

As autumn settles across South Africa, with crisp mornings and golden afternoons, we are delighted to bring you the May edition of the Seven Seas Tattler. This month's issue is packed with fascinating stories, new faces, and a touch of nostalgia. We're thrilled to introduce readers to our new Club Secretary, Euan, who brings a fresh wave of energy and enthusiasm to the team. Be sure to read more about his plans inside!

Among our pages, you'll find a rich spread of articles: a deep dive into some expert players in the rugby centre position, the thrilling boxing world of Sugar Ray Robinson, and another lively edition of The Football Corner to keep sports enthusiasts entertained. History lovers will enjoy our exploration of Cleopatra's Needles and an intriguing look at ancient "germ theory" as proposed by Marcus Varro vs modern theory. We've also included a documentary video on the legendary Steve Winwood, an update on Simon's Town's very own Submarine Museum, and an account of the visit by the majestic "Oosterschelde" to Simon's Bay. Lastly, we pay tribute to the extraordinary Gene Hackman with a biographical feature following the news of his recent passing — a true talent whose legacy will endure.

Settle in with a cup of something warm and enjoy the voyage through this month's Tattler!

Your editors

Jonathan and Colette

From the Secretary's desk.

Dear Members,

I am honoured to report that at the Annual General Meeting held last Friday I became your Club Secretary once again. This is my second time to hold this post, and I am proud to be able to say that I was part of the dedicated team that made sure that The Club survived the hard times of COVID and made it through to greener pastures.

As soon as the official minutes of the AGM are available to me, I will distribute them to all our members. This year I intend to run a tight ship and to look in depth at the functioning of our club. I believe that whilst we currently have a wonderful management and staff looking after us, there are some things that we need to make more businesslike and some new standards that we need to make sure we are meeting.

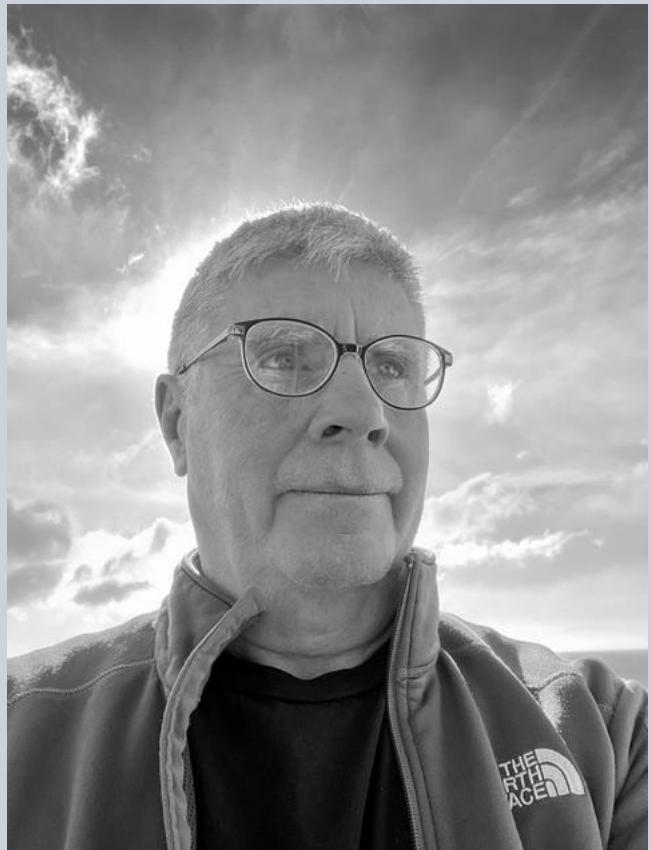
It is also my intention to make sure that the machinations of your committee and the news of improvements and events are transmitted timeously and regularly to everybody. Whilst we all enjoy the time-honoured events of the Friday Draw and Happy hour, we have seen innovations such as our Quiz night and this wonderful periodical, The Tattler, go from strength to strength. Just recently we have seen some more steps forward with new events being organised by some of our most recent members. Once again, I give Kudos to them for their initiative and will do everything I can to help maintain this momentum.

I look forward to a great year and many more enjoyable times together.

Cheers!
Euan

If you have any suggestions as to how we might improve The Club for you then I would love to hear from you.

euans@euans.com



CLASSIFIEDS

Click image about to launch the website.

Advertisement submitted by Club Member Eugene van der Walt.



Click image above to launch the website.

Advertisement submitted by Peta-Anne van der Walt (nee Morrison), married to Club Member Eugene van der Walt.



Editorial

Comparing top Springbok Centre Pairings over the Years

Thinking about our current Springbok centres, it occurred to me that the Boks have had several excellent pairs of centres who are definitely worth remembering. I have decided not to attempt to compare them, rather just to remind readers of these stars. Of the many combinations I have elected to cover the four below.

1) Lategan and van Schoor

Tjol Lategan and Ryk van Schoor were a tad before my time, but I can remember my father and uncle extolling their virtues. They played together in the late forties and early fifties. As with all great centre combinations, they had different skills. van Schoor was known for his crash ball qualities and tackling, while Lategan was the speed merchant. South African rugby journalist R.K. Stent described Lategan as having a 'Big Moment' temperament. They played together in 10 tests, a record at the time.



2) du Plessis and Gerber



The Michael du Plessis and Danie Gerber partnership was much more "my time"! Michael, one of my all-time heroes, from the WP and Danie, an EP boy who is still regarded by many as one of the all-time world greats. Michael, a natural 10, "became" an inside centre due to Naas Botha having a stranglehold on the Bok fly-half position. Unlike Naas, du Plessis was a deadly tackler and a superb passer of the ball. Danie, a gifted runner with pace, swerve, side-step and all else required to beat opponents. They were very successful despite playing outside a man who kicked first (and second) and only seemed to pass when the kick was not on. That may be a little harsh, but you know what I mean! Michael could pass the ball (both ways) 25 meters and was a pretty good kicker. Danie seemed to be able to beat players at will without them touching him. He won 24 caps for South Africa (scoring 19 tries) and still holds the highest try scoring ratio per game (79.16 %) in the history of South African rugby. Despite playing only 24 games for South Africa, his impact on the game and talent was considered way ahead of his time.

3) de Villiers and Fourie



What a great partnership was struck up between these two! Jean and Jacque (not to be confused with Jean-Jacque Rousseau, although they did compose some remarkable moves when playing together), these two are a relatively recent brilliant partnership. Both also had stints for the Springboks on the wing which indicates there was no lack of pace from either. In March 2010 a try scored by Fourie was named as the International Rugby Players Association Try of the Year 2009. Jacque played for the Boks 72 times and scored 32 tries. Jean de Villiers played 107 times for the Springboks scored 27 tries. As a centre Jean was versatile and there were (and still are?) countless debates around whether he was a better 12 or a 13. Personally, I always preferred him as a 12, but he was excellent at inside and outside centre and not shabby on the wing either.

4) de Allende and Am



Damien de Allende and Lukhanyo Am. Do these two belong here? In my opinion, certainly. They are the very definition of a partnership made up of two different but complementary skill sets. The bruiser and the sleight of hand master. For some strange reason, Damien took a long time to win over a lot of supporters. That a key role of his was to take the crash ball, get over the gain-line and force the second phase (where opposition may be a little out of shape) wasn't understood! Damien is incredibly strong and protects the ball very well. It is rare for him to not get across the advantage line or lose control. Having said this, he also has all the skills and has the full range of passes. (Don't take it from me but do listen to Nick Mallett though!). Outside him Am can be majestic. A master at the offload, he is pacy and has vision. Both are above average defenders, and both have scored tries at vital times.

