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Dates to Remember

***Aged Car Expo at Belmont 16 Foot
Sailing Club Fri 11 September***

School Holidays

Mon 27 Sept - Fri 8 October

PRESIDENT'S REPORT – September 2026

We held our AGM on 7th August and our standing committee were re-elected unopposed.

President: Barry Keen

Vice-President: Jackie Lampie

Secretary: Wendy Smith

Treasurer: Grahame King

Committee members: Brenton Elsey, Mitzi Gordon, Denise Hayes, Carolyn Keane, Margie Olsen, Merv Pope, Carmel Smith, Lindsay Threadgate, Judy Wallace, Ray Hinton

My thanks to all our volunteers for their unfailing efforts.

On a sad note Bruce Deitz, Member # 4 (inaugural member) (aged 90), passed away on 10th August. Lindsay Threadgate, Di Williams and I represented the club at his funeral.

We had a member's social day out for lunch at Caves Beach Hotel (more in Brenton's report).

On 11 September, we will represent the club on a stand at Pat Conroy MP's Aged Care Expo at Belmont 16 Foot Sailing Club - there will be 2 sessions - 10:30 am and 2:00 pm. Everyone welcome.

We have had a number of our volunteer team on the sick list. Mitzi and Ray are now back on deck, Denise and Grahame are still recovering.

Barry Keen
President



Social News

Social Outing Report - Caves Beach lunch

An overcast and somewhat cloudy day beckoned on Friday 21 st August as 15 members met up at Caves Coastal Bar & Bungalows for lunch.

With menus in hand, much discussion was had as to which dish was considered the best for the day. Orders then placed, it was time for a general chinwag among those present, solving the problems of the world along with local gossip. Once the meals were ready, a steady tune of cutlery on crockery replaced most of the chatter, indicating that the dishes chosen were generally good choices and enjoyable. While the weather was a little gloomy and breezy, it mattered little as we were seated inside away from the vagaries of the weather and the prying eyes of the many seagulls who frequent this establishment, looking for a feed.

With tummies now content, it was time to say our goodbyes and to 'waddle' back to our vehicles



Michael Leunig poem

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

ASCCA Competition Results – August 2026

Our club took 1st, 2nd, and 3rd in the **photographic competition**, judged by guest judge Clare Franga. All of the entries are worth a look- see them on the ASCCA website or [CLICK HERE](#)

The September theme is ‘**Patterns in Nature**’. Ideas might include tidal sand flats, sand dunes, spiralling fern fronds, cracked dry earth, eucalyptus bark, light refracting through ocean waves. The judge is looking for intentional composition and the use of natural light to achieve visual rhythm and balance, and for finding pattern and structure in chaotic environments. The deadline is **25 September**.

Club Scoreboard (ASCCA’s comment)

We started this competition in September 2025, so it’s time to sum up the 2025-2026 Club Scoreboard and congratulate the winners.

Computer Pals for Seniors Newcastle placed first with 135 points. Their members entered enthusiastically and successfully in both creative writing and photography competitions.

AUSOM placed second with 68 points. Manly Computer Pals placed third with 24 points.

We also had a few entries from Northern Beaches and Computer Pals for Seniors The Hills.

ASCCA Competitions – Creative writing competition results again; see full details on the ASCCA website or [CLICK HERE](#)

There were ten entries in the creative writing competition that closed on 25 August. The theme was The Stranger, and the entries covered diverse themes: history, fear, grief, kindness, robots and murder. What made the winning entries stand out was their use of small details to convey setting and emotion – showing, not telling.

Carmel Smith, Newcastle – 1st

Carmel’s very moving story uses descriptive detail (bonnet latch, bushy beard, names of the bikers) to describe how her initial fear of a biker gang changed to gratitude. See Carmel’s story below.

Annette Walker, Newcastle – 2nd

Annette uses vivid sensory details to describe her experience as a young backpacker in Europe. Her feelings (grief at the beginning, gratitude to the stranger who helped her at the end) are shown through action.

Pam Doughty, AUSOM – 3rd

Pam’s funny, warm-hearted poem is about an AI robot who has something to learn about humans. The details are what make the humour work – the fridge over-ordering the milk, the washing machine complaining about odd socks, the trip to Timbuktu.

