>PC Update

November 2019

Publishing Information

iHelp – Get the help you need with your computer, Ph: (03) 9276 4088, Email: ihelp@melbpc.org.au, Live Chat!, Online Support Request

Online membership form

Responsibility for content in this newsletter lies with individually named authors

Monthly Meeting Live Stream from 7.00pm on Wednesday 6th November at http://tv.melbpc.org.au

Please remember to always bring your membership card to meetings

SIG Listings and up to date calendar are available on our homepage

Editorial November 2019
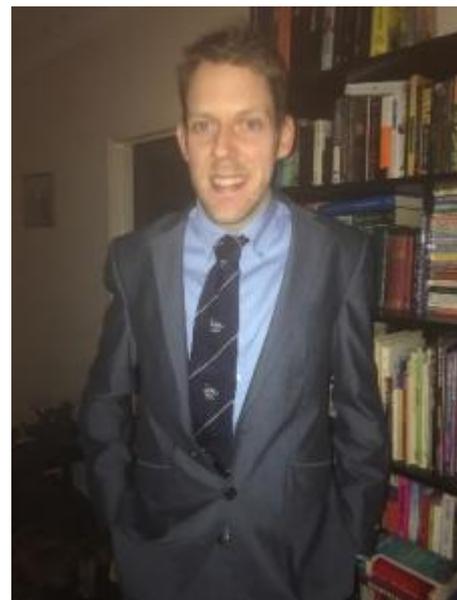
Hugh Macdonald

Welcome to the November 2019 edition of PC Update. This edition marks the end of an era as we have a President's report from John Hall for the last time. I'd like to thank John for the great work he's done for the club. As others have noted, there is a definite positive, friendly atmosphere to be found at the club, and as culture always permeates from the top of any organisation, that can be attributed to John and the committees that he's led. Also from a personal point of view, as a relatively new member, and relative unknown who joined the committee, John has always been very welcoming and very supportive of the activities I've undertaken within the club. So thanks John!

It's also the beginning of a new era with my immediate predecessor as PC Update editor, David Stonier-Gibson, about to become President. David has been someone who has been equally welcoming and supportive of me in the time I've been around the club, and I've found that he brings enormous energy and enthusiasm to anything he seeks to undertake at Melbourne PC User Group. So I think the future of the club is in very good hands, and I look forward to publishing David's first President's report next month.

Other than that, this month's edition of PC Update contains the usual array of goodies:

- There is a very informative article from Jan Whitaker based upon her presentation at the last monthly meeting, featuring tips about how to get into genealogy.
- Phil Lew has an interesting article along with some great photos by George Skarbek, of the recent Melbourne Society of Model and Experimental Engineers exhibition that several members from the Microcontroller Workshop SIG displayed their work at.
- I've reviewed software called CloudReady which can more or less turn any old laptop you might have into a Chromebook.
- A useful smartphone app called Emergency+ is reviewed.
- There are reports from the East SIG, Northern Suburbs Linux Group, Video Production Group and Science and Tech Projects Group.

Enjoy reading, and have a great month.

From The President November 2019

John Hall

Our new committee

In my September President's Report I asked for volunteers to nominate for the upcoming committee and I am very pleased to say that we have filled all of the "executive" positions and we also have 9 nominees for the rest of the committee which has resulted in us having to call an election for the 8 positions that are "non-executive".

The last remaining executive position was that of Treasurer and I am very pleased to report that Peter McConnachie (who I worked with at Coles Myer and is a qualified accountant) will be taking over the position from Stewart Gruneklee.

Peter is a relatively new member who joined our Genealogy SIG in Mornington and it is re-assuring that we can continue to attract new members through our SIG activities in this manner.

I am also pleased to report that 5 of the nominating members are relatively new additions who have joined our group through the activities of the Melbourne Computer Club.

I see this fact alone as an endorsement of the actions that our committee has taken over the past 3 years since I joined, as it means that we now have a young, energetic and enthusiastic team who will hopefully lead us over the years to come in the same spirit that members such as John Swale (member 16) have led us in the past.

I am also very grateful to David Stonier-Gibson for taking over from me as President.

David also joined us through our new "Meetup" channel and has a rapport with the newer (dare I say "younger") members of our club and his enthusiasm and leadership skills will no doubt provide valuable guidance to our incoming committee.

Finally, as this is my last report as President I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the committee members that I have worked with over the past 3 years for enabling us to reduce the annual loss of over $200,000 per annum for the consecutive years from 2013 to 2015 (i.e. over $600,00 loss) to a modest but satisfactory profit of $477 this past financial year!!!

When I recently asked one of our members wanted he wanted from our club he said he just "wanted it to survive'!!!

I think that we can proudly say that we have achieved that goal and I hope that we will not only "survive" but that we can "thrive" under the leadership of our new younger committee.

November Monthly Meeting

The November Monthly Meeting (including Annual General Meeting) will be held Wednesday November 5 at 7pm

Guest Topic: Tim Talks Tech
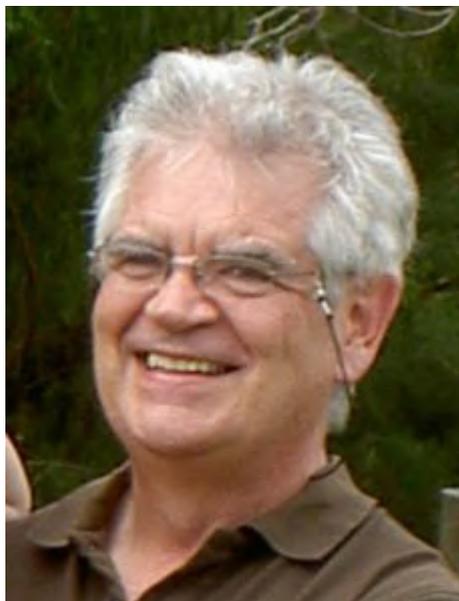
Our November speaker is Melbourne PC User Group member and frequent and popular meeting guest speaker, Tim McQueen. What exactly is he talking about this time? You'll have to attend the meeting or tune into the streaming to find out.

Meeting Agenda

7:00 Welcome. MC is Peter Bacon.
President's Annual Report – John Hall
Q&A – George Skarbek
7:30 sharp:
AGM. ~ 30-40 minutes. Agenda from John Swale.
Social break
~ 8:45 Monthly Meeting resumes:
New president's address: Introduce new committee members – David Stonier-Gibson
Member presentation: Tim Talks Tech – Tim McQueen
What's new – George Skarbek
9:30 Close

Please remember your membership card or a photo of your QR code on your phone

The meeting is streamed live online at https://tv.melbpc.org.au

Don't forget, directly after the meeting WAFFLE SIG at Fong's Chinese restaurant in Bentleigh. This is a totally social

gathering where you can enjoy a snack, a full meal or just a cup of coffee. Sketch maps at the meeting or use [Google Maps](#)
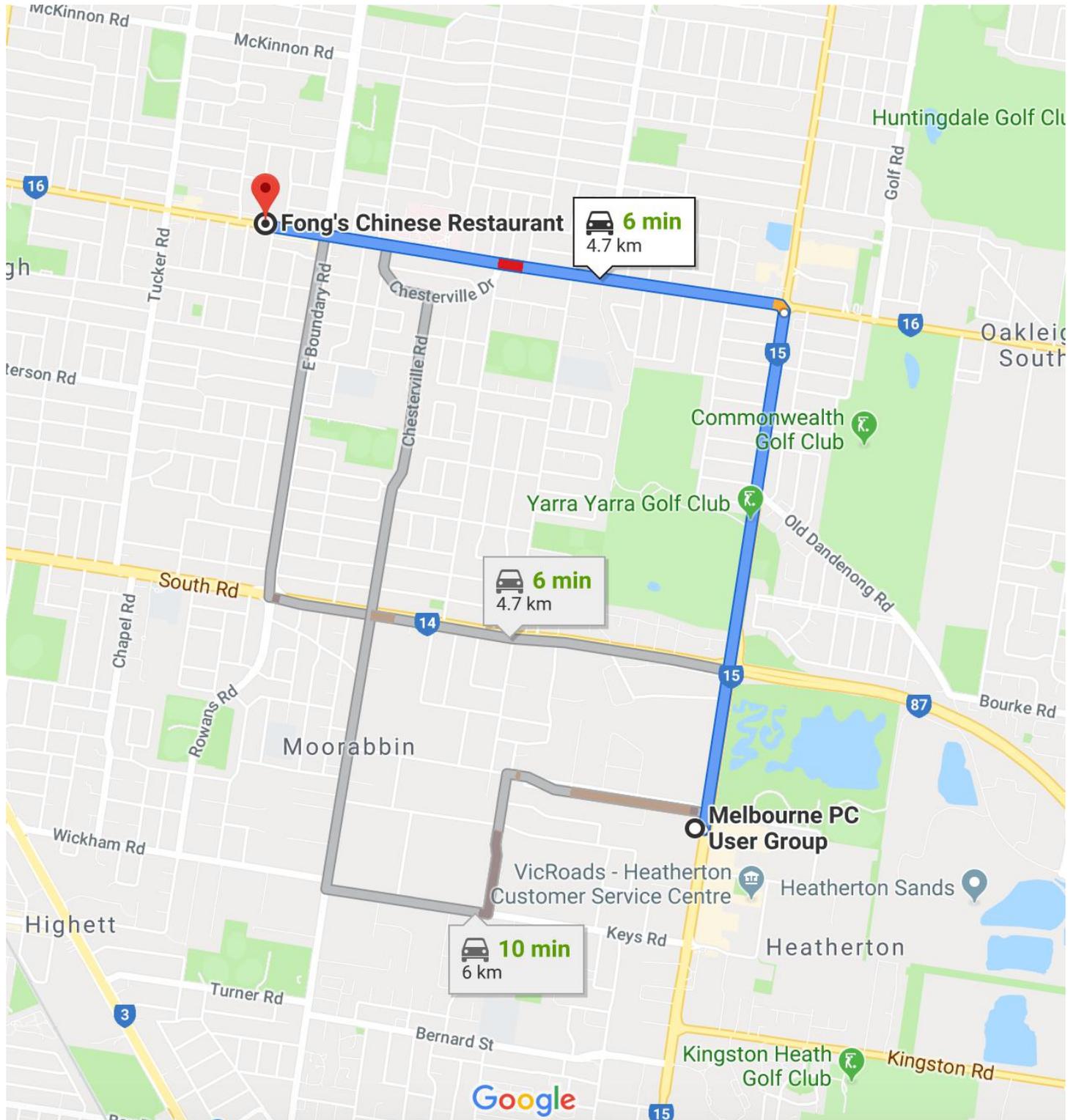
Discovering Family Histories and Mysteries

