



Dear Members and Friends,

*We publish this month's Tattler a little later than normal. Our apologies!*

Happy New Year and a warm welcome to 2026! We hope your holidays were filled with joy, laughter, and perhaps a turkey or two—Monet would certainly approve! As we set sail into another year, the Seven Seas Tattler brings you a vibrant mix of stories.

We kick off with a tribute to a rising rugby star, Paul de Villiers, whose prowess on the field has Stormers fans buzzing. From his impressive Man of the Match awards to his leadership as South Africa U20 captain, Paul's journey is one to watch closely this year.

Science and innovation continue to amaze, imagine sipping a vaccine in a beer, strolling along a glow-in-the-dark Van Gogh-inspired bike path in the Netherlands, or marvelling at autonomous microrobots! And for those who love a touch of mystery, Nostradamus' cryptic predictions for 2026 hint at political intrigue and celestial stirrings—interpretation, as always, is in the eye of the beholder.

History buffs will enjoy tales from the Ghost Fleet of Mallows Bay, the dramatic Pearl Harbor attack, and milestone anniversaries like the first South African television broadcast. Not exactly riveting viewing! Yet we rushed to embrace it. Black and white screens, bunny ears, fuzzy pictures... and pure excitement. My word, how times have changed. We'd love to hear your memories of those early TV days — the shows, the struggles, and the stories you loved to watch!

Culture and art also shine, from Al Pacino's enduring cinematic brilliance to Monet's charming and rare depiction of turkeys.

And, because we love a fun twist, we share quirky facts—from the incredible density of a sea otter's fur to the stress rankings of cities worldwide.

P.s We want to thank our friend Libby and Penny Standley, for their very encouraging feedback on our editorial efforts.

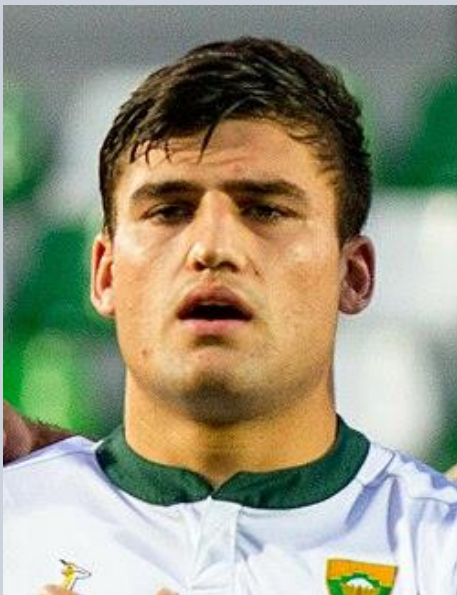
"Thank you for, yet another, fascinating Tattler production, thoroughly enjoyed it, as I have for the last twelve months. I wish you a very happy Christmas, and a wonderful 2026. Looking forward to another year of reading The Tattler. Much love, Penny Standley"

## Editorial

### Tattler's ode to a new (Stormers) rugby star - Paul de Villiers (actually, a wee limerick)



There is a young man named Paul  
Who, amongst his competitors, stands tall  
He's fetching is so fine  
He will be a bok in good time  
We look forward to watching him tackle, jackal and run with the ball



<b>Born</b>	13 January 2003 (age 22) George, South Africa
<b>Height</b>	180 cm (5 ft 11 in)
<b>Weight</b>	99 kg (218 lb; 15 st 8 lb)
<b>School</b>	Hoër Landbouskool Oakdale, Riversdale
<b>University</b>	Stellenbosch University

Flanker and habitual Man of the Match, Paul de Villiers. He came through the academy system of the Western Province, representing their U21 side. De Villiers represented South Africa U20 in 2022 and 2023, being named captain in 2023.

Playing for the Stormers this year he has earned three “man of the match” awards!

And THIS is how you jackal!  
Click on the image to the right to watch.



## A little rugby trivia from way back!

**Donald Barry Clarke** (10 November 1933 – 29 December 2002) was a New Zealand player who played 31 test matches for the New Zealand All Blacks.

*Clarke was famously known as “The Boot” — a tribute to his phenomenal goal-kicking ability. His powerful kicking was a hallmark of his career; he could boomerang penalties and conversions from remarkable distances and in challenging conditions. (ESPN.com)*



*Clarke scored 781 points for the All Blacks in 89 matches — a national record that stood for 24 years. (ESPN.com)*

*About his move to South Africa, he said “I’ve never regretted the move, but I’ll be a New Zealander as long as my backside points to the ground. When I talk of we and us, I’m only ever referring to the All Blacks.” (ESPN.com)*

**Lionel Geoffrey Wilson** (25 May 1933 – 17 September 2017) was a South African rugby player who played 27 tests for the Springboks.

*He was called “Dick” by close friends and “Speedy” by his teammates during his playing days, even though he wasn’t actually the fastest player — the nickname was more a mark of respect for his grit and consistency on the field. (rugby365).*



Interestingly, both played fullback and both had goal-kicking duties. In 1976 Wilson emigrated to New Zealand. In 1977 Clarke moved to South Africa. Both passed away in their adopted nations.

Locals will remember that Lionel was a local lad, born to Billy and Doris Wilson in Cape Town, he was their second child. He grew up in Plumstead and Wynberg and attended Wynberg Boys' High School. He played in 60 games for Western Province.



## F1 2026

Tattler - For those that are not total fanatics!

F1 2026 teams and engines		
McLaren		Mercedes
Mercedes		Mercedes
Red Bull		Red Bull-Ford
Ferrari		Ferrari
Williams		Mercedes
Haas		Ferrari
Aston Martin		Honda
Racing Bulls		Red Bull-Ford
Alpine		Mercedes
Audi		Audi
Cadillac		Ferrari

Now here is a little titbit that may have appeal to our readers!  
(From ScienceNews)



### HE MADE BEER THAT'S ALSO A VACCINE. NOW CONTROVERSY IS BREWING

Chris Buck stands barefoot in his kitchen holding a glass bottle of unfiltered Lithuanian farmhouse ale. He swirls the bottle gently to stir up a fingerbreadth blanket of yeast and pours the turbulent beer into a glass mug.

Buck raises the mug and sips. "Cloudy beer. Delightful!"



He has just consumed what may be the world's first vaccine delivered in a beer. It could be the first small sip toward making vaccines more palatable and accessible to people around the world. Or it could fuel concerns about the safety and effectiveness of vaccines. Or the idea may go nowhere. No matter the outcome, the story of Buck's unconventional approach illustrates the legal, ethical, moral, scientific and social challenges involved in developing potentially life-saving vaccines. Buck isn't just a home brewer dabbling in drug-making. He is a virologist at the National Cancer Institute in Bethesda, Md., where he studies polyomaviruses, which have been linked to various cancers and to serious health problems for people with weakened immune systems. He discovered four of the 13 polyomaviruses known to infect humans.

The vaccine beer experiment grew out of research Buck and colleagues have been doing to develop a traditional vaccine against polyomavirus. But Buck's experimental sips of vaccine beer are unsanctioned by his employer. A research ethics committee at the National Institutes of Health told Buck he couldn't experiment on himself by drinking the beer.

Buck says the committee has the right to determine what he can and can't do at work but can't govern what he does in his private life. So today he is Chef Gusteau, the founder and sole employee of Gusteau Research Corporation, a nonprofit organization Buck established so he could make and drink his vaccine beer as a private citizen. His company's name was inspired by the chef in the film *RATATOUILLE*, Auguste Gusteau, whose motto is "Anyone can cook."