Barry Keen, Newcastle – HC

Barry describes how he has filled his life with friends and activities since the death of his wife. The Stranger is Barry’s unknown future self as he deals with his loss, and this powerful metaphor frames his story.

Lindsay Threadgate, Newcastle – HC

Lindsay uses historical detail to establish the setting for this well-observed study of a mysterious neighbour from his childhood. This piece ends with Lindsay’s adult reflection on Brownie’s story.

Entries for the next creative writing competition are due by **25th November 2026. The theme is Myths and Lies.**

Member Information cont

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

[Computer Repairs, Services and Sales in Newcastle, NSW](#)

Contact Us

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

Scam Watch

Quishing (QR-code-based phishing) (also covered in the ASSCA newsletter)

AI Overview

Quishing is a type of cyberattack where scammers use fake QR codes to trick people into giving up personal information or downloading malware.

The word combines QR code and phishing. Instead of clicking a suspicious text link, a victim scans a malicious QR code with their phone camera.

How Quishing Works

- **Hidden Destinations:** You cannot see the full website URL before you scan a QR code. This hides the danger until it is too late.
- **Bypassing Security:** Traditional email spam filters often fail to scan or detect malicious links hidden inside an image file like a QR code.
- **Fake Landing Pages:** Once scanned, the code opens a spoofed website designed to look like a real login portal, bank page, or payment screen.

Common Examples

- **Emails and Messages:** Scammers send fake corporate invoices, delivery notices, or promotional offers with an embedded QR code requiring immediate action.
- **Public Stickers:** Fraudsters place fake QR code stickers over real payment meters, parking kiosks, or restaurant menus to steal credit card data.]

How to Stay Safe

- **Inspect the URL:** Check the web address carefully before entering passwords or payment details after a scan.
- **Verify the Source:** Do not scan unsolicited codes in emails or unexpected physical locations.
- **Use Security Tools:** Keep your phone's operating system updated and consider security software that previews QR code destinations

Technology

Could robots help tackle loneliness

There is a new BBC sitcom where Ann Droid imagines a near future in which robots provide care and companionship to older people at home.

The series centres on Sue, a recent widow played by Sue Johnston, her hapless son Michael and Linda, an assistive care robot played by Diane Morgan. Linda is designed to provide daily support and companionship, with predictably comic results.

This is a great read - [go here](#) for the full article in The Conversation

So, yes, social and AI-powered robots can significantly reduce feelings of loneliness, especially among older adults and individuals in care facilities.

How Robots Help

- **Companionship:** Devices like the ElliQ social robot or South Korea's Hiodol AI dolls offer conversational interaction, voice responses, and emotional comfort.
- **Catalysts for Connection:** Robots encourage human-to-human interaction by reminding users to call friends, participate in group activities, or leave the house
- **Daily Routine Support:** They help manage health by tracking medication schedules, prompting meals, and monitoring vital signs or falls.

Limitations and Risks

- **No Replacement for Humans:** Current technology cannot provide physical care—such as helping someone up after a fall or assisting with washing—and cannot genuinely reciprocate human emotions.
- **Risk of Isolation:** Experts caution that poorly designed AI could foster unhealthy, addictive attachments or discourage real-world social engagement if optimized purely for digital engagement.

Report partly generated by AI

We are almost the the end of another Term. We finish on 24/9/2026

Wk	Monday Morning Club Lambton	Monday Afternoon for ComputerPals Members Club Lambton	Tuesday Walbaend Library	Wednesday Afternoon Adamstown Library	Thursday Zoom session (see your email for the link)
9	14/9 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected Photo Editing	14/9 12:30 to 2:00 pm # 58 Assistance class Cost \$5	15/9 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected Photo Editing	16/9 1:00 to 2:30 pm BeConnected Photo Editing	17/9 10:00 to 11:30 am Online ZOOM class
10	21/9 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected ChatGPT	21/9 12:30 to 2:00 pm # 59 Assistance class Cost \$5	22/9 10:00 to 11:30 am BeConnected ChatGPT	23/9 1:00 to 2:30 pm BeConnected ChatGPT	24/9 10:00 to 11:30 am Online ZOOM class

Next Term, (**Term 3** will commence on **13 October 2026**.)

Keep an eye out for an email from us with the new Term classes

Our Team will formulate the classes during the school holidays.

Take the time now to enjoy the break and maybe some Grandparenting time or a holiday away.

We look forward to seeing you when we return