



THE LEADING LINE NEWSLETTER

Latest news and views from
Lake Macquarie Camera Club

September 2026 – Issue 35



Federation of Camera Clubs (NSW)
Established 1954

WELCOME TO THE SEPTEMBER 2026 ISSUE OF THE LEADING LINE



My First Tattoo – Ian Armstrong – Honours/Judges Choice August Monochrome Print - Advanced Grade.

In this issue:

- Images from the photoshoot at the Warners Bay Ice Skating rink.
- An article from Chris Mannweiler on “shooting” a couple of Mustangs’!
- Images from Trevor, Hans’ and Ian’s underwater adventures in Indonesia
- Contributions - On Holidays in Canada with Ian Brown and a Hidden Gem from Dennis Archibald.
- Ai judging of images. What’s possible.

My thanks to everyone who contributed to this issue.

Our next club night will be held at the Valentine Bowling Club on
Wednesday 9th September at 7.00pm.

New Members

A very warm welcome to new members Deborah Thompson and Matt Carson.

What's on in September

The activities and tutorials for September are summarised in the table below.

The best and most immediate way to see what's happening in the club is to look on our website Calendar, and then select the "Agenda" option. You will see what is on each day through the month. A summary appears below. Another action-packed month ahead!

September						2026
MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
31	01	02 Club Committee Mtg. via Zoom 7.00pm	03	04	05	06 September Club Competition Entries close 11.30pm
07 Zoom session - PSA Interclub entries with Roy Killen, 7.00pm	08	09 Club Night at VBC 7.00pm start	10	11	12	13
14	15 Macro SIG Zoom session with Bill Chambers- 7.00pm start	16 Astro Pshoot with Greg Carruthers - 7.00pm. Details on website	17	18	19	20
21	22	23 Fun Photography Night at VBC - 7.00pm	24	25	26	27
28 Coffee catchup at Lake Macquarie Sailing Club at 9.30am	29 Lightroom SIG Zoom session with Greg Carruthers at 7.00pm	30 Camera Craft Zoom Session with Andrew Dewar. Ice Hockey P'Shoot @ 7.00pm	01	02	03	04

Our Supporters

Our club patron is [Les Porter](#)..

We are supported by Valentine Bowling Club - <https://valentinebc.com.au/>

Our Sponsors are:

- Frame Today - <https://www.frametoday.com.au/frame-today-store-locations/picture-framing-warners-bay>
- Camera House Kotara - <https://www.camerahouse.com.au/store/newcastle>



Camera House has promotions for Father's Day running through September -

https://www.camerahouse.com.au/fathersday_gifts

- BenQ – <https://www.benq.com/en-au/store.html>

If you are interested in purchasing any BenQ products, please let David Richards or Dennis Archibald to obtain a discount voucher for monitors or lighting equipment.

2026 Annual General Meeting

Your committee for the year ahead:

Position	2026 - 2027
President/Newsletter Editor	Dennis Archibald
Secretary, Public Officer	Ian Armstrong
Webmaster/Co-Competitions Coordinator	David Richards
Co-Competitions Coordinator	Allison Hayes
Vice President and Training Coordinator	Greg Carruthers
Treasurer	Ruth Keech
FCC Coordinator	David Richards
Social Functions	Katherine James
Social Functions	Barb Hunter
Membership Coordinator	Jim Sloan
Training, Grading Officer	Bill Chambers
PSA Coordinator and Training	Roy Killen
Club Projectionist	Julie Brooks
Guest Speaker Coordinator/Club Promotions	Toni Woodcock

2026 External and Club Competitions News

Please let us know if you have had success in competitions external to our normal club competitions.

External Competitions

Sutherland Shire National Competition.

Congratulations to Bill Chambers and Phil Whiteman.



Image Name:	Dominance	
Score:	25	
Result:	Accepted 🏆 SSNEP Gold Medal 🌟	
Image Name:	Deadly Embrace	
Score:	25	
Result:	Accepted 🏆 Highly Commended 🌟	
Image Name:	Jumping Spider Moulting	
Score:	27	
Result:	Accepted 🏆 APS Silver Medal 🌟	
Image Name:	Two For Tea	
Score:	27	
Result:	Accepted 🏆 APS Gold Medal 🌟	

Phil Whiteman achieved Acceptances for the following images.



