



TOUKLEY RSL SUB BRANCH

Newsletter

Issue 71– March 2022

NEW SUB BRANCH MEMBERS

Welcome to the following new Sub-Branch Members:

Grant Smith

VALE

Lest We Forget



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY



**Sub Branch General Meetings are held on the first Monday of each month,
At 10.30am, upstairs in Club Toukley RSL, with the exception of January.
All Members are invited to attend.**

Interment service Terry Zorbas	Monday 21 March 11.30 am
Interment service Ronald Robinson	Thursday 24 March 10.30 am
Interment service Harry Albert James	Thursday 24 March 11.30 am
Interment service Warren William Kelly	Thursday 31 March 10.30 am
Next monthly meeting	Monday 4 April 10.30 am
Wallarah Bay Anzac Service	Sunday 10 April 9.00 am

Toukley RSL Sub Branch President's Report:



This year has begun at rapid pace and will continue to get busier until after Anzac Day. We are now in the most hectic time of year with planning for this important day and I am pleased to report that we are on track with the organisation for the two services at the cenotaph and the 21 services at Schools and Aged Care Facilities at which we participate.

Following the Dawn Service, breakfast will be provided upstairs in The Ary for **members, partners and invited guests only**. For the general public who attend the Dawn Service, a bacon and egg roll will be available in Ziva Eats and Pizza restaurant, courtesy of the Sub Branch.

Tickets are now on sale for the Anzac Day luncheon, at a cost of **\$10.00 each per Sub Branch member/partner** and are available from the Sub Branch office each Thursday from 10.00am-12.00noon and also at the General Meetings. The luncheon, which will be held upstairs in the Ary in Celebrations Function room, will include a two-course meal (entrée and main) with entertainment by Brassick. A good day is assured, so get in early if you are a Toukley RSL Sub Branch member and would like to attend.

We are hopeful of a good turnout from the public for both services – and fine weather! This year, I am pleased to report that we will be having a march. We will also again have the support and attendance of 381 Squadron RAAF Williamtown, 236 Army Cadets, the Australian Air League Toukley Squadron, Wallarah Community Band and Toukley RSL Pipes and Drums for which we are very grateful.

The planting of marigolds for Anzac Day will be done any day now by The Ary's contractors. If previous years are anything to go by, then we are assured of an impressive showing in time for Anzac Day, although the inclement weather is playing havoc!

The small permanent shrubs in the centre of the six gardens at the cenotaph are looking strong and healthy, and I am pleased with the overall appearance. At the present time, the ashes of 422 deceased Sub Branch veterans are interred in the memorial gardens, with four more interment services to be held during March. Details of the scheduled interment services are as below:

Terry Zorbas	-	Monday 21 March 2022 at 11.30am
Ronald Arthur Robinson	-	Thursday 24 March 2022 at 10.30am

Henry (Harry) Albert James - Thursday 24 March 2022 at 11.30am
Warren William Kelly - Thursday 31 March 2022 at 10.30am

Members who have provided their mobile phone numbers to George Meier will be notified via SMS closer to the time so that you have the opportunity to attend any of the services to pay your final respects.

Following approval from the members for the Committee to investigate the viability of renovating Diggers' Inn, George Meier, Bob Swift and I met with an Architect on site on Friday 25 February. The outcome of the meeting was positive and the Architect will come back to us in 4-6 weeks' time with conceptual drawings for our perusal. George, Bob and I will then further discuss the information provided to us, take our recommendations to the Committee, then on to the members.

I am feeling positive that the Architect will provide good ideas on how best to utilise the facility for our members and veterans' groups. We envisage a major renovation, keeping it single storey, with a new (and larger) kitchen, men's and women's disabled toilets, new bathroom, library and an enclosed verandah at the back, with an enclosed barbecue area.

This project is to be carried out in three stages:

Stage 1

The Architect is to design renovations to the existing structure that fulfills the requirements of the Sub Branch and provides us with a multi-use premise for the future.

