

## Pictures to Desktop and Direct Editing of Images

### 1 Background

Before Microsoft released Windows 10, it was possible to set your desktop to cycle through your personal photos. With the release of Windows 10, while it is still possible to set your wallpaper to your pictures folder, the operating system no longer looks in any subfolders. Therefore, if you're like most people, and you organise your photos into subfolders, none of them will be displayed on your desktop. This program fixes this limitation allowing you to set Windows so that it looks through all your photos no matter which subfolder they are in.

It does this by creating a folder in your public directory called Picture links (full path `c:\users\public\DesktopPhotoEdit\PictureLinks`)

Inside this directory it places shortcuts to all your photo no matter what subfolder inside the picture folder they are located. By placing all the links into a single folder it effectively "flattens" the folder structure so that all the photos are now accessible to Window 10.

The program also allows you, with a simple keyboard shortcut, to go directly from your desktop wallpaper photo to the photo file so you can edit or delete it. This is great because it means you can now use your desktop wallpaper to help sort through your photos.

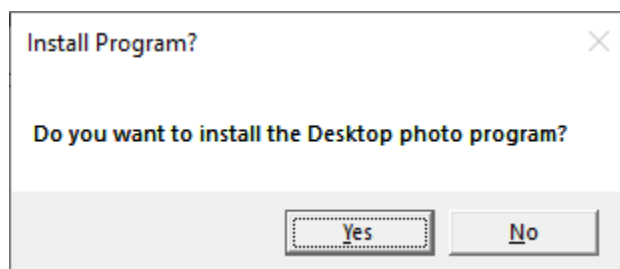
When you get a photo you don't like, you simply push `<CTRL>+<ALT>+<Q>` and you are taken directly to the photo where you can delete or edit it. I fix my photos which contain red eyes using this method.

### 2 How to install

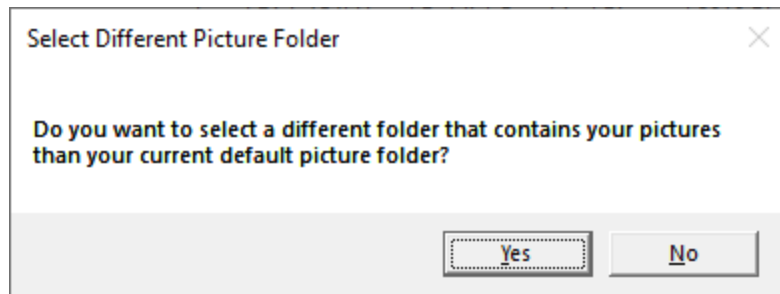
After you have downloaded the DesktopPhotoEdit.zip file from the website extract all the files it contains and then simply double click on the Install.vbs file.

This program will display a system message requesting elevation to administrator privileges. This required to install the program.

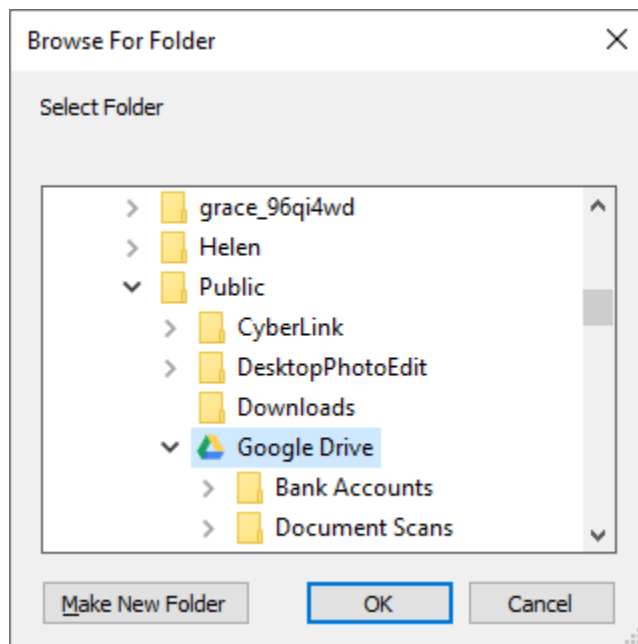
After you have said yes to this request the following dialogue box appears



Click Yes and the program will check whether you want it to scan your default Pictures folder and its subfolders or whether you want it to scan a different folder from the default Pictures folder as defined in your user profile.

