which will need loading into Adobe’s Lightroom and editing, That, as well as every-day photography should keep me going for a few of the darker months at the end of the year!



At the time of writing I have just attended a webinar which was to launch Luminar AI This software promises to be a huge leap forward in photo post-processing. Some years ago I started using Luminar when it was introduced into the UK market at the Photography Show as a competitor to Adobe’s Photoshop. I have seen the product develop a true cataloging function so it could compete with both Adobe’s Photoshop **and** Lightroom, making it a one-stop-shop. Now with the

introduction of AI tools, it could give Adobe a run for its money! Mind you back in the seventies they said the same about Betamax against VHS video recorders. (For those youngsters under 45, back then we used magnetic tape devices to record TV programmes, and they were not compatible ie a Betamax tape could not be played in a VHS recorder and vice-versa. Betamax was the technically superior recorder but was totally blown away in the market place by VHS. That was also the era when cameras used 20 or 36 shot rolls of film (which needed to be processed in smelly chemicals in a dark room.) In many ways the world does get better!

This edition of the Newsletter, which is roughly twice the normal size, includes Fiona McCowan LRPS giving us a short introduction to various Circles of members who aim to improve each others’ work by critiquing actual images they have authored. There is also an article by Doug Lodge who organises one of the Print Circles. Also in this edition there is an interesting account of a Workshop in Sussex that Patrick Smith attended and enjoyed so much

that he booked onto another. There are no parts of the world that Landscape Group Members do not reach! Kevin Gibbin describes a trip to Antarctica - he is certainly tougher than I am. Kevin Gibbin may well have wished he had read Mark Bank's article about clothing for inclement weather. Also Ollie Taylor tells us about his Astro photography in 2020.

Back to normal size in the next edition in March.

Anyone who has an interesting slant on Landscape photography, a trip you have enjoyed, a piece of equipment you enjoy and could review, or if you know of a technical angle to deal with an issue, write 500+ words. provide a few images and send me the article and images - you will be featured in a future edition of the Newsletter.

As an example I recently purchased an L bracket and tripod head of the Three legged Thing brand. This makes switching the camera on a tripod from Landscape to Portrait orientation a 30 second operation without needing to move the tripod at all, or the direction that the camera is pointing. The camera is permanently mounted on the L bracket and can be mounted on the tripod with the 3 Legged Tripod Head already fitted, replacing the standard tripod head. Alternatively if you are doing a shoot which needs some tripod mounted shots and some hand held ones you simply release the camera as if you were changing orientation and put it back after if you have more tripod mounted shots to take. It is a very quick operation to remount the camera on the tripod.

When I had decided to buy an L bracket and tripod head I looked on website of a well known supplier (based in East Anglia) and reviewed their different brands. The brand I chose was the cheapest but because what it does is fundamentally simple, I saw no reason to think that its operation would be inferior in any way and I have been unable to fault it. The device is coloured an orange/red rather than the traditional black but personally I like it although I recognise that not everybody will.



It is hard to find criticisms of the device, apart from the colour, which as stated above some would not go for. The head and the L bracket come in 2 separate boxes (they are sold



separately), which is not a problem. However they come with no instructions or any help at all as to how they are assembled and used which may well cause a problem for some photographers but I had seen one in use before so that was no difficulty for me. What was a problem was that the tripod head had a ball and socket which could be clamped, of course, but that is not my preference.

However I am going to try using the tripod head I had retired and to mount the new one on that. It may

look odd which I would not mind but it has to be rock solid firm to be effective and I will see if that happens in practice. The above is a little under 400 words, which is less than the 500 I ask for articles to have. However it is a very simple device and therefore does not need as long a review as say a lens, camera or place. “Passing Temple Island” above is the first image I took with the device fitted.

**All Images © Peter Fortune**



# Chair Chat

By Richard Ellis RPS Landscape SIG Chair

By the time you are reading this 2021 will be well underway and hopefully we will have had more good news about the vaccination programme. With all of us living under some restrictions the committee has decided to continue with our internet-based programme for the foreseeable future.

We have set up a series of monthly talks covering diverse areas such as composition, moods and printing. You can find details of them all [here](#). We have also set up a series of hybrid workshops offering a briefing on a location by a leader followed by time for an individual visit. Subsequently there will be a review of the images created. I am leading one for the Sussex coast focussing on long exposure and coastal architecture and really looking forward to meeting the participants.

There is also the opportunity to participate in workshops set around a theme such as “neglected” where a leader gives a briefing and then you interpret the theme whilst staying in your local neighbourhood. The workshops are a great opportunity to meet fellow photographers but if you do not fancy the workshop you can use the titles to inspire a local project on your own.

We have also set up a monthly [competition](#). There will be a chance to submit your images during the first 3 weeks of the month followed by a week of member-led judging. There is a prize of a *Fotovue* book so please submit your images.