Once the design is complete, we will go back to you, the members, for your input/approval/endorsement.

If that is in the affirmative, we are then required to obtain approval from the State to proceed.

Stage 2

Approval of all documentation from Council, with complying certifications.

Stage 3

Appointment of a Project Manager, then selection of a builder once competitive quotations and pricing have been successfully provided and accepted.

You may have noticed that the Sub Branch Webpage has been having a few problems recently. This has been very frustrating for George Meier to get fixed. He has been constantly working on getting the webpage up and running and feels that he is beginning to make some progress. This should be working again soon. Thanks, George.

Just a reminder about Sub Branch Membership, which is now free. If you wish to retain your membership of the Toukley RSL Sub Branch, you don't need to do anything. However, if you decide to discontinue your membership, then you need to let our Membership Officers know, and your name will be removed from our Membership list.

If you know of a member who has moved into care, please let us know, so that our records can be updated. Our Welfare Officers will also be notified and, if the member remains in the area, will endeavour to do visitations and/or make contact phone calls.

Bob Swift has been investigating the possibility of resuming Sub Branch bus trips. Further on in this Newsletter are Bob's ideas for monthly bus trips covering a host of different and interesting places. Bob has also expressed interest in organising a bus trip to the Vivid Light Show in Sydney in June. However, for this to go ahead, we will need a minimum of 40 people. These trips are a great way to visit and see places that you might not normally have the opportunity, or way, of getting to. Thank you, Bob, for putting in the time for these bus trips.

R Wilson

Bob Wilson
President
Toukley RSL Sub Branch

. Keeping your Sub Branch Details Up to Date

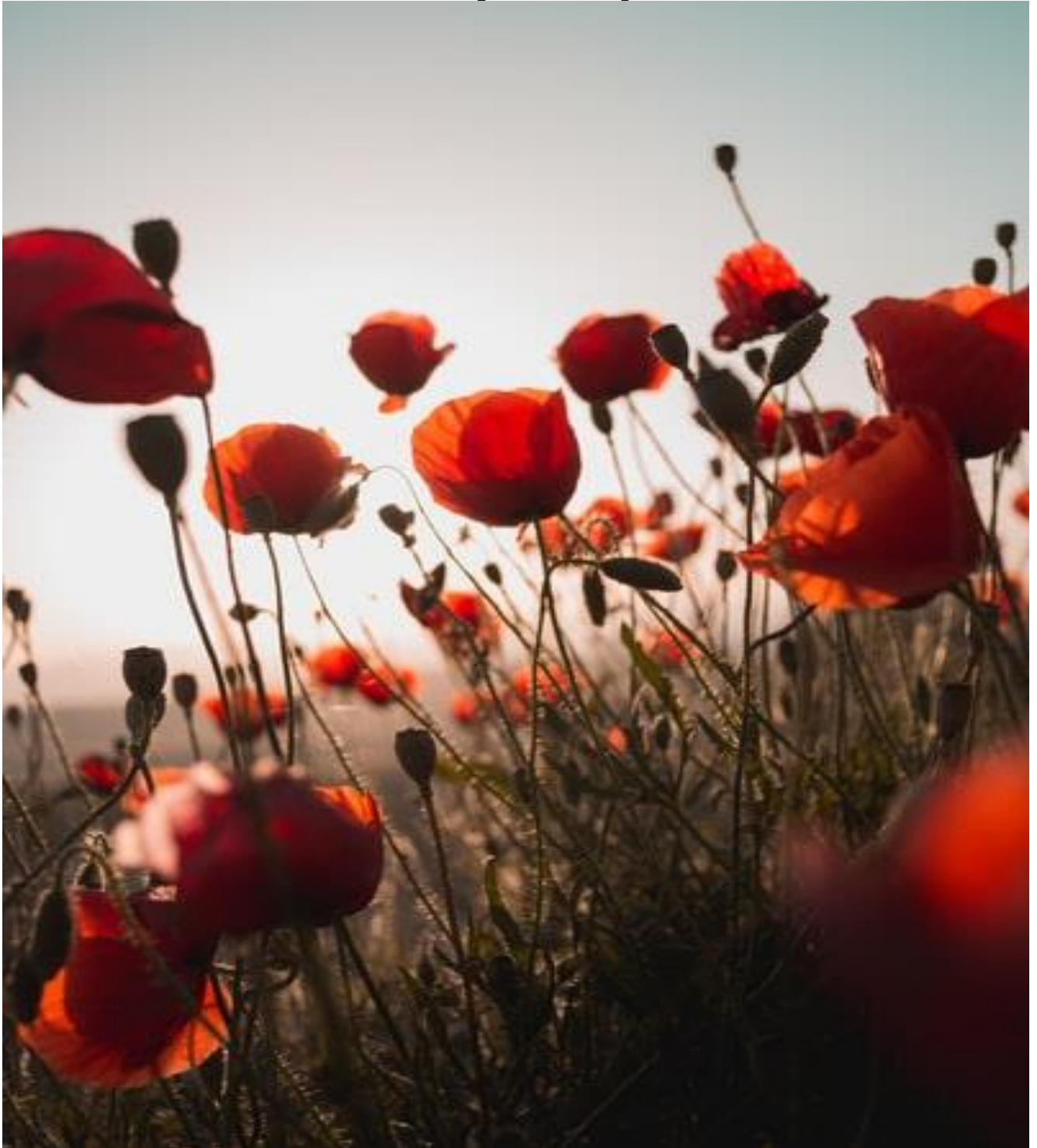
If you have recently moved, or your details have changed, please let the Sub Branch Office know so that we can update your address and contact details.

