

ComputerPals - Newcastle

Where Seniors master technology

SWITCHED ON SENIORS

Email : contact@computerpals.org.au

President

**Sandra Keen**

Dates to Remember

Clubroom has reopened with classes only - on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday. Stay safe and healthy.

You can still **BE A ZOOMIE** and join us online. Fri mornings @ 9.45

Thank you Harold for the poems on P6

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Australian Seniors
Computer Clubs Association **ASCCA**

President's Report -



With Christmas and end of the year fast approaching we hear so many folk who can't wait to say 'Goodbye' to this difficult year and welcome in 2021.

It has been a trying year for ComputerPals too, but we stayed connected with a great group of members through regular Zoom sessions. The set times each week gave some normality to the isolation – a reason to get out of our pyjamas and converse, learn, have fun in spite of COVID!

Each year 5th December has been mandated as International Volunteers Day by the United Nations. It is a time to celebrate and promote the efforts of all volunteers. This year, in particular, community volunteers continue to make valuable efforts in communication and community engagement. Huge thanks to our very own volunteer team at ComputerPals Newcastle - our Tutors, Tech Team, Roster Team and Committee. This club would not exist without you!

Thanks, too, to all the members who entered the Australian Senior Computer Clubs Association Photographic Competition and helped Computerpals Newcastle gain Champion Club status for a second year. Congratulations to everyone who gained awards – see Page 4 .

Early in November we had our first outing since we were shut down by COVID in March. Social Organiser - Brenton Elsey organised a Car Observation Run complete with directions & questions, finishing at Speers Point Park. Due to Brenton's excellent instructions everyone arrived at the destination and enjoyed the social gathering in COVID-safe manner.

Last Monday, 30th November we held a Christmas Luncheon with a difference – a picnic in the park to comply with COVID restrictions. So many enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere and are looking forward to more such events. Special thanks to Brenton Elsey and able assistant Beryl for wonderful organisation to ensure the picnic was a huge success. See Brenton's report and photos in this newsletter. Thanks also to Fred Neal for providing tables on the day.

Our volunteers all deserve a well-earned rest while they deal with the Festive Season and recovery from all the hustle and bustle. This year we will finish on 18th December. Our Roster team will be working on next year's timetable of classes so if there is a subject you need and will attend please let us know.

Our committee have agreed to start the 2021 year earlier than usual with an Open / Enrolment Day on 15th January and classes resuming on 19th January.

Have a Joyous Christmas and the Happiest of New Years.

Sandra

A FEW SCAMS TO BE AWARE OF - AND BEWARE OF

Be aware that not everybody who offers “HELP” is your friend...there are some nasties out there. Many are just nuisance texts and you can “educate” your smart phone to take care of them for you. They consist of messages informing you that your “order” will be cancelled if you don’t verify by a certain time, or your transaction needs to be completed by a particular time or you will miss out. There are many variations—way too many to list here. My phone dings very often with the message that they have just located another one and dealt with it. I have set my phone to automatically report and block spam an to let me know - just in case they get over-zealous and block ‘good stuff’.

More information:

sign up to the Stay Smart Online Alert Service,

www.staysmartonline.gov.au/alert-service.

To check for current scams and risks visit

www.scamwatch.gov.au

If you’ve been the victim of a cybercrime including financial loss, report it to **ReportCyber** at www.cyber.gov.au/report.

The “Can you hear me” scam - seems to be on the comeback again. This consists of a phonecall, and when you answer the caller asks “Can you hear me?” **HANG UP WITHOUT ANSWERING.** All they need from you is the word “YES” and that can be used as permission to make all kinds of changes and cause all kinds of problems for you. If you have ever changed electricity providers you will have experienced this method of giving consent over the phone for the change to be made to your account.

Technology is wonderful and can make life much easier but can also bring some enormous headaches with it. Care and caution can be your biggest protection. If you are unsure what to do about something, phone ComputerPals and ask for help. We don’t bite - not anymore anyway! :-)

A message from the Newcastle City Police District, Lake Macquarie Police District and Port Stephens Hunter Police District ...

SCAM ALERT! There have been several reports of scammers calling people from what appear to be trusted NSW Police Force numbers and threatening the call recipients with fines or arrest.

These scammers are using technology to make it appear that the calls originate from legitimate police phone numbers; a practice known as ID spoofing.

The caller impersonates a NSW Police Force officer and states that the person receiving the call has an outstanding fine or warrant. The scammer demands a form of payment to prevent arrest or further court action.

The NSW Police Force will never call a member of the public and demand payment over the phone in order to avoid going to court or being arrested.

If you get an unexpected call from someone who states they're from the police, and starts asking for personal details or threatens you, please hang up. If you’re concerned, you can always verify by contacting your local police or the Police Assistance Line directly on 131 444.

