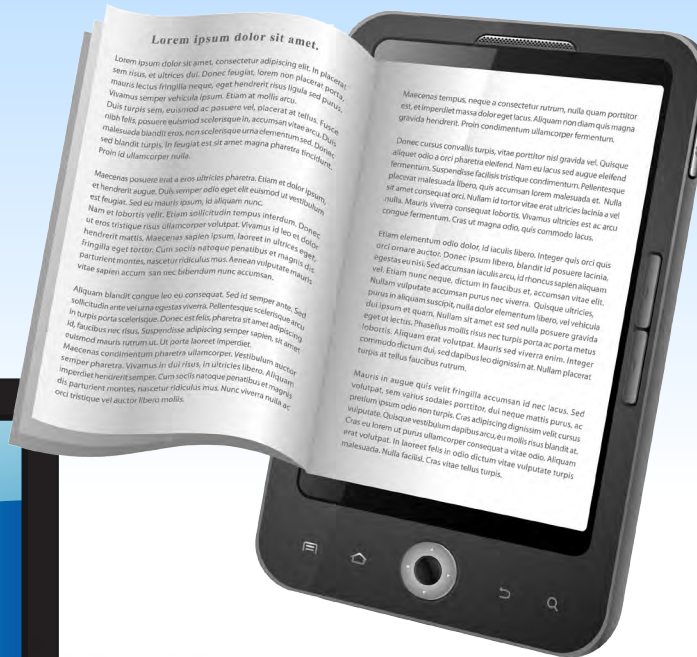
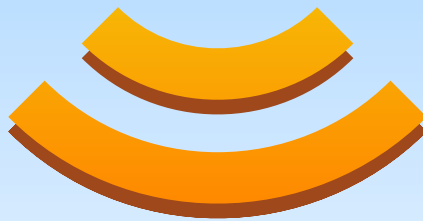


Official Magazine of the MELBOURNE PC USER GROUP INC.

PC UPDATE

Applications in the cloud: weighing up the pros and cons of subscription software.

Read any good e-books lately?



Plus:

- Model rules
- Information overload
- My life with computers:
from punch cards to HTML
- Local and Special Interest Groups



THE PURPOSES OF THE GROUP are to conduct, on a non-profit basis, activities aimed at the effective utilisation of the personal computer and to endeavour to achieve such effective utilisation by means of:

- Advancing computer literacy
- Advancing the art and science of information processing through education and interchange of ideas
- Keeping members abreast of developments in computing and information technology and enabling members to exchange information and experience
- Representing computer users in public debate and by acting and speaking on their behalf where they would be affected by proposed legislation or other regulatory measures
- Providing a forum for the exchange of views among computer users and between computer users and the computer industry
- Co-operating supporting or joining with, or in, other organisations with similar purposes
- Undertaking other activities beneficial to the Group

In order to further its purposes the Group shall have the rights, powers and privileges of a natural person.

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Erin D'Arcy

FIRST AID & INTERNET HELP LINE

(03) 9276 4088 (10am-3pm)

This line is answered only when a volunteer is available between 10am-3pm Monday to Friday. Outside these hours please leave a brief message and your membership details. An iHelp team member will call you back when available. Alternatively please refer to the Dial Help listing.

ONLINE SERVICES

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Internet Service | Melbourne Local Access (03) 9697 4000 |
| Intranet Service | Melbourne Local Access (03) 9697 4004 |
| Melb PC Home Page | http://www.melbpc.org.au |
| Internet Services Page | http://www.melbpc.org.au/isp/ |
| Internet Help Service Page | http://ihelp.melbpc.org.au/helpdesk/iuser/index.asp |

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All authors must lodge a complete submission form (available from <http://www.melbpc.org.au/pcupdate/authorrelease.htm>) that confirms the article is previously unpublished and original content, and grants Melbourne PC User Group Incorporated the right to publish the article on one or more occasions on any medium, including print and the internet; the right to edit the article and permit republication by non-profit organisations. If this is not the first publication, the author must have re-publishing rights, and grant Melbourne PC User Group Incorporated the above rights.

SUBMISSIONS

Email your submissions as file attachments to editorpc@melbpc.org.au. Standard document formats are accepted (Eg .txt, .rtf, .doc, .docx). Please keep formatting to a minimum.

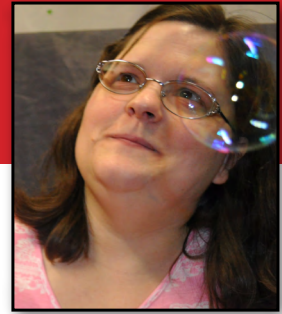
GRAPHICS

Accompanying graphics should be separate high-quality JPG or PNG attachments – NOT embedded in the document. Just indicate in the text where they should appear.

CLOSING DATE

PC Update magazine submission deadline is the end of the second week of the preceding month, unless other arrangements are made with the editor.

PC Update Editor's Report March 2013



By Katharine Shade

There's just so much to read, and not enough time to read it all! And that's just the non-fiction; I haven't read any novels for a long time, which is really starting to frustrate me.

With so much compelling content at our fingertips demanding to be consumed, an important skill in this technological age is how we process it.

I don't just mean sorting through the rubbish (oh, so much rubbish!) to get to the interesting and accurate information, but actually deciding *what* to read.

Yes, that article in *The Age* online on the latest technological gadgets looks interesting, but there's 10 other tabs in the browser from this morning with articles to read, it's 11am already and I'm yet to start work...

I mentioned Instapaper last month, which is a very handy way of collating my text into a read later digital pile. It keeps track of what I've read and articles I mark as favourites and is synced across all my devices.

That's all well and good... if I had time to actually read everything in that particular slush pile. I have other daily reading priorities, which include:

- Email: work, social, emailed newsletters, children-related correspondence.
- Facebook: It has mostly sup-planted email and instant messaging for communication with family and

friends.

- Newsgroups: Melb PC newsgroups of course!
- TweetDeck: I have never embraced it for broadcasting messages, but I do "follow" a few people.
- Feedler Pro: An RSS reader which keeps all my RSS feeds in one place for reading on my iPhone or iPad Mini, and fed into by my Google subscriptions.
- Electronic books: Digital stacks of them are sitting on my Kindle account, which is accessible via my computers, iPad Mini, iPhone and the actual Kindle device.
- Fiction/non-fiction books – the paper kind: piled up around the house. Library books often go back to the library late and unread, despite my best intentions (I consider my fines a donation to the wonderful library system we have in this country).
- Correspondence via (snail) mail. I still receive items in the post, so there are physical as well as electronic piles to sort through (although less than in the past thanks to email and setting up direct debits).

[Cont...]



[Continued]

There are a few different skills required to get through it as efficiently as possible. Being a fast reader is a good start, as is the ability to skim-read to get to the most pertinent sections (although "speed reading" per se isn't much chop from what I understand).

The less time spent futzing around with different software to collect and read your material the better. An RSS reader can draw from many different sources, saving you from going to individual web pages to keep updated with news, blogs, articles and so on.

Instapaper and/or Evernote help to keep your total number of read later piles to a minimum (even if they are a mile high).

Learning how your email program can use rules to filter incoming messages into different folders can really help keep your electronic correspondence in order. Although beware the tendency for the out of sight, out of mind issue, where folders full of "to do" emails sit there slowly filling up as you struggle with keeping up with just your inbox.

I still use the old dinosaur Outlook Express on my desktop, which is my main machine. It works well for my purposes, particularly as I have spent a lot of time carefully setting up my rules and folders.

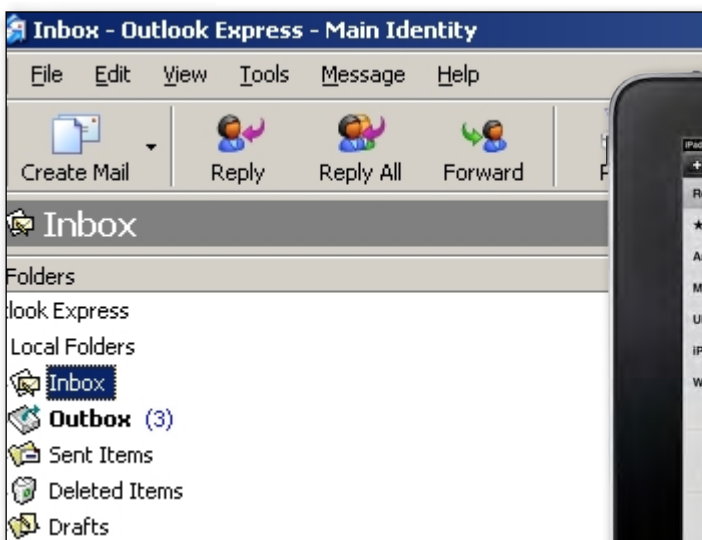
While I use the Gmail browser interface on my

laptop, and will use it on my desktop for searching through my email, Outlook Express just feels more comfortable for me when it comes to reading, writing and sorting email. Having an in-built newsreader helps too.

I keep my five email accounts together by routing them all through Gmail. This is particularly useful when I need to search my mail – even with my carefully constructed hierarchy of folders in Outlook Express, it can still be very hard to find a specific message. The search facility within Outlook Express is pretty limited, as well as rather flaky on my system – it often gives out of memory messages.

Searching via Gmail means that I can use the various Google search tips and tricks I've learnt over the years and I don't have to be tied down to my desktop system for the Outlook Express.

Now excuse me, I must go. I'm behind with my email, there's a few books I just have to download from the Amazon Kindle store, I have some (late) library books to return, there's at least five months of reading material in my Instapaper account, I have some more RSS feeds to subscribe to, and I want to search through the recipes I've been clipping into Evernote for something to cook for dinner tonight. Mercy! ☹

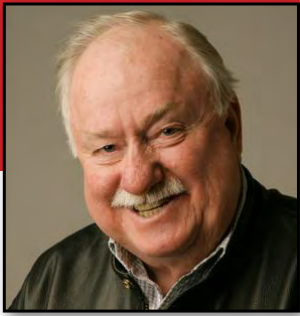




What's On In March 2013

JS12

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|--|--|---|--|---|
| 31 | <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Colour Codes</p> <p>Black: SIG meetings at Melb PC H.Q. Moorabbin. Blue: SIG meetings held at other locations. Yellow Box: No SIG meeting.</p> </div> <p>Full details of "Special Interest Group" activities, meeting times and training course information in the magazine.</p> | | | | 1 Essendon <i>(Main Meeting 9.30am)</i> Multimedia (MHE) <i>(Wadham House 10am)</i> | 2 |
| 3 | 4 Melb PC Committee | 5 North East Genealogy <i>(10am - 12.45pm)</i> | 6 Monthly Meeting Melb PC H.Q. Moorabbin 7pm sharp <i>and afterwards the WAFFLE SIG</i> Video Production <i>(Sony Vegas 10am)</i> | 7 AdobeVideo <i>(1.30pm - 4pm)</i> Ballarat <i>(7.30pm - 9.45pm)</i> Sunbury Daytime <i>(New Users 9.30am)</i> | 8 Casey PC <i>(Hampton Park 12.30pm - 3pm)</i> Essendon <i>(Open Forum 9.30am)</i> Ripper <i>(Hardware Wadham House 10am)</i> | 9 Making Money On The Internet <i>(10am - 12noon)</i> Microcontroller Workshop <i>(11am - 4pm)</i> |
| 10 East Workshop <i>(10am - 2pm)</i> | 11 Access <i>(6.30pm - 8.30pm)</i> Linux <i>(6.30pm - 9pm)</i> Peninsula <i>(New Users 4pm)</i> Wyndham <i>(General 7.30pm - 9.30pm)</i> Public Holiday Labour Day | 12 Everything Apple <i>(2pm - 4pm)</i> WASINT <i>(10.30am - 12.30pm)</i> | 13 Communications <i>(7pm - 9.30pm)</i> Microcontroller <i>(7pm - 9.30pm)</i> East <i>(7.30pm - 10pm)</i> | 14 E-Book <i>(7pm - 9.30pm)</i> NeDay GIG <i>(Photography - Digital Imaging 10am)</i> Sunbury Daytime <i>(New Users 9.30am)</i> | 15 Essendon <i>(Check website for meeting details. 9.30am)</i> Ripper <i>(Digital Photo W'shop Wadham House 10am)</i> | 16 |
| 17 MACE <i>(10am - 2pm)</i> Beginners East <i>(10am - 12.30pm)</i> Genealogy <i>(1pm - 3.30pm)</i> Macedon Ranges <i>(Gisborne 2pm - 4pm)</i> | 18 Graphics <i>(7pm - 9.30pm)</i> Nth Subs Linux <i>(7.30pm - 9.30pm)</i> Peninsula <i>(Main Meeting 9.30am Graphics 12.30pm Genealogy 2.30pm)</i> | 19 Wyndham <i>(Multimedia 7.30pm)</i> | 20 Everything iPad / iPhone <i>(2pm - 4pm)</i> Android <i>(Ivanhoe 10am)</i> Melb PC Marketing <i>(sub-committee 7.30pm)</i> | 21 Music <i>(7.30pm - 9.30pm)</i> Bayside <i>(10am - 12 noon)</i> Sunbury Daytime <i>(General Meeting 9.30am)</i> | 22 Retired and Interested Persons <i>(known as Ripper 10am)</i> Casey Workshop <i>(Hampton Park 10am - 12.30pm)</i> | 23 Microcontroller Workshop <i>(11am - 4pm)</i> |
| 24 Web Design <i>(2pm - 4pm)</i> | 25 Peninsula <i>(New Users 4pm Add Music To Your Computer)</i> Video Inner East <i>(Balwyn 7pm - 9.30pm)</i> | 26 Programming <i>(6.30pm - 9pm)</i> North East <i>(Evening 7.30pm - 9.30pm)</i> Yarra Ranges <i>(Meeting 9.15am Workshop 11.30am)</i> | 27 Video Production <i>(Pinnacle 9.30am)</i> Essendon <i>(7pm - 9pm)</i> | 28 Sunbury Daytime <i>(Maintenance 9.30am. Meeting also held on a 5th Thursday)</i> | 29 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>Have A Question Post It On ~anywhere</p> <p>http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~anywhere/</p> </div> Public Holiday Easter Good Friday | |



Melb PC President's Report

March 2013

By Charles Wright

The club's monthly meeting on 6 March is a particularly important one. The outcome of the Special General Meeting on the question of adopting the model rules included in the new Associations Incorporation Reform Act will determine the way we run the club in future.

I was very much involved in the original incorporation of Melb PC and I am particularly keen to ensure that we have a framework of rules and policies that protects the club and its members.

As I have pointed out at more than one monthly meeting, our rules did not serve us well last year, and they need to be tightened. The new rules include many changes that would prevent some of the questionable practices of last year and also ensure that the rights of members are well defined and protected.

We are obliged to change our rules to comply with the new legislation, and in my opinion, we should do so without delay.

Sharman Grant, an energetic member of the committee and a solicitor currently practising in the corporate area with the professional background to guide us through this process has prepared an FAQ on [page 18](#) which explains the effect of the new rules, and explores the issues and concerns that have been expressed by some members.

The committee is anxious to ensure that members should be able to consider opposing arguments, so we have asked another committee member, Harry Lewis, to prepare a "No" case (see [page 21](#)).

I am not sure that I understand all of Harry's

concerns, and I can't say that I share them, but it is fair to say that some members are reluctant to give up some of our existing rules.

Having discussed the issues with Sharman and Harry, my belief is that it is not at all clear that we have a choice. It does not seem likely to me that we can cherry-pick from the new requirements. It seems unlikely, given the intent of the regulators, that they would approve the retention of our existing quorum for general meetings and allow us to prevent members nominating for committee positions from the floor.

In my opinion, the requirement for a quorum of 10 per cent of the membership will protect us from the scenarios that have been raised by some opponents of the new rules, that an organised faction could use them to mount a "coup d'etat".

I firmly believe the club will benefit greatly from having 10 per cent of members attend general meetings either in person or virtually (we are looking at setting up the technology to allow video conferencing) or through a proxy.

To ensure that sort of interest, the committee is going to have to engage members in discussions and decision-making much more deeply than in the past. That is much more likely to encourage members also to stand for office. We all know that the fact that in the past we haven't required elections has contributed to the club's malaise.

I believe these rules will result in better communications and the development of a charter of members' rights, which I have been strongly advocating for several months.

I think that anyone who has been looking at the newsgroups or the web site or my monthly reports will appreciate that we have made some great steps towards improving communications.

The committee has demonstrated that it is much more open, actively seeking and responding to members' concerns and questions. The

financial reports and committee minutes are being made available even before they have been officially adopted by the committee. We are conducting surveys and issuing discussion papers so that we can obtain the broadest possible range of views and suggestions on key activities.

I think that Sharman's strategy of adopting the model rules to ensure that we comply with the Act, and develop policies and procedures to give us more flexibility is the right one.

A draft copy of a proposed policies and procedures document is already available at <http://ccedesign.com.au/melbpc/melbpc-landing-page.html>.

I hope that you will read the material provided in this issue of *PC Update* and that the motion to adopt these model rules will receive your support.

LAST MONTH we took a major step towards revitalising our Special Interest Groups with a Saturday afternoon conference of SIG convenors at Moorabbin. It was well organised by the SIG Co-ordinator, Jan Weiner, who has considerable experience as a convenor, with the assistance of Bill Dair, who chaired the event and was well attended by convenors and several members of the committee.

I took the opportunity to play devil's advocate and invite our co-ordinators to consider whether one of the statements we have cherished for years – that SIGS are the lifeblood of Melb PC – is really true.

I explained that the definition of "lifeblood" is "a vital and life-giving force" and suggested that perhaps the arteries that link Melb PC with its SIGs might be clogged: by indifference or neglect or in some hopefully tiny number of cases, by outright animosity.

The greatest impairment to the healthy circulation of ideas and energy that the club and its SIGs needs to survive, I suggested, was a failure of imagination, or the natural inclination to resist change.

In my view, we need better communications, not just from the club's administrators to the SIGs,

but also from the SIGs to the centre.

Everyone involved in SIGs is a potentially invaluable resource for the club, and we need to hear more of their ideas and concerns and tap their knowledge and enthusiasm.

While we have opened one or two new SIGs, we have also witnessed the closure of others, and we need to invest much more energy in attracting and training future convenors and spreading our coverage to other areas.

We know, for instance, that the Essendon SIG has a committee of about 10 co-convenors who have established an impressive operation that has established valuable links with the local council and continues to thrive.

I know that Essendon SIG, and probably every other SIG, can offer valuable ideas to other SIGs and to the club at large, and I am hopeful that through them, we can establish an on-going conversation that really will make SIGs the club's lifeblood.

We have begun to set in place a better framework for SIG convenors and their helpers to share their knowledge and concerns, ideas and solutions.

Last week we completed electrical rewiring at Moorabbin, which will dramatically cut our power bills. ☺

MONTHLY MEETING ON DISC

The monthly disc contains video footage of each month's meeting, including the president's address.

This month's video is of the February 2013 meeting.

Cost: \$5 each (\$6 with postage) or \$55 for an 11-issue subscription (postage included).

Pick up from: monthly and SIG meetings, the Melb PC office.

For further details: office@melbpc.org.au

From Barry Horn

Congratulations on the December edition of *PC Update*. A lot of good reading in it.

While there is no problem reading the magazine online, it really does need to be in print format. I find myself scanning it online, reading an article or two, downloading a couple of pages to study later but not getting back to it. A lot of the good journalism is therefore wasted.

The December issue is certainly of a standard that would justify paying extra money to receive a print copy, though I don't know how much extra it would cost.

I think a printed magazine would help retain members and attract new ones. If printing is too expensive for a monthly magazine, maybe a quarterly magazine supplemented by a monthly emailed newsletter would work?

From Eric Lichfield-Bennett

The amount of spam in our email is the worst I have seen in 20+ years.

What's happened to the filters on our server?

Has a previous member of our committee broadcast all the addresses on the web? If so, time he was dealt with by the law under the privacy act. Members names and addresses are confidential to the club, not its members, serving or otherwise.

It is also time the server came back in-house and our contract with AAPT terminated.

Please (forgive the pun) address these matters.

From Alan Knott

Thank you for the report as received today. I wholeheartedly concur with the motion as regards the Honorary Life Members and thank them for their efforts. However I cannot accept the advice in regards to the Model Rules.

I have experience with being Public Officer (which post is now disbanded) and am now Secretary/ex PO of three Associations.

As per the advice from CAV, the new Model Rules do not have to be adopted by an association. If they are not, the existing rules [of Melb PC] apply until such time that the Association makes some other alteration to its constitution.

The existing rules/constitution meet legal requirements now.

The addition of the previous rules as outlined in 3c would have to be approved by the Registrar as it would constitute an alteration to the Rules.

Yes Melb PC can adopt these new model rules but I do not believe that this is the best course of action.

In addition, the Model Rules DO permit members to be sent notices etc. by email or fax but this would only be after the adoption of the new constitution.

I believe that it would be better to make a complete revision of our (Melb PC) rules over the next few months that would incorporate all the provisions of the new Act and the requirements of our association.

Committee's response: Sharman Grant took these concerns into account when preparing the FAQ on [Page 18](#).

Melb PC Draft Policies & Procedures 28 Feb 2013

Now available to download from:

<http://ccedesign.com.au/melbpc/melbpc-landing-page.html>

From Louis Cook

Please allow me to comment on model rule 38 (2) Voting at general meeting – giving the “chairperson” a casting vote.

