



Bramhall Photographic Society

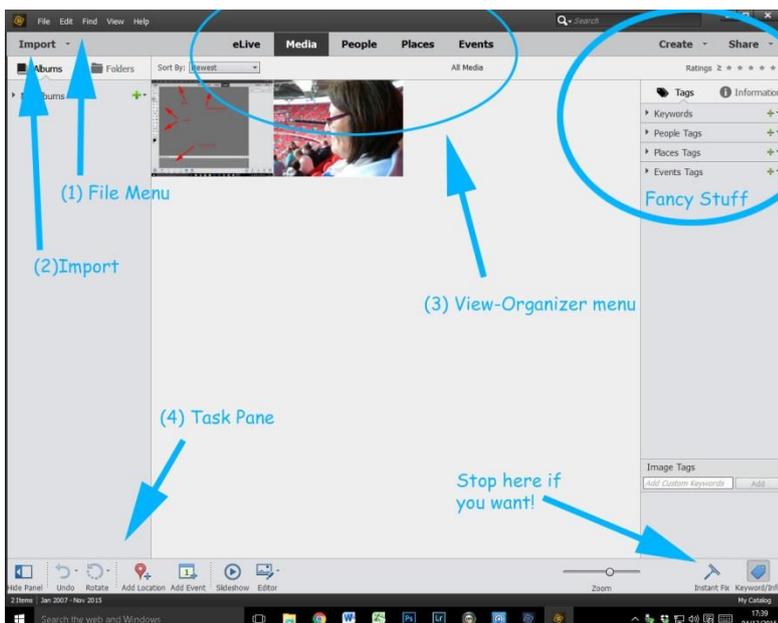
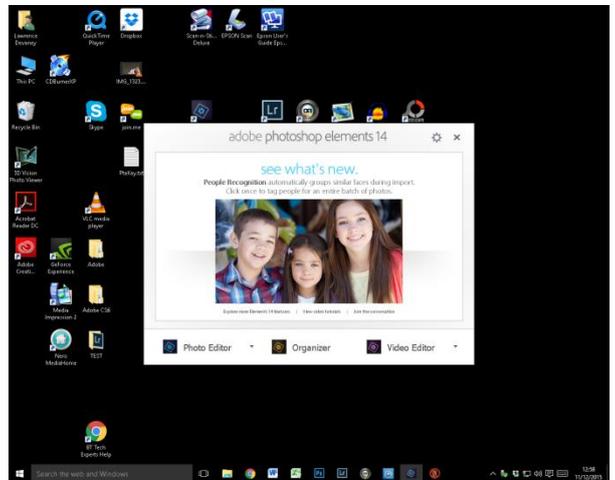
PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS AN INTRODUCTION TO THE WORKSPACE

(This technique will work in any version of Elements although the screenshots may vary)

Introduction

At amateur and camera club level no photograph has ever been taken that cannot be improved by post capture editing. Either in the Darkroom or today on a computer. Today the reason for this is that Digital cameras are set to 'degrade' your pictures. 3 properties are affected: - contrast, exposure range and sharpness. At a basic level image editing software is used to correct the photograph. The best known and most powerful version is Photoshop, other good ones are available including some that come with your camera but this course will use Photoshop Elements 14 (PSE). We will not be able to show you every nook and cranny of PSE but what we will demonstrate should enable you to delve and experiment on your own to unlock the more progressive aspects. This evening you will get an introduction to the software and its basic tools.

1. Load Elements 14, version 12 & 13 look very similar. A choice is offered – do you want to ORGANISE or EDIT? Let's start correctly and organize our work as 'workflow' it may not be important now but by the time you have a few hundred or more photographs it will be. Make sure the 'Media tab' is selected.



