

Park Nottingham u3a Newsletter

September 2026

Chair's Note

This will be my last 'note', as I step down in September as Chair, and indeed as a Committee member, having completed my allowed tenure as both. So this will be a slightly longer note than usual!

I have lived in The Park since 1986 but until our u3a was formed in 2016 knew few residents beyond near neighbours and felt that the social groups I was aware of had barriers not opportunities. My friendship and social groups were elsewhere. The u3a seemed to be an opportunity to change that and I was a keen founder member.

I was one of the original Committee and have spent 10 years as Chair or Vice Chair (and also served a full term as Membership Secretary) and seen our u3a grow from the original 50 to around 150 members while developing into an important community resource in The Park and beyond (25% of members live outside of The Park). We set out to provide alternative social contact and activity and bring together disparate parts of the community. Anyone in their 'third age' (after full-time work and primary childcare) could join - no need for vetting or personal recommendations. Our success shows that the need was there and our growth that we remain relevant. It has been gratifying to have been part of that but it is time to let others take us forward.

Our aim has been to provide a welcoming and convivial atmosphere to all and being a relatively small u3a has helped us maintain this quality. My involvement has developed numerous friendships and links to other social groups in the area and I know this reflects many members' experience because they have told me.

Our AGM in September sees the current Committee resign and seek re-election if they desire. However, the u3a rules of maximum tenure for Committee members is designed to promote a reasonable turnover of those overseeing our activities and I am but one of five who need to depart in September. Three can return after a one year hiatus but Liz Gilder and myself have run out of road and must depart permanently (just from Committee, I hasten to add!). So there will be at least some new faces and skills after the AGM to help carry us forward.

It is therefore important to have a quorum at the AGM on 15th September so that a new Committee can be formed. At the current membership level that would be 30 members, well within our average Monthly Meeting numbers. Please make the effort to attend this time as well.

We will have a new Chair in place for the next newsletter, which I am continuing to edit, and I wish them well in that rewarding task of promoting the ideals of u3a and ensuring a bright future for our organisation.

I will, of course, continue to see you at Monthly Meetings, social events and in various groups while getting the most out of my u3a membership!

Ian Henderson

Park Nottingham u3a Calendar - Sept 2026

Date	Activity	Venue	Convenor
1st Sept, 4pm	TED Talks	Member's Home	Maureen Moffatt
3rd , 2pm	Photography	Member's Home	Rod Mitchell
3rd, 2pm	Music Appreciation	Castle Tennis Club	Jacky Fisher
3rd & 17th, 4pm	Canasta	Castle Tennis Club	Jane Ellis
4th, 3.15 for 3.30pm	Film Group	Member's Home	Ian Henderson
9th, 10.30am	Local History	National Civil War Museum, Newark	Jane Morrell
9th & 23rd, 3pm	Crossword Group	Member's Home	Jonathan Wickens
14th, 2pm	Committee Meeting	Castle Tennis Club	Ian Henderson
15th, 10am	AGM & Talk- Prof. Catrin Rutland	Castle Tennis Club	Sarah Waites
15th, 3.45 for 4pm	Mahjong	Member's Home	Graham Edwards
16th, 3.45 for 4pm	Science Seekers	Member's Home	Adrian Hyde/ Reg Dennick
18th , 10am	Longer Walk	Lambley	Andrew Martin
18th, 3.45pm	Book Group	Member's Home	Liz Gilder
25th, 10am	Long Walk		Graham Edwards
TBC	Plants & Picnics	Member's Home	Marion Martin
TBC	Dining Group	Various	Adrienne Lee

One way to contact group leaders is to visit our u3a website (link at end of newsletter) and clicking on the convenor's name on the relevant group page. You can then type a message that will go straight to the inbox of the convenor

Monthly Talk - August

Bharat Patel, an award-winning journalist who has mostly worked for Central Television, treated us to a drily humorous talk of two parts.

First he told a series of amusing anecdotes and then reflected on coming to Britain as an 8 year old Gujarati, trying to make sense of the people and culture. He described how he was berated by one member of an audience for not being Rick Stein; how he suffered Dave, the accident prone camera man, who was using the toilet when the Red Arrows flew over and had turned off his sound when interviewing Tony Blair; how he caught Princess Anne's lady in waiting scratching her bottom, assuming attention was elsewhere.