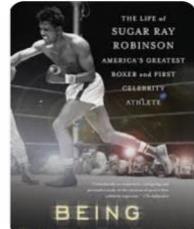
As always there may be howls about those I have not included. And probably rightly so. One thinks of Mannejis Roux and various partners (Gainsford, Olivier and Jansen), Whipp and Oosthuizen, LeRoux and Mulder, Barry and Jooste being just some. We would love to hear your comments about who should have been included which we will certainly put in our next edition. But these are my chosen four.

A little bit on pugilism

A while ago I was asked to name my favourite boxer of all time. I am certainly no

The word "pugilist" originates from the Latin word "pugil," meaning "boxer" or "fist-fighter". It's related to "pugnus," which means "fist". The "-ist" suffix indicates someone who is a practitioner of the activity. The word "pugilism" also stems from the same Latin root and refers to the practice of boxing.

boxing fundi but have followed the sport for many years. After a little bit of thought I went for Sugar Ray Robinson. Obviously, these kinds of questions and answers are totally subjective, and nobody can be right or wrong. However, those tempted to answer with a more recent boxer might not be aware of this man's exploits. Thanks to current circumstances I decided to do a little work on this!



Firstly, we must note that he fought in an era where there were eight weight categories only. I think there are currently eighteen (18)!

Secondly there was only a single world champion in each weight category. These days, due to the number of different "associations" (e.g. WBA WBC) there are 4 (or even 5) champions per weight division - so we have 72 or even 90 world champions at any time.

Thirdly, although Sugar (real name Walker Smith by the way) was also a champion in the welter-weight division, he is probably best known as a middleweight. This division is arguably the most competitive of all.

I have heard people argue that boxers of that era fought less frequently. Without studying this in any detail, this certainly did not apply to Sugar who fought very regularly. As an example, from 1943 to 1951 Robinson went on a 91-fight unbeaten streak, the third-longest in professional boxing history.

Sugar fought 85 times as an amateur (unbeaten) and 200 times as a pro! His final stats do not do him justice due to the inevitable (at that time) hanging in too long and making a comeback although his comeback did allow him to achieve the record of being middleweight champion five times.

So, what do the real experts have to say? - (From Wiki) Robinson has been ranked as the greatest boxer of all time by sportswriters, fellow boxers, and trainers. The phrase "pound for pound" was created by sportswriters for him during his career to compare boxers irrespective of weight. Hall of Fame fighters Muhammad Ali, Joe Louis, Roberto Durán and Sugar Ray Leonard have ranked Robinson as the greatest pound-for-pound boxer in history. In 1997, The Ring ranked him as the best pound-for-pound fighter in history, and in 1999 he was named "welterweight of the century", "middleweight of the century", and overall "fighter of the century" by the Associated Press. In 2007 ESPN.com featured the piece "50 Greatest Boxers of All Time", in which it named Robinson the top boxer in history

Tattler - I feel quite pleased with my choice despite seeing a lot less of his fights than of more recent boxers.



Click on this image to see him in action!

Football Corner

(Our friend Howard Cohen writes for us again)

Champions League - the mixed fortunes of two English Teams

In America Friday nights under the lights are always an occasion for their version of football. Likewise European nights under the lights have their special atmosphere of anticipation and parochial fervour particularly when the last eight teams contest for the right to play the Champions League final, Europe's premier football competition.

Arsenal faced Real Madrid in the first leg of their bid for a semi-final berth at the Emirates. An eagerly anticipated game, Arsenal who are well placed to finish in the runners up spot in the EPL, lined up against the perennial champions of Europe managed by the old fox Carlo Ancelotti. Fifteen times champions of Europe, Real, who have not been at their best this season, presented daunting opponents with the know-how, self-belief and temperament to beat any European team. They also have a star-studded line up including the likes of Vinicius Junior, Kylian Mbappe, Jude Bellingham and Camavinga to name just a few. Arsenal who was not favoured by the pundits had Saka who is their offensive point man back from injury, the young Pole Kiwior standing in for the injured Gabriel and Merino, a mid-fielder by trade, filling the number 9 role which has been a problematic slot for the Gunners for most of the season. On paper, which is never where a game is won, Arsenal appeared a trifle light weight.



As the game unfolded Real dominated possession but were unable to make a meaningful impact against a well organised Gunners defence. The backline kept their shape and tackled incisively never leaving the Real danger men Mbappe and Vini Junior any space. The midfield of Odegaard, Partey and Rice was the area of the pitch where the Gunners were able to assert the kind of dominance that ultimately proved decisive. A first half which was keenly contested saw shots saved at both ends of the pitch, Arsenal able to weather an early dominant spell by Los Blancos as they worked their way into the game finishing the stronger of the two teams. Saka and Mbappe had the best chances of the opening stanza. Saka beat Bellingham down the line and his pinpoint cross was narrowly missed by Rice with the goal at his mercy. Mbappe uncharacteristically fluffed the best chance of the first half. Bellingham, who had an assertive game won possession on the halfway line and sent Mbappe away with a superb through ball only to see the redoubtable Frenchman scuff his shot with Raya helpless in front of him. Mikel Arteta would have been the happier of the two managers as the players headed for the sheds locked at 0-0. One had the feeling that goals would be in the offing in the second half.

In the second half Arsenal began to play with increasing self-assurance and the game exploded with half an hour to play. The Gunners were awarded a free kick after a rugged tackle on Saka by Alaba drew the referees attention. Rice stepped up to take the free kick. At least 30 yards out with the ball positioned in line with the near post Rice fired an exquisite curling missile over the wall and rocketing into the roof of the net leaving Courtois standing in his socks and Ancelotti looking bemused. 1-0 to the Arsenal and more to come. The goal led to a barrage of attempts by Arsenal as they began to assume command against a tiring Real. Rice, Martinelli and Merino all threatened but for some impressive saves from Courtois. With 15 minutes to go the game was stood on its head. Another free kick was awarded to Arsenal in much the same position as the previous one, perhaps lined up more to the centre of the goals. Up stepped Rice with the anticipation of *deja vu* filtering through a highly animated Emirates packed to the rafters with Gunners faithful. Seemingly against the odds Rice contrived a drone like exocet which screamed over the wall heading unerringly into the top right corner with Courtois a bewildered spectator. 2-0 to the Gunners and Los Blancos looking beaten if not yet bowed. Five minutes later the curtain dropped on Real when Merino converted a Lewis-Skelly assist following some excellent work by Rice who was having the game of his life. 3-0 to the Arsenal and a trip to the Bernabeu

looming with a three-goal advantage. From my perspective this was Arsenal's finest performance of the season and a game to savour for all the faithful. Declan Rice was majestic, and he will surely talk about this game with his children and grandchildren.