Our AGM will be on 6 March and there is a chance to join our friendly and dynamic committee. We are particularly interested to hear from people with web or desktop publishing skills. We hope that some of you would like to join the committee as a member without portfolio: if this is of interest to you please contact [landscape@rps.org](mailto:landscape@rps.org). You will also find an advert for some admin help in this newsletter – if you can spare a couple of hours a month please let us know as we would really like to find someone to help us.

Our [AGM](#) will take place alongside a speaker’s day when we will hear from two FRPS photographers about their landscape work. This will take place via Zoom and is free to members. You can sign up on the website.

The RPS are running a major consultation process about the governance of the RPS. As a committee we have already made representations about the proposals. There is also the chance for you to add your views. Social media is full of people complaining about the result of votes they do not like so it is important you engage with the process. Details of the

changes proposed can be found [here](#) and you can send your views to [janet.haines@rps.org](mailto:janet.haines@rps.org). The committee strongly encourages you to engage with this process.

At the last RPS AGM council were tasked with ensuring the RPS takes steps to tackle the climate emergency. As a committee we feel it is very important that all parts of the RPS do their bit to support this initiative and the Landscape Group will be working towards a net zero target. To that end we will be taking environmental considerations into account when setting up conferences, workshops and when making our purchasing decisions. We have also decided to add a “Carbon Levy” to our workshops to help offset the carbon dioxide produced. You can find more details [here](#).

Thank you for taking the time to read to the end of this – a bit of a marathon but there is a lot going on and I hope you will all have found something of interest.

I hope that you all are able to make some wonderful images in 2021.

Best wishes

Richard



The Royal Photographic Society  
Landscape Group  
invites you a

# Speaker Day

and AGM

Saturday 6 March 2021  
10 am  
Via ZOOM

Join us for an exciting day of  
landscape photography talks by  
Linda Wevill FRPS and Tony  
Worobiec FRPS

The talks will cover experimentation  
and composition in landscape  
photography

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Tickets and full details from  
[RPS website](#)

RPS SIG members Free, RPS £6, Public £8

All welcome

Contact: [landscape@rps.org](mailto:landscape@rps.org)



© Linda Wevill FRPS



© Linda Wevill FRPS



© Tony Worobiec FRPS



# The Colours of Antarctica

By Kevin Gibbin

Some time ago I was privileged to visit the Antarctic Peninsula with a long-standing friend, leaving our wives at home. My wife would not have tolerated the crossing of Drake Passage, some of the potentially wildest seas in the world, nor the cold of the Antarctic, albeit in the austral summer; my friend's wife was disabled and could not travel.

## Planning and Preparation:

**Planning** was the easy bit – I have an excellent local travel agent who has undertaken the organisation of many long-distance trips for me.

**Preparation: Purchase** a second camera body “just in case” – a Nikon D300 to support the D200 I already owned at that stage; I already had the lenses I wished to use with the Nikkor DX 18-200mm as the workhorse. **Purchase** a waterproof camera bag “just in case” as we were going to be hopping in and out of Zodiacs (motor boats for travel whilst in the Antarctic. **Purchase** more batteries in anticipation of reduced battery life in the cold. **Think** about contrast and exposure for snow and ice.

## The Trip

Why the title? Inspiration came slowly during our “expedition” but was crystallised when I saw some really beautiful magenta coloured kelp..



In fact most of the time we spent in the Antarctic saw dull slightly misty conditions with a low cloud base. Indeed our first sighting of land after crossing Drake Passage



was to herald such conditions prevalent for most our time there.

Even in these conditions some of the enchanting colours implied by the title can be



seen. The ship in the above photo lends scale, another ice-breaker of similar size to “our” ship. The conditions reduced many of the problems of contrast that I had anticipated



The predominant colours were of course the blues – a huge range – in the ice and three Images epitomise these. Of course the dominant features were the icebergs and these images portray these, the third Image shows the blues but there is also a delicate pink in the snow and ice in the foreground due to the presence of lichens, nurtured by penguin droppings!

Below are 2 images showing a couple of huge icebergs



The next image shows some quite intense green lichen in the snow.



The next 2 images show fabulous colouring in rocks – copper salts I believe, producing this wonderful blue with lichen the orange colours.



We experienced one day with clear skies and sun and this led to a beautiful and prolonged sunset, showing a “cathedral” of ice and if the reader looks closely you will see a Zodiac with its colourful occupants.



The sunset was a delight with a steadily changing range of magical pastel hues.



It would have been remiss not to show one of the Zodiacs with its primary coloured occupants, homeward bound with Polar Star, “our” ship just visible in the distance.



