

HURSTVILLE SENIORS COMPUTER CLUB

www.hurstvillesc.org.au



“keeping up with our grandchildren”

NEWSLETTER

March 2011

Member of ASCCA.

Australian Seniors
Computer Clubs
Association

WE NEED YOUR HELP



"To be a good volunteer takes faith and then the willingness to act upon that faith. We must have faith in people, in ourselves, in the spiritual resources that exist in every person...."ANON

At this point we NEED more Volunteers to assist us in this vital job of helping the community. We salute our present Tutors who have been with us for many years. You do not need to be an expert. To tell the truth, many of our long experienced Tutors merely keep up and it is a constant learning experience. Do not let the rapid development and advances in the computer world deter you from helping the club help others. We teach the absolute BASIC skills so most members with a fair amount of basic computer skills should volunteer.

COMMITTEE NEWS

We farewelled Sashi Balachandran at our last meeting, prior to her move to Queensland. Irene Ramsay has been selected to fill the Committee vacancy. We welcome Irene to the Committee.



A Joint Committee and Tutors' meeting will be held at 10.30am on Wednesday 30th March. Head Tutors, Tutors and Heads of the Special Interest Groups are invited to attend. Your presence is important to help determine some important planning issues and further development, progress and continuing success of our Club. Please inform our President before 26th March of your attendance for catering purposes.

We look forward to having your positive input at this meeting.

FEBRUARY MEETING

Once again we had a well attended February meeting. Our members were treated to intriguing and fascinating stories of World War 1 by **David Bennett**, plus his demonstration of how members could trace their relatives who died in WW1.



David is a spellbinder! I believe our March speakers will be equally fascinating as they tell the story of the building of the telegraph line from Adelaide to Darwin, the precursor of our internet so to speak. Our TWO Guest Speakers, **Les Edwards** and **Ken Black** will trace the development of this vital part of Australia's history.

By the way, Les's name appears in the Guinness Book of Records. In a [speed contest](#) between a Morse Code operator (Les) and texting on a mobile phone by a twice world record holder. Les won comfortably.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR COMPUTERS MORE ACCESSIBLE

Computers are definitely not just a toy for the young generation. In fact, computers are a lot more useful for people who have problems with mobility and keeping in touch with the world in the first place.

At the same time, people with reduced eyesight may have severe difficulties using computers because technology is still created to be attractive for the young. For example screen resolutions have become enormous, providing more desktop space, and as a result smaller icons and text.

Everything is smaller, faster, and more sensitive, which is a nightmare for a slow person with bad eyesight and stiff hands.

Fortunately, Windows provides a lot of options to reverse these "features" and make computers more accessible for seniors. Windows also comes with tools that enhance visibility and accessibility. Let me show you some of them.

1. Screen Resolution

A high screen resolution is wonderful because more things find space on your desktop. However, a high resolution also reduces the size of everything and text becomes very hard to read. Hence, it may help to reduce the screen resolution. It's not a very elegant solution, but it's quite easy.

Right-click onto a blank area of the desktop and select *Properties*. The Display Properties window will open. Click on the *Settings* tab and reduce the screen resolution to 1024 x 768 or 800 x 600 pixels. If you're using a flat screen, you'll see that decreasing the screen resolution will also reduce the sharpness. You'll simply have to find the right balance for yourself.

To retain sharpness and visibility, you can also increase the DPI (dots per inch). Note that this step may require rebooting or using the Windows setup CD. Within the Settings tab click the *Advanced* button, switch to the *General* tab and under *DPI setting* select *Large size (120 DPI)* from the pull-down menu.

2. Contrast...once again go to DISPLAY PROPERTIES and adjust things to your requirements

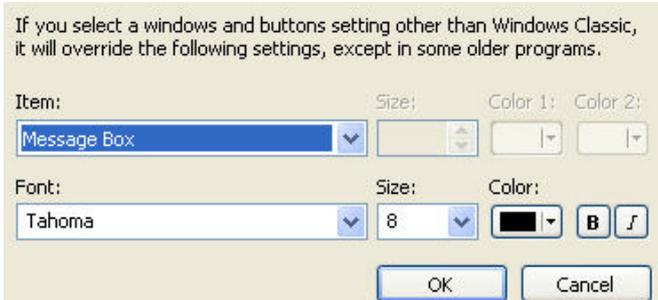
We're still in the Display Properties menu from the previous point. Switch to the *Appearance* tab. Under *Windows and buttons* select *Windows Classic style*. Now you can select a High Contrast scheme from the *Color scheme* pull-down menu.