This is an archaic rule and an alternative is “where the voting is equal, the motion is lost” and this is because the motion does not have overwhelming support. Whilst there is an unwritten convention that the chairperson will maintain the status quo this may not always be the case and difficult to interpret; the chairperson is relieved of this obligation if the motion is lost with equal votes.

It is an amicable solution to what is sometimes a vexing question.

This is submitted for your consideration and it may be too late to make an alteration but I suggest it be kept in mind for future adoption.

The use of “chairperson” is not good syntax and smacks of “political correctness” when the correct use is “chairman”. I suggest you run “find and replace” to easily make changes.

The section I refer to in the model rules is appended below.

I would also like to convey my appreciation to the dedicated members who manage the “user group”... thank you Ladies and Gentlemen.

38 Voting at general meeting

- (1) On any question arising at a general meeting—
 - (a) subject to sub rule (3), each member who is entitled to vote has one vote; and
 - (b) members may vote personally or by proxy; and
 - (c) except in the case of a special resolution, the question must be decided on a majority of votes.
- (2) If votes are divided equally on a question, the Chairperson of the meeting has a second or casting vote.
- (3) If the question is whether or not to confirm the minutes of a previous meeting, only members who were present at that meeting may vote.
- (4) This rule does not apply to a vote at a disciplinary appeal meeting conducted under rule 24.

BREAKING NEWS – Our Melb PC Newsgroups

When to pay for file recovery? Are there any other options? The Newsgroup experts put their heads together to assist with a serious loss of data issue.

You can get help too, and we are here 24/7.

We have 14 newsgroups, each with a different emphasis. You can read some of the newsgroup conversations by logging into <http://forum.melbpc.org.au/newsforum> with your Melb PC username and password.

To read all of the newsgroups, and when you are ready to start a topic, join a conversation or ask for help, you can setup a newsreader utility on your computer. We will help you with this. Here's the place to start <http://member.melbpc.org.au/~anywhere>



Melbourne PC User Group Monthly Meeting

WEDNESDAY, 6 MARCH at 7pm

Melb PC Headquarters

479 Warrigal Road, Moorabbin VIC 3189 (Corner Cochranes Rd)

Includes:

*Special General Meeting
Asus Eee Pad Android Tablet
Digital Post Australia*

BILL DAIR (Melb PC member) will give a presentation on the Asus Eee Pad Android Tablet (This will only go ahead if time permits after the SGM). It will include an outline of the features, examples of Android apps, and a demonstration of these on the touch screen technology.

A presentation by **DAVID KEOGH** (Account Director, Computershare Communications Services) on "Digital Post Australia". Digital mailbox (or post) is a new communication channel for essential mail. Digital Post Australia will shortly be one of

the providers. It will enable consumers to receive essential mail such as bank statements, telecommunications and utility bills, insurance and share registry documents in a secure online environment where documents can be stored, organised and retrieved.



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kaiser baas for
their generous raffle donations.

kaiser baas™

Public transport users can take Smart Bus 903 from several train stations. The closest are Mentone station on the Frankston Line (5 minutes away) and Oakleigh Station on the Pakenham/Cranbourne line (10 minutes).



WIN THESE RAFFLE PRIZES AT THE MONTHLY MEETING

**\$2 Ticket
3 Tickets \$5**



MEET YOUR MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

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Charles Wright



president@melbpc.org.au

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Building and Facilities Portfolio

Roger Wragg

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I have been a member of Melbourne PC User Group since 1991 and have been filming and editing the videos of the monthly meetings since 2007. I run the Vegas Video Production group and act as assistant-coordinator of the Graphics group.

I stepped in to edit *PC Update* at no cost to the group as a cost-cutting measure (11 issues from July 2011-May 2012).

I participate in many SIGs and have given presentations to SIGs all over the inner- and outer-metro areas.

I was involved in the design of our new club rooms, especially the audio-visual equipment, its installation and programming. I am helping with the setup of our new Optus mobile broadband by visiting members at their home when they experience difficulty.

My background is Physics and Mathematics from Melbourne University. My main interests have been in education where I served for many years on the Secondary Mathematics Committee of the Education Department and also on the Physics Standing Committee of the Victorian Universities and School Examination Board.

I would like to see our group building and facilities used by as many members as possible in this new digitally connected age.

BREAKING NEWS – Our Melb PC Newsgroups

Lots of folk were happy to assist when James needed help migrating Outlook Express mail files to his Windows 7 computer.

You can request help on any topic at any time 24/7, in the Newsgroups.

We have 14 newsgroups, each with a different emphasis. You can read some of the newsgroup conversations by logging into <http://forum.melbpc.org.au/newsforum> with your Melb PC username and password.

To read all of the newsgroups, and when you are ready to start a topic, join a conversation or ask for help, you can setup a newsreader utility on your computer. We will help you with this. Here's the place to start <http://member.melbpc.org.au/~anywhere>



Melbourne PC User Group 2012-13 Operating & Capital Financial Report

25 February 2013

Preliminary: not confirmed by committee

Budget version 5: 24 November 2012

| Income | Year | | January | | January YTD | | |
|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| | Budget | Actual | Budget | Variance | Actual | Budget | Variance |
| 1000 Disk Sales | 8,600 | 632 | 0 | 632 | 5,372 | 4,691 | 681 |
| 1001 Drink & Confection Sales | 1,200 | 109 | 0 | | 932 | 654 | 278 |
| 1005 Raffle Income | 4,900 | 0 | 0 | | 2,683 | 2,675 | 8 |
| 1007 Postage Recovered | 600 | 21 | 50 | (29) | 215 | 350 | (135) |
| 1010 Interest Received | 49,500 | 0 | 375 | (375) | 22,159 | 25,125 | (2,966) |
| 1020 Dial Up Internet Income | 40,000 | 2,017 | 3,333 | (1,316) | 18,182 | 23,333 | (5,151) |
| 1021 Wireless Broadband Internet | 40,000 | 2,046 | 3,333 | (1,287) | 24,796 | 23,333 | 1,463 |
| 1022 Westnet Commission | 24,000 | 1,545 | 2,000 | (455) | 11,954 | 14,000 | (2,046) |
| 1032 Hire of Equipment | 1,200 | 1,274 | 100 | 1,174 | 2,559 | 700 | 1,859 |
| 1050 Subscriptions | 92,000 | 13,117 | 15,867 | (2,750) | 114,968 | 116,655 | (1,687) |
| 1071 Training Courses | 1,200 | 0 | 100 | (100) | (124) | 700 | (824) |
| Total income | 63,200 | 20,761 | 25,158 | (4,506) | 203,696 | 212,216 | (8,520) |
| Less cost of goods sold: | | | | | | | |
| 5105 - 5106 Mobile Broadband | 42,000 | 5,000 | 3,500 | (1,500) | 24,172 | 24,500 | 328 |
| 5109 Fibre Optic Network | 38,400 | 3,080 | 3,200 | 120 | 18,950 | 22,400 | 3,450 |
| 5110 Dial Up Data Charges | 24,000 | 4,020 | 2,000 | (2,020) | 24,381 | 14,000 | (10,381) |
| 5120 DVD Purchases | 2,400 | 0 | 200 | 200 | 2,351 | 1,400 | (951) |
| 5140 Printing Manuals for Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 100 | 0 | (100) |
| 5145 Computer Software for Training | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5150 Training Fees | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 5155 Raffle (prizes- items for Raffle) | 3,600 | 1,286 | 300 | (986) | 3,673 | 2,100 | (1,573) |
| Total cost of goods sold | 10,400 | 13,386 | 9,200 | (4,186) | 73,627 | 64,400 | (9,227) |
| Gross margin | 52,800 | 7,375 | 15,958 | (8,692) | 130,069 | 147,816 | (17,747) |

Melbourne PC User Group Balance Sheet

31 Jan 2013

Current assets

| | | |
|------|-----------------------------|----------------|
| 8005 | Cash at bank | 4,702 |
| 8030 | Petty cash | (265) |
| 8040 | Term deposits | 906,435 |
| 5000 | Accounts receivable | 620 |
| 1466 | Undeposited funds | 1,430 |
| | Total current assets | 912,922 |

Fixed assets

| | | |
|------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| 7110 | Property, plant & equipment | 2,242,802 |
| 7120 | Provision for depreciation | (1,181,460) |
| | Net fixed assets | 1,061,342 |

| | |
|---------------------|------------------|
| Total assets | 1,974,264 |
|---------------------|------------------|

Current liabilities

| | | |
|------|------------------|-------|
| 9050 | Accounts payable | 9,336 |
|------|------------------|-------|

Other current liabilities

| | | |
|------|--|---------------|
| 2106 | Payroll liabilities | 16,027 |
| 9000 | GST payable (receivable) | (7,096) |
| 9099 | Internet subscriptions prepaid | 41,129 |
| 9400 | Annual leave provision | 6,986 |
| 9430 | SIG funds held | 124 |
| | Total other current liabilities | 57,170 |

| | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Total current liabilities | \$66,506 |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|

| | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Net assets | \$1,907,758 |
|-------------------|--------------------|

Equity

| | | |
|------|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| 3900 | Retained earnings | \$2,063,586 |
| | Net income (loss) this year | (\$155,828) |
| | Total equity | \$1,907,758 |

Model Rules – Why Melb PC User Group Inc should adopt them – Frequently Asked Questions

By Sharman Grant

To help members consider the resolution to adopt the Model Rules in the regulations to the new Associations Incorporation Reform Act (“the Act”) I have prepared some FAQs based on questions posed by members.

Q. Why should we adopt the Model Rules? Why don't we just keep our old rules?

A. At some point before November 2013 we have to decide what we are going to have in our rules. Our rules are like a constitution. They establish the incorporated association structure. Whatever rules we adopt must meet the requirements of the Act. The Act is passed by parliament and is the governing legislation. The regulations and the Model Rules are subordinate legislation and are prepared by the regulator (Dept of Consumer Affairs).

If we adopt the Model Rules, we are deemed to have rules that meet the requirements of the Act because section 47 (2) of the Act provides that if we adopt the Model Rules we have met the requirements of the Act. If we let the regulator know that we have adopted the Model Rules, we will be complying with the Act immediately.

If we do not adopt the Model Rules, we are required to submit whatever rules we wish to follow and the regulator will review these and if it thinks that they do not meet the Act, the regulator may impose whatever additional rules that it thinks we may need to comply with the Act.

Further, section 48 (3) of the Act provides that if our rules do not meet the requirements of the Act, the Model Rules, to the extent that they make provision for that matter, are taken to be included in our rules. One member suggested that we try to guess what the regulator wants and make changes to

our rules and then submit these. I do not think this is a good idea. It would be difficult to guess what might be required and if we were wrong, we would just have to change our rules again. Clause 8 (3) of the transitional provisions in Schedule 4 to the Act notes that the Registrar will not approve any alteration to rules unless they comply with the Act.

Under the Act, if we adopt the Model Rules, these are automatically updated if the law changes. If we have our own rules (non-Model Rules), we have to comply with a detailed process to alter these rules including Registrar's approval under section 50 of the Act.

Q. Is there much of a difference between the Model Rules and our current rules?

A. There are some basic structural differences and some content differences. On the structure, our current rules provide for processes with details about “how”, whereas the Act is a little more abstract and refers to “what” needs to be done rather than how it should be done. Our current rules also have more detailed coverage about items like membership. I think that the “how” (processes) and detailed items like arrangements for honorary life membership should be in our policies and procedures rather than in our rules so that they can be amended if necessary without going through the section 50 processes under the Act.

Some provisions in our current rules are untidy (e.g. processes for convening SGMs). The Model Rules are clearer and are set out in a more logical way.

The requirement for what has to be in rules under the Act is in Schedule 1 to the Act. The following table sets out the requirements in the Act in column 1, our current rules in column 2 and my comments in column 3.

| The Act Schedule 1 | Melb PC's current Rules | Comments |
|--------------------|-------------------------|--|
| Clause 1 | Rule 1 | |
| Clause 2 | Rule 2 | |
| Clause 3 | Rule 3 | |
| Clause 4 | Rule 4 | |
| Clause 5 | | Not sure rights thoroughly explained in the current rules |
| Clause 6 | Rule 6 | |
| Clause 7 | Rule 6 | |
| Clause 8 | Appendix 2 | |
| Clause 9 | Rules 20 – 27 | I think our policies and procedures could be stronger on record-keeping |
| Clause 10 | Rule 27 | |
| Clause 11 | Rule 34 | |
| Clause 12 | Rule 30 | |
| Clause 13 | Rule 34(2) | |
| Clause 14 | Rules 34(1) and 26(4) | |
| Clause 15 | Rule 34(2) | |
| Clause 16 | Rule 34(2) | |
| Clause 17 | Rules 8 - 19 | |
| Clause 18 | Rules 8 - 19 | |
| Clause 19 | Rules 8 - 19 | |
| Clause 20 | Rule 35 | |
| Clause 21 | Rule 29 | I think we could have a better process for authorising an expenditure in our policies and procedures |
| Clause 22 | Rule 31 | |
| Clause 23 | Rule 33 | |

My recommendation is that we should move process and detail requirements that might need to be amended out of the rules and into a policies and procedures document so that we have a boilerplate set of rules and a policies and operational procedures document that contains, among other things, processes for operational business, a charter of members rights and SIG manuals. The operational document should be a living document and should be amended as the need arises without necessarily having to pass a special resolution.

Q. Wouldn't this present a risk to members? For example, if there was insufficient consultation for any changes to procedures.

A. Insufficient consultation would present a risk to members so one of the issues that we need to agree on is what consultation is necessary and how do we do this. One of the issues the new website designers will be dealing with is how to ensure that we make it easy for members to give their views on issues that affect them, in a timely way.

Q. The regulator has apparently told members that its staff do not believe that you can have any arrangements outside the Model Rules pointing to section 46 of the Act which provides that our rules constitute the terms of a contract. Can we have policies and procedures that are not in the Model Rules?

I am not sure what the regulator has told members. My own experience is that any "advice" from the regulator is given on the basis that it is not legal advice and it is not signed by anyone. As far as I can see, the Act does not prevent us from having policies and procedures outside our rules. I understand from other legal colleagues that they will be taking this approach. I checked the Explanatory Memorandum to the Act to see if any special meaning had been attributed to section 46 and there does not appear to be any. Any contract can have collateral terms that are set out elsewhere, for example in policies and procedures. Section 29 (1) (e) of the Act provides that we can do anything that a body corporate can do and

section 30 (d) provides that we can do anything to further our purposes and exercise our powers. The Act is based on the Corporations Act requirements for companies and most companies have a constitution but also have operational policies and procedures. For example, it would be difficult to put a HR policy in a constitution. Employment law seems to change every five minutes. From a regulator's point of view (I used to work for one), it is easy to simply tell everyone "No" in answer to any question. They know that the large players get their own legal advice so they do not have any arguments about the law. I think we should be robust about getting arrangements that suit us.

Q. Is it the case that the Model Rules provide that a member can only hold proxies for 10 members?

A. No. There is no restriction on the number of proxies that a member can hold on behalf of other members. (I understand that this may have been the case under now-superseded legislation.)

Q. The Model Rules provide that we need a 10 per cent quorum of members to approve resolutions. Will this be a problem?

The attendance at the past three general meetings was:

- AGM Nov 2012 - 462
(including postal votes and proxies)
- SGM Jul 2012 - 752
(including postal votes and proxies)
- AGM Nov 2011 - 308
(including postal votes and proxies)

We would probably meet the requirement if that trend continued and we did nothing, but the current committee intends to keep members

engaged, interested in voting and taking part in our affairs. The 10 per cent requirement, in effect, keeps the committee honest because it forces the committee to engage with members.

Q. Is there anything in the Model Rules that prevents us from using postal voting?

A. No, there is no prohibition in the Act or the Model Rules on postal voting. The voting mechanism is a process matter best dealt with in policies and procedures. It may be useful for us to explore other methods of voting in the future, for example, by email or through the website so it is best to have this process in our policies and procedures rather than in our rules.

Q. Do the provisions for the nomination and election of committee members prevent us from voting candidates selected or promoted in advance of the meeting?

A. No. There is no prohibition on nominating candidates prior to the meeting. I understand one of the members is concerned that Model Rules 49 to 54 prevent this but I believe that this is not the correct interpretation of those provisions. The Model Rules are about the outcomes or "what" is required to be done, not about process. Again, we should explore other methods of nomination in the future (possibly Facebook?).

Q. Is there any problem with AGMs being required to vote on the number of non-officer places on the committee for the coming year (Model Rule rule 53 (1))?

A. No, and it is important that members have input into this important issue to ensure that governance is transparent.

Why I shall be voting against the adoption of the Model Rules

By Harry Lewis

As a member of the Committee, I have become concerned with how many of our members seem to be out of touch with Melb PC. Fewer than half our 4,000-odd members have been downloading *PC Update*. Just under one-third (30 per cent) do not have a melbpc.org.au login name and password. Those members are not using a melbpc.org.au email address, and they are unable to post to the newsgroups or to access the sections of our website for which the login is required. Among them, around 550 have no email address at all that is known to Melb PC, and do not even receive monthly mailouts. When a member's contact with Melb PC is limited to their annual subscription renewal, you have to wonder how many more times they will feel like paying up.

We need to do all we can to re-establish contact with our out-of-touch members. What we should not do is to cut such members off from any of the means by which they can engage with the wider Melb PC community and contribute to its decisions.

When your Committee decided last December to propose the adoption of the new Model Rules for incorporated associations, I voted against, having not had time to study the new Rules. Since then I have done so, and I have come to the conclusion that they are not right for Melb PC. One of several undesirable consequences of adopting the Model Rules would be to remove any possibility of postal voting. Voting by post is one way in which members who find it difficult to travel to Moorabbin can participate in Melb PC's affairs.

It would take a very long article to cover all issues raised by the Model Rules. I shall summarise my principal concerns, with references, so that members can make up their own minds whether they are happy with the motion coming to our special general meeting on Wednesday, 6 March.

If they are not happy, they should vote against, which will have the effect of referring the matter back to the Committee.

Nominating and electing officers and Committee

The processes for nominations and elections are covered in Rules 49-54 (see link at end). It seems clear that all these activities are to take place within the annual general meeting. Nominations happen there, and elections (if required in case of any contest) happen there too. But please read these clauses for yourself and see if you agree with me. Under our present rules, nominations require at least 28 days' notice; under the Model Rules, no notice at all is required, or indeed possible.

If you do agree, then you will also agree that there is no scope for postal voting. At our last AGM 356 postal votes were cast in the Committee election. You can have postal voting only if you know in advance who all the candidates are, their manifestos are published, and members are provided with voting instructions and voting papers. Postal voting suits Melb PC well because we have a widely distributed membership, and many members find it difficult or impossible to travel to Moorabbin for meetings, especially when they are held in the evening, as has been the tradition for our AGM (and is required by our current Rules). Taking away members' access to postal voting removes what has been a democratic right under our present Rules.

Annual vote on the number of Committee places

A striking feature of the new Model Rules relates to the number of Committee places. Rule 53(1) requires every AGM to vote how many committee places there shall be in the coming year, in ad-

dition to those of the four officers. We may hope that this would be a formality, but there is a risk of instability if an AGM were to decide to change the number of committee places. Furthermore, a disgruntled AGM might be tempted to perform radical surgery on the Committee, by voting that there be no non-officer committee places at all. We may hope that the risk of this happening would be small, but we should not take that risk.

The quorum for general meetings

Before you can conduct your AGM (or any general meeting) you need a quorum. Melb PC's present quorum for general meetings is (in effect) 50. The Model Rules fix the quorum at 10 per cent of your membership (Rule 36). That sounds quite reasonable until you realise that for Melb PC it means around 400 (given current member numbers) and that the large meeting room at Moorabbin seats fewer than 200. Even at the exceptionally well-attended special and annual general meetings in 2012 we will not have had more than 250 people present in person, well short of 400. (Before the dramas of 2012, the largest recorded attendance at an AGM I could find was 200 – when membership was around 11,000.)

Under the new Model Rules the general meeting quorum includes any proxies granted by absent members to members attending (Rule 36(2)). So in principle we could reach 400 with a combination of actual attenders and proxies granted to them. I doubt whether that would get around the need to book a larger hall for general meetings, as we would not know in advance that at least half the quorum would consist of proxies. We would have to plan for a quorate meeting. Whatever the ratio of attenders to proxies, obtaining the numbers required would call for vigorous recruitment in the run-up to any general meeting – an entirely new imposition on the Committee and other volunteers, which could easily be avoided by choosing a more realistic quorum – such as the one we have now.

Voting by proxy and (loss of) postal voting

When members record their postal votes, they select their candidates from a list of those who have already been nominated. Voting by proxy is not, in my opinion, an adequate substitute for postal voting. When a proxy was granted the voter would not know who the candidates would turn out to be, since that can be decided only at the AGM, and any member could nominate him/herself at that meeting (Rule 51(2)). Any large-scale reliance on proxies raises another issue. At the 2012 AGM 45 proxies were granted, all to the same person. If, at future AGMs, a large number of proxies were granted to a small handful of members, those members would wield disproportionate power over the election. We would not want to have AGMs like those of large listed companies, where the proxy votes quite swamp those of the shareholders who turn up in person.