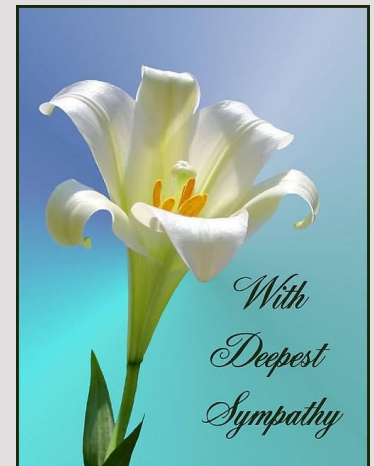
To find out more information about scams, or to find out other ways to protect yourself, visit www.scamwatch.gov.au. If you have been the victim of a scam, you can report it to local police or to the ACCC online at the ‘SCAMwatch report a scam’ page.

Best Wishes

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



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



Condolences

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

Christmas Picnic Lunch

On Monday 30th under somewhat grey skies, 39 members were present to celebrate a ComputerPals Christmas Lunch with a difference, held this time as a picnic in Speers Point Park due mainly to the ongoing COVID-19 restrictions.

Fearing a Summer heatwave or storm, a decision was made to hire the large, level shelter at the park, enabling members to dodge the possibilities of a hot sun or rain. This decision was vindicated, as an exercise group were occupying the shelter on our arrival and shortly after, a ladies Probus group had intended using it also. A couple of showers added to the justification for this move.

Possession settled, members rolled up with all the usual picnic fare, those forgetting their tables able to dine comfortably thanks to Fred Neal supplying 4 long ones. The shelter provided enough room for those present to sit or move around and mingle while adhering to socially distancing rules. President Sandra Keen then presented certificates to members who gained awards for the recent ASCCA Photography competition, and for all families an informative publication regarding online safety for grandparents and carers.

With tummies satisfied and conversations slowing, it was time to pack up after what had been a happy occasion for those present. Beryl and I would like to take this opportunity to wish all members a very Safe and Happy Christmas and New Year - **it must surely be better than 2020.**

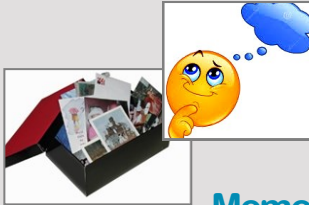
Brenton



Thank you Beryl & Brenton for a job well done in a particularly difficult situation. Maybe more of these casual gatherings would be welcome all round.



Special Interest Groups



MemoryPals

Our new group meets on **first Monday** of each month at **1:00pm**

Reminisce about your childhood memories and learn how to preserve them.

WriterPals

Our Creative Writing group is for enthusiasts, not experts. We meet on the **second Monday of each month**.

Meetings are from **1:00 pm** until we go home!



DigiPals



DigiPals is an active group of

ComputerPals members who meet on the **third Monday of each month at 1 p.m.** to explore digital photography.

FOR EVERYONE CHEERING ON THE END OF 2020



PLEASE BE ADVISED MAD MAX WAS SET IN 2021

MemoryPals

The next meeting of MemoryPals will be on **Monday 7th December (which will also be the last for this crazy year)** at 1pm.

All are welcome, just bring some ideas with you of anything special you might enjoy doing to help preserve, protect and perpetuate your memories and memorabilia.

Help is readily available should you require it No need to book - just join the Zoom group.

WriterPals

Everybody has a story to tell...Our next Writerpals meeting will be **Monday December 14th** starting at 1pm via Zoom.

How about logging in and sharing some tales about your activities and coping strategies during the shutdown period. Treat it as a letter to a friend letting them know what you have been up to.

Give writing a go...you don't even have to tell anyone...just try!

Start with one small story about just one person, thing, pet, event

I think I'm looking forward to catching up with some of you on our final 2020 swapping of ideas.

DigiPals

Digipals will resume in January.

Congratulations to all winners in the ASCCA Digital Photo Competition: **Journalism**-Brenton Elsey: Highly Commended, Sandra Keen:1st Place

Travel– Barry Keen: 3rd Place, Barbara Bartlett: 2nd Place

People / Portrait - Beryl Elsey: Highly Commended, Brenton Elsey: 2nd Place

Landscape / Seascape - Liz Temple:1st Place

Landscape Structural/Manmade - Lindsay Threadgate: Highly Commended

Animals - Lindsay Threadgate: Highly Commended, Deirdre Eastwood: 1st Place

Open - Dianne Williams:3rd Place, Barbara Bartlett: 2nd Place

People's Choice - Annette Walker: Landscape

ComputerPals Newcastle was awarded Champion Club

Friday Zoomies

For those not yet ready to head back into the classroom, Friday will be devoted to regular Zoom classes.

The final two Fridays of this year will be devoted to Christmas Emails and Q&A although that can change if there are requests for something special.

To find out what is on check your email or send an email to us at contact@computerpals.org.au for what is coming up and how to join our Zoom sessions.

ComputerPals Mission

Our mission is to educate seniors in the use of computers as a way of enriching their lives and making them more self-reliant.

We bridge the generation gap and assist seniors to find ways to benefit the community through their collective experience and knowledge.