Critics warn that Buck's unconventional approach could fuel antivaccine sentiments. Arthur Caplan, who until recently headed medical ethics at the New York University Grossman School of Medicine, is sceptical that a vaccine beer will ever make it beyond Buck's kitchen.

But the project does have supporters who say it could instead calm vaccine fears by allowing everyday people to control the process. Other researchers are on the fence, believing that an oral vaccine against polyomavirus is a good idea but questioning whether Buck is going about introducing such a vaccine correctly.

(Tattler - what do you folk think?)

## What a lovely path!

(from Mechanical Engineers Rocks)



In the Netherlands, engineering and art collided beautifully when designers created a glow-in-the-dark solar bike path inspired by Vincent van Gogh's iconic *Starry Night*. Located in Eindhoven, the pathway uses millions of photoluminescent stones that absorb sunlight during the day and glow softly at night, creating a swirling cosmic pattern that looks painted by the sky itself.

The bike path is not just artistic — it is a sustainable innovation. The glowing stones require no electricity, reducing nighttime lighting needs and improving safety for cyclists while lowering carbon emissions. Engineers designed the illumination to last up to 8–10 hours after sunset, even in winter conditions.

This glowing route is part of a nationwide movement to promote eco-friendly cycling infrastructure. By blending culture, renewable tech, and public design, the Netherlands is showing the world how cities can become safer, greener, and more inspiring.

## What did Nostradamus have to say about 2026?

(Niamh Shackleton)

Nostradamus is said to have been predicting the future for years, and some believe he had some bleak forecasts for 2026.

Real name Michel de Nostredame, Nostradamus was a French apothecary, physician, and reputed seer and is best known for his 1555 book *Les Prophéties*. Despite being dead for hundreds of years, many believe Nostradamus predicted things like Princess Diana's death, the rise of Hitler, and the 9/11 attacks.

Now, when it comes to 2026, I'm afraid Nostradamus hasn't exactly predicted world peace and the end of all natural disasters... While he doesn't name 2026 specifically in his book, interpreters think that the 26th quatrains of his text relate to the year ahead.

### A 'great swarm of bees'

In one of Nostradamus' passages, he wrote that 'the great swarm of bees will arise... by night the ambush', says the Daily Express.

But apparently this doesn't mean bees will descend on towns and cities in a hostile Planet of the Apes style takeover, but the 'bees' are a symbol of power and could refer to political figures.

Some believe these figures could be Donald Trump and Vladimir Putin, both of whom may experience victories in 2026.

### Ticino to 'overflow with blood'

Ticino is the southernmost canton of Switzerland. The specific naming of the Swiss region could refer to renewed conflict in Europe, some believe, as Ticino borders with Italy.

Adding fuel to the theories of conflict, elsewhere in his 26th quatrains Nostradamus speaks of war.

"Seven months of great war, people dead through evil / Rouen, Evreux the King will not fail," he wrote, per the Daily Mail.

### Mars 'ruling his path'

Again, his sentiments are subjected to interpretation, but as Mars is the ancient god of war, people think this refers to yet more conflict for 2026.

Nostradamus wrote: "When Mars rules his path among the stars, human blood will sprinkle the sanctuary. Three fires rise from the eastern sides, while the West loses its light in silence." As the East and West are named, there have been suggestions that this means there's pending conflict between Western Europe and Asia.

Nostradamus was a 16th-century French physician and astrologer, best known for writing a book of cryptic verses that many people believe predict future events.

Who was Nostradamus : Full name: Michel de Nostredame, **Born:** December 14, 1503, in Saint-Rémy-de-Provence, France, **Died:** July 2, 1566, **Profession:** Physician, apothecary, astrologer, writer.

Nostradamus trained as a medical doctor during a time when Europe was struck by plague outbreaks. He rejected bloodletting and promoted hygiene, fresh air, and clean water, which helped earn him a good reputation.

## Cape Town Traffic - No, you were not exaggerating!



## Wikipedia announces its top 5 articles of 2025

Tattler - Who did searches on any of these?

Wikipedia will mark its 25th anniversary on January 15, 2026. No one could have predicted 25 years ago that Wikipedia would grow into the backbone of knowledge on the internet it is today—powering search engines, voice assistants, and generative AI tools.

### The top five



Charlie Kirk

Deaths in 2025

Ed Gein

Donald Trump

Pope Leo XIV

- #1: Charlie Kirk
- #2: Deaths in 2025
- #3: Ed Gein
- #4: Donald Trump
- #5: Pope Leo XIV

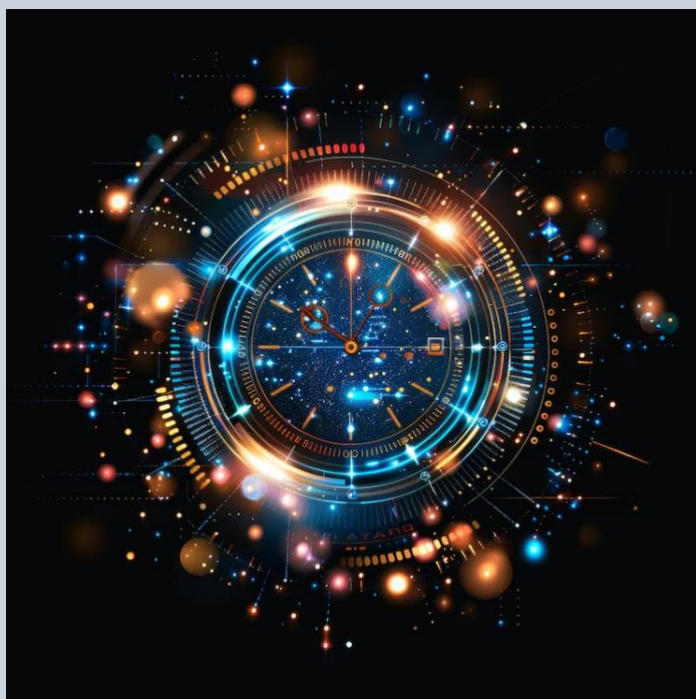
The most-read article on English Wikipedia this year covered Charlie Kirk, a US political activist, entrepreneur, and media personality who was assassinated in September at a university campus debate he organized. In the day afterwards, people viewed the article about Kirk nearly 15 million times, or an average of over 170 times per second. Across 2025, about 43% of the views on Kirk’s article came from outside the US.

Coming in the #2 spot is “Deaths in 2025,” an article that has never been lower than third on our annual list of most-read articles. This annual article is updated by English Wikipedia’s volunteer editors when they find published obituaries that come out after the deaths of notable individuals. With eight billion people in the world, there are many notable deaths to update the page with each day.

One of those deaths in 2025 was Pope Francis. The first Latin American to become pope, Francis served for 12 years before passing away in April. The Catholic Church selected his successor, Pope Leo XIV, a few weeks later. As people rushed online to learn about Leo, traffic to all Wikimedia projects peaked at around 800,000 hits per second—more than 6x over normal traffic levels, and a new record for us. Plenty of people came to learn more about Francis’ life too; his English Wikipedia article was the 11th most-read of the year.

US President Donald Trump entered the office for the second time on January 20, 2025. He is appearing on English Wikipedia’s annual most-read articles list for the eighth time. Since 2015, the English Wikipedia article about Trump has not appeared in that list only in 2022 and 2023.

## Time Travel



Watch this short video by clicking on the image to the right.