A short article such as this cannot do justice to the magnificence of the scenery that we saw nor can it portray the vast range of colours that we experienced in this supposedly white Continent, Earth’s largest desert.

**All Images © Kevin Gibbin**

## 2020 A Light in the Darkness

By Ollie Taylor

With most of us hoping for light at the end of the tunnel in 2021, it's unlikely many of us will want to look back over our shoulder to 2020 as we're more than happy to see the back of it. Though as someone who's photographic craft is plied predominantly at night, the dark and somber mood clouding many of the days in 2020 actually lifted and gave way to light at night.

Working on an ongoing book project meant venturing out around the south west during May in the middle of the night, namely revisiting old haunts and documenting grid references, alongside exact times and what is available to photograph in the night sky, and at what time on the chosen locations to complement the landscape. May is a strange month for night photography, after working a long winter it's a time to look forward to, but also presents its challenges. As our days warm in the UK, so do our nights, and this presents the challenge of humidity, an absolute deal breaker when it comes to producing pristine nightscape work.

Studying the forecast quickly gave way to dismay, the days were going to be well worth going out for walks as the temperatures and weather forecast was sunny, dry, and hot for the time of year, so it was envisaged that visibility at night would be poor.

I ventured forth anyway as there were far too many clear nights on the menu not to try, and I needed as many locations as possible this year to try and meet a deadline for the project. I was glad I ventured out, night after night after night of clear, crystal, warm nights.



Corfe Castle, Dorset

Never before have I witnessed such a run of clear nights with such good visibility alongside hot days; I'll never know for sure, but I put it down to less air pollution, and it will remain a month considered the best I have ever seen for shooting the Galactic Core of the Milky Way in the UK.



### The Galactic Core (centre of the galaxy) Corfe Castle

It didn't end there, Noctilucent Clouds (NLCs) are usually associated with higher latitudes in the summer months surrounding the solstice. In Northern areas of the UK, nights never leave Nautical, or Civil Twilight, meaning they never reach Astro Twilight, and thus true darkness, so typical landscape astrophotography as such (photographing the Milky Way Core) is not possible; however it's a time when NLCs (also called "Night Shining Clouds") become prominent within the upper atmosphere. Vibrant overhead displays are usually associated with the far north areas such as the Scottish Highlands, though occasionally southern Scotland and Northern England, and Wales.

However in June, an all-nighter was required as I was treated to the most spectacular display I had ever seen, regardless of how far north, in the county of Dorset at Knowlton Church as the NLCs appeared late at night, then reappeared around 2.30 – 4 am. There were reports up and down the country, and also in southern areas of the US, as the clouds had never before been sighted.

At first visible within the UK in the small hours of the morning, until finally becoming visible just after sunset, then through the night.



**Both above 2 images - NLCs at dawn over Knowlton Church**



But by no means was 2020 through with its night sky phenomena, next, it presented the entire Northern Hemisphere, with the spectacle of Comet Neowise.

And as if I hadn't already had my fill, a night on the Cornish Coast presented me with both the comet, then the beauty of watching NLCs form on the horizon, framing the landscape, and comet.



**Neowise over Crown Mines at Sunset**



### **NLCs and Neowise in the moonlight, at dawn over Pendeen Lighthouse**

The business has been ripped apart, commercially, due to restrictions brought about by the current pandemic, and 2020 will always be a year looked back on full of darkness, though strangely with an amazing glimmer of light, a comet trail if you will, and memories of some of the best nights under the stars in my career.

**All Images © Ollie Taylor**

### **About Ollie Taylor**

Ollie set up the first advertised, insured, and structured landscape astrophotography workshops in the UK, and most probably Europe, towards the start of the last decade. An avid landscaper prior to going over to the dark side, Ollie Taylor runs dedicated low light (twilight) and nightscape workshops across the UK and wider Europe, alongside combi-landscape and landscape astrophotography tours and workshops. The workshops are carefully planned to frame the landscape utilising night sky elements alongside, golden hour, sunrises and sets, with expert tuition where required.

**Web:** [www.ollietaylorphotography.com](http://www.ollietaylorphotography.com)

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/OllieTaylorPhotography/>

**Instagram:** <https://www.instagram.com/olliemtaylor/>

**Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/OllieTPhoto>

Due to the pandemic, Ollie has also created downloadable tuition packs so you can learn landscape astrophotography from the comfort of your own home, with follow along video tuition for both the field and post-production work, with workflow files included.

<https://www.ollietaylorphotography.com/shop/landscape-astrophotography-course/>

**For Discount Codes for RPS members see Ollie's Website**



## Volunteer wanted

### Your Landscape SIG needs you



A vacancy has arisen for someone to help with an administrative task. We would like someone to come forward to run the programme following up with people who leave the Landscape SIG. This is an administrative task which involves emailing people who leave the group to find out why they left and collating the responses. This can all be done from home, requires only familiarity with email, and Microsoft Excel. It would take 1-2 hours per month.

