

HURSTVILLE SENIORS COMPUTER CLUB

www.hurstvillesc.org.au

"keeping up with our grandchildren"

NEWSLETTER

June 2010

Member of ASCCA.

Australian Seniors
Computer Clubs
Association



This month we will have a combined meeting of the Committee, Head Tutors, Tutors and Leaders of the Special Interest Groups. Recent combined meetings have not been well attended. It is crucial that members make an extra effort to attend such meetings, which occur, after all, only four times a year. The success of this Club is essentially dependent upon you and your input and contributions at these meetings.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VOLUNTEERS.

"If our hopes of building a better and safer world are to become more than wishful thinking, we will need the engagement of volunteers more than ever." [Kofi Annan](#)

TEN MINUTE SPEAKERS

Joyce Pickup was our ten minute speaker for the month of May and demonstrated how to become a member of FACEBOOK. Joyce explained that Facebook is a social utility that connects people with family and friends and others and allows members to upload an unlimited amount of photos and to share links and videos.



Joyce made it clear that we should have control over how we share our information and who can see it.

Once you register with the site, you need to create a profile with all the necessary details about yourself and you are then free to use all the functions of the site. All you need is a valid email address. In spite of the newspaper beat-up and the controversies surrounding Face Book and security, Joyce did a great job promoting the social network.

Thanks Joyce, well done.

This month our ten minute speaker, **Frank Grosz**, will give a brief talk on interesting websites.

Frank also serves as Vice President, is Group Leader of the Internet Class as well as leading the Computer Maintenance Team.

OUR MAY GUEST SPEAKER presented a talk on the history of Telstra's growth, development and research.

Jonathon Grahame's, current responsibilities include establishment of Telstra's mobile telephone network in the Blue Mountains area.



Jonathon presented an interesting and absorbing as well as deeply researched history of telecommunications in Australia and described the rapid developments in mobile telecommunications to, as we know, a population which is very enthusiastic at adopting new technologies.

As an ex-maths teacher, Jonathon was able to quantify recent trends, including:

- 48% of Australian households now have broadband internet access,
- there are 24 million mobile phone services in Australia - more than the population,
- there has been a massive growth in SMS text traffic, and
- there are still many people using dial-up for their internet access.

Jonathon also emphasised the importance of including an ICE (In Case of Emergency) contact phone number (eg: a close relative's phone number) in your mobile phone's contacts list.



Our Guest Speaker for June will be Mr **Anoop Metha** a representative of Microsoft. Mr Metha's presentation will be on Office 2010 - the latest office suite from Microsoft. You will see some cool features and how it improves productivity in our day-to-day lives.

We always look forward to Microsoft representatives at our meetings.

CLUB NEWS

We are happy to inform you that **John Shortland**, who leads the Genealogy Group, is back with us following his recent illness. Furthermore, we would like to wish all our members Good Health in these cold and windy Winter months.

Other Special Interest Groups are very active in their fields, notably the Web Development Team, under the able leadership of **Fred Scott**, which has just completed the [new look web site](#). The major change is to the opening page which has been completely redesigned by **Geoff Turton**. It now has a modern, fresh appearance which is much more attractive - thanks Geoff. The remaining pages have a slight cosmetic upgrade but the content is unchanged.

However attendance at our Special Interest Groups has been somewhat patchy of late, with the Technical Group having a waiting list, the Video Editing Group seeking more members and the Digital Imaging Group going from strength to strength. All in all, the Groups are alive and well, and it would be a good idea to explore some of their activities. These groups are run by expert and friendly tutors.



Head Tutor Shirley Boxall and students

THANK YOU to FRANK GROSZ and TED CRICHTON

My computer was literally STUFFED with stuff even though I'd emptied photos and emails. Frank suggested I bring the computer to the 11.30AM internet class. Frank took my laptop to the computer shop and had 1 gigabyte of RAM installed. He then loaded clean up programmes into my computer and used them to clear 1 1/4 gigabytes of space. Frank worked on my computer until 3pm. with Ted his assistant tutor helping out.

Frank has offered to continue cleaning up my laptop at the next internet class.

I'm 84. My son, my backstop, is seriously ill with cancer. So, as you can imagine I'm extremely grateful to Frank and Ted for the help and considerable time they spent on my computer and wish to say THANK U.

Bernadette Abbott.

COMPUTER MAINTENANCE

The fact that Students are missing one lesson day a month due to computer maintenance appears to concern both Tutors and learners.

We regret this and invite discussion and suggestions as to how we may improve the maintenance programme. Maintenance of twenty one computer hard disks and other peripherals is an arduous and time consuming task for our maintenance team.