Jan Whitaker

Ed: This article is based on a presentation that Jan Whitaker gave to the Monthly Meeting on October 2 2019. If you'd like to see the full presentation please go to https://tinyurl.com/y2v5q5c4

Why do genealogy?

- Discover awesome family stories: the highs, the lows and the heartbreaks
- You'll be in awe of your pioneering ancestors
- Find the bad boys and girls in your family
- You'll find long lost cousins all around the world
- Finding old family photos is seriously cool
- The thrill of the hunt, and of course, the find
- It's a jigsaw waiting to be solved
- Research 24/7 in your pyjamas
- You'll make so many new friends

My motivations

- Curiosity
- Can easily access information from "back home"
- "Back home" has extended to places I never expected

The motivations of others (from a Facebook post)

- Love of family stories and wondering about the people in family photos
- Why did people move?
- Love of a good mystery
- Love of history
- Brings together many interests, e.g. history, geography, biology, writing, solving puzzles etc.
- Looking for lost family
- Pending retirement, looking for a hobby

Where do you look for your family information?

- Major Genealogy Conglomerates
  - Family Search – free, many databases
  - Ancestry (.au) – fee, more databases and ancillaries (Newspapers.com for extra $)
- Others
  - Find My Past – UK focus ($)
  - My Heritage – European Focus ($)
- All of them overlap
- Some have .au versions
- Government record and archive services (free and $)
  - national and state libraries, agencies, and departments
- People
  - family, genealogists (free and $), librarians, historical societies
  - amateurs like us: interest groups, classes
- Facebook groups
  - genealogy general and locales for local information access

Australian sources

- Trove for newspapers and MUCH more: https://trove.nla.gov.au/
- State Library of Victoria: http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/help/family-history-faq
- National Library Australia: https://www.nla.gov.au/research-guides/family-history
- Family History Connections (Blackburn)was AIGS (membership or per day fee) https://www.familyhistoryconnections.org.au

Choosing a genealogy service

- MOST important: Geographic coverage – do your research
- Services provided – databases and sizes and organising (tree creation), personal storage
- Budget
  - Free
  - Half-price sales, or buy one month to try
- Alternate access: Libraries and family history centres
  - Library edition of subscription services
  - Books, microfilm, microfiche, family and location histories

What is a record?

- "Official" information about a person or event

- Name, date and place minimum
- Held by a government bureau or church so it can be verified
- Physical or digital
- Common records: census, land, tax, birth, death, marriage, wills, military service, immigration

What is an index?

1. Information transcribed from a record
2. An alphabetical listing of records kept by the original source (think a telephone directory or volume index or book index)

- Can introduce errors because the transcriptions are secondary
- Don't rely just on index/transcribed information

What to save from and about a record?

- The index information AND the ACTUAL Record
- Citation information so you can find it again
- Try different tools provided on the website – download v print v save
- TIP: Print in Ancestry tools provides option to capture record AND citation info
- Set up a local file system that makes sense – surname per folder is a good start

Where do you keep your tree and information?

- Why: Structure and sharing ancestors and research – To find what you collect!
- Online provides access from other locations (libraries, traveling)
- Offline allows for local control and protection from disappearing records
- Family Search is a common world tree; Ancestry is yours, public or private
- Best: online and offline with a back-up

How do you keep your tree and information?

- Family Treemaker (414!)
- Ancestry (259)
- Family Search
- Roots Magic (224)
- Legacy (143)
- more than one (74)
- Reunion
- Ancestral Quest
- The Master Genealogist
- Brother's Keeper
- Mac Family Tree
- My Heritage
- Family Tree Builder
- Word and/or Excel
- Family Historian
- Paper
- Heredis
- GRAMPS (open source)
- Clooz
- FTAnalyzer
- Ages

- Wikitree
- Zoompast
- Google Docs spreadsheets

Fit For Purpose

- "Ancestry to create files, Family Treemaker for backup and publishing"
- "Reunion for my laptop and main tree but backups on Ancestry and Family Search"
- syncing between online and local
- Free versions available to try out (they have long learning curves, so don't expect to learn all the features)

Further help for 'doing' genealogy

- The service you subscribe to: videos, webinars, guides and wikis
- How to use the service AND how to do research on specific topics
- In person groups and online networks
- Melbourne PC User Group SIGS

Melbourne PC User Group SIGS

- 5 SIGS are specifically focused on genealogy and family history
- 1 has added a DNA specific meeting
- Melbpc Yammer has a genealogy discussion forum
- Individual general SIGs may have talks on this topic occasionally
- Genealogy East SIG, 3rd Sunday of the month, 12.30-2.30pm, Vermont South
- North East Genealogy SIG, 1st Wednesday of the month, 10-12noon, Heidelberg
- Mornington Family History SIG, 3rd Monday of the month, 1.30-4.30pm, Mornington
- Mornington Peninsula SIGAdvanced DNA,
  4th OR 5th Wednesday of the month,2-4pm
- Yammer Genealogy Discussion Forum, all day, every day

Other Help Sources Online

- Familysearch Wiki – 90,000 articles (90,699), International help
  https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Main_Page
- Cyndi's List
  Categories, Free and fee sites
  https://cyndislist.com/
- Facebook – LOTS!
  The Genealogy Squad – 20,000+ members
  Local Facebook groups
  Specific services: translation, photo identification, families

Melbourne Society of Model and Experimental Engineers Exhibition Report 2019

Words: Phil Lew, Photos: Phil Lew and George Skarbek

The "Let's Make It" theme invited many other like minded groups to exhibit their projects which showcased each groups knowledge, expertise and ingenuity in the various areas of technology and engineering. It was held at Oakleigh South Secondary College on the weekend of 5-6th October 2019.

Oakleigh South Secondary College…

Located at Bakers Road off Centre Road, is roughly 3km away from our Moorabin premises.

For the two days, the school's STEM students and teacher were available to showcase student projects.. Some Arduino, but predominately BBC Microbit board based projects using Scratch as the programming language of choice.

Our Stand…

This the second year in which the Microcontroller Interest Group has represented our club at this exhibition. Last year we had some additional support from the Science and Tech Projects Group.

Our Volunteers….