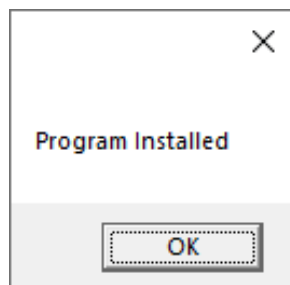


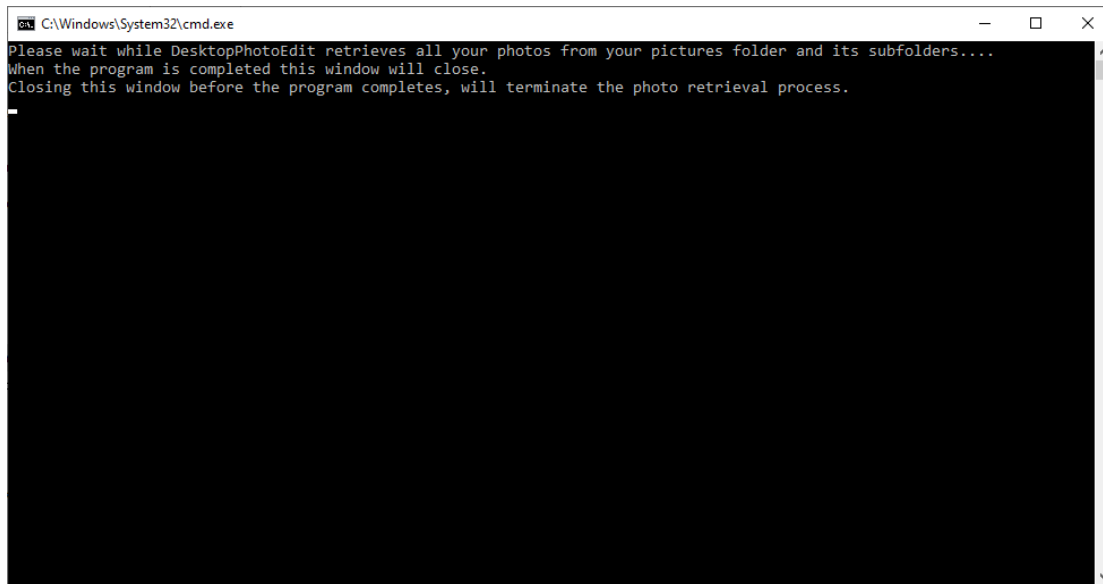
If you say yes to this prompt, then you will be presented with the following window which allows you to select the folder you want the program to search.



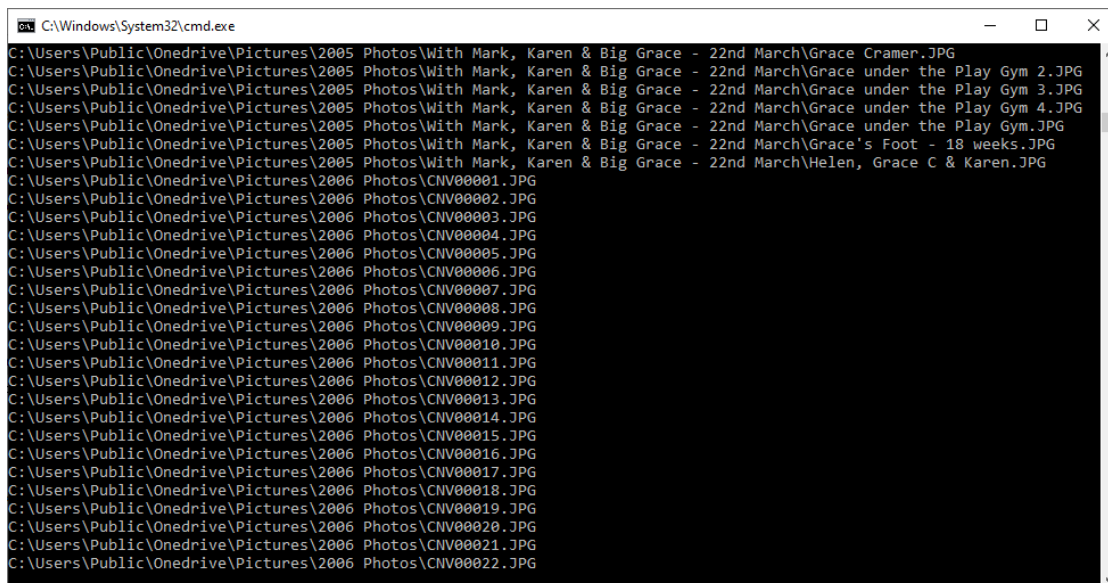
Once you have either accepted the default pictures folder or selected your own pictures folder, the install process begins. A Dos window will appear (Figure 1) which you should not close until the program completes (see next page).