Lake Tyrrell Salt Pan





Lana Jade



Salty Fence – Lake Tyrrell

Vatican Museum Circular Stairway



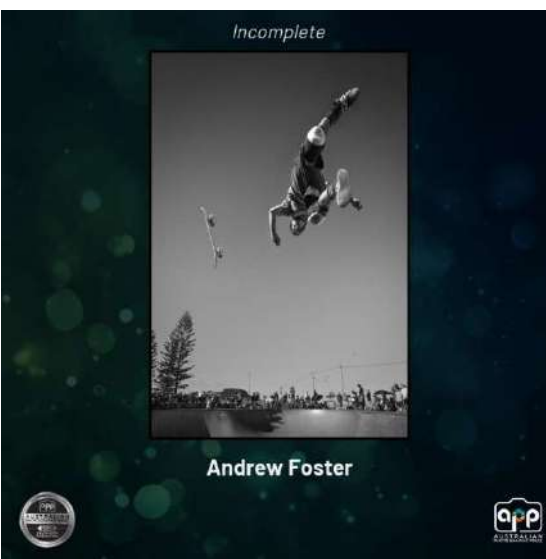
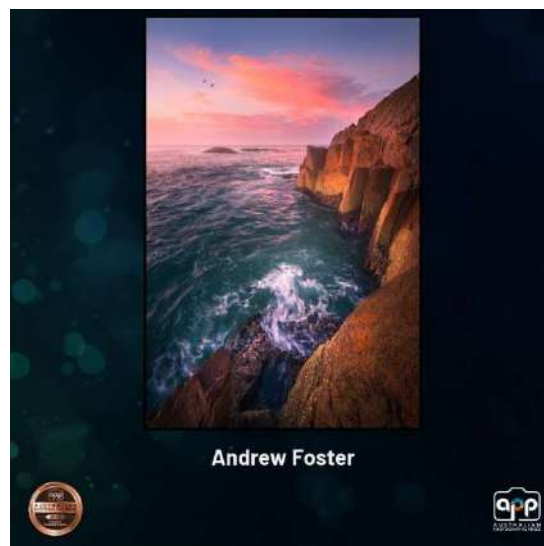
Australian White Ibises Feeding

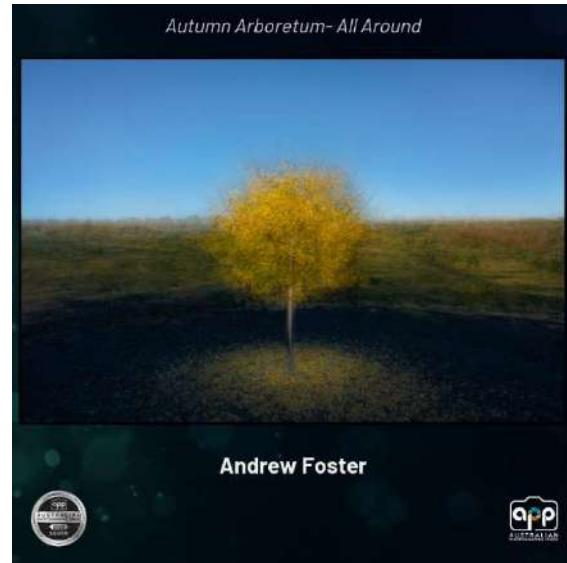
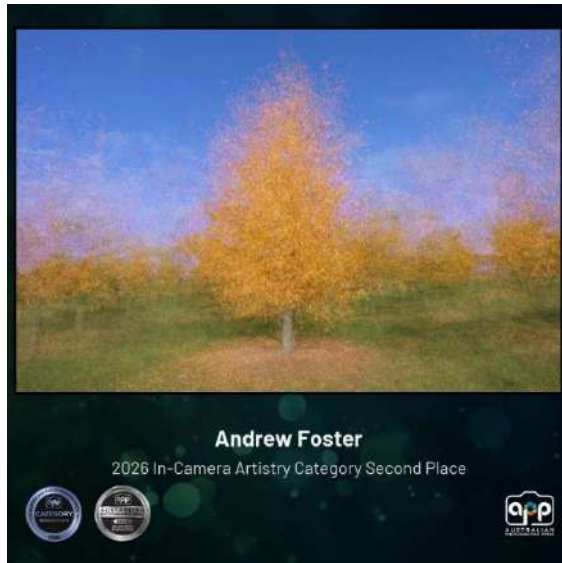


Australian Paper Wasps

Australian Photographic Prize Competition

Congratulations to David Richards, Terina Vale and Andrew Foster for their success in this competition.





Local Competitions you can enter:



[Hunter Wetlands Centre Annual Photography Competition - Hunter Wetlands | Newcastle NSW](#)





Club Competitions 2026 – David Richards

Will your image be the 2026 IOTY Winner? Please remember that images must be entered into a monthly club competition during 2026, to be eligible to be entered into the IOTY 2026 competitions (subject to other club rules).

Our judges do not enjoy having to reject or disqualify images from competitions, so a timely reminder to ask you to refresh yourself by reading both the definitions and judging criteria for our 2026 Set Subjects, as well as our club competition rules. Where do you find them?

Set Subject competitions:

Go to **COMPETITIONS > Set Subjects 2026**, then scroll down to the bottom of the page where you can both view or download the Set Subject definitions and judging criteria. If you still have questions, reach out to the relevant club judge.

Club Competition Rules

Go to **COMPETITIONS > MONTHLY COMPETITIONS**. Here you will find the competition rules and definitions. Here are several common and recurring errors members make:

- you cannot enter the same image in a digital competition and a print competition in the same month.
- non-compliance with Nature definitions (particularly human elements)
- non-compliance with Monochrome definitions

September Club Competitions

Our judges for August competitions are:

- PRINT: Bill Chambers
- DIGITAL Colour: Lindie Kolver
- DIGITAL Nature: Andy Hayes
- SET SUBJECT: Steve McGrath

Entries close strictly at **11:30pm Sunday 6th September**, but please don't leave it to the last minute to submit your entries. Try and enter them at least a day prior, and then double check that your images have uploaded correctly. There is a lot of extra work created for our Competition Manager to sort out issues on a Sunday night.