If you think you could help with this please contact Richard Ellis at

[landscape@rps.org](mailto:landscape@rps.org)



# RPS Landscape Group Circles

By Fiona McCowan LRPS

What a strange year 2020 turned out to be. Let's hope 2021 will be a better year for everyone. One of the more positive outcomes of the Covid-19 pandemic and the various lockdowns and tiers (in the UK) has been the growth of our circles and for some the introduction of ZOOM meetings.

We are planning to run a number of articles over the next year in the newsletter. The articles will include some examples of the images critiqued/processed so you get a good idea of how the circles work.

For those of you who don't know about the circles, I thought I would tell you a little about each type. We have Print, eCritique and Processing circles.

Print circles – the print circles are the oldest circles in the Landscape Group. Physical prints are circulated for constructive critique amongst the Print Circle members. The optimal number of members in each circle is 8 - 10. Two or 3 pouches are circulated concurrently, each person being asked to try and turn the pouch around in 2 weeks (maximum 3 weeks).

We have three print circles managed by David Fiddes, Doug Lodge and Diana Wynn. The first of several articles from Doug Lodge appears later in this newsletter.

eCritique circles have been running for nearly two years. Digital images are circulated amongst the eCritique Circle members each month. The optimal number of members in each circle is about 10 as not everyone is able to submit and critique each month.

We now have 3 eCritique circles, a new one was established in the summer and is currently being managed by David Travis alongside his long standing circle. The other eCritique circle is managed by Martyn Bennett.

Martyn's eCircle has been holding monthly Zoom meetings since the beginning of March 2020 which work really well and enable members to share their experiences of workshops, courses, new techniques, interesting photography articles etc.

Processing circles – the two processing circles have been established for over a year. Each month one member of the group is asked to share an unprocessed RAW image with their circle. The members of the group process the image as if it were their own,

explain the reasons for their editing approach and share their edited images and notes with the other members of the circle.

Our two processing circles are managed by Irene Stupples and Jim Stupples.

The processing circles recently introduced Zoom meetings to enable group discussions and the exchange of ideas. These are working really well. The author of the image processed that month shows their RAW image, the processed versions from the other members and also their edited version. It has been fascinating seeing how different people approach the editing of the same image. The meeting finishes with the author of the image for the following month showing their image and giving some background information eg where it was taken and why they took it.



**Original image by Fiona McCowan**



**Image as processed by Irene Stupples**



**Image as processed by Mark Reeves**

Finally, I would just like to take this opportunity to thank all the circle leaders for their time and effort in making the circles work.

If anyone has any questions on the circles or are interested in joining please contact me by email [landscape2@rps.com](mailto:landscape2@rps.com)

**Fiona McCowan, RPS Landscape Group, Member without Portfolio**



# Inclement Weather Clothing

By Mark Banks



If you are wet or cold (or both), it isn't easy to concentrate on the task in hand - taking a great photograph - so, choosing the right outdoor clothing is essential. I, therefore, thought I'd publish an article on my experiences of outdoor gear and some of the clothes I use in more inclement weather.

I have to say that in past years I feel certain clothing manufacturers have hoodwinked me into buying their products by supplying them to my photographic contemporaries. I guess that's good marketing and I can't blame them (it worked after all). It took me a long time to realise, however, that, in some cases, there was better clothing out there for more specific purposes, some of which are considerably cheaper. I, therefore, want to point out from the start that the manufacturers listed below have not, in any way, sponsored me or this article. I have also



supplied links for guidance only, and I encourage you to shop around for the best deals (don't forget your local high-street independents, too)!

### **Safety first!**

If I'm going out alone, I tell my wife (or hotel reception if I'm away) where I'm going just in case I get into trouble in a location devoid of phone signal, or my phone battery runs out. Always prepare for the worst and hope for the best as they say!

A powerful headtorch is an excellent purchase for the winter months as it frees up your hands for carrying other equipment.



### **Layer up!**

When going out on a shoot, I used to dress as if out hiking - wearing quality walking gear and sturdy boots. Although that may be fine whilst you are walking, it might not be when you're standing still as you are not burning energy to keep warm. Even in summer, temperatures can quickly plummet when the sun goes down, so I layer up with several thin layers rather than fewer, more bulky, items. They are also easier to carry if you're too warm and need to shed some. The layer nearest your skin should have good 'wicking' properties (the ability to draw moisture away from your body), these are called base-layers. They are essential for both comfort and safety, particularly if you're planning on walking long distances before standing

around to take photographs. My base layers are from Paramo, which I like, but most outdoor clothing manufacturers offer them, too.