3. Sizes

We have already touched on that in the first point. Size matters. And while we're in the Appearance tab of Display Properties, let's see what else we can do. For example you can increase the *Font size*.

Furthermore, you can click the *Effects* button and check the *Use large icons* option.

Finally, back in Display Properties, click the *Advanced* button and look at the *Items* you can edit here.



For example you could increase the font size in menus or the size of caption buttons or the text size in message boxes. Font styles and colors are also under your control.

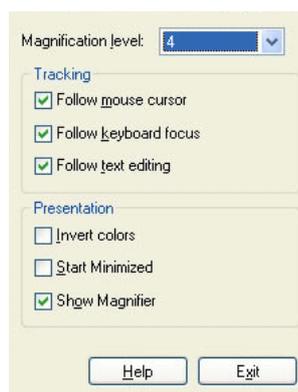
Before we leave the Display Settings, let me give you one more piece of advice. You can save all these settings as a theme. This way you can easily restore or share them. Within the Display Settings window, switch to the *Themes* tab and click *Save As*. I'm sure you can figure out the rest.

4. Magnifier

Windows comes with a tool that lets you magnify things you can't see despite all your settings.

You will find the tool under Start > All Programs > Accessories > Accessibility folder > Magnifier. In the same folder you might also find an Accessibility Wizard, a Narrator, and the On-Screen Keyboard.

The magnifier will reserve a bit of screen in the top and open a Magnifier Settings window.



Through the settings you can increase the magnification level and change the tracking and presentation.

Inverting colors can enhance contrast and readability.

The magnification window itself can be moved around the screen and you can change its size. Since it will push away your open windows when launched, you might want to select *Start Minimized* for the next time you need it.

You can do the same to have a LARGER, MORE VISIBLE, MOUSE POINTER

Open the *Mouse Properties* through Start > Control Panel (classic view) > Mouse and switch to the *Pointers* tab. Changing the scheme and selecting a large pointer will increase its visibility. Within the *Pointer Options* (or *Motion*) tab you can further adapt its visibility and speed. Don't forget to adjust scrolling with the mouse using the *Wheel* tab.

With these Windows options a lot can be done to make computers accessible for our members.

GONE PHISHING

This is a repeat of an earlier article. It is reprinted because the amount of scams in only one year has increased by many times.

However Phishing scams have become more prominent of late *SO BE AWARE*. Most of this is simply commonsense but worth repeating.

How to Avoid a Phishing Scam

There are some simple rules that you can follow which will help you stay protected from phishing:

- *Never respond to an email that asks for personal or financial information, even if appears to be from your bank.*
- *Always call your bank by phone or visit them in person if you wish to update your financial and personal details. Never send this information electronically.*
- *Regularly check your computer for viruses and spyware to ensure that your system is not being scanned for personal details without your knowing. The SPYBOT and AD-AWARE utilities are very useful and are FREE.*
- *Determine who you need to contact in an emergency if you feel you have become a victim of phishing. Reports may need to be filed and accounts temporarily closed.*
- *Keep close check of your financial statements to see whether there are any unexplained transactions.*
- *Understand your rights in relation to online fraud.*

It is worthwhile having a good look at the Australian website www.netalert.gov.au/home.html

EMAIL TIP

If you want to save a picture received by email, open the mail, right-click on the picture, and choose "Save as".

It will save in the same format as the picture; for instance if the image is in JPEG format it will save as JPEG format.

GUARD AGAINST DISASTER

NAN BOSLER - Best Bytes March 2011

AS WE well know from the happenings of the last couple of months, disasters and unfortunate incidents can strike with little warning, so having quick access to information to help you save precious wet records is very important.

The February 2011 (issue No 48) of Now & Then, News from the State Records, has information on its website that will help you to be prepared.

Conservation Tip 6: Dealing with wet records <http://archivesoutside.records.nsw.gov.au/conservation-tip-no-6-dealing-with-wet-records/> outlines the salvage and handling of wet records.

I have been accumulating family history documents, photographs and the like in my home for more than 50 years.

As a belated new year's resolution I know I should be creating a workable way to store and protect those documents.

One step I can take immediately is to buy an extra external hard drive and transfer a copy of all my electronic family records and photographs onto it.

Think about it. What will be your first step towards protecting information about your family's heritage for future generations?

WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

March is Women's History Month with the theme Women in the business of food.

The theme for this year puts a focus on Australian women who have made significant contributions to the history of food, whether in cooking or in education, science or technology.

In taking their skills and expertise into the public sphere, these women changed history by challenging perceptions about women's unpaid domestic skills.

View the Women's History Month website for the calendar of events, news and images.

www.womenshistory.com.au

