

Club Notices February 2022

A Commodore 64 challenge for Melb PC

Harry Lewis

Melb PC was approached recently by local poet Ted Holmes. Between 1999 and 2001 Ted published three volumes of poems. For publication at the time he presented his publisher with 3.5" Commodore 64 floppy disks. Ted's reason for his approach to Melb PC was his hope to have the contents of the surviving disks converted to a form in which he can pass it for publication on the internet.

Ted is now 100 years old. I append a transcript of his CV from one of his books.

We accepted his challenge. We now have custody of six 3.5" floppy disks which he tells us include all the poems published in his three books. We are wondering if among our membership there might be someone who still has the key resources to enable Ted's disks to be read and then interpreted into a modern file format.

Preliminary research (and discussion in Yammer) suggests that the conversion requires a computer that can read the disks (as any surviving Commodore 64 with 3.5" floppy drive can do, and others can apparently be persuaded to do with special hardware support) and software to create a C64 disk image for converting into a usable format. We have found programs claiming to perform the final conversion, but the earlier tasks seem more difficult to achieve.

If you are able to help in this project please post to this Yammer thread:

<https://www.yammer.com/melbpc.org.au/threads/1339600743219200>

or to send an email message to Harry Lewis (halewis@melbpc.org.au).

Ted Holmes CV (from his volume 'Millennium Shift: Poems for the People', Spectrum Publications, 2000)

Born in 1921, Ted Holmes was educated at Scotch College and the University of Melbourne. Graduating in Commerce, he worked as an accountant in industry, chartered accounting, Melbourne Olympic Games Committee 1956-57; as a public relations officer and finance officer, Snowy Mountains Authority, Cooma; lecturer, Melbourne University and performance management adviser with the Victorian Government. He is a widower with two surviving daughters. In retirement, and through his poetry writing which post-dates the deaths of his wife Audrey and daughter Gill in 1997, he is encouraging people to live adventurously.

Call for Home Visit Volunteers

Cedric Wyndham

While most (more than 99%) of the requests for computing and phone assistance are handled over the phone by iHelp or Dial Help, or by the member visiting a SIG, or referral to a non-club expert person or organisation, some problems require a volunteer to visit the member. In the latter case the member needing assistance often has health problems that prevent him/her visiting a SIG or commercial computer repair shop, also they may find it hard to afford a commercial service.

These are situations where the Home Visit Assist program is called on. But my list of volunteers I can call on, has shrunk in recent times, for various reasons, so this is a request for a few more.

Details

I try to find a volunteer within 20mins driving time of the client member. I have reasonable coverage of the Waverley-Brighton region, which is the “centre of gravity” of our membership. But I would appreciate a few more in many other areas.

I have nil volunteers west of Sydney road (Keilor, Werribee, etc), poor coverage of Frankston and Peninsula area, same for outer East such as Belgrave, also outer North.

Most volunteers would do less than a job a year, but each job can be time consuming - often the computer has a lot more problems than the problem identified over the phone.

Anyone who is interested please contact me, also anyone that wants to know more of what is involved please get in touch. I don't have an IT background, and volunteers don't need that. If you have spent much time in club activities, attending monthly or SIG meetings, and use modern technology for hobbies or work, you have probably picked up sufficient knowledge. When you are doing a job, advice and assistance will be available at the end of your phone.

At present we need to ask that all HVA volunteers meet Victoria's definition of fully vaccinated as at the time of the visit. In brief the current requirement is double vaccinated or an acceptable exemption.

Please email me at cwyndham@melbpc.org.au for more information.