The Bernabeu in Madrid is a daunting venue for any away team not least when Real are playing for a place in the Championship semi-final carrying the burden of a three-goal deficit. Hope springs eternal and the faithful were going to do their utmost to encourage Los Blancos to shake off the shackles of a miserable record loss at the Emirates. It was not to be. Arsenal arrived in Madrid confident of protecting their hard earned first leg advantage. In truth the return game was a disappointment. Arsenal suffered a first half scare when Saka butchered a penalty, but they were able to keep their nerve. A brilliant team goal opened the Gunners account. All of Saka, Merino, Odegaard and Rice were involved in some intricate inter passing that left Real confused and Saka to finally chip the ball over Courtois. 4-0 to the Arsenal and counting. Two minutes later Arsenal euphoria was dampened somewhat when Saliba had one of his brain farts to which he is susceptible. Inexplicably he found himself caught in possession by the ever-alert Vini Junior who stroked the ball into an empty Gunners net with Raya awol. Was there to be a twist in the tail? Modric and Diaz were introduced by Ancelotti for Ascencio and the out of sorts Mbappe. For Arsenal, Saka, who took an earlier knock was hooked for Trossard. Though Real never threw in the towel with half an hour to play it was difficult to see how they could turn the tie on its head. With the dying embers of the game barely flickering the excellent Martinelli burst through the centre of the pitch leaving spent Real defenders in his wake and slid the ball past Courtois. Game over and Arsenal through to the semis. Mention must once again be made of man of the match Declan Rice who strode the scene like a colossus. He is in the form of his life. For those who like a flutter you could do worse than a wager on the Gunners to lift the trophy.



The other quarter final featuring an English team was the tie between Aston Villa and PSG. Villa have had a rather topsy turvey season with consistency their chief issue. When they have turned up, they have played some inspiring football, when they have had to grind, they have proved fragile and shaky in defence. Currently Villa lies outside the Champions league spots in seventh position and have a lot of work to do to squeeze into the top five spots. They have had a heavy schedule of football this season playing both Champions league football thanks to a brilliant season in 2023/ 2024 and have also made it to the semi-finals of the FA Cup. They have an astute , vastly experienced manager in Unai Emery who has transformed them into a competitive skillful team who are able to compete with the best when they are on song .Their opponents PSG managed by the mercurial , much travelled Luis Enrique have played some exceptional football this year , very easy on the eye they prefer to control possession and attack the 18 yard box . Funded by Arab money they

have been perennial losers at the business end of the Champions league and were desperate to end the season with the major European trophy which had thus far eluded them. Gone was the policy of acquiring expensive Galactico's at the end of their careers looking for a last substantial payday. Enrique has assembled a young team of immense talent with an appetite for success.

The first leg in Paris went much according to plan for PSG. They enjoyed 76% possession, completing nearly four times as many passes as Villa and had 29 shots at goal, they managed a passing accuracy rate of 94.5% which is phenomenal. 10 of their shots were on target. What this translates into is a low block from Villa and a desperate hope that they could catch their dominant opponents on the break. Much against the run of play the irrepressible Morgan Rogers put Villa in front just before half time. 1-0 to Villa but one felt they had a testing second half ahead of them. A crafty, well executed goal by one of their young stars Doue deservedly drew PSG level, but the goal of the game followed shortly afterwards when the outstanding Kvaratskhelia with a stunning solo goal scored with sublime nonchalance. 2-1 to PSG and one felt more was to come. Such was

PSG'S dominance that Emery appeared to decide that damage limitation was his best tactic with Villa dropping ever deeper in a last gasp attempt to keep the deficit within manageable proportions for the return leg in Birmingham. Dembele who had menaced the whole evening with purpose and intent spoilt Emery's plans with a peach of a through ball which sent Nuno Mendes goalwards, and he beat Martinez easily. 3-1 to PSG and a two-goal deficit for Villa at home in the second leg.

At home before the Villa faithful, the atmosphere was electric despite the two-goal deficit. The pattern of play was much the same as the first leg in Paris, PSG dominating possession and completing double the passes made by Villa. However, the statistics did not reveal the true picture of this game which was an end-to-end affair with Villa playing with much more confidence and self-belief and attacking PSG at every opportunity. Two goals from the outstanding Mendes in short order rattled Villa pushing the overall goal tally to a daunting 5-1 to PSG. A deflected shot from the tireless Villa mid fielder Tielemans just before half time left Donnarumma standing in his boots, 5-2 as the players retired to the sheds. Once again, the unexpected turned the game upside down when two quick fire goals by McGinn and Konsa made the aggregate 5-4 to PSG and the Villa crowd began to smell blood. Nothing is impossible in football as United showed against Lyon in a recent Europa tie. However, it was not to be and despite any hubris PSG may have felt at the start of the game they held on to their 5-4 advantage and will face Arsenal in the semis.

That is all for now. Yours in football.

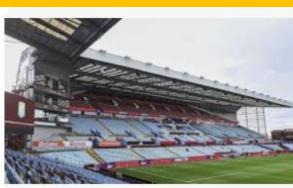
Howard Cohen

Home Stadiums



The **Emirates Stadium** is a football stadium in Holloway, London, England. It has been the home stadium of **Arsenal Football Club** since its completion in 2006. Arsenal's women's team made the stadium their home in 2024.

Capacity: 60,704 - Opened: 22 July 2006 - Construction cost: £390 million (2004) - Record attendance: 60,383 (Arsenal vs Wolverhampton Wanderers, 2 November 2019)



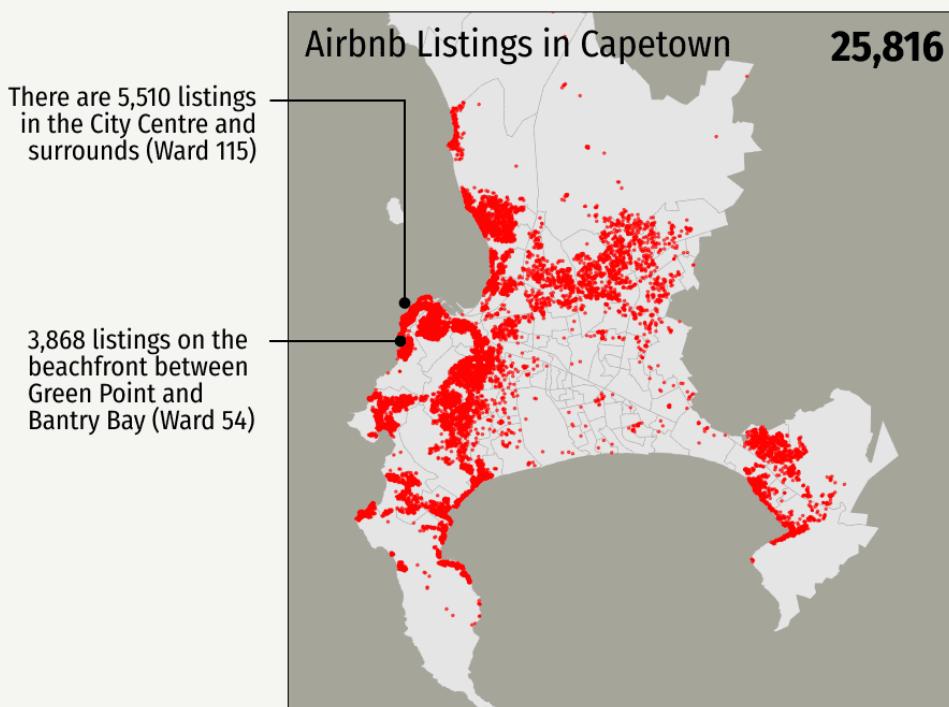
Villa Park is a football stadium in Aston, Birmingham, and has been the home of Premier League club **Aston Villa** since 1897.

