

# HURSTVILLE SENIORS COMPUTER CLUB

www.hurstvillescc.org.au

“keeping up with our grandchildren”

## NEWSLETTER

February 2008

Member of ASCCA.

Australian Seniors  
Computer Clubs  
Association



The year started off extremely well and we can look forward to many hours of learning and creative activities. The Special Interest Groups are operating and progressing well and prospective new members are making frequent enquiries. Our first general meeting was characterised by an anticipation of good things to come for our Club

We highlight the Maintenance Group who selflessly maintain things and assure that the Club's computers run smoothly, considering the fact that in Queens Road alone an average of 125 members utilize the computers each week.

Some computers now have the facility to “dual boot” with either Windows XP or Vista operating systems, and all programmes are functioning perfectly

Sashi has been welcomed as a new member of “THE TEAM”



**Nick Hodge**, our first Guest Speaker of this year, gave an absorbing illustration of some of the more interesting innovations from Microsoft and specifically the use of MESSENGER and some of the community and social websites.

Nick demonstrated the talk with actual examples, including how to share your personal files, photos, and videos of any size, and how to drag and drop into a Shared Folder.

This was followed by many questions and even more so at the conclusion of his talk. Of course with these programmes privacy is usually an issue and this topic was well covered.

The versatility of the programme is almost endless. Nick also participated in our usual Q&A session which covered a wide array of questions from the audience.

Thank you Nick. We hope you will come again soon.



**Maurie Moroney** gave an impromptu Ten Minute Talk on the newly hyped, widely advertised and much misunderstood High Definition Television which has recently been introduced on some

channels in a limited number of programmes, but it is increasing.

So what is High Definition Digital TV?

Let us skip the technicalities and just say that the simplest explanation is that it produces a lifelike picture and sound that surpasses DVD quality. Most people are amazed when they see HDTV for the first time.

Common reactions include: I want that - how much is it? Is it available now? Yes, HDTV is here! Unfortunately it's not as simple as it needs to be yet and of course the cost can be prohibitive for most retirees. And there are other problems.

If you want this top-of-the-line picture quality, make sure before you buy a new big flat screen TV that both the set top box and screen you buy are *HD capable, not SD*, or you will not be able to fully take advantage of the superior HD image. Expect too, that you will be paying a premium for the HD equipment.

And as Maurie notes: before rushing out to buy one - DO YOUR HOMEWORK

**OUR GUEST SPEAKER FOR FEBRUARY** will be **Kim Buhagier**, Centre Director of the Pole Depot in Penshurst

The Pole Depot Website notes amongst other things:

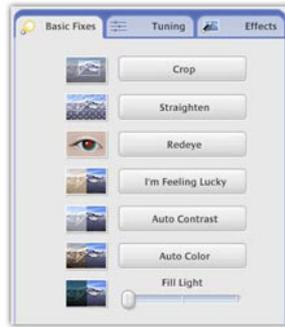
“Our friendship group is a great way of meeting new people and sharing experiences. This program aims to provide a network amongst participants for contact, access to information and support, in order to maintain independence for as long as possible, and includes outings, speakers, barbecues, games and music. Transport is available on request.”

General Meeting - 1.30pm Wednesday 26th February

## TEN MINUTE SPEAKER FOR FEBRUARY

Now is the time to put that new digital camera you were given for Christmas to more creative use

**Joyce Pickup** will demonstrate the capabilities of Picasa, which is one of the many free programmes which have plenty going for them. Picasa can be downloaded from:



<http://picasa.google.com/download/thanks.html>

Picasa's Basic Fixes are buttons that make it fast and easy to crop, remove red eye, fix the contrast and colour, and enhance your digital pictures. You can also make posters and screensavers, print excellent quality pictures, turn your photos into a movie and a host of really "fun" stuff.



*The Monday class in a more relaxed mood*

## OFFICE 2007 INCOMPATIBILITIES

With the proliferation of Windows Vista and the latest office suite Office 2007, problems are appearing when people try to share documents because Microsoft has created a new file format for Office 2007 which is incompatible with older versions of Office. This applies to Word documents, Excel spreadsheets and PowerPoint presentations. To quote Microsoft, this was done "..... to reduce file size, improve security and reliability, and enhance integration with external sources". Now documents are saved as DOCX files, Excel spreadsheets as XLSX files, and PowerPoint presentations as PPTX files.

Fortunately Microsoft has provided a means of overcoming this incompatibility problem. There are two ways of going about it.

**Scenario 1:** You have Office 2007 and you want to create a file that can be read by an older version of office.

**Solution 1:** Instead of saving the file in the usual way, click on *File > Save As > Word 97-2003 Document*. There is an equivalent feature in Excel 2007 and PowerPoint 2007. (It is possible to change the default output format to always save in Word 97-2003 format if you wish)

**Scenario 2:** You have an older version of Office and you wish to open an Office 2007 file.

**Solution 2:** Download a free file from Microsoft which will allow you to read and write in Office 2007 format without otherwise affecting your existing software.

