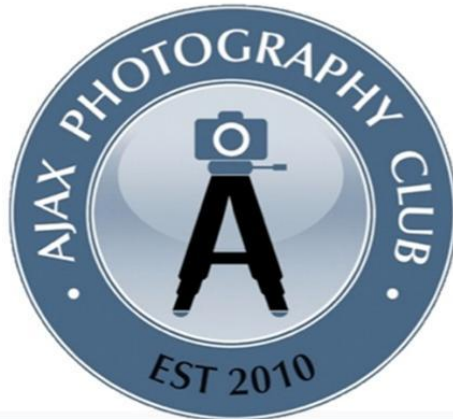


APC Newsletter

Photo • Friendly • Fun • Focus • Feedback



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Volume 3
of the
2025 – 2026 Year

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Looking for...

Members to take a turn filling one of the vacant positions on the APC Board. Having vacancies reduces what the club can do for your journey in photography. It's like a squirrel finding no peanuts in his wee dish,



How to Stay Motivated to Make Photos

From Rodney Harvey

Photography is an art of capturing moments, and every photographer starts with excitement and a fresh vision. However, like any creative endeavour, staying motivated can be challenging, especially when the initial excitement fades. Here are some practical tips to help you keep your passion for photography alive.

- 1. Set Personal Projects** Creating a personal project can add structure and purpose to your photography. Choose a theme that excites you—be it street portraits, nature photography, or a year-long project capturing a single location through the seasons. Setting small, achievable goals within your project will give you something to look forward to each time you pick up your camera.
- 2. Try New Techniques** Learning new techniques can reignite your creativity. Experiment with long exposures, macro photography, or even post-processing techniques like double exposures or light painting. Trying something outside your usual style can inspire new ideas and challenge you in a refreshing way.
- 3. Join our Weekly Photo Challenge Community** Connecting with other photographers, whether online or in person, can be incredibly motivating. Engaging with our member community can provide valuable feedback, inspire new ideas, and push you to improve your craft. Plus, seeing others' work can remind you of the endless possibilities photography has to offer.
- 4. Take a Break if Needed** If you find yourself in a creative rut, don't hesitate to take a short break. Stepping away from your camera for a few days or weeks can give you a fresh perspective. Use the time to observe, find inspiration in other art forms, or revisit photos you've taken in the past. Breaks can help prevent burnout and keep you motivated in the long run.
- 5. Remember Your "Why"** Reflect on why you started taking photos in the first place. Was it the joy of capturing memories, the love for a particular subject, or the thrill of creating something beautiful? Reminding yourself of your motivation can reignite your passion and keep you moving forward when times get tough.

Staying motivated to take photos is about maintaining a balance between challenge and inspiration. By setting goals, learning new skills, connecting with others, allowing for breaks, and staying grounded in your purpose, you can continue to find joy and creativity in photography, even during challenging times.

Slideshow Reminder

One of the highlights of the APC's annual general meeting held in June is the members' slideshows. This is your chance to shine on the big screen! Slideshows may be made simply in Power Point or in various other software programmes. Your slideshow is an opportunity to put together a series of photos that you have made set to a musical background. Some people choose instrumental music; some chose music with lyrics. Some choose the photos first and then add a piece of music; some choose the music and lyrics that tell a story and make photos to suit the story. Whatever you choose, you will no doubt impress yourself when you see it play at the meeting in June.