[Tattler picked this up on the 1440 site](#)

The earliest mention of time travel

Time travel has fascinated humans for centuries. It appears in myths, literature, and science fiction. One of the earliest examples comes from the 400 BCE Hindu epic Mahabharata, describing time dilation long before Einstein’s Theory of Relativity. By the 19th century, stories introduced machines enabling time travel—setting the stage for modern sci-fi.

Manuscript illustration of the Battle of Kurukshetra (Hindu epic Mahabharata)





## The future is now...and it's tiny. (By Study Finds)

### In A Nutshell

Researchers built autonomous robots just 210-340 micrometres wide, roughly the size of a paramecium, that contain an onboard computer, sensors, memory, and propulsion systems.

The microrobots can measure temperature, make decisions based on sensor data, and navigate toward warmer areas without any external control, all while running on the same power as a living cell.

About 100 robots fit on a chip smaller than a fingertip and are manufactured using standard semiconductor processes, with estimated production costs of about one penny per robot.

The devices demonstrated the ability to autonomously adapt their movement in response to changing temperature gradients, transmitting measurement data back to researchers by encoding it in their motion patterns.

### Interesting fact - The sea otter has one million hairs per square inch

A sea otter can have between five and ten times the number of hairs on a single square inch of its body as a human has on their entire head.



The chinchilla has the densest fur of all mammals that live on land, with around 130,000 hairs per square inch. Chinchillas can tolerate freezing temperatures, but they cannot survive in temperatures higher than 80 F (27 C)



Comparison to other animals - Cats, around 100, 000; dogs around 15, 000

## Roman Recipe for Ruins

(from 1440 Daily Digest)

Newly discovered materials from Pompeii confirm how the Romans formulated concrete to build long-lasting structural masterpieces.

Architect Vitruvius described the Romans' building process nearly 2,100 years ago in "De Architectura"—the first known book on architectural theory—suggesting they mixed a water-lime paste with other ingredients to produce concrete. But a 2023 paper challenged this order. Researcher Admir Masic analysed samples of a roughly 2,500-year-old city wall in Priverno, Italy, and found Romans used a "hot-mixing" process—first mixing dry ingredients including lime fragments and volcanic ash, then adding water. The approach released heat, allowing lime pieces to expand and fill gaps as cracks form. Now, analysis of a newly discovered site in Pompeii confirms Masic's theory using additional samples and a dry raw materials pile.



An ancient Pompeii wall at a newly excavated site, where Associate Professor Admir Masic applied compositional analysis (overlayed to right) to understand how ancient Romans made concrete that has endured for thousands of years.

Credit: Archaeological Park of Pompeii

## World's longest underwater road will take 15 years to build and cost \$2,400,000,000

(By Ellie Kemp)

It will reach 1,286 feet below sea level. A European country is building the world's longest and deepest underwater tunnel for an eye-watering \$2.4 billion.

The project, called Rogfast, will measure up at 27 kilometres (17 miles) long and be located 392 meters (1,286 foot) below sea level. It will drastically cut travel times for commuters along Norway's west coast.



The country is already home to the world's longest road tunnel, the Laerdal Tunnel, which stretches 24.5 kilometres (15.2 miles).

And by 2033, Norway will hold another major record to its name with the Rogfast tunnel.

Rogfast is part of Norway's wider plan to create a ferry-free coastal highway called E39.

The shiny new tunnel itself will create a 'faster and more reliable link' between Bergen, dubbed the 'gateway of the fjords,' and fourth-largest city Stavanger by around 40 minutes.

It will be made up of two separate tubes with two lanes each and includes a unique double roundabout located 260 meters deep, linking to Kvitsøy island.

Construction began in 2018 but was halted in 2019 due to cost issues. Work re-started in 2021, with construction to continue for the next 12 years. The expected completion date is 2033.





## The world's most and least stressed cities

(from Remitly)

Feeling stressed is unfortunately a universal experience, but some cities make it harder to stay calm. Rising costs, long commutes, and security concerns can take a toll, while access to good healthcare and cleaner air can make life easier.

At Remitly, we know that financial security can play a major role in reducing someone's stress. When your finances are stable, it's easier to plan, support loved ones abroad and find peace of mind wherever you call home.

That's why we set out to discover which global cities could be the most (and least) stressful to live in today.



### Key findings

New York City could be the world's most stressed city, with a stress score of 7.56 out of 10, driven by a combination of congestion, high crime rates, and high pollution levels.

Eindhoven, Netherlands, is the least stressed, scoring just 2.34 out of 10, thanks to its relatively short commutes, strong healthcare, and low crime levels.



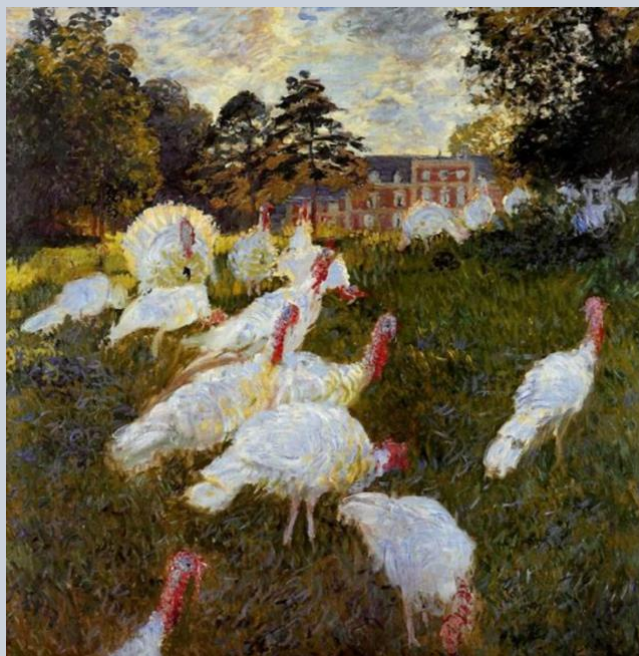
Is the Netherlands one of the calmest countries in the world? It's home to four of the 10 least stressed cities – Eindhoven, Utrecht, Groningen, and Rotterdam.

(Tattler - My pick is Porto!)



## Art Corner

**Colette's submission** – “ I just love this painting as it is so rare. Monet did not paint many animals at all. I love the white and coral of the turkeys. I can hear them goggling and clucking in my mind as I look at it. I thought it appropriate to share it now, as many of us would have partaken in turkey xmas dinner! It also has a lovely story with a bit of a sad story for Monet himself””



Yes — Claude Monet did paint a work (or works) featuring turkeys! The most well-known is commonly called The Turkeys (French: Les Dindons).

Artist: Claude Monet, the famous French Impressionist painter (1840–1926).

Year: Around 1876–1877.

Medium: Oil on canvas.

Style: Impressionism — loose, vibrant brushstrokes that capture light and colour rather than fine detail.

The original painting is in the Musée d'Orsay in Paris, France.

The work depicts a group of turkeys on a lawn with some of the estate buildings or landscape behind them, executed in Monet's characteristic focus on natural light and atmosphere. This subject is unusual for Monet — he didn't often paint animals — which makes The Turkeys stand out in his body of work.

Painted for the patron Ernest Hoschedé, who commissioned Monet to decorate the grand salon of his Château de Rottembourg in Montgeron (Essonnes), this painting was exhibited under the title “Les dindons (décoration non terminée)” [The Turkeys] (unfinished decoration) at the Impressionist group's third exhibition in the spring of 1877.