Merino wool jumpers are useful between base layers and outer clothing as they dry quickly.

### Waterproof - really?

When buying waterproof clothing don't be fooled by the word 'waterproof' as it would appear most manufacturers use this word when their clothing resists moisture absorption just for a short while (and not even in simulations of heavy rain). After carrying out some research recently, I decided to go for the Patagonia 'Torrentshell' jacket and over-trousers, and so far I'm delighted with my purchase. For those with deeper pockets, the Arcteryx brand appeared to offer the most exceptional protection, but this comes at a price, and I couldn't justify this when I occasionally find myself wading through brambles and other sharp foliage!



### Winter footwear



From around the start of October to the end of April (and on the beach) I mainly wear wellington boots. They give me the freedom to walk in puddles, streams, mud, snow, rock pools and all the places I might want to take photographs - places I would avoid if wearing shoes or even boots. I own two pairs of different brands and select each depending on the circumstances. My first pair are from Aigle, and I walk relatively long distances with these, many miles in fact, without any issues. Designed for walking, they are expensive, but they last a long time and wear well (they are relatively heavy though).

My second pair are by Lemigo - a very lightweight and far cheaper design ideal for walking shorter distances and travelling abroad. These are a great all-rounder, and I was (and still am), so impressed when I first bought them that I wrote a dedicated blog about them. Since then, I have used them in Norway in temperatures sometimes reaching  $-10^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and my feet were still lovely and toasty. After using them for a while now, their only shortcomings is that they have a wide top, which sometimes allows foliage to fall inside the wellington when wading through heavy vegetation. The tops of my calves also get wet in heavy rain for the same reason. Personally, this isn't a big issue as I tend to wear these for protection and the ability to walk through pretty much anything rather than keeping my feet perfectly dry. They have excellent grip, too.

Here's a couple of wellington top tips! Purchase a dedicated wellingtons bag, so when you return to your vehicle, you can zip them up and avoid messing up the boot. Second, in winter months, avoid leaving your wellingtons in the boot or (unheated) garage. Any moisture within the wellington is unlikely to dry out, and therefore, they'll feel cold, damp and uncomfortable when you put them back on.

## Extremities

Socks made from Merino wool are excellent for absorbing sweat and odour and also dry quickly. I prefer not to wear thick hiking socks - I find them uncomfortable, so in icy conditions, I wear a couple of pairs of thin socks instead (both pairs of wellingtons mentioned above are lined, which also help prevent my feet from getting cold).



A waterproof hat and gloves are essential in wet weather. In freezing temperatures, I wear two sets of gloves - a thin pair of Sealskinz (that operate the camera and mobile devices) and some ski gloves for walking (which I wear over the thin pair). I always make a point not to expose my hands to the air in freezing temperatures. Although they are fine in cold, dry weather, woollen hats become uncomfortable and soggy when wet. I, therefore, use the Sealkinz extreme cold weather waterproof hat when rain is forecast.

## Supportive Backpack



As landscape photographers, we often need to carry relatively heavy weights long distances. Usually over undulating ground and up (and down) steep inclines, so it's essential to have a backpack designed for this purpose. The F-stop Kashmiri UI suits my needs perfectly. Its ergonomic design takes most of the weight off the shoulders and transfers it to the waist via a padded strap, which is good for the spine. It opens from the back which is convenient because I can permanently leave an elasticated waterproof cover on the bag at all times, protecting it from the weather as well as sand, mud, snow etc. It's also small enough to be allowed in the overhead locker when travelling abroad (on most airlines anyway).

## Comfort is key

Taking pictures in inclement weather is challenging enough without being side-tracked by personal comfort. So, before you next venture out in inclement weather give some thought to your choice of clothing - at best it could save your life, at worst you could return with more dramatic images!

All Images © Mark Banks

## About Mark Banks

Mark is a professional landscape photographer based in the North East of England. His passion for the subject comes from the love of travel and being outdoors in remote places. Mark has been teaching landscape photography and post-processing for over 20 years and runs photography workshops around the UK and abroad. He also teaches for the Joe Cornish Gallery in North Yorkshire and the Royal Photographic Society.



# Edgelands

## A Project led by Rolf Kraehenbuehl

The North Wales region are running a project throughout 2021 called Edgelands. The project aims to capture the interaction of urban and rural space via a series of images. Participation is free but does require the production of a summary of what the work will capture.

Participation can be individually or in teams and it is hoped to deliver an exhibition at the end of 2021.



If you are interested you can find out more [here](#) or email Robert Brittle at [landscapemagazine@rps.org](mailto:landscapemagazine@rps.org). Robert will convene a meeting of interested parties and then you can decide on a co-ordination structure. Please reply to Robert by 12 Feb 2021.



