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Dates to Remember

Term 2 Ends Thurs 2nd July
Recommence Mon 20th July

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – June 2026

The time is getting nearer our AGM will be held on 7th August at Cardiff RSL Club

We are looking for 'new blood' to join the committee.

Volunteering is a rewarding experience. Everyone is different, but personally, it is the feeling good about myself and knowing I can help other people. Plus, it's about being around all of you, happy, smiling, friends and that part I intend to continue for as long as I can.

The Club's Constitution says I have to step down.

A new President has to be found, and as a personal appeal to YOU, I urge you to consider taking on the role and help us with our succession plans.

It is your opportunity to contribute to our club and community and to 'feel good'.

I am available for you to talk to for more information

Please talk to your friends and encourage them to volunteer in some capacity; we can always use the extra help.

[CLICK HERE](#) for a Nomination Form.

Please complete it and return it to our Secretary, Wendy Smith, **by 31st July**.

Barry Keen
President



Social News

Barefoot Bowling Social Day Out

Our 2nd term social outing for 2026 was to Club Lambton for some 'fun in the sun' aka barefoot bowling.

Some 16 members turned up on a fine day, a little cooler than our previous experience. This time, due to a morning bowling competition being held, our group enjoyed lunch together with more than a few in trepidation of what lay ahead. Once tummies were content and bowls, jacks and mats were collected from the Club, members made their way out to the green and a new adventure for most. Fortunately, members Roy Adams, Warren Kreckler and a couple of others were in attendance, and as bowlers of some note were able to pass on the basics of the game to the rest, most of whom had never so much as stepped foot on a bowling green previously. Some of our members came just for the lunch and stayed on to cheer those bowling.

And so, the bowling got under way, with 3 lanes operating, allowing 2 x pairs each lane with a couple of members observing and grabbing a few photos. Considering the lack of experience, the 'quality' of bowling was, for the most part at least, quite respectable. The bowling style of some members certainly created discussion, while a few bowlers in their excitement sent bowls down with the wrong bias, subsequently ending up in neighbouring lanes. After numerous 'ends' (not sure of the correct terminology) and the sun warming up after a rather cool and strong breezy start, it was time to pack up, with some grabbing a drink and a seat back in the Club for a discussion on what had just taken place.



Best Wishes

For all our members who are celebrating birthdays and anniversaries - hearty congratulations



Condolences

To those who are ill we send our best wishes for a speedy recovery.



To those of our members who have lost loved ones recently, please accept our sincere condolences. You are in our thoughts

Member Information

Morning Tea/General Meeting – ‘Changes to My Aged Care’

Our Morning Tea and general Meeting was held on Monday 25th May at our ‘Headquarters’, Club Lambton.

A very pleasing attendance of 100 (including a few guests) turned up for this event, and to listen to the guest speaker, Kathy Lewis (Nova Care) talk about changes to My Aged Care which took effect in November 2025. The package ‘Home Care’ has seen a name change to ‘Support at Home’ with costs involved. Kathy highlighted the importance of obtaining a code (number) for support for each type of service from the various providers – these can be ‘saved’ for when needed. Also, it was important to note that not all types of assistance were available from all providers e.g. some provide cleaning, shopping and socialising, some provide transport, others providing showering, cleaning etc. The cost of the various services usually ranges from \$15 - \$25. Kathy then called for questions, with many members keen to ensure they had their own queries answered.

It was then time for morning tea to be served, along with the draw for lucky door prizes.



ASCCA May Competition Results

The theme for the May 2026 photography competition was Hands at Work, linked to the May theme of volunteering.

First Place – Hands painting inside a small glass bottle, Dianne Williams, Newcastle

Second Place – The Wildlife Biologist, Cynthia Langley, AUSOM

Third Place – Cracking the Coconut, Sally Morton, Manly

March-May Creative Writing Competition

The theme for the March – May quarter creative writing competition was ‘Heirlooms’.

We had four entries from Newcastle Computerpals, who have an active creative writing group called WriterPals, and one entry from AUSOM.

First place: Carmel Smith, Newcastle, The Heirloom

Carmel’s poem about Nan’s brooch that all the kids wanted made the judge chuckle. It tells a story with a twist ending and makes us question what an heirloom is. [Click here](#) to see all results and the next competition themes.

Member Information continued

Payment Details:

Our bank account details are :

Account Name Computerpals

BSB 650 000 (Newcastle Permanent Building Society)

Account 962205402

in the reference section put your SURNAME and INITIAL, plus M (for membership payment), #...
(for Assistance class)

Remember: please book in for the classes you want to attend.