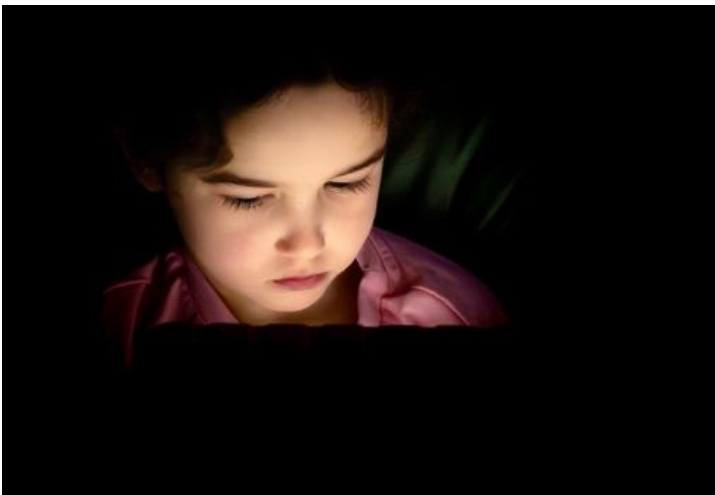
Photo Clinics

Help Improve your Photography

from Richard MacEacheron

Photo clinics offered by our club are intended to help improve your photography skills, whether it be composition or post processing. During the recent clinic, the feedback I received on my granddaughter's portrait image was that it could be improved by centering and then by adding a border of a complimentary colour, (similar to how matting is used to enhance a photo during the framing process). So, on to YouTube Photoshop tutorials to learn how to add borders. I thought this was good feedback; here is the result

This may not be the best example, but the border idea holds promise, at least for me.



Quote of the Day

Whoever said that "money can't buy happiness" has never entered a camera store.

Shooting Through Obstructions

From Terri Sullivan

Have you been frustrated trying to shoot through a fence, or between the heads in a crowd, or around other obstructions. Depth of Field can be your friend in these situations.

The key in situations like these is to try to blur out the obstruction as much as possible and keep only the subject in focus. The more out of focus the obstruction is, the less distracting it is, and more importantly the less visible it appears in the photo.

Depth of field is affected by three factors: aperture, distance to the subject, and focal length of the lens. In photo #1 you can see the chain link fence I was shooting through. In all the photos this fence was 4 feet in front of where I was shooting from.

Let's start with **the aperture**. The larger the aperture (smaller f number) the narrower the depth of field so that the obstructions in front of the subject (focal point) become blurred or out of focus. You can see from my settings in the photos that the lens I was using does not have a very large aperture ($f6.3$ or $f7.1$). Yet, because of the other two factors, I was still able to blur out the fence in some photos.

Distance to the subject. The closer the subject is to the camera, the narrower the depth of field. As above, the narrow depth of field helps to blur out the obstructions in front of the subject. However, if the subject is close to the obstruction, then the obstruction may end up being somewhat in focus and therefore still somewhat visible. In Photo #1 the wolf was quite close to the fence so I was not able to successfully blur out the fence. In both Photos #2 and #3 the wolf was slightly further away from the fence and you can see that the fence is more blurred the farther away the wolf is from the it.

Finally, the **focal length of the lens**. A longer focal length or a zoomed telephoto lens will contribute to a narrower depth of field. Once again this helps to blur the obstruction. In Photo #3 and #4 I was zoomed in to a focal length of 165mm. You can see that the combination of the 165mm focal length and the distance between the wolf and the fence pretty much eliminated the fence from these photos.

Give these techniques a try the next time you're trying to shoot past an obstruction.



Photo #1

- Focal length 100 mm
- $f6.3$
- The wolf was only about a foot past the fence

Photo #2

- Focal length 149 mm
- $f6.3$
- The wolf was about 10 feet away



Photo #3

- Focal length 165 mm
- $f7.1$
- The wolf was about 20-25 feet away



Photo #4

- Focal length 165 mm
- $f7.1$
- The wolf was about 25-30 feet away



To truly take control of the images you make, understanding the three settings you may choose in **MANUAL** mode is necessary. The phrase **EXPOSURE TRIANGLE** is used to refer to the combination of *ISO, Aperture, and Shutter Speed*. The phrase **EQUIVALENT EXPOSURES** is used to refer to the production of identical photos by choosing different settings. The three settings in the exposure triangle determine the level of light to reach the sensor and if you choose one setting to allow a lot of light you may have to choose another setting that restricts the light in order to balance out and to achieve correct exposure.

It's like math: If correct exposure is represented by "20", there are multiple combinations of the three variables (i.e. ISO, aperture, and shutter speed) which, when combined, will each result in the same answer – correct exposure.

$$10 + 5 + 5 = 20 \quad 7 + 7 + 6 = 20 \quad 8 + 4 + 8 = 20 \quad 9 + 3 + 8 = 20$$

So, if there are so many combinations of settings to get the same result, how do you choose which settings to use? Understanding the role of the 3 settings and determining what element you wish to prioritize is key to your decisions.