Bernd Wachs…..Practical electronics demonstration with Led matrix elements, Usage of Electronics Test Equipment
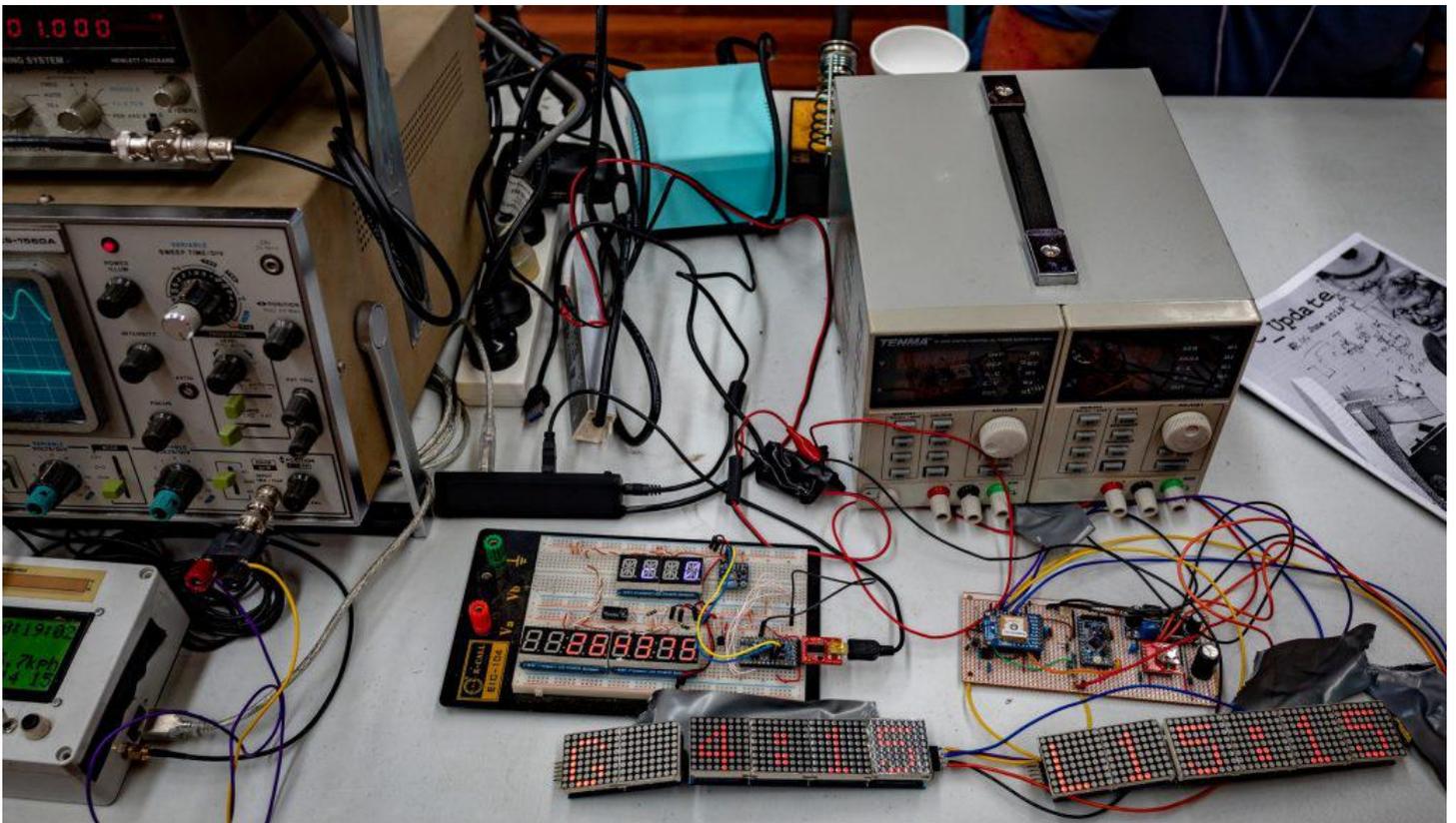
Sean Clarke – Replica IMSAI 8080; Talking Billy Bones, 3D Mini Mill,

Replica IMSAI 8080 is fully working front panel running 8080 code as can be seen in the Windows 7 terminal window in the display above the unit (Modern ESP32 controller used to emulate an early PC.

Emulates 4Mhz Z80, 56K RAM, 4 Floppy drives, VT100 terminal)

Talking Billy Bones was singing sea shanties with the mouth moving in sync with speech was a great source of interest from the students and many others passing by.
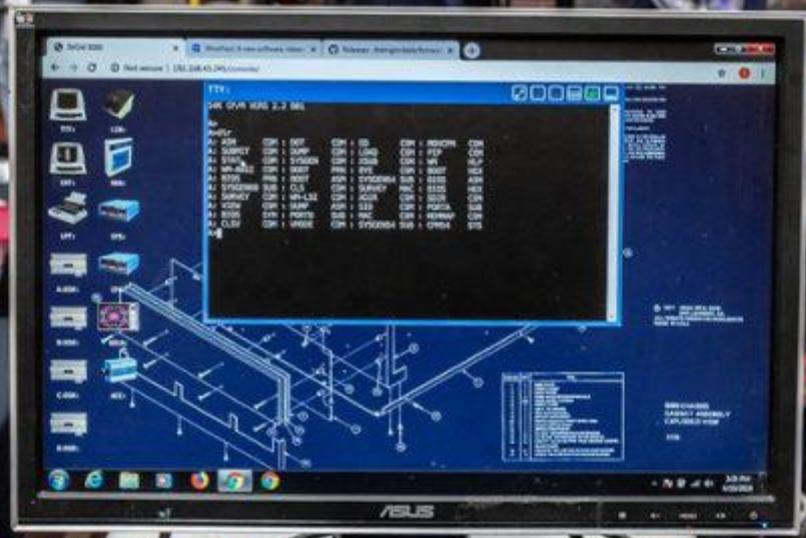
Melbourne Society of Model & Experimental Engineers
2019 LET'S MAKE IT EXHIBITION

Talking Billy Bones

Animatronic Halloween Prop

John Shirt Version 4 Solar Tracker Reflector Mirror

John had dramas with his solar tracker as he had damaged it just a week before and needed to repair it for the show. It has been heavily modified since its last showing with vast improvements in the programming (Arduino Nano powered)

Brian Davis 3D printer.. Creality Ender 3

Brian was printing trolley tokens for visitors to our stand. This little amazing printer produced excellent first up prints and costed Brian less than $230 delivered from eBay when he bought it.

Phil Lew Scrolling LED Matrix Sign...

This scrolling sign was a long term project that was to be available for last year's exhibition and was a last minute decision to get it done. So in between organising / transporting stuff and stand set up over a period of twelve hours parts were fabricated and finally all the parts were put together the night before the exhibition opened. The Arduino code was only loaded, modified, debugged just before leaving for the show Saturday morning.


The rest of our display consisted of many photos of our workshop facilities which featured Brian in our garage work area. All photographic image composition work was by George Skarbek.

Software Review: CloudReady

Hugh Macdonald
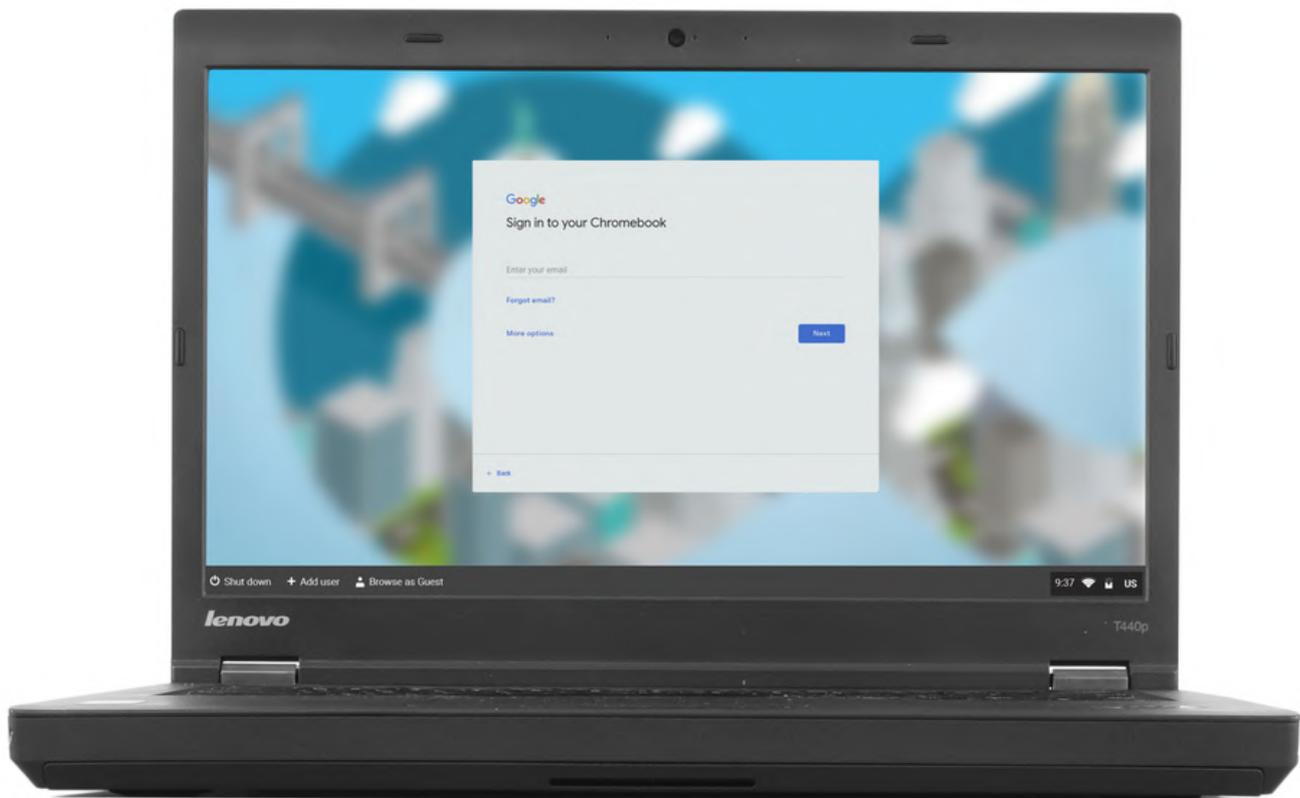
Like me, you might have always wondered whether a Chromebook would be a useful computing device for everyday use. But also like me, you might have been reluctant to actually purchase a Chromebook, lest it wasn't suitable, and you were left with an underwhelming computer you couldn't do much with. Well now there is free software called CloudReady that can turn any old laptop you have lying around the house into a Chromebook, so you don't actually have to make any financial outlay. All you need in addition to the old laptop is a USB stick. In this article I'm going to go through the process of installing CloudReady and setting up a ChromeBook.