He won an award three years running for having to go into the smelliest houses to cover stories. There were certainly overtones of racism such as at the ceremony to collect his film award dressed in a tuxedo, two women summoned him to fetch wine. He had numerous semi-dangerous experiences when filming abroad and once slept in a room in Africa with an iguana on the ceiling.

Bharat's grandfather, head man of his village and jailed twice for his sympathy for independence, still encouraged the family to move to England for the excellent education system. A 9 year old Bharat found English people puzzling – their colouring for a start. White people had red faces!

A young Bharat, used to a caste system in India where one's name conveyed one's station in life, had to get used to Crooks who weren't and Ramsbottoms who certainly weren't, when names were called out on the register. He was told that it always rained in England, and white people never went out when it rained. Most shocking of all was the information that white people didn't wash their bottoms with water but used toilet paper. To think the British ruled half the world with dirty bottoms! His family obviously gave it their best shot to integrate at Christmas by buying alcohol and meat when they did not eat or drink either.

He was a very entertaining, engaging and thought-provoking speaker.

Bharat supports the Hope Cancer charity attached to Leicester Royal Infirmary and at least 20 people bought his autobiography, proceeds of which plus his fee go that charity.

Next time we have a talk on **“Science Fiction versus Science fact”**.

Professor Catrin Rutland is a research scientist, working in cancer and cardiovascular disorder, but she is also an author of not only science books but also science fiction. From Huxley to Crichton and Atwood to Orwell, there has always been an interest in the world of biology and genetics, both in literature and in the world as a whole. These authors explore ethics, ideologies and imagine different worlds and take the reader/viewer on a journey.

This talk explores how much of this science fiction has, or will, become fact. Where does the future lie with genetics and what does this mean for us and the next generations? Do we have a voice and opinion in how these technologies are used and does this voice



come out through literature? Can we control the technology and what regulations are in place? Will humans benefit from genomics? By exploring the predictions and portrayal of genetics within literature, we start to unravel the possibilities of science in relation to the ethics of our society.

Join us on Tuesday **15th September**, **10.00 for 10.30 AGM and talk at 11am** at Castle Tennis Club. **Please note the earlier start time.**

Sarah Waites

Annual General Meeting - 10.30am 15th September

Prior to our Monthly Talk on 15th September we are holding our AGM to review the year and elect our Committee for the next twelve months. We have sought nominations, which will be confirmed to you after the deadlines date of 8th September.

It is important that we are quorate to undertake these tasks so please attend if you can.

We meet at Castle Tennis Club, 10 for 10.30am.

News from the Groups

English Language Group- *Convenor, Margaret Wiedermann*

Readers may remember that when the Princess of Wales issued a thank-you message to her well-wishers "from William and me", over half the British public thought this was grammatically incorrect. Or at any rate, over half the people who fill in YouGov questionnaires. The Princess was right, of course. You wouldn't say "from I". The issue resurfaced in our group recently when someone spotted an estate agent's sign outside a student house which read "Me and you could be friends for a year".

Your convenor was the last to work out what it was supposed to mean (this property is for rent), but once we'd got our heads round that, the "I / me" discussion was fast and furious. Most of the group thought ungrammatical expressions like "Me and Colin went to the pub last night" are so common colloquially that there was a case for using it to attract students. A more complex example was "from my wife and I's house". It's obviously wrong, but how would we rephrase it?

From there we segued smoothly to the topic of changing your linguistic register according to the company you're in, and in a fascinating confessional time, those of us who hailed originally from Yorkshire, Devon or Kent revealed whether we had

abandoned our native accents for received pronunciation when heading off to the wider world.

It's been a busy month, but in a final burst of bafflement we unravelled the Lidl tagline "Winning at Summer is More to Value" by translating it into German and then back to English, where it re-emerged more convincingly as "Enjoying the summer is especially valuable". If you're one of those who have had enough of this particular summer, you can always seek distraction by joining our group on the email mjwh57@gmail.com.

(Or use the other email mjwiedemannhunt@gmail.com)



Cryptic Crossword Group *Convenor, Jonathan Wickens*

We cancelled our regular meeting on 22nd July in favour of the Garden Party - a good choice!

One typical form of cryptic clue is the double definition, where both sides of the clue give the same answer. In our first August puzzle we had two simple ones:



- Colliery belongs to me (4) - giving MINE
- Release without charge (4) - over to you for this one!

This one was more tricky:

- Straighten things out and become more friendly (6)

With the letters _N_E_D to help us, the answer had to be UNBEND, which obviously means to straighten things out. But become more friendly? Well, my dictionary does give one meaning of the intransitive verb "unbend" as "to be affable". However, if you start using the word in that meaning, you will probably be met with blank looks! Crosswords certainly increase your vocabulary, but some words are more useful than others in the 21st century!