The work had a special importance for Monet, who was always interested in his future and repeatedly sought to buy it back. The work changed owners several times before it entered the national collections. In 1878, it passed from the hands of Hoschedé to those of the painter Giuseppe de Nittis, was bought in 1884 at the sale after Nittis's death by the critic Théodore Duret, and then, when the latter sold his collection in 1903, by the Rouen amateur François Depeaux, before being acquired in 1906, at the Depeaux sale, by Princess Edmond de Polignac, Winnaretta Singer (1865-1943), a wealthy American heiress and art patron.

Monet's wrote to Winnaretta Singer on June 13, 1909. The letter tells us that the wealthy American entrusted the work for sale to Durand-Ruel, who asked 30.000 francs for it. Monet addressed Singer directly to ask her if she would consent to a “discount” “in deference to the work's creator” for this “very old” work. In a letter acquired by the Musée d'Orsay in 2006, the Princess of Polignac finally replied to Monet (on June 25, from London): “I parted with regret with your admirable painting — only because I had been unable to find a home worthy of such a beautiful work — I have just bought a house in London of which “Les Dindons” shall be the most beautiful ornament - You will therefore forgive me, my dear Master, if I do not respond affirmatively to your request”.

The painting was finally bequeathed to the Louvre Museum by Winnaretta Singer upon her death in 1943 (handwritten will dated July 5, 1938).

So, sadly he never owned it which he desperately wanted to do.

## December Club Quiz

It is great to report that on the evening of the 10th we had, for the first time, seven teams in action. Extremely rewarding! We hope this sets the standard for the coming year and thank all for their participation.

Pictured below, the teams in action.



At 21h00, the winners emerged and were presented with their token prize. Congratulations!



As usual we provide one set of questions from the night which readers can use to test themselves. Answers elsewhere in this Tattler

### Category - Characters in Literature

- 1) Agatha Christie created the character Hercule ..... Provide the last name
- 2) Whose writings included the character Mr Plod?
- 3) A female fictional character appearing in several mystery book series, movies, and video games, as a teenage amateur sleuth. The books are ghostwritten by several authors and published under the collective pseudonym Carolyn Keene. Who is the character?
- 4) Elektra, Jaws and Max Zorin are villains appearing in which series?
- 5) Atticus Finch is the hero in what novel?
- 6) Edmond Dantès finds himself imprisoned in an island fortress with no hope of getting out. Who wrote the story that includes this?
- 7) Private Eye, Sam .....is from "The Maltese Falcon". Provide Sam's last name
- 8) In whose book does Lemuel Gulliver feature?
- 9) Meg, Jo, Beth and Amy are sisters in a famous novel by Louisa May Alcott. Name it
- 10) In the book, "Captain Blood" by Rafael Sabatini, what is the first name of Dr Blood who was wrongly convicted of treason and sold into slavery in the Caribbean?

Answers elsewhere in Tattler

## Maritime, Naval and Military

**MALLOWS BAY / where 100s of WW1 ships were sunk**

*Source: Forces Network 31/10*

We thank our good friend Libby for this fascinating story.



### **Saving America's Historic Sites**

Ghost Fleet of the Potomac, Mallows Bay

Location: Charles County, Maryland

Imagine kayaking the tranquil waters of a secluded cove on the lower Potomac, binoculars in hand, in search of bald eagles, great blue herons, and osprey. As you float along, you spot weathered wood and rusted iron jutting out from the water—they look almost like ribs.

You're looking at some of the approximately 200 shipwrecks of the Ghost Fleet of the Potomac. Located in Mallows Bay near the Maryland town of Nanjemoy, the Ghost Fleet is the largest and most varied collection of historic shipwrecks in the Western Hemisphere.

Mallows Bay is now the most prominent feature of the new Mallows Bay-Potomac River National Marine Sanctuary, the first national marine sanctuary within the Chesapeake Bay watershed. ([Read the full story below](#))



*photo by: Stephen Badger, Maryland Department of Natural Resources  
Rusted nails and remains of a shipwreck in the Ghost Fleet of the Potomac.*

## **Mallows Bay and the Ghost Fleet of the Potomac**

Most of the ships resting in Mallows Bay, along the Potomac River in Charles County, Maryland, trace their origins to World War I, a period of frantic industrial mobilization in the United States. Though the war began in Europe in 1914, the United States did not enter the conflict until April 6, 1917. By that time, German U-boats were sinking Allied and neutral merchant vessels at an alarming rate—more than 200 ships per month—creating a global shipping crisis.

Within days of entering the war, the Wilson administration moved to expand ship production. On April 16, 1917, the United States Shipping Board created the Emergency Fleet Corporation (EFC) to oversee the rapid construction of vessels needed to transport troops, food, and supplies.

The EFC launched an ambitious program to build steel, concrete, and wooden ships across 40 shipyards in 17 states. Wooden steamships were emphasized because they could be built quickly using America's abundant timber resources and did not require scarce steel. These ships were intended to serve as a merchant fleet supporting the war effort overseas.

The program ultimately failed to meet its original goals. Of the 734 ships ordered, only 98 were delivered before the war ended in November 1918. Of those, just 76 could carry cargo, and nearly all suffered from mechanical defects and poor construction. None of the wooden steamships ever sailed to a European port during the war.

After the armistice, the Shipping Board deemed the ships surplus and largely unusable. A special committee was appointed to dispose of the inactive and incomplete fleet. What had cost the U.S. government approximately \$300 million to build was sold for scrap for just \$750,000.

Most of the vessels were purchased by the Western Marine & Salvage Company of Alexandria, Virginia. The company towed the ships to the Potomac River, where engines, boilers, propellers, and other valuable metal components were removed. Salvage planners estimated they could recover about \$10,000 worth of scrap per ship.

The wooden hulls, however, posed a problem. Stripped of metal, they were difficult and costly to dismantle. The solution was disposal by destruction. The hulls were moved to Mallows Bay, where they were burned and beached. On November 7, 1925, 31 ships were burned in a single day, marking the largest mass destruction of ships at one time in U.S. history.

By 1931, Western Marine & Salvage had transported 169 hulls into Mallows Bay. The onset of the Great Depression caused scrap prices to collapse, forcing the company to abandon the project. The remaining ships were left partially submerged, where local scavengers salvaged whatever materials, they could.

Interest in the Ghost Fleet revived during World War II, when metal shortages again became critical. In 1942, the federal government—through the Metals Reserve Company—contracted Bethlehem Steel to recover any remaining metal from the wrecks. Salvage operations continued until 1945, with recovered materials sent to a facility near Baltimore to support wartime production.

After the war, the site faded from national attention.

In the 1960s, a company called Idamont, Inc. purchased land near Mallows Bay and sought permission to remove the remaining hulls. Public scrutiny revealed that Idamont was a front company for the Potomac Electric Power Company (PEPCO), which planned to build a power-generating station at nearby Sandy Point.

The resulting controversy drew congressional attention. For the first time, the House Committee on Government Operations considered not only the historical value of the wrecks but also the ecosystem that



had developed around them. The committee concluded that removing the ships was unnecessary, effectively preserving the Ghost Fleet in place.

Today, the Ghost Fleet of the Potomac is both a historic and ecological treasure. The decaying hulls have become a complex habitat for fish, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and invertebrates, transforming Mallows Bay into one of the most biologically rich areas of the river. The site lies just 40 miles south of Washington, D.C.