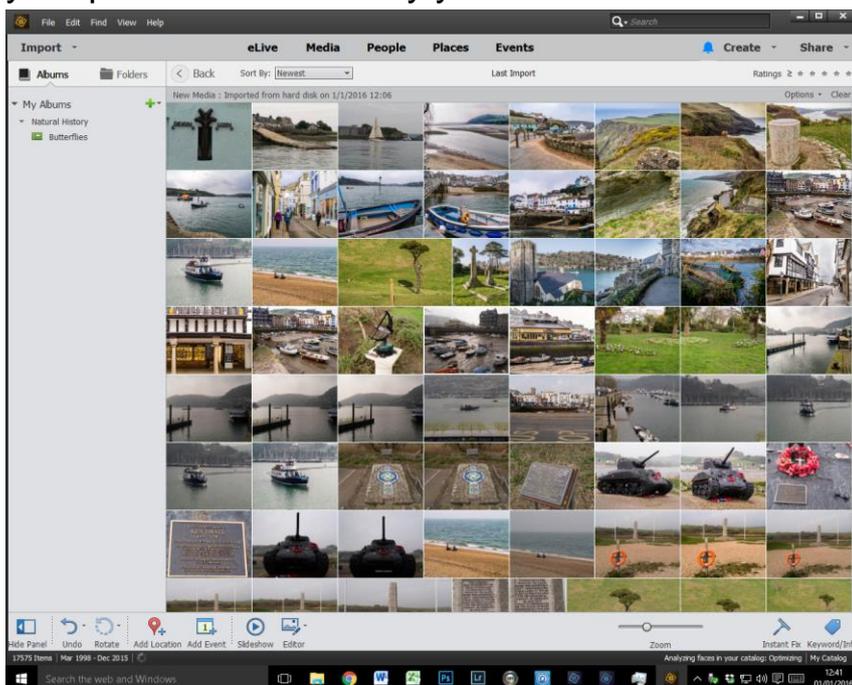
2. The line known as the 'FILE MENU' line is not so important at this stage. More important is the 'IMPORT' dropdown and the 'VIEW-ORGANIZER MENU'. 'FANCY STUFF' we will look at later.

3. Where are your pictures?
(A) Memory cards & sticks, CD/DVD, on your camera/phone/tablet. Or (B)

probably already on your computer.

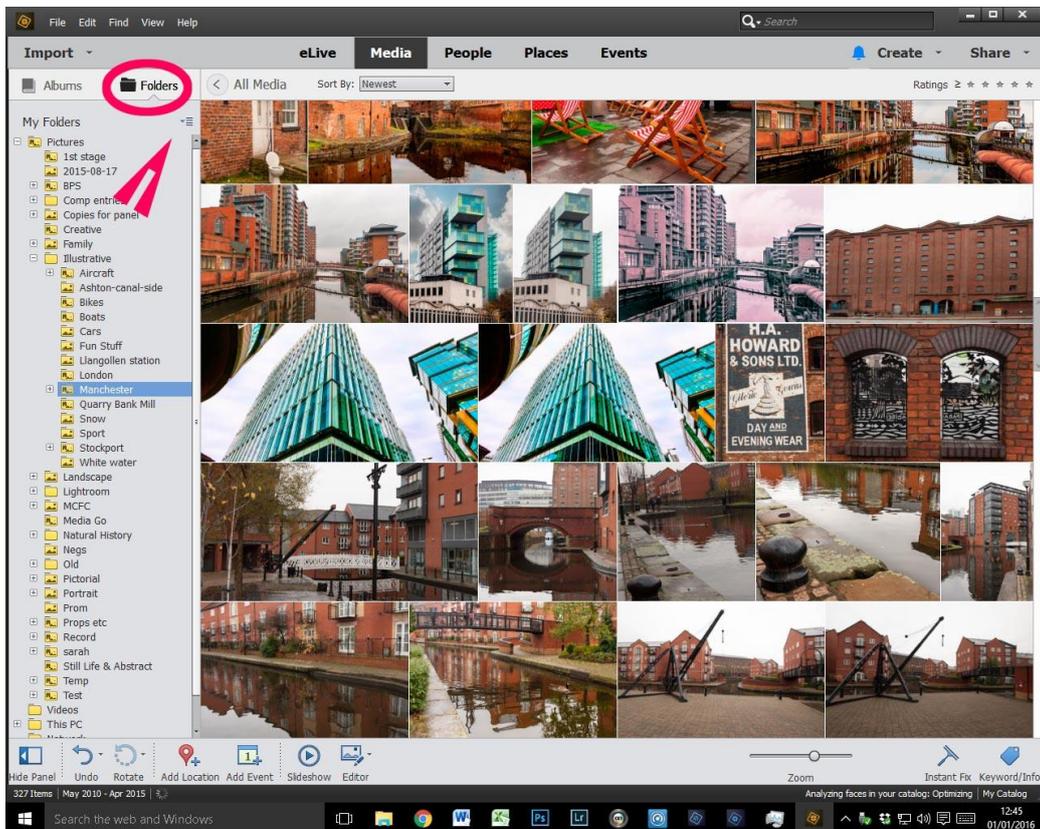
'IMPORT' is used to get our pictures from? Camera – Card etc. and the Computer. Most of us already have pictures on the hard drive with a potential to end up with thousands of photographs. Some of you may already have a folder system that makes it easier to find your images and documents. PSE provides a way of creating a **catalogue** (a record of all your images) and **albums** for your work. A Catalogue makes it much easier to find individual pictures. Albums allow you to collect your best ones together as we did with the old photo albums cherished by families.

