

HURSTVILLE SENIORS COMPUTER CLUB

www.hurstvillescc.org.au



“keeping up with our grandchildren”

NEWSLETTER

April 2008

Member of ASCCA.

Australian Seniors
Computer Clubs
Association



for our eventful ten years of rapid growth and development and quite a few inspiring innovations which all in all made the computer club in a few short years into a valued service for Seniors in the St George area.

Our Club is ten years young and still growing and developing.

Ten years of rapid growth and innovation is largely thanks to the foresight and prescience of our founder George Thompson and his initial team of eager and willing volunteers, many of whom are still active members of the club.

Ten years later the club is still providing a valuable service to the people of Hurstville and environs.

Today we thank the club pioneers and those public spirited and forward looking volunteers who so selflessly gave of their time, experience and expertise. Many of them are still tutors in the club and a few are still students learning about the inexhaustible power that computers can give to Seniors. In fact all our growth and development certainly augers well for the next ten years and more.

The success of the Club is shown by the fact that we now have students and tutors who can maintain and repair their own computers, and students who with confidence can strip and reassemble their own computers. We have students who have developed into experts and prize winners at digital photography, who use all the facilities of Office with confidence and members who trace their family histories and also those who are happy just to send the occasional email, or complete a PowerPoint presentation, use Media Player or Photo Story with some flair, or just have an hour of fun creating greeting cards or playing solitaire. And

INVITATION

**YOU ARE CORDIALLY INVITED TO OUR
TENTH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

**1.30PM
WEDNESDAY 30th APRIL**

**Bring along a member who does not
usually attend our interesting monthly
meetings**

**Light refreshments will be served
And there will be door prizes
Enjoy an eventful and interesting gathering**

many students have graduated into very competent tutors.

Besides the normal day to day teaching, our Special Interest Groups have grown from strength to strength, meeting the demands of our members in such varied fields as Genealogy, Website development and Digital photography just to mention a few

And then we have our volunteer Tutors. Who are these volunteers and why do they do it? And what are the benefits of volunteering?

Besides the fact that it has a positive impact on physical and mental health, enhances social networks and increases opportunities for social interactions volunteering strengthens a sense of belonging and most importantly increases skills in all aspects of computing and makes a difference in the lives of others. And as an added benefit, it has been proven that older volunteers live longer than non-volunteers.

I have been doing volunteering, as many of you have done, since the day I retired from my profession, and at our Club I have found this a rewarding, fulfilling and meaningful activity and along the way I have met students who became much more than mere computer students, they became friends and acquaintances. You look out for them and you care for them. *(Henri Joubert)*

HOW DID IT ALL COME ABOUT??

The Club was started after George Thompson visited the Seniors Card Technical Expo in October 1997. There he met members from the existing eight clubs (all from the north side) who were collecting names of people interested in joining a Club. This list, which included names from St George, was sent to him. To find more people interested in starting a club in the area, he set up a stall at the Hurstville Council Seniors Expo in March 1998, asking visitors to type their name and address on a 386 computer with a Works data base. There were also names that came from the notices posted in the eleven libraries in the St George area.

He then sent letters to 158 people notifying of an inaugural meeting on 29 April 1998. Eighty attended, agreed to form a Club and elected the following Committee - President, George Thompson - Vice President, Maxine Gray - Secretary, Alma Goesch - Assistant Secretary, May McDonald - Treasurer, Graeme Gavin - Committee Members, Bettie Hart, Denis McDonald, Doreen Chisholm, and Marie Thompson.

Hurstville City Council was the only Council offering assistance. They provided free use of a lockable area they partitioned off in the Hurstville Seniors Centre with a bench around the wall to fit five computers. Later a small office was added next to it which fitted two more computers. Four 386 computers with Windows 3.1 were obtained from the TAD organization for \$100, then some 486's were bought at auction. These were soon updated with all seven machines now being the latest versions.

Membership is over 300 with a waiting list to join - we don't take new members until we have a vacancy for lessons. Beginners lessons on word processing and spreadsheets etc. are held Tuesday to Friday in an informal atmosphere without set courses. Each day is autonomous with Head Tutor and assistants teaching pupils what they want to know. Monday is for lessons on graphics.

Our Patron, Councillor Merv Lynch, was able to obtain the use of a second Clubroom in the Council's community building. This is called the Annexe and has eight computers being used by Special Interest Groups, viz. - a Technical Class - an Internet Class - a Genealogy Class - a Digital Imaging Group - a Web Design Group - and a Video Editing Group.

A Monthly Meeting is held on the last Wednesday of the month for general discussion and a Guest Speaker.

GUEST SPEAKER

Last month **Bill McCully** demonstrated the latest Vista-ready self tutoring CD set "Take the Teacher Home, Easy Learning for Seniors".



These two *Take the Teacher Home* CD video courses demonstrate every action you need to learn on your own computer screen.

Throughout these lessons you can learn at your own pace, feeling relaxed and confident as you master each step and discover for yourself that computers are actually easy and logical to understand. So Take the Teacher Home and enjoy learning computer skills with the help of these two-disc sets.