Charles County manages Mallows Bay Park as a day-use area, and the bay forms part of the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail. It is now a popular destination for kayaking, fishing, birdwatching, heritage tourism, and scientific research.

In July 2019, after years of advocacy by local communities, conservation groups, historians, and educators, Mallows Bay–Potomac River was designated a National Marine Sanctuary—the first new U.S. marine sanctuary in nearly two decades. The designation formally recognizes the site’s rare combination of maritime history, cultural significance, and ecological value.



*photo by:Library of Congress*  
*WWI-era posters for the United States Shipping Board Emergency Fleet Corporation.*



*photo by: Library of Congress*  
*Ship under construction before being grounded in Mallows Bay.*

## 7 December 1941 – Japanese attacked Pearl Harbour

Source: Wikipedia, <http://www.war.gov>, Britannica

The attack caused heavy losses but failed to cripple the US navy. Japan's air assault sank or damaged 18 warships (including eight battleships) and destroyed 188 aircraft, killing 2,400 Americans, yet all three Pacific Fleet aircraft carriers were absent and survived, and vital infrastructure like oil depots and repair yards remained intact—preserving core US naval power and enabling a rapid recovery.

This animated visualization reconstructs the two-wave Pearl Harbor strike—showing the flight paths, ship positions, and timing that allowed Japan's carrier force to severely damage Battleship Row in just 110 minutes while catching US defences off guard.



[See a visualization of the Japanese attack – Click on the image alongside to watch \(Approx 17 minutes but very interesting!!\)](#)

Many things about the Pearl Harbor attack were tragic, but the saddest aspect is often understood as a combination of human loss, surprise, and preventable vulnerability rather than a single moment.

The most heartbreaking element was the sudden loss of life. On the morning of December 7, 1941, more than 2,400 Americans were killed and over 1,100 wounded, most of them young sailors and soldiers who had no warning and no chance to defend themselves. Many were trapped below decks when ships capsized or exploded. On the USS Arizona, over 1,100 men died in seconds when a bomb detonated the forward magazine; many of their bodies were never recovered and remain entombed in the wreck to this day.

Equally tragic was the element of complete surprise. The attack occurred on a quiet Sunday morning, during peacetime routines. Men were eating breakfast, writing letters, or sleeping when the bombing began. There was no formal declaration of war beforehand, which deepened the sense of shock and betrayal and left families unprepared for the sudden losses.

Another deeply sad aspect is the sense that the disaster might have been mitigated. Intelligence warnings existed but were scattered, underestimated, or misinterpreted. Aircraft were lined up wing-to-wing to prevent sabotage, unintentionally making them easier targets. Many historians agree that better preparedness could have reduced the scale of destruction and loss of life, adding a layer of sorrow rooted in missed chances.

Finally, the attack's sadness extends beyond the harbour itself. Pearl Harbor catapulted the United States into World War II, leading to years of global violence and tens of millions of deaths worldwide. For many, the tragedy lies not only in that single morning, but in the vast human suffering that followed.

In essence, what makes Pearl Harbor so sad is that it represents lives lost without warning, in a moment that changed history forever—a quiet morning shattered, and a generation propelled into war.

In the immediate, tactical sense, Japan “won” the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. However, in the strategic and historical sense, Japan ultimately lost, and the United States won.

Key U.S. assets were not destroyed: American aircraft carriers were not in port, fuel depots and repair facilities survived, and the harbour itself remained usable. The attack unified American public opinion almost overnight. Isolationism vanished, and the U.S. entered World War II fully mobilized. The United States' industrial and military capacity far exceeded Japan's, and once engaged, it proved decisive. Within four years, Japan was defeated, culminating in Japan's surrender in August 1945.

A famous summary used by historians is:

Japan won the battle at Pearl Harbour but lost the war it provoked.

### **Royal Navy's first crewless helicopter prepares for flight**

*Source: Naval Today 2/12*

The Royal Navy's first crewless helicopter is one step from taking to the skies after completing successful trials on the ground.

The helicopter Proteus is being developed by Leonardo under a £60m program and is believed to be one of the world's first full-sized autonomous helicopters. The unit is the size of a traditional helicopter, but it is tasked by a pilot rather than flown manually. The aircraft has been 'flushed up', with its engines, systems, and rotor blades tested, according to the Royal Navy. Senior officers and experts from the MOD were invited to Leonardo's Yeovil site, where the aircraft was designed and manufactured, to see it 'ground running'. "Proteus is equipped with cutting-edge onboard software capabilities, carrying a suite of sensors and systems that allow it to sense its environment, make decisions and act accordingly. All of this processing is conducted onboard the aircraft, while operating in the most extreme environments, including high sea states and strong winds – just where the Royal Navy needs this kind of capability," Nigel Colman, Managing Director Helicopters UK, Leonardo, said.

Proteus will be tasked to patrol specific maritime areas, drawing on information provided by other allied ships, helicopters, submarines, and detection systems to calculate the best chance of success in finding an underwater foe. Initially, the demonstrator is being assessed for the ability of autonomous systems to support anti-submarine operations. To detect submarines, it will drop sonobuoy listening devices into the ocean to search the depths for the tell-tale acoustic signs that emanate from submarines. Once found, the system has the ability to report its findings back to the mission commander.

By embracing drone helicopters, the navy aims to search wider stretches of ocean for longer periods without putting strain on aircrew, who could be deployed on other critical sorties.

Watch here – Click on image below:



## Iron Beam Laser Defence System set for IDF launch

Source: Josua Marks <http://www.jns.org>,

Years ago, the concept of laser weaponry featured in many sci-fi movies and comics. It is here!

Israel will begin deploying the technology at the end of the month, offering cost-effective interception of rockets and UAVs.

*A Rafael Iron Beam -M (250) High Energy Laser Weapon System (HELWS) is displayed during the Security Equipment International (DSEI) at London Excel on Sept. 10, 2025, in London, England. Photo by John Keeble/Getty Images.*



A Rafael Iron Beam -M (250) High Energy Laser Weapon System (HELWS) is displayed during the Security Equipment International (DSEI) at London Excel on Sept. 10, 2025, in London, England. Photo by John Keeble/Getty Images. A Rafael Iron Beam -M (250) High Energy Laser Weapon System (HELWS) is displayed during the Security Equipment International (DSEI) at London Excel on Sept. 10, 2025, in London, England.

Israel's Iron Beam ("Magen Or" in Hebrew) laser defence system will begin defending against aerial threats at the end of the month, the country's Defence Ministry announced on Monday.

"With development complete and a comprehensive testing program that has validated the system's capabilities, we are prepared to deliver initial operational capability to the IDF on Dec. 30, 2025," said Brig. Gen. (res.) Daniel Gold, head of the Directorate of Defence Research and Development at the Defence Ministry.



Brig. Gen. (res.) Daniel Gold, head of the Directorate of Defence Research and Development at the Israeli Defence Ministry, speaks at the International DefenceTech Summit at Tel Aviv University on Nov. 24, 2025. Credit: Israel Ministry of Defence.

Speaking at the International DefenceTech Summit at Tel Aviv University, Gold said the system was a complement to the Iron Dome, David's Sling and Arrow air defence systems, and "is expected to fundamentally change the rules of engagement on the battlefield."



The system uses a 100-kilowatt laser to intercept rockets, mortars and UAVs at a range of more than 6 miles (10 kilometres), at a fraction of the cost of traditional interceptors. The estimated cost per firing is about \$2 to \$5, compared to \$40,000 to \$80,000 for a single Iron Dome interceptor.