The first step is to prepare for CloudReady installation. This involves heading to https://www.neverware.com/freedownload and downloading the CloudReady USB Maker if you're running Windows, or an image file if you're running Mac OS or Linux. If you use the USB Maker in Windows it's a very simple process. You simply run the program, insert a USB stick when prompted, and after about 20 minutes you'll have a USB installer ready.

The next step is to find an old laptop suitable for turning into a Chromebook. I have an old Acer Aspire One netbook, which so many years later, feels very underpowered with its Atom processor and 4GB RAM running Windows 7. So I'm hopeful that Google's lightweight operating system will be just the ticket to give this machine a new lease of life.

Once you have your laptop and USB stick ready you just need to have the USB stick inserted when you turn the laptop on and be ready to press a function key (the exact one varies by laptop manufacturer so search for the model of your laptop) to bring up the boot device selection menu and choose the USB stick. After a few moments you should see the CloudReady logo on your screen and it will begin to boot Chromium OS (yes it's the open source version of Chrome OS here) from the USB stick. Once it loads up

you'll be prompted to select your wifi network (it won't setup if you don't have one to select) and then you'll be prompted to sign in with your Google account (it is once again necessary to have a Google account in order to sign in).

After that you'll boot into Chromium OS and you are free to try out the operating system directly from the USB stick. I will review the operating system in depth next month, however in short it centres on the Chrome browser, a Files application that you can use to organise your documents, and any number of progressive web applications (PWAs) that you can download from the Chrome store.

If you decide you want to setup Chromium permanently on your hard drive, you just have to click on the clock in the bottom right corner of the screen and from the box that pops up choose 'Install OS'. From here you follow a few prompts to confirm that you do want to install Chromium OS and have it overwrite your hard drive. You then have to wait for around 20 minutes while it installs (although it's probably faster on a machine with a more powerful processor and a solid state drive). After this it will reboot and you'll have Chromium OS on your hard drive. It will remember the Google account that you initially signed up with, so you won't need to do any of that again.

I have a few initial thoughts on Chromium OS. It's definitely nice and lightweight compared to any version of Windows. The old and under-powered Acer Aspire One boots up in no time now, and use of the Chrome browser with a few tabs open is quite responsive. However old habits die hard I guess, and as a long time user of Windows, Linux and Mac OS on my machines, I feel anxious about the lack of applications I'll have at my disposal. I'll see how I go at finding Chromium equivalents to the applications I use on a daily and weekly basis.

For someone who isn't a computer enthusiast, I can see how Chromium OS would be a breath of fresh air. It is essentially just a web browser, and if that's all you use your laptop for, then you won't feel like you're missing out. You won't have to worry about installing applications, running updates, or doing anything much at all in terms of configuring settings with Chromium OS and CloudReady.

So the bottom line is if you've always wanted to try a Chromebook and you have an old laptop on hand, then downloading CloudReady is a simple way to try out the experience. Additionally, if you've got family members or friends who could benefit from a really simple computing experience that centres around using a web browser, then setting up CloudReady for them might be of benefit too.

Software Review: Emergency+ smartphone application

Neil Muller

Ed: This article was originally part of the East SIG Report but is being run as a standalone article due to the fact that this app could be important and useful to members over summer. Thanks to Malcolm Miles for the suggestion.

Brian Heywood introduced members to a smartphone app that's comparatively unknown in Victoria, but one everyone should have. The app is called **Emergency+** and is available free for iPhone, Android and Windows phones. Due to its simple and clear interface the app enables people to call with their location the right emergency number quickly without having to remember numbers. It was developed and launched in 2013 by the "Triple Zero Awareness Work Group" and can be used anywhere in Australia.

The **Emergency+** app uses a mobile phone's GPS so callers to Triple Zero can provide emergency operators their location information displayed on the apps home screen. In addition to Triple Zero, the apps home screen also includes SES and Police Assistance Line numbers so non-emergency calls are made to the most appropriate number.
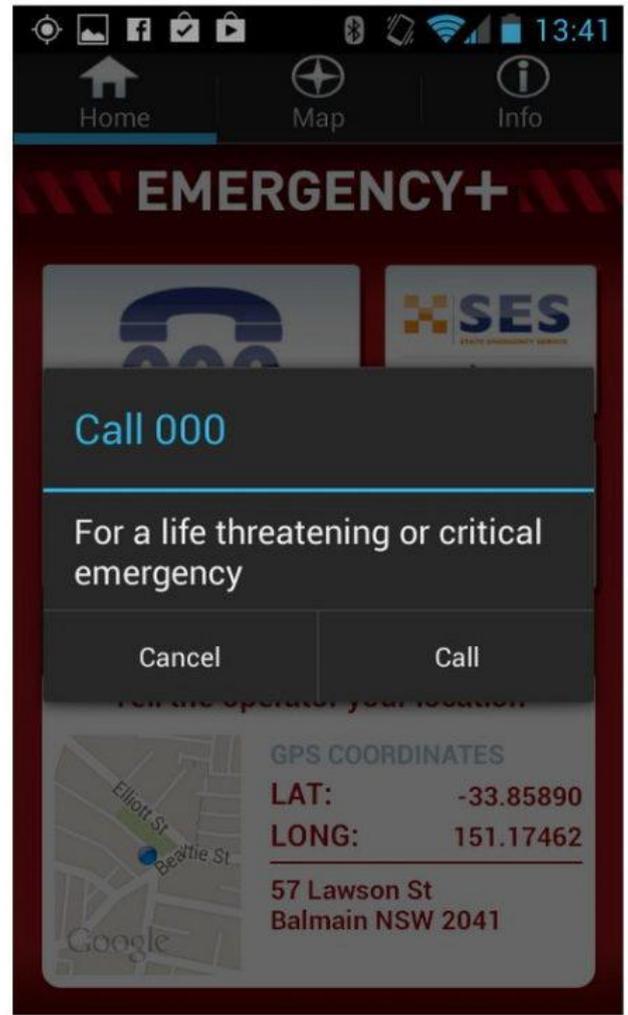
After selecting the **Emergency+** icon on your phone, the Home screen is displayed. From here you can select the emergency service you want, Triple Zero, SES or the Police Assistance Line number for non-emergency calls. When installing the app, you need to give permission for the app to access your location. This is needed so the app can use the GPS functionality on the phone to determine its location. The app displays the location using the phones GPS or A-GPS which you relay to the emergency operator when requested.

Pressing one of the 3 emergency buttons on the Home screen does not automatically connect you to that service. As a failsafe measure you have to confirm to make the call.

Many people would be used to calling the emergency number Triple "O" which is a throwback to the days of rotary telephone dials. With the advent of alphanumeric keypads and to avoid confusion the correct name we should now be using is Triple Zero.

After explaining the basics of the **Emergency+** app, Brian gave a short history of the emergency number we use in Australia. In 1961 the PMG (Post Master General) Department established the emergency phone number Triple Zero. The number zero (0) was chosen firstly because it was the last number on a rotary telephone dial and could easily be found in the dark. Secondly, in outback Queensland you would dial 0 to access an outside phone line, then dial 0 again to access an operator and if that failed dial 0 again to access the operator further along the line.