September Set Subject - "Abstract Nature Photography"

Definition:

Abstract nature photography transforms recognisable natural subjects into abstract forms by emphasising elements like shape, colour, and pattern rather than a literal depiction of the subject. Techniques such as extreme close-ups, intentional camera movement, and creative framing are used to create compositions that evoke an emotional or interpretive response from the viewer, moving beyond traditional documentary-style nature images. Key characteristics:

- Focus on Abstraction - The goal is to move away from explicitly recognisable subject matter, such as a specific tree or mountain range.
- Emphasis on Form, Colour, and Pattern - The photographer focuses on the lines, shapes, colours, textures, and repeating patterns found in nature.

- Detachment from Reality - The techniques used create a distance from the physical subject, making it unrecognisable or transforming it into something new and thought provoking.

Consider using some of the following techniques:

- Extreme Close-Ups: Capturing tiny details of a natural subject can make it unrecognisable.
- Intentional Camera Movement (ICM): Moving the camera during a long exposure can create streaks of colour and form, like a painting.
- Creative Framing: Selecting a unique perspective or isolating a specific pattern or texture within a larger scene.
- Light and Shadow: Using interesting light to highlight forms, create patterns, or produce ethereal effects.
- Cropping: Selectively cropping an image to emphasize abstract sections of the original scene. Go out and observe the natural world, looking for compelling shapes, colours, and textures. Pay attention to the principles of design such as line, shape, form, texture, and colour to compose your image.

Judging Criteria:

Images that will score best will be those that evoke feelings, associations, and a personal response from the viewer, rather than just documenting a scene. Your image could demonstrate a landscape or naturally occurring subject and inspire a particular mood or vision. The image should show beauty and artistic potential in the ordinary or overlooked aspects of nature and transform them through your creative approach.

Important criteria

The image must not contain composite elements or have anything added or removed from the image in post editing, unless through cropping. In keeping with traditional nature photography, the image should not contain any man-made objects or human elements. Colours and exposure may be gently enhanced, but extreme contrast / brightening / saturation and the like should be avoided. The image should clearly show what you have found in nature and be presented in an interesting abstract way.



Our club is a member of PSA, and this allows us to participate in the PSA Interclub competitions, where we compete against clubs from all over the world. Full details about how these competitions are conducted can be found on the club website at **Competitions>PSA Interclub Competitions**. There you can also see the latest PSA competition news and results. In previous years, our club has been very successful in the Digital sections – Colour, Monochrome, Nature, Photojournalism and Photo Travel. Last year, we started entering the Colour and Monochrome Print sections and to date have enjoyed moderate success.

On the club website, if you click on the "**Galleries**" menu you can view galleries of the Round 1 ,Round 2 and Round 3 club entries for the PSA Interclub competitions.

If you have any questions about the PSA Interclub competitions, please contact Roy Killen.

Photographic Society of America Interclub Competitions.

Our club joined the Photographic Society of America (PSA) and started entering the PSA Interclub competitions in 2018.

These competitions are run annually, and each competition has three Rounds. Round 1 in November, Round 2 in February and Round 3 in April. In the 2018-19 and 2019-20 competitions, we entered the digital Open, Nature, Photo Travel, and Photojournalism sections. In the 2020-21 and 2021-22 competitions, we entered the digital Open, Creative, Nature, Photo Travel and Photojournalism sections. For the 2022-23 competition, the Creative section was discontinued, and a separate Monochrome section was introduced. Since then we have entered the digital Colour, Monochrome, Nature, Photo Travel and Photojournalism sections in each competition. For the 2024-25 and 2025-26 competitions, we also entered the Small Colour Print and Small Monochrome Print competitions.

In each Round, our club entry in each digital section consists of six images, and our club entry in each print section consists of four images. Club members are allowed to have only one image in each section, but they may have images in multiple sections.

All club members are eligible to submit images for possible selection as part of our club entries. Images are submitted on the club website using the same procedure as entries in normal monthly club competitions. The submitted images are judged by experienced club members to determine our club entries in each section. Over the years we have been entering these competitions, 72 different club members have had images selected to represent our club.

Approximately 400 clubs worldwide participate in the Interclub competitions. In each section (e.g. Colour Digital), the clubs are divided into groups of approximately 25. At the end of each season, the top-scoring clubs are promoted to a higher group, and the lowest-scoring clubs are moved to a lower group. For several years, our club has been in Group A (the top group) in all digital sections except Colour. There is only one group in Small Colour Prints and one group in Small Monochrome Prints.

On our club website you can find additional information in these places:

- A detailed overview of the Interclub competitions: Competitions>PSA Interclub Competitions>PSA Interclub Overview. This includes the definitions used for specialist sections (such as Photo Travel).
- To upload images for possible selection: Competitions> Enter a Competition. Scroll down and select the competition you want to enter.
- Galleries of club entries and awards from the 2024-25 and 2025-26 competitions: Competitions>PSA Interclub Competitions.

Entries for Round 1 of the 2026-27 competitions are now open on the club website. Digital entries must be submitted by 15th October and Print entries by 1st October to allow time for the club entries to be selected and submitted to PSA.