The Iron Beam—to be renamed “Ohr Eitan” (“Eitan’s Light”) after Eitan Oster, who fell in battle in Lebanon and whose father was one of its developers—will be integrated into the Israel Defence Forces’ air defence array.

### German Navy to procure MQ-9B SeaGuardian for reconnaissance, ASW

Source: *NavalNews* 24/12

Will we need pilots, sailors and other servicemen in the future unmanned military vehicle era?

The German Navy will receive four Medium Altitude Long Endurance (MALE) **Unmanned** Aerial Systems (UAS) from General Atomics Aeronautical Systems (GA-ASI) for maritime long-range reconnaissance and anti-submarine warfare. Each system consists of two MQ-9B SeaGuardian drones, as well as other components and a command-and-control system, meaning the German Armed Forces will procure a total of eight MQ-9Bs.



For ASW missions, the SeaGuardian can carry two to four sonobuoys dispensers under its wings.

According to well-informed sources, the financial scope of the contract, financed from special funds and the regular budget, is estimated at around €1.52 billion. This sum includes spare parts and other services, such as flight crew training, for an initial two-year period of operation. The delivery of the aircraft, which are to be stationed at the Nordholz naval air base, is scheduled for the period between 2028 and 2030.

Reportedly, the unmanned aerial vehicles are to be upgraded to an anti-submarine warfare configuration in 2031 and 2032.

## This month in History - January 1975

(50 years ago)

### General

**5 Jan** - Television was introduced to South Africa for the first time in that nation's history, more than 25 years after it had been introduced in most of the industrial nations of the West, as the SABC began its first nationwide broadcasts.

**12 Jan** - The United Nations Security Council voted, 11 to 1, with 3 abstentions, to allow the Palestinian Liberation Organization to participate in its debate on Middle East peace and to be accorded the rights of a member nation for the limited purpose of the debate. The U.S. voted against, but did not veto, the resolution, while its allies in NATO, the UK, France and Italy, abstain.

**16 Jan** - The trial of jailed members of the Red Army Faction (including Andreas Baader and Ulrike Meinhof) began in West Germany. Their lawyers unsuccessfully requested that the terrorists be treated as prisoners of war.

**18 Jan** - The Scottish Labour Party was formed, by a group breaking away from the UK Labour Party because of dissatisfaction with the then Labour Government's failure to secure a devolved Scottish Assembly, as well as with its social and economic agenda.

**21 Jan** - The first commercial flights of the Concorde supersonic airliner took place, as two of the jets— a British Airways flight from London and an Air France flight from Paris— departed simultaneously at 11:40 in the morning.



**24 Jan** - At the 33rd Golden Globe Awards ceremony, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* won all four major awards (Best Actor, Best Actress, Best Director and Best Film).






**28 Jan** - Following the example of other nations, the United States Senate voted, 77 to 19, to create an exclusive fishing zone, off limits to all non-American fishing vessels, extending 200 miles (320 km) from the shores of the United States, effective July 1, 1977 ([Tattler](#) - Pity we did not do similar?).

## Sport

**4 Jan** - Tennis - Australia Open won by Mark Edmondson and Evonne Goolagonn/Cawley.

**3 - 7 Jan** - Cricket - Australia beat West Indies by 7 wickets. (Greg Chappell got 182).

**17 Jan** - Wales defeated England 21–9 at Twickenham in the 1976 Five Nations Championship. The Welsh team would go on to win the Grand Slam for the seventh time in their history.

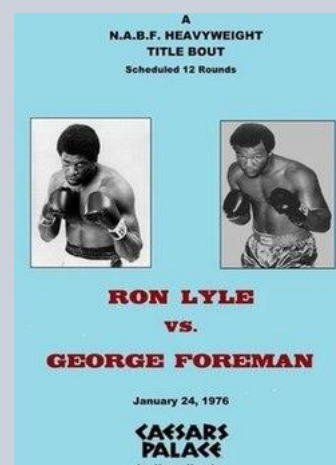
Pos	Team	Pld	W	D	L	PF	PA	PD	Pts
1	 <a href="#">Wales</a>	4	4	0	0	102	37	+65	8
2	 <a href="#">France</a>	4	3	0	1	82	37	+45	6
3	 <a href="#">Scotland</a>	4	2	0	2	49	59	–10	4
4	 <a href="#">Ireland</a>	4	1	0	3	31	87	–56	2
5	 <a href="#">England</a>	4	0	0	4	42	86	–44	0

(Not a great year for the poms!)

**24 Jan** - Boxing - George Foreman knocked out Ron Lyle in a world title fight. Caesars Palace, Las Vegas — January 24, 1976

The heavyweight fight between Ron Lyle and George Foreman at Caesars Palace in 1976 stands as one of the most violent and dramatic contests in boxing history—a raw, punishing encounter that came at a pivotal moment for both fighters.

George Foreman entered the bout attempting to rebuild his career after his devastating loss to Muhammad Ali in the Rumble in the Jungle (1974). Once the most feared puncher in boxing, Foreman was seeking redemption and a path back to the heavyweight title. Ron Lyle, a former Marine with extraordinary power and toughness, was himself a top contender, having already engaged in several brutal heavyweight wars.



From the opening round, the fight was fought at close range, with little finesse and no caution. Both men relied on raw strength and heavy punches, trading thunderous blows in the centre of the ring. Neither showed interest in defence.

The fourth round became legendary. Lyle knocked Foreman down twice, stunning the former champion and appearing on the verge of victory. The crowd erupted as Foreman struggled to his feet, visibly hurt and exhausted. It was one of the few times in his career that Foreman appeared close to defeat by knockout.

Despite the punishment, Foreman survived the round. Drawing on his experience and power, he regrouped in the fifth round and began landing crushing uppercuts and hooks. Lyle, having expended enormous energy in the earlier knockdowns, began to tire.

Midway through the fifth round, Foreman dropped Lyle with a series of unanswered punches. Lyle attempted to rise but collapsed back to the canvas. The referee stopped the fight, awarding George Foreman a knockout victory at 2:59 of Round 5.

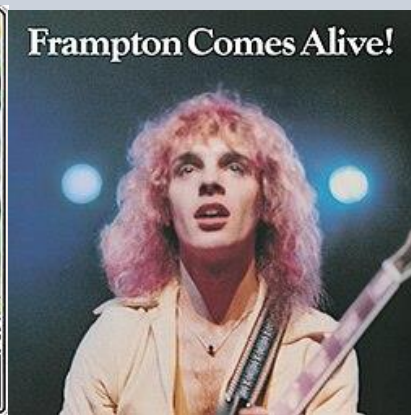
The Lyle–Foreman bout is remembered as one of the greatest slugfests in heavyweight boxing history—often cited alongside fights like Ali–Frazier for sheer intensity. It showcased Foreman’s resilience and destructive power, proving he remained a formidable force despite earlier setbacks.

For Ron Lyle, the fight cemented his reputation as one of the toughest heavyweights of his era, a fighter willing to stand toe-to-toe with the most dangerous punchers in the sport.

Nearly half a century later, the fight remains a benchmark for heavyweight brutality—a night at Caesars Palace when survival mattered as much as skill, and two men tested the absolute limits of endurance and will.