Capacity: 42,640 - Opened: 17 April 1897 - Built: 1895–1897 - Team: Aston Villa F.C. - Architect: Archibald Leitch - Owner: Aston Villa

Tattler found this interesting. While the Atlantic seaboard may well have the greatest share, the solid "red stripe" from Muizenberg to Simon's Town is present.

Booked up again

Cape Town has 25,816 Airbnb properties, with the majority located in the City Bowl and along the Atlantic seaboard



Source: Inside Airbnb December 2024 data

theoutlier.co.za

I tried to come up with a carpentry pun that woodwork. I think I nailed it but nobody saw it.

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN IGNORANCE AND INDIFFERENCE?
I DON'T KNOW AND I DON'T CARE.

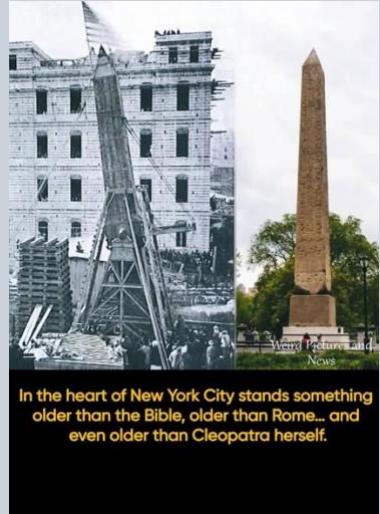
A&E Home

Did you know?

The Cleopatra's Needles

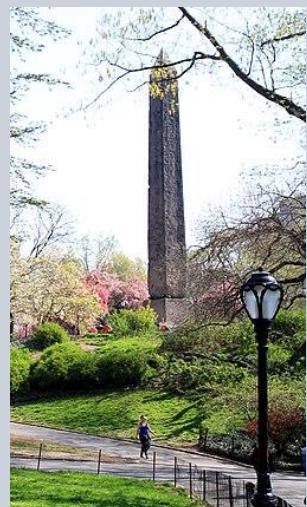
Most people stroll through Central Park without ever realizing they're walking past the oldest monument in New York City—and one of the oldest man-made objects in all of America. Rising 69 feet into the sky and weighing over 200 tons, the Obelisk—often called "Cleopatra's Needle"—was carved in Egypt more than 3,500 years ago. It was created to honour Pharaoh Thutmose III, long before Cleopatra was even born, from a single block of red granite quarried in Aswan and originally erected in the city of Heliopolis.

After being toppled and buried during the Persian conquest in 525 B.C., it was rediscovered centuries later by the Romans, who moved it to Alexandria and placed it near a temple built by Cleopatra. That's when it earned its famous nickname—even though she had nothing to do with its creation.



Fast forward to 1879: Egypt gifted the obelisk to the United States as a gesture of goodwill. But how do you move a 200-ton granite column across the ocean in the 19th century? With brilliance and sheer determination.

It was carefully lowered, loaded onto the wooden cargo ship *Dessoug*, and shipped across the Atlantic. Upon arrival, it took 19 days to transport it through Manhattan—using a custom-built carriage pulled by horses and winches.



Finally, on January 22, 1881, before a crowd of 10,000 spectators, the Obelisk rose again—this time in Central Park, where it still stands tall.

So, the next time you're in New York, stop for a moment beneath Cleopatra's Needle. You won't just be looking at a monument... you'll be standing in the shadow of 3,500 years of human history.

(Source ~Weird Pictures and News)

New York's Central Park, just outside the Metropolitan Museum of Art

And the needle has a sister!



Cleopatra's Needles are a separated pair of ancient Egyptian obelisks now in London and New York City. The obelisks were originally made in Heliopolis (modern Cairo) during the New Kingdom period, inscribed by the 18th dynasty pharaoh Thutmose III and 19th dynasty pharaoh Ramesses II. In 13/12 BCE they were moved to the Caesareum of Alexandria by the prefect of Egypt Publius RubriusBarbarus.

Since at least the 17th century the obelisks have usually been named in the West after the Ptolemaic Queen Cleopatra VII. They stood in Alexandria for almost two millennia until they were re-erected in London and New York City in 1878 and 1881 respectively. Together with Pompey's Pillar, they were described in the 1840s in David Roberts' Egypt and Nubia as "[the] most striking monuments of ancient Alexandria"

London's Victoria Embankment

True size of countries

Tattler covered this subject briefly some months ago, but this is a better picture (and explanation).

The true size of each country is in dark blue. The light blue, the one we're used to seeing, is the Mercator map, or Mercator projection, a cylindrical map projection that was developed by the Flemish cartographer Gerardus Mercator in 1569. It is commonly used for navigation and world maps because it preserves angles, making it useful for marine navigation.

However, one of its main drawbacks is that it distorts the size of objects as they get closer to the poles. For example, Greenland appears much larger than it is in comparison to countries near the equator like Africa, which is significantly smaller in size than it appears on the map.



Ancient Insight, Modern Revelation Did a Roman Scholar Predict Germ Theory?

Here's a jaw-dropper from ancient history: In 36 BCE, Roman scholar Marcus Terentius Varro warned about invisible creatures in swampy air that could cause disease. Writing in *Rerum Rusticarum*, he advised against building homes near marshes, saying that "certain minute creatures, invisible to the eye" might enter the body through the nose and mouth and make people sick.

That's nearly 2,000 years before microscopes or germ theory were a thing! Overlooked in his time—his ideas dismissed by his contemporaries, overshadowed by Hippocratic and Galenic theories of "miasmas" and "bad air" blamed for illness—Varro's spooky-accurate observation now earns him quiet praise as an ancient pioneer of microbiology.

Though lacking modern scientific tools, he intuitively sensed a microscopic world responsible for illness—centuries before Antonie van Leeuwenhoek discovered microbes in the 17th century or Louis Pasteur formally developed germ theory in the 19th century.



Who knew Roman farmers were onto microbes before scientists had names for them?

Sometimes, ancient wisdom was just waiting for science to catch up.

(Source – Facebook)

Brew Before Breakfast: Morning Beer in Medieval Germany — By the Tankard or the Tithe?

If you think cracking open a cold one before noon is a modern indulgence, think again. In medieval Germany, beer for breakfast wasn't just acceptable—it was expected. Long before the invention of coffee or tea had trickled into Europe, beer was the beverage of choice from sunup to sundown, and that included the morning meal.

Why? For starters, water wasn't always safe to drink. Brewing beer—even the weaker "small beer" that was common in the morning—involved boiling, which helped kill off harmful bacteria. It also offered calories, nutrients, and hydration, especially for labourers heading into a long day in the fields or at the forge. In monastic communities, even monks would begin their day with a mug of light ale, often brewed on-site under the watchful eye of the abbey's brewmaster. Beer was seen not as a vice, but as a vital part of daily sustenance.



In medieval Germany, it was common to start the day with a hearty beer soup. This blend of beer, bread, and sometimes sugar or butter, served as a nutritious breakfast that not only filled the stomach but also likely made the harsh realities of medieval life slightly more bearable. In some regions, beer soup was considered a suitable breakfast for children as well!