On Monday 7th September, at 7pm there will be a Zoom session to provide advice on selecting your PSA Interclub entries. The special requirements for subject matter and editing in Nature, Photo Travel and Photojournalism will be explained with examples.

The simplest way to enter images in the PSA Interclub competitions is to navigate to the relevant competition under Competitions>Enter a Competition, select the competition and click on “Add Images from my Image Library”. Search for images by Title or Competition Type or Competition Awards. Select the image you want and click on “Finish Marking Desired Images”.

If you have any questions about the PSA Interclub competitions, please contact Roy Killen who co-ordinates our club entries.

PSA Courses

If you have a couple of hours a week to devote to improving your photographic knowledge and skills, you might like to consider joining the Photographic Society of America (PSA). Being a member of PSA has many advantages, one of which is access to a range of on-line education programmes, webinars and digital study groups. All of these are free to members of PSA. This page <https://psaphotoworldwide.org/page/education> has links to information about all these resources.

In the online education programmes the student is connected to an instructor who works with them (usually by email) to provide information, guidance and advice. Each online course consists of several lessons. Students are provided with written information, and they are required to undertake structured exercises and submit worksheets to demonstrate their understanding of the topic.

Existing courses for beginners:

- Digital photography
- Introduction to Photoshop



Courses for intermediate and advanced photographers:

- [Image Evaluation](#)
- [Image Critique](#)
- [Competition Images](#)
- Advanced Photojournalism
- Creating a PSA Portfolio
- Street photography
- Portrait photography
- History of photography.

The three courses in blue are particularly helpful for club members.

Image Evaluation – This is a 6-lesson course designed to assist the photographer to develop a basic understanding of the key elements that make a strong image and to be able to review their own images objectively.

Image Critique – This course follows on from Image Evaluation, giving the student skills to provide a critique for another person. This course is suitable for members who are involved in PSA Digital Dialogue or Study Groups where the members are required to comment on the work of others. It is also a brief introduction to the skills required to become a mentor or judge.

Competition Images – This is a two-part course with five lessons in each part. It is designed to assist intermediate and advanced photographers capture and process images suitable for entering in competitions from club level to international exhibitions. It is highly recommended that students complete the Image Evaluation course before enrolling in this course.

To learn more about any of these courses, select the course you are interested in from the link above and click the 'LEARN MORE' button. PSA members may undertake any or all the available courses, but only one at a time. Roy Killen can also provide additional information about these courses.

Free PSA Membership for Students

The Photographic Society of America (PSA) has officially launched a **free 2-year student membership program** to support and inspire young photographers.

This **digital student membership** is available to photographers who are **currently enrolled in school, TAFE or university** and can provide a **valid student ID**.

If you know a student who would like to take advantage of this offer, all they need to do is go to the PSA website <https://psaphotoworldwide.org> and select the "Join Now" link. Then, in the Student Program section, select "Sign up here".

If you have any questions about this PSA offer, please contact Roy Killen.



In our last edition we announced that our club has become a member of the **NSW Federation of Camera Clubs (FCC)** on 1st July this year. The FCC is the leading body representing photography clubs across New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. With a proud history of promoting the art and craft of photography, the FCC currently supports over 72 affiliated clubs and a thriving community of more than 2,500 passionate photographers.

As a member club, our members and club will now have access to the following FCC resources and competitions. To facilitate this association keen eyed members will notice that the Home Page on our website now contains the FCC logo which contains a link to the FCC website.

As well as the PSA Interclub Competitions members and our club can enter the FCC competitions.

More news to follow.

INTEREST GROUPS NEWS

To be part of an interest group, on our website go to “My Account”, then “My Groups”, and join the group you wish to join. This will ensure you receive emails with news on outings, photoshoots, ZOOM Meetings or other group activities. Similarly, also make sure you subscribe to the corresponding Group Discussion Forum. This will provide links to relevant websites, YouTube videos and downloads on the groups area of interest. To do this go to “Information for Members”, then “Forums”, then subscribe to the relevant Interest Group Forum.

In summary the groups, their respective mentors and news are listed below. It is **NEVER** too late to get involved. It's great to see a flurry of activity with more people joining groups.

If you would like to join one of these groups just contact the nominated mentor.

1. **Camera Craft Group** –the basics of camera craft and/or basic image editing. Mentor – Chris Prior.

A great night at the Warners Bay Ice Skating Rink. Our thanks to Andrew Dewar for arranging this opportunity. Some images of the event and yes that is our club members hiding under those layers. Several members missed out on this opportunity. Andrew will be endeavouring to organise another outing. Watch this space.





2. **Lightroom** – Learn and share the tips and tricks of using Lightroom Classic as your main image editing program. Mentor – Greg Carruthers.
3. **Astrophotography** – Learn the basics of capturing and editing nightscape images including the Milky Way, star trails and foreground interest. Mentor- Greg Carruthers.
4. **Studio Lighting** – **Studio Lighting Group** – We no longer have a leader for this group but intend to investigate sourcing workshops through our new affiliation with FCC. Watch this space.
5. **Macro Photography** – Learn how to master the techniques involved in capturing and editing Macro images. Mentor – Bill Chambers.