In the 1980's Triple Zero (000) became a national number for critical emergencies. In 2013 the "Triple Zero Awareness Work Group" based in NSW released the **Emergency+** app.

To demonstrate the app in use, Brian showed a short video used to train emergency operators and users of the **Emergency+** app. The video is available online at http://www.ambulance.nsw.gov.au/Community-Info/Emergency-App.html or on YouTube at

From the apps Home screen you can access 2 additional displays by selecting the icons at the top of the screen. Selecting the middle icon displays a map screen while the right icon displays information on other emergency numbers. The Map screen displays your current location depicted by a blue circle, GPS coordinates shown as Latitude & Longitude and street address if appropriate. The Information screen displays information and links to the 3 main emergencies services along with other National numbers. Scroll down the information screen to display additional emergency phone number icons that link the user to the following National numbers:

- Crime Stoppers
- Health Direct
- National relay Service
- National Security Hotline
- Poison Information
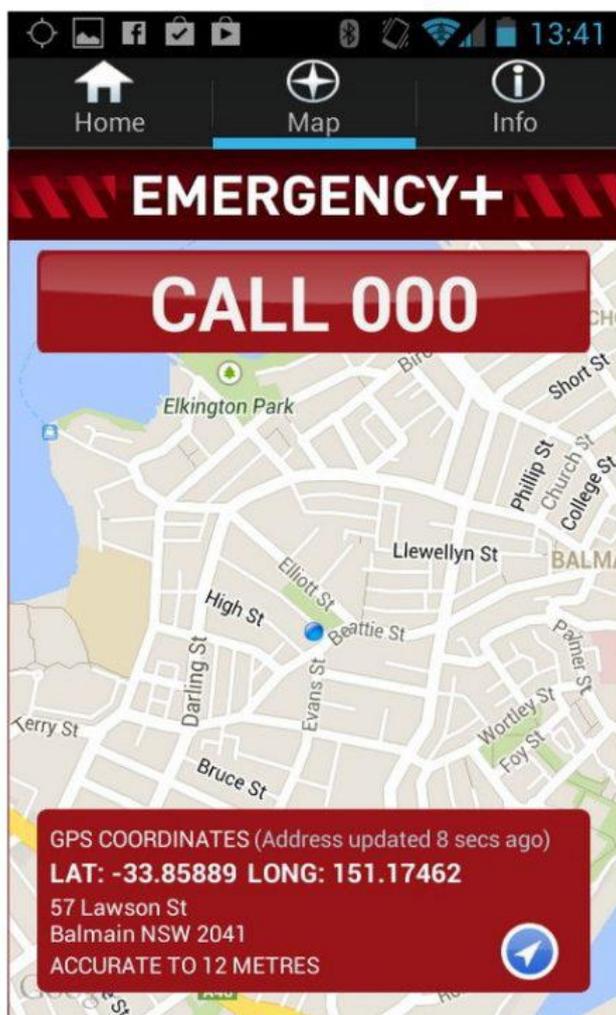
It's not well known but Triple Zero is not the only phone number for critical emergencies in Australia. Number 112 works for all GSM or GSM derived mobiles (the system used in Australia) and 106 is used for text based emergencies. All calls to any of these emergency numbers are free. Calls use the strongest signal available so are independent of your phone carrier.

To conclude his presentation Brian summarised how the Latitude and Longitude figures derived from the phone's GPS relate to Australia. For further information or to suggest improvements to the Emergency**+** app contact the "Triple Zero Awareness Work Group" at TripleZero@fire.nsw.gov.au.

How to use the iHelp website

Leighton West

The iHelp website can be found at http://www.melbpc.org.au/ihelp

Intro & Search

Many Members are unaware of the free facilities available to them from our iHelp pages at www.melbpc.org.au. Just click on the Top Menu item called iHelp. A Search Menu is then provided to help you find anything on our site.

Support

Fundamentally the pages are there to help you sort out technical problems and catalogue all the resources available within the Club including iHelp, Meetings,. Workshops, Library, Contacts, SIG's, Yammer and PC Update. If you have a technical problem you can lodge a Support Request or ask our team live from the Chat Pop-Up in the top RH corner.

Q&A

The iHelp section includes a Q&A section with answers to typical problems and a Common Settings page to help with configuring your system.

Club Facilities

For those of you who have never visited Moorabbin, there is a Club Facilities page which shows several short videos of various activities on the premises.

Internet Lounge

The Internet Lounge is a resource available to all Members, where you can try before you buy, use our video scanning facilities or burn a disk using our Broadband connection. A listing of the software you can trial is also listed on the Club Facilities page.

Monthly Meetings

For completeness the site provides Menu items that link to our Live Monthly Meeting Online, or to the Archives that contain videos of past meetings. Even Members who never get to Moorabbin can enjoy the membership benefits of the clubs technical sessions from home. Questions can be left online to be answered at the next Meeting.

PC-Update

For convenience we have a menu item for PC Update On Line where you can download or just read current and past monthly magazines. This makes iHelp a One-Stop-Shop for any Club matters, apart from Office-Administrative issues.

Web Links

Lastly a Web Links page chronicles many recommended sites on the web which may interest you, or provide Support with Hardware or Software issues. If you have a personal website resource which you would like to share with others, this can also be listed on the Web Links page for others to see.

DOTW Winners October 2019

Roger Brown

DOTW (whatever that stands for) is our weekly poll and light hearted review of the sillier events of the week. Thanks to those who vote and also to the odd member who might "feature" – all in fun of course.

Last month's "winners" were:

Centrelink for issuing a $14,500 robodebt to a disability pensioner with an intellectual impairment and then failing to offer him support to deal with the alleged overpayment.

Queensland Police for its refusal for over two years to prosecute a senior constable who used a police database to obtain the personal details of a domestic abuse victim and sent her address to her violent former husband.

The headmaster of St Kevin's College for being blindly unaware of the entrenched sexist culture at his school despite the latest "chant" incident and other earlier incidents.

And lastly our very own DSG for accepting the poison chalice of Club President – a DOTW worthy action if ever we heard of one!!

Yammer Highlights October 2019

Dennis Parsons

Chit Chat

One good thing about Yammer is members read a wide variety of news media from around the world and post links to interesting and very topical articles that many of us would not otherwise see. Bruce posted a link to an article from the UK Independent detailing India's plan to cancel a number of coal fired power stations in favour of solar. The discussion of course lead directly to the rationale of the Adani coal mine in Queensland and subsidies for related infrastructure such as railways as well as the coal itself. It was also noted that coal mines are closing in the US as the price of energy derived from renewables makes coal noncompetitive.

https://www.yammer.com/melbpc.org.au/#/Threads/show?threadId=385570549497856

Computer Help

Many of us use a single WiFi router, often supplied by our Internet provider, to provide adequate coverage over our entire house. For others coverage can be a problem with the signal being weak or even non-existent in some areas depending on the location of the router, and the shape and construction of the house, with intervening brick walls and reception on upper floors presenting particular problems.

A question was asked about the efficacy of various means of extending the coverage of the WiFi signal. A mesh network possibly using multiple nodes was considered to be the superior solution to provide widespread uniform coverage but was also more expensive due to the number of devices potentially required.

Roger had run an ethernet cable (courtesy of Kev, our resident cabler) out to his man cave (aka his music room) to provide an island of coverage via a second WiFi router. Julie had recently installed a WiFi extender (courtesy of a suggestion by Dave our resident iHelp team member) that relays the WiFi signal to improve the coverage in her "U" shaped house and posted "heat" maps she'd created to show the "before and after" coverage. Peter had acquired a new WiFi router that provided a stronger signal, which in combination with additional Ethernet cabling reduced the traffic load on his WiFi network eliminating the need for any additional WiFi sources.