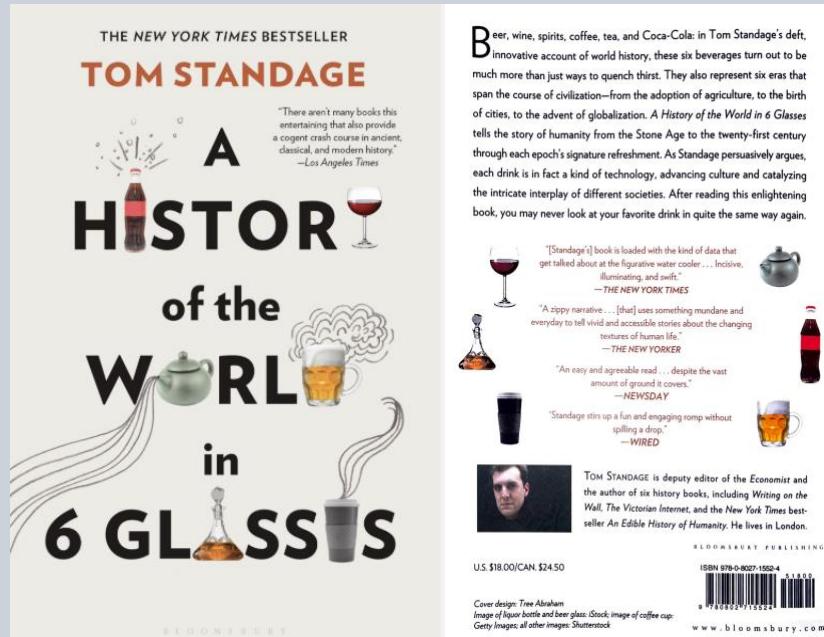
Morning beer wasn't the strong stuff we sip today. It was low in alcohol (usually around 2%), cloudy, and hearty—more like a liquid loaf of bread than a party starter. In fact, it was so integral to life that some medieval German workers were paid partly in beer, and children often drank it too. So next time someone gives you side-eye for a brunch beer, just smile and raise your glass to your medieval ancestors—they were day-drinking long before it was cool.

Colette here. I could not resist commenting on this story that Jonathan found. By absolute co-incidence I picked up a copy of "A History of the World in Six Glasses" by New York Times best-selling author Tom Standage in a

charity shop in South Carolina in the US 2 weeks ago for the princely sum of 1\$. I thought it sounded fascinating and really has been. I'm almost done with it.

Standage shows how beer, wine, spirits, coffee, tea, and Coca-Cola each helped shape civilizations, drive innovation, and even spark revolutions! Written with wit and clarity, it's the perfect blend of insight for history buffs and lively storytelling. I'll never look at my morning coffee or evening glass of wine the same way again.

I see Exclusive Books carries it, for quite lot more than I paid. Bottoms Up!



A top musician - Steve Winwood



For your entertainment - a doccie on Steve. A member of the bands Spencer-Davis Group, Traffic and (supergroup) Blind Faith. A musician who can sing and play a variety of instruments! Click on the image to watch.

It is 19 minutes long but well worth it if you're a Winwood fan. You can click on "Skip" to reduce the ads.



Club Managers Report

100 Club Winners April 2025

Capt G. Harrison (Ret) – R300

Mr E. Potgieter – R300

Capt P.S. Barnard (Ret) – R300

Mr T. Wilkinson – R1000

We wish the following members a very Happy May Birthday. May the year ahead be filled with good health and happiness. For our usual bit of fun, we note some historic events and dates.

Mr D.J. Chaplin – 01 May.

1707 – The Acts of Union come into effect, uniting England and Scotland into Great Britain.

Mrs R. Moore – 02 May.

1982 – The Argentine cruiser General Belgrano is sunk by the British submarine HMS Conqueror during the Falklands War.

Lt J.P. Payne (Ret) – 06 May.

1954 – Roger Bannister breaks the four-minute mile in Oxford, England.

Prof G.J. Kruger – 10 May.

1994 – Nelson Mandela is inaugurated as South Africa's first Black president.

Mr J. Lucas – 11 May.

330 AD – Constantinople is inaugurated as the new capital of the Roman Empire.

Mr A.H. Collingridge – 15 May.

1940 – Nylon stockings go on sale for the first time in the U.S.

R Adm D.R. Faure (Ret) – 16 May.

1960 – Theodore Maiman operates the first functioning laser.

R Adm (JG) A. Soderlund (Ret) – 17 May.

1395 – Battle of Rovine: The Wallachians defeat an invading Ottoman army.

Mr P.A. Venter – 19 May.

1536 – Anne Boleyn, second wife of Henry VIII, is executed.

Capt P.S. Barnard (Ret) – 20 May.

1873 – Levi Strauss and Jacob Davis receive a patent for blue jeans.

Capt T.J.D. Thiart (Ret) – 20 May.

1631 – The city of Magdeburg in Germany is seized by forces of the Holy Roman Emperor and most of its inhabitants massacred, in one of the bloodiest incidents in the Thirty Years' War.

Mr D.E. Mac Kenzie – 21 May.

1927 – Charles Lindbergh begins the first solo transatlantic flight.

Mr M. Salida – 23 May.

1873 – The Canadian Parliament establishes the North-West Mounted Police, the forerunner of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

Capt L.J.P. Connelly (Ret) – 28 May.

1588 – The Spanish Armada, with 130 ships and 30,000 men, sets sail from Lisbon, Portugal, heading for the English Channel. (It would take until May 30 for all ships to leave port).

Capt J.P. Beukes – 29 May.

1953 – Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay summit Mount Everest.

Mr G.R. Glen – 29 May.

1453 – Fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks.

New Members

We welcome the following new and returning members to the club and wish them a long and happy association!

Captain Johann Uys (Ret) married to Tarryn-Jane and resides in Malmesbury. Johann, who is retired, has been a Member of the Club for many years prior, and is now rejoining the Club.

Mr Fred Bassnett married to Marguerite and resides in Highway Road Fish Hoek. Fred who is now retired, was a Senior Director of a Trade Consultancy Business in the United Kingdom.

Mr Edgar Till married to Raymeree and resides in La Lucia KZN. Edgar, who served in the South African Navy from 1966 to 1976 enjoys keeping abreast of all things Naval especially in the Submarine environment.

Aye,

Glen

Seven Seas celebrated its 50th quiz night – 9 April

If the success of a quiz is measured on criteria such as - Being competitive but participating in friendly banter, close scoring, no bickering about the questions and answers, and loud cheering when an answer is proved to be correct, our quiz gets good marks!

The team that won it, (frequent winners Chris' Porcupines) did so by a single point. The 3rd placed team was beaten by just 2 points! Average scores for the quiz were 7/10 (not too easy, not too difficult)

The inclement weather influenced turnout, but we still had 4 teams. Euan and I thank all the participants.

Below indicates a period of intense concentration!



To the winners, the spoils (Token prizes awarded by the Club).



As usual we present one of the categories in play. We tried something a little different. The teams were presented with 10 photographs and 12 capital cities. The task was to match the correct cities to the photographs. Here they are

Random List

- 1) Vienna
- 2) Havana
- 3) Paris
- 4) Budapest
- 5) Amsterdam
- 6) Beijing
- 7) Dublin
- 8) Canberra
- 9) Monaco
- 10) Kuala Lumpur
- 11) Wellington
- 12) Warsaw





Would you like to know how you did? The answers are elsewhere in Tattler. The teams scored highly on the night.