**Both Images © Rolf Kraehenbuehl**



# PHOTO WORKSHOP TO DEVILS DYKE & FULKING ESCARPMENT, SUSSEX

By Patrick Smith

The South Downs are ancient chalk hills that stretch for about 260 square miles across the south-eastern coastal counties of England from the Itchen Valley of Hampshire in the west to Beachy Head, stopping at Eastbourne in the east. At the heart of these gently rolling hills are the stretch of Downs which start in Brighton and reach a peak at Devils Dyke – before dropping steeply to the villages of Fulking, Ditchling and Pyecombe. It was at the Devils Dyke National Trust reserve that we met up for an afternoon and evening workshop to explore these ancient hills.



It was so good to be able to come along to an event like this after months of lockdown. Just three of us attended, Howard Klein, Justin Cliffe and myself along with Phil Bedford who was running the event.

Having met outside the Devils Dyke pub and had some briefing on the planned walks, along with measures to maintain our safety in line with Covid rules.



The view into the steep sided valley at Devils Dyke made a challenging start to create an interesting composition. The light was rather



flat though the cloud cover started to increase which improved the conditions.

We then walked in a westerly direction along the South Downs Way to enjoy the views across the downs towards the industrial chimneys of Portslade on the coast.

A number of interesting stiles, signposts and windswept trees added foreground interest to our images along with a convenient tractor ploughing in the fields.

The combination of the soft round curves of the hills in different hues – with the ploughed fields and winding paths add a unique character to the views of the downs.

Cyclists were in abundance on the main paths and their fitness was impressive – until we noticed that several were aided by electric motors!



By late afternoon the sun was getting hazy in the valley and we were able to take some images of the Fulking escarpment in the subdued light, as the shadows lengthened.

We stopped for a welcome meal at the pub at 6pm and had a chance to view some of Phil's portfolio of images he has taken in the area, and learn of some of the techniques needed to overcome the difficulties of shooting into the sun as it sets.



At around 7pm we went out to set up our tripods, hopeful that the sun would provide us with the full 'golden hour' as it set over the downs. I had quite a battle with lens flare and the increasing haze so the conditions were quite challenging. With help provided by Phil and with the use of graduated filters I was pretty happy with some of the shots I achieved.

As we were anticipating the setting sun hitting the escarpment it went behind a thick bank of clouds!

That's the challenge of landscape photography!

A very good workshop was enjoyed by us all and I am looking forward to meeting up with Phil on a second workshop – again on the South Downs but this time at a 5am start!



**All photos © Patrick Smith**

## **Postal Portfolio Print Circles**

**By Doug Lodge, Print Circle C**

The RPS Postal Portfolio Print Circles use the 'old fashioned' method of print to share and critique each other's works. There are three groups who have between six and ten members in their group and all work in pretty much the same way to share their prints and information.

To start I, as the organiser of Circle C, will make an A4 print of my chosen subject and complete an information sheet with a title for the print, details of when, where and why the shot was taken together with information on the equipment used in the taking and the camera settings etc.

Details of editing and software are added, with information on printers and papers used, with the reasons why and any other information deemed relevant to the print or processes.

Once completed, the portfolio is posted to the next member in the group who will critique my print with any suggestions on how the shot or print could, in their opinion, have been improved and anything they liked or disliked. They then add their print and detail sheet and forward it on to the next member for their turn.

And, so it goes on, critiques and prints are added until, eventually, the portfolio returns to me. I then add my second print and detail sheet, critique all the prints now in the portfolio and send it off again so the process becomes self-perpetuating. By having two prints in the portfolio all members are able to see everyone else's prints and critiques before the first print is removed to make way for the third print when the portfolio, again, returns to me.

Generally, members will take three to four weeks to complete their critiques and add a new print, therefore, Print Circle 'C' has two bags of portfolios on the go at any one time. One of the other circles works on circulating three bags at a time. Currently we have bags containing our fourth and sixth prints and numbers five and seven in the second bag.

To give a feel to what goes on in the Circle, in this edition of the Newsletter, there will be more later in the year. I have selected two of the prints together with the full information contained on the detail sheets and a selection from the critiques on each print. Although I give credit to the taker of the photograph, the names of those making comment have been kept

confidential to avoid any comeback! Actually, a lot of the comments are very similar so don't need repeating.

## **Autumn Colours at Vimy Ridge © Doug Lodge**



### **Details at taking stage**

#### **Concept, Date, Time, Location, Weather, Camera details etc.**

An hour's stop off at Vimy Ridge Memorial, Arras, France following a wine tasting trip to Burgundy. Because it was such a fantastic day and we found we had some time, our coach driver decided to make a detour to show us the memorial, built by the Canadians to commemorate their fallen from WW1.