Note: BeConnected classes are free, but afternoon Assistance classes on Mondays are not (cost \$5 per 1½ hours) and are available only to ComputerPals financial members. Don't just drop in—we are restricted to the booked in numbers we can help.

How do I book in: Phone: 0478 219 220 leave your name & phone number and the reason for your call— someone will get back to you.

See club website for more information

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We have the continuing need to source new members and mentors. Word of Mouth continues to be the strongest and most effective.

Two opportunities to promote ourselves were

- A stallholder table at Shortland Seniors Expo at Club Macquarie on Thursday 30/4- We have attended these for many years with reasonable results and good PR.
- A stallholder table at Newcastle Community Aged Care Expo at Wallsend Diggers on Wednesday 13/5

NEED COMPUTER HELP AT HOME?

Members often need tech help at home to set up their computer, maybe link it to a printer, or maybe it's the internet connection, or help setting up a smart TV.

Mark Bowe and his team have been helping our club for some time now, and they can also help you. It is Mark's business, so there are costs involved. I suggest you get a quote for the work you want done before you engage them. There is no commercial arrangement with our club

Bowe's IT Solutions 116b Elder Street, Lambton, 2299, NSW

<http://www.bowesitsolutions.com.au>

Contact Us

To contact the Roster Team or the Treasurer regarding class rosters or payments use:
islingtonpals@gmail.com

Scam Watch

How AI Voice-Cloning Scams Are Exploiting Seniors

The Anatomy of a Voice-Clone Scam

Historically, the infamous "Grandparent Scam" relied on a caller pretending to be a grandchild crying or whispering through a staticky phone line, claiming they were in jail or a car accident. Today, bad actors are using just a few seconds of audio—scraped from a grandchild's public social media video—to generate a synthetic voice that sounds completely identical to the real person.

A senior answers the phone to hear what sounds exactly like their loved one saying: "Grandma, I'm at the police station, I messed up and need bail money right now. Please don't tell Mom." Moments later, a second scammer steps in pretending to be a legal official or lawyer to demand immediate payment via cryptocurrency, wire transfers, or gift cards.

Why Seniors Are at High Risk

Data released by [National Seniors Australia](#) reveals that over 30% of older Australians have fallen victim to online fraud or identity theft. Scammers exploit several factors unique to older generations:

- **Trust and Urgency:** Seniors are more likely to answer unknown calls and respect authority figures, panicking when presented with a family crisis.
- **Hyper-Realistic Tech:** It is incredibly difficult for the human ear to distinguish between a real human voice and an AI-cloned voice.
- **Isolation:** Scammers often target individuals late at night or during quiet hours when they cannot easily consult other family members.

To protect seniors from AI voice harvesting, you must focus on securing both the senior's account and the accounts of their younger family members (like grandchildren), whose voices are usually the ones being cloned. Modern AI voice-cloning software requires less than 10 seconds of clear audio to create a perfect digital replica

The most effective, practical ways to lock down social media profiles and cut off data access for scammers include:

1. Switch Profiles from "Public" to "Friends Only"
2. Audit and Purge the "Friends" List
3. Stop Tagging and Sharing Family Videos Publicly
4. Hide Friend Lists and Mutual Connections
5. Turn Off "Platform Downloading" and Sharing
6. The Ultimate Fallback: The Analog "Circuit Breaker"

Because it is impossible to control every piece of audio online, technology security experts heavily recommend implementing an analog defense system alongside digital locks:

- **The Family Safe Word:** Sit down with the senior and establish a private, un-guessable phrase (e.g., "Blue Lighthouse" or "Tuesday Pancakes").
- **The Rule:** If anyone calls claiming an emergency and asking for money, they must say the code word. If the caller creates an excuse or cannot provide it, hang up immediately.
- **Change the Voicemail:** Scammers also harvest voices from standard phone greetings. Switch the senior's voicemail from their recorded voice to the automated robotic system voice provided by their carrier.

If you or a loved one believes you have been targeted by an AI scam, report it immediately to your bank and local cyber support services like [Scamwatch](#)



Technology

How AI Voice Assistants Can Help You Stay Independent and Connected

Voice assistants like Amazon Alexa, Google Assistant, and Apple Siri have advanced quickly. Today's assistants do more than set timers — they can help with reminders, emergency calls, medication schedules, communication, entertainment, and even home safety. This article explains practical ways seniors can use voice assistants, what to watch out for, and simple steps to get started.