This information is required so that we can send any correspondence and membership renewals to the correct address.

Also, if you know of a member who has moved, either to another area or to an Aged Care Facility, please notify the Sub Branch Office.

COMMEMORATION OF ANZAC

**March and Service 9.00 am
WBRC Sunday 10 April 2022**



Note from Editor :

As in previous years the Toukley RSL Sub-branch will continue to support the organizing committee for the Anzac Commemoration Service at Wallarah Bay Recreation Club. The service this year will be held on Sunday 10 April 2022 commencing at 9.00 am.

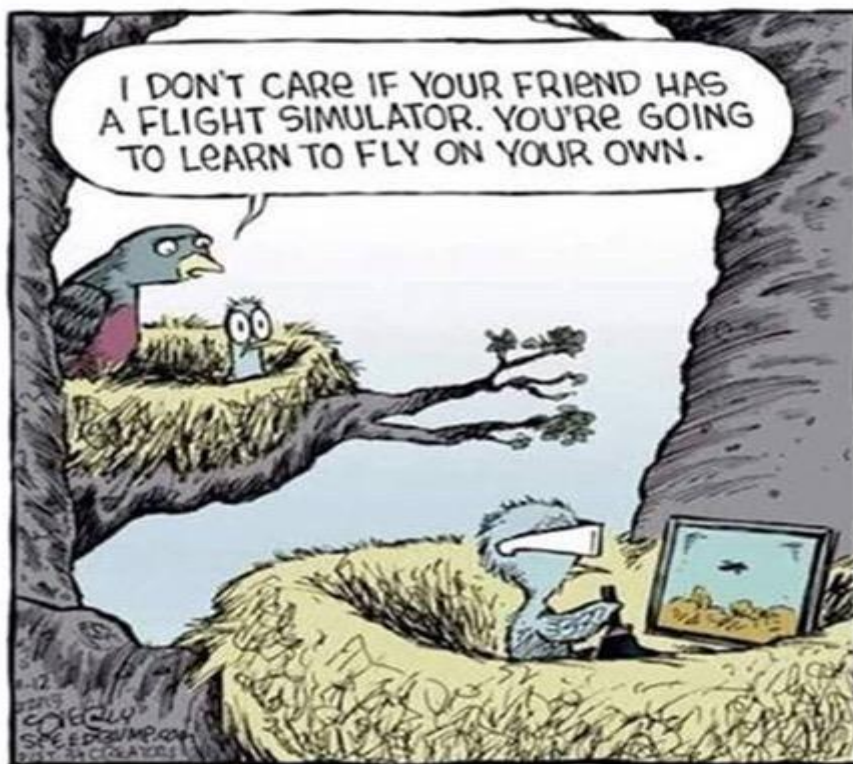
The Sub-branch bus will be leaving the club at 8.00 am for all those that wish to attend.