Wi-fi coverage before Netgear extender installation

Wi-fi coverage after Netgear extender installation

Extender plugged in here
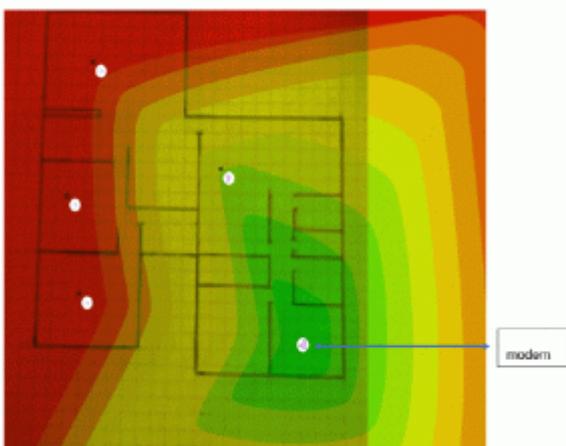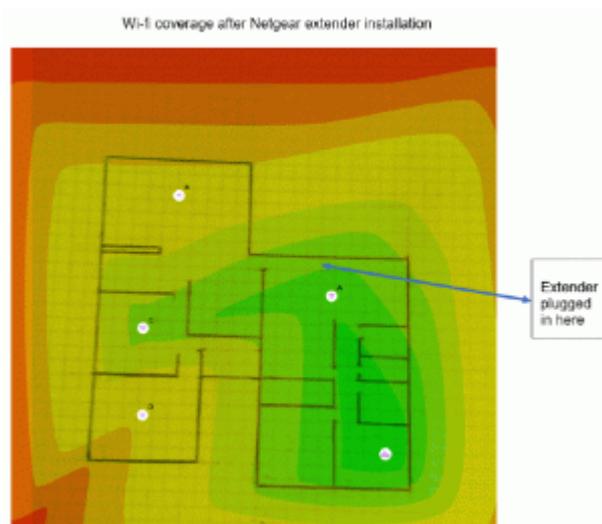
The message? There is more than one way to skin the WiFi cat, which is better depends on the particular physical characteristics of your home and WiFi needs.

https://www.yammer.com/melbpc.org.au/#/Threads/show?threadId=384804968595456

NBN Questions and Comments

Yammer continues to be a good source of information for members contemplating the move to NBN – personal member experience, knowledge and expertise continue to be an excellent resource for those uncertain of what the NBN future may hold for them.

A number of members who currently have Telstra or Optus cable and are happy with the speed and service are facing the move to NBN with a degree of trepidation as they don't see much advantage and some significant disadvantages. Most are understandably keen to retain their cable service for as long as possible but have been warned not to leave it too late or they risk disconnection. NBN will provide a considerable improvement in upload speed, but for many users this isn't greatly significant – great if you're uploading a lot of photos or backing up large files to the cloud but of little advantage for general Internet use where media consumption means it is heavily weighted in favour of download speed.

Stewart is one such member – Telstra recently increased his download speed to 100Mbps at no extra cost and he's found the only way to keep it if he remains with Telstra when he moves to NBN is to pay more, something he quite understandably isn't pleased with. Roger suggested looking at other providers who are very competitive – he originally remained with Telstra on the grounds that their service had been good and he didn't want the complication of changing providers and moving to the NBN at the same time, but has since changed.

https://www.yammer.com/melbpc.org.au/#/Threads/show?threadId=359950872698880

East SIG Report October 2019

Neil Muller

The October meeting opened with **George Skarbek** conducting his usual Q&A segment.

George commenced with an update to a recent presentation he gave on a cheap smartwatch he purchased to check his ECG and blood pressure readings (East SIG report for July 2019). At the time George was sceptical that the readings would be accurate, but as the watch was only $70 it was worthy of investigation, being cheaper than a doctor's visit. On a routine visit to his GP recently, George showed the ECG readings to his doctor. To his amazement the doctor said the graphs were very close to reality. The pulse rate displayed by the watch was also accurate, as George checked that himself. Blood pressure readings however were poor, being about 10% in error. George was surprised that a smartwatch for the low price of $70 was as accurate and had the features it did.

Q: I have just purchased a new PC and don't want to pay the cost of a full version of Office. As a member of MelbPC I believe I can get Office for free. How do I go about doing that?

A: Go to the Microsoft website and log in with your MelbPC account. Go to Office and you will see displayed the Office suite of Word, Excel, PowerPoint, etc. As all the Office programs are in the cloud, you will have to log in each time you wish to use them. You must therefore be on the internet and if there is no internet you won't have access to any Office programs.

[John Hall] If you look at your MelbPC dashboard you will see under "Add/Renew Membership" that you can includes a downloadable version of Office365 to run on your PC with the various membership categories. (refer Figure 1).The cost is $65 compared to over $100 from a retail store. Office will download to your PC and sync with everything in the cloud and you won't have to sign in each time.

[John Swale] The price is for a yearly subscription for Office on 5 PCs, 5 tablets & 5 phones.

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Renew your Membership

Your **Pensioner (Yearly)** membership expires on December 1st, 2019.

Membership *
- ● **Individual - $ 95.00 (includes GST of $ 8.64)**
- ○ **Individual + 1 Family Member** - $ 120.00 (includes GST of $ 10.91)
- ○ **Individual + 2 Family Members** - $ 145.00 (includes GST of $ 13.18)
- ○ **Individual + 3 Family Members** - $ 170.00 (includes GST of $ 15.45)
- ○ **Individual + 4 Family Members** - $ 195.00 (includes GST of $ 17.73)
- ○ **Pensioner (Quarterly)** - $ 20.00 (includes GST of $ 1.82)
- ○ **Pensioner (Yearly)** - $ 80.00 (includes GST of $ 7.27)
- ○ **Pensioner (Yearly) + 1 Family Member** - $ 105.00 (includes GST of $ 9.54)
- ○ **Pensioner (Yearly) + 2 Family Members** - $ 130.00 (includes GST of $ 11.82)
- ○ **Corporate** - $ 190.00 (includes GST of $ 17.27)
- ○ **Student** - $ 80.00 (includes GST of $ 7.27)
- ○ **Other** - $ 80.00 (includes GST of $ 7.27)

Membership Add Ons
- ☑ **Office Pro Plus - $ 65.00 (includes GST of $ 5.91)**
- ☐ **PC Update Newsletter** - $ 28.50 (includes GST of $ 3.50)
- ☐ **Monthly Disc** - $ 55.00 (includes GST of $ 5.00)

Total Amount $ 160.00

Q: My Windows 10 PC won't recognise my ID at start-up. How do I reset the photograph which obviously needs updating to recognise me?

A: I always log on with a password and have never used facial recognition.

[John Swale] You'll have to log in with your normal password then go into Settings à Accounts à Sign-in Options. Set up an account password and PIN then click the "Set up" button for Face and uncheck facial recognition and add your new photograph.

Q: I have ongoing problems with PCs losing their WiFi connections to the modem. Both the PCs are laptops and I have to right click on the WiFi icon and select Repair, which then successfully connects to my WiFi. It's happening on 2 different sites both connected to the NBN, one is a Telstra modem and the other an iiNet modem. It seems to be the same sort of problem on both. I'm unsure whether it's a problem with Windows 10 or whether Telstra and iiNet have used the same "crappy" program in their modems. Other computers don't exhibit this problem at the same sites.

A: It seems likely that you're losing the WiFi signal due to a signal strength problem. To check if that's the cause, download WiFi Analyser to you PC or smart phone. It will show you all available WiFi signals in the area and their strength. The problem could be caused by a neighbour using exactly the same channel on one of their devices. That would be the first thing I'd check. Using WiFi Analyser determine which are the best free channels and select one of those. From your browser connect to your router, usually this is done using 192.168.0.1 or 192.168.1.1 and you'll be connected directly to your router. Log into your router with your Admin name and password and go to WiFi. Move the WiFi channel you're currently using to a free channel as determined from the WiFi Analyser readings. That's all you have to do, as your laptops, phone and everything else will automatically connect to that new channel. If that fails and you have a dual band 2.4 & 5GHz modem, logon to both bands. Just because you're logged onto one band doesn't mean you're automatically logged on to the other, so log on to both.

Q: You've been running a computer service business for some years, I was wondering whether the demographic coming to you for help is the same now as in the past and how that compares with MelbPC members who ask for help?

A: I can't answer that as about 8 years ago I decided I was going to retire and not take on any more clients. However I still look after the people I've worked with over the last few decades. The demographic of the people I still work for are generally younger than most MelbPC members who come to me with problems.

After a refreshment break **Dave Botherway** outlined what to do after buying a new PC. This presentation was the result of a member approaching Dave asking "when I buy a new PC, what software comes with it and what software do I need?" Software we get with a new PC and software we need are two different categories which Dave dealt with separately in his presentation.

Software we get with a new PC
When buying a new PC, it will come with an operating system such as Windows 10 Home or Pro. Rather than including a Windows 10 DVD or USB thumb drive, the PC will most likely have a recovery partition instead, so the PC can be reset back to its factory settings if needed. The manufacturer will also include some of their own software such as drivers, tune-up software and other programs from companies for which the PC manufacturer receives a commission. E.g. Media suites, antivirus, system tuning software, graphics programs etc.

Bloatware or PUPs (Potentially unwanted Programs) are terms used for the additional software that is often included by the PCs manufacturer. This software takes up room on the PC, can be potentially useful but can also be unwanted. An example could be trialware for an antivirus program. Such programs are free for the trial period but once that period is over, the program stops working if not paid for.