Interpretation and amendment

Having taken so much space to explain how some of the Model Rules do not (in my view) suit Melb PC, I shall have to deal with a few formalities very briskly.

I have assumed that the Model Rules mean what they say; and that if you adopt Rules, you are bound by them, and cannot then decide to vary or to ignore any of them. To suggest otherwise would seem to me to undermine the entire process. (What an association does about matters that are not covered by its Rules is a separate question not considered here.)

Could we just amend the motion at the meeting? There are at least two reasons why the motion before the SGM cannot be amended in the meeting. One is a general principle for such meetings, that amendment counts as changing the business, and you cannot do that. The business is confined to what was announced in the meeting notice¹. The other comes from the technical definition of "Model Rules": if you change just one clause, you

are no longer deemed to be a user of the Model Rules – so a motion to vary any wording at all in the Rules (such as the general meeting quorum clause) would count as a wrecking amendment². Either of these reasons is sufficient on its own to rule out amendment at the SGM.

The Model Rules are not a Procrustean bed to which all associations are obliged to conform. They offer default settings which associations can change to suit their own conditions, constrained only by the governing legislation³. Melb PC should make changes to suit its distinctive needs.

References

References in the text are to the Model Rules, a copy of which has been placed on the Melb PC website here: <http://melbpc.org.au/sgm/>

Our present Rules can be found here: <http://melbpc.org.au/melbpc/rules/melbpcrules.pdf>

1. see pp. 8-9 of http://www.csaust.com/media/30600/AGM_procedural_guide_FINAL.pdf (the context is the Corporations Act, but the principle is the same, in view of Melb PC's current Rule 11(4))
2. see the advisory information on the new Act here (scroll down to "Model Rules") – a very long url here abbreviated to: <http://bit.ly/VbPAMl>
3. see <http://bit.ly/YIN2bi>

Author's note

I have been Secretary/Public Officer of two other associations incorporated in Victoria, and in both of them have piloted rule changes through general meetings and the Registrar's office. On behalf of one of them, I have been studying the new legal framework and attending briefing meetings offered by Consumer Affairs Victoria and the Public Information Law Clearing House (PILCH). In the more distant past, starting in 1968, I was involved in prolonged discussion of issues of governance and representation during constitutional change in my place of employment.

BREAKING NEWS – Our Melb PC Newsgroups

Some great NASA photos of the earth at night were posted, and an insect was identified from a member's photo.

We've identified plants and lots of bugs and helped with general gardening questions in the Newsgroups.

Great balls of fire! If you haven't downloaded a flaming icon replacement for your cursor arrow, you can read all about it in the Newsgroups.

Ideas, whacky or not, can often be found in the Newsgroups.

We have 14 newsgroups, each with a different emphasis. You can read some of the newsgroup conversations by logging into <http://forum.melbpc.org.au/newsforum> with your Melb PC username and password. To read all of the newsgroups, and when you are ready to start a topic, join a conversation or ask for help, you can setup a newsreader utility on your computer. We will help you with this.

Here's the place to start <http://member.melbpc.org.au/~anywhere>



My Life with Computers

Libby Shade (formerly Grierson)

My life with computers started at the Mathematics Department, New Arts Building, University of Melbourne. At the end of my degree course in 1963, I saw on the noticeboard an advertisement for Programmers in Training at the PMG (Postmaster General's Department).

After sitting the public service proficiency test and being interviewed by several PMG gentlemen, I was lucky enough to be selected (along with Peter Smith who has previously reported on his history in this magazine). Until this point, I had had no experience with any computers, or even with an electronic calculator, though one fortunate person in our class had one.

I happened to be extremely fond of mathematical puzzles and was well prepared for the public service test, and then for the job I virtually fell into. I'm not sure whether the selection was deliberately equal opportunity or that it just happened this way, but if I remember correctly there were six male and six females selected.

We started our employment in the PMG in late January 1964 at 31 Flinders Lane, a building remarkably devoid of any cooling systems and of any computers. However, there was a highly prized photocopier which we needed permission to use, and copies were counted very carefully.

During six months of training, we learned Fortran and Cobol. I particularly enjoyed devising solutions to little puzzles using Fortran. This was the earliest version of Fortran and there was much use of "go to", but we were encouraged to document heavily with comments and I never had any problems with this process. I found Cobol to be relatively clumsy and not very inspiring so it is fortunate that I didn't get involved in the big pay project that started up at that time. We also learned a small amount of assembly language



Libby Shade

and we were able to test our code on a GE machine at the west end of the CBD.

After the six months, on the basis of my interests and university training in mathematics and statistics, I was allocated to the Mathematical Programming Group under the management of Clive Brown, who became a life-long friend. His nurturing and encouraging management gave me the permission to do a lot of research and development, which resulted in some very positive outcomes. More of that later.

We wrote our programs on coding paper, 80 columns wide, which were punched up (in the card-punching department) and were then sent by inter-office bag to Sydney to be run on the Honeywell 200 and 1800 computers at North Sydney. A day later the printouts and cards arrived back, identifying any errors that had occurred, and the process was repeated until the desired outcome was obtained.

Any official correspondence we had was likewise processed by our typing pool and returned to us, possibly with errors, which we would return until a correct copy was produced. All incredibly time-consuming compared with today!

Initially I started on several projects connected with my interest in statistics and optimisation theory. One was an attempt to mathematically reduce the length of rounds of vans picking up letters from letterboxes, by altering the order of pickup. This one didn't get very far. I was then redirected to the cable program which was to occupy my work life for the next 30 years or so.

Lead cable with a different number of pairs for telephones was purchased at the time from four suppliers, two in Australia and two in Japan. There were about 300 different types of cable and each company could potentially quote a price for any

number of the cables. The PMG had an agreement with each manufacturer for a lower and upper limit of pairs of cable for each of the quarterly orders. The PMG also had a very specific requirement for each type of cable to be purchased each quarter. Thus, the objective was to minimise the total cost to the company and establish the exact purchasing requirements for each cable, while ensuring each supplier company received an overall order within their contractual range.

Working over a period of several years, I was able to design and implement a Fortran program to do exactly this, based on the method I had learned in Theory of Statistics Part II at university. This involved finding a first solution (any solution) and then progressively improving it by the Stepping Stone method, until it could be proved (by a certain calculation reaching zero) that it was in fact the best solution. Since there was hardly any memory available in the computer for storage, I had to deal with an array of five rows and about 300 columns and was shifting data around continuously.

Each time the program was run, all the prices and cable types had to be provided, together with the ranges for each manufacturer, and the orders for each cable. I did a tremendous amount of work bringing data in and out with magnetic tapes writing and rewinding.

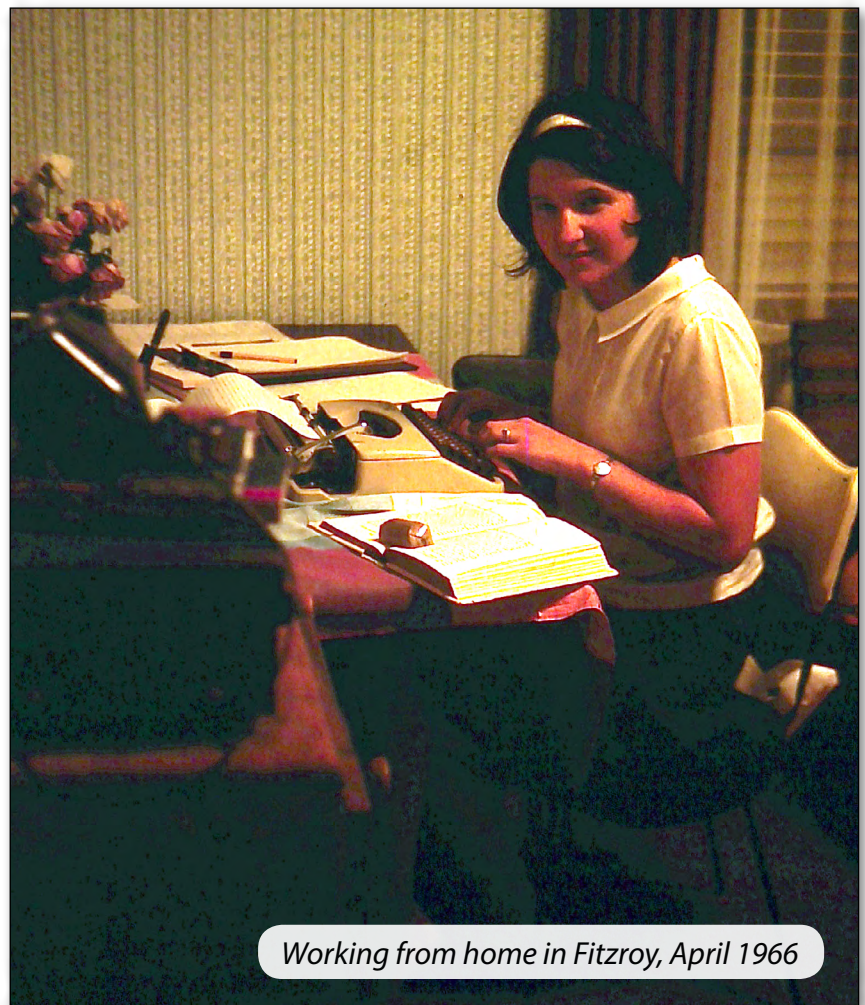
At the beginning of 1966, Fred and I got married, and therefore I was made temporary, as was the way for married women in the public service. In Victoria, Section 43 of the public service Act 1890 specifically excluded married women from employment in the public service. Fortunately this was repealed some years later.

The cable program went into actual production in 1966. I also (like Tim McQueen) made use of the IBM 7090

at the old Architecture building at Melbourne University, and recall carrying around many boxes of punch cards. It would have been a disaster if I had dropped them. More often, I used the IBM 7044 at the IBM headquarters at Fitzroy Street, St Kilda. I loved sitting in the room and watching the tapes roll around and around as the solution to the cable problem was found. At the end, all the tapes rolled back to rest with a real “whizz” and you knew that a solution was there.

One time both of those computers were unavailable, and I was sent up to the Lucas Heights establishment in a secluded area of New South Wales to run the program in the middle of the night, and then phone the urgent results through to Clive Brown so that the contracts could be put in place for that order.

[Cont...]



Working from home in Fitzroy, April 1966

[Continued]

During 1966 and 1967 the cable program kept operating and was moved to a monthly schedule. Each execution of the program saved the PMG a significant amount of money. I did a huge amount of typing to create masses of documentation to describe what the program was doing, which was quite possibly never looked at! Basically the whole project was a one-person job.

At the end of 1967 I left the PMG due to the coming birth of our first child. At the time I had no intention of returning to work as I was very focussed on the next stage of our family life, bringing up children; it is amazing how quickly this feeling changed! We were very lucky in the temperament of our first baby, and within 18 months I was able and wanting to do some contract programming work at home. Again Clive Brown stepped in with some work to be done (and I was possibly the first IT contractor for Telstra); unfortunately it started to get a bit difficult again with a lively two-year-old.

Along came another child, this being Katharine Shade, editor of this magazine. Many activities kept me busy, including playing flute in the Melbourne Symphony Orchestra as a professional musician for two years, and having a third child. So my work with computers was put on the back burner. However in 1978 through my voluntary work with the Nursing Mothers' Association, I was invited by them to process and report on some data that had been collected in respect of weight gains in breastfed babies. I was given access to the program SPSS and some computing time at Monash University. The results of the analysis were cited in *The Lancet* and it gave me a taste for



computing again.

By 1979 I was ready to return to full-time work, and very much wanted to return to the PMG/ Telecom. On requesting employment, I was asked how much I knew about databases – the use of these had been invented while I was away. Things do change quickly! So I was offered a position back at the bottom of the ladder, with the promise that I should climb the ladder fairly quickly.

It did pan out that way. On my return to work, now at 199 William Street, I offered to go back and work in the cable-ordering department. I was pretty pleased to find that they had been continuing to run my Fortran program for all of those years, with only one change to the program – where I had the number zero to identify the best solution, this had to be changed to zero with some digits after the decimal point, otherwise it wasn't working properly; a strange fact but true. Anyway, we were introducing all sorts of complications to the requirements, so I was able to do a lot more research and development, gaining a promotion every sixth months and rising back to where I was when I left.

After a few years it was decided that every district in Australia in Telecom should be allowed to order its cable online, and the best computer system to tie all of this together would be an Adabas Natural system, with the Fortran program sitting at the centre of the network to process requirements each month; orders would then be available online to the manufacturers as well.

A new project group of which I was a part was set up for this in 1985 and subsequently I became the manager. I found Adabas Natural a marvellous tool for programming, and was really surprised when later it dropped out of favour. Together our team built a terrific network of programs and it operated for many years, until it was taken over by a you-beaut Telstra purchasing system. Naturally by then we all had our own desktop computers, as did the technical staff in the various districts. Moves to 459 Little Collins Street and then Marland House followed.

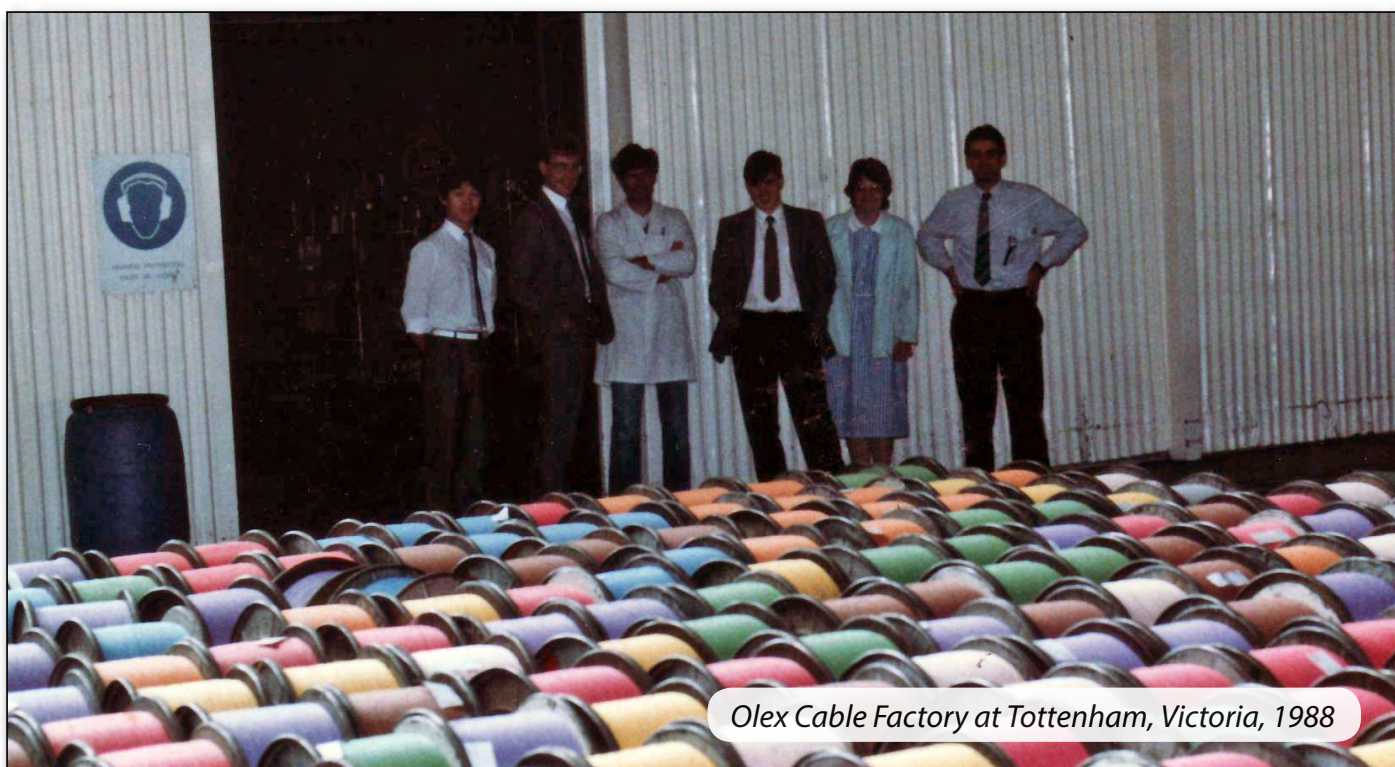
In 1996 after 28 years of operation, a Telstra function was held to mark the closure of the Cable Ordering Project and the Cable and Material Processing System which had been running for 10 years (these ran concurrently). The systems were said to have saved millions of dollars for Telstra by reducing the costs of cable orders.

From 1996 onwards, my later work in Telecom/Telstra took me through many other technologies including the earliest website design in HTML for Telstra's first internal website. Other management work within Telstra's internal systems continued, by this time at Telstra headquarters in Exhibition

Street. My final management role was of Telstra's Property System for several years, at Southbank (where we waited with bated breath for all systems to crash on 1st January 2000). Some outsourcing of IT had been achieved earlier with a group going to IBM, so it was no surprise when Deloitte Consulting made a bid in 2000 for the maintenance of Telstra's internal systems and a number of staff was hived off to go and work for them, including me, in their green building in Bourke Street.

I happily departed Deloitte after several challenging years there, retiring from that phase of my life in 2002. It wasn't a full retirement as I then opened up a computer services shop in the suburbs for two years. That's closed now, and I spend the time on my home office computer doing extensive genealogy research, assisting my daughter in her business and maintaining several websites for myself and for various amateur organisations.

I was an early joiner of Melbourne PC User Group and found the magazine most informative, especially in those early days when everything was new and things were changing all the time. What's new? I'm glad to say computing was a wonderful career for me. ☺



Olex Cable Factory at Tottenham, Victoria, 1988

Reading E-books

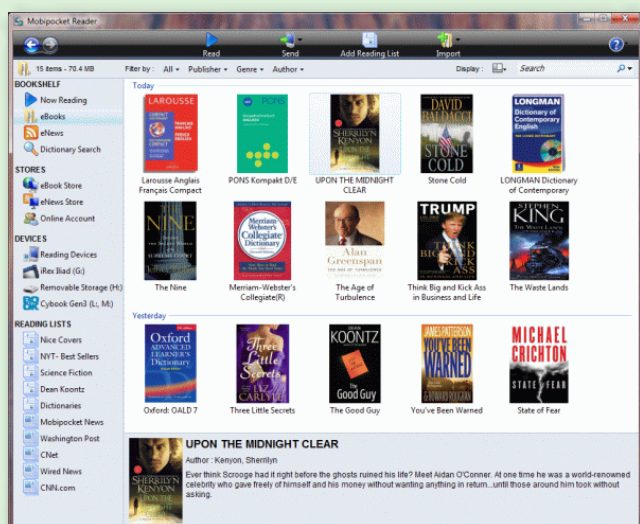
By Henk Visscher



From a disc that came with the Spring 2010 issue of *Windows Computer Magazine*, I acquired 459 classic e-books (books in electronic form, i.e. each book is contained in a computer file). I thought, "This is good. Now I get to read all those books I never got a chance to read as a young man, or re-read some that I read at that time.

The books on the disc were all free to use, without copyright restrictions. I soon found there are thousands more e-books available on the internet, either free or for a small price.

On the disc were a couple of the programs that are needed to read the e-books, which mostly were in a special format, files with the epub extension – though some were in plain text format. I tried and settled on Mobipocket Reader (obtainable at www.mobipocket.com) and it has been my favourite and simple program for this purpose for more than two years. Another is the calibre (lower case "c") library program, which has more complex functions.



MOBIPOCKET READER

This is a free program which allows direct import of files in the .epub, .txt or .pdf formats by the drag and drop method, directly from the file window of Windows Explorer (have both Reader and Windows Explorer open side by side on the screen – right-click the Taskbar > Show Windows Side by Side). As each file is accepted by the program, you see a progress bar at the base to show the import progress. You can choose to select multiple books, but I usually select no more than five or six e-books at a time, to keep an eye on progress of error-free copying.

The listing of books in the program window may be sorted/filtered in various ways.

CALIBRE

Although the interface is similar to Mobipocket Reader, there are many differences. I like the fact you can download metadata and book cover images directly into the program. The metadata often supplies important information about a book and the covers give a feeling of authenticity to the interface.

STORAGE

I keep all my e-books in the Documents\My Ebooks folder. Where possible I keep them in sub-folders named by author.

As said, e-books may be in plain text format (.txt) and the Portable Document Format (.pdf). However, there are some negatives to those formats where e-books are concerned.

PLAIN TEXT

Whereas the EPUB format allows a book's illustrations to be included, it is self-evident that you get no such luxury with plain text. The text is normally presented without any formatting, except that the program does insert line breaks (word-wrap) to ensure lines do not run off the page.

PDF FILES

I have tried to import and read a number of PDF files. However, time and again I came up against formatting problems, like where a paragraph block was partly off the screen to the left or right. E-book reader programs are far from the ideal way to view PDF files and it's best to stick with dedicated PDF readers such as Adobe Acrobat or its many imitators.

MOBILE COMPUTING

Mobipocket Reader was apparently designed with mobile computing in mind but it is eminently suitable for the Windows desktop computer. The reader window can easily be configured from the main program window in terms of fonts and font sizes, as well as background colour (I like a nice soft green with a navy blue font).

E-BOOK READERS

I can also read e-books on my smartphone and recently acquired a portable e-book reader. I needed to go into hospital overnight; after the procedure of an angiogram I was required to lie on my back for many hours while keeping one leg out straight. Having been bored senseless two years before during the same experience, I bought an e-book reader to keep my mind off the discomfort.