Why it's useful:

- Hands-free help: Use voice commands if reaching a phone or computer is difficult.
- Medication and appointment reminders: Set recurring reminders so you don't miss doses or visits.
- Stay connected: Make phone or video calls and send messages to family without typing.
- Home control: If paired with smart plugs or lights, you can control household devices by voice.
- Information and entertainment: Ask for news, weather, audiobooks, music, or recipes instantly.
- Safety features: Some assistants can call emergency contacts or even connect to medical alert systems.

Practical examples:

- Morning routine: "Good morning" routines can read the day's weather, calendar, and reminders.
- Medication: "Remind me to take my heart medicine at 8 a.m. every day."
- Voice-Activated Dialing: If a senior has vision loss or shaky hands, they can bypass searching through a digital contact list. Saying "Call Sarah" immediately starts a hands-free phone call.
- Fall detection pairing: Some smart devices and services can notify caregivers if a fall is detected.

Privacy & safety tips:

- Use a strong Wi-Fi password and keep your device's software up to date.
- Review and limit voice recordings: Most providers let you delete saved recordings periodically.
- Choose privacy settings: Disable features you don't want, like "drop in" or always-on recording.
- Be cautious with financial or personal info; don't give account details aloud.
- Beware of scams: Never share PINs, bank info, or one-time codes via voice unless you initiated a trusted service.

AI voice assistants can be a simple, powerful tool to help you stay independent, safe, and connected. Start small, focus on a few helpful tasks, and adjust settings so the device works the way you want.

Wk	Monday Morning Club Lambton	Monday Afternoon for ComputerPals Members Club Lambton	Tuesday Walsend Library	Wednesday Afternoon Adamstown Library	Thursday Zoom session (see your email for the list)
1	27/4 Public Holiday Declared for Anzac Day		28/4 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected Q & A	29/4 Library closed for repairs No class	30/4 10:00 to 11:30 am Online ZOOM class #36. Zoom fee \$10 is payable (covers all sessions for Term 1)
2	4/5 10:00 to 11:30 am • Enrolment Day • BeConnected Backup - Android & Apple 11:30 am - 'till you've had enough - Writerpals	4/5 12:30 to 2:00 pm #46 Assistance class	5/5 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected Backup - Android & Apple	6/5 1:00 to 2:30 pm BeConnected Backup - Android & Apple	7/5 10:00 to 11:30 am Online ZOOM class
3	11/5 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected Background Personalisation	11/5 12:30 to 2:00 pm #47 Assistance class	12/5 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected Background Personalisation	13/5 1:00 to 2:30 pm BeConnected Background Personalisation	14/5 10:00 to 11:30 am Online ZOOM class
4	18/5 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected You Tube & Streaming 11:30 am - 'till you've had enough - Writerpals	18/5 12:30 to 2:00 pm # 48 Assistance class	19/5 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected You Tube & Streaming	20/5 1:00 to 2:30 pm BeConnected You Tube & Streaming	21/5 10:00 to 11:30 am Online ZOOM class
5	25/5 10:00 to 11:30 am • Morning Tea with guest speaker • BeConnected	25/5 12:30 to 2:00 pm Committee Meeting	26/5 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected Q & A	27/5 1:00 to 2:30 pm BeConnected Q & A	2/6 10:00 to 11:30 am Online ZOOM class
6	1/6 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected Passkeys 11:30 am - 'till you've had enough - Writerpals	1/6 12:30 to 2:00 pm # 49 Assistance class	2/6 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected Passkeys	3/6 1:00 to 2:30 pm BeConnected Passkeys	4/6 10:00 to 11:30 am Online ZOOM class
7	8/6 Kings Birthday Public Holiday		9/6 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected Q & A	10/6 1:00 to 2:30 pm BeConnected Q & A	11/6 10:00 to 11:30 am Online ZOOM class
8	15/6 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected Photo Mgt - Albums 11:30 am - 'till you've had enough - Writerpals	15/6 12:30 to 2:00 pm # 50 Assistance class	16/6 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected Photo Mgt - Albums	17/6 1:00 to 2:30 pm BeConnected Photo Mgt - Albums	18/6 10:00 to 11:30 am Online ZOOM class
9	22/6 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected Photo Editing	22/6 12:30 to 2:00 pm Committee Meeting	23/6 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected Photo Editing	24/6 1:00 to 2:30 pm BeConnected Photo Editing	25/6 10:00 to 11:30 am Online ZOOM class
10	29/6 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected Download & Share Photos	29/6 12:30 to 2:00 pm # 51 Assistance class	30/6 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected Download & Share Photos	1/7 1:00 to 2:30 pm BeConnected Download & Share Photos	2/7 10:00 to 11:30 am Online ZOOM class