After short time, you will see a list of subfolders in your pictures folders being processed. Depending on how many pictures you have, this process can take several minutes or even longer, but you will see in the command window each picture folder being processed. When the program has finished the following message box will be displayed:











*Figure 1: Command window that is displayed as the install program begins to create file links to all the pictures in your picture folder.*



*Figure 2: A list of folders being processed by the program as it works through all the subfolders inside your picture folder.*

Once the program has executed you will find a new folder inside your public directory (c:\users\public). This folder is called **DesktopPhotoEdit**

Inside this folder you will find the following files

 > This PC > Local Disk (C:) > Users > Public > DesktopPhotoEdit				
	Name	Date modified	Type	Size
	 PictureLinks	29/06/2020 22:01	File folder	
	 Desktop Photo Edit Instructions.pdf	29/06/2020 20:58	Adobe Acrobat D...	6,099 KB
	 ExtractDeskImage.vbs	25/04/2019 23:09	VBScript Script File	2 KB
	 Report.txt	29/06/2020 21:49	Text Document	2 KB
	 UpdatePictureLinks.vbs	29/06/2020 21:48	VBScript Script File	3 KB

If you look inside the subfolder PictureLinks, you will find all the shortcut files to all your photos that the install program has found. The files are simply named fileN so the number in the final file name is the total number of photos the program found in your pictures directory (see Figure 3).
































 > This PC > Local Disk (C:) > Users > Public > DesktopPhotoEdit > PictureLinks				
	Name	Date modified	Type	Size
	 File13126.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13127.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13128.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13129.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13130.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13131.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13132.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13133.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13134.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13135.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13136.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13137.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13138.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13139.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13140.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13141.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13142.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13143.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13144.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13145.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13146.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13147.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13148.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13149.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13150.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13151.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13152.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13153.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13154.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	 File13155.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	File13156.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	File13157.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	File13158.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB
	File13159.JPG	29/06/2020 19:53	.symlink	0 KB

Figure 3: The link files to all your photos that the install program found. In this example the total number of photos files found is 13,159.

The program also creates a text file called Report.txt. Inside that file lists all the link files and to which files they point to.