6. **Scape Photography** – ‘Scape’ Photography – capture and editing of Landscapes, Seascapes and Cityscapes, including the opportunities presented during Blue hour and Golden hour. Mentor – Dave Richards

7. **Photoshop** – Training via Zoom conferencing on Monday nights – Mentor – Roy Killen.

Zoom sessions of the Photoshop SIG will start again on Monday, 18th May. Meetings will then be held on the first and third Mondays of each month. The topic for the first meeting is “Processing Raw files in Adobe Camera Raw”. Following sessions will revise and expand on various Photoshop topics dealt with last year.

If you plan to attend these meetings, please go to the *My Account>My Groups* menu and click on the "Join Group" button for the **Photoshop Special Interest Group**. You will then receive emails to remind you of meetings.

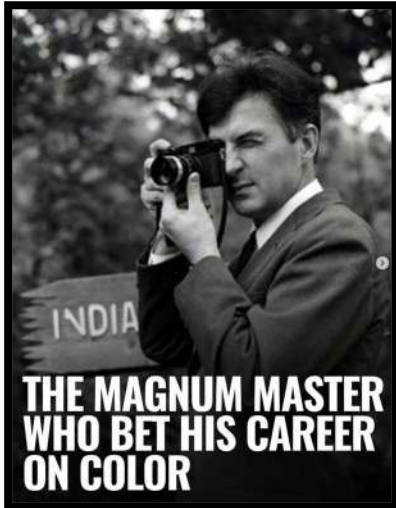
For further information, contact Roy Killen.

8. **Street Photography** – gear, camera settings, street etiquette, photoshoots – Mentor – Dennis Archibald.

The group hold regular outings and shoot images on the street on different aspects of street photography. Members submit their images and share them with the group in discussions held via zoom conferencing. The aim of the group is to improve members ability to “see” opportunities and to build confidence in shooting in public places.

9. **Nikon Z Users** - share and learn menu options, focus modes, when and how to use them. It’s an opportunity to learn and discuss ways of exploiting the camera’s capabilities – Mentor – Greg Carruthers.

10. **Aerial Photography** – photography from drones and fixed wing aircraft. Mentor – Peter Harrison. Some images follow of a recent outing of the aerial special interest group to Catherine hill Bay, and the good news, all drones safely back to base!



Ernst Haas, a pioneer of color photography and a leading member of the legendary photo collective Magnum Photos.

Born in 1921 in Austria, Haas developed a deep interest in art, music, and painting from an early age.

During WWII, when Austria was annexed by Nazi Germany, Haas served in the Red Cross instead of military service, where he witnessed the tragedies of war firsthand. After the war, he began documenting the world through his camera.

In 1949, Haas gained international recognition with his photo essay depicting the repatriation of war prisoners. This work caught the attention of Robert Capa, which led to his joining Magnum Photos.

At a time when most photographers were focused on black and white, Haas explored the possibilities of color film. In 1953, he produced the first all-color photo feature for LIFE magazine, playing a pivotal role in establishing color photography as an artistic medium.

He used color not merely as a tool for recording reality but as a means of abstract and painterly expression, and as one of the founding figures of color photography, he went on to influence generations of photographers.

Ernst Haas's belief that got color taken seriously...

COLOR IS THE SUBJECT

When Haas started, serious photography meant black and white; color was for advertising. He treated color as the whole point of a picture, not a decoration added on top. A wet red street; a blur of yellow taxis: the color carries the feeling. The lesson: don't just shoot in color and hope it looks nice. Build the frame around the color that made you stop.

"Color is joy. One does not think joy. One is carried by it."



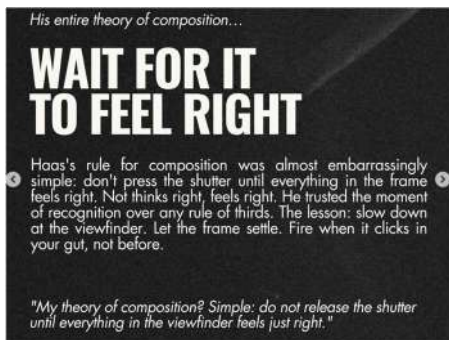
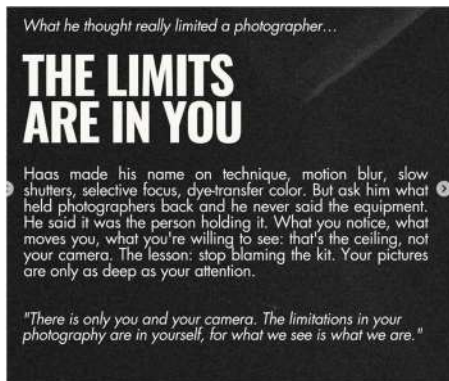
What he chased instead of new subjects...

SEE THINGS NEW

Haas didn't hunt exotic locations or novel subjects. He believed the same street, seen with fresh attention, held everything he needed. Transformation, not travel. The lesson: you don't need somewhere new to shoot. Go back to the ordinary place you've walked past a hundred times and find the version of it nobody has noticed yet.

"I am not interested in shooting new things. I am interested to see things new."