- 3.1 Select Import/ "From Files & Folders" (Don't go anywhere near the "In Bulk" option) a typical dialogue box opens up and PSE requires you to navigate to the files you want to include. This could be a single image or a full folder, in which case select the file/s or select all files in the folder. This could take seconds or a lot longer depending on how many photographs you have and how fast a processor you have (for some a cup of tea right now would be a good idea, for others it might be lunch or even off to bed for the night). Just leave the computer to do what it has to do. In a dialogue box you will see information that shows the folder being checked through and the main box will gradually be populated with your pictures. Eventually your screen will look something like this.



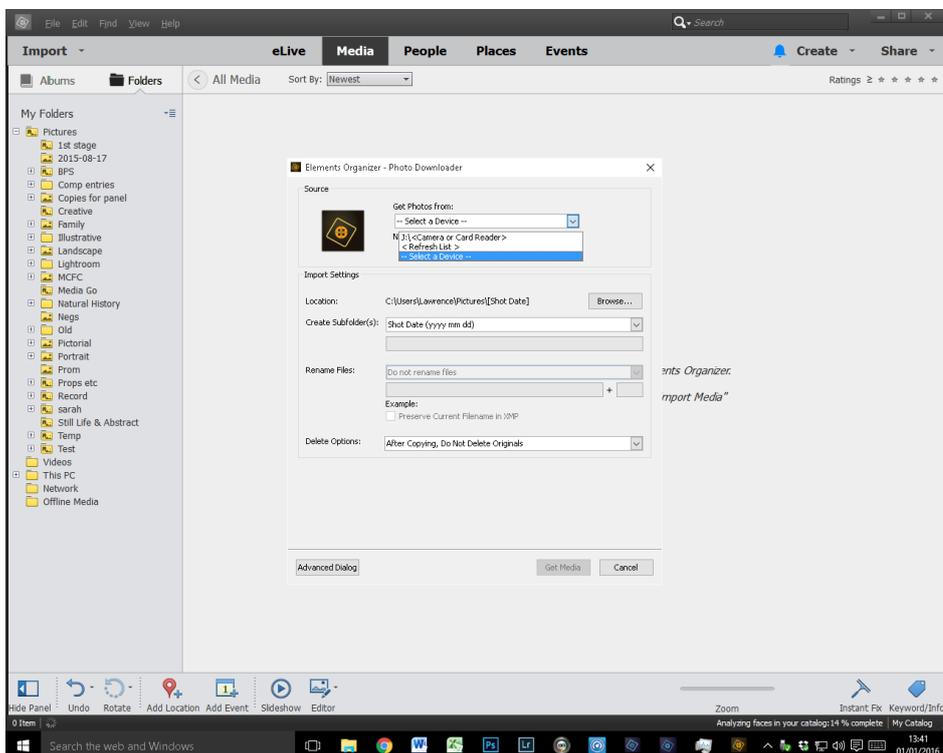
If you are not shown the folders on the left side click on 'Folders' and if its just a long list click on the drop down and select 'Tree' so that you

then see this.



The other options under 'Import' are straight forward (Apart from the dreaded "In Bulk") and set out in an intuitive way although 'From Camera or Card Reader' is worth spending a little time on.

- 3.2 Whatever you attach will generally instigate your computer system to ask a question about how you want to handle it. Dismiss this message as we will use PSE. Select 'From Camera or Card Reader'



this dialogue box.