In September, we will meet on **9th and 23rd**.

Local History Group - *Convenor, Jane Morrell*

Our next visit is to "The National Civil War Centre" in Newark on Wednesday

9th September at 10 am. A few places are left so contact me at jane.morrell57@gmail.com if interested

MahJong - *Convenor, Graham Edwards*

Having weathered the heatwave of the Summer, Mah Jong in The Park is looking forward to the cooler Autumn days to justify staying indoors to play. Players are rewarded with tea and cake and enjoy an hour or two of vaguely competitive play. Our September meeting is on **Tuesday 15th** (after the AGM/Monthly Meeting) at a member's home.

Members already on the MahJong mailing list as well as those in our WhatsApp group will receive notification nearer the time, detailing the arrangements for the meetin*If you would like to know a bit more about the game, or if you are interested in joining us, please email me using the address below. I can also offer you a complimentary copy of the u3a rules for Mah Jong - grahamedwards542@gmail.com*



Film Group- *Convenor, Ian Henderson*



*We did not meet in August but resume on **4th Sept, 3.15 for 3.30pm** when we will discuss '**Tony**' a biopic of the early career of chef and TV personality Anthony Bourdain. Based on his best selling autobiography '**Kitchen Confidential** ' it charts his induction into the anarchic, drug-fuelled world of tourist catering in Cape Cod, before he became a world-famous culinary travel writer. Should appeal to the Dining Group as well!*

Music Appreciation Group - *Convenor, Jacky Fisher*

I am planning a meeting to discuss future activities and gauge what members want. I really hope as many of you as possible could come to this meeting as it is difficult to work out what is really wanted. The meeting will be at **2pm on Thursday 3 September** at the Castle Tennis Club, on Tennis Drive (where the U3a monthly meeting is held).

So far we have tried various themes, including previews of concerts coming up, a look at the history of classical music by William Ruff, trips to a few concerts, visits to Peggy's Skylight and instrumental recitals in a member's house. It would be really helpful to know if any of these items were particularly popular, or if you have any ideas of anything else you would enjoy!

New members to the group would be welcome: gandjfisher23@gmail.com.

Long Walks - *Convenor, Graham Edwards*

Baslow circular

This was the third attempt to walk this route, postponed from May, previous attempts having been deferred because of the hot weather.

Seven of us set off from **Baslow** on a pleasant late summer's day on this 6½ mile ramble. Our route took us through the back streets of Baslow then up onto the fields above the village. A steep drop towards the A619 Bakewell Road followed by a sharp climb up the other side was soon after rewarded with a visit to the Chatsworth Farm Shop . Here we were able to find some ingredients for supper, and relax over coffee for a while.

Despite my assurances that the route would be downhill, we were soon climbing again, albeit on a proper paved road, before we descended into **Edensor**, a delightful little village on the Chatsworth Estate. Here the Tea Cottage accommodated us in a little roofless stone bothy outside and provided a substantial lunch, which kept us occupied for far too long.

Relaxed from our lunch break we rambled down to **Chatsworth**, and having just eaten decided against afternoon tea at the house. Instead we ignored instructions about closure and walked along the riverside path and past the cricket ground back into Baslow.

It was generally agreed that this was a very agreeable way to spend a few hours. Indeed such was the fun level that I forgot to take any photographs, so you will have to imagine what a good time we all had.

Long Walk plan: Friday 25th September - Keyworth circular via Wysall

I am aware that some of our group are concerned that some of our Long Walks may be too challenging. I have therefore planned quite a gentle walk, new to this group across the fields from **Keyworth to Widmerpool** and back to Keyworth (via another route). The walk is only about 5½ miles, and relatively flat. There are a few stiles and gates to negotiate.

The walk is accessible by bus from Nottingham. The walking time is just over 2 hours, and we will find a suitable hostelry for refreshment along the way.

I will be sending out full details during September to those on the Long Walks mailing list. Please note the walk is not on the fourth Tuesday this month because of diary conflicts.