At JB Hi-Fi I found the one that did the job, nice and cheap – YellowStone (<http://www.jbhifi.com.au/portable/mp3-players/yellowstone/ereader-sku-310278>).

It is the e-book reader I wanted, but is also an MP3 player, a video viewer (great for my YouTube downloads, both in FLV and MP4 format), a calendar, calculator, voice recorder, and even a radio (FM only). Its tiny speaker on the back is no good for music playback but the music sounds great through my headphones.

It doesn't have internet and phone capability, but what could I expect for \$59!

To support the video file sizes, I expanded its 4GB storage capacity with a 16GB mini SD card for another \$20. The unit connects to my computer via a USB cable and the 4GB and 16GB memory locations show up in Windows Explorer as separate external disk drives. I had no problem creating folders and transferring files onto the unit.

Incidentally, with the calibre program you can connect to your e-book reader – most are compatible for this – and transfer books from within calibre to the e-book reader (Menu: Connect/Share > Connect to Folder).

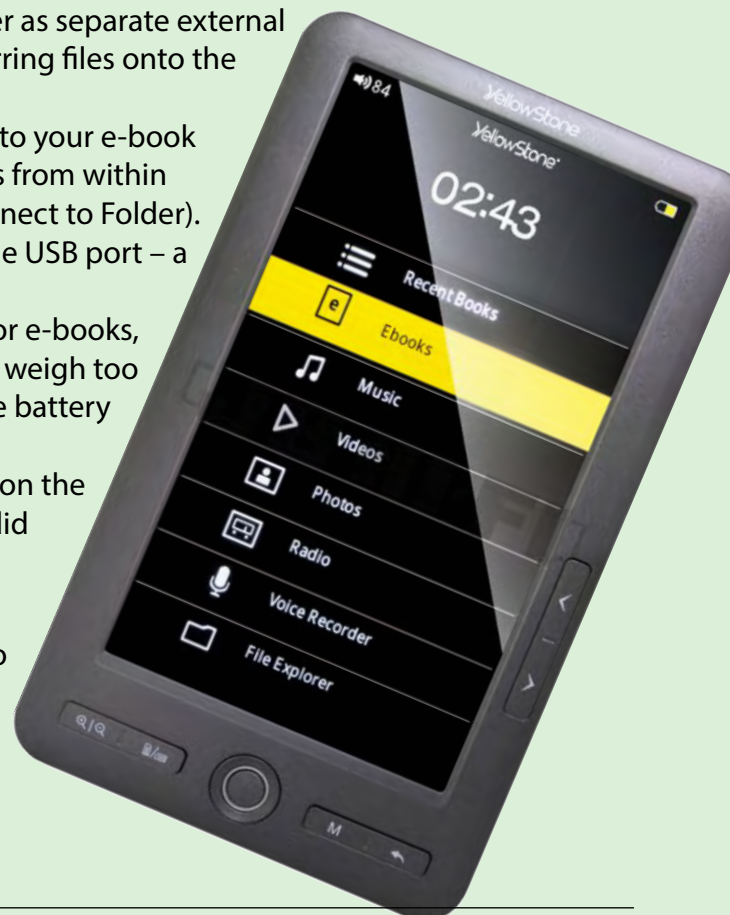
The battery is charged while the unit is connected to the USB port – a USB cable is supplied as well as a power cable, of course.

The battery lasts "forever" when you only use the unit for e-books, but even with videos I get hours of use. The unit does not weigh too much, when I use it seated comfortably in my recliner. The battery hardly seems to lose power when the unit is not in use.

On the JB Hi-Fi website users were invited to comment on the unit. This drew several rather negative comments which did not reflect my experience.

WHERE TO GET E-BOOKS

I recommend for those interested that the first place to go is the global www.gutenberg.org website or its Australian sidekick www.gutenberg.net.au. Here you can also get additional information not covered in this article. ☺



Office 365 Home Premium



Crunching the numbers: ADAM TURNER untangles the complexities of subscription software – is it time for you to make the switch?

Rather than buy Microsoft's Office 2013 outright, home users now have the option to pay a monthly or yearly subscription for Office 365 Home Premium.

Microsoft Office is a collection of applications which most people have on their computers, such as Word for creating and editing documents, Excel for spreadsheets and PowerPoint for presentations. Traditionally home users have paid for Microsoft Office outright, buying it on disc or else downloading it from Microsoft. Or instead of a retail copy, you might have got a cheaper deal if Microsoft Office came pre-installed on a new computer (known as an OEM – "original equipment manufacturer" – copy).

Traditionally, once you've paid for a retail copy of Microsoft Office it's yours to use for as long as you wish – even if you buy a new computer. When the next version of Office was released you were generally offered a discount on the upgrade.

While home users have always bought Office outright, many businesses pay a yearly subscription instead. This entitles them to update to new versions of Office when they come along. As of Office 2013 this subscription pricing model is now available to home users; for \$12 per month, or \$119 per year, Australians can install Office 365 Home Premium on up to five computers, which can be a mix of Windows and Mac in the same household.

Home users can still buy a retail copy of Office Home & Student 2013 outright for \$169, although retail copies of Office 2013 are only available with a single-PC license and Microsoft has discontinued the discounted multi-license family pack.

Unlike previous versions of Office, if you upgrade your computer you can't transfer your copy of Office 2013 from your old computer to your new computer. If you're reinstalling


Windows on the same computer, you'll need to contact Microsoft technical support if you need to reinstall Office.





The prospect of your retail copy of Office 2013 dying with your computer is not a pleasant one and will likely drive more people to Office 365. If you need several copies of Office 2013 then an Office 365 subscription is probably the most economical option anyway. Of course the downside is that you need to keep paying Microsoft month after month, or year after year. If you stop paying your subscription then your Office 365 applications switch to read-only mode.

Office 365 Home Premium isn't a stripped-down, browser-based Office suite such as Office Web Apps or Google Docs. For your money you get full desktop Office 2013 versions of Word, Excel, PowerPoint and OneNote to install on your computer, just like the boxed version of Office Home & Student 2013. But Microsoft sweetens the deal with Office 365

[Cont...]

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Office 365 Includes

Microsoft Office Professional Plus

- Flexible service offering with pay-as-you-go, per-user licensing
- The complete Office experience with services integration in Office 365
- Simplified user set-up to preconfigure services
- Always the latest version of the Office apps, including Office Web Apps
- Familiar Office user experience to access services

Microsoft SharePoint Online

- My Sites to manage and share documents
- Improved Team & Project Sites
- Document-level permissions to protect sensitive content
- Share documents securely with Extranet Sites
- Cross site collection search

Microsoft Exchange Online

- 25GB Mailbox
- Outlook and Outlook Web App
- Anti-Virus/Anti-Spam
- Shared Calendars, Contacts & Tasks
- Mobile email for most mobile devices including BlackBerry, iPhone, Nokia, Windows Phone
- Personal email archiving and compliance capabilities

Microsoft Lync Online

- Instant messaging and presence
- PC-to-PC audio and video calling
- Click-to-communicate from Outlook, SharePoint, and other Office Applications
- Online meetings with PC-audio, video conferencing and screen sharing
- Single click meeting creation and join from Outlook
- Calendar integration with Outlook and Exchange

[Continued]

Home Premium by also including copies of Outlook for email, Publisher for desktop publishing and Access for working with databases.

Home users might not need these extra business-focused applications but, if they do, Office 365 Home Premium offers even better value for money. Keep in mind that Office 365 Home Premium is for “non-commercial use” and there are different plans for businesses which charge per user per month.

Microsoft Office users need to crunch the numbers to determine whether Office 365 Home Premium is the right choice, working on the assumption that we’ll see the next Office update in 2016.

If \$169 Office Home & Student 2013 meets your needs and you only require one or two copies then buying it outright works out more economical than a three-year Office 365 Home Premium subscription – assuming you don’t upgrade your computer.

Of course if you’re only using the basic features of Word and Excel then a free open-source Office alternative such as OpenOffice might do the job and it’s certainly worth trying before you hand over your money for a Microsoft Office, especially in consideration of the licensing restrictions on retail copies of Office 2013.

If you also need Outlook to manage your email, contacts and calendar then buying a single \$299 copy of Office Home & Business 2013 is still more economical than Office 365 Home Premium. If you also need Publisher and Access then Office 365 Home Premium is certainly a better deal than buying even one \$599 copy of Office Professional 2013.

These calculations are assuming that you’re paying the full recommended retail price for Office 2013. If you find it cheaper on the shelves, or get a discounted OEM version pre-installed on a new computer, then the value proposition might change – but probably not by much.

Office 365 v Office 2013 retail

\$169 Office Home & Student 2013
Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote

\$299 Office Home & Business 2013
Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, Outlook

\$599 Office Professional 2013
Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, Outlook, Publisher, Access

\$119 per year – Office 365 Home Premium
Word, Excel, PowerPoint, OneNote, Outlook, Publisher, Access
Five-computer license, 20GB SkyDrive, Office on Demand




Along with additional business-focused applications, Microsoft also throws in a range of extra features with Office 365. Tight integration with Microsoft's SkyDrive cloud storage makes it easy to backup your documents online and edit them from different computers. You're granted 20GB of SkyDrive storage as opposed to the standard 5GB. You also have access to the Office on Demand service, which lets you temporarily run Office 2013 applications (except Outlook) on any internet-enabled computer running Windows 7 or Windows 8.


The ability to edit documents on any computer is more likely to appeal to business users, but home users will still benefit from the ability to easily store documents in the cloud and share them with other SkyDrive users. ☞




Welcome to the new Office

You're about to sign up for Office 365 Home Premium Preview, a new service that gives you a full-featured version of Office. With the service you also get:

- 

A personalized experience on up to 5 household PCs or tablets.
- 

Access your applications, documents, and settings on Internet-connected PCs.
- 

The applications you trust: Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Outlook, OneNote, Access, and Publisher.

Click Try now and a few steps later you can start using Office.

[Try now](#) [Learn more](#)

Windows 7 or 8 required



An Overview of Lexing and Parsing: Orientation

Originally, this material was published online as two long articles [An Overview of Lexing and Parsing](#) and [Lexing and Parsing Continued](#). Each of those has been split into three parts, for ease of publication. This is Part 2. Part 1 was published in *PC Update* February 2013, pp.38-41.

By Ron Savage

In Case You Think This is Going to be Complex

Truly, it just *sounds* complicated, because I'll be introducing various presumably-new concepts, but don't despair. It's not really that difficult.

Somehow and somewhere we have to manage the complexity of the question "Is this a valid document?" for a given grammar.

Recognising a token with a regex (regular expression) is easy. Keeping track is hard.

Yes, the complexity of setting up and managing a formal grammar and the Discrete Finite Automaton seems like a lot of work, but as it's a specified and well-understood mechanism, we don't have to reinvent something every time.

By limiting the code, we have to write two things. Firstly there needs to be a set of rules for how to construct tokens within a grammar. Secondly, a set of rules for what happens when we construct a valid combination of tokens is needed so we can focus on the important part of our application: determining what a document which conforms to the grammar means (the author's intention), and less on the mechanics of verifying that a document matches the grammar.

Coding the Lexer

The lexer's job is to recognise tokens, and our sub-grammar #1 specifies what they look like. So our lexer will have to examine the input stream, possibly one character at a time, to see if the "current"

input, appended to the immediately preceding input, fits the definition of a token.

Of course a programmer can write a lexer any way they want. The way I do it is with regexps combined with a DFA (Discrete Finite Automaton http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deterministic_finite_automaton) module.

This blog entry – More Marpa Madness (http://blogs.perl.org/users/andrew_rodland/2012/01/more-marpa-madness.html) – discusses using Marpa in the lexer (i.e. as well as in the parser, which is where I use it).

And what is a DFA? The "Finite" part means the input stream only contains a limited number of different tokens, which simplifies the code, and the "Automaton" in our case is the software machine we are writing, i.e., the program. For more, see that Wikipedia article on DFAs. Note that DFAs are often known as STTs (State Transition Table): http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/State_transition_table which are the set of regexps which recognise tokens, together with instructions about what to do when a specific type of token is recognised.

But how do we make this all work? MetaCPAN <https://metacpan.org> is your friend! In particular, we'll use `Set::FA::Element` to drive the process. For candidate alternatives I assembled a list of Perl modules with relevance in the area, while cleaning up the docs for `Set::FA`. See <https://metacpan.org/module/Set::FA#See-Also>. I did not write `Set::FA`, nor `Set::FA::Element`, but I now maintain them.

Be assured, such a transformation of BNF (or what-

AN OVERVIEW OF LEXING AND PARSING

ever our grammar's source is) into a DFA gives us:

- Insight into the problem: To cast BNF into regexps means we must understand exactly what the grammar definition is saying.
- Clarity of formulation: We end up with a spreadsheet which simply and clearly encodes our understanding of tokens. Spreadsheet? Yes, I store the derived regexps, along with other information, in a spreadsheet, as explained below.

Back to the Finite Automaton

In practice, we simply read and re-read the definition of our BNF – here the DOT language <http://www.graphviz.org/content/dot-language> – and build up the corresponding set of regexps to handle each “case”. This is laborious work, no doubt about it.

For example, by using a regexp like `/[a-zA-Z_][a-zA-Z_0-9]*/`, we can get Perl's regexp engine to intelligently gobble up characters as long as they fit the definition. Here, the regexp is just saying: Start with a letter, upper- or lower-case, or an underline, followed by 0 or more letters, digits or underlines.

Look familiar? It's very close to the Perl definition of `\w`, but disallows leading digits. Actually, DOT disallows them (in certain circumstances), so we have to, but of course it (DOT) does allow pure numbers in certain circumstances.

And what do we do with all these hand-crafted regexps? We use them as *data* to feed into the DFA, along with the input stream. The output of the DFA is basically a flag saying Yes/No, the input stream matches/doesn't match the token definitions specified by the given regexps. Along the way, the DFA calls one of our callback functions each time a token is successfully recognised, so we can stockpile them. Then, at the end of the run, we can output them as a stream of tokens, each with its identifying “type”, as per “The Lexer's Job Description” above.

A note about callbacks: sometimes it's easier to design a regexp to capture more than seems appropriate, and to use code in the callback to chop up what's been captured, outputting several token elements as a consequence.

Since developing the STT is such an iterative process, you'll want various test files, and some scripts with short names to run the tests. (Short names because you're going to be running these scripts an unbelievable number of times.)

States

At any instant our STT (automation, software machine) is in precisely one state. Perhaps it has not yet received even one token (it's in the “start” state), or perhaps it has just finished processing the previous one. Whatever, the code maintains information so as to know exactly what state it is in, and this leads to knowing exactly what set of tokens is now acceptable, i.e. any one of this set will be a legal token in the current state.

This is telling us then that we have to associate each regexp with a specific state, and vice versa, and it's implicitly telling us that we stay in the current state as long as each new input character matches a regexp belonging to the current state, and that we jump (transition) to a new state when that character does not match.

Sample Lexer Code

Consider this simplistic code from the synopsis of `Set::FA::Element`:

```
my($dfa) = Set::FA::Element -> new
(
    accepting => ['baz'],
    start     => 'foo',
    transitions =>
    [
        ['foo', 'b', 'bar'],
        ['foo', '.', 'foo'],
        ['bar', 'a', 'foo'],
        ['bar', 'b', 'bar'],
        ['bar', 'c', 'baz'],
        ['baz', '.', 'baz'],
    ],
);
```

In the *transitions* parameter the first line says: “foo” is a state's name, and “b” is a regexp saying we jump to state “bar” if the next input char is “b”. And so on.

This in turn tells us that to use `Set::FA::Element` we have to prepare a transitions parameter matching this format, hence the need for states and regexps.

And this is code I've used, taken directly from GraphViz2::Marpa::Lexer::DFA:

```
Set::FA::Element -> new
(
  accepting => \@accept,
  actions   => \%actions,
  die_on_loop => 1,
  logger    => $self -> logger,
  start     => $self -> start,
  transitions => \@transitions,
  verbose   => $self -> verbose,
);
```

Let's discuss these parameters.

- **Accepting.** This is an arrayref of state names, meaning that, after processing the entire input stream, if we end up in one of these states, then we have "accepted" that input stream. That just means that every input token matched an appropriate regexp, where "appropriate" means every char matched the regexp belonging to the current state, whatever the state was at the instant that char was input.
- **Actions.** This is a hashref of function names, so we can call a function, optionally, upon entering or leaving any state. That's how we stockpile recognised tokens. Further, since we write these functions, and we attach each to a particular combination of state and regexp, we encode into the function the knowledge of what "type" of token has just been matched when the DFA calls a function. And that's how our stockpile will end up with (token, type) pairs to output at the end of the run.
- **die_on_loop.** This flag, if true, tells the DFA to stop if none of the regexps belonging to the current state match the current input char, i.e. stop rather than loop for ever. You might wonder what stopping automatically is not the default, or even mandatory. Well, it's because you might want to try some recovery algorithm in such a situation, before dying.
- **Logger.** This is an (optional) logger object.
- **Start.** This is the name of the state in which the STT starts, so the code knows which regexp(s) to try upon inputting the very first char.
- **Transitions.** This is a potentially large arrayref, listing separately for all states all the regexps which are to be invoked, one at a time, in the current state, while trying to match the current input char.
- **Verbose.** Specifies how much to report if the logger object is not defined.

So, the next problem is how to prepare the grammar in such a way as to fit into this parameter list, and hence addressing that must come next.

Coding the Lexer – Revisited

The coder thus needs to develop regexps etc which can be fed directly into the chosen DFA, here Set::FA::Element, or which can be transformed somehow into a format acceptable to that module. But so far I haven't actually said how I do that. It's time to be explicit...

I use a spreadsheet with nine columns:

1. **Start.** This just contains one word, "Yes", against the name of the state which is the start state.
2. **Accept.** This contains the word "Yes" against the name of any state which will be an accepting state (see above).
3. **State.** This is the name of the state.
4. **Event.** This is a regexp, which is read to mean: The event fires (is triggered) if the current input char matches the regexp in this column. Now, since the regexp belongs to a given state, we know the DFA will only process regexps associated with the current state, of which there will be one or at most a few. When there are multiple regexps per state, I leave all other columns empty.
5. **Next.** The name of the "next" state, i.e. the name of the state to which the STT will jump if the current char matches the regexp given on the same line of the spreadsheet (in the current state of course).
6. **Entry.** The optional name of the function the DFA is to call upon (just before) entry to the (new) state.
7. **Exit.** The optional name of the function the DFA is to call upon exiting from the current state.

8. Regexp. This is a working column, in which I put formulas so that I can refer to them in various places in the "Event" column. It is not passed to the DFA in the "transitions" parameter.

9. Interpretation. Comments to self.

The STT for GraphViz2::Marpa is on-line here (<http://savage.net.au/Perl-modules/html/graphviz2.marpa/stt.html>).

This structure has various advantages:

Legibility: It is very easy to read, and to work with. Don't forget, to start with you'll be basically switching back and forth between the grammar definition document (hopefully in BNF) and this spreadsheet. This is a way of saying there's no coding done at this stage.

Exportability: Since I have not yet addressed the question of how the code will read the spreadsheet, I offer these techniques:

- Read the spreadsheet directly. There is no problem with this method, except the complexity of the code (in the external module which does the reading of course), and the slowness of loading and running this code.

I should mention that since I use LibreOffice (<http://www.libreoffice.org>) I can either force end-users to install OpenOffice::OODoc, or export the spreadsheet as an Excel file, in order to avail themselves of this option. I have chosen to not support reading the *.ods file directly in the modules (Graph::Easy::Marpa and GraphViz2::Marpa) I ship.

- Export the spreadsheet to a CSV file first. This way, we can read a CSV file into the DFA fairly quickly, without loading the module which reads spreadsheets.

Be careful here with LibreOffice, since it forces you to use Unicode for the spreadsheet, but exports e.g. double-quotes as the 3 byte sequence 0xe2, 0x80, 0x9c, which when used in a regexp will never match a "real" double-quote in your input stream. Sigh. Do No Evil. If only. So, when exporting, *always* choose the ASCII option.

- Incorporate the spreadsheet directly into our code (my favourite). We do this in 2 stages:

Export to a CSV file, and just use an editor to append that file to the end of the source code of our module, after the `__DATA__` token. Such in-line data can be accessed effortlessly by the very neat and very fast module `Data::Section::Simple`. Clearly, since our module has been loaded already, because it's precisely what's being executed, there is essentially no overhead whatsoever in reading data from within it. Don't you just love Perl! And MetaCPAN of course. And a community which contributes such wondrous code.

An advantage of this alternative is that it lets end-users edit the shipped *.csv or *.ods files, after which they can use a command line option on scripts to read their file, over-riding the built in STT.

- After all this, it's just a matter of code which reads and validates the structure of the STT's data, and then reformats it into what `Set::FA::Element` demands.

So, enough about the lexer, but we can say that by now the first sub-grammar has been incorporated into the design and code of the lexer, and that the second sub-grammar must now be encoded into the parser, for that's how the parser performs syntax checking. ☺

That concludes PC Update's Overview to Lexing and Parsing. For Parts 3-6, please visit <http://savage.net.au/Ron/html/graphviz2.marpa/Lexing.and.Parsing.Overview.html>.