and complete

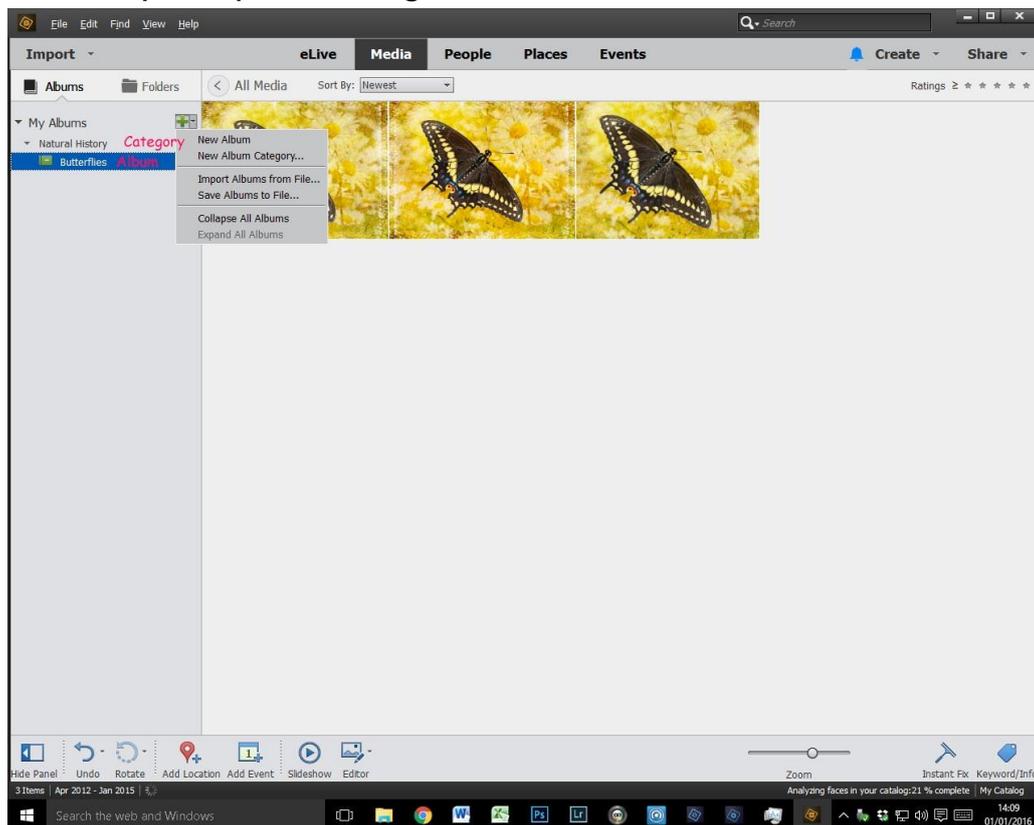
Select 'Get photos from' and opt for the appropriate option.

Select 'Browse' and navigate to the folder you want the photographs to be added to. Complete the other options.

When complete select 'GET MEDIA' button.

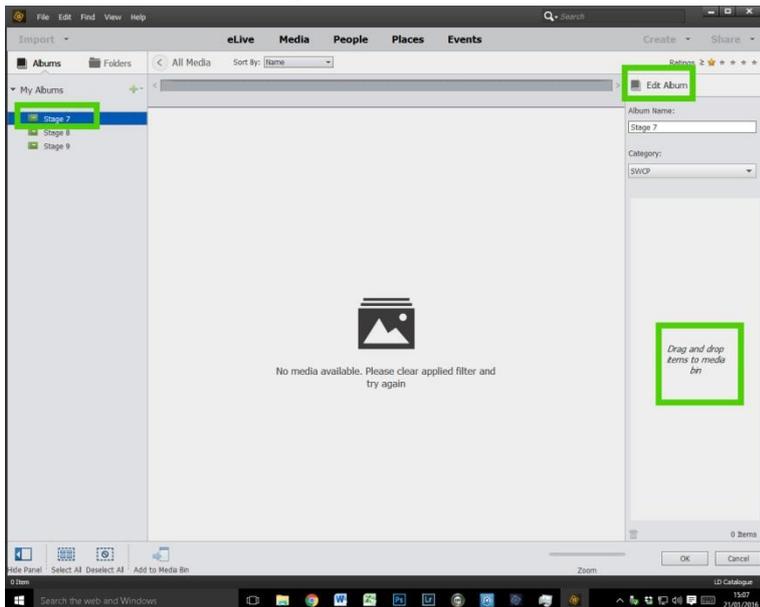
- 3.3 Folders are, basically everything you **don't** want to chuck away. So what's an 'album'? Exactly what you would expect it to be – your best stuff, images from different folders you want to find together. 'ALBUM CATEGORY' is the broad description e.g. Transport. An 'ALBUM' would be a sub section of a category e.g. Aircraft. Why do you do this? It's so you can find your pictures easily and quickly, especially the best ones.

Select ALBUM, click on green plus sign and see the NEW ALBUM PANE open up on the right.