In this article we shall focus on what may be achieved by understanding **APERTURE** which is the opening in your lens through which light passes to enter your camera. Obviously, the smaller the opening, the less the light and the larger the opening the more the amount of the light. The measure of the opening is referred to by **f stops**. Here's the tip of the day: When you understand that the *f stop numbers are actually fractions* you will understand that f4 is really $\frac{1}{4}$ of the whole and f16 is $\frac{1}{16}$ of the whole. You just know that $\frac{1}{4}$ of a pie is a bigger slice than $\frac{1}{16}$ of the pie so f4 is a bigger opening in your lens than f16.

Now that you have the key to understanding f stops as it relates to aperture sizes, you must be thinking: "Why does size matter?" Aperture size matters because it will determine the area of your photograph will be in sharp focus. Moreover, you will be able to blur an unattractive background OR achieve sharp focus throughout your composition OR make your subject appear more prominent within the photo.

The 6 photos with this article are the same in that they are equivalent exposures of the same composition. They were all made with the camera on a tripod using the same focal length shooting a static scene. An ISO of 200 was maintained in all photos. You will see that the aperture was changed by increments of one stop. Of course, to achieve equivalent exposures when we change the amount of light allowed by the size of the aperture, we also need to change the amount of light let in by changing the shutter speed. However, this experiment is intended to illustrate the effect of aperture on your composition. As you can see the subject is the cup and the background is neither attractive nor does it contribute anything of value to your composition. But it was there, so by being able to change the aperture to blur out the background, the photo could be rendered more attractive and the subject more prominent.

The lesson to take away from this experiment is that choice of aperture has an effect on the photos you make. By taking control and choosing settings yourself rather than giving the camera the control in an AUTO MODE you can *make* photos as opposed to *take* photos.

Now, a word of caution...the amount of blur / artistic blur / Bokeh in your photos will also be affected by the focal length of your lens and distance between camera and subject and background. With this information I leave it to you to devise your own experiments and the learning will be in the doing.

P.S. A report of your own experiment would be most welcome for the next newsletter. The Editor



f 22

1/30 sec.

ISO 200



f 16

1/60 sec.

ISO 200



f 11

1/125

ISO 200



f 8

1/250 sec.

ISO 200



f 5.6

1/500 sec.

ISO 200



f 4

1/1000 sec.

ISO 200

Eye of the Storm

A Review by Catherine

I recently attended the “Paul McCartney Photographs 1963-64: Eye of the Storm”. It offers an intimate, behind-the-scenes look at Beatlemania through McCartney’s own lens. The photographs are on display at the AGO until June 7th, 2026.

The Art Gallery of Ontario (AGO) is hosting the Canadian debut of over 250 photographs taken by McCartney during the early months of Beatlemania. The exhibition captures the Beatles’ rise from British sensations to global superstars with pictures captured in Liverpool, London, Paris, New York, and Miami. Visitors can see both the chaos of fans and press as well as behind the scenes moments of John Lennon, George Harrison, Ringo Starr, and Paul McCartney. McCartney, with his 35-mm Pentax SLR, (good choice of camera), explored the early days of Beatlemania. The show features candid street photography, backstage and personal moments of the band and a transition from black and white to colour photography over the course of 1963 to 1964.

McCartney makes no claim to being a master photographer — he calls himself “an enthusiastic photographer who happened to be in the right place at the right time”

“We were moving at such speed that you just had to grab, grab, grab! It meant some of these shots were not as sharp as others,” McCartney wrote in his book. “But I kind of like that, I like the mixture. We’ve got some very sharp pictures and we’ve got some more romantic photos with that softness which really captures the time.”

Below is an image I really enjoyed from the show – it was taken from the car as the Beatles were being driven into the Plaza Hotel in New York. I love that this is the view that they would have had looking out of the car.

*Paul McCartney, “Photographers in Central Park, New York,” February 1964
Copywrite Paul McCartney under exclusive license to MPL Archive LLP*



"Who is looking at who?" Paul teases — which included a horde of professional photographers who were obsessively trailing the band.

"It's impossible to look at the show and not know what happens next," Shedden of the Toronto Star said. "Most visitors will arrive knowing how the story ends — the collective exhaustion, the contract disputes, the 1969 band breakup — and yet the photographs offer no hint of that messy future." Shedden continues "there's a tension between innocence and inevitability running quietly through Eyes of the Storm."

McCartney's camera lingered on contemplative moments: bandmates caught alone with their thoughts. In fact, based on the pictures, there were a lot of captures, that showed the Beatles with rather sombre faces, probably a reflection of the overwhelming nature of the tours.

