

# East SIG Report – March 2018

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The March meeting commenced with Q&A conducted by **George Skarbek**. **M.C. Paul Woolard** arrives late with the projector.

Q: As you've recommended previously, I used the DOS command line tool "Cipher.exe" to write zeros and ones over personal data that I deleted. If I did a Format C, can I get back into Cipher to run it again?

A: What Cipher does is write binary zeros and ones in random patterns to all the empty space on a drive. Cipher can also be used to encrypt or decrypt data on NTFS drives. When you delete a file in Windows, a lower case sigma is written in front of the file name. Anyone with a reasonable knowledge would be able to retrieve 98% of such deleted data. That's the reason you would use Cipher to write over that deleted data. To write over the unused portions of your C drive type "cipher /w:c"

Q: I did have a question but I've now solved it myself but thought it might be of interest to others. Unbeknownst to me, Microsoft installed an app called "Films & TV" on my computer and as a result I could no longer view my videos. I've now changed all the default program settings back to VLC media player and everything is now working fine again.

A: Another option is to uninstall the Microsoft app. Windows won't do it but the free programs "iobit uninstaller" or "cCleaner" probably will. Both programs will also clean up any leftover registry entries. If you look around you'll probably find other programs you don't need so uninstall those as well. When you do your backups, they will take longer and the backup will be bigger with those unwanted programs included. The free version of cCleaner should be fine as the paid Professional version will give you features you probably won't need.

Q: Does anyone have any information on free software that will transcribe recorded speech to text? As I didn't have a microphone I recorded the speech on my phone.

A: I tried a free program some years ago and it was so bad that I uninstalled it straight away. "Dragon Dictate" is very good program but it is not free. The current version requires very little training, say 2 to 3 minutes compared to the 30 minutes plus that was needed 5 years ago. "Dragon Dictate" has around 95% accuracy which is outstanding for the little training needed. That equates to about 10 misspelt words per page.

Phrases like "He too went to the woods to chop some wood because he wanted to have more wood" will test how good a program is. The software has to determine which to (to/too/two) and which wood (wood/would) to use as these words sound identical. These words are easy for a human to interpret, but a program will have to do a lot of analysis to get it right.

Audience member Neil Muller noted that Windows 10 includes speech recognition and that would be worth trying if you're using Windows 10. George commented that 5 years ago the Windows program was terrible, but the Windows 10 speech recognition program is definitely worth trying. For about 10 years Windows has had a speech recognition program but never advertise it. I understand why they were reluctant to advertise it, but if you have Windows 10 give it a go. You will find a link to "Speech Recognition" listed in the Control Panel.

Q: I've recently seen advertisements for Oppo mobile phones. Have you heard anything about these?

A: Yes I've seen some surprisingly good reviews on Oppo phones. Price is about mid-range but features are very close to top of the range of other brands that cost hundreds of dollars more. It has a very good processor and a good camera. George then asked if anyone else had any comments. Audience member David King indicated that he knows someone with an Oppo

phone. "It is one of those with a very big screen and it works very well. I was most impressed by it."

Q: When my computer boot up it displays a message about a program called Mosaic and that WinSplit will not use these hotkeys. What is Mosaic and should I uninstall it?

A: Mosaic is the name of one of the first browsers that appeared around the time of Windows 95 so it's unlikely to be that. It should be safe to uninstall Mosaic so look under "Programs & Features" and uninstall it from there. No one in the audience was able to assist any further.

Following Q&A **George Skarbek** demonstrated the free graphics program **Faststone Viewer**. George uses this program regularly because of its quick and easy editing of digital photographs. His knowledge of this program was obvious from the many features he demonstrated. George also noted that Faststone Viewer will even edit RAW files from a number of camera makers. A 95 page manual is available for download if required.

First up George showed how to navigate the main program interface. Double clicking on an images thumbnail displays the image in full screen. At this point no toolbars or icons are evident on screen. To access the various menus the mouse cursor is moved to the various edges of the screen and the menu pops out.

After outlining some of the feature available in the various menus it was time to demonstrate the most common adjustments. According to George the most useful adjustment is the "Adjust Lighting" tool. This tool is identified by a sun icon and uses sliders to adjust Shadows & Highlights and Contrast & Saturation. It did wonders to some extremely underexposed images. A before and after button show the changes and these were dramatic. Other features demonstrated were, Straighten, Clone & Heal, Crop, Resize, Adjust Colour and Sharpen. From the Drawing Board menu (left side of the screen), shapes and text can be added to an image. Other useful tools available include batch rename and batch convert.

After the break **Brian Heywood** demonstrated a Sony Bluetooth speaker he purchased at Officeworks for \$59. The Sony speaker, model SRS-XB10 is a small canister style speaker with good battery life (claimed to be 16 hours) and decent sound output for its small size. When demonstrated, the sound filled the large meeting hall and was distortion free. The Sony speaker's dimensions are 75φ x 90mm high. The speaker is powered by a rechargeable battery and is IPX5 rated as water-resistant.

The SRS-XB10 connects to a smartphone with One-touch NFC (near field communication), via a mini audio jack or micro USB port for charging. An interesting feature of this mono speaker is when linked with a second unit will create a stereo pair.

Following Brian's presentation guest speaker, **Stewart Bedford**, took us on "A Personal Journey" back to his childhood home using his Computer and the Internet. Using maps, photos and street view images from Google Earth, complimented by YouTube videos and internet searches, Stuart visited his childhood home in England (Stanway House) and routes taken on his long journey to school. This was a most interesting presentation and showed the power of what can be found on the internet.