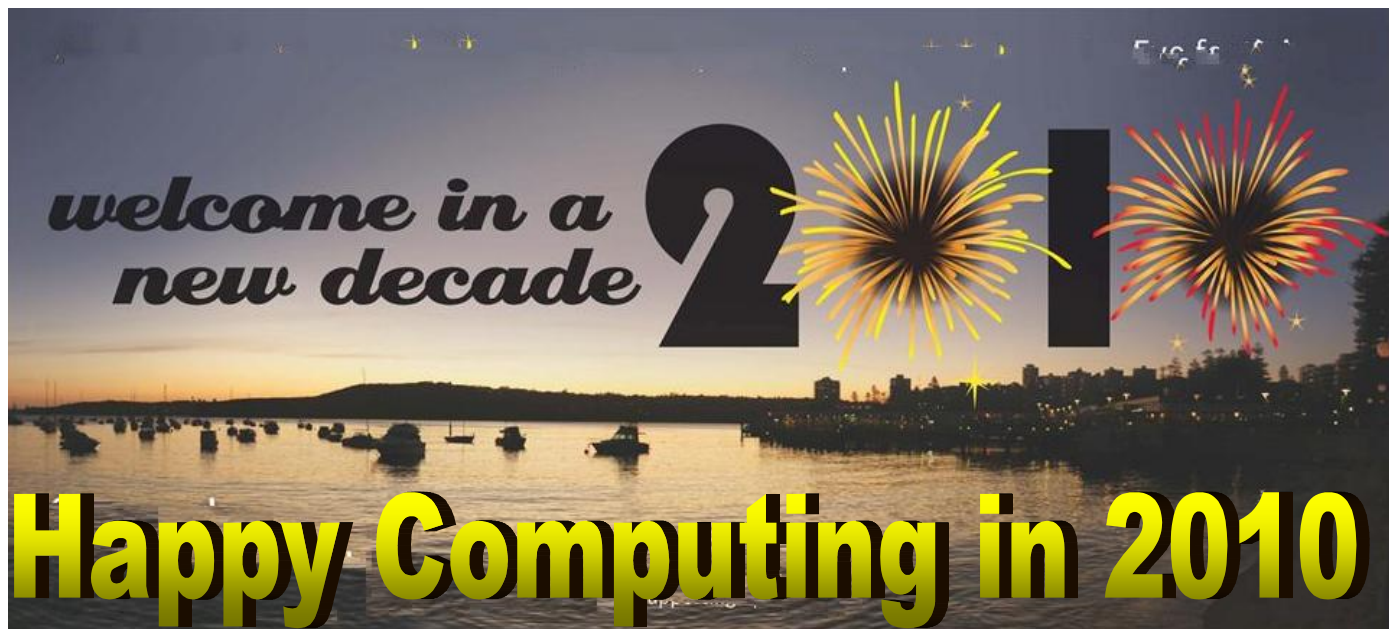


MANLY MOUSE

Newsletter of Computerpals for Seniors - Manly Inc.

February 2010



What does Windows 7 mean to YOU?

At the General Meeting to be held in the Manly Library Meeting Room on 11 February, Ted Hulbert will tell you about the new Windows operating system, Windows 7, and explain its main differences from Windows XP and Vista. He'll tell you the best way to upgrade from XP and Vista to Windows 7 and, if you want to use Windows 7 and keep your existing system, he'll show you how to do it. Ted will also describe the email problems you might face because Windows 7 does not have a resident email program such as Outlook Express.



You can't afford to miss this talk especially if you already have Windows 7 on your computer or you are thinking of installing it.

Next meeting Windows 7 Special Thursday 11 February

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Manly had fireworks on New Year's Eve but we didn't need fireworks for our sizzling Christmas Party. Jack introduced our special guest Councilor Adele Heasman who gave a charming speech showing she understood both the need for computer training and the difficulties. Later she mingled with members who enjoyed chatting to her. Two tables of delicious food were provided by members - thank you all.. There was a not-too-difficult quiz and then the prizes were presented. A great afternoon thanks to the happy spirit of the members - a good start to Christmas and the new year.



The President's Column

I would like to welcome all new club members and also those returning after the Christmas break. During that break several members of your committee have been busy giving the computers their annual clean-up. Our thanks go to Bob Bellini who provided his expertise and time in this work and to Ted Hulbert in obtaining new software, particularly Windows 7.

The new operating system, Windows 7, is now being put onto the Club's computers together with applications such as Microsoft Office, which includes Word, Excel and PowerPoint; also Skype, Picasa and other popular programs are being installed on the new operating system. It is intended that each computer will be able to run XP, Vista and Windows 7 by simply selecting the required operating system when the computer boots up. By default the computers will boot into Windows 7.