Taken at 12.35 pm on 21<sup>st</sup> October, 2018 with my Nikon D850, using a Nikkor 24 -70, f2.8 lens. Settings were ISO 250, f/10 at 24mm with a 1/250<sup>th</sup> second exposure, hand held. As it was very bright in the midday, autumn sun I added a circular polariser to try to kill some of the light and reduce the heat haze a little. It also helped to give a fantastic blue to the sky, contrasting against the almost white of the monument and bring out the copper in the changing leaves on the trees.

I took several shots of the memorial against the blue sky but, once home, felt this one of the trees, making the monument play second fiddle to their colour was my favourite. Also, it was an angle no one else was using so, for better or worse, gives the scene a more unusual take. I would have liked to change my position a little bit more but, fortunately, the signs which said, 'danger unexploded ordinance' were in English as well as French!

### **Details at the processing stage**

#### **Editing, Printing, Digital Manipulation details etc.**

Edited in Lightroom. Standard RAW editing but altered the white balance to give the scene a warmer feel. I used a little more on the vibrancy slider than I normally do and added a minimal amount of saturation to the red and orange sliders and actually took a little out of the blue! Also, a little detail enhancing in NIX. Printed on my Epson SureColor P600 using standard Epson inks. My first print was on Innova Fibra Print Baryta 310 g/m which gave a very clear, almost clinical appearance to the scene, so I had a go with Permajet FB Distinction 320 g/m which, although not so crisp as the Baryta, deepened the colours (probably too much for some people) to give, what I feel, is an arty appearance that brings back fond (photographic) memories of the visit.

## Other remarks

I made two mistakes when I put this image in for a club competition. Firstly, I called it Vimy Ridge Memorial when the trees are the main focal point. Secondly, I printed it as a standard 16 x 9 which gave far too much green in the foreground with nothing on it and likewise too much blue overhead. I think I should have used the letter box crop in the first place.

## Critiques

I enjoyed this very different image of Vimy Ridge which I have visited a few times. The balance between the line of trees and the monument works extremely well and the diminutive figures give a sense of scale, so it is strong on composition. The autumnal colours were a bonus but I would prefer the blue reduced a little.

The contrast of the sky against the orange / red of the leaves sets the image off very well. The letterbox format is right but where to crop the trees on the left must have been a problem. The leaning trunk on the extreme left is fine. I wonder why there are two bare trees in the middle of the row, which by your positioning echo the two pylons?

Gosh, you've some blue ink with this, Lightroom must have been almost on steroids! The over saturated blue sky aside, this is a very effective image. I like the composition a lot. I may have been tempted to remove the people in front of the memorial to make the image and its message so much stronger.

I think both blue and green channels could do with pulling back a little to make this look more natural.

I like the strong colours, but over saturated for my taste. People are small enough not to detract.

It seems as though the living trees are waiting patiently in line to pay their respects to the fallen cohort of humanity represented by the Memorial. The bareness of the sky and

foreground greatly enhance the poignancy of the scene. Over saturated for my taste, a colder appearance would have worked better given the sombreness of the subject matter.

### **Tresco, Isles of Scilly © Nigel Goode**



### **Details at the taking stage**

#### **Concept, Date, Time, Location, Weather, Camera details etc.**

I took this shot from the ferry from Tresco to St. Mary's on the Isles of Scilly. It had been a dreadful, wet day but it cleared up just as I was leaving Tresco, leaving strong clouds and sunlight dappling the island which caught my eye.

It was taken with a Nikon Z7 with 24-70 mm zoom at 34mm, handheld. Exposure was 500<sup>th</sup> second, aperture priority and ISO64.

### **Details at processing stage**

#### **Editing, Printing, Digital Manipulation details etc.**

I processed it in Lightroom Classic with adjustments to whites and blacks, highlights and shadows and a little added contrast. Finally, I used Color Effex Pro to further enhance the details in the clouds. It is printed on Permajet Museum Heritage paper.

### **Other Remarks**

I had never been to the Scilly Isles before but travelling between the islands from Hugh Town, St. Mary's is easy and opens up fantastic possibilities for landscape photography. The islands are small enough to walk around and the coastlines are very varied. I thoroughly enjoyed the trip and would very much like to go back.

## **Critiques**

The landscape isn't dramatic but it is beautiful, especially when the light works in one's favour. You've certainly captured some gorgeous light here, particularly on the right side of the image. The sea's a bit uninteresting so your decision to exclude most of it is a wise one; I'm less convinced by your inclusion of so much sky. It is quite interesting (thanks to Nik!!) but makes up the vast majority of the image. I'd rather you'd cropped off the less interesting quarter to a third off the left of the frame and reduced the amount of sky accordingly. As it is, I'm left with a very, very narrow line of interest on the land which is where my main attention should lie.