To identify and locate bloatware Dave uses the following free programs:

- PC Decrapifier removes unnecessary programs and startup items that can slow down your PC. Download at *https://www.pcdecrapifier.com* ,
- AdwCleaner for cleaning out adware *https://www.malwarebytes.com/adwcleaner/* and

- Malwarebytes to protect against malware, ransomware, malicious websites, and other online threats that have made traditional antivirus obsolete. Download at *https://www.malwarebytes.com/*

To remove any unwanted programs the uninstaller that comes with the program is still the best option. Alternatively the Windows uninstaller can be used at Settings à Apps à Apps & Features. Other free programs Dave recommends for removing programs are:

- cCleaner https://www.ccleaner.com
- Revo uninstaller https://www.revouninstaller.com
- IOBit Uninstaller https://www.iobit.com

Software we need to install on a new PC
Once all unnecessary programs have been removed, it's time to install programs you need. Dave covered the various categories of programs he loads on a new PC, describing each and outlining alternate options in each category. Most of the programs listed are freeware.

- Antivirus eg AVG, Malwarebytes
- Password manager eg LastPass, KeePass, DashLane
- File search eg Everything
- Internet Browsers eg Firefox, Chrome
- Photo viewer eg Irfanview, Faststone Image viewer
- Media player eg VLC, GOM
- Office eg MS Office, OpenOffice, LibreOffice
- Backup eg Macrium Reflect
- Software analysers eg Secunia, PatchMyPC, Ninite (software installer), IOBit Advanced System Care

As most of the software mentioned above is freeware, the best source to download from is the developer's website. To determine the URL of the developers website Dave suggests using Google. Clicking on the Download button from the developers site often links to a commercial site such as cnet.com or Filehippo.com. Be careful what you download from these sites, as the download screen can include downloads to trialware or Pro versions of the same programs that you have to pay for. Often other programs are displayed on the download screen and it can be confusing to know which download button is for the program you want.

The developers of the freeware programs will often receive royalties for including additional software with their programs. Dave strongly suggests when installing freeware not to use the default install option. The default installation will often contains a ticked checkbox agreeing to install some extra program unrelated to the one you intended to install. Eg when updating Adobe Flash Player in default mode, a box is checked that will install McAfee Virus Scan along with Flash player.

As there is a multitude of free software available, how do you select the one that's best for you? Fortunately there are a number of websites that provide independent reviews and rank programs by category. Gizmo freeware at *www.techsupportalert.com* is one of the best for independent reviews and rankings. Others Dave mentioned are Filehorse at *www.filehorse.com* and FreewareFiles at *www.Freewarefiles.com*.

To conclude Dave summarise his favourite programs. Some of these are old programs but all still work with Windows 10:

- Coolbeans – System information
- Everything – File Searching
- Macrium Reflect – Backups
- Ccleaner – System cleaner
- Malwarebytes – Location Malware and PUP
- Clover – File Explorer replacement.

Northern Suburbs Linux SIG Report October 2019

Trevor Jacobs

Unusually, we started a few minutes late, missing our customary MC.   Get well soon, Paul.

Back to tradition, and we started with Nick Vespo and Linux News.

First up was the not-so-secret Android10 beta. A few notable headlines …

- gesture/swipe navigation as an option, and some intelligent extras such as protection from accidental swipes
- a dark theme, good for batteries and eyes, and
- live captioning

The reviewer did hasten to add that when the beta turns into the real A10 things might look and work a bit differently, but it's apparent there has been a lot of attention to polishing security, wifi performance, and the layout of configuration menus.

A10 will support foldable phones, with intelligent screen splits, and obviously the recently released Pixel4.

A quick mention for a US company Wing, which has beaten Amazon, Google and others with a commercial offering in drone delivery.

Finally, a demo video of the advances made in robotronics by Boston Dynamics. Quite impressive, even if, as sagely observed, there was still some remote control by humans.

In the Open forum, a member question sparked discussion about UEFI motherboards and boot menus. Apparently UEFI mobos ain't UEFI mobos, Sol, and some manufacturers will provide a minimal UEFI implementation while others provide useful extra utilities.

The social break was animated, with much interest in Alf Lovison's rescue of a dead All-in-One PC, initially with new monitor driver electronics, and then a Rpi system. A good example of repair and reuse.

After the break, the main presentation of the evening came from David Hatton, this month on CloudReady (from Neverware) . In essence, this is a minimised ChromeOS and enables the user to turn an old PC or laptop into a Chromebook. While Neverware state that CloudReady will definitely work on all their certified models – some 350 in the list – many devices that are not officially certified will also run CloudReady with only minor gaps in the standard functionality. Neverware also state their end of support date for certified devices – the demonstration Dell 6410 laptop had an expiration date of August 2024.

The 2GB Ram/16GB disk/64 bit plus Google account requirements aren't trivial, but aren't too demanding – older devices are more likely to be omitted from the supported list by being unable to meet graphics demands than storage. There are paid for editions for enterprise and education as well as a home edition. The Home Edition is free, but there is no access to the official Support Team and Home Edition devices cannot be enrolled in the Google Admin console. The demonstration used the free Home Edition.

The first task in bringing up CloudReady is to create a bootable USB drive, and although there are other methods the easiest and most reliable method is to use the official CloudReady installer, which is a Windows utility. Comprehensive instructions are given on the website at **https://www.neverware.com/freedownload**

Although CloudReady will run as a live USB, the installed version is intended to be the only OS on the storage device, so the installer overwrites existing installs and doesn't countenance dual boot.   Members familiar with working with ChromeOS or Chromebooks found the feature set impressively full.
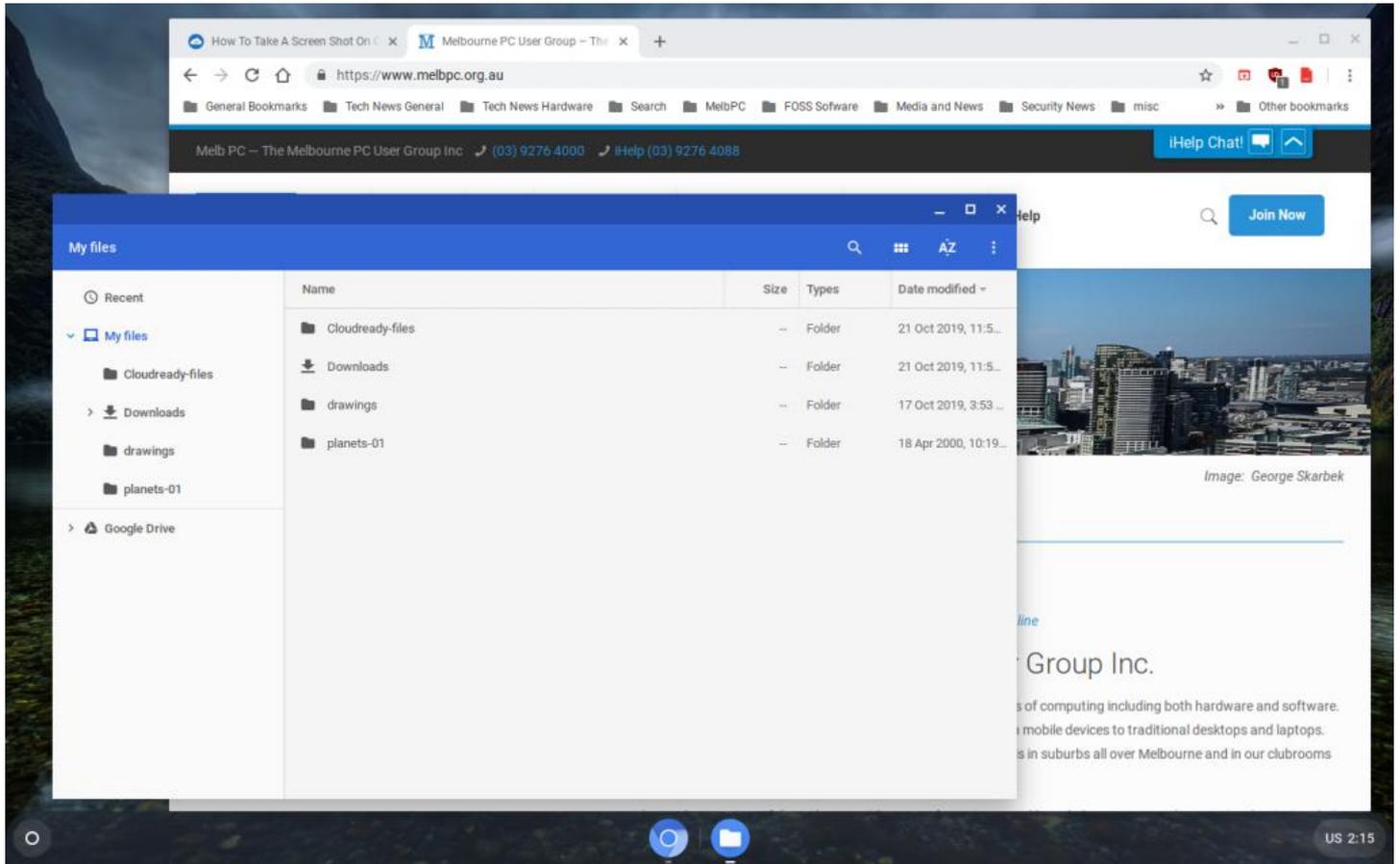
Additional apps and extensions can be installed from the Web Store and many of them have a capability to be used offline. Internet access can be via ethernet or wifi depending on the connectors on the device.