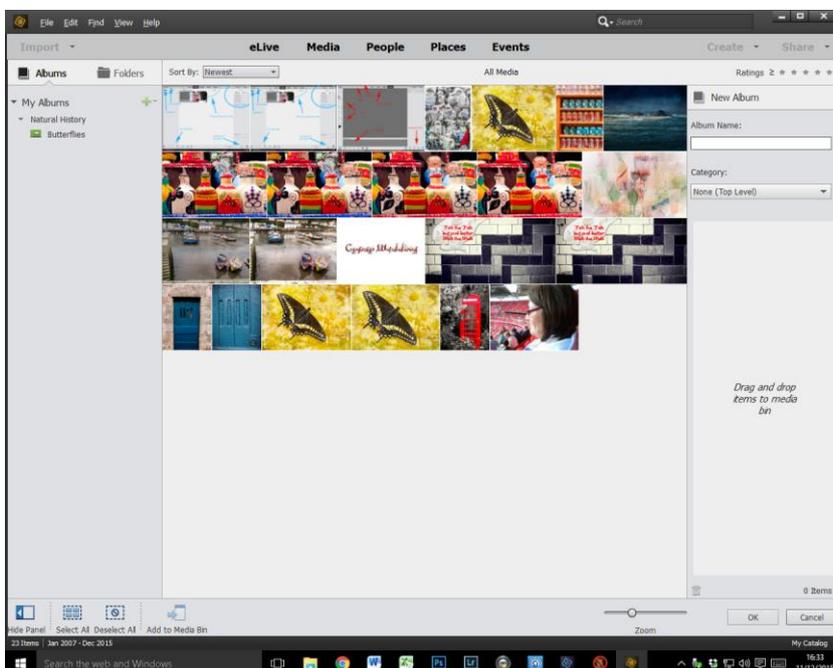


- 3.4 Complete the boxes, Category should be the broad description and Album is the sub section. Navigate in 'FOLDERS' to find the images you want in that folder. and drag them into the 'MEDIA BIN' on the right. It's easier to select just your best images if you take the advice to 'Rate' the photographs in the folder. Because, now you can use the filter to select just the ones you want in the Album by: 'Edit'/Select All and click OK. View the ALBUM column to see your selected images. It's possible to add more photographs from folders at any time once the Album has been created. Or you may not have selected any images when you made the Album. Simply, right click

on the Album you want to add to and select 'Edit'. This will open the Album Pane on the right.



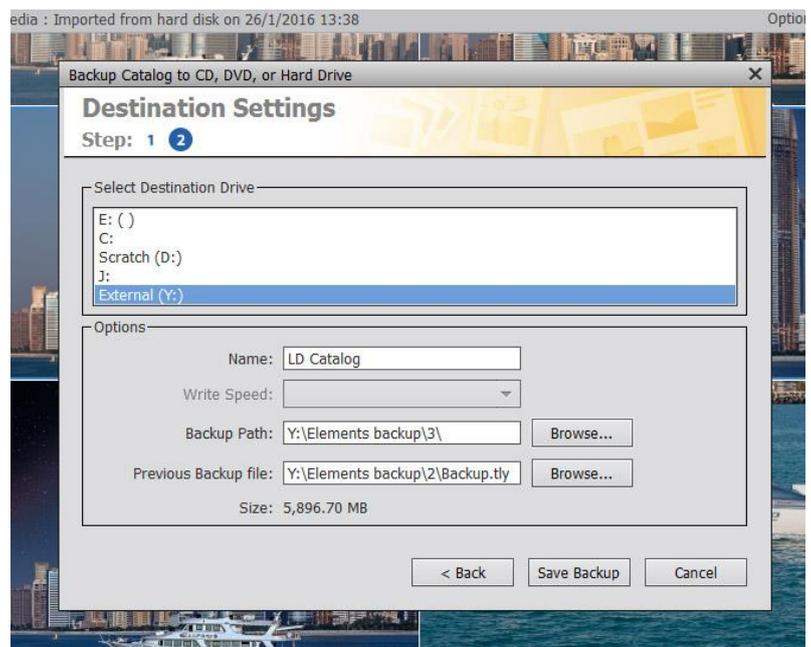
If the dropdown does not appear make sure you are not still in 'Create an Album' mode. Navigate in folders to find the image you want and click & drag into the opened Album Pane. (This process looks to the presenter to be a sensitive step i.e. it doesn't always go right on the first click. What you should see is a symbol like a no entry sign as you start to drag. This will change once you drag into the Album Pane. Once the no entry sign has disappeared release the mouse button.). Click OK. To take an image out of an ALBUM, right click on the image and select 'remove from Album'. You can sort (order) your pictures in an album if you want to alter their sequence. You must change the 'Sort By:' to 'Album Order' then Just click and drag the images into place.



As you edit or change your photographs the thumbnail representation in your 'Catalogue' will not change automatically in related image editing software so it's a good idea to update manually when you need an images thumbnail to represent the current edit status. To do this right click on the image or images and select "Update Thumbnail".