The exhibit is worth going to see. The early works fall more into family snapshots, people obscured by other people, less than ideal composition BUT the people in the images are just so famous and the feeling is the photographs capture a crazy moment in time.

There is a collection of colour images from Miami that are certainly the highlight of the show – rich coloured images of the Beatles hanging around a pool, and they are fabulous.

The show is on until June 7th at the AGO.

In Search of...
A Newsletter Editor for the
Ajax Photography Club

***The position will
begin in the 2026 -
2027 club year for a
3 year term.***

***Please be prepared
to announce your
intention at the
June meeting.***



Inspiration from APC Presenter, Trina Koster

AND

Making Photos Together

*From,
Terri,
Catherine,
and Nancy*

In January the Ajax Photography Club arranged a presentation by Trina Koster featuring portrait photography. Feeling inspired to try out studio portraiture, Catherine, Terri, and I (Nancy) joined forces.

We had no preconceived ideas but this collaborative approach resulted in the photos you see here. We began with nothing but a single speedlight and a rectangular softbox and experimented with positioning. To learn best, we used a tether cable so we could all immediately see each photo and determine changes we could make. Of course, we had to be our own models so we had the added challenge of placing ourselves in front of the camera. As you can see in Catherine's portrait, a single light source can shape the subject and add drama.

It did not take long until we decided to add wardrobe to the endeavour and Terri's penchant for hats came to the fore, sending me around the house sourcing millinery.

Creatives juices continued to flow and Terri mentioned how much she liked Michael's (now famous) photo as a gangster, wielding a Dollar Store derringer, and looking through a window for the bad guys. Out came the venetian blind and the windowpane and the three of us set the scene. It took some trial and error, working with the placement of the shadows, but with the three of us working together we succeeded. Being a threesome, we could have one model, one equipment handler, and one photographer.

Next, we added the prop pistol, wardrobe, our imagination and thespian skills to make the photos that tell a film noir story.

A cup of tea and a snack appeared and we took some time to review the photos and discuss the learning.

In conclusion, this is the power of being a member of the APC. We can get together with others to try something of mutual interest and the learning is accelerated while we enjoy our time together.





Finding Inspiration

*From
Michael
Nelson*



The Ajax Photography Club continues to provide inspiration and supports me in my quest to make better photographic art.

Our February speaker, Peter Baumgarten, showed us many ways to improve our landscape photographs and our last speaker, Kas Stone, spoke eloquently on the various ways she seeks inspiration. She clearly demonstrated to me, that the Ajax Photography Club covers all the bases. We are currently offering all of the things that she suggested as ways to seek and find inspiration.

We have **monthly speakers** that, even when they are not great teachers, regularly inspire APC members to get out and shoot something.

The **image review** and **photo discussions** is an opportunity to share our images with peers, and discover if what you intended for the image to convey actually comes across to the viewer.

Study the Masters is an opportunity to put together a collection of images of one or two exceptional makers, and share them with your peers, so that we may all learn more about how established makers understand their art.

Book Study is an opportunity to read and practise a particular aspect of the photographic arts in depth, and share your insights and struggles with others discovering the same things.

We have **outings with peers**, where we get to spend time with other photographers and develop the APC community.

We learn from John to embrace Miksang and Wabi Sabi.

We have **Clinics** that allow us to get feedback on our images to help us improve our technique and composition and even understand a little more about the impact of our images.

We even have **Print contests** that give us the chance to show the best of our images and to have them printed and shared with the larger community.





Mont Saint Michel, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site, with a rich history spanning over 1,300 years, marked by religious significance, architectural marvels, and strategic military importance.

708 AD – the history of Mont St. Michel began when the Archangel Michael appeared in a vision to Bishop Aubert of Avranches, instructing him to build a sanctuary on a rocky inlet which led to the first oratory being built.

933 AD – Mont St. Michel appears on the Bayeux Tapestry.

966 AD – A community of Benedictine Monks established themselves on the island with the construction of a church.

11th Century – The Abbaye church was built and, as the number of pilgrims to the island increased, the church became too small and prompted further expansion.

12th Century – the construction of “La Merveille” (the wonder) a three-story complex for housing the monks, which enhanced the architectural splendor.

1337-1453 was the Hundred Year War and Mont St. Michel played a crucial role during the conflict with its fortifications allowing it to withstand sieges. It became the symbol of resistance against British forces.