Tech Tip: Identify Anything Instantly with Google Lens!

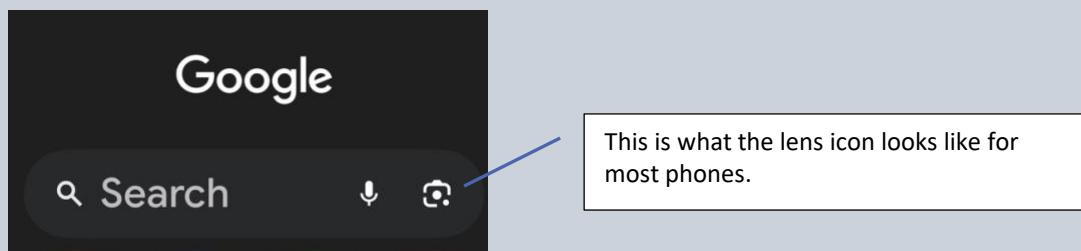
Some of you might know this already but for those that don't, here is a tech tip on how to use Google Lens.

DISCLAIMER: I am not a tech expert, but I use this function quite a lot. If you don't manage with my "instructions" ask a friend, or probably better a child or grandchild!!!

Ever spotted a plant, building, or interesting object and wondered what it was? With Google Lens, you can find out in seconds!

Here's how to use it:

You must use Google as the browser, not Safari or Chrome etc. Open the Google Lens app (or tap the Lens icon inside the Google app or Google Photos).



Point your camera at the object you want to identify — a flower, a landmark, even a product!

Tap the screen, and Lens will scan it, bringing up information, similar images, or useful links.

Bonus:

In Google Photos, you can tap on any photo you've already taken and use Lens to get more details.

Use Lens to translate text, copy handwritten notes, or even shop for similar items online!

It's like having a pocket-sized encyclopaedia and shopping assistant wherever you go.

Try it with these cities. Point your phone at an image of one the cities, and use google lens to tell you exactly what you are looking at.

Maritime, Naval and Military

Britain's future laser ship?

Source: UK Defence Journal 05/04

The Royal Navy's next destroyer isn't just a bigger Type 45 — it's shaping up to be a whole new kind of warship.



(photo - ukdefencejournal)

The term 'destroyer' might not fully describe what the Royal Navy is planning. While global navies stick with DDG (guided-missile destroyer), perhaps Britain is heading toward a DDL — a directed-energy destroyer — with the upcoming Type 83.

Though still in its concept phase, the programme is already being framed as something far more ambitious than a traditional air-defence ship. According to the Ministry of Defence, the Type 83 destroyer is "one element of the Future Air Dominance System (FADS)" and will eventually replace the six existing Type 45s. But as Defence Minister Maria Eagle recently confirmed, further announcements will come only after the Strategic Defence Review concludes.

That hasn't stopped the MoD from laying out the vision. In previous comments, the MoD has called FADS "a transformative multi-domain programme" that will deliver integrated air and missile defence, with reach across air, land, and sea — and crucially, the ability to counter hypersonic threats. In short: a system designed to dominate. Former Defence Procurement Minister James Cartlidge hinted at just how different these vessels may be. Speaking at the Full Spectrum Air Defence conference last year, he said: "These are more than just ships. They are a distributed sensor network. Effectively a 'system of systems. They will be highly automated. Blending missiles with new technologies such as Directed Energy Weapons. Incorporating both uncrewed systems and complex radar sensing capabilities." With that in mind, it's worth considering that the Type 83 may be the UK's first serious step toward operational naval lasers — not just as an add-on, but as a core part of its air and missile defence architecture. The Type 83 is still in its early concept phase. A Market Engagement Event (MEE) was held by the MoD in December 2024, with a potential follow-up session planned for early

2025. These sessions are designed to give industry partners a chance to contribute ideas — and identify early limitations.

While no official designs have been released, an unofficial concept image from 2023 suggested a ship much larger than the Type 45, perhaps closer to China's Type 055 or the U.S. Zumwalt class. That would make sense if it's expected to host directed-energy weapons, power-intensive radar, and a larger missile payload.

Features likely to be included:

- Integrated Air and Missile Defence (IAMD) for hypersonic and ballistic missile threats
- Directed Energy Weapons (DEWs) as a potential main battery system
- High-capacity missile cells, possibly Mk 41 VLS or equivalent
- Uncrewed and autonomous system integration
- Future-proofed power and propulsion systems

The system aims to provide fleet-wide protection and extend detection ranges, increasing survivability and lethality at standoff ranges. Destroyers have long been designated by their missile capabilities — hence the DDG classification. But if lasers and automation become central to how the Type 83 operates, a new designation might eventually be warranted. Perhaps more importantly, the ship reflects a broader shift in how the Royal Navy approaches sea control, fleet defence, and power projection. With a growing emphasis on "system of systems" thinking, even the way warships are conceptualised is changing.

There's no solid timeline for procurement yet, but an Initial Operating Capability (IOC) is expected in the late 2030s, with full entry into service likely in the 2040s. The Strategic Defence Review currently underway will play a major role in determining the programme's pace and scale.

For now, the Type 83 remains an ambitious concept. But if even half the promises around DEWs and multi-domain dominance come to fruition, it won't be just another destroyer.

It'll be something far more dangerous.

Simonstown's Beautiful Submarine Museum

Source: Information supplied by Angel Soderland



On Tuesday 15 April we welcomed our 10 000th visitor and Easter Saturday and Sunday saw 241 visitors pass through.

Feedback has all been great with only positive comments in the visitor's book. Numerous foreign visitors from all over - Canada to Australia with many from Poland, Germany, Belgium, the UK, Brazil and Argentina. We also have had visitors from the DRC and Zambia. A photo of the delightful DRC family below.



The Museum is open seven days a week from 09h30 -1530 and tours of up to 10 visitors every 20 min from 0940 to 1500 lasting 55 minutes. Seniors R60. Adults R80 and U12 yrs R40.

We have John Winter, Rhod & Linda McRae-Samuel, Bob Harrison, John Gower and me as guides/reception.

The formal opening by the Chief of the Navy will be on 30 April with the Mayor of Cape Town unveiling the donor board.

(Angel doing his thing!)



A Beautiful Visitor to our Bay

Source: Facebook, <https://www.dutchtallship.com/2025/04/23/simons-town/>

The Dutch sailing ship the Oosterschelde arrived as part of the DARWIN200 mission, a global voyage retracing Charles Darwin route onboard the HMS Beagle. A bust of Darwin was unveiled on the 20th of April in Simon's Town.



(From NSRI - Photograph by Simon McDowell)



(Photograph by Nigel Riley)



Sculptor Johan Steyn (Photograph from Mapmyway)

The Oak Forest on Visingsö: Sweden's Royal Navy Legacy

Source: <https://www.atlasobscura.com/places/visingso-oak-forest>, Facebook, Wikipedia

On the picturesque island of Visingsö, nestled in the southern part of Sweden's second-largest lake, Vättern, lies a forest like no other. Stretching across the central plains of the island is a carefully planted oak woodland, steeped in royal ambition, maritime dreams, and the patient poetry of nature.