2026 It's a Knockout – “The Prize” by Chris Mannweiler

Last month we reported that Chris Mannweiler finished in 1st Place in the 2026 competition. The prize was a telescope gifted by our sponsor, Camera House Kotara. Chris wasted no time in putting his prize to work as you can read below.

“After winning the It's a Knockout competition over the next few night I put the telescope together and practiced using the included mobile device adaptor to photograph the near full moon. Once I worked out how it worked on the telescope, I had to use the manual setting in the Pro area on my phone camera to adjust the ISO, shutter speed and self-timing so that I could reduce motion blur. Here are some of the images captured. The green coloured one is due to an included moon filter which fits to the eyepiece.”





What's Coming Up?

Club Speakers

Guest speaker **Yulius Santoso** presented to the club at the end of August. Yulius was a great interactive presenter, and it was clear that the people who attended really enjoyed his talk. A short message from Yulius –

“Hi Dennis,

Apologies for the late reply and thank you so much for the kind message.

It was an absolute pleasure coming up to Newcastle and speaking to the club. I’m really glad to hear the talk was well received.

And even better to hear that six of you visited Sydney to put some storytelling into practice! I hope you all had a fantastic day, got some great shots, and came home with plenty of stories.

Please pass on my thanks and best wishes to everyone at the club.

*Kind regards,
Yulius”*



If there is someone in the photographic world who you would like to invite to the club, then please contact Toni Woodcock and have a chat.

Open Studios 2026

Open Studios is an event run by Lake Macquarie City Council over the weekend of the 7th and 8th of November where local artists open their studios to the public to showcase their work. Our club has entered this year, and Valentine Bowling Club have granted us the permission to use their Function Room for the event. This is a great opportunity to promote our club and demonstrate the range of accomplished work club members produce. It is also a great way for us to support our host, Valentine Bowling Club. You can find out more at the following link -

<https://www.lakemac.com.au/Events-directory/Council-events/Lake-Mac-Open-Studios-2025>

Mustang by Chris Mannweiler

This project was born from a friend asking me to photograph their 2024 Limited Edition Ford Darkhorse Mustang, one of only 1000 built and with only 3 in Australia.

Most talk about techniques, equipment etc., but few talk about the workflow behind the images they set up, the following is my workflow which can be used for any photography project, especially set subjects you are not familiar with:

The brief:

Starting with what the image is required to communicate. In this case interesting images of the vehicle to highlight its prestige and pedigree.

Research

Gather existing images of vehicle photography that can guide your concepts.

Concept development

Using your inspiration (existing images) develop concepts that could work to satisfy your brief. I usually do 5 totally different concepts. Since this was for someone else, I then consulted with the owner to have them choose which they preferred.

Prototype

Take images with different settings, lighting, perspective to get the image you want.

Test

Discuss the outcome of the prototypes with the client to see which one works the best

Modify

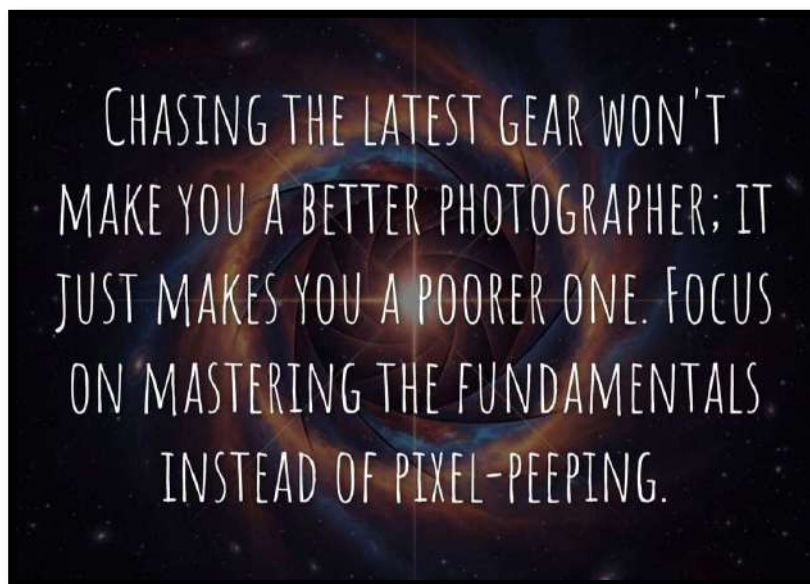


Make any changes that may need to be implemented to improve the image.

This shoot was a little different as I was only allowed 30 minutes with the aircraft so some of the steps were not adhered to pre shoot, but during the shoot the last 3 steps were completed on the fly (pardon the pun). I did seek the experience of the staff at Hunter Warbirds in relation to locating the aircraft (working airport, safety of myself and the vehicles) and best time of day to shoot to maximise natural lighting and shadows. I had no control of the background distractions.

I had never actually posed people or an object before, so I found this quite a challenge, but the owner was great to work with moving the vehicle into different positions throughout the shoot. I also was required to move the audience too.

Here are a few the resulting images.



Holidays – Ian Brown

Some years ago, we travelled to Canada and the first part of the trip was a bear adventure in the Khutzeymateen Valley grizzly bear sanctuary.