The lessons are set out in easy to understand format and you don't have to be a computer genius to get up and running using them. They have been professionally prepared and processed and have been offered to our Seniors Computer Club at a most reasonable price.

"We would highly recommend Take the Teacher Home CD's as an excellent learning resource and look forward to the development of more titles in the future." (COTA)

You may order copies through our president, Pam Samuels or order directly from Mr McCully.

TEN MINUTE SPEAKER



Once again **Jenny Webster**, in her presentation, demonstrated the value and appeal of an unadorned straight narrative "Telling Your Story".

Jenny's presentation has been the collaboration of a few able helpers. and our audience was really impressed by her recollections of "Her Life Before Computers".

To our future Ten Minute Speakers: do your presentation in whatever form is suitable for you.

REMEMBER

There will also be a JOINT meeting of Committee, Head Tutors, Tutors and Heads of the Special Interest Groups, Wednesday 30th April starting at 10am.

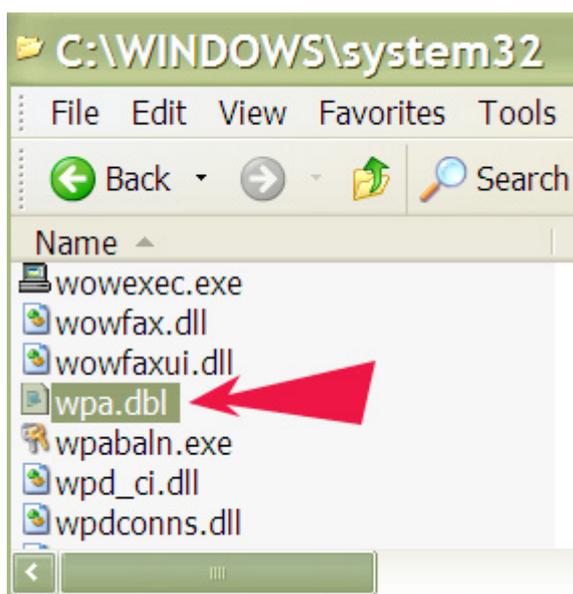
We value your input and contributions to the efficient and innovative activities of this Club.

AVOID WIN XP RE-ACTIVATION

The time may come that you'll need to reinstall your Windows XP. It could happen. Maybe you'll add a new motherboard or hard drive. Maybe you'll get constant errors and problems that just won't go away. Or perhaps you're a neat freak who wants to rid yourself of clutter and start fresh with a clean operating system. If you do reinstall Windows XP, then you'll need to re-activate it too - that is, unless you keep this tip handy.

The first time you activated XP it created a file called "wpa.dbf" that lives in the WINDOWS\system32 folder. By creating a backup of this file on disk, you can simply put it back into the folder after reinstalling XP and avoid the whole re-activation hassle. Here's how.

Go to **My Computer** then select your Hard Drive (usually drive C). Go to the **WINDOWS\system32** folder and scroll down until you find the wpa.dbf file.



Right-click and choose "Send To" then either Floppy Drive (make sure you have a disk in) or CD-R/RW.

Now, when you reinstall Windows XP you'll come to the activation screen - decline to activate and let the install finish.

Restart your computer in Safe Mode (keep hitting **F8** at start-up then when the Advanced Boot Options menu appears and arrow up/down to Safe Mode).

Find your way back to the **WINDOWS\system32** folder. It's a good idea to rename the wpa.dbf file you're replacing just in case you run into problems, so call it something like "wpa.nothing".

Get the backup disk and copy the old wpa.dbf file back to the **WINDOWS\system32** folder and reboot.

There you go - XP is up and running again.

PHOTO RECOVERY SOFTWARE

Do you sometimes get that sinking feeling that you have deleted that prize winning photo that you took in Turkey or the Antarctic or the long lost relatives in Italy?

Causes of data loss can vary from computer viruses, power failure, operating system crash, application crash; corrupt or missing system files, accidental formatting of hard disks, hard disk media failure, accidental deletion of files, etc. etc.

No worries, there is some hope that they can be recovered provided you take a few precautions.

Provided your hardware was not physically damaged, there is still a chance you may be able to recover your files with free or very inexpensive data recovery software.

But beware, some "free" recovery software is *Time Limited*.

Search Google for FILE RECOVERY TOOLS (or something like this).

However, if your drive is making strange noises or reports some error message DO NOT PROCEED. This indicates a hardware failure so your data is not going to be recoverable using "undelete" style data recovery software.

As soon as you realize your data has been deleted, stop using the computer! The less activity the better to avoid dangerous disk-swapping activity.

Find and download data recovery software on another computer.

Save the recovery tool to a flash drive and run it directly from there if possible.

Save the extracted data back onto the flash drive for added safety.

Of course it is always a good idea to back up your photos on a CD or DVD.

And don't panic!

Change of Address, email or postal. Please inform Geoff and Marie ASAP