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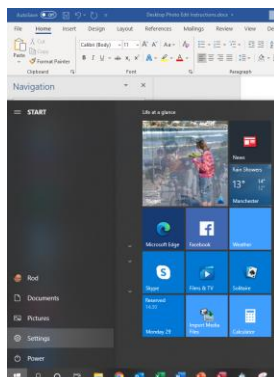
Report.txt - Notepad
File Edit Format View Help
File141's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2002 Photos\Skiing 2002\PICT0134.JPG"
File142's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\DSCN1170.JPG"
File143's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\A couple of Galas.JPG"
File144's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Barrenjoey Headland.JPG"
File145's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Bondi Beach 2.JPG"
File146's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Caley & Helen & Chloe avoiding the circardas.JPG"
File147's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Caley & Helen 2.JPG"
File148's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Caley Waterskiing.JPG"
File149's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Chilling out on the beach.JPG"
File150's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Chloe Waterskiing.JPG"
File151's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Christmas Day - present opening..JPG"
File152's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Cocktails on the beach.JPG"
File153's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Drinking.JPG"
File154's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Eating.JPG"
File155's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Francis Waterskiing.JPG"
File156's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Helen & Rod & Angie.JPG"
File157's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Helen & Rod - Captain Cook Dinner Cruise.JPG"
File158's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Helen and Angie.JPG"
File159's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\In the living room of the holiday unit..JPG"
File160's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Jamie, Cathy & Jacob Young.JPG"
File161's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Jess, Francis & Chloe.JPG"
File162's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Jess, Matt & Chloe's there too.JPG"
File163's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Jessica Waterskiing.JPG"