This is Part 2. Part 1 was published in PC Update February 2013, pp.38-41.

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Home page: <http://savage.net.au/index.html>

All programs of mine are "OSI Certified Open Source Software"; you can redistribute them and/or modify them under the terms of The Artistic License, a copy of which is available [here](#).

Raspberry Pi Corner

By Lance Lloyd

The big news is that the Raspberry Pi Foundation have released their Model A version of the RasPi for USD\$25. Details from www.raspberrypi.org/archives/2759 and www.raspberrypi.org/archives/3215. However, this is a lower powered (but cheaper) RasPi that may be more suited to using for dedicated purposes, such as creating a robot or some sort of automated process!

Raspberry Pi Camera (www.raspberrypi.org/archives/3224) is another new hardware item due for release soon – the hardware is complete but the Foundation is working on fine-tuning the picture quality and the drivers required. Release date is expected to be late March or early April 2013.

Yet another hardware device for the RasPi becoming available is the SenseBoard (www.raspberrypi.org/archives/3240) which uses the Sense programming environment to drive it. The SenseBoard comes with various inputs and outputs to enable your RasPi to interact with (and control elements of) the real world. It is designed for novice users, but is similar in function to an Arduino board.

New cases are being designed all the time, including this stylish and highly priced aluminium case (www.ubergizmo.com/2013/02/raspberry-pi-aluminum-case-by-barch-designs/). However, for sheer beauty, I think the best of the new cases is the *PiLarian*, inspired by the skeletons of the microscopic marine creature the radiolarian. Biology and the RasPi coming together, it's gotta be good? Sign up to order yours at <http://pilarian.com/index.html>.

Two software updates of note this month are:

1. A free version of Minecraft for the RasPi (<http://pi.minecraft.net/> and <http://mojang.com/2013/02/minecraft-pi-edition-is-available-for-download/>) for those mad gamers among you. Beware, Minecraft is addictive!
2. Media centre software updates of the Raspbmc – www.raspberrypi.org/archives/3274 (and www.raspbmc.com/about/) and the OpenElec system (<http://openelec.tv/news/22-releases/83-openelec-3-0-rc3-released>). If you are looking to use a RasPi as a media centre, you could look at John Hall's video on how he set his up, as explained to us at a recent MHE-SIG meeting (www.melpc.org/Downloads/downloads.html), or read this review on software options (<http://goshawknest.wordpress.com/2013/02/19/openelec-vs-raspbmc-vs-xbian>).

I look forward to bringing you some new developments in the Raspberry Pi “space” next month! ☺



Everything iPad/iPhone

Convener:
Dick Johnson 9857 7362
E-mail to: applesig@melbpc.org.au
or everything-ipad@ausom.net.au

A joint venture between MelbPC and AUSOM. The emphasis will be on the Apple iPad and iPhone and helping people understand the iOS environment.

Next Meeting: March 20

2:00 pm

Dropbox

Presented by Dick Johnson

Dick will take you through:

- Signing up for Dropbox
- Using Dropbox
- Pulling things out of Dropbox
- Emailing PDFs
- Putting things into Dropbox
- Limitations of the iPad with Dropbox
- Being careful about what you do with Dropbox



3:00 pm

Apple's Stores

Presented by Dick Johnson

Dick will demonstrate the iTunes Store: signing up; buying tunes, videos, podcasts, and apps; and how to use, update and delete apps.

**3rd Wednesdays,
2:00 pm–4:00 pm (except January)
Moorabbin Interest Group Room
479 Warrigal Road, Moorabbin**

Everything Apple

Convener:

Susan Jensen 9885 7060

Assistant Convener:

Damian Vuleta 9509 9992

E-mail to: applesig@melbpc.org.au

or everything-apple@ausom.net.au

A joint venture between MelbPC and AUSOM. The emphasis will be on Apple iDevices (iPod, iPhone, iPad, AppleTV, Time Capsule Airport Extreme) and helping people understand the Mac environment.

Next Meeting: March 12

2:00 pm

Mind Mapping on the iPad with iThoughtsHD

Presented by Barry Fredrickson

Barry will explore how iThoughtsHD allows ideas to be collected and mapped visually. The map can then be shared with applications like Word/Pages; PowerPoint/Keynote; other mind mapping programs or via PDF. You can use Mind Mapping for ideas, meetings, brainstorming, GTD, planning, note taking, reference or revision.



There will be a 10-minute tea break halfway through and time for questions afterwards

**2nd Tuesdays, 2:00 pm–4:00 pm
(except January)**

Moorabbin Interest Group Room

LOCAL AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Local and special interest groups are the lifeblood of Melbourne PC User Group

Groups of members with specific interests meet regularly to discuss and indulge their interests in a wide range of topics. There are also regional groups which cover more general topics.

This is where Melb PC membership really pays off and you gain all the benefits. Enhance your computer knowledge and widen your circle of friends to include other members who have similar interests and very often, similar problems to solve. Often you will see presentations by visiting experts.

All members are most welcome. This is part of your Melb PC membership, so feel free to contact any of the conveners listed here. Ask them about future meetings; ask them about the format of their meetings and anything else you need in order to get started. And many of the groups have their own web page, follow the links from here: <http://groups.melbpc.org.au>

IS THERE A GROUP NEAR YOU?

Any suburb (Newsgroups)

Anywhere, Anytime

Hampton Park

Casey

Mornington

Peninsula

Avondale Heights

Essendon

Hoppers Crossing

Wyndham

Mount Waverley

East Workshop, Multimedia Home Entertainment, Hardware, Digital Photo

Ballarat

Ballarat

Ivanhoe

North East, North East Android, North East Daytime & Photography/Digital Imaging, North East Genealogy

Sunbury

Sunbury

Balwyn

Video Inner East

Montrose

Yarra Ranges SIG & Workshop

Watsonia

Northern Suburbs Linux

Brighton

Bayside

Vermont South

Beginners East, East, Genealogy

Gisborne

Macedon Ranges

Moorabbin (Melb PC Headquarters)

Access
Adobe Video
Communications
E-Book
Everything Apple
Everything iPad
Graphics/Animation

Linux & Open Source
MACE
Making Money on the Internet
Microcontroller
Microcontroller Workshop
Music
Programming

Retired and Interested Persons
WAFFLE (Wine & Fine Food Lovers Event)
WASINT (Web & Software Investment Tools)
Website Design
Windows Advanced

WHAT'S ON THIS WEEK?

Check the calendar on pages 7.

SIG Conveners Meeting Report

Jan Weiner

February 2013

The SIG Conveners meeting held on 16 February was well attended, with over 40 participants on the day and several apologies were accepted. A light lunch was followed by the meeting.

The topics covered came under several headings including:

- Melb PC and its future.
- The role of volunteers and their support to committee members in tackling the huge workload in getting the club on its feet, etc.
- The SIGs and their contribution to Melb PC well-being.
- The needs of SIGs today was addressed, and the issue of declining membership was a popular discussion topic. Many had already made positive steps in this area.
- A major thought was to encompass all newer technology available today (as well as PC-related).

Other areas discussed were:

- *PC Update*
- Melb PC website update

- the email server situation
- the possibility of online forums
- resources available
- Linux availability in the training room
- communications across SIGs
- methods of promoting the awareness of Melb PC.

Sharing presenters amongst SIGs was an area to be investigated in the near future. The problems Melb PC is experiencing were also of interest. Many questions were answered, and suggestions will be presented at the next committee meeting.

There were several papers presented during the break, including a collation of all responses to the appeal for items for the agenda.

The Convener Guidelines Manual is currently under review and will be distributed ASAP. Orders were taken for Windows 8 and Office 2013. USB drives were distributed to the SIG conveners present.

The feedback I have received has generally been positive. I would appreciate comments for future SIG Convener meetings.

AASIG (Newsgroups)

Denis Parsons

February 2013

On the computing front this month, the big topic was Windows 8. The cheap introductory pricing was ending, so people were discussing taking advantage of the \$15 upgrade on recently purchased Windows 7 systems and the \$40 online/\$60 DVD upgrade from XP, Vista and older Windows 7. Officeworks was the cheapest place to buy the DVD version and it's still available for around \$50 (as at 19/2/2013). A lot less than the \$399 Microsoft is now asking!

The general consensus is the "Metro" tile interface is terrible for desktop and laptop use, but installing a third party app like Classic Shell

to return a Start menu to the desktop helps give a more Windows 7-like experience and makes it quite acceptable. With the demise of Windows XP only 12 months away, a \$50 upgrade to Windows 8 makes quite a degree of sense as a replacement option.

The latest batch of Java security problems also featured, with the suggestion being to uninstall Java unless you actually need to use it, or at the very least disable it in your browser. It was mentioned that "an estimated 50 per cent of all web site exploitations were due to Java vulnerabilities," so it's something to be taken seriously.

There was a fine display of machismo (all in

the name of fun of course) over whose computer had the most accurate time according to <http://time.is>, with Roger the winner at -0.003 secs. We'll gladly take any late entries and amend the results accordingly!

A highlight of the general discussion was Phil posting images of the dust storm that hit

Melbourne 30 years ago, with various people recalling seeing it roll in over the city and how dark it got. Or not noticing at all until they left for home to discover dust everywhere! There were also some great family photos posted showing boys getting greasy helping Dad work on the bike or car.

Adobe Video Workshop

Report by Kathy Rouse

February 2013

Twenty attended our first meeting for the year and it was nice to see everyone after such a long break.

SONY CAMCORDER HDR-PJ760V

Barry Sheedy gave us a very detailed and informative review of his new camera.

He began with a video he had made which outlined the features of the camera. The video was extremely well done. It not only gave us a lot of information on the camera but also was an excellent example of how to put such a video presentation together.

Barry told us that this type of video, unlike many of his videos, required a script before shooting and narrating.

Everyone learnt something from the presentation and a special thanks goes to Barry for all the work that must have gone into creating such a professional and entertaining video.

The presentation was followed by a video, by Barry, of a recent trip to Rippon Lea House and Gardens. This was, again, a first-rate example of how to put a video together.

After the presentation, we all learnt even more about the camera's features, and even Barry found out something new about his camera from the discussion.

ARCHIVING OUR FOOTAGE

There was some discussion about the best way to archive our videos. It was generally agreed that the best kind of backup involves two external copies kept in different locations. The most secure option used by one of our members was a copy kept in a fire-proof safe.

I find that the easiest way to archive my videos is to do a rough cut in Premiere Pro or Premiere Elements, get rid of all the rubbish, and then save the archived project. It can easily be done using the Project Manager in Premiere Pro, or Project Archiver in Premiere Elements and allows me to perform various edits and output to various formats without losing the quality of the original video.

NEXT MEETING – 7TH MARCH 2013

John Shirt will convene the next workshop, and, as no-one offered to give a presentation, this will be a golden opportunity to bring along any of your home videos to show the group.

Also bring along anything at all, such as tips or techniques that you have discovered, that might interest other members. I'm pretty sure that Barry Sheedy loves any keyboard shortcuts that members may want to pass on to him.

I will be caravanning and will not see you all until the April meeting, where I hope to have some footage of my trip to show you all.

Everything Apple

Report by Susan Jensen

February 2013

Julie Ackland confidently took us through setting up a new iPad out of the original box.

She focussed on setting up an iTunes account and downloading iTunes (for Windows) so that the iPad can communicate with a PC.

She showed us how to connect to a password-protected WiFi network.

Julie talked about the usefulness of Bluetooth for close connectivity of a PC, earphones and a keyboard, the latter two being add-ons to the iPad.

She showed how to manage Notifications and Do Not Disturb settings.

Next we researched Accessibility allowing a soft home button, speak selection, zoom (not recommended) and a three-finger tap as well as selecting the text size that one is comfortable using.

Multitasking gestures was an eye-opener. Apps were moved around, added or deleted and Julie put some into a folder and named the folder with something appropriate to its content. Apps that

you do not use can be deleted, except the ones that come standard from Apple. The standard ones you don't use can be put in a folder and or/sent to the screen furthest from view.

All Apple apps allow you to email from within them, other apps may not. We looked at how to send more than one photo by email using the Share icon in the Pictures app.

It was recommended that we look for some discounted or free apps in the App Store, where one can also find Apple's suggested "Essential Apps". Apple Maps is now preinstalled and Google Maps comes in a free of charge App.

We investigated the use of the small flower icon which is on the lock screen, this opens a slide show of your pictures. We looked into organising pictures into albums. A picture from your library can be used as a wallpaper for the lock screen, the home screen or both.

Julie also showed us how simple it is to set up most of the well known email accounts on the iPad. See [advert](#) for March details.

Making Money on the Internet

Paul Hemsworth

February 2013

Following on from our last meeting in November this meeting was "in house", that is, members helped members by sharing resources and experiences. An impromptu show of hands elicited the fact that most present had built, or are planning to build, their own website or sites.

As has been said before, Wordpress and Kompozer are recommended for a first attempt at building a website. Both are free, open-source tools. WordPress is the easiest for the absolutely non-technical, yet its features are sufficient for a basic website. Kompozer is a little harder to learn but can do more than Wordpress. It has FTP built in. Buying a template was also suggested because templates simplify the process, are relatively

cheap and are available in an enormous range. Ready-made templates are about one tenth of the price of custom designs. Free templates can also be found on the web.

Members were also reminded that a benefit of Melb PC membership is that a website is provided for free.

Online business can be summed up in two words: "Targeted Traffic." Traffic must be targeted, or qualified. Millions of visitors count for nothing if they are not there to buy your product. It all comes back to ranking in the search engines.

What is your product? As an example of thinking outside the box we heard of a tradesman who made short videos of facets of jobs that he did. These videos were posted on YouTube. YouTube

LOCAL AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP REPORTS

placed ads on the videos and each time someone viewed a video/ad he received payment. His 10 clips were returning \$60 per week.

Reputable backlinks are still valuable, therefore good articles on reputable sites help page ranking. Noble Samurai is a useful resource as it has a lot of good content relevant to SEO, such as article writing. Also it doesn't fill your inbox every day or week with email (www.noblesamurai.com).

The Axandra website has useful content for SEO. Axandra also offers a weekly newsletter with links to SEO articles published that week. In addition it has iBusiness Promote, website promotion software (www.axandra.com).

When all this is done it is still important to update a website. Google is always looking for fresh content. Updating somewhere in the range of weekly to monthly is desirable, but which part of that range is an individual choice.

There was some discussion about costs. A Small Orange is a hosting service that has been recommended before. It has increased the price of its "Tiny" website hosting from \$25.00 to \$35.00 per year. Still a bargain (asmallorange.com).

Having a website built professionally can cost up to \$45,000. In addition the cost of maintaining the website can be high. We heard of owners

being charged \$100 to change a phone number on their site. When requesting a quote for building a website, ask about maintenance. Be sure you are given the password to your site.

Open source programs can help cut costs. For example, Open Office, which is free.

We were alerted to Eventbrite which had tickets for "Get Connected: buying and selling on eBay", a free class being held at Malvern Library. Exploring further we found that under "Get Connected:" there were classes on several other topics as diverse as security and social media.

A member endorsed "Market Samurai" which she has been using for some time and found it to be very useful. The bonus is that although there was an initial purchase price the program is updated regularly at no charge.

OTHER RESOURCES

- Long Tail Pro and Long Tail Platinum are keyword research tools. See <http://longtailpro.com>
- Smart Passive Income by Pat Flynn has useful information. See <http://www.smartpassiveincome.com>
- Flippa is for buying and selling websites. See <https://flippa.com>

Yarra Ranges

Report by John Sapsford

January 2013

Our first meeting for the year commenced promptly at 9.15 am. We had 15 members in attendance, with Jan Weiner a surprise visitor.

Bryan introduced Jan to the members and gave her the opportunity to outline her plans as a Melb PC User Group committee member, and her new role as the designated SIG co-ordinator. Jan indicated she intended to visit as many SIGs as possible in 2013, and Yarra Ranges was first on her list.

There was a lively discussion on a number of issues about the Melb PC User Group for Jan to take back to the committee:

- *PC Update*: the new format to be downloaded from the web site – is unpopular with members. Members still wish for a printed version of PC Update.
- Members felt that the committee had lost touch with the grassroots membership.
- Letters written to the Melb PC office had not been answered most times.
- Plans should be implemented to stop the leakage of membership.
- \$4000 a month for the dial-up internet service for only a few hundred members was considered to be far too uneconomical for

LOCAL AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP REPORTS

- the remaining 300 or so members using it.
- It was difficult for members in the eastern region to get to the monthly meeting. In the past the Pharmacy College at Melbourne University or Deakin University was more convenient and close to public transport.
- Has Melb PC adapted to the new changes to technology such as iPhones, tablets etc.?
- The website is not kept up-to-date.
- What happened to the Mailman bulk email program? SIGs such as YRIG found this to be a valuable communication tool, and would really like to see this service reinstated ASAP.

We also had a look at the Apple AUSOM web site and their online magazine. Perhaps YRIG members might like to consider subscribing.

Bryan recommended the Gizmo Freeware web-site (www.techsupportalert.com).

They currently have links to Adobe program downloads, including the CS3 suite of programs (now free), Adobe Acrobat 8 etc. Have a look for yourself.

Jan asked if she could get an idea of computer interests, so each member gave a quick insight into their particular computer interests. These were:

- Helping friends with computer problems

- Shopping sites on the web
- Receiving and sending email
- Image editing
- Family history
- Keeping up-to-date with technology
- Learning from other members at the monthly SIG meeting
- Music
- You Tube videos
- iTunes
- Ubuntu, Virtual Machines, Microsoft Visual Studio .NET
- C# programming language
- Maintaining the YRIG WEB site
- Newsgroups
- Hardware/software issues and problems
- Playing computer games such as FreeCell
- Video editing
- Researching motor bike spare parts
- General internet research
- Buying and selling on eBay
- PowerPoint presentations.

Bryan thanked Jan for her interesting input during the morning and invited her to stay for the workshop after the meeting.

The meeting closed at 11.30 am.



AND



in the same SIG

The Access SIG is now the Access/Excel SIG!

We meet on the second Monday in the month (except January).

**Do you face some challenging tasks and believe using Access or Excel is the answer?
Join us at our regular monthly meeting to discuss solutions, and learn tips from others.
If you want to learn more about Access or Excel, we are here to help.**

access@melbpc.org.au
<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~access>

**2nd Monday 6.30pm-8.30pm (except January)
Melb PC Headquarters, 479 Warrigal Rd, Moorabbin 3189**

LOCAL AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP DETAILS

Many of the groups have their own web page, follow the links from here:

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au>

ACCESS (DATABASE) AND EXCEL

access@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~access/>

Second Monday of each month 6.30pm-8.30pm (except January), Melb PC Headquarters, 479 Warrigal Road, Moorabbin 3189.

Craig Evans Craig_Evans@racv.com.au

Do you want to extend your use of Access, Excel and VBA? Do you have experience with Access, Excel or the VBA code behind them? Come along, ask questions, share your experiences, help solve others' problems and pick up a new idea or two for yourself.

All levels of user experience are welcome. Even the simplest problems can generate interesting solutions.

ADOBE VIDEO

adobevideo@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~adobevideo/>

First Thursday of each month, 2.00pm-4.00pm (except January) Melb PC Headquarters, Level 1, 479 Warrigal Rd, Moorabbin 3189,

Kathy Rouse 9580 6386

The Adobe Video SIG is aimed at videographers, from beginners to the more experienced, wishing to edit and enhance their home videos using Adobe software. The group has lively interactive presentations from various members using the video editing programs Premiere Pro and Premiere Elements. The workshop also includes tips and techniques, shared by the members, on the use of other Adobe software such as Photoshop, Illustrator and After Effects.

ANYWHERE, ANYTIME (NEWSGROUPS)

anywhere@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~anywhere/>

Time 24/7 location as you choose. Kevin Martin (evening only) 9723 5997 or 0407 343 162

The Anywhere, Anytime SIG provides a 24-hour, 7-day-a-week and always-easily-accessed place for all members of the Melb PC User Group to read and write comments, to ask questions on computing or non-computing topics, to receive replies from other Club members and to read their exchanges between each other.

BALLARAT

ballarat@melbpc.org.au

First Thursday of each month 7.30pm-9.45pm

Midlands Golf Club Heinz Lane Ballarat. Alan Pittard 5339 4235

Ballarat is a general purpose SIG. Usually we have no specific topic; it suits everyone at present to let the meeting run in a direction that is topical on the night. From time to time we have a guest speaker/presenter on something of particular interest to us at the time but free form seems the norm at present.

BAYSIDE

bayside@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~bayside/>

Third Thursday of each month 10.00am-12 noon St Stephens Church Hall Cnr Cochrane Street & North Road Brighton. Beginners' subgroup meets 12-1.00pm after the main meeting.

John Morris 9583 4095

Graham Ackland 9589 6229

LOCAL AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP DETAILS

BEGINNERS EAST

beast@melbpc.org.au

Third Sunday 10am-12.30pm (January to November) and second Sunday 10am-12.30pm (December) Vermont South Community Centre Karobran Drive Vermont South Melway 62 G7. Dave Botherway

The East Beginners Group demonstrates how to set up and maintain a computer, how to run software, scan documents, process images, sort out error messages, etc. All procedures are repeated (slowly) until members feel confident with the new knowledge.