The story begins in the 1830s, during the reign of King Karl XIV Johan, when the Swedish Navy found itself looking to the future and its need for ships. Oak was the essential material for building warships at the time, but due to overharvesting and slow reforestation, the navy foresaw a timber shortage.

The monarch ordered those thousands of oak trees be planted on Visingsö, where the rich soil and favourable climate promised ideal growing conditions. Over the next few decades, more than 300,000 oak trees were planted in orderly rows, creating a man-made forest that would take centuries to mature. These weren't just "oaks" - they were planted between larch and spruce so that they would grow tall and straight, making the navy oak forests rather unusual.



Ironically, by the time the oaks were tall and strong enough to be of use, technology had left wooden warships behind. Iron and steel had become the materials of modern naval engineering. The grand oaks of Visingsö were never felled for battleships; instead, they remained—towering and magnificent, a green cathedral of intention that outlasted its purpose. Today, the forest is a peaceful and enchanted place, criss-crossed with walking paths and echoing with birdsong. It's also a living monument to long-term planning, and a gentle reminder that the plans of one era often become the treasures of another.

How many trees does it take to build a ship?

The number of trees needed to build a wooden ship depends on the size and type of the vessel, as well as the kinds of trees used. Here's a general idea:

*For a large wooden warship (like those used in the 17th–19th centuries):
2,000 to 4,000 mature oak trees were typically needed.*

Example: HMS Victory (launched in 1765), Admiral Nelson's flagship, required about 6,000 trees, mostly oak, but also elm, pine, and fir for different parts of the ship.

Why so many trees?

A single oak might provide only a few usable curved beams or planks, especially as shipbuilders needed wood with natural bends for strength and shaping.

Different types of timber were used for the keel, hull, decks, and masts—so a mix of species was often required.

This month in History - April 1975 (50 years ago)

General

3 May - The nuclear-powered aircraft carrier USS Nimitz, first of the Nimitz class group of the ten largest "supercarriers" in the world, was commissioned.



5 May - Television broadcasting began in South Africa, as the first test broadcasts of the South African Broadcasting Corporation TV system were made; regular broadcasting would start on January 5, 1976.

9 May - In Laos, Kaho Xane Pathet Lao, the official newspaper of the Lao People's Party, ran the announcement that the nation's Hmong people "must be exterminated down to the root of the tribe" because their soldiers had assisted the United States in fighting the Communists. The extermination would begin days later.

10 May - The Betamax home videotaping system was introduced by Sony with the LV-1901 going on sale in Japan.

12 May - Two Soviet destroyer ships, the Boykiy and the Zhguchiy, sailed into Boston Harbor, becoming the first Soviet ships to dock at a U.S. port since the beginning of the Cold War. The occasion was the 30th anniversary of the Allied victory over Germany. The next day, the U.S. Navy ships USS Leahy, and the USS Tattnall sailed into Leningrad.

24 May - The Soviet space mission Soyuz 18 was launched into space. The next day, the cosmonauts docked with the Salyut 4 space station.

30 May - For the first time in eight years, the Suez Canal became navigable once more, after the last two ships, trapped since the Six-Day War of 1967, were raised and removed. The British freighters Scottish Star and Port Invercargill were towed 60 miles from the Great Bitter Lake to Port Said.

The Suez Canal from space



Sport

3 May - Christa Vahlensieck runs female world record marathon (2:40:15.8).

11 May - Monaco GP - The race was won by Niki Lauda giving the new Ferrari 312T its first win. The win broke a 20-year drought at Monaco for Ferrari. Lauda dominated the race, only losing the lead during a pitstop. He won by two seconds over the McLaren M23 of Emerson Fittipaldi. Carlos Pace finished third in his Brabham BT44B.



16 May - Muhammad Ali TKOs Ron Lyle in 11 for heavyweight boxing title.

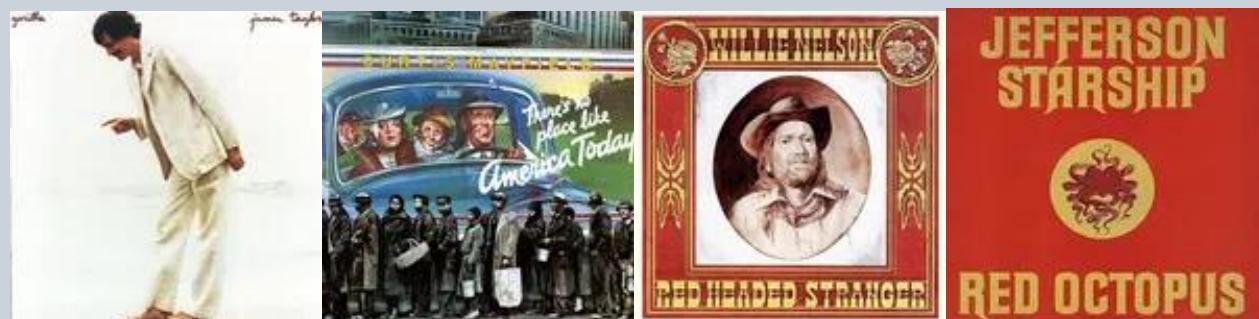
17 May - Filbert Bayi of Tanzania broke the world mile record, held by Jim Ryun for almost eight years. Bayi, who led the race in Jamaica, from start to finish, bested Ryun by a tenth of a second, covering the distance in 3:51. Less than three months later, on August 12, John Walker of New Zealand would break Bayi's mark.

25 May - The 1975 Belgian Grand Prix was won by Austrian driver Niki Lauda driving a Ferrari 312T, his second victory for the year after winning Monaco two weeks earlier. Lauda led 65 of the 70 laps, taking a 19-second victory over South African driver Jody Scheckter in a Tyrrell 007. Carlos Reutemann drove his Brabham BT44B to third place.

28 May - 19th European Cup: Bayern Munich beats Leeds United 2-0 in Paris.

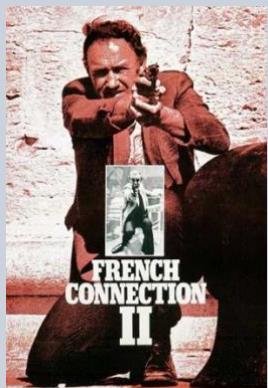
31 May - The touring French rugby teams beat Natal 34 – 18.

Music





Movies



The French Connection (1971)

Director: William Friedkin

Starring: Gene Hackman (as Jimmy "Popeye" Doyle), Roy Scheider (as Buddy Russo).

Academy Awards for Best Picture, Best Director, Best Actor (Hackman), Best Adapted Screenplay, and Best Editing.

Loosely based on a real 1960s heroin bust, The French Connection is a gritty, fast-paced crime thriller set in the grimy underbelly of New York City. It follows two detectives trying to bust a massive drug smuggling ring.

This was Hackman at his raw, fearless best. As Popeye Doyle, he is unrelenting, abrasive, and morally ambiguous — far from a clean-cut hero. Completely immersed in the role: his mannerisms, gait, and expressions all reflect a man who's constantly tense, distrustful, and obsessive. Balanced bravado with vulnerability — you can feel the pressure and obsession eating at him.

The iconic subway chase scene — Popeye racing a hijacked train through NYC traffic — is a masterclass in physical performance and tension.

Hackman later admitted he didn't like Doyle as a person but worked hard to portray him honestly — that moral discomfort adds complexity to his acting.

