Revisiting Images
May 6, 2019

Those of us that spend a lot of time out in the landscape, be it close to home or further afield, shoot a lot of images. Digital technology has been a blessing and no, it has not been a curse, but it has meant we tend to shoot an awful lot of stuff. I for one do this particularly when I am in a location I won't be back to for months or years as the case maybe. Once all is shot many photographers get home and then download all immediately and delete all they consider poor or don't like. I am not talking about the images that are clearly out of focus or have camera shake, we all delete these. I am talking about the ones that we have looked at for 2 -3 seconds and made an instant decision Yes or No, Keep or Save!   Increasingly, I find this approach to have problems. Often, we are not looking properly and sometimes our mood effects what we judge to be good or weak, like or dislike. I now find myself keeping more and more which means having a lot of storage but I find it has been worth it. I have looked back years and been appalled by some of the stuff I thought good, which is a learning process it itself, spent time looking at images that I initially disregarded, and spent a lot of time revisiting the processing of photos and been surprised and pleased by results. Colour to black and white has featured a lot in this process. Deleting, re processing and modifying photos on my website is much more usual these days too. More and more I am now processing for print which in my mind has to be the ultimate goal so if it "aint" going to be a good print it's a gonner for me.

The addiction to Facebook and its constant bombardment of images and posts which I contribute to a lot, has really stunted our ability to look and to see, using our eyes and our brain. The constant popping up of images and posts that demands we look NOW at whatever and always for a very short space of time, has had consequences for us all. More and more I look at what people like on FB and it tends to fall into certain categories.

1 Our "friends" like what we post sometimes regardless of the content
2 Images that are very dramatic
3 Images that are either very colourful or very black and white
4 Images that capture a funny or shocking moment

I am not saying that there are not great photographers posting superb images but there is a trend for the above to be looked at and liked more, it would seem.

It's easy for the eye and brain to respond to any of the above, it does not involve much thinking or having some sort of dialogue with these tiny images. Given this, I would suggest our ability to look and see is being degraded. So for me, I think more time must be spent looking at images on photographers' websites, work in print and in books. Am I going to still post to FB? yes of course but maybe not so much ! I am going to look back more and more at folders of work and reflect on what was shot, how it was shot and how it may have been processed. I think this may be more productive and enjoyable. So why not take a trip down memory lane and look back and reflect on the past? Hopefully it will help you define the future.