If you are not on the list, and would like to join to receive updates on our walks, please let me know.

grahamedwards542@gmail.com

Longer Walks - *Convenor, Andrew Martin*

After the final two days of the most recent heatwave, five Longer Walkers set out to explore the hills of **Charnwood**. With temperatures of 30°C predicted for the afternoon, we

were a bit anxious but were determined to give it a go. We met up at Beacon Hill to attempt a 9-mile circular route visiting Broombridge Country Park, Bradgate Park and Ulverscroft Priory. The group have developed a fondness for this part of Leicestershire with its rolling hills, some jagged summits and a great deal of pretty woodland on the edge of the National Forest. The woodland was a blessing after lunch, providing us with dappled shade, while the cool breezes on the summit of Bradgate Park made up for the lack of shade (see right).



As usual on these walks, there was plenty of history to delve into, with the ruins of the birthplace of Lady Jane Grey, the Nine Days Tudor Queen, at Bradgate House, and the remains of the 12th-13th Century Augustine Priory at Ulverscroft. The church lychgate at Newtown Linford provided shade and benches for us to rest and to eat ice creams kindly purchased for the group by Graham. It was noticeable that the herds of Bradgate Park deer were absent from the meadows below us, but we found them sheltering in the shade lower down. It was a concern to see the trees suffering from the effects of the heatwaves, looking quite dead with their brown leaves. The ancient oaks, that have survived for hundreds of years, seem to be really struggling.



Longer Walks dates for your diary:

Friday 18th September

I know already that a number of Longer Walkers will be away on holiday, and this walk is also on the same day as the Book Group. Consequently, we will settle for a shortish local route and postpone the promised return to the Peak District until October. If you fancy a short but challenging walk around **Lambley** (about 7 miles), please get in touch. Travel will be by car and we will be back in Nottingham by 3pm.

Friday 23rd October

We will revisit a favourite walk that we completed for the first time in 2024. Starting at **Grindleford**, we will walk up through Padley Gorge to traverse the base of the crags at Burbage before topping out on Higgarr Tor and the ancient fort of Carl Wark. Our return will take us over Owler Tor, Millstone Edge and the crags of Lawrencefield before a descent through Bolehill Wood to our start point. This is a relatively short route (only 7.5 miles) in challenging terrain with spectacular scenery.

Friday 28th November This is the proposed date for the next month. Please note this in your diary. There will not be a Longer Walk in December.

If you would like to know more about these walks and be included on the Longer Walks email list, please contact me using the email address u3aparkwalks@gmail.com.

Science Seekers - *Convenors, Adrian Hyde & Reg Dennick*

In August **Dr Vince Wilson** put the case for the the UK establishing a

nationalised drug production company to strengthen the NHS's resilience and reduce its dependence on increasingly vulnerable global pharmaceutical supply chains. The Government's NHS strategy involves moving more healthcare into community settings, expanding digital monitoring of long-term conditions, and increasing preventative healthcare and education.

The NHS has contributed to substantial increases in UK life expectancy while spending less per head than many comparable countries. An important element of this success has been access to affordable generic medicines. However, demographic ageing and falling birth rates are expected to increase demand for medicines, making reliable supplies of inexpensive drugs increasingly important.

The central problem identified is the growing frequency of medicine shortages, particularly for generic drugs. Between February 2024 and April 2025, 87 national shortage notices were issued to English community pharmacies, around half involving generic medicines. This is partly due to global demand exceeding manufacturing capacity and to the relocation of much pharmaceutical and active pharmaceutical ingredient (API) production to South-East Asia. This has reduced UK manufacturing capacity and increased supply-chain vulnerability.

The proposed solution is to expand UK-based production of APIs and generic medicines. Lessons can be drawn from France, the US and Cuba, particularly Cuba's integration of universities, research and pharmaceutical production. A nationalised company is proposed built around UK universities and the British Generic Manufacturing Association, producing strategically important APIs for NHS medicines. Such an organisation could reduce shortages, save NHS staff time, improve patient care, develop UK scientific expertise, strengthen economic activity and potentially supply medicines to other countries.

Upcoming meetings:

Wednesday September 16th at 1 Newcastle Court, NG7 1BL:

Adrian Hyde will talk on "*Infinity and π from Archimedes to Newton*"

Wednesday October 21st :

Reg Dennick will give a hands-on presentation entitled "*Volta's Piles*"

Plants and Picnics- *Convenor, Marion Martin*

This month saw us meeting at Liz Gilder's (postponed from July). For me as convenor, this is always a bit of a 'coming home' venue, as the first ever Plants and Picnics meeting took place here back in 2020, when we were getting well into Covid times. Back then, we had to keep changing what we did to keep up with the ever-changing rules set by Government - meeting in gardens, then only garden centres, then the Rule of Six, so we had to do two sittings, but we kept going, and established a social space against the odds, but very

much needed. I am actually quite proud that this group has kept this going.