4. Once you have started to establish your catalogue you will from time to time be prompted to "Back up the Catalogue". Again depending on the speed of your computer and the number of images stored on it the backup could take anything from a cup of tea to a weeks holiday. To Backup the Catalogue for the first time its File/Backup catalogue. You might get a grey box telling you that some files cannot be found. It's usually best to click on 'Reconnect'. Elements will try to find them; again it can take some time. Remember if you are going to move, rename or delete a photograph do it in the Elements organiser or you will be frustrated when Elements tells you that the file/image cannot be found. When Elements has prepared for the backup another grey box appears with 2 choices and as this is the first backup choose 'Full Backup'. You will then be asked in a dialogue box where you want to backup to. It's best if you have an external hard drive but you can use a prepared folder on the C: drive. Wherever it is my suggestion is to create a folder called Elements Backup, then a sub folder called '1'. Select for the backup. For subsequent backups

'Incremental Backup' should be selected and click next. This dialogue box will appear. Now you need to 'Browse to your elements Backup folder and in the 'Backup Path' box your browse should take you to Elements Backup/ and make a new folder called '2'. Now Browse to 'Previous Backup File' and select Elements Backup/1/backup.tly (backup.tly is a file) and

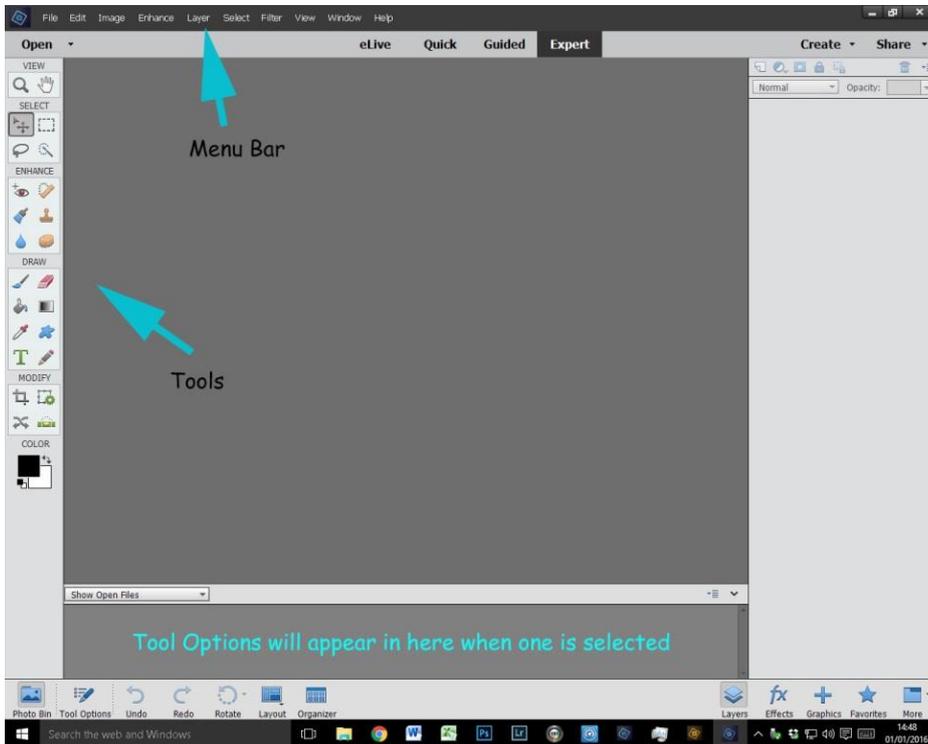


select. Now save backup. Each time you carry out an incremental backup move on a folder. i.e. create a new one with the next number. After you have a back history of 3 or more you can start to delete the older numbered folders. (On the 28th January I gave an inaccurate answer to a question about what was backed up. I subsequently obtained clarification and Elements Catalogue Backup does save the image files. This is the full response I obtained: -