The first photo of the Ocean Light 2 brings back wonderful memories of the 3 nights we spent aboard the yacht, including our transfer via our first float plane experience.

Making new friends and seeing the bears up close in their natural habitat was the highlight!

Reliant on the tides each day we set off in a 10-person zodiac and traversed the tributaries of the main waterway searching for bears.

The second photo shows a bear that looks just like an oversized puppy dog in contrast to the third photo which highlights the size and raw power of the bears. The claws have the potential to tear a person to pieces.

Over the days we saw the bears wrestling, standing, diving into the water and swimming. We were able to get within a few metres of the bears and at one stage a bear jumped into the zodiac. We also saw wolves and eagles during our very memorable adventure.





Matahari Dive Resort - Trevor Cotterill

Club members Trevor Cotterill, Hans Stauband Ian Marriner have recently returned from the Matahari Dive Resort in Bali on a trip as members of the Snappers Underwater Photography Club and have shared these amazing images.





Hidden Gems – Two Approaches – Dennis Archibald/Roy Killen

As many of you know I was able to go on a photo tour in 2017 to the south of France to shoot in the Camargue region and in the lavender fields of the Valensole Plateau. It was a very busy couple of weeks, with morning and afternoon shoots. I captured a lot of images.

When you have so many images it's impossible to appreciate them all and recently I went back looking for some competition worthy images. One of the mornings saw us on a beach with the opportunity to photograph a magnificent black stallion as its handler put him through his paces. The lighting was very flat, and the raw file had not encouraged me to do anything with the image.

I process most of my images in Lightroom. I wanted to produce a final image that was impactful and warmer, in keeping with the beach setting.

At the same time Roy has been running his photoshop tutorials and I invited him to process the same raw file as I was interested to see what Roy could produce given his experience and to see the steps that he took to produce his result.

The following table is a step-by-step comparison of the same raw file. One undertaken by me (Dennis) in Lightroom and the other by Roy using Photoshop.

Finally, once we had both finished our edits, I asked Roy for an assessment of both images using an Ai assessment tool he has been developing using Microsoft's Co-Pilot. My personal takeaway from this exercise is that I need to better understand the process to increase the impact of my images. You can see the judges comment I received

when I entered the image in an Open Colour competition earlier this year and the comments for both images, Roy's and mine when assessed by the Ai tool.



Screenshot of original raw image – 1/1600 sec @f8, ISO 2000



Lightroom edit by Dennis



Photoshop edit by Roy

July Open Colour - Judges comment:

"The image suggests a sense of freedom. A very majestic beast enjoying it's time by the water's edge. As the beast frolics along, the sand is being kicked up by the hooves, which has been captured using a fast shutter speed. The overcast light reveals soft muted tones and some muscle tone of the horse, which could be enhanced with a little sharpening. The background does not compete for our attention, and the

composition places the horse slightly left and moving through to the right.”

Ai comment:

Image 1 presents itself with confidence and clarity, demonstrating strong timing, disciplined composition, and a coherent treatment of light that supports both subject and environment. The emotional tone is controlled and natural, and the technical execution holds together without distraction. While there is room for micro-refinement in environmental tension and tonal shaping, the photograph stands as a mature, competition-ready entry with a clear visual voice. **Score: 86/100.**

Ai comment:

Image 2 arrives with a heavier, more dramatic presence, using contrast and atmosphere to amplify intensity and narrative force. The composition is assertive, the tonal palette is deliberate, and the technical handling reinforces the mood without compromising clarity. Minor opportunities exist in balancing environmental detail, but the image communicates with authority and delivers a high-impact experience aligned with top-tier competition expectations. **Score: 91/100.**

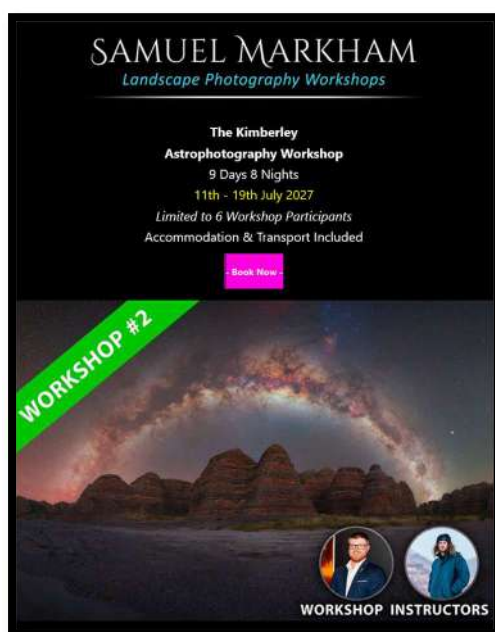
Ai Conclusion:

Between the two entries, the evaluation resolves decisively in favour of Image 2. Its stronger atmospheric tension, deeper tonal authority, and more assertive compositional weight give it the higher competitive edge. Image 1 is a well-crafted, confident photograph with clean execution and a coherent narrative, but Image 2 demonstrates superior emotional force, more deliberate sculpting of light, and a heightened sense of presence that aligns more closely with top-tier judging expectations. The intensity of its mood, the clarity of its visual intent, and the disciplined control of contrast collectively elevate it above its counterpart. In a formal panel, Image 2 would advance, with Image 1 receiving commendation but not selection.