File164's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Jon, Flavienne, Baptiste & Sebastian Higgs.JPG"
File165's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Julie - Harbour Bridge Climb.JPG"
File166's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Julie, Helen & Rod - Harbour Bridge Climb.JPG"
File167's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Leyton Hewitt, no, Mark Benson.JPG"
File168's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Lion Island.JPG"
File169's target is "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2003 Photos\Aussie Trip 2003\Look out from West Head.JPG"
  
```

*Figure 4: Part of the contents of the report file. In this example File141's is pointing to the image file with full directory path "C:\Users\Public\Google Drive\Pictures\2002 Photos\Skiing 2002\PICT0134.JPG"*

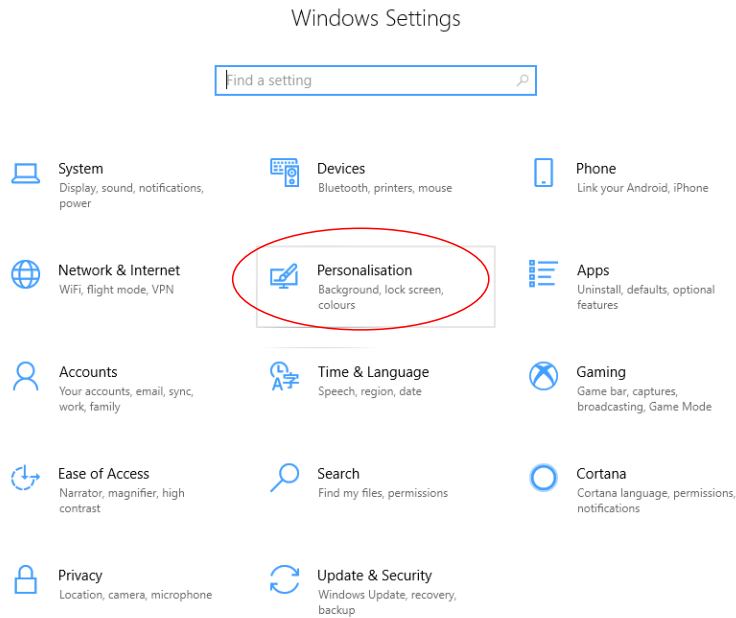
This file can sometime also be useful if you want to see a list of all your photos. The ExtractDesktopImage.vbs file is the program that runs when you push the key sequence <Ctrl>+<Alt>+<Q> to open an explorer window with the current desktop photo file selected (see Figure 6, page 7).

### 3 Setting your desktop wall paper to select your picture link files

While the install program does all the tasks which will allow you to show all your photos in your Pictures folder's subfolders, you need to finish the installation by manually changing your personalised settings so that your wallpaper is set to all the shortcut files in the c:\users\public\desktopEdit\Picturelinks folder. To do this, go to system settings ([Start menu > Cog Symbol](#)).

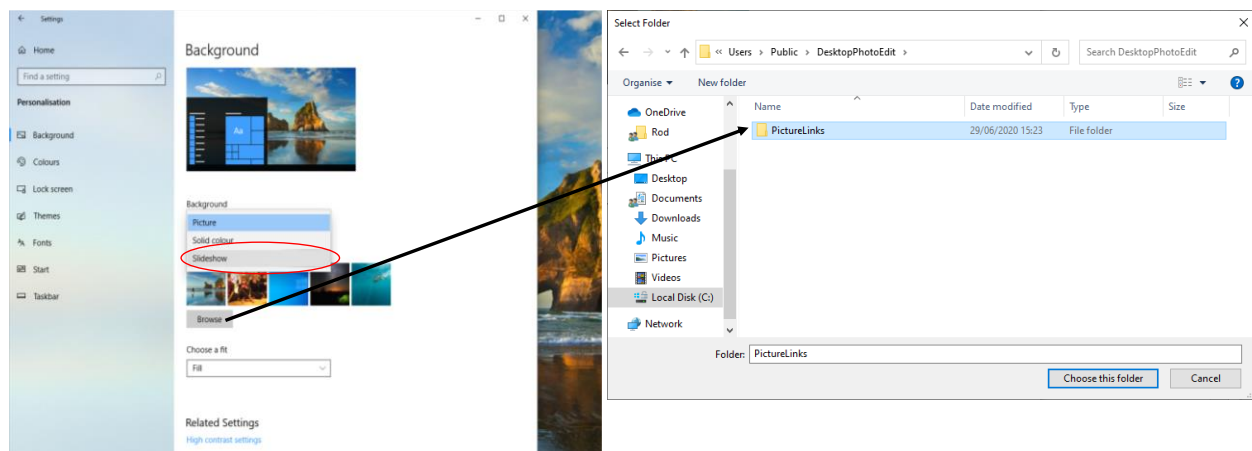


## Select Personalisation



Change Picture to Slideshow (see image below).

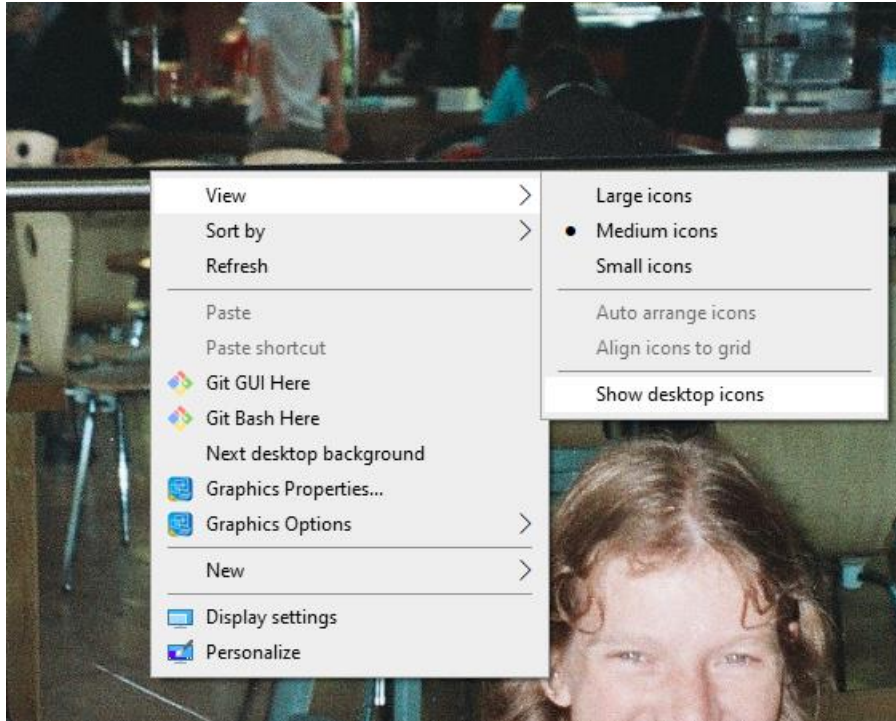
Then click the browse button and navigate to folder **c:\Users\Public\DesktopPhotoEdit\PictureLinks**.



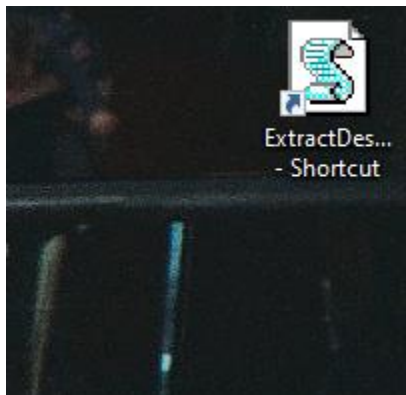
Make sure you set the toggle switch shuffle to on and also you can adjust the amount of time the desktop paper stays up. You might initially want to set the desktop wallpaper time to only 1 minute so you can confirm it is displaying all your photos in all the subfolders of your Pictures folder.