CASEY

casey@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~casey/>

Second Friday of each month 12.30pm-3.00pm (except January public holidays)

*Hampton Park Community House:
16-20 Stuart Ave. Hampton Park Melway 96 E8.
Jan Whitaker 9705 9009 Jan Weiner*

Casey offers a friendly, social atmosphere where our members learn from, support, encourage and help each other on computer and communications topics. The Hampton Park meeting is based on presentations and Q&A.

CASEY WORKSHOP

casey@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~casey>

Fourth Friday of each month 10am-12.30pm

*Hampton Park Community House:
16-20 Stuart Ave. Hampton Park Melway 96 E8.
Jan Whitaker 9705 9009, Jan Weiner*

Please bring your laptop or your complete PC if you need assistance. Windows 7 help will be available. Wi-Fi updating is possible using the internet available on-site. Notify Jan Whitaker, jwhit@janwhitaker.com or phone: 9705 9009, of your intention to attend.

COMMUNICATIONS

comms@melbpc.org.au

Second Wednesday of each month 7.00pm-9.30pm (except January) Melb PC Headquarters, Level 1, 479 Warrigal Rd, Moorabbin 3189, Philip Lew 9822 2998 BH

The Communications SIG focuses on all aspects of computer connectivity. Topics include modem communications (BBS and internet dialup); Client/Server software, HTML and other internet related topics. We also cover topics on Computer Networking (LANs and WANs) and other relevant general telecommunications issues of interest to the well-connected PC user.

E-BOOK

ebook@melbpc.org.au

Second Thursday of each month (except January) 7.00pm, Melb PC Headquarters, Level 1, 479 Warrigal Rd, Moorabbin 3189. Dennis Fieldhouse 9557 6847 Keith Younger 0414 945 791

The E-Book SIG is a forum for the sharing of information, experiences and ideas relating to the broad field of e-books and e-readers. At present the range of e-book readers is rapidly expanding and costs are falling, yielding great scope for reviews and performance comparisons. Purchase of e-books and the software for this purpose is worthy of study as are the various programs for manipulating and editing of text.

EAST

east@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~east>

Second Wednesday of each month 7.30pm-10.00pm (except January) Vermont South Community House Karobran Drive Vermont South. Melway 62 G7. Paul Woolard 9877 1059 Ian Dewhurst 0438 480 500

At East we provide an entertaining and informative session covering a range of computer topics for all levels, some from invited speakers and some from our own members. George Skarbek hosts the popular Q&A segment.

LOCAL AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP DETAILS

EAST WORKSHOP

eastwsh@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~eastwsh>

Second Sunday 10.00am-2.00pm Wadham House
52 Wadham Parade Mt Waverley rear of Library
Melway 61 E12. Ken Gubbins 9842 8875
Jeff Webster 9078 0879

The East Workshop is hands-on, practical, interactive and runs on "Show me how, and I'll do it with your assistance". We handle "how to upgrade", "software doesn't run", "slow computer", "no sound", "no video" problems, and more. Bring your computer.

ESSENDON

essendon@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~essendon>

First, second, and third Friday 9:30am-12 noon, fourth Wednesday 7-9pm (except January), Nancye Kirchner Neighbourhood Centre, Doyle Street Avondale Heights. Melway 27 D6 John Guegan 9317 7114

Provides assistance with computer skills including word processing, spreadsheets, digital photography, music applications, computer maintenance and product reviews. First Friday – Main meeting. Second Friday – Open Forum. Third Friday – Varies- Check website for details. Fourth Wednesday Night – Multimedia/General.

EVERYTHING APPLE

applesig@melbpc.org.au

or everythingapple@ausom.net.au

Second Tuesday of each month 2.00 pm-4:00pm (except January) Melb PC Headquarters, Level 1, 479 Warrigal Rd, Moorabbin 3189, Susan Jensen 9885 7060 Damian Vuleta 9509 9992

A joint venture between AUSOM and Melbourne PC User Group. The emphasis is on Apple iDevices (iPod, iPhone, iPad, AppleTV, Time Capsule, Airport Extreme etc.) and helping people understand the Mac environment.

EVERYTHING IPAD

applesig@melbpc.org.au

or everythingipad@ausom.net.au

Third Wednesday of each month 2.00 pm-4:00pm (except January) Melb PC Headquarters, Level 1, 479 Warrigal Rd, Moorabbin 3189, Dick Johnson 9857 7362

A joint venture between AUSOM and Melbourne PC User Group. The emphasis is on the Apple iPad and iPhone and helping people understand the iOS environment.

GENEALOGY

geneast@melbpc.org.au

Third Sunday 1.00pm-4.00pm (January to November) Second Sunday 1.00pm-4.00 (December) Vermont South Community Centre Karobran Drive Vermont South Melway 62 G7. Robert Swindley

The Genealogy SIG is for those beginning genealogy and for those who are advanced but need more computer knowledge to move ahead. Members' trials, tribulations and expertise are openly discussed and freely shared in this self-help group.

GRAPHICS/ANIMATION

graphics@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~graphics>

Third Monday of each month 7.30pm-9.30pm Melb PC Headquarters, Level 1, 479 Warrigal Rd, Moorabbin 3189, Yahya Abdal-Aziz, Roger Wragg

The Graphics SIG explores everything to do with computer graphics, software and hardware. Topics discussed include paint programs, drawing, animation, graphic programming, fractals, printing, scanning, fonts, design, illustration and better photography. Bring along your questions and problems. Visitors are always welcome.

LOCAL AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP DETAILS

IHELP

ihelp@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~ihelp>

Approximately 6 monthly, 7.00pm till 9.00pm, Melb PC Headquarters, Level 1, 479 Warrigal Rd, Moorabbin 3189.

Convener: Rotational. The current leader can be determined from the office.

The function of iHelp is a group of "Users helping Users" whose main role is to sort out internet or General PC problems so that members can get a full-featured online experience. Services include Telephone First Aid, Email Help and Internet Help.

Volunteers with patience and computer experience are always welcome.

LAN-SLIDE GAMING

<http://www.lanslide.com.au>

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/lanslide>

*Events: Quarterly Next Event: April 2013
26-hour gaming event from 10.00am Saturday until 12.00pm Sunday Brendon Taylor, Craig Mattson*

Bring your own PC LAN parties are a fantastic way to socialise with other gamers and battle it out for sponsored prizes. Popular games include *League of Legends*, *Call of Duty*, *Age of Empires*, *MineCraft* and *FlatOut 2* – or bring-your-own multiplayer games and find others with the same gaming interests as you!

We had 70 people at our last event and we provide a full gigabit network and power to support this. Simply bring your own PC, some games, and enjoy the fun. Plenty of prizes and giveaways provided by our sponsors.

LINUX & OPEN SOURCE

linux@melbpc.org.au

<http://member.melbpc.org.au/~linux>

Second Monday of each month 7.00pm-9.30pm (except January) Melb PC Headquarters, Level 1, 479 Warrigal Rd, Moorabbin 3189, James Cox (9885 5503)

The SIG is a Linux-based group exploring Linux at various levels from beginner to advanced, including server-based solutions. It also looks at open-source applications for platforms that include Linux, BSD, Mac and Windows. We aim to have a mix of Q&A, demonstrations and workshops. Presentations will mostly be oriented towards demonstrating an application from the open source world and will include topics of interest to both beginners and those with some experience. We intend to hold Workshops to help users at all levels. On meeting days there is a help workshop before the main meeting, 3.00pm-5.00pm, with one-on-one, hands-on, informal training. Ringing to book is preferred but not essential.

MACE (MELBOURNE ATARI COMPUTER ENTHUSIASTS)

mace@melbpc.org.au

Third Sunday 10.00am-2.00pm Melb PC Headquarters, Level 1, 479 Warrigal Rd, Moorabbin 3189. Andrew Boschan 5426 1917 AH Roger Davies 9879 1109 Enquiries 0500 818 448

The Atari SIG is dedicated to the joy of Atari. The SIG is fast, furious and action-packed. We welcome all owners and former owners (we know you are out there) to visit us and join in the fun; it's a soul thing!

MACEDON RANGES

mrgpc@melbpc.org.au

*Third Sunday 2.00pm-4.00pm Further Education Centre 18 Hamilton St Gisborne.
John Hunter 0406 868 226*

The Macedon Ranges members range from beginners to technicians and have a common interest in computers, with the sole aim of sharing knowledge and experiences, and helping each other. The SIG is a general-purpose group that is free-flowing and may or may not have a specific subject to discuss at the meeting. There are times a special guest is invited to speak on a particular

LOCAL AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP DETAILS

subject that has been requested by a group member. At other times there may be special instruction and demonstrations on particular software or hardware. Members can also bring along any hardware they are having problems with for the group to try and resolve.

MAKING MONEY ON THE INTERNET

amsig@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~amsig>

Second Saturday 10.00 am-12 noon (except December and January) Melb PC Headquarters, Level 1, 479 Warrigal Rd, Moorabbin 3189, George Skarbek 9561 6362 Paul Hemsworth 9337 4947

Affiliate Marketing (AM) is a way to make money from one's websites by placing links to merchants and taking a commission when someone buys through such links. This SIG covers the basics of building websites (but limited to AM purposes), time-saving tools, and available programs.

Members are encouraged to share their experiences and the occasional hot tip at the SIG.

MICROCONTROLLER

micro@melbpc.org.au

Second Wednesday of each month 7.00pm-9.30pm (except January) Melb PC Headquarters, Level 1, 479 Warrigal Rd, Moorabbin 3189, Philip Lew 0428 567 019 John Hollow 0417 031 164

Microcontrollers are small cheap computer-chips with measurement or sense inputs (e.g. temperature, door-open) and control outputs (e.g. displays, motor control), i.e. all combinations of analog and digital, inputs and outputs. They need very few other components to function, and are in many products (e.g. cameras, cars, toys). Our group is for people to develop microcontroller projects (including the software-programming) – gadgets for fun as well as more serious purposes. We make machines, using microcontrollers and other electronics, to do things. We cater for all levels of knowledge, novice to experienced – users helping users.

MICROCONTROLLER WORKSHOP

microws@melbpc.org.au

Second Saturday 11.00 am-4:00pm (except January)

Fourth Saturday 11.00 am-4:00pm (except

December) Melb PC Headquarters, Level 1, 479

Warrigal Rd, Moorabbin 3189, Robert Brown, Geoff Lethbridge, John Shirt

The Saturday Workshop is a "Creative Space": a space to express your creativity. This workshop is under construction. Its development depends on those who are involved and their interests. The workshops are centred around, but not limited to, microcontrollers. If you are looking for a space that facilitates sharing of ideas and support, a place where you can express your creativity, then this SIG could be what you are looking for. The Workshop is an informal SIG, a place to work on your project, start a new project, or join a group project.

MULTIMEDIA HOME ENTERTAINMENT

multimed@melbpc.org.au

<http://www.melbpc.org.au>

First Friday of each month 10.00am-12 noon (except January) Wadham House 52 Wadham Parade Mt Waverley Melway 61 E12. John Hall 9803 2731 Kelvin Cording 9438 1047

The aim of the interest group is to assist members in the installation and operation of PC-based hardware and software to run and maintain Multimedia Home Entertainment systems. This would include such things as Personal Video Recorders (PVRs), Media Servers (including Windows Home Server), internet streaming of video and audio, Sony PS3 and Windows X-Box home entertainment systems, and home networking and storage systems for playback of video and audio. Attendees are welcome from beginners to expert level. Members are encouraged to bring their own equipment to gain hands-on experience in setup and/or maintenance.

LOCAL AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP DETAILS

MUSIC

music@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~music>

*Third Thursday of each month 7.30pm-9.30pm
Melb PC Headquarters, Level 1, 479 Warrigal Rd,
Moorabbin 3189, Yahya Abdal-Aziz, David Godfred*

The Music SIG is for members who like to make or listen to music. Bring along your creations, questions and problems. Visitors are always welcome.

NEWSGROUPS

See Anywhere, Anytime SIG.

NORTH EAST

neast@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~neast>

*Fourth Tuesday of each month 7.30pm-9.30pm
(except December) Uniting Church Hall 19 Seddon
Street Ivanhoe Melway 31 F8. John Grant 9467 2709
AH; Choi Lai*

NORTH EAST ANDROID

lampshir@melbpc.org.au

*Third Wednesday of each month 10.00am to
12.00pm (except January) Uniting Church Hall 19
Seddon Street Ivanhoe, parking at the rear, Melway
31 F8. Colin Lampshire 9857 5372 or 0413 640 408
Kelvin Cording 9438 1047*

The Android Interest Group provides the opportunity for members to learn how the new rapidly emerging Android Operating System can be used to operate, control, and maintain applications (apps) on compatible mobile devices such as computer tablets and smartphones. All aspects of both hardware and software are considered with a learning experience based on friendly discussions, presentations, and demonstrations to suit both novice and experienced computer users.

NORTH EAST DAYTIME & PHOTOGRAPHY/DIGITAL IMAGING

neday@melbpc.org.au

*Second Thursday of each month 10.00am-12.15pm
(except January) Uniting Church Hall 19 Seddon
Street Ivanhoe, parking at the rear, Melway 31 F8.
Colin Lampshire 9857 5372*

We aim to interest and assist all levels of computer users, from beginners to the more experienced. Our General Interest Group meetings feature reviews of useful software and computer add-ons, with plenty of time to assist with members computer problems.

Every alternate month we specialise in issues relating to Photography/Digital Imaging.

NORTH EAST GENEALOGY

negen@melbpc.org.au

<http://member.melbpc.org.au/~negen/>

*First Tuesday of each month 10.00am-12.45pm
(except January) Uniting Church Hall 19 Seddon St
Ivanhoe.*

Allan Medforth 9410 9034; Vilma Stargatt.

Now recognised as an important support for members helping members with genealogy and computer skills. A good social atmosphere supported by excellent facilities.

NORTHERN SUBURBS LINUX

nslig@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~nslig>

*Third Monday of each month 7.30pm to 9.30pm
(except December). Community Meeting Room
Watsonia Library Ibbotson St Watsonia Melway 20
E4. David Hatton, Stephen Davidson*

The Northern Suburbs Linux SIG provides a focus for members living in the northern suburbs who are interested in learning more about using Linux in day-to-day computing tasks. Meeting topics are influenced by the regular attendees; beginners and visitors are most welcome. For SIG news and last minute updates please see our Web pages.

LOCAL AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP DETAILS

PENINSULA

pennsula@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~pennsula>

Lindsay Wiles 9775 3069 Terry Said 5975 0327
Main meetings First Monday of each month-7.00pm
(except January) Third Monday of each month-
9.30am (except December) Mornington Information
Centre 320 Main St Mornington.

New Users Subgroup second and fourth Mondays
of each month-4.00pm (except school holidays)
Mornington Secondary College, Nepean Highway,
Mornington

Graphics Subgroup third Monday of each month
12.30pm Mornington Information Centre
320 Main St Mornington

Genealogy Subgroup third Monday of each month
2.30pm Mornington Information Centre
320 Main St Mornington

PROGRAMMING

program@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~program>

Fourth Tuesday of each month 6.30pm-9.00pm.
Melb PC Headquarters, Level 1, 479 Warrigal Rd,
Moorabbin 3189. Mohan Gupta 0421 214 081
Roger Plant 0403 789 593

Tell us about programs you are writing, wrote in
the past, or give ideas for interesting programs to
write. We'll walk through the process of writing
programs, from user interface design to code cut-
ting and testing. Different programming languages,
techniques and tools will be showcased as well as
scripts, plugins, extensions, markups, compilers,
databases, hopefully something for beginners and
pros alike.

RETIRED & INTERESTED PERSONS

ripper@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~ripper>

Fourth (not last) Friday of each month 10am-12
noon Melb PC Headquarters, Level 1, 479 Warrigal
Rd, Moorabbin 3189, Ken Thomas 9884 5309

This general interest group has subgroups
Graphics and Digital Imaging and New Users
meeting at 9am before the main meeting. The
Windows subgroup meets for a further hour from
12 noon after the main meeting.

The Hardware subgroup meets at 10am on the
second Friday of each month, at Wadham House,
52 Wadham Pde. Mount Waverly, Melway 61:E-12
(except Jan).

The Photoshop subgroup meets at 10am at
Wadham House on the third Fri of the month.

SUNBURY

sunbury@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~sunbury>

Every Thursday of each month 9.30am-12 noon
Sunbury Senior Citizens Centre (back room)

8 O'Shannassy Street Sunbury Melway 382 E4.
Kevin Day 9744 2514 Kevin Hale 9740 5786

First Thursday – New users, but everyone welcome
Second Thursday – Maintenance, problems dis-
cussed, sometimes solved

Third Thursday – Main meeting, demos, presenta-
tions etc.

Fourth Thursday – Linux, a new experience

5th Thursday – (when there is one) Maintenance

VIDEO INNER EAST

Fourth Monday of each month (except December)
7.00pm-9.30pm Balwyn Library Meeting Room 336
Whitehorse Road Balwyn. Richard Balsillie 9809 4116

The group covers all aspects of production and
related photo and image editing techniques.

LOCAL AND SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP DETAILS

WAFFLE (WINE & FINE FOOD LOVERS EVENT)

trado@melbpc.org.au

First Wednesday of each month from 9.40pm following the Monthly Meeting at Melb PC Headquarters, Level 1, 479 Warrigal Rd, Moorabbin 3189 (except January)

Budget supper get together – BYO (wine) or buy. Patrons are welcome even if only for coffee.

At La Casetta 1066 Centre Rd, Corner of Eskay Rd Sth Oakleigh. Melway 78:G-2. Patrons are welcome even if only for coffee. Tom Rado 9807 4072

How-to-get-there sketch maps are available at the Monthly Meeting.

WASINT (WEB & SOFTWARE INVESTMENT TOOLS)

wasint@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~wasint>

Second Tuesday of each month, 10.30am-12.30pm (except January) Melb PC Headquarters, Level 1, 479 Warrigal Rd, Moorabbin 3189. Richard Solly.

Become more confident in the use of Web and software tools as part of your financial life. Join others, both at the monthly meeting and through the online Web board to share favourite sites and information sources in the exploding field of online financial information.

WEBSITE DESIGN

webdesign@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~webdesign>

Fourth Sunday 2.00pm-4.00pm (except December and January) Melb PC Headquarters, Level 1, 479 Warrigal Rd, Moorabbin 3189. Fleur Stephens 0407 330 963

The aim of the Website Design SIG is to help members build and manage their own websites. So if you are creating, managing or designing a website and need some help, drop in. Visitors welcome.

WYNDHAM

wynd@melbpc.org.au

<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~wynd>

Room 3 Central Park Community Centre Lonsdale Circuit off Franklin Blvd. Hoppers Crossing Melway 206:J-1. Chris Hughes 9731 0891; John Healey
General: Second Monday of each month 7.30-9.30pm (except January)

Multi-Media: Third Tuesday of each month 7.30pm-9.30pm (except December & January)

General: Provides local information and support to the South-West Region of outer Melbourne. There will be Q&A Sessions and coverage of PC Hardware and Software issues. There will be a supper break with time for informal discussion.

Multi-Media: With the convergence of both video and still photography and the attendant add-ons, this Interest Group will cater for the media aspects of PC technology. This will include video & photo manipulation and production, animation, presentation, sound & music, illustration, 3D, and various associated add-ons and plug-ins. We will also have visiting presenters and demonstrations.

YARRA RANGES & WORKSHOP

yrig@melbpc.org.au

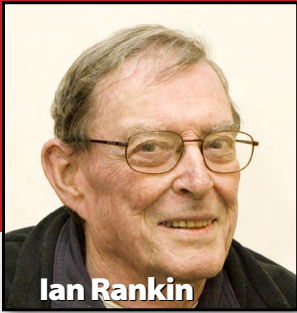
<http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~yrig>

Fourth Tuesday (except December) Meeting Starts 9.15am followed by the Workshop. Japara Community House, 13r Leith Road Montrose Melway 52 D7. Bryan Paten 0429 430 640 Shane Mason 9733 5390

Meets to provide general information and support to members in the Outer East Region of Melbourne. There will be Q&A sessions and coverage of PC Hardware and Software issues, with time for informal discussion. From time to time we will have visiting presenters and demonstrations. The Workshop will cater for the members who experience problems with their computers or programs. Extended answers can be given to questions that need clarification. Come along to help other members or just to enjoy the companionship.

March 2013 Monthly Disc

All programs on the monthly disc are free, except where shown otherwise. The monthly video is of the February 2013 monthly meeting. The monthly discs are \$5 each (\$6 with postage) or \$66 for an 11-issue subscription (postage included). It is available at the monthly meetings, SIG meetings and the Melb PC office. For further details email office@melbpc.org.au



Ian Rankin

Anti-Virus

GMER – Ver: 2.0.18327

GMER is an application for XP/VISTA/7/8 that detects rootkits. It scans for hidden processes, hidden services, hidden files, hidden registry keys, hidden drivers, drivers hooking SSDT, drivers hooking IDT, drivers hooking IRP calls etc.

Audio

aTunes – Ver: 3.0.2

aTunes is a fully-featured and handy audio player and manager, with ripping and encoding tools included. aTunes is coded in the Java programming language (Java 5), using Swing, making it a highly portable piece of software.

Giada – Ver: 0.5.6

Load or record up to 32 samples, choose to play them in single mode (drum machine) or loop mode (sequencer), and start the show with your computer keyboard as a controller.