A note from Tommy Hobbs to all members :

A flag party will be required for the following services :

1. Anzac Commemoration Service at Wallarah Bay Recreation club on Sunday 10 April 2022 commencing at 9.00 am. The Sub-branch bus will leave The Ary at 8.00 am. Refreshments and a snack will be provided at the completion of the service.
2. A Flag Party will also be required for Anzac Day 25 April 2022 as the march WILL be held this year. The Flag Party will be required to march from The Village Green at Toukley forming up at 9.35 am and marching to The Cenotaph. Refreshment and lunch will be provided at the luncheon upstairs at The Ary. This is a ticketed event so ensure you have purchased your ticket before the event.

Anybody interested in being in either flag party please contact Tommy Hobbs after a general meeting or on a Thursday morning in the Sub-branch office.



Wellness & Welfare programme

Members, we are trying to re-start the monthly bus trips up again after our Covid experience.

Many organisations like; Central Coast Council, Williamtown RAAF Base and Sydney Museums are still operating under Covid restrictions and so are not accepting visitors in these early months but have promised to open up as the year progresses.

The following bus programme for 2022 is correct at time of writing but venue's, price's etc could change as venues open up again. I would like to extend our outings to include some night time entertainment including special events at Laycock St theatre, Wyong Art House etc.

Could you please provide feedback as to whether you would support this type of extra outing.

Wellness & Welfare programme (Bus Trips)

Date	Destination	Lunch	Cost
Mar Fri. 31st	Richmond Vale Railway Museum Entry \$20 p.p. (includes morning tea.)	Cessnock Workers Club	Lunch at own expense
May Fri 27th	Buttonderry Waste Management Facility	Ourimbah RSL	Lunch at own expense
Jun Fri 24th	Wollombi Endeavour Museum & Kurri Kurri Murals	Cessnock Workers Club	Lunch at own expense
July Fri 29th	Newcastle Airforce Base & Museum	Airforce Mess Hall	Lunch at own expense
Aug Fri 26th	Hawksbury Heritage Cruise.	Lunch on Board	
Sept Fri 30th	Yarramolong Spring Fair (Must be a Sunday)	Eat at Venue	Lunch at own expense
Oct Fri 28th	Garden Island Heritage Centre	Sydney Fish Markets	Lunch at own expense
Nov Fri 25th	Koala & Barramundi Fish Farm. Bobs Farm, Nelson Bay	Lunch at Nelson Bay Bowling Club.	Lunch at own expense
Dec Fri 9th	Hunter Valley (Leave RSL @ Gardens Xmas 5 pm). Lights	Dinner at Cessnock RSL at own expense.	

Trooper Arthur Sydney Bellenger, 1st Australian Light Horse Regiment AIF, wrote to his sister at Temora, New South Wales, on 25 August 1915.

"I have been here over six weeks now, and have had one or two narrow escapes. One night a party of us went up a gully on outpost duty, and I had just spread my overcoat out and was lying down waiting for my turn to go on duty when an explosive bullet burst fifteen centimetres from my face and filled my eyes with dirt and a few splinters cut my lips. All the boys standing round who saw the flash said they expected to see half my head blown off. They could scarcely believe it when they found I was not hurt. Another time I was just boiling my dixie, when a shell burst just overhead, and before I had time to duck a piece of shrapnel hit my boot and knocked the heel off, but we are getting quite accustomed to all those little things now.