If you reveal your desktop items (Figure 5) then you will notice a new vbs shortcut file on your desktop.



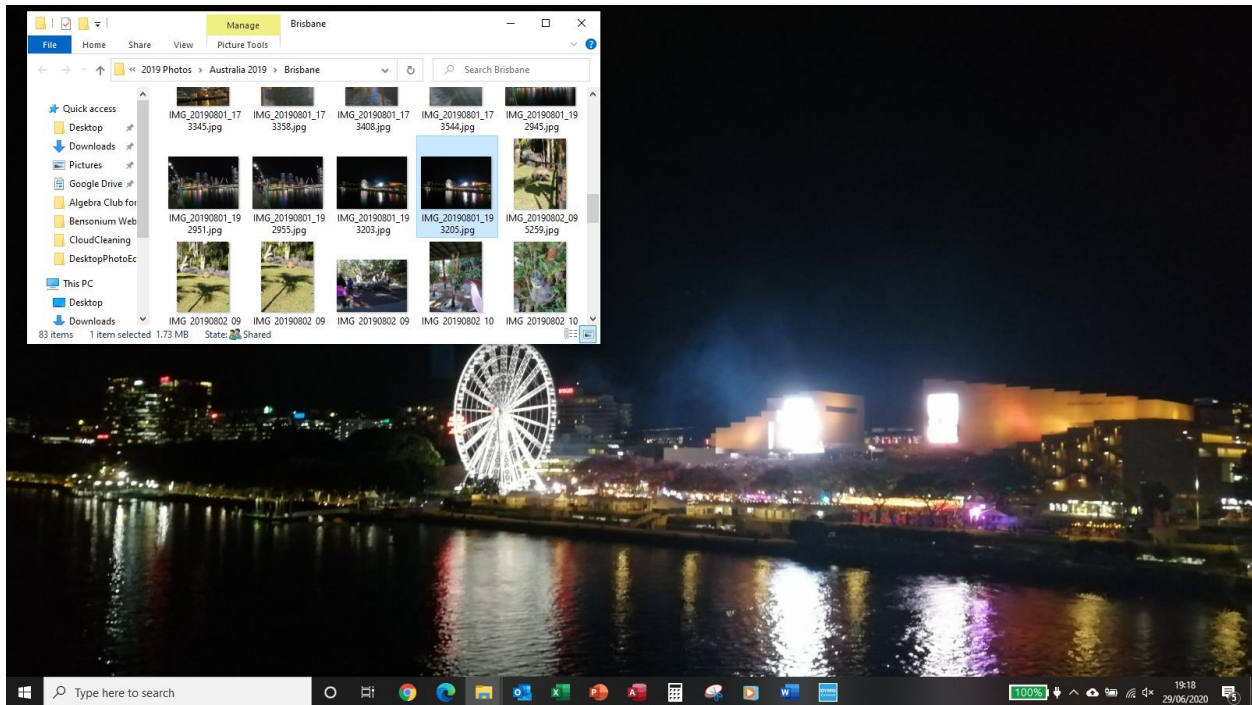
*Figure 5: You can hide/reveal your desktop items by right clicking on your desktop selecting View and then toggling Show/Hide Desktop icons as shown in the image above.*



*Figure 6: Shortcut to a script file (located in the "C:\users\public\DesktopPhotoEdit" folder which opens the folder which contains the picture file that is currently being displayed on your desktop).*

Normally, you want to hide your desktop items so they don't clutter up your picture on the desktop. This is why the shortcut is configured to run with the keyboard key press <Ctrl>+<Alt>+<Q> (pushing the Ctrl key the Alt key and the Q key on your computer keyboard simultaneously).

When you do this a file explorer window will appear with the picture file that is currently being displayed on your desktop selected in the explorer window (Figure 7)



*Figure 7: Desktop after pushing the <Ctrl>+<Alt>+<Q> keys. The explorer window opens in the correct subfolder with the file currently displayed on the desktop selected.*

If you delete the file it will not disappear from the desktop because the operating system caches the image. However, it will obviously never appear again.

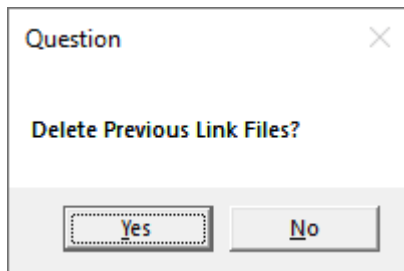
#### 4 Keeping the link files up to date

Because the operating system is accessing link files (pointers to your photos) and not the photos themselves obviously new photos you add to your picture folder will not be displayed on your desktop because they have been added after this program was run and so they have no corresponding link file in the C:\Users\Public\DesktopPhotoEdit\PictureLinks folder. However, inside the DesktopPhotoEdit folder there is another program called “UpdatePictureLinks” which you should run from time to time to keep your shortcut folder up to date.

This program is similar to the initial install program. If you run it on your standard pictures folder, it silently deletes all the old shortcuts and creates new ones. This also means that not only will all your new photos be added to the shortcut folder, but orphaned shortcuts, that now refer to photos you have subsequently deleted, will be removed.