OpenMPT – Ver: 1.21.01.00

OpenMPT, also known as Open ModPlug Tracker, is an easy-to-use, popular music sequencing program. It supports a wide vari-

ety of module formats and offers an intuitive, native GUI as well as advanced features such as VST (Virtual Studio Technology) plugins and ASIO (Audio Stream Input/Output).

Zortam Mp3 Media Studio – Ver: 14.65

Zortam Mp3 Media Studio is an all-in-one MP3 application. It has several modules such as Mp3 Organiser, ID3 Tag Editor, MP3 Player, MP3 Normaliser and MP3 to Wav converter. You can also batch auto tag your MP3 files using the Zortam song database.

Backup

Directory Compare – Ver: 3.42.2

Directory Compare enables you to compare folders and specify files to synchronise. Documents and applications can be kept on a backup hard disk or any other storage device.

FBackup – Ver: 4.8.289

FBackup is a freeware backup program for Windows. FBackup protects your important files and folders from partial or total loss by automating backup tasks; it password protects and uses compression to save storage space.

Burner

DeepBurner – Ver: 1.9.0.228

Burn to DVD and design disc covers for free. DeepBurner hasn't got a flashy interface with metallic effects and funky buttons. It has a clean design, which reflects its frugal use of resources.

Desktop

Coolbarz – Ver: 1.0.0.2

Coolbarz provides you with desktop toolbars for quick and easy access to your most commonly used programs. While Coolbarz was developed for Windows 7, it was also designed with previous versions of Windows in mind.

File/Folder Launcher – Ver: 2013.1

File/Folder Launcher, also known as FFLauncher, is a simple, very easy-to-use application that helps you launch applications and open files and folders.

Digital Imaging

Adobe Photoshop – Ver: CS2 Free

Adobe Photoshop is a graphics editing program developed and published by Adobe Systems. This older, still useful version, has been released free of charge.

FotoSketcher – Ver: 2.35

FotoSketcher converts image files to drawings, with over 20 different styles to choose from. It also includes basic image correction and retouching.

ImageTools – Ver: 3.4

Image Tools is simple, yet powerful mass image customisation application that will help you resize, convert, crop, flip and rotate your images. You can also add watermarks to your pictures.

PicaJet – Ver: 2.6.5.696

PicaJet is a powerful, feature-rich, but highly customisable and convenient digital photo management and image database software that will efficiently organise your digital image collection.

Skitch – Ver: 1.0.1.16

Capture, annotate and share images. You can take screenshots or open photos, add arrows, shapes and text, crop, resize, then share your work with friends, family and co-workers. Integrates seamlessly with Evernote.

Visions – Ver: 1.4.4.1850

Visions enables you to easily view and search photos, fix flaws, apply effects, create albums and calendars, share your favourites through email, prints and online sharing websites and much more, all in a cool and fun 3D interface.

Disk Tools

Drive Speedometer – Ver: 1.1.0

Drive Speedometer monitors the current read and write speeds of your hard drives.

Drives Monitor – Ver: 10.6

Drives Monitor utilises Performance Monitor data to visualize physical or logical disk activity. For each physical/logical disk, percentage active time and bytes read and written per second are displayed.

Partition Wizard Home Edition – Ver: 7.7

Partition Wizard is a partition manager that can be used by individuals with any experience level. The user interface of the program is clean and intuitive. You can run a wizard to copy a partition or a disk, as well as recover a partition or recover free data.

Games

NussKnacker – Ver: 1.06

NussKnacker is a game for Windows that imitates Jawbreaker for Pocket PC, Otis for Mac OSX, and Same Game for Windows 3.1.

OpenTTD Stable – Ver: 1.2.3

This is an open-source clone of the original popular Microprose game "Transport Tycoon Deluxe". It tries to mimic the original game as closely as possible while extending it with new features.

Home/Office

Calc7List – Ver: 2.6.0

A talking calculator with many options. Perform your calculations and list accounts with flexibility. View the operations performed in another window and add various notes so you won't forget important things.

Database .NET – Ver: 7.7.4759

An innovative, powerful and intuitive multiple database management tool. Browse objects, design tables, edit rows, export data, and run queries.

LyX – Ver: 2.0.5.1

An accessible and open-source document processor that encourages an approach to writing based on the structure of your documents (WYSIWYM – What You See Is What You Mean) and not simply their appearance (WYSIWYG – What You See Is What You Get). It combines the power and flexibility of TeX/LaTeX with the ease of use of a graphical interface.

Internet

Tonido – Ver: 3.62.0.21836

Once installed on any computer (Windows, Linux or Mac), Tonido enables files and media on that computer to be available anywhere, through a web browser or smart phone (iPhone, Android, Blackberry or Windows Phone 7).

Multi Media

Kirara Encoder – Ver: 10.1

Kirara Encoder is a user-friendly utility that enables you to encode and convert your multimedia files.

Programming

Cppcheck – Ver: 1.57

Cppcheck is an open-source and easy-to-use application that provides static analysis of C/C++ code. It will check for memory leaks, mismatching allocation-deallocation, buffer overrun etc.

Security

CTI Text Encryption – Ver: 4.0

CTI Text Encryption is an easy-to-use text encryption and decryption tool for hiding your sensitive information from others. Lightweight and portable via USB flash drive. Able to encrypt with multiple keys.

DiskCryptor – Ver: 1.0.757.115

DiskCryptor is an open-source encryption system for Windows that enables the encryption of an entire PC's hard drive or individual partitions – including the ability to encrypt the partition and disk on which the OS is installed.

Utilities

7-Zip – Ver: 9.2

7-Zip is open-source and creates archives with a high compression ratio. It can use many different compression formats, including 7z, zip and tar.

Belarc Advisor – Ver: 8.3.0.0

The Belarc Advisor builds a detailed profile of your installed software and hardware, Microsoft hotfixes that are missing, anti-virus status, CIS (Centre for Internet Security) and benchmarks, displaying the results in your web browser.

ClickOff – Ver: 1.90

ClickOff is a pop-up blocker which can also automatically click buttons on messages that come up frequently (eg "are you sure..."), fill in text, minimise or maximise windows and set additional parameters such as wildcards and delay time for possible user intervention.

File Joiner – Ver: 2.1.1

File Joiner is a straightforward program which enables you to merge parts of a file (.001, .002 etc).

GhostBuster – Ver: 98926

A handy and reliable utility designed to list all devices, detect ghosted devices, and remove these if they match selectable device types and/or device classes.

neoSearch – Ver: 2.40

neoSearch is a lightweight program which uses a unique algorithm to index your computer, providing almost instant search results for file queries. You can navigate quickly to any file or folder on your system as well as index shared folders across networks.

ServiWin – Ver: 1.55

ServiWin utility displays the list of installed drivers and services on your system. For some of them, additional useful information is displayed: file description, version, product name, company that created the driver file, and more.

SharpKeys – Ver: 3.5

SharpKeys is a registry hack that is used to make certain keys on a keyboard act like other keys. For example, if you accidentally hit caps lock often, you could use this utility to map caps lock to a shift key, or even turn it off completely.

XdN Tweaker – Ver: 0.9.3.0

Provides various system adjustments and fine-tuning options. For Windows Vista, XP and 2003 server.

Video

DVDVideoSoft Free Screen

Video Recorder –

Ver: 2.5.28.1212

Free Screen Video Recorder is a compact full-featured screen video recorder and screen shot capture program.

Updates

Ad-Aware A.E. 9.5; Adobe Reader 10.0; Agent 6.0; Avant Browser 2011 Build 30; Firefox 9.0; Foxit 5.0.2; IrfanView 4.3; Opera 11.5; Paint.Net 3.5.8; Slim Browser 6.00 Spybot 1.6; Thunderbird 9.0; Winzip 15.5; XnView 1.9

GEORGE SKARBEEK brings us answers to some curly questions.

Send your questions to george@melbpc.org.au

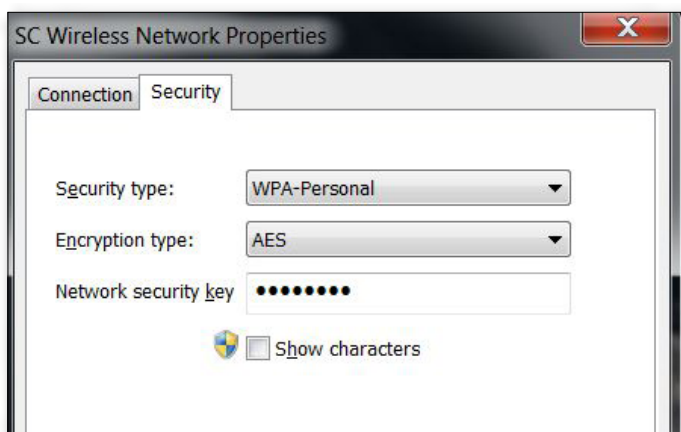
BANKING ON WI-FI

Q: I will be going overseas in a couple of months and I will have to do some banking via the internet. How safe is it to use Wi-Fi for banking?

A: No internet banking can be guaranteed to be 100 per cent safe but it can be reasonably close to that figure.

Using Wi-Fi is not as secure as using a wired connection, but is safe enough if you take some simple precautions. The first, and by far the most important, is to only use a Wi-Fi connection that requires a password. This ensures that all data is encrypted. Staying in large hotels in big capital cities, you should expect that they use a high level of encryption.

Using an internet café in a small African town may be more risky, but probably safe enough if you take precautions. I am assuming that you have your own tablet or laptop. When using a computer in the business section of a large well-known hotel you can be quite confident (but still not 100 per cent certain) that there is no data logger installed. In the backpack café my confidence would not be that high, and for



banking I would use my own computer except for emergencies.

Before you connect to a Wi-Fi network, click on the network icon near the clock and hover the mouse over your proposed connection to see how secure it is. WPA2 is the most secure. WPA is very good and adequate for banking. If you see WEP then do not connect for banking as this can be broken quickly.

The second step to prevent your banking being compromised is to log in and do the banking immediately. Then log out and later log back in for browsing, reading mail etc. This gives the hacker the minimum amount of time to crack the password. They must collect many of the received packets and run their software to crack it. It can take from a few minutes to years depending on the length of the password, the level of encryption used and the speed of their computer.

The above information is given in good faith but I am not a security expert and have not tried to hack into any Wi-Fi networks.



WHAT IS WINMAIL.DAT

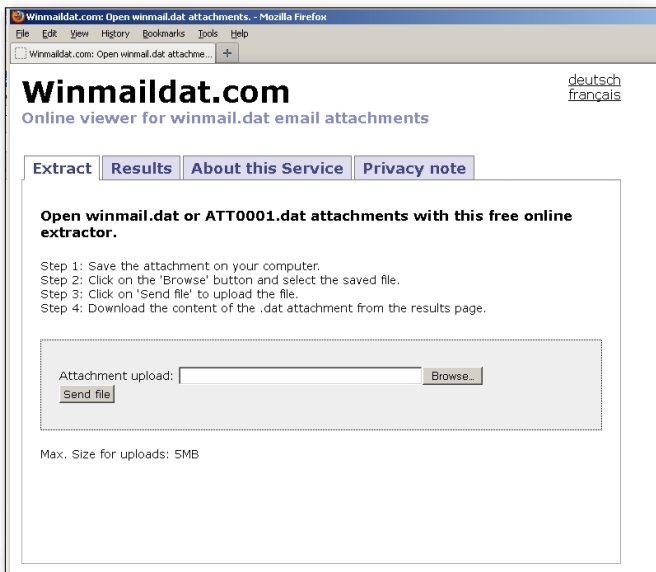
Q: I have received a file, Winmail.dat, as an attachment and I cannot open it with any of my programs. Do you have an answer?

A: Winmail.dat is a file created by MS Outlook to send personal information to be incorporated into the recipient's Outlook data file, and for all practical purposes is not usable unless they also use Outlook. Users of other mail reader programs cannot open this file and there is no Microsoft program that you can use to view the contents of this .dat file.

Fortunately there is a tiny program that allows the extraction of files from Winmail.dat. See www.biblet.freeserve.co.uk for details. You can also use a service at <http://www.winmaildat.com>

I suggest that you ask your friend to alter their Outlook settings to enable you and other recipients to be able to read the attachments. To alter Outlook, click on Tools, Options, the Mail Format tab, and in the Send in this Message Format list, select HTML. Selecting Plain Text will remove all special font and colour formatting, destroy tables etc.

Microsoft has an article on this topic at <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/278061>. If your sender works in a corporate environment using an Exchange Server then see <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/138053>



USB 3 ON USB 2 COMPUTER

Q: I will be purchasing a new computer soon that will have USB 3 ports. Can I purchase a USB 3 drive now and use it on my current computer that has only USB 2 ports?

A: Yes you can without any problems as it is backwards compatible. Just plug it in and it will work.

You will be limited to USB 2 speeds, but in very many cases this will not be a problem especially if you are using a USB thumb drive and not a USB connected fast hard drive. The theoretical speed of USB 2 is 480 Mbit/s but the effective throughput about 35 MB per second. This is faster than most USB 2 drives can read or write data, therefore there will be no difference in speed if such a drive has a USB 2 or USB 3 connection.

Some manufacturers are selling these slower USB devices with a USB 3 interface for a premium as many users are not aware that they do not need a USB 3 interface on the lower speed device.

USB 3 is capable of speed up to 3.2 Gbit/s or 400 MB/s.



=====YOUR AD GOES HERE=====

Did you know that as a member, you are entitled to place free computer-related ads in PC Update?

**Send in your
FOR SALE and WANTED
advertisements**

to: editorpc@melbpc.org.au

=====YOUR AD GOES HERE=====

JOHN SWALE reports on Questions and Answers from the opening session of the February monthly meeting and from members' written submissions.



Q: I use Windows 7 with Internet Explorer and Chrome. In Internet Explorer I have several folders in Favourites that I set up so I can save the website links in one of these categories. When I go to a web site and save the address as a favourite it saves it in the base Favourites folder. Can you have it use the last folder used to save a favourite?

A: No. If you click "Add," Internet Explorer will save it in the general folder and then you will have to manually move it to the desired folder. You should select a specific one by clicking the down arrow in the "Create In" listbox before clicking "Add".

Q: I have a new PC with Windows 7 and, when installing some programs, it asks for administrator privilege even though my account was set up as an administrator. So I have to use the primary administrator account. How can I do it with my normal account?

A: It is part of the security paranoia that has come into the construction of Windows over time. The best way is to find the setup.exe or equivalent file on the install disc or in a folder on the hard disk, right click on it and chose "Run As Administrator". [JS: In Windows XP chose "Run As" and then from the drop-down user list select Administrator.]

Q: I have been contemplating upgrading my desktop which runs Vista. What's stopping me is the time it takes to install the applications and then get all the settings correct. Is there an easy way to transfer the programs?

A: Unfortunately not. You can often transfer the settings by saving them from within the current program. When you install an application, some of the files go into the Windows folder and some

into the specific program file folder and there are also entries made in the registry. So you have to install the applications from scratch and import any settings that you have saved. Remember that the longer you leave it the harder it gets.

Q: I have a problem with Internet Explorer as conduit.com has taken it over and won't let me do anything. I use Microsoft Security Essentials to check for any viruses and malware.

A: It looks like malware has taken it over or it could be that your homepage has been hijacked. Microsoft Security Essentials is not bad but you could try setting up a Kaspersky rescue CD or USB drive. Go to kaspersky.com, find the ISO file and burn it to a CD or USB. When you boot from the CD or USB, the system will go and check for updates before commencing the testing. [JS: Search for "Kaspersky rescue disc" and you will find links to the instructions and YouTube videos for creating the bootable CD and flash drive.]

Q: I have an old PC running Windows XP Pro and the motherboard and PSU died. I got a new PC, installed Windows 7 and recovered my "My Documents" folder from the old hard disk. Windows 7 does not have Outlook Express so where are my old emails?

A: They are in hidden files so you will have to go into the folder options and the View settings and select Show Hidden Files. Then navigate to Documents and Settings, select your logon name folder | Application Data | Identities | Microsoft | Outlook Express and select the folder(s) with a string of characters in between {}. This will give you the mailboxes. The address box is a separate

file with a wab extension located in Application Data | Microsoft | Address Book.

Q: I received a GEDCOM (GEnealogical Data COMmunication) file via email and I cannot open it from the email. Any ideas?

A: It is a text file. So you can use Notepad or other text editor to view the data which is in a standard format. Most genealogy programs can open these files. *[JS: See the [Wikipedia GEDCOM](#) entry for the format of the file and some issues related to non-standard file structures.]*

Q: I was helping a friend who has an external hard drive which he cannot open with Windows XP. I could see it on my laptop running Vista. I have Kaspersky and anti-malware programs on a USB drive but I could not access the USB drive on his machine to check for problems. I am wondering if he has some infection.

A: If the external hard disk and the USB drive don't work on his machine I suspect that there is something wrong with his USB sub-system. Check in the Device Manager for any highlighted problem.

Q: I am not getting my Melb PC emails coming into my XP and Windows 7 systems. My mailbox is over quota and emails sent to me are bouncing back to the senders. What do I have to do?

A: You need to access the mailbox from the webmail system, via the [Melb PC home page](#). See if there are any spam or other emails that can be deleted, particularly with large attachments. Then pull the other emails down into your email reader. Some email servers try to resend emails for several days so you will need to download those remaining emails soon after deleting the unwanted ones.

Q: At the December meeting last year you mentioned you would be looking at Internet Explorer 10 over the break and would tell us about your experience this month. Did you manage to test it? I ask because I have it working perfectly under Windows 7 but after upgrading to Windows 8 it crashes a few seconds after loading. It is on a 64-bit system.

A: I didn't manage to get more than a couple of days holiday over the festive season so I haven't done any testing yet.

Random Access – Over to You

Please contact me if you have any comments on the answers given, can provide a reply for an unanswered question or if you cannot attend a meeting and would like a question asked and included in this column. Contact me via the office or email jswale@melbpc.org.au.

The Melb PC newsgroups are a very good source for assistance with problems. To find out how to connect to them see <http://groups.melbpc.org.au/~anywhere>.

For a more general newsgroup introduction, see <http://www.melbpc.org.au/faq/newsgroups.htm>.

Otherwise try to contact the commercial distributors or search the internet before asking questions here. In all cases mention the model or version numbers.

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MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM



Melb PC User Group Inc.
479 Warrigal Road
MOORABBIN, Vic, 3189
Phone (03) 9276 4000

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

| | | | | |
|---------|------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|
| Title | First Name | Initial | Last Name | |
| Address | | | B/H Phone | A/H Phone |
| Suburb | State | Post Code | Mobile Number | Job Title |

| Annual Membership Fees | |
|--|--------------------|
| Individuals | \$65 each \$ |
| Students* / Pensioners^ | \$50 each \$ |
| Additional Family Members (excludes relatives or friends) | \$12 each \$ |
| Total | \$ |

Email Address

How did you hear about Melb PC User Group?

PC Update Swap Meet Friend Radio

Other

Introduced By No.

Additional Family Members

Name Signature

Name Signature

*Students must attach a photocopy of their student card or letter from their educational institution confirming full time student status. ^Pensioners must attach a photocopy showing both sides of their Centrelink Pension Concession Card. Change of family member(s) must be notified in writing to the club secretary. I hereby apply for membership of Melbourne PC User Group Inc. (A0003293V) and agree to abide by its rules while I remain a member.

Signature _____ Date / /

Payment Details / Credit Card Authority

Payment Details

Total Payment \$

Cheque attached, payable to Melbourne PC User Group Inc. (A0003293V)

Debit Card Credit Card Visa Mastercard Expiry / /

.....

Name On Card

Signature _____ Date / /

FEBRUARY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Melbourne PC User Group Inc.

Minutes of Committee Meeting held Monday, 4th February 201

Meeting Commenced at 6.30 pm

Present:

Don McKenzie (Chairman)
Stephen Tidswell
Ian Rankin
Sharman Grant
Cindy Perry
Stuart Gruneklee
Jan Weiner
Lance Lloyd
Roger Wragg

Apologies:

Charles Wright
Harry Lewis

Visitors:

Dianne Vogt

Website Development

The Vice President announced that he would be taking over all aspects of the Website Development for the Club. He told the meeting that the quotes we had received were far too high and did not meet our requirements. He would provide new specifications and proposals.

Minutes of previous meeting:

Motion: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 3rd December 2012 be accepted

Moved: Stuart Gruneklee
Seconded: Stephen Tidswell
Carried:

Correspondence

From: The Australian Firefighter
Thank you Cindy Perry for your interest in The Australian Firefighter.

From: Alan Knott
Thank you for the report as received today. I whole heartedly concur with the motion as regards the Honorary Life Members and thank them for their efforts.
However I cannot accept the advise in regards to the Model Rules.
I have experience with being Public Officer [which post is now disbanded] and am now Secretary/ex PO of 3 Associations.
As per the advice from CAV the new Model Rules do not have to be adopted by an

association. If they are not the existing rules [of Melb Pc] apply until such time that the Association makes some other alteration to its Constitution.

The existing Rules/Constitution meet legal requirements now.

The addition of the previous rules as outlined in 3c would have to be approved by the Registrar as it would constitute an alteration to the Rules.

Yes MelbPC can adopt these new model rules but I do not believe that this is the best course of action.

In addition, the Model Rules DO permit members to be sent notices etc. by email or fax but this would only be after the adoption of the new Constitution.

