

The Zoom meeting on Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> March went well and with around 16-18 members attending on-line. Brian introduced the meeting which then followed the Agenda set out in his email of Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> March, and thus the main item was John's presentation "Using "Google Photos" "Photo Albums"".

### **The Presentation: " Using "Google Photos" "Photo Albums"" – John Allen**

Since the first "lockdown, the Group has used Google "Photo Albums" as the on-line place to upload member's monthly competition photos to where everyone can view, and then vote on, them – and this approach actually worked pretty after some early "bugs" in the process were ironed out!

Up to now, all photos were uploaded by John and now Brian, but that actually takes a lot time and effort. Thus some members (notably Malcolm) suggested it would be easier/quicker if they could upload their own shots directly to the relevant albums.

Having "thought about that", the Committee decided to give it a try, but felt – *given their own experience of how it's done, and what can go wrong!* – that some "guidance and training" for the members on how to do it might be appropriate. Therefore this presentation was developed – *with review and input from other Committee members and Tony* – with the aim of ensuring that members understand what is involved, what to do, and *what not to do!*

The presentation "starts from square one", by outlining what "Google Photos" is about (*i.e., on-line storage of photos & videos in the Google "cloud"*) and how to:

- Get a Google account if you don't already have one.
- Create and name your own Albums
- Upload your shots to them
- View the shots in each Album, and the info that is given on each
- Edit an Album to add or delete shots as appropriate
- Share "links" to your Albums with specific people or, later, send links to others (*e.g., other members, or family & friends*) via email (etc.)
- Allow others to upload their own shots to your Album (*which is critical in allowing Group members to upload their competition shots - but it's actually the default anyway!*) – or else preventing others from doing that &/or from deleting shots already there.
- *Finally*, how to do some "housekeeping" to keep within Google's "free" storage limit of 15Gb of new files (from 1<sup>st</sup> June 2021), and how to delete whole Albums in one go or in part.

Both PowerPoint "pptx" & pdf versions of the latest update to the presentation are attached, and you may find it useful to save both "locally" for future reference.

*NB: Some links in the pptx version may not work for more than a couple of months due to John's "housekeeping" of his Google account.*

**Thus, from the April 2021 competitions onwards, members are encouraged to upload their photos directly to the relevant albums** – see Brian's 23<sup>rd</sup> March email – but, if you are uncertain about doing that, then continue to send them to Brian.

### **Presentation "Crop & Resize your photos for Google Photos" – Brian Hillier**

At the February meeting, Brian outlined his experiences of uploading shots to Google Photos, only to find that they looked too small &/or had black borders and thus looked slightly different to how they did before uploading – and this appeared to relate to how they had been cropped &/or resized *before* he uploaded them.

At that meeting he had outlined what he had found, but – *in light of John's presentation as above* - he decided to create a more detailed one, and so he did that in the form of a Google Photo Album "Crop & Resize your photos for Google Photos" presentation which he "shared" at the March meeting – and you can find it here.

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/Y4mfKXGaKyS5XYS8A>, and he will prepare a pdf version for distribution &/or download in the near future.

**NB:** with a bit of practice with Google Photo Albums, you can download the individual photos that make up his presentation (*but PLEASE DON'T accidentally delete any of them!*).

Essentially, what he said was:

- The width-to-height ratio in pixels of a photo (and video) image is called the “Aspect Ratio” and varies according to the device used to take it, &/or to how the printed version has been cropped.
- Most cameras/devices produce shots with ratios of around “3x2” (e.g., “35mm film”, and most DSLRs) or “4x3” (“Micro Four Thirds cameras”), and those from phones “vary”.
- Google Photos display images at 3600x2200 pixels, and thus has an Aspect Ratio is “18x11” (*from 3600x2200 by a bit of simple maths*) and differs from the devices used to produce most images!
- As a result, shots directly uploaded from a device may not display correctly in Google Photos - photos smaller than 3600x2200 will not fill the display area, larger photos will fill the display area but may appear as a portrait or landscape shots whereas they were originally the opposite, &/or may appear with black borders on the top/bottom or the sides.
- However, with appropriate cropping and “re-sizing”, the pixel size of an original “3x2” or “4x3” (etc.) shot then that can be made to approximately match Google’s 3600x2200 pixel requirement and the shot will then be correctly & fully displayed in a Photo Album.
- Also, even if the pixel count is much lower than 3600x2200, the image can be resized to approximately match those numbers and then it will display correctly in a Google Photos Album – Brian gave an example where a photo with an original image size of 239kB/Pixel size 1013x5700 was resized to 1MB/3600x2025 and then displayed correctly in an Album