French Connection II (1975) also starred Gene Hackman. This lesser-known sequel picks up in Marseille, France, where Popeye Doyle goes alone to hunt down drug kingpin Alain Charnier. Unlike the original, it focuses more on character psychology than procedural action.

If the first film was about action and grit, this one is about Doyle's soul. Hackman delivers a brave, stripped-down performance, especially in the harrowing scenes where Doyle is captured and forcibly addicted to heroin.

His withdrawal scenes are intense and physical — Hackman throws himself into the agony, sweats through the pain, and fights like a cornered animal.

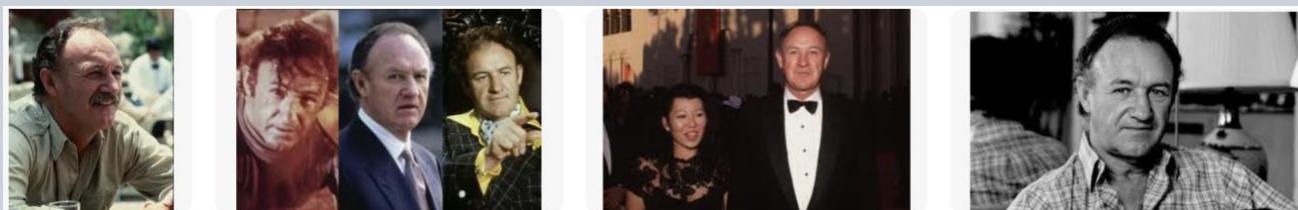
There's a deeper emotional arc: rage, humiliation, resilience. It shows us Popeye not just as a tough cop, but as a man whose ego and body are pushed to the brink.

While the film didn't achieve the critical acclaim of the original, Hackman's performance is arguably even more daring and layered.

Verdict: Deserves more credit than it gets today

Gene Hackman's portrayal of Popeye Doyle is brutal and brilliant, flawed but fascinating. A benchmark for anti-hero cop roles.

Gene Hackman: A Life on and off Screen



Born on January 30, 1930, in San Bernardino, California, as Eugene Allen Hackman.

Hackman had a tough early life. His father, a printing press operator, left the family when Gene was around 13, and Hackman moved with his mother to Danville, Illinois. At age 16, Hackman lied about his age to enlist in the U.S. Marine Corps, serving as a field radio operator for over four years, including stints in China, Japan, and Hawaii.

After the Marines, he worked a variety of jobs including furniture moving, truck driving, and even as a doorman.



After his military service, Hackman studied journalism and TV production at the University of Illinois, but his real interest was acting. He later enrolled at the Pasadena Playhouse in California. It was there he met Dustin Hoffman, and both were labelled as "least likely to succeed" by their teachers.

Undeterred, Hackman moved to New York City and took on various odd jobs while studying acting at the Actors Studio, working alongside talents like Robert Duvall and Al Pacino. He also roomed with fellow struggling actor Robert Duvall.

He took small stage and television roles throughout the early '60s, gradually building a name. His breakout role came in "Bonnie and Clyde" (1967), where he played Buck Barrow, Clyde's older brother. The role earned him his first Academy Award nomination for Best Supporting Actor.



Major milestones were "The French Connection" (1971): As hard-nosed detective Popeye Doyle, Hackman won the Academy Award for Best Actor. The role is considered iconic. "The Conversation" (1974): A psychological thriller directed by Francis Ford Coppola, showcasing Hackman's subtlety as a surveillance expert. "Superman" Series (1978–1987): Played the flamboyant villain Lex Luthor, adding charisma and comic relief to the superhero franchise. Hackman was known for portraying deeply flawed, often angry or dangerous men—yet always with a touch of humanity.

Hackman's first marriage: was to Faye Maltese (1956–1986). They had three children: one son and two daughters. In 1991, he married Betsy Arakawa, a classical pianist. They've lived quietly together in New Mexico.

After his final role in "Welcome to Mooseport", Hackman retired from acting in 2004. He wanted out of the public eye and never made a big announcement—he just quietly stepped away.

In retirement, he turned to writing, co-authoring several historical fiction novels. He also enjoyed cycling, painting, and living a low-key life in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He turned 95 in January 2025. He never graduated from college—his education came from life, military, and acting school. Hackman once narrated a World War II documentary and was praised for his voice acting. A notorious introvert, Hackman avoids Hollywood parties and the spotlight, preferring a quiet life. He and friend Dustin Hoffman were so poor early on, they lived in a cheap walk-up apartment and shared food expenses. He was hit by a car while biking in 2012 at age 81—and walked away with minor injuries.



Gene Hackman is regarded as one of the greatest American actors of all time. A two-time Oscar winner. Known for his intensity, believability, and range. Despite his fame, he's always remained grounded, private, and humble—truly a Hollywood legend who walked away on his own terms.

Sadly, Gene Hackman died recently. The partly mummified remains of Hackman, 95, and Arakawa, 65, were found in their Santa Fe home on 26 February this year, when maintenance and security workers alerted police. No foul play is suspected.

Tattler – Laughs

Club member Jim Page posted this on Facebook.  Tattler swiped it!

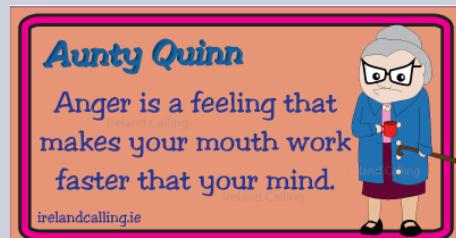


Therapist: Your wife says you never buy her flowers is that true?

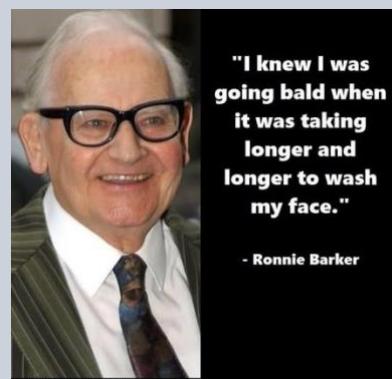
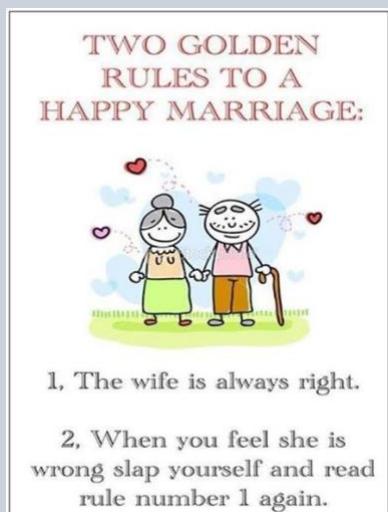
Him: To be honest, I never knew she sold flowers.



The Brilliantly rude Billy Connely. (Warning – many expletives!) Click below to watch



NEW ON THE MARKET
The 4x4 dentures for all biltong eaters.
Made especially to your specifications



We really would value more feedback. Please feel free to comment or submit items. Our email addresses

are jonathanagolding@gmail.com and colettepatience@gmail.com

Have a good month.

Answers

- 1) Canberra
- 2) Vienna
- 3) Havana
- 4) Paris
- 5) Budapest
- 6) Dublin
- 7) Kuala Lumpur
- 8) Monaco
- 9) Amsterdam
- 10) Beijing