1789-1799 – The French Revolution dissolved the Abbaye and it was repurposed to a state prison under Napoleon until 1863.

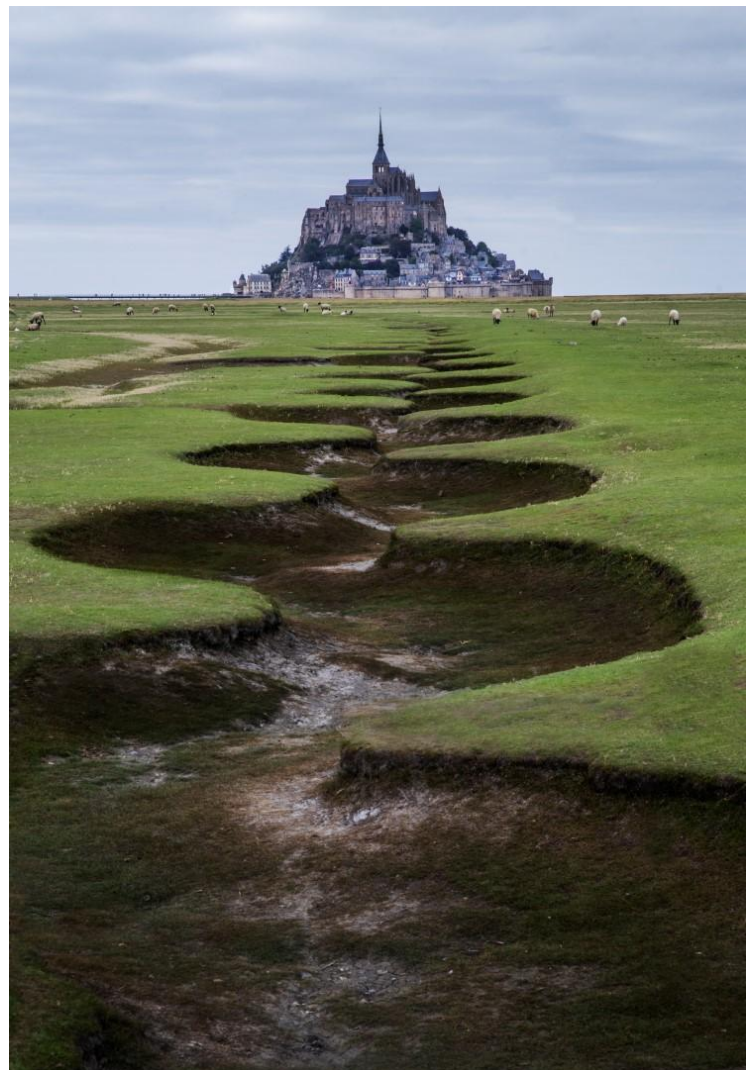
19th Century – The Abbaye underwent restoration.

1979 – Mont St. Michel was designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, recognizing its cultural and historical significance.

2014 - The new bridge, to the Abbaye, was opened to the public. The bridge allows waters to flow freely around the island and improves access for tourists and transportation.

Visit to Mont St Michel in France

*From
Catherine Holden*





Today Mont Saint Michel stands as one of France's most visited landmarks, attracting at least three million tourists and pilgrims each year. It is the most visited site in France after Paris.

From our hotel (although in the middle of nowhere), we can just walk across the field to Mont St Michel! That was a real bonus as we did not have to deal with the hassle of car shuffles, and lining up for buses. We got settled into our room and then decided to walk over to Mont St Michel. We have all of tomorrow to explore the town so we decided to explore around the Mont and find somewhere for Dad to paint. We crossed over the road, through a couple of farm gates and then made our way across the fields to Mont St Michel.



There were tons of sheep and very few people. The grass is either very shortly cropped by the sheep or more like moorland grasses. Occasional flooding from the sea has created salt marsh meadows that were found to be ideally suited to grazing sheep. Agneau de présalé (salt-meadow / salt-marsh lamb), is a local specialty. The Mont was impressive even from a distance. The land was so flat around that it really stands out. It took about 40 minutes to walk to the Mont. In days gone by, the Mont was only accessible at low tide. That however changed when the causeway was put in to accommodate the busloads of visitors who arrive by the minute. People can also walk over on the sand at low tide, but it can be fairly risky and should only be done with a guide. It was not clear how we would get up on the causeway but as we got closer, we could see a stile that we could use to get over the fence. Dad found a spot to paint and I went off exploring and photographing. I walked around looking for good angles. It was a bit tricky to get a shot without the causeway. The causeway in its own right is a leading line, but eventually I found the shot below as I looked at the castle. I could get the whole island without the causeway.