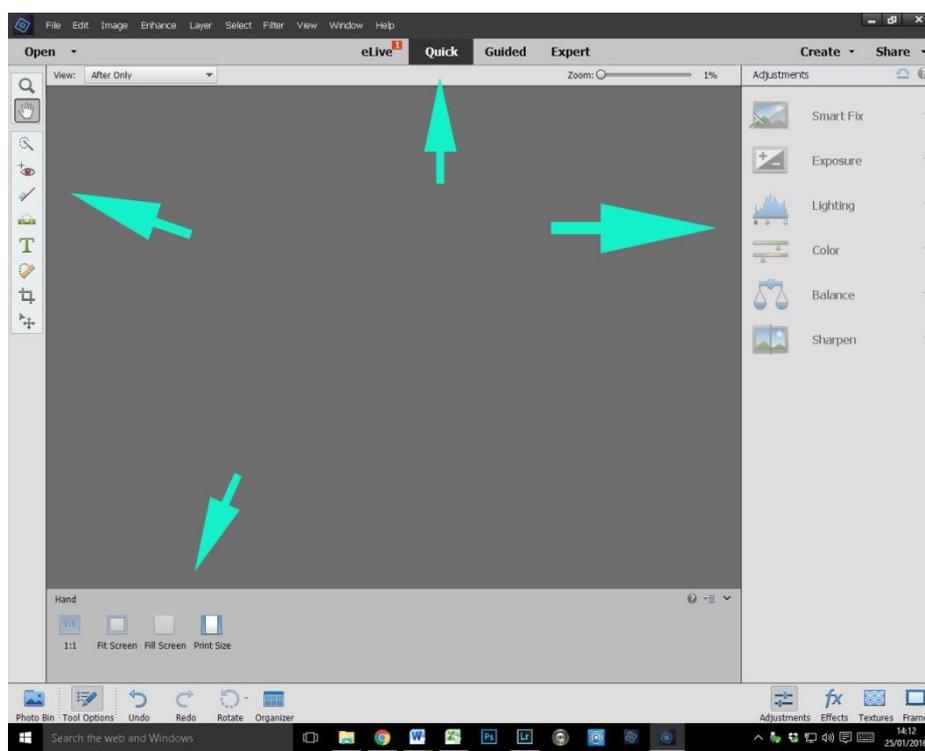
“The catalog backup of the organizer saves not only the catalog (a special folder), but all the images files and their folder structure. Its purpose is to be able to restore everything from the backup folder, to the original location or on another drive or computer. The links are restored so that you don't get 'disconnected' or 'missing' files in the catalog. If necessary, the restore process prompts you to convert the catalog if you restore on a newer Elements version.”)

A brief look at 'Quick Fix' but it's very basic and there is better in Elements Editor.

4 This is what the Elements Editor looks like

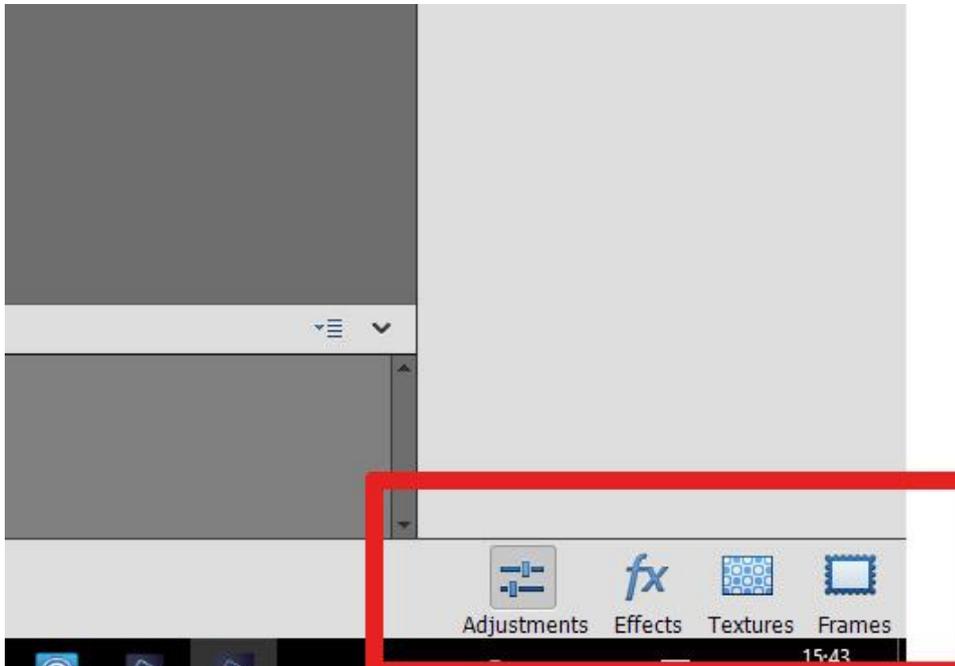


It all has a logical design and can be easily described - Menu Bar, tools, Tools Options. If you point the cursor at each icon you will see a pop up that offers a brief description of the tools function. Some are obvious like the red eye fixing tool others less so. Click on one and the 'Tools Options' pane changes to provide the? – Options. Also very confusing in the range of options. This however, is in 'Expert Mode' and is where we are aiming to get you. But if we dived in here you would become very