Science and Tech Projects Group Report

David Stonier-Gibson

Hydroponics Project Update

In Sci/Tech meeting on Sunday 20th October we decided to enter our hydroponics project in the upcoming Monash Mini Maker Faire on Sunday 1st December. This has somewhat taken focus off an all-singing all-dancing setup and onto something that can be cobbled together quickly for the show.

The initial concept was to have a welded steel frame. That morphed into bolt-together racking. The new Q&D (Quick and Dirty) setup is getting a frame made out of timber scavenged (legally!) from a building site, with plastic tubs from Bunnings. I undertook to do the grow lights. These will consist of red, blue and white LEDs (Light Emitting Diodes) in an approximate ratio of 3:1:1. The blue and red are the actual grow lights. The white is to have normal lighting for viewing the plants. The LEDs come as a self-adhesive flexible strip, so they are quite easy to mount. There's no need to individually mount and wire hundred of LEDs.

I ordered the red and blue LEDs strips off eBay from a local stock, and they arrived the other day. I already have enough white ones in my component collection. The power supply (this many LEDs requires a pretty beefy power supply) will be an old re-purposed computer supply. I will be cobbling together a simple electronics controller to allow the lights to be controlled from some kind of front panel, possibly a touch screen. I have all the bits required to make high current dimmer/drivers (this is the low end of what

I did for a living).

The hydroponics system is a project of the Science and Tech Projects Group, which meets 1st and 3rd Sundays at Moorabbin. It will be exhibited under the Melbourne Computer Club brand.

The Microcontroller Workshop SIG is also mounting a display under the Melb PC banner. That will consist of a number of projects from members. It's still a little fluid, but I hope we will have Rob Conway's marvelous model steam engine, John Shirt's solar reflector, Sean Clarke's Scary Skull and a retro game from Bill Sakell. I am resurrecting my RoboMite wheeled robot, and trying to find time and head-space to teach it a new set of tricks.

Video Production Group Report October 2019

John Hall

The meeting opened with John Thomson's "What's New" section where he showed us the Sony FX9 Pro Video Camera and gave us some facts about its amazing capabilities.

He also showed new Cameras from Canon – the EOSC500, Sony – the A9 II, Nikon – the Z50, but the highlight was a video taken with the new GoPro Hero 8 Black which showed this camera's amazing inbuilt video stabilisation.

Roger Wragg then gave us a comparison of the latest Vegas Pro 17 Software (see "Vegas Pro Web Site") versus DaVinci Resolve 16 (see website).

While Vegas Pro 17 is a great step up for people already using the old Sony Vegas Studio (Vegas Pro is now owned by Magix Software and they have made many improvements since taking it over from Sony) it still costs over $500 Australian and Roger's conclusion was that – if you have the time to learn a new software package – you would be better off to download the older version of DaVinci Resolve – 15, which is free, as this gives you nearly as much functionality as both the Vegas and DaVinci "paid" versions.

After the Coffee Break, Frank Catlin gave us the second half of his talk on preparing for and filming "event videos" (such as weddings, birthday parties, school concerts and the like).

You can download a full PDF version of Frank's presentation from here – "Frank Catlins Presentation"

We finished the evening by showing some of our members videos and as usual they were of a very high standard.

If you would like to come along to the Video Production Group our next meeting will be at our Moorabbin Office on Monday 11th of November at 7:00 p.m.

Sony Alpha a9 II Mirrorless Digital Camera

November Calendar

SIG & Other Meetings — Nov-2019

MELB PC USER GROUP

Latest version of this Calendar is at: https://www.melbpc.org.au/ (see Quick Links)   This version is: V2–updated–30-oct-2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Legend SIG meeting at Melb PC HQ, Moorabbin. **Non-Moorabbin meeting.** ~~Cancelled Meeting~~ Changed Meeting To be confirmed	**Changes** Please advise changes to: calendar-admin@melbpc.org.au		Other SIG (Special Interest Group) information: https://www.melbpc.org.au/sigs/about/ Recent Changes: https://www.melbpc.org.au/sigs/about/recent-changes/	**Have A Question** **Post it on Yammer** **Yammer:** http://yammer.com/melbpc.org.au/	**1** **Essendon SIG** *Main meeting* *Avondale Heights* *9:30am - 12noon* **Multimedia Home Entertainment SIG** *Mount Waverley* *10am - 12noon*	**2**
3 **Science & Tech Projects Group** *Moorabbin* *1pm - 5pm*	**4**	**5** *PUBLIC HOLIDAY*	**6** **North East Genealogy SIG** *80 Hawdon Street Heidelberg* *10am - 12noon* **MONTHLY MEETING + AGM** *Melb PC HQ, Moorabbin* *7pm – 9:30pm* **then Supper (WAFFLE)** *at Fong's 9:35pm*	**7** **Sunbury Daytime SIG** *New Users* *9:30am - 12noon*	**8** **Essendon SIG** *Open Forum* *Avondale Heights* *9:30am - 12noon* **Hardware SIG** *Mount Waverley* *10am - 12noon* **Casey SIG** *Beaconsfield* *1pm - 3:30pm*	**9** **Microcontroller Workshop SIG** *Moorabbin* *12noon - 5pm* **Raspberry Pi – Moorabbin SIG** *2pm - 4pm*
10 **East Workshop SIG** *Mount Waverley* *10am – 12noon*	**11** **Access (database) and Excel SIG** ~~*Moorabbin*~~ ~~*6:30pm – 8:30pm*~~ *Nov meeting cancelled* **Video Production Group** *Moorabbin* *7pm - 9:30pm* *Please confirm if meeting on Queen's Birthday.*	**12** **Investment Tools - WASINT SIG** *Moorabbin* *10:30am - 12:30pm*	**13** **Video Production – Sony SIG** *Moorabbin* *10am - 12noon* **North East Daytime & Photography SIG** *Heidelberg* *10am - 12noon* **Communications SIG** *Moorabbin* *7pm – 9:30pm* **Microcontroller SIG** *Moorabbin* *7pm – 9:30pm*	**14** **Sunbury Daytime SIG** *Advanced* *9:30am - 12noon* **East SIG** *Blackburn South* *7:30pm - 9:30pm*	**15** **Essendon SIG** *Various topics.* *Avondale Heights* *9:30am - 12noon* **Digital Images SIG** *Including Photoshop* *Mount Waverley* *10am - 12noon*	**16** **Windows Plus SIG** *Moorabbin* *10am - 12noon*
17 **Beginners East (BEAST) SIG** *Vermont South* *10am – 12noon* **MACE (Atari Computers) SIG** *Moorabbin* *10am - 2pm* **Genealogy East SIG** *Vermont South* *12:30pm - 2:30pm* **Science & Tech Projects Group** *Moorabbin* *1pm - 5pm*	**18** **Mornington Peninsula SIG** *General inc Q&A* *Mornington* *9:30am - 12noon* — *Family History* *Mornington* *1:30pm - 4:30pm* **Northern Suburbs Linux SIG** *Watsonia* *7:30pm – 9:30pm*	**19** **Everything Apple SIG** *Moorabbin* *2pm - 4pm* **Melb PC Committee** *Moorabbin* *7pm*	**20** **North East Android SIG** *Heidelberg* *10am – 12noon*	**21** **Sunbury Daytime SIG** *Main Meeting* *9:30am - 12noon* **Bayside SIG** *Brighton* *10am - 12noon*	**22** **Raspberry Pi - Mt Waverley SIG** *10am - 12noon* **PC Update – Articles Deadline**	**23** **Microcontroller Workshop SIG** *Moorabbin* *12noon - 5pm*
24 **Website Design SIG** *Tutorials* *Moorabbin* *2pm - 4pm* — *Troubleshooting* *Moorabbin* *4pm - 6pm*	**25**	**26**	**27** **Video Production – Pinnacle SIG** *Moorabbin* *10:00am – 12:30pm* **Mornington Peninsula SIG** *Family History – Advanced DNA (LAST Wed of month)* *Mornington* *2pm - 4pm.* **PC Update – Reports deadline**	**28** **Sunbury Daytime SIG** *Maintenance & Linux (Fourth & fifth Thu of month)* *9:30am - 12noon*	**29**	**30**

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