The Club intends XP and Windows 7 to be the main systems used in tutoring. For those of you who run Vista on your desktop or laptop PC, don't worry, Windows 7 is not too dissimilar to Vista in its operating characteristics and you will be shown the important differences.

There is quite a bit of superfluous equipment in the club room, for instance, there are printers, USB dongles, books, chairs, etc. and the suggestion has been made that the club should have a garage sale so that members may have the opportunity to buy this surplus equipment at attractive prices. Your feedback on this suggestion is wanted.

On a more personal note I think I write on behalf of all of us when I wish former tutor and committee member, Elaine Clark, bon voyage and best wishes as she and her husband, Mike, move to Queensland. Also, it is good to report that our stalwart treasurer, Noel McKee, is back on his feet again after some major surgery. Welcome back Noel.

I hope to see many of you at the Club's General Meeting on 11 February

Jack Newton



Love my Kindle

"I'm not a gadget person but I just LOOVE my Kindle" boomed the friendly voice of Oprah Winfrey.

"I want one of those", I shrieked as my sticky fingers found their way to Amazon.com to place an order. Alas, it would be another 12 months before the U.S. backlog was cleared and ordering to other countries could commence.

I finally ordered on 1st December 2009 and five days later I was frantically ripping open my long awaited Kindle.



The hardest part was bending down with a dodgy knee to plug it into the USB (don't use a wall adapter because it won't work).

Three hours later, fully charged and rearing to go, both the Kindle and me, I ordered my first book. Actually I ordered 20!! Too easy.

It comes with a simple instruction book in large print. You can't go wrong. Believe

me, if there was a way to muck it up, I would have found it.

The 5 way control button operated like a mouse. The text key changes the font size for those that need it. Text can also be read by either a male or female voice. The basic instructions cover everything you need to get going. A more comprehensive set of instructions are on the Kindle itself.

If you delete a book it can be retrieved at a later date. Now that's rather good of Amazon.

I give it the "thumbs up" in all departments. Indeed I have to restrain myself from grabbing my pen knife, rushing out to the nearest tree and hacking out on the bark, "I love my kindle."

Rosemary Taplin (former member)

Brian Winter

We are sad to tell you that tutor Brian Winter passed away 16 December 2009. Brian was always helpful to the club, tutoring regularly for several years until recently when he still willingly stood in whenever required. We will miss him, particularly at the general meetings where it was always a pleasure to chat to him. We send our sympathy to his wife, Adele, and his family.

The following letter appeared in the Sydney Morning Herald Traveller Section

When my husband died last June I wrote to an airline with a copy of his death certificate and asked them to delete his details from their frequent-flyer program.

But emails with his points status continued. After a couple of further attempts to stop them, without success, I contacted the airline stating that my husband had not passed on, over or away but had died.

I received an email saying: "Hello William. Thank you for updating your details with us."

At least the emails stopped. N S

We asked N S if we could print her letter. She replied:

While my letter amused many friends, they were also amazed at the insensitivity that some organisations can have in the circumstances. This airline wasn't the only one either, but of course it was their response that was so incredible.

I'm also finding, as a freshly minted widow, that some people are taking me for a fool. This is outrageous and I've decided to be more proactive in standing up for myself. One man yesterday, would never have dreamed of talking to my husband as he did to me, so I've had to write a letter setting the situation right and I don't think he'll be so manipulative or demeaning again.

I must say too, that my original letter was much better written than the version that went in the paper. I'm an English teacher and was annoyed at the poor editing, but the message did get across, so if it helps or encourages others to take similar action that's good.

It is quite likely that some of our members have experienced such insensitivity. In this case it may be 'explained' by blaming the computer program that wrote the email but surely it should be possible for a program to be written which recognises the word death. Speak up if you can!



Play your cards right

Many travellers have had the shock of coming home to discover they have been charged repeated fees for making ATM withdrawals and for foreign-currency conversions on purchases.

To the rescue come prepaid money cards that allow you to spend your own money, at locked-in exchange rates, for much more reasonable fees.



Tourist trap ... gaining access to your money via ATMs is a hidden cost of travel abroad.