While we admire the enthusiasm of our learners to attend classes, this job has to be done. As mentioned in an earlier newsletter, students should discuss this matter with their tutors who generally will consider all sides of the issue We are sympathetic towards students missing one session per month and are confident that a satisfactory solution can be achieved.

However, it is timely to remind members that our volunteer maintenance team, ably led by Frank Grosz, sacrifices an extraordinary amount of personal time and effort in carrying out their tasks.



Flash drives are in common use in the Teaching sessions. We appeal to members to check flash drives for viruses before using them in our Club computers.
KEEP YOUR VIRUS PROGRAMMES UP TO DATE !

OPTICAL DISCS Part 3

Damaged Discs - Scratches on the Laser-Reading Side of CDs and DVDs.

Scratches generally cross data lines or tracks on the disc, and how bad (deep and wide) they are will determine the extent of interference with laser focus on the data. Small or occasional scratches will likely have little or no effect on the ability of the laser to read the disc, because the data are far enough below the surface of the disc that the laser is focused beyond the scratch. This is comparable to the effect of a light scratch on a pair of eyeglasses; it does not markedly impair vision because the viewer's eyes are focused beyond it.

Even assuming a scratch is deep or wide enough to influence laser focus, error detection and correction coding in the disc drive can in many cases recover the misread data. However, scratches that are deep, wide, or bunched together can adversely affect the readability of the disc. These scratches can cause the laser to

misread enough data to make error correction coding ineffectual.

While data errors generated from scratches that run outward from the centre of the disc stand a good chance of correction by the error correction firmware, scratches running in the direction of the track, the same direction as the laser reads the disc, are more likely to cause uncorrectable errors. These uncorrectable errors are called E32 in the Red Book for CD specifications, and PO Error in DVD specifications.

If scratches are deep enough to damage the data or metal layers on the reading side of a disc, the data cannot be read or repaired.

The Technical Group

BEST BYTES

by Nan Bosler

ASCCA has just published a CD called Travellers' Tales which is full of very useful information for anyone who plans to travel.

It also has stacks of information about taking, enhancing, sending and storing photographs. The CD is available from ASCCA and the cost including postage is less than \$20.

In addition, the Australian Government provides travel warnings that should be heeded on www.smartraveller.gov.au.

You can change your desktop in no time.

Right click on your desktop and select Properties and then click on the Display tab. You can scroll through the list of images supplied with Windows XP.

If you want to use a picture saved on your computer, simply click the Browse button and an Open window will appear. It will default to your My Documents/My Pictures folder but you can browse through other folders, click on the picture you want and then click Open.

This will take you back to the Display Properties window and you should see a preview of your brand new desktop. If this is what you want, click Apply, OK.

WIRELESS INTERNET

Recently, the disputes between Senator Conroy, the Minister for Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy, and Google has made us aware of the problems with wireless internet, or WIFI as it is sometimes called. We note that an increasing number of our members use the facility which of course is extremely handy and versatile.

There is a major advertising blitz by ISPs to sell wireless internet but one has to be aware of the

dangers and disadvantages as well. The debate is ongoing, generating a lot of misinformation and hot air.

SECURITY

Here are some of the security measures suggested at the inauguration of the **National Cyber Security Awareness Week (6th June)**

- Install **security software** and update it regularly.
- Turn on **automatic updates** so that all your software receives the latest fixes.
- Get a **stronger password** and change it at least twice a year.
- **Stop and think** before you click on links or attachments.
- **Stop and think** before you share any personal or financial information - about yourself, your friends or family.
- **Know what** children in your home are doing online. Make sure they know how to stay safe and encourage them to report anything suspicious
- **Delete suspicious emails.** Beware of unexpected or dodgy looking emails. You don't want to click on a phishing email and give a scammer your personal details.
- **Update your browser.** Some of the latest browsers can warn you when you visit a potentially unsafe site and help protect you from phishing attempts. Make sure you're running the [current version of your browser](#) and it's set to automatically update.
- **Pay safely.** Purchasing items on the Internet has become an integral part of our internet activity. If you don't already have a PayPal account, [sign-up](#) and enjoy extra security on your transactions.



Attorney-General, Robert McClelland, also launched the *Protecting Yourself Online – What Everyone Needs to Know* booklet.

The *Protecting Yourself Online* booklet is available on the Australian Government's *Stay Smart Online* website at

www.staysmartonline.gov.au

"By following the advice in this new publication, our members can minimise cyber security risks while enjoying the benefits of living, working and playing online", Mr McClelland said.