Contact Us



To contact the Roster Team or the Treasurer regarding rosters or payments use:

islingtonpals@gmail.com

Roster Team

Barry Keen



Mitzi Gordon

Camel Smith



Wendy Cripps-Clark

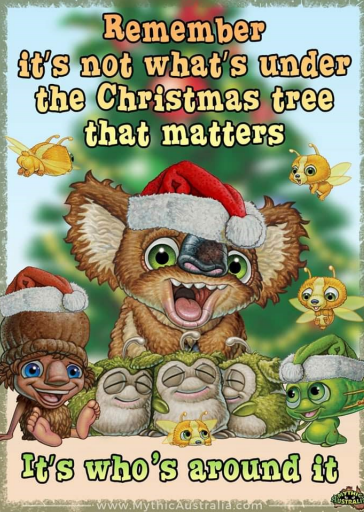
These people are all volunteers who also teach classes at Computerpals. We ask that you take this into consideration when your phone call is not answered immediately.

Funnybone —

YOU TELL ME NO STICKS IN THE HOUSE



THEN YOU DRAG A WHOLE TREE IN



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year. Stay safe and well.



PRIVACY STATEMENT: Information contained in this Newsletter is only for the members of the ComputerPals Newcastle Inc. The Editor accepts no responsibility for any errors, omissions, libels, in accuracy or other shortcomings of this newsletter.

A Ghostly Night

In the still of the night, when all things seem right
The cat is out stalking, he looks for a bite
With the moon hanging low, and shadows abound
There's mice in the field, and the cat on the round

But all is not normal, a ghostly figure is seen
The cat with its fur up, it's eyes have turned green
No sound to be heard, not even a breeze
Long shadows are seen, cast by the still trees

A shadow is seen, it's a ghost, I am sure
Making towards me, I head for the door
A groan, I hear, as I make my way in
Trip over the garbage, make quite a loud din

As I pick myself up, and dust myself down
A quick glance I give, as I'm moving around
Where did it go, is it inside or out
Can somebody help me, I give a weak shout

The night has progressed, I wake from my sleep
It's a dream that I've had, after counting the sheep
I'm covered in sweat and my throat is so dry
Don't know what's happened, perhaps I might die

But saneness, I'm sure, will come to the fore
As daylight and coffee will help, like before
The cat and myself, no more we will roam
Let the ghost and the dark find their way home.

WHERE'S SANTA?

I hear the children ask "where's Santa"?
We have Christmas cake and Fanta
Lollies, nuts and all things nice
Awaiting now for our Christmas night

We wait, me and all my relations
I hope Santa is not in isolation
Will Rudolph and the reindeer team
Be ready for our Christmas dream?

Will he be allowed to cross our border
Queensland's thoughts should be broader
Many thoughts have crossed my mind
But Santa Clause, I want to find

Does corona affect his reindeer
This is the problem that I fear
If they should go into isolation
What will happen within our nation

Can Santa visit through our chimney
What's the state of his availability
Will he drop our presents as he flies by
If we miss him, many children, I'm sure will cry

My thoughts for Christmas night is this
Go to sleep and sleep a night of bliss
Dream of Santa, corona free
Handing toys to you and me.

Poems from Harold Franks ...

CHRISTMAS WISHES

Jingle bells, jingle bells, it that Santa I hear
Is it really the end of another long year
The years come around much quicker, I fear
But Christmas it is, I tell you, my dear

The shops are in bloom, like a beautiful flower
With puddings and cakes, and lit up like a tower
The children are singing their Christmas songs
And trying to atone for their yearly wrongs

With Rudolph and gang, locked into their gear
They're leaving their home, not even a tear
For Aussie's the place they want to be
The smiles on kid's faces, they want to see

Sleigh loaded with goodies, releases the brake
For Aussie before nightfall, they want to make
No if's or no but's, they're up in the sky
To deliver their load, it's do or it's die

For Santa, he knows, just who have been good
With presents for all, just under his hood
To please mother and dad, a carton of beer
And the rest of the world, he wishes good cheer

Oh deer, Christmas is near

Oh deer, Christmas is near
Santa and reindeer are coming, I fear
Children are laughing and looking around
At Christmas shopping all over town

Shop keepers grinning and rubbing their hands
Preparing their shops, the best in the land
Windows displayed with Santa Claus toys
Tempting parents to buy for girls and for boys

The cash register ringing its usual song
Don't keep them waiting, it won't be too long
For Santa has left his home in Lapland
Be on the lookout for when his sleigh lands

Lights on the trees, the big and the small
Gifts are attached, just watch they don't fall
Waiting for children, the good ones, I'm sure
With biscuits and lollies, there's sure to be more

Joy and delight, for Christmas is near
The voices of children, delightful to hear
Singing the tunes of Christmas time songs
In shorts and singlets and a pair of old thongs

Will Santa be having his usual team?
Pulling his sleigh, with Rudolph, I mean
With Dasher and Dancer and all of the boys
I hope that his sleigh is covered with toys