Foreign-exchange specialist Travelex has had a basic Cash Passport available for some time and recently launched an enhanced version, while the Commonwealth Bank has just unveiled a Travel Money Card in conjunction with MasterCard. The Commonwealth has upped the ante by allowing travellers to load up to six currencies onto one card, making it ideal for people heading to multiple destinations. A prepaid travel card works like this: you load it with your own money (up to \$25,000) in whatever currency or currencies you're going to need. Currencies available on travel cards include Euros, British pounds, South African rand and US, Australian, New Zealand, Canadian, Singapore and Hong Kong dollars. You can have a basic card that allows you to draw money at ATMs around the world, or one that can also be used for purchases, in the way you would normally use a credit card. A flat fee is charged for each ATM withdrawal you make using a travel card, usually about \$3.50, but you're not charged for purchases, as you're making the purchase in local currency (pre-loaded onto your card).

If you use your travel card to make direct purchases wherever possible and limit ATM transactions to the occasional withdrawal, you incur limited fees.

There are some set-up and reloading fees but these are minimal in comparison with those involved in using a standard credit or ATM card overseas.

Apart from reducing fees, the biggest benefit of travel money cards is security. The cards are PIN protected and difficult to use without authorisation. They also save you from having to hand over your regular credit card (which can be skimmed or stored). A travel card is not linked to your bank accounts in any way. *SMH*

Mobiles to gain greater capacity

THE mobile-phone industry will gain access to vital wireless capacity under the proposed reallocation of a chunk of radio spectrum.

The Australian Communications and Media Authority yesterday released a discussion paper recommending that the spectrum be largely turned over to mobile phone companies hungry for the capacity to service the rising number of smartphone users.

The 2.5 gigahertz band is at present used by media companies for electronic news gathering, particularly outside broadcasts by free-to-air television stations. But there is an international push to turn the band over uniformly to mobile use.

The ACMA paper arrives a week after the Federal Government released a paper discussing possible uses for a separate slab of spectrum, which will be highly sought after by Optus, Telstra and Vodafone/Hutchison, which crave more capacity to service the boom in data-hungry smartphones, such as the BlackBerry and iPhone.



ACMA, the government agency responsible for the regulation of broadcasting, the internet, radio communications and telecommunications, said the most profitable use of the spectrum would be to open most of it up to the mobile companies, while at the same time guaranteeing the news organisations access to part of the 2.5 GHz band or replacement spectrum.

The mobile phone industry unsurprisingly welcomed ACMA's recommendations, with Australian Mobile Telecommunications Association chief executive Chris Althaus saying: "There is no doubt that as demand pressures grow within our digital economy for 'any time, anywhere' connectivity, the mobile industry must gain timely access to new spectrum resources." Source: *The Age*

Tip: A quick way to add an attachment to an email is to drag the attachment over to your inbox and a new email will open with the attachment added. Just fill in the recipient's address and subject line, click send. *Cloudeight*



From SMH Column 8 "Aside from spellcheck disasters, what about mobile phone predictive text disasters?" wails a mortified Graham Hannaford, of Forster. "I am a big fan of predictive text, but it has let me down severely in the recent past. I was awoken in the early hours one morning to the sound of an incoming text message from a newly acquainted lady friend, inquiring as to my current whereabouts. Still half asleep, I replied by text 'I am home in bed'. Imagine my horror while checking my sent messages later to realise that the four single keystrokes for 'home' are the same as those for 'good', and the latter was the phone's first choice!"

Also in Column 8: A word of warning on high-tech communications, courtesy of Peter Nelson of Pymont. "Talking about making mistakes with devices, do people realise that when finishing a Skype call on your computer, unless you consciously disconnect at the end, people can quite clearly still hear what is going on?"

Beware: a serious threat to Internet Explorer

You may have read in the newspaper that a bug has emerged in Internet Explorer in the last week so serious that the governments of both France and Germany have advised their citizens to switch to an alternative browser until Microsoft get a chance to fix the problem. At the time of writing there had been no such advice from the British government. So is the problem really that serious? According to an updated security bulletin from Microsoft, the problem applies to IE6, 7 and 8 on Windows 7, Vista and XP, so it definitely is a problem. In addition, code that exploits the flaw is freely available and can allow a hacker to easily run malicious code on a vulnerable system, and hackers are already using it to attack systems.

Microsoft released an emergency patch to fix the problem on Thursday, through the Windows Update Service. They are also taking the opportunity afforded by the security bug to quite brazenly try to get people to upgrade to Windows 7. So the question is, what should you do? You should definitely install the latest Windows Updates by visiting the update site :<http://windowsupdate.microsoft.com>

Until the fuss dies down, we'd also advise that you listen to the French and German governments, and switch to an alternative browser such as Firefox, at least temporarily. You can get the latest version of Firefox here:

<http://www.mozilla-europe.org/en/firefox/> *Windows Advisor*

Bluetooth and wireless technology

Bluetooth is a wireless technology that is more associated with mobiles than with computers. Bluetooth allows you to attach devices to mobiles, computers, iPods, car audio systems, etc. without wires. In order to use a Bluetooth device it must be "paired" with a Bluetooth enabled device. You can buy Bluetooth enabled keyboards, mice, headsets, printers, cams and Internet phones for your computer - as long as your computer is Bluetooth enabled or capable. Even if your computer is not Bluetooth capable you can make it so by buying a Bluetooth adapter.