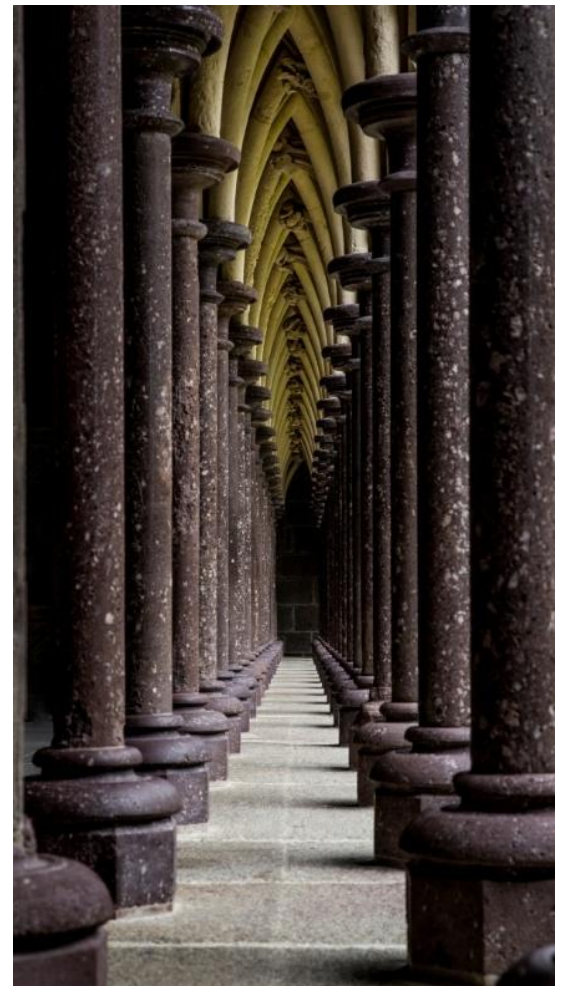




The number of people was rather overwhelming. There are thousands of people here. They have not discovered the rest of Brittany, but they have found Mont St Michel!

On the second day, we walked back across the field and I suggested my photo location to Dad as a better location to paint and he agreed. I walked over the cause way and up the main street and then out onto the ramparts. Oh, my goodness, there were so many people and from the ramparts you can see the people continuing to walk and take the bus over the cause way! I walked around the ramparts and looked for different photo ops as there were so many people it was a bit difficult but a good challenge. I walked about for about 2 hours, went part way up the village and then into a small church called the church of Saint Pierre. Then I went back to get Dad. He was done his sketch and ready to go and explore the Abbaye.

We headed in and it really was a crush of humanity. The street goes up and up and up and there is only one way up. The street and stairs just keep going. It is free to go on the island and you only have to pay when you want to go in the Abbaye, cloisters and buildings. The current buildings were designed in the 11th Century by an Italian architect. He designed the Romanesque church of the Abbaye, placing the transept crossing at the top of the mount. Many underground crypts and chapels had to be built to compensate for the weight. These formed the basis for the supportive upward structure that can be seen today. The Cloisters were amazing – the centre court is a patch of green at the top of the mount. Several of the arches look out over the sea. I am sure back in the day, the wind would have howled through the area, but with Plexiglas – there was now just a wonderful view of the sea. The opening to the sea really was the highlight of the cloisters.





Once we worked our way through the Abbaye, cloisters, reading rooms, crypts and dining hall we emerged again onto the ramparts of the city (that go almost all the way around). They offer the best views of the estuary and surrounding flats. The colours were spectacular – a lovely blue and cream colour. Periodically a set of stairs takes you back to the chaos below in the street.

Mont St Michel has been on my bucket list since I visited the sister site in Cornwall (St Michael's Mount) many years ago. I loved being outside the Mont and the scenery is spectacular. I found the inside of the Mont very claustrophobic, as the number of people crammed into the streets is very overwhelming. Regardless, UNESCO sites never disappoint and it was worth visiting.



The End



Photo made by Catherine Holden

**Please consider being a
contributor to your
APC Newsletter.**