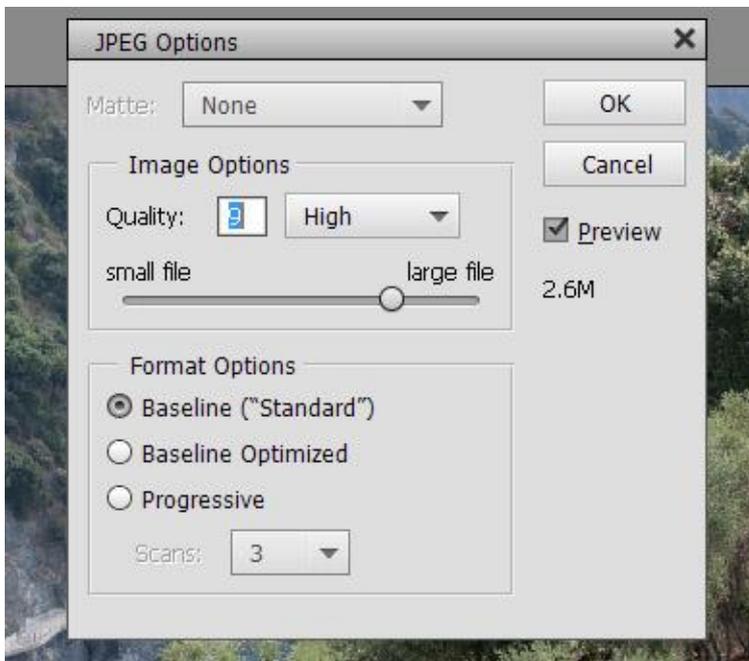
frustrated as there is so much to remember. The sessions following this one will focus on the 'Expert Mode'.
5 We don't want you to leave frustrated and not be able to play with new skills and once you have your catalogue and Albums started 4

weeks is a long time to twiddle your thumbs. This is what the Elements Editor 'Quick Mode' looks like. A little similar but scaled down in its level of sophistication. Fewer tools and less 'bells and whistles' but still powerful and very useful for basic editing of photographs. The tools are almost 100% obvious and the adjustment options are quite intuitive. Tools options will probably take some experimenting with. Open a picture in 'Quick Mode'. Make sure that on the bottom right 'Adjustments' is active.



You should now have the right hand pane showing the images properties that can be adjusted. Its quite intuitive so have a play. Nothing is set in stone until you save the work. When you have adjusted your picture to show it in its best 'light', 'Colour' etc save it but give it a new name so that you still have your original

- 6 So far we have not used the File Menu bar but 2 important file options to remember. The first one is Edit/Undo... Very useful if you want to go back a step. The next one is File/Save As. That's the first time you save your work, a straight File/Save is OK after that. Its always a good idea to differentiate any finished edits by altering the file name. e.g Edit1 or Edit 2 or even Edit2_Mono if you have a black and white version. Try to keep yor original so that you can always go back to it if it all ends in a mess. For now always save as a Jpeg file.



When requesting File/Save you will

have to select the file type/extension as suggested opt for Jpeg and a dialogue box like this will appear. The only change you need to consider is Quality. As a rule of thumb if you are likely to print your work choose 'Maximum' if its for a monitor/screen select 'Medium' quality 6. For the web Quality 4 is generally fine. These are all levels of compression – basically the software chucks away pixels it doesn't think you need so **minimise** the number of saves you carry out with Jpegs. And if you are having a 'play' it's a good idea to keep your original image and not save over it. That way you can always go back to it no matter how badly you muck it up. When you click on OK to save and the dialogue box leaves the screen you can now close down that file. Big Warning. If you have done a 'save as' the computer thinks the original file is still open as well as your edited version and when you ask it to close you will be asked if you want to save the file. If you respond yes your original work will be saved but with the edits you didn't want applying to the original file. Always check what file name you are being asked if you want to save to meke sure its not the original. If its your original and you want to keep it say no.

- 7 Now, have some fun with the 'Effects' option (next to 'Adjustments') and after that the 'Frames' and possibly the 'Textures' although for those you might be better waiting for our second Presentation. Again unless you save it you will not commit to any permanent changes. But if by some chance you end up with a masterpiece and you want to print it, save it with a new name and come along on the 25th February and I will say a few words about printing in our second half.

That's it for my notes but if you hit a problem before you take your frustration out on the cat or monitor let me know what the problem is by e mail and I will do my best to clarify my notes for you.