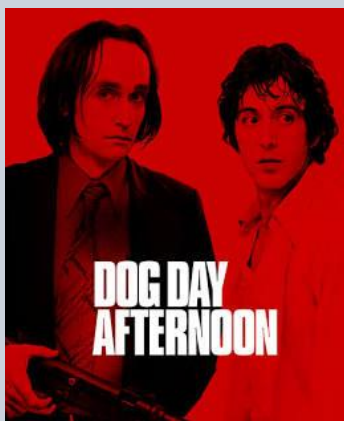
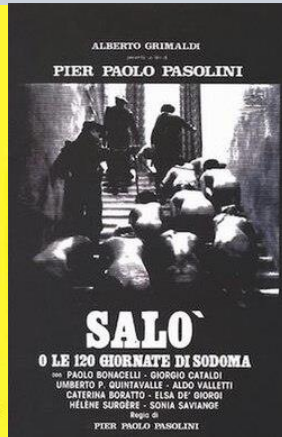
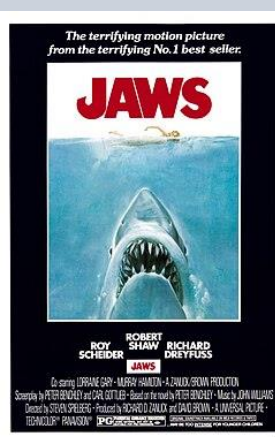
**23 - 28 Jan** - Cricket - Australia beat West Indies by 190 runs. (Ian Redpath, Alan Turner and Viv Richards all made centuries, Vanburn Holder got a five-fir).

## Music





## Movies



### Dog Day Afternoon

Dog Day Afternoon (1975) is a tense, true-crime drama set in Brooklyn on a sweltering summer day. The film follows Sonny Wortzik, a desperate and impulsive man who, along with his nervous partner Sal, attempts to rob a small neighbourhood bank. The robbery quickly unravels when they discover there is very little money on hand, and police soon surround the building, turning the failed heist into a prolonged hostage standoff.

As the day wears on and the heat intensifies, Sonny becomes the centre of intense media attention. His motives are gradually revealed to be deeply personal rather than purely criminal: he needs the money to pay for his partner Leon's gender-affirming surgery. The situation draws sympathy from the public even as it grows more dangerous, highlighting Sonny's volatile mix of bravado, vulnerability, and sincerity.

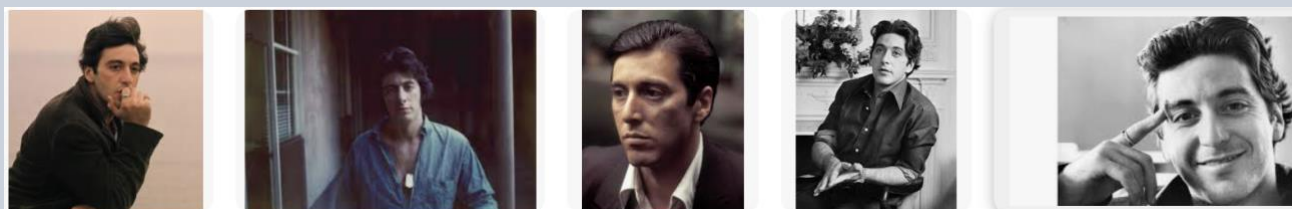
Negotiations with police and the FBI stretch on for hours, while tensions rise inside the bank and among the hostages. Ultimately, the standoff ends tragically at the airport, underscoring the film's themes of media spectacle, social alienation, and the human cost of desperation. Directed by Sidney Lumet and powered by Al Pacino's electrifying performance, Dog Day Afternoon is both a gripping thriller and a sharp social commentary.

### Al Pacino: A Life in Acting

Alfredo James Pacino was born on April 25, 1940, in East Harlem, New York City, to Italian American parents, Rose Gerardi and Salvatore Pacino. His parents divorced when he was very young, and Pacino was raised primarily by his mother and maternal grandparents in the South Bronx. The neighbourhood was rough and economically strained, but it was also rich in street life and character—an environment that later deeply informed his acting.



Pacino struggled academically and left school in his teens, working a series of odd jobs while nurturing a growing obsession with acting. After the death of his mother when he was in his early twenties—a loss that profoundly affected him—he committed himself fully to the craft, despite periods of poverty and homelessness.



Pacino studied acting at HB Studio under respected teacher Charlie Laughton, who became one of his most important mentors. He later gained admission to the prestigious Actors Studio, where he studied under Lee Strasberg, immersing himself in Method acting.

During this period, Pacino trained and socialized alongside actors who would later become major figures in American cinema. Among his contemporaries were Robert De Niro, Dustin Hoffman, James Caan, and Ellen Burstyn. Pacino developed a lifelong friendship—and famous creative parallel—with Robert De Niro, with whom he would later collaborate in *The Godfather Part II*, *Heat*, and *The Irishman*.



Before film success arrived, Pacino built a strong reputation in theatre, winning Tony Awards and gaining respect as a serious stage actor.

Pacino's film breakthrough came in 1972 when he was cast as Michael Corleone in *The Godfather*. Initially considered an unlikely choice, his restrained, internal performance became iconic and launched him into international stardom.

Throughout the 1970s, Pacino delivered a remarkable run of performances, including: *Serpico* (1973), *The Godfather Part II* (1974), *Dog Day Afternoon* (1975) and *Justice for All* (1979).

After a quieter period in the 1980s, he experienced a major resurgence in the 1990s with films such as: *The Godfather Part III* (1990), *Scent of a Woman* (1992), for which he won the Academy Award for Best Actor, *Carlito's Way* (1993), *Heat* (1995).



Pacino continued to balance film, theatre, and television work, earning acclaim for performances in *Angels in America*, *The Irishman*, and numerous stage productions. He is widely regarded as one of the greatest actors in the history of American cinema.

Al Pacino has never married, a choice he has often attributed to his deep devotion to acting and personal independence. He has four children: Julie Marie Pacino (born 1989), with acting coach Jan Tarrant, Anton James Pacino and Olivia Rose Pacino (twins, born 2001), with actress Beverly D'Angelo, Roman Pacino (born 2023), with producer Noor Alfallah.

Pacino has spoken openly about how fatherhood later in life grounded him and gave him a renewed sense of purpose.

Despite his intense screen persona, Pacino is known to be thoughtful, introspective, and deeply private. His primary passion outside of film remains theatre, which he considers the purest form of acting. He is also an avid reader, particularly of classic literature and poetry, and has a long-standing interest in Shakespeare.

Pacino is a devoted New York Yankees fan and has a love for Italian culture, food, and history. Friends often describe him as warm, humorous, and intellectually curious, with a lifelong hunger for artistic exploration rather than celebrity.

Al Pacino's career spans more than six decades, marked by fearless performances, emotional depth, and unwavering commitment to his craft. From struggling Bronx youth to cinematic legend, his life story reflects both artistic obsession and remarkable resilience. He remains a defining figure of modern acting—an artist who transformed American film by bringing raw humanity to the screen.

#### **And 100 years back - January 1926**

**9 Jan** - The Navy League of the United States released a report finding the United States Navy to be unprepared for war and well short of the tonnage limitation set by the Washington Naval Treaty.

**10 Jan** - In the U.S., the capsizing of the four-masted schooner Prinz Valdemar blocked all ship traffic in and out of Biscayne Bay and the harbour of Miami, Florida. The 35-year-old Danish ship was stranded on a sandbar at low tide when it became top-heavy and tipped over. Two ocean liners, the George Washington and the Seneca, were unable to leave, and other ships at sea were unable to sail in.