We pass the time away in the trenches playing cards and reading, but books are very scarce over here. Some places, where our trenches are only 15 to 20 metres apart, we get a lively time with bombs, and the Turks are very liberal with them at times, and they are expert rifle shots, too."

'The Sun' (Sydney), 17 November 1915. Ancient measures revised.



Arthur Sydney Bellenger was a drover from Bourke NSW. He was 23 when he enlisted in the AIF on 20 November 1914. A good horseman he was allocated as a trooper to the 1st Light Horse Regiment. Part of the 4th Reinforcement draft, he departed Sydney for Egypt on 17 March 1915. When they arrived, the Regiment had already left for Gallipoli. The reinforcements trained at Aerodrome Camp, Heliopolis. Drafts from Australia were received, inoculated, drilled and despatched to the peninsula when there was an opportunity. It was not until 14 July 1915 that the men of the 4th Reinforcements landed at Anzac, joining their comrades they were quickly deployed to Pope's Post at the head of Monash Gully.

Trooper Bellenger was with C squadron, he survived the carnage of 7 August that befell A and B squadrons. He wrote his letter in Rest Gully above the coast just north of Anzac Cove.

Arthur survived Gallipoli, leaving on the night of 19/20 November. Back in Egypt rumours abounded that the Light Horse would not be deployed to France. The prospect of serving as mobile troops in Siani/Palestine was as yet unrecognised. Facing the alternative of continuing as an infantryman, Trooper Bellenger along with a number of his comrades chose to transfer to the Artillery.

He served in France as a gunner in the 2nd Field Artillery Brigade. Again he survived. He returned to Australia 20 June 1919 and the life as a drover. He passed away on 23 January 1957. Cremated, his ashes are interred at Rookwood not far from Parramatta.

Puzzle Corner



Trivia

1. Which 1982 Steven Spielberg movie popularized the phrase "phone home"?
2. Who famously defeated Bobby Riggs in a televised tennis match in Texas in 1973?
3. Reese Witherspoon was born in 1976, but what is she most famous for doing?
4. Who did Mark David Chapman shoot to death in New York on 8 December, 1980?
5. What notable event marred the 1972 Olympics in Munich, Germany?
6. The soccer team Bayern Munich play in which European Country?
7. Palm Springs is located in which US state?
8. Which TV drama is set in the fictional continent of Westeros?
9. What was Einstein's first language?
10. Which H is the Scottish name for New Years Eve?
11. Which country's capital is commonly known as 'KL'?
12. In what city can you visit the Musée du Louvre?

At 2115 on 3 September 1939, tune into any Australian radio station (TV was not around 'till 1956) and you would hear the Prime Minister, Robert Menzies make a speech, in essence:

"Fellow Australians, it is my melancholy duty to inform you officially that in consequence of ... by Germany in her invasion of Poland, Great Britain has declared war on her and as a result Australia is also at war."

Why "as a result"? Well things were different then. By the "Statute of Westminster 1931" an act of the UK parliament had granted most of the trappings of independent sovereignty to the then British Empire's "Dominions". The Australian Parliament, however, had never adopted the Act. That meant that if the UK Government declared war, Australia was at war, Australian troops once they left our waters fell under UK command, and appointments of governors and governors general could be over-ruled by our imperial masters. That was to be all changed with Vice Regal assent to the "Statute of Westminster Adoption Act" on 9 October 1942.