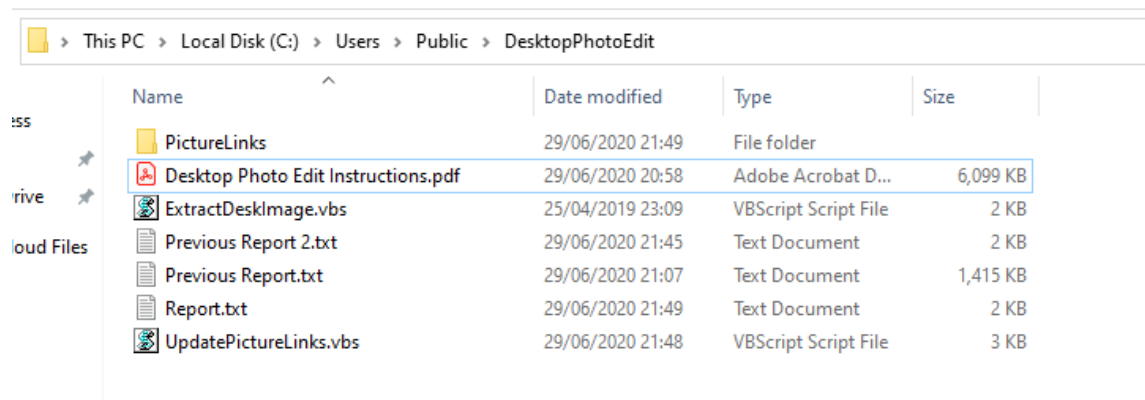
However, it is also recognized that you may want to include photos that do not reside inside your system’s picture folder. Therefore, if you select the option to scan a different directory than your picture folder, this program will give you an extra prompt as follows:





This means that if you want to combine the contents of several folders scattered outside your default picture folder, you can because if you choose not to delete the previous link files the new ones will be added to all the ones that are already in the folder.

Likewise, in this instance, your Report.txt file will be renamed Previous Report.txt because both reports are still relevant. In fact, the number of Report.txt files in your DesktopPhotoEdit folder indicates how many times this program has been run without asking for the PictureLinks Directory to be completely restarted. For example, in the screenshot below the Update picture links program has been run at least twice since the program was first installed.



Note that if you choose not to delete the previous link files please be aware that any link files that now refers to photos you have deleted will also continue to remain inside the PictureLink folder. If the operating system tries to access a link that refers to a non-existent photo file then the desktop simply appears a blank solid colour.

## 5 Windows 10 updates

I have noticed on my own computer that sometimes after windows 10 updates, the desktop photos no longer cycle properly. If this happens simply navigate back to the personalization settings and reselect your PictureLinks folder as described above (3 Setting your desktop wall paper to select your picture link files, page 5).

## 6 Conclusion

I hope this program especially if, like me, you have thousands of photos on your hard disk that you never look at. If you do find this program useful, please consider submitting a positive [review here](#) and promoting my website [www.bensonium.com](http://www.bensonium.com) to your friends and family. You might also like to check out my other programs which are also available on the website [here](#).