A wireless router is a router that you connect to your cable or ADSL modem that takes the modem's wired internet signal and converts it to a wireless signal so that you can connect to the Internet with any computer or laptop that has a wireless card or wireless USB adapter that is within range of the router. Most wireless routers also have four inputs so that you can connect a computer near the router by a network cable too. Now you maybe thinking - wait, the Bluetooth lets you connect wirelessly and so does a wireless router - what's the difference? A Bluetooth-enabled device can be paired with selected Bluetooth-enabled devices - and it must be paired with each device - whereas a wireless router is a transmitter that transmits a signal that can be picked up by any wireless computer or laptop within range. Think of a wireless router as a radio transmitter. A radio transmitter transmits a signal that can be picked up by any radio within range. Essentially your wireless-enabled laptop or desktop computer is like a radio - it receives the signal - and you connect to the Internet. And, with today's wireless router's range being so broad, if you don't encrypt your wireless signal, anyone within range of your wireless router can connect to the Internet too. Fortunately, the new wireless routers make encrypting your wireless router's signal much more easy than older wireless routers - so it's easy for most people to set up. We strongly recommend that if you do use a wireless router you use encryption. Each manufacturer of wireless routers has different protocols for setting up encryption - be sure to read the instructions and documentation that come with your wireless router carefully with regard to encryption.

Cloudeight

To free up disk space, Outlook Express can compact messages. This may take up to a few minutes. What's going on? Does Outlook Express want to delete your old emails? What Does Compacting Messages Mean, and What Happens? When you delete an email in Outlook Express, it is moved to the Deleted Items folder. The message disappears from its original folder, and when you empty the trash, it disappears from there, too. Deletion merely hides the messages from view. Of course, having all your deleted messages still on disk means a lot of space that can be reclaimed is wasted over time, and if Outlook Express has to keep track of too many obsolete messages this itself can mean a slowdown of certain actions. So Outlook Express tries to remove these deleted emails physically from time to time. This it calls "compacting". Every 100 times you close Outlook Express, you are asked to start that process.

Compacting folders from time to time is essential. **Even more essential is that the process can be completed without interruption.**



Truisms recommended by Bob Bellini

No Backup?

"Those who do not archive the past are condemned to re-type it." - Garfinkel and Spafford

Buying on Price?

"The anguish of low quality lingers long after the sweetness of low cost is forgotten." -

Unknown author, suggested by Peter Gregory

Skipping software updates and Low Quality Antivirus/ Spyware

"Security is always excessive until it's not enough." - Robbie Sinclair, Country Energy, NSW Australia

IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND A CLASS PLEASE PHONE THE CLUB 9976 0930 AND ADVISE THE DUTY TUTOR TO ALTER LIST AND ALSO PLEASE TELL YOUR TUTOR.

Tutors' Roster (subject to change)		
Monday	9 am - 1 pm 1 pm - 5 pm	Graham Clark & Lyn Nicholls Arthur Johnson & Ron Peerless
Tuesday	9 am - 1 pm 1 pm - 5 pm	Philip Bratel & Wally Gora Lyllal McNeish & Tony Wu
Wednesday	9 am - 1 pm 1 pm - 5 pm	Ted Hulbert & Bridget Mahoney Harry Aguero & Elaine Johns
Thursday	9 am - 1 pm 1 pm - 5 pm	Dorothy Peters & Jack Newton Special Courses
Friday	9 am - 1 pm 9 am - 5 pm	Ern Cohen & Hugh Walker Bob Bellini Mac only

Welcome to new members:
Barry BRADLEY; Margaret CARPENTER; Jennifer DOUGLAS; Gary MARTIN; Gordon MONTGOMERY; Marina USHAKOV; Ila WHARTON; Warwick WHARTON

If you are not listed here you will be next month.

The assistance provided by Manly Council to Manly Computerpals is gratefully acknowledged.



Our Website is kept up to date by Graham and includes photos, latest news and recent and earlier copies of the Manly Mouse.

www.manlycompals.org.au

Disclaimers

Members who bring equipment such as a laptop computer or digital camera to the Club do so at their own risk and Computerpals accepts no responsibility for damages or loss.

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