In 1939, the Regiment was a mechanised machine-gun Regiment. The Regiment was placed on a war footing. 7 October 1939 found the Regiment in camp at Campbelltown showground. Each section had two 1.5 tonn trucks carrying a Vickers machine-gun, each with a crew of 3 and another 3 scouts, all but the gunner armed with Lee Enfield Mk III rifles. The gunner also carried a Smith and Wesson Revolver. There were 2 sections per troop. Headquarter Squadron was augmented by an intercommunication troop and an anti-aircraft troop with four Hotchkiss LMGs. The trucks were still hired by the Army from individual soldiers. In camp, soldiers were paid 4 pounds 16 shillings (\$9.60*) per week for their 1.5 tonn truck or 2 pounds 8 shillings (\$4.80*) for their car. This camp of four weeks was followed by another of 90 days, commencing 24 January 1940 at Wallgrove, adjacent the M4/M7 interchange. The camp administrative officer at Wallgrove was Major de Groot of ribbon cutting fame; the once fascist had metamorphosed into a patriot and had been promoted.

Mechanised Machine Gun Battalions were being formed in the newly raised Second Australian Imperial Force. Many good soldiers and senior commanders left to fill their ranks. Most Lancers were taken on strength of the 2/2 MG Bn AIF, and set-off to fight in Egypt and Libya.

1940 had seen two of the Regiment's COs, David Whitehead and Robert Hawke, leave to join the AIF. John Pye, who had commanded in the mid 1930s, now nearing retirement took command in an era of rapid change.

February 1941 saw the Regiment in camp initially at Narellan; the Regiment was now for the most part a full time unit. November 1941 saw the Regiment at Cowra with Army supplied Ford 1 ton trucks. When Japan entered the war, many left to join the AIF; some went into captivity in Singapore with 8 Div. The ranks were filled by Universal Service Personnel (conscripts). From then on, most members of the Regiment volunteered to join the AIF whilst remaining in the Regiment.

December saw the Regiment assembled at Rutherford and classified as a Motor Regiment ("The theory of Motor Regiment warfare is much akin to that of the Light Horse. Just drive up, dismount, fire a few shots, then drive out again. This sounded very easy," [Edwards]) and given the operational role of defending the beaches in NSW north of Newcastle.

"Colonel Pye frequently told us of our glorious heritage and of our honoured affiliation with the renowned King's Dragoon Guards. The CO's inspection of the lines was most impressive. That such a large body of dogs and men was required for such a simple job never ceased to cause us much perplexity." [EDWARDS]

At this point in order to build fitness, route marches were practiced in earnest, up to 100 km in a single exercise. The troops speculated this would steel them if there was a petrol shortage.

On 8 May 1942, the Regiment became an Army Tank Battalion to eventually be equipped with Matilda tanks. Officers and Senior NCOs were rotated through the AFV School at Puckapunyal to learn the new skills. The Regiment was issued with a light tank and bren-gun carriers to learn the new tactics.





The Regiment's older officers were by now replaced by young men mostly commissioned from the volunteer ranks. John Pye's health was suffering, he was replaced as CO by Robert Gordon.

The end of 1942 saw the Regiment with a full compliment of Matilda Tanks, training at Singleton. In February 1943 any of those who had not joined the AIF were transferred out; the Regiment was styled 1st Army Tank Battalion AIF (Royal New South Wales Lancers). In March the CO changed again, Derek Glasgow, an officer with tank combat experience in Egypt and Libya assumed command. Officer ranks were also augmented with men who had seen combat.

The Regiment was honed and ready. RHQ had 4 tanks, there were three sabre (or combat) squadrons, SHQ with 3 tanks and five troops each with 3 tanks. Two of the tanks in each troop had a two pounder (1 kg) gun, the third a 3 inch (76.2 mm) howitzer. Much tropical training took place around Southport QLD, as the Lancers anticipated combat deployment.

On 1 August 1943 the Regiment was augmented by the elements necessary to survive as a mechanised unit in a tropical environment against the fanatical Japanese enemy. On 8 August the first elements sailed out of Townsville headed for Milne Bay in New Guinea.