**17 Jan** - Twenty-year-old Ayn Rand left Russia, departing from Leningrad by train. Her early life experiences in Communist Russia were a major influence on her philosophy.

On 17 January 1926, a twenty-year-old woman named Ayn Rand boarded a train departing Leningrad, leaving behind the country of her birth and the revolutionary society that had shaped—and scarred—her early life. Her destination was the United States. Though little known at the time, this quiet departure would later be understood as a decisive turning point in the life of one of the 20th century's most controversial and influential political philosophers.

Ayn Rand was born Alisa Zinovyevna Rosenbaum in 1905 in St. Petersburg, then part of Imperial Russia. Her childhood began in comfort and relative privilege. Her father was a successful pharmacist, and the family valued education, literature, and intellectual ambition. This stability was shattered by the Russian Revolution of 1917.



When the Bolsheviks seized power, Rand's family business was confiscated by the state, and the Rosenbaums were reduced to poverty almost overnight. Food shortages, political violence, and ideological repression became part of daily life. Rand witnessed firsthand the effects of collectivization, state control, and the subordination of individual lives to political doctrine.



These experiences left an indelible mark on her thinking.

As a teenager and young adult, Rand studied history and philosophy at the University of Petrograd, where Marxist ideology dominated academic life. She found the enforced conformity and ideological orthodoxy suffocating. Even at this early stage, she rejected collectivism and developed a fierce belief in individualism, reason, and personal freedom—ideas that ran directly counter to the prevailing Communist worldview.

In 1925, Rand obtained permission to leave the Soviet Union on the pretext of visiting relatives in the United States. Such permission was rare and difficult to secure. On January 17, 1926, she departed by train from Leningrad, carrying little more than personal belongings and a determination never to return. She would later say that she left Russia “with no intention of ever seeing it again.”

After traveling through Europe, Rand arrived in New York City the following month. She was struck immediately by the scale, energy, and promise of America—an impression that would deeply influence her writing. Within months, she moved to Hollywood, initially working as a film extra and screenwriter. There, she reinvented herself entirely, adopting the name Ayn Rand and committing herself to a literary career.

Rand’s later novels, including *We the Living*, *The Fountainhead*, and *Atlas Shrugged*, draw heavily on her early experiences in Soviet Russia. Her portrayal of totalitarianism, the crushing of the individual, and the moral dangers of state power are rooted not in theory alone but in lived experience. Her philosophy of Objectivism, which champions rational self-interest, capitalism, and individual rights, emerged directly from what she had seen lost under Communist rule.

The train ride out of Leningrad in January 1926 marked more than a physical journey—it was a philosophical crossing. Ayn Rand left behind a society that demanded ideological obedience and entered one that allowed her to think, write, and argue freely. For better or worse, the ideas she developed afterward would shape political debates, literary culture, and philosophical discourse for generations.

**24 Jan** - The first successful journey across Africa by motorcar from south to north was completed by Chaplin Court Treatt and Stella Court Treatt as they arrived in Cairo in Egypt, one year, four months and 11 days after they had departed from Cape Town on September 13, 1924.



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#### **Driving the Length of a Continent: The Court Treatts’ Epic African Journey**

*Court Treatt in 1924, dressed for the expedition*

On September 13, 1924, at a time when large parts of Africa were unmapped by roads and reliable infrastructure was virtually non-existent, Chaplin Court Treatt and his wife, Stella Court Treatt, set out from Cape Town on an ambitious and unprecedented journey. Their goal was nothing less than to drive a motorcar the full length of the African continent—from south to north—a feat many considered impossible.

The journey tested both human endurance and mechanical limits. The Court Treatts faced deep sand, swamps, dense bush, rivers without bridges, extreme heat, illness, and long stretches without supplies or assistance. Progress was often painfully slow, with days spent digging their vehicle out of mud or scouting safe routes forward. Stella Court Treatt played a vital role in the expedition, navigating, recording their experiences, and enduring the same physical hardships as her husband—an extraordinary achievement for the era.

After one year, four months, and eleven days on the road, the Court Treatts finally arrived in Cairo, Egypt, completing the first successful motorcar crossing of Africa from south to north. Their arrival marked a milestone in the history of exploration and motoring, demonstrating both the possibilities of modern technology and the sheer determination required to conquer a continent.



**26 Jan** - Scottish inventor John Logie Baird demonstrated a mechanical television system for members of the Royal Institution and a reporter from The Times at his London laboratory.

### **John Logie Baird and the First Public Demonstration of Television**

On 26 January 1926, Scottish inventor John Logie Baird achieved a breakthrough that would forever change the way the world communicates and consumes information. In a small laboratory in London, Baird demonstrated a working mechanical television system to members of the Royal Institution and a reporter from The Times.

Using a system of rotating discs, photocells, and light-sensitive components, Baird was able to transmit moving images—crude by modern standards, but unmistakably recognizable. Faces appeared in flickering, low-resolution form, proving for the first time that television was not merely a theoretical concept but a practical reality.

The demonstration was met with cautious fascination. While the technology was still in its infancy, the implications were profound. News, entertainment, education, and culture could one day be transmitted instantly into homes, collapsing distances and reshaping daily life. The Times reported on the event, helping to bring Baird's achievement to wider public attention.

Though mechanical television would soon be overtaken by electronic systems, Baird's 1926 demonstration stands as a foundational moment in broadcasting history—a rare instance when the future arrived quietly, in a modest laboratory, witnessed by only a handful of people, yet destined to transform the world.

**31 Jan** - Italy's Chamber of Deputies reinforced the personal power of Benito Mussolini by passing "Law Number 100", establishing that Italy's Prime Minister had the right to issue judicial norms without previous consultation with the parliament.

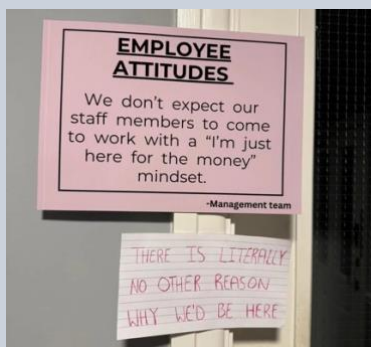


## Tattler –

### Quiz Answers

- 1) Poirot
- 2) Enid Blyton
- 3) Nancy Drew
- 4) James Bond
- 5) To Kill a Mockingbird
- 6) Alexander Dumas
- 7) Spade
- 8) Jonathan Swift
- 9) Little Woman
- 10) Peter

### Some clever/weird/unusual signs



A wife asks her husband, a software engineer...  
 "Could you please go shopping for me and buy one carton of milk, and if they have eggs, get 6!" A short time later the husband comes back with 6 cartons of milk. The wife asks him, "Why the hell did you buy 6 cartons of milk?" He replied, "They had eggs."



Two engineering students were biking across a university campus when one said, "Where did you get such a great bike?"  
 The second engineer replied, "Well, I was walking along yesterday, minding my own business, when a beautiful woman rode up on this bike, threw it to the ground, took off all her clothes and said, "Take what you want."  
 The first engineer nodded approvingly and said, "Good choice: The clothes probably wouldn't have fitted you anyway."

**Bonus video funny - (age-wise) most suitable for many of our members, including me! - Andy Huggens Ladies and Gentlemen: Click on the image to watch.**



We really would value more feedback. Please feel free to comment or submit items. Our email addresses are [jonathanagolding@gmail.com](mailto:jonathanagolding@gmail.com) and [colettepatience@gmail.com](mailto:colettepatience@gmail.com)  
 Have a good month.