I too have tried to take photographs from a ship / ferry and unfortunately, I found what the human eyes see the camera rarely records. Had the ferry been somewhat closer the image would have been entirely different. The centre of attraction for me is the buildings with the orange roofs on the right hand side and perhaps, development of that part of the image would produce more balance with more land and less sky.

Glorious sky Nigel and the composition reflects the importance you attach to it. In general, this comes across as a well exposed image. The detail in the island appears sharp and there is an appealing degree of contrast in the clouds with only a hint of clipped highlights in the large cumulus on the left hand side. The dark blue of the sea is especially well matched by the corresponding cobalt hue of the sky. My only niggle is the title. Visually, the overwhelmingly arresting part of the image is the dramatic cloudscape that completely dominates the island, which in itself takes up less than 6% of the print area. I'd be tempted to have something more in keeping with what we're looking at. 'Strong Clouds over Tresco' or even, if you want a literary reference, 'Storm Clouds over Storm Island' after a mystery novel by Ann Quinton set in Tresco.

The processing and choice of paper suit this image and really pull the detail of the buildings out.

Overall, a very pleasing image, improved by the choice of a matt, textured paper. I would like to see the image printed out three or four times the size to really appreciate the drama.

## **In Conclusion (at least for this issue of the Newsletter)**

As we have added more prints to the portfolios and members have got to know each other through their work it has been enlightening to see that members are willing, in their critiques,

to be honest and also to try and help each other to improve and look at their work from a different viewpoint. Members are not sending out prints which try to say 'look at me, what a fantastic photographer I am, but rather prints that may have received mixed reviews at camera club competitions or ones where the member is not sure and is looking for guidance on how to make a good photograph or print become an outstanding one.

The other, important, fact members have picked up on is the difference the type and quality of paper used for the print makes. There is an awful lot of difference to the look, feel and appearance of the final image. The difference between a scene printed on a run of the mill gloss compared with a quality, textured, fine art matt is difficult to imagine until you actually see it.





# Instagram #rpslandscape

Tag your  
images  
#rpslandscape  
for a chance  
to be featured

## Events

We have changed the way we show events. Listed below are the events not sold out or cancelled/postponed at the time of writing. If an event catches your eye you can go to the Landscape Events page of the RPS website by clicking [here](#) You can then search by date for the event in which you are interested.

### Fine Art Printing with Lightroom

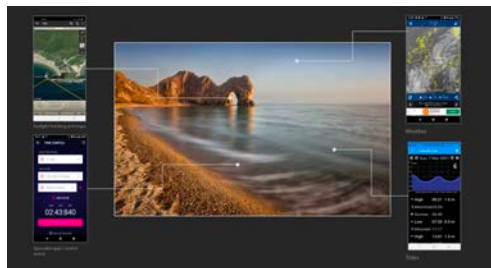


**Interactive Workshop:** Max. 10 Participants, link will be supplied

**Date & UK Time:** 1,2, & 3 February 2021 10:00 - 12:00

### Using Technology for Planing and Organising Landscape Shoots

**Online Workshop:** Max. 6 Participants, link will be supplied



**Date & UK Time:** 15 February 11:00 - 14:00

## **Mono Moods**



**On line talk by Colin Jarvis**

**Date and UK Time:** 22 February 2021 20:00 - 21:30 (approx)

## **North Wales coastal long exposures**



**A Hybrid online/on-location Workshop. Max. 6 Participants**

**Dates and UK Times, online briefing:** 5 March 2021 19:30 - 21:00 (approx)

**Shooting (Unaccompanied):** 13/14 March 2021

**Online review:** 8 April 2021 19.30 - 21:00 (approx)

## **Your Landscape your way; long exposure**



**A Hybrid online/on location Workshop. Max 6 Participants**

**Dates and UK Times:** 5, 12 & 31 March 19:00 - 20:00 (approx)

## Engagement - Melanie Friend



**Date and UK Time:** 25 March 2021, 18:45 - 19:45

**Online Talk** Link will be supplied

NB This is a free talk but not organised by the Landscape Group but the Documentary Group.

You can book here [Melanie Friend Talk](#)



# Quick Links

Easy links to our pages on the RPS website

[Landscape Group Homepage](#)

[What we do](#)

[Events](#)

[Publications](#)

[Committee](#)

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The Landscape Newsletter always welcomes articles with pictures. If anyone can put together an article on a place visited, a photographic technique or a piece of equipment that they value, we would like to hear about it. Articles should be at least 500 words and pictures should be 1200 pixels along the longest side and at 72 pixels per inch resolution. Images should not be embedded in an e mail but can be sent in a zip file. Please send material to me, Peter Fortune at [landscapenews@rps.org](mailto:landscapenews@rps.org)

The next newsletter will be in March 2021 so send anything as soon as you can. See the front page of this Newsletter for full details.