Puzzle Corner Answers



1 ET

2 Billie Jean King

3 Acting

4 John Lennon

5 Terrorist attack

6 Germany

7 California

8 Game of Thrones

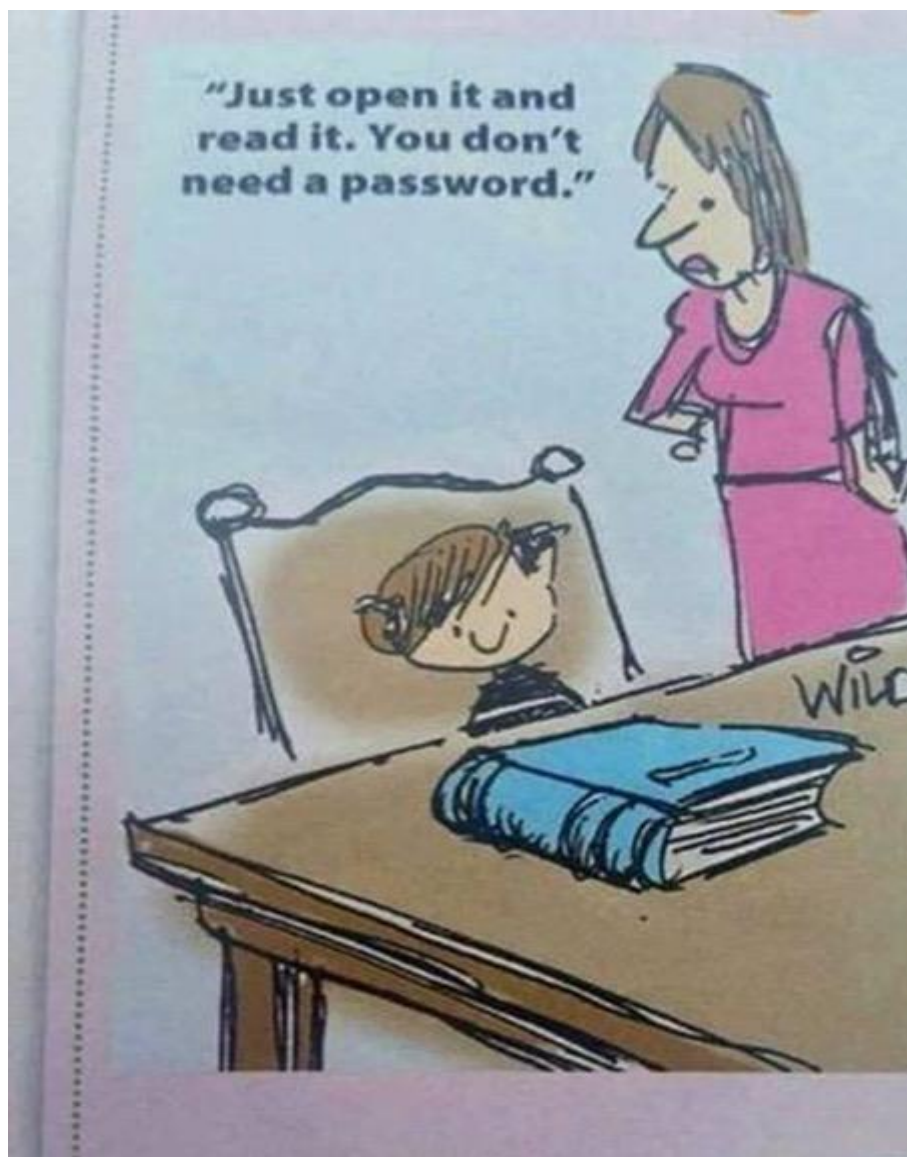
9 German

10 Hogmanay

11 Malaysia

12 Paris





TOUKLEY RSL SUB BRANCH

Patron:	Karen McNamara
President:	Bob Wilson
Vice Presidents:	George Meier Ian Collier
Secretary:	Judith Walker
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