Sitting in Liz's garden now, whilst enjoying tea and scones provided by Liz, gardening chat obviously turned to the then-continuing hot summer and drought, and how we and our



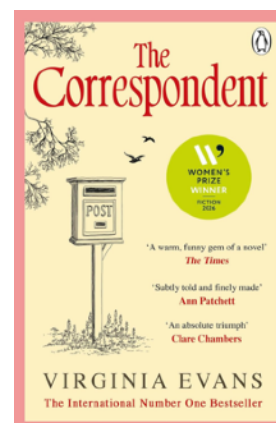
gardens had coped with it. We are fortunate in not having a hosepipe ban, but even so, many of us have spent much of our summer engaged with the hose or watering can, just to keep up. There are a lot of surprise performances however, and her garden looked impressively verdant. Her hostas (above) looked particularly good (lack of slugs?). She had an impressive range of tomato plants, and I particularly liked the hedge effect she had achieved using Fuchsia Thalia (left) planted in containers - a little bit of inspiration to take home.



If you would like to join us, please email Marion Martin at PNu3aPandP@gmail.com

Book Group- *Convenor, Liz Gilder*

*In August we read **The Correspondent** by **Virginia Evans**, a book composed entirely of letters and correspondence with no traditional dialogue or narrative and a slow leisurely pace which some of us found difficult to engage with early on. Sybil Van Antwerp is seventy three, slowly losing her sight and always writing letters..... To her children. Her favourite authors. Her ex-sister in law. The journalist poking into her past. Her doctor. Suitors. Kindly neighbours. The infuriating gardening club. Many of the group found the book a page turner, engaging and thoroughly enjoyable.*



*The next read is **The Land in Winter** by **Andrew Miller**. The novel tells the story of two young married couples living in the west country during the big freeze of 1963 – one of the coldest winters on record. Eric is a GP and his wife originally from London feels bored and out of place in the countryside. Another couple live on a farm as new arrivals. Bill bought the dairy farm rashly upon leaving Oxford University without a degree and is overwhelmed to be a farmer. His wife Rita was a dancer and like Irene feels out of place. Both Rita and Irene are newly pregnant and form a friendship. Eric and Irene hold a party for Boxing Day in 1962 inviting friends. The interactions between the characters reach a climax during the party, they become more drunk as it progresses, while outside, a large blizzard is forming.....*

*Our next meeting will be on **Friday 18 September** at a member's house.*

Contact Liz Gilder at e.gilder@peoplemarketing.co.uk if interested.

Dining Group - *Convenor, Adrienne Lee*

At the end of July we ventured once again into the rolling fields of Rushcliffe to sample the offerings of the **The Royal Oak** in East Bridgford, recommended by one of our own.

Nowadays, the economics of pub catering, which often provides the bulk of a venue's profit, militates against in-house cooking. Instead large catering companies such as Brakes, Bidfood and MKG Foods provide a wide range of fresh and cooked options to suit a variety of price points from bog-standard to 'gourmet'. This is why so many pubs offer similar menus with tapas dishes, 'tempura prawns', pates, fish and chips, steak-and-ale pie and stews predominating. None will be made in-house but merely reheated or at best quickly fried. The longer the menu the more this sort of food predominates and in the chain pubs it is the only option.

The quality of pub food now is a marked improvement over the warm pasty/pie offerings of old but does often come with a generic feel.

The Royal Oak is in this mould with a significant proportion of its menu seemingly bought-in and ready-made despite boasting a 'chef'. However, it does seem to provide fresh dishes as well and overall the food was of good quality. The 'house pork ribs' were tasty with a tangy barbecue sauce, the Baked Salmon (in the bag?) was good and the Gammon, Egg and Chips (cooked to order, pictured right) was substantial and tasty. The Goat Cheese Risotto (hard to believe this was made to order) split those who ordered it - 'too cheesy' said some. The Ice Cream was the real deal, though- a good supplier is in place here.



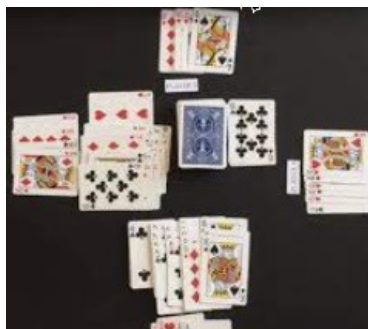
As a decent example of a nice pub with competent food (if not cooking) it ticks many boxes and should be a reliable venue for many. Prices are around £8 for starters and £18-24 for mains.