Worth a Look?

I'm sure club members have different ways of informing themselves on photography in its many forms and applications. Whether it is subscribing to magazines, borrowing books or magazines from the library or following people on social media or YouTube. Each month we will include some links to news stories on the internet, competition results and well-known photographer's work. If you have an item of interest, please let us know. A special thanks for the contributions received this month.

Samuel Markham is a landscape photographer who presented to the club a few years back. He runs regular workshops for small groups of photographers. You can check out his website at the following link - <https://www.samuelmarkham.photography/>



- Thanks to Alan Hinde for this one on Shooting on the Street -
<https://jaredpoole.photography/blog/overcoming-fear-in-street-photography-when-your-camera-braver-than-you>
- Lightroom's New Feather and Edge Sliders Fix Mask Halos | Fstoppers
<https://fstoppers.com/education/two-new-sliders-make-every-lightroom-mask-look-more-natural-903883>
- Phil Penman: The World's Best Black and White Street Photographer
https://youtu.be/Gu2-xGfYLoE?si=7V1sl-_AqnLcNUBI
- Article on Macro Photography from The Guardian – Bob Todd
https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2026/aug/15/once-i-started-zooming-in-i-never-stopped-the-mesmerising-art-of-macro-photography?fbclid=IwGGRvZgRleHRuA2FlbQlXMQBzcnRjBmFwcF9pZA80MDk5Njl2MjMwODU2MDkAAR4LDElnGqfDRJrXt27YZVtNbStPqGe3VvTyVOOTIHAz8yS2L_Ff1cMLiF0HqQ_aem_lYBzQPM18INC0ST9nWtKVA
- The following screenshot for the Canon shooters is taken from Jim Zuckerman's August newsletter.



Just a few years ago, Canon did something I thought was brilliant. They released two new long lenses that are very light weight and hand-holdable as well as very affordable. The lenses are the 600mm for \$800 and the 800mm for an amazing \$1000.

What's the catch? The lens aperture is fixed at f/11.

For decades, the problem for wildlife and bird photographers has been two fold. Super telephotos are super expensive – like \$13,000 for a 600mm f/4 – and super heavy. The weight makes them unwieldy and tough to travel with, and the cost puts them out of reach of most mortals.

Because we can now use ISO settings higher than ever before – 3200 ISO is now common because the results are so good – the rationale for an f/11 fixed focal length lens makes perfect sense. Both the 600mm and the 800mm are easy to hold and easy to carry in a backpack. I've used the 800mm and was impressed with how sharp it is.

True, in low light with moving subjects, a larger aperture would be ideal. Photography is all about compromise, though, and these two lenses fill a niche that needed filling for a long time. The low cost of these telephotos means pretty much any photographer can start filling the frame with wildlife and small birds.

If the light level is low, simply raise the ISO and then, in post-processing, deal with the noise by applying Topaz DeNoise AI.

It's true these are not zoom lenses. I prefer zooms for their compositional flexibility, but having the ability to reach into the distance and fill the frame with a wild animal is a game changer.

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Photography Quiz

The following Photography Quiz is taken from Jim Zuckerman's Monthly Newsletter – Photo Insights. You can subscribe to this monthly newsletter at <https://www.jimzuckerman.com/>

1. A lens hood is only effective when shooting directly into the sun.
 - a. True
 - b. False
2. The Inverse Square Law states that as the distance between light source and subject is doubled, say from 10 feet to 20 feet, the intensity of the light is reduced by:
 - a. Half
 - b. 4 times
 - c. 3 times
 - d. 5 times
3. By reducing the power of a flash, two things happen. One of them is the light output is diminished. The other one is:
 - a. The flash duration is shortened
 - b. The white balance is changed
 - c. The light beam narrows
 - d. All of the above
4. In black and white photography, which filters produce a black sky?
 - a. Green and yellow filters
 - b. Neutral density and UV filter
 - c. Red and yellow filters
 - d. UV filter and green filter
5. If you see a speck of dust in the viewfinder, it will definitely show up in your pictures.
 - a. True
 - b. False
6. The biggest challenge for macro photographers is:
 - a. Direct sunlight
 - b. Shallow depth of field
 - c. The wind
 - d. All of the above
7. With film view cameras for formats 4x5 and 8x10 inches, photographers would take two identical exposures. They would then develop one and hold one. This addressed the issue of:
 - a. Achieving the ideal depth of field
 - b. Insuring a good exposure
 - c. Preventing unwanted contrast gain
 - d. Critical focus
8. Back in the day, color infrared film with a red filter turned vegetation what color?
 - a. Yellow
 - b. Blue
 - c. Magenta
 - d. Black
9. When developing slide film in the darkroom, what color safelight could be used?
 - a. Red
 - b. Amber
 - c. Midnight blue
 - d. A safelight couldn't be used for slide film development

Answers on Page 28 of this newsletter.



Quiz Answers

1. b
2. b
3. a
4. c
5. b
6. d
7. b
8. a
9. d

FOR SALE/TO BUY:

The items shown below belong to Christine Robertson. If you would like to enquire about any her email address is cpr2407@gmail.com and her phone number – 0431237211.