To obtain this file, go to

<http://www.microsoft.com/downloads>

and you will find "Microsoft Office Compatibility Pack for Word, Excel, and PowerPoint 2007 File Formats" in the Popular Downloads section. Download this file which is named FileFormatConverters.exe (it will take more than an hour with a dial-up connection). Run this file to install the Compatibility Pack. Thereafter, any file created with Office 2007 can be opened automatically by an older version of Office.

As an added bonus, you can also save files in the Office 2007 format if you wish. In Word, if you click on *File > Save As* you will find an additional option in the "Save as type" box (below the "File name" box), namely "Word 2007 document (\*.docx)". There is a similar option in Excel and PowerPoint.

As a test, I have created a Word document in Office 2007 containing text, graphics and a table in the new format and it looked exactly the same when opened in Office XP using the Compatibility Pack.

According to Microsoft, the Compatibility Pack only works in Windows 2000 and Windows XP provided all the latest service packs and high priority security updates have been installed, and for Office 2000, Office 2002 (XP) and Office 2003. The Excel 2003 viewer and PowerPoint 2003 viewers are also supported to read .xlsx or .pptx formats.

Users of Office 97 and previous versions of Office are largely out of luck. Microsoft hasn't supplied a compatibility pack and probably won't. You can try a free service like <http://docx-converter.com> to convert Word documents only, although the

conversion process isn't as complete as what the Microsoft compatibility pack can do. Another possibility is to use the free Office Viewers with the Compatibility Pack which will let you open .docx files then copy and paste the contents into a standard document.

Incidentally, there is also a PowerPoint Viewer 2007 for those who don't have the presentation software installed on their computer.

*Thanks Fred*

## WEB DESIGN CLASSES

The Web Design Interest Group has resumed after the holiday break, with a basic class on the first Wednesday of each month and an advanced class on the third Wednesday of each month. Both classes commence at 1:30pm in the Annexe, which is in the Council building in McMahon Street. Enter via the Wandarrah Rooms door, to the left of the Marana Hall doors. Follow the stairs up to the first floor, then a small set of stairs to the room on the left hand side.

A new **Beginner's Class** will commence in March specifically designed for those who know nothing about creating a web page and are interested in finding out what is involved. It will be held on the first Wednesday of each month at **12:45pm** prior to the basic class. This is an ideal way to "stick your toe in the water without getting wet".

If you have any questions please contact Fred Scott by email at [mail@fredscott.net](mailto:mail@fredscott.net) or by phone at 9597 3243.

## PARKING

Please note that Council development works have commenced in the area adjacent to the Senior Citizen Centre and car parking in the area is now very limited.

The "Gravel Pit" car park opposite Queens is COMPLETELY fenced off - hence no parking at all.

Adjacent to the Queens clubroom, the parking line which included the disabled car park has been fenced off thereby limiting parking to six places.

## BIGGER ICONS, LESS EYE STRAIN

In the January issue I forgot to tell you that this applies in Word!!!

*Ed*

## BEST BYTES – by NAN BOSLER

**THE INTERNET MOVIE DATABASE** claims to be Earth's biggest movie database. It should have everything you would ever want to know about movies and TV shows. [www.imdb.com](http://www.imdb.com)

On the left side of the front page is listed the Top Box Office Hits, Movies Opening this Week, Movies Coming Soon, new DVDs, Upcoming DVDs, and User Favourites (the most visited WebPages).

Each of these abbreviated lists has a More link which takes you to more details and links to more detailed lists.

Hidden behind all this is an extensive database of movies and TV shows, which you can get to through links and searches.

**TO MAKE SURE** you get the latest updates each time you visit the sites you have stored in your Favourites, open Internet Explorer and click on Tools and then Internet Options.

In the window you have five choices. Select one of the first four. I selected Every time I visit the webpage, that way the page is only updated when I visit it.

It saves time updating the sites each time I open Internet Explorer.

**THE REGISTRAR GENERAL** for Scotland is planning to introduce a new public record to be known as the Book of Scottish Connections (BSC).

People all over the world with a Scots connection will be able to apply (for a fee) for a birth, death, marriage, or civil partnership abroad to be recorded in the BSC, provided the event has already been registered with the civil registration authorities of the country in question.

A commemorative certificate of the event (and the Scots connection) will then be available from the registration service in Scotland.

Go to [www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/famrec/book-of-scottish-connections.html](http://www.gro-scotland.gov.uk/famrec/book-of-scottish-connections.html)