Our next outing will be advised later.

Ian Henderson

Canasta Club – *Convenor, Jane Ellis*

Our meetings in September are on **Thursdays, 3rd and 17th**, starting play at **4.00pm** (setting up from 3.45pm) and finishing at **6.00 pm**.



Once again, if you are interested in joining the group or would like to come along for a taster session, please contact Jane Ellis at jane.ellis21@outlook.com.

Tea/coffee and excellent biscuits are included in the fee and are served at the beginning of the meeting. Previous experience is not essential, and we offer taster sessions for £5 per session. We are a very friendly group and many of our more experienced players are happy to

impart the rules of the game and for everyone to join in.

TED Talks - *Convenor, Maureen Moffatt*

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday **1st September at 4pm**

We have discussed climate change, gender issues and lots of things in-between so our next topic is going to deal with Capitalism!

This podcast comes in two parts, the first "Why meeting in the middle isn't enough" Is presented by **Bill Heck**. The second is a presentation by **Stephanie Lepp** which looks at an alternative view.

Plenty to debate over tea and cake...

There is room for one or two more members if you want to dip into this group you are welcome to come along.

Contact Maureen Moffatt - Mo.moffatt@gmail.com or 07496149721

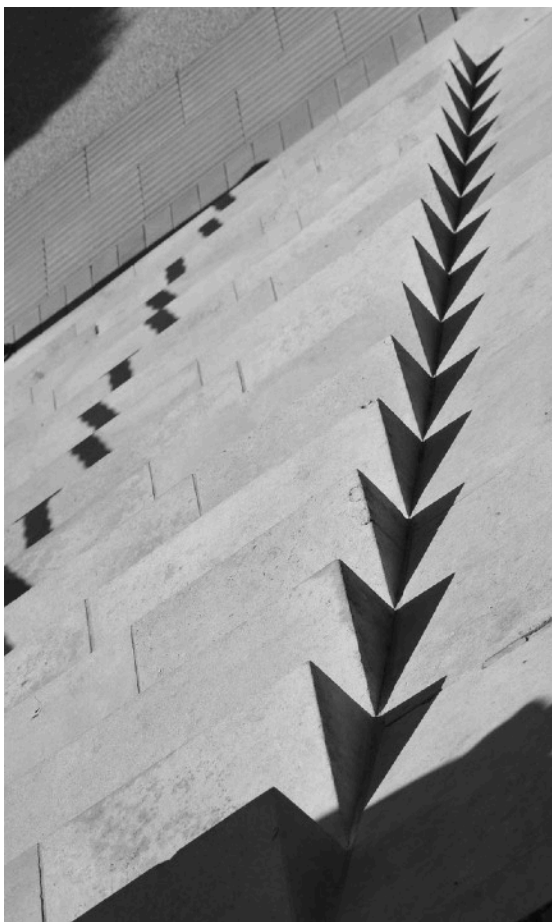
Photography Group- *Convenor , Rod Mitchell*

*The Photography Group will be meeting on **3rd September** to review our 'Summer Light' images. There ought to be lots of these, given the number of hot, sunny days we have enjoyed all summer (although for some, 'endured' may be a more accurate description). Cloudless skies and harsh sunlight present their own challenges, but the group will undoubtedly have risen to these. A selection of the best images will appear in October's Newsletter.*

Meanwhile, this month's Newsletter features 10 of our black and white photos, chosen from the 28 submitted. In some cases the image had been converted from a colour photo, whilst others were shot with the camera set to black and white. It's a while since our last meeting so I'm unsure which of the latter, if any, made the cut. Nonetheless, it's likely we'll carry on shooting some of our images in black and white. A couple of taps on your smartphone and you too can discover your inner Henri Cartier-Bresson or Lee Miller.

Black & White by Photography Group







Useful Contacts

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Editor's note: If you are reading the newsletter on your computer, tablet, or phone, you will find that all email addresses in blue *italics* are live and can be clicked to send a message. Similarly, where a link to an internet web page is offered, the blue italics indicate that this is a live link and will take you straight to the page.

Contributions for the **October** Newsletter should be sent to the editor,
Ian Henderson, by Thursday **24th September** by emailing:
parku3anewsletter2@gmail.com