I believe that it would be better to make a complete revision of our [MelbPC] rules over the next few months that would incorporate all the provisions of the new act and the requirements of our Association.

The Secretary is to reply.

From Louis Cook

Please allow me to comment on model rule 38 (2) Voting at general meeting - giving the 'chairperson' a casting vote.

This is an archaic rule and an alternative is "where the voting is equal, the motion is lost" and this is because the motion does not have overwhelming support. Whilst there is an unwritten convention that the chairperson will maintain the status quo this may not always be the case and difficult to interpret; the chairperson is relieved of this obligation if the motion is lost with equal votes.

It is an amicable solution to what is sometimes a vexing question.

This is submitted for your consideration and it may be too late to make an alteration but I suggest it be kept in mind for future adoption.

The use of 'chairperson' is not good syntax and smacks of 'political correctness' when the correct use is 'chairman'. I suggest you run 'find and replace' to easily make changes.

The section I refer to in the model rules is appended below.

I would also like to convey my appreciation to the dedicated members who manage the 'user group'... thank you Ladies and Gentlemen.

38 Voting at general meeting

FEBRUARY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

- (1) On any question arising at a general meeting—
(a) subject to sub rule (3), each member who is entitled to vote has one vote; and
(b) members may vote personally or by proxy; and
(c) except in the case of a special resolution, the question must be decided on a majority of votes.
(2) If votes are divided equally on a question, the Chairperson of the meeting has a second or casting vote.
(3) If the question is whether or not to confirm the minutes of a previous meeting, only members who were present at that meeting may vote.
(4) This rule does not apply to a vote at a disciplinary appeal meeting conducted under rule 24.
The Secretary is to reply.

From: Eric Lichfield-Bennett
The amount of spam in our emails is the worst I have seen in twenty + years.
What's happened to the filters on our server? Has a previous member of our committee broadcast all the addresses on the web? If so, time he was dealt with by the law under the privacy act. Members names and addresses, are confidential to the club, not its members, serving or otherwise.
It is also time the server came back in house and our contract with AAPT terminated.
Please (forgive the pun) address these matters.
The Secretary is to reply.

From: Barry Horn
Congratulations on the December edition of PC Update. A lot of good reading in it. While there is no problem reading the magazine on line, it really does need to be in print format. I find myself scanning it on line, reading an article or two, down loading a couple of pages to study later but not getting back to it. A lot of the good journalism is therefore wasted. The December issue is certainly of a standard that would justify paying extra money to receive a print copy, though I don't know how much extra it would cost. I think a printed magazine would help retain members and attract new ones. If printing is too expensive for a monthly magazine, maybe a quarterly magazine supplemented by a monthly e-mailed newsletter would work?
Secretary is to reply.

Motion: That the correspondence be accepted

Moved: Jan Weiner
Seconded: Don McKenzie
Carried

Office Report:

| Membership: | January | November |
|-------------|---------|----------|
| New | 4 | 13 |
| Renewals | 160 | 281 |
| Total | 4122 | 4210 |
| Family | 434 | 441 |

Internet:

| | January | November |
|-----------|---------|----------|
| Full | 272 | 321 |
| Associate | 1503 | 2186 |

Wireless Broadband Internet:

| | January | November |
|-------|---------|----------|
| New | 9 | 10 |
| Total | 278 | 268 |

New Members:

Motion: that provisional new members 46687 to 46690 as circulated be given full member status.

Moved: Lance Lloyd
Seconded: Stuart Gruneklee
Carried:

Motion: That the Office Report be accepted

Moved: Stuart Gruneklee
Seconded: Jan Weiner

Presidents Report

I think I was optimistic last year, when I predicted that 2013 would be a challenging one for the group. I doubt that any committee has been forced to deal with so many critical issues so early in its term as the current one. We are engaged in a thorough review of all our expenditures; an overhaul of our processes and activities; a fundamental change in our rules; organising re-publication of a print copy of PC Update; development of a marketing plan and re-development of all our internet activities.
Perhaps the toughest challenge is confronting the unpleasant reality of our finances and the difficult choices they present us with. What is at stake, essentially, is the continued survival of Melb PC. We are living beyond our means, and rapidly exhausting our reserves. While it is always possible that we might yet find a new product or dramatically enhance our

FEBRUARY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

attractiveness to new members, there is a very strong sense within the committee that we have to stem our losses without delay, to maximise our chances of having a long-term future.

Our treasurer, Stephen Tidswell, has closely reviewed our budgetary position and it is very clear from his report on page 14 of the February 2013 PC Update, that Melb PC is on an ever-accelerating downward slide which must somehow be arrested.

Stephen has framed his report as a discussion paper. While the figures are accurate, no decision has been made as to how we should react. We really do want as many members as possible to have their say and help guide our deliberations.

The major problem is that our only major profit source, dial-up internet, has, over at least a decade, been moving slowly and inevitably into loss.

Our only remaining income stream of significance – annual subscriptions – does not come anywhere near meeting our expenses. For the year to December total membership fees were roughly in line with budget expectations at \$101,851. For the full year, we expect them to total \$192,000. Unfortunately, that looks like being \$268,330 less than our outgoings.

Our last fee increase was in 2010, and the amount was \$5 per annum, which in my view was not enough, even then.

Our Apple community counterpart, AUSOM, charges \$80, with an additional \$50 for its bulletin board services. By comparison, our members get a good deal more for what effectively amounts to half the annual fee.

I imagine Stephen's musings over future membership fees are likely to be greeted with horror, so I had better make it clear that we are not proposing to increase our fees by 140 per cent. What is likely, however, is that we are going to be looking at an increase that will put us more in line with AUSOM's subscriptions. The alternative – continuing to subsidise memberships from our reserves – would make it impossible for us to survive. By necessity, Stephen's calculations don't include some of our recent successes in trimming costs.

With the help of one of our members, Bill Donlan, who is an electrical engineer, vice-president Don McKenzie has done a thorough analysis of our power and air-conditioning system and usage, and we have identified considerable cost savings there. You can read

that report on page 16 of the February 2013 magazine.

What we have learned from that review is that our lighting and air-conditioning at Moorabbin have been poorly designed and implemented, to the extent that we have been wasting in the order of \$1000 per month, if not more, on our power bills. We are in the process of fixing that.

We have already fixed the phone system and are now engaged in reviewing the telephone services which have been imposing an unnecessary cost on the group. We have been spending \$1600 per year, for instance, on a White Pages entry, despite the fact that it has been a few years since virtually anybody found us through White Pages. We have cancelled that.

We have been evaluating the monthly phone services and rental, which add up to around \$700 per month. By eliminating unnecessary services we have cut that immediately by \$170 per month and in September, when a contract with Telstra expires, our phone bill will come down by an additional \$300 per month, approximately.

We are in the process of obtaining quotes from professionals for the rebuilding of our web site. As with several other activities, we have found that as the membership declines and ages, we simply do not have sufficiently skilled or interested volunteers to do the work. One example of this is the relocation of our internet facilities from Burnley, which has been draining something like \$4000 a month from our bank balance. After more than three years getting nowhere, it is quite clear to the committee that we must look instead to having our services out-sourced. As he has throughout his long service to Melb PC, Richard Solly is providing us with a considerable amount of guidance on this. It is quite a challenge, because it involves our email, newsgroup and web site, to say nothing of the incorporation of more recent social media developments like Facebook and Twitter etc.

The first quotation for our web redevelopment suggests that we could be up for as much as \$16,000 for the re-design.

We have yet to obtain competitive tenders, but we might also have other alternatives. One possibility we are looking at is a US company called Ning (ning.com), which has a platform that allows organisations to build online communities. Their customers include the US Peace Corps. I'd be interested in any feedback from members on Ning, and any

FEBRUARY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

other services that could meet our needs in the future.

The marketing strategy and action plan is progressing well, with a lot of hard work from chairman Lance Lloyd – although as with so many of our tasks, several other committee members are also involved. Cindy Perry, for instance, has designed a couple of promotional pamphlets. I am particularly keen, for instance, in working closely with the Kingston City Council and other community groups to see how we might better integrate our group with the local community.

Treasurers Report:

Melb PC has budgeted for a loss of \$268,330 in 2012/13 (including Burnley relocation) and it may be expected that the financial result will be of that order. The major contributing factor has been the fact that subscription rates are too low to fully recover the Group's operating costs. Member numbers have reduced and not been offset by increases in subscription rates. Subscriptions are such a large proportion of income that they must be increased to balance the Group's books. The list of budget and actual figures below shows that no other areas of income or expense are large enough to generate the necessary improvement.

Accounts figures for 2012-13 summarised into major income/cost groups:

| Income | Full year Budget | First half Actual | First Half Actual |
|--|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Subs The only major variable item | 192000 | 101851 | 100788 |
| Interest Likely to decrease in future | 49500 | 22159 | 24750 |
| Dialup Will decrease | 40000 | 16165 | 20000 |
| Wireless Tied to broadband expense | 40000 | 22750 | 20000 |
| Wnet Com Likely to decrease in future | 24000 | 10409 | 12000 |
| Other | 17700 | 9601 | 9518 |
| Total | 363200 | 182935 | 187056 |

| Expense | Full year Budget | First half Actual | First Half Actual |
|--|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Mobile BB Tied to Broadband Income | 42000 | 19172 | 21000 |
| FO N'work Will decrease in future periods | 38400 | 15870 | 19200 |
| Dialup Data Will decrease | 24000 | 20361 | 12000 |
| PCUP Exp | 44000 | 15902 | 24000 |
| Depreciation No practical change | 155000 | 77502 | 77500 |
| Burnley reloc. Should not recur | 25000 | 0 | 0 |
| Wages Little change possible | 146000 | 67630 | 73000 |
| Other exp. | 157130 | 92180 | 90905 |
| Total | 631530 | 308618 | 317605 |
| Net Loss | (268330) | (125682) | (130549) |

For Melb PC to breakeven just by raising subscriptions, rates would have to increase by an amount sufficient to recover the budget loss in addition to the existing subscription income.

Increase is: budget loss \$268330 as a percentage of budget subscription in \$192000 = 140%.

Set out below is a preliminary calculation of the subscription rate increase necessary to achieve break-even. The calculation indicates an increase in individual subscription to approximately \$160 if that were the only change. A combination of increased subscription rates, increased membership numbers, increased revenue in other areas and reduced costs would, of course, be more acceptable. Members who opt for a printed PCUpdate are likely to see an additional cost increase.

FEBRUARY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Calculation of required subscription rates for break-even:

| Member Type | Members at 30/06/13 As budget | Current Subs. rate | Approx New rate | Subs Income inc GST |
|--------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Indiv. | 2440 | 65.00 | 160.00 | 390400 |
| Pension | 813 | 50.00 | 120.00 | 97560 |
| Student | 15 | 50.00 | 120.00 | 1800 |
| Family | 476 | 12.00 | 30.00 | 14280 |
| Life | 28 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 3772 | | | 504044 |

For Melb PC to break even just by raising subscriptions, rates would have to increase by an amount sufficient to recover the budget loss in addition to the existing subscription income. Above figures include budget forecasts as well as actual figures and there are plenty of other ways to look at the numbers. Nevertheless, whichever way we look at it, the answer is going to be much the same.

Please note that this is a discussion paper, not a firm proposal. It is intended to inform Melb PC members of the scale of the problem in front of us. We must reduce costs and increase revenue to balance our budget. We won't, of course, be proposing subscription rate increases of 140%, but some increase is likely to be part the solution. It's a problem large enough to require a lot of informed discussion before we make any major decisions but it needs action soon.

Secretary's Report:

The new office server has been installed and we are currently working on integrating the new system with the MMS. This is proving troublesome, the MMS, whilst it is still operational, is old and the author of the program is no longer providing support. We are experiencing instances of data loss that cannot be explained and this will almost certainly continue.

We have looked at this problem of replacing the members' database in the past; refer Committee Minutes 10th January 2012. As can be seen the costs of replacement were minimal. The largest cost, \$2200.00, was the attendance of the Reckon consultant while we were mapping the old system to the new. The Committee at the time agreed that we should move the MMS in its entirety to QuickBooks. Then it was decided we would continue with the MMS for the time being. This may not be the case now and I recommend that we revisit the migration to QuickBooks and obtain new quotes to do this.

Moving Burnley.

There are possible options of closing down our operations at Burnley

Option 1

We keep running from Burnley but at a reduced cost. We are presently paying:-

Per month \$4422 PA \$53064

After reductions, as advised by Richard Solly:-

Per month \$2322 PA \$27864

Option 2

Close Burnley down and have our mail, webpage and news groups hosted externally. It has not been possible to obtain firm quotes because when the supplier is asked, one is invariably referred to the company's website. However, it appears that the costs would be of the order

Per month \$1000 PA \$12000

Option 3

Buying new hardware and software and set up a new server installation at Moorabbin.

Whilst we have no firm quotes, it is expected that there would be an initial cost:-

Purchase of hardware, software \$25000

Per month Unknown PA Unknown

Option 4

We shift our mail service to Microsoft Outlook com, which is free at the moment, or get it hosted. Run our web pages, newsgroups and PC Update from Moorabbin

Cost

Monthly for Hosting \$600 PA \$7200

Other costs not known at this stage.

If we adopt Option 1, then we would be able to keep our dialup facility. We would be unable to do this with Options 2, 3 and 4.

If the dialup is closed down, then we could refund the balance of the dialup subscription as an inducement to switch to Wireless Business Broadband.

If we adopt Option 2, then it might be sensible to get a consultant to advise us on the migration.

FEBRUARY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Members Database (MMS)

The Vice President announced that we were not suffering from data loss but the problems were caused by the operating system. He will provide the office with a program called Ultra Edit which will resolve any problems with the MMS.

Motion: That Option 1 is implemented as soon as possible (that is reduce all possible steps to reduce costs for the time being while other options are explored).

Moved: Stephen Tidswell
Seconded: Stuart Gruneklee
Carried

Motion: That AAPT be asked to quote to take over all of our internet functions at Burnley as one option to upgrade the facility.

Moved: Roger Wragg
Seconded: Lance Lloyd
Carried

Motion: That the Executive Reports be accepted.

Moved: Jan Weiner
Seconded: Sharman Grant
Carried

Sub Committee Reports

Building and Facilities – Roger Wragg

On many occasions I have been left alone to lock up after the monthly meeting, as committee members issued with keys tend to leave promptly at the end of the meeting. This is a problem for me as I have a large amount of video equipment to pack up and take down to my car. Microphones must be turned off and put away, all toilets checked, back door checked, the outside front glass doors at the bottom of the fire escape stairs locked, all lights turned off and the alarm set. After all this I move my equipment to the basement and finally lock the lift. It would be appreciated if another committee member could occasionally help with these tasks.

ACTION Stewart Gruneklee has offered to help with the lockup.

I have put up several signs indicating to members that we are no longer accepting items for the “free to a good home” table. We are basically getting junk and it is costing us to have it removed.

ACTION the flow of junk and old computers has stopped

Cleaning AIRCON filters: ceiling intakes must be slid out of holders, taken down stairs and hosed clean then dried and replaced. A simple task but requires use of a ladder. The filters on the roof require a service person.

ACTION some filters have been cleaned

Leaks in roof: members have noticed brown rust stains on our ceiling tiles both in the training room and main meeting room. This is a complex problem caused by poor maintenance of AIRCON units mounted on the roof. These units do not belong to the club. (Refer to roof pictures in the **information pack** you will receive at the committee meeting)

ACTION Aircon tech came and fixed a complex problem with our security system and its interaction with the Aircon system. Members should refrain from pressing the two-hour over run button at the rear of the main meeting room. He also suggested that we should get a maintenance contract. He also said that finding the leaks on the roof could wait till winter when it rains as this makes it much easier rather than taking a hose up on the roof.

Replacement fan to be fitted to “kitchen” window. The original fan was of domestic quality and it has failed. The replacement will be of industrial quality.

ACTION new fan has been fitted and is working

Down lights in main room: Several of these have failed and the globes need replacing. A simple five-minute task but requires use of a ladder. We have a supply of replacement globes.

NO ACTION

Brendon Taylor (gaming) has attached a strip of flashing LEDs to our ceiling using nylon ties producing an effect whereby our suspended roof tiles no longer sit in their holders. **It looks a mess**

NO ACTION AS YET!!!

I am finding it very difficult to find members willing to learn how to program our complex \$US8000 audiovisual system. It does help if they have had some theatre audio and lighting experience. However I do have two members willing to help me with the video of the monthly meeting. This video goes on the monthly disk and is a way we communicate with members who live outside Melbourne or who do not like to drive at night.

NO ACTION

FEBRUARY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Future Projects

Upgrade of projector in main room to a full HD 1920x1080 resolution with HDMI inputs. The current projector has a native resolution of 1280x800 and has no HDMI inputs. This will bring our projection system up to date with the outputs of most modern laptops. The current projector will automatically downscale outputs to its native resolution when required.

NOTE John Hall requires HDMI input for his presentation on 6th Feb.

Paint the front wall of the main room pure matt white. The current colour is not correct and imparts a colour cast to the projected image.

Reduce base load power consumption. At the moment there is one switch that controls all lights in the main corridor **and** the Internet lounge. It has been suggested that we break this into two circuits with separate switches. (Note: this is not a simple task- refer to lighting circuit plan in your information pack)

Other possible solutions are replacing all fluros with LED lights (expensive). Another possible solution might be to disable half of the fluro tubes in all lighting fixtures. This does not confront our main base load that is the big AIRCON unit on the roof (refer to roof pictures in your information pack)

NO ACTION AS YET

Congratulations to Don and his team for replacing the chairs in their correct positions after the gaming day and the general clean-up – well done.

Membership & Marketing – Lance Lloyd Introduction

A sub-committee of Lance Lloyd, Harry Lewis, Cindy Perry and Dianne Vogt has been formed. We have had various email exchanges and one face-to-face meeting, so far.

Focus

Our focus has been to look at the strategic level in order to develop an overall approach to marketing the club to:

- a. Retain members
- b. Attract new members

However, as we go, we are also opportunistically identifying actions which can be easily and simply enacted to retain or gain members (i.e. tactical measures).

SWOT

We have undertaken a SWOT analysis of the benefits of Melb PC membership and our

marketing and memberships approach.

We will use these identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities to devise actions and activities to build on our past successes and failures.

We will be asking the Committee to review our SWOT (also contributed to by the members who frequent our NewsGroups).

Vision

And from this SWOT, and what we already know about the club, we will ask The Melb PC Committee members to contribute to a VISION for the Club.

What is our purpose?

What is the spatial extent of our club? –

Greater Melbourne area (including Geelong, Bendigo and Ballarat)? With phone and internet help – could this extend further? , now or in future?

What devices do we cover? – “...for all your SMART devices”

What structure do we have – overarching group with regional or specialist interest groups?

SIG Convener's Report – Jan Weiner

Tuesday 22 January 2013, I was able to visit Yarra Ranges SIG in the am/pm and also East SIG in the evening.

I found the Yarra Ranges to be a welcoming and social group who made me very welcome and had already discussed the invitation I had sent to their Convener.

They were willing to supply information about their personal use of PCs and related technology, how they utilized the time at the SIG and the statistics of the SIG. One gentleman travelled down 11/2 hours monthly to the SIG.

I was able to report on many of their concerns re Melb PC with PC UPDATE causing a lengthy discussion.

They were pleased to hear my proposals, and were enthusiastic in providing ideas and brainstorming.

I enjoyed the time there and observed the Workshop that followed.

A most rewarding experience from both SIGs at Yarra Ranges.

On another note, North East SIG in the evening was down in numbers and they were not holding a meeting as such.

FEBRUARY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

It appears there was some confusion. They were told last year they needed a Convener and then got a notice for this meeting. The inference was to get a Convener. Those present were not able to take it on or were already convening other SIGs. Choy Lai is prepared to Co Convene but wants help. There was much discussion relating to the past precedence's and not a lot looking for change or development. This group did not appear to be adaptable or acceptable to change. Again I was able to find out what most of them are interested in and the statistics of the group. I spoke about possibilities for them as a SIG but it was a mostly negative responsive experience from my point of view. I indicated I would return in February to see if a Convener had been found. I left feeling this SIG would close due to lack of leadership.

Volunteer Report – Cindy Perry

1. On the 15th January 2013, Lance Lloyd arranged a meeting to be held at Moorabbin regarding a membership proposal. Harry Lewis, Dianne Vogt and Cindy Perry attended the meeting which lasted for a couple of hours. The meeting concentrated on how to increase membership, why we are losing members and how to keep the members that we do have. The club's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were discussed.
2. The Volunteer Party has been arranged for Friday 22nd March, probably 6:00pm, the time is still to be confirmed. A database of Volunteers is now complete and the invitation letter has been drafted.
3. The Volunteer Co-ordinator and the Membership & Marketing Co-ordinator are keen to have a stand at the shopping centres. However, there is a lot of preparation before we are able to go ahead with this idea. I have prepared a draft of a pamphlet which explains what the Melb PC is, all our SIG's, an application form and the internet agreement. A separate leaflet has also been prepared with only the application form and the internet agreement. Paper copies will be distributed to each member of the committee at the meeting to be held on the 4th February.

Motion: That the Dial-help list be re-instated and posted on the members-only section of

the website after the names are checked as correct and current.

Moved: Lance Lloyd
Seconded: Stewart Gruneklee
Carried

Meeting Closed at 9.15pm