He then demonstrated how to crop and resize several photos (*notably Malcolm’s of 2 lion statues in a museum*) to match the Google Photos Aspect Ratio in photo-editing Apps (e.g., *Affinity Photo, FastStone Image Viewer, Photoshop Elements*) of which most members have at least one.

### **The March Competitions**

Brian has circulated the list of winning entries in both competitions, and has sent them to Eirwen and Tony as appropriate, and so those shots will soon appear on our website pages as normal.

Thus Andrew led discussions in which he “Shared “the Google Photo albums of the two competition entries and we discussed the circumstances and locations where shots had been taken, why they had turned out as they had, and whether alterations to framing, lighting, subsequent cropping etc., and so on would have made any “improvements”.

### **Taking/Creating “Black & White” photos**

The April themed-competition will be for shots in “**Black & White**”, and so Andrew gave a short presentation on that subject, and how to set your camera/device to take B&W shots.

He contributes to several aeromodelling magazines which can only accept a limited number of colour photos, and therefore he converts some of his colour shots to B&W in order for them to be accepted. He showed how this can be done in “your favourite” photo-editing Apps (*they all work slightly differently, but with very similar results*) by adjusting the colour, hue and saturation settings “sliders” (*and then saving as new files, of course!*).

Brian has now provided the following weblinks links where info and guidance on converting photos to B&W.

- Short concise advice is offered by this link:  
<https://helpx.adobe.com/uk/photoshop/using/convert-color-image-black-white.html>

- Very long, verbose, technical advice is offered by this link  
<https://www.photoshopsessentials.com/photo-editing/converting-color-photos-to-black-and-white-in-photoshop> c

### **The April Competitions**

As indicated above, the April themed-competition will be for “**Black and White**” shots, and you can submit your shots into Google Albums as follows:

- **Photo Album - 104C - Black and White photographs**  
<https://photos.app.goo.gl/tbFCHUycdo7FaUhDA>
- **Photo Album -104S - Shot of the Month**  
<https://photos.app.goo.gl/RokaAPLWuZWLGaYF8>

The deadline for all **entries** will be: **midnight on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> April**

***NB:*** Send them to Brian if you don't want to try to upload those directly into Google Albums.

The deadline for **voting** will be: **midnight on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> April**

### **The 26<sup>th</sup> April presentation**

The April presentation is still TBD, but will be announced after the next Committee meeting early in the month.

### **Monthly meeting Diary Dates for 2021 - the 4th Monday of each month (at least for the immediate future)**

As you will all know, the H u3a meeting programme for 2021 is currently “fluid” due to the ongoing pandemic and restrictions, but, for at least the next few months, the Committee aims to continue to have **Zoom meetings on the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of each month** until such time as opportunities for face-to-face meetings at the Baptist Church (*or maybe elsewhere &/or as “photo-shoots??”*) become much clearer and more stable.

Well, that's all for the moment, and so all the best and hope to see you all on **MONDAY 26<sup>th</sup> April at the next ZOOM Virtual Meeting!**

**Brian**

**And on behalf of the other members of the Steering Committee: Andrew Longhurst, Judy Peddie & John Allen!**

*NB: you will soon be able to see these Notes on-line at <https://u3asites.org.uk/hillingdon/page/61662>, where you will also find those from previous meetings, and there is also much information & guidance there on many aspects of photography, learning how to use your camera, image processing and printing, etc.!*