

Switched On Seniors

Newsletter of ComputerPals for Seniors – Newcastle Inc.

Volume 13 September, 2013

President's Report



I thought I'd get this done while the committee meeting is fresh in my brain.

Spring a great time unless you have hay fever.

Post AGM.

I'm still President, Merv Pope is Vice President, Barry Keen – Treasurer, Maree Field – Ass. Treasurer, Brenton Elsey – Social. All other positions remained the same, but we need to find an Education Coordinator to head up an Education Team. Thinking caps on everyone please.

I'm sure elsewhere in the Newsletter, Bruce will put a list of the Committee Members. Thank you very much to those continuing in their roles and welcome to those who have changed roles and the new members. Farewell to Bruce Deitz and Michael Pitt, who have served on the committee with diligence. Thank you for your loyal and supportive service.

Also at the AGM, a resolution was passed to put up the class course fees from \$5 to \$6 per 90minutes – a five week course will now cost \$30 and a 3 hour short course will cost \$12. This will apply from January 2014. A \$2 fee will be charged per person when attending any of our special interest groups or workshops. This fee applies immediately. Membership is still \$20 per financial year.

Thank you to all who took part in the survey. We had a very good response. This gives us a very good idea of where the club should be going in the future. The Education and Roster Teams will be studying the results closely in the near future and we will keep you informed of the results.

A couple of suggestions in the survey, to which we gave consideration, but which we have decided not to go ahead with are a Home-visit service and a question and answer forum by email. Both these sound good, but as we are all volunteers and have other lives, we just do not have the personnel to do these extra chores.

If you have a portable device; iPad, Android tablet. We are starting a new special interest group called TabPals, on Friday 25th October at 1pm. The 4th Friday of the month will be our regular meeting day, as Mondays are fully booked.

The next Social Outing will be to Dungog. If you would like to go and need transport, we have drivers willing to take extra passengers, so don't be shy about asking for a lift.

- A few dates for your diary: October 21st Monday Morning Tea in the School Hall 9.30 – 11.45 am;
- December 4th Christmas Luncheon at East Maitland Bowling Club starting at 11.30 am;
- March 17th 2014 Senior's Week Morning Tea in the School Hall 9.30 am – 11.45 am.

Thank you for your support in the past and I look forward to serving you in the future.

Agapé, Elaine Butler

Social Report

7th September

Dungog Outing

We are off to Dungog for our next Social Day out. The traditional owners of the area now known as Dungog are the indigenous Gringai clan of the Wannarua people.

By 1825 Robert Dawson had named the Barrington area, while surveyor Thomas Florence named the Chichester River in 1827. Two years later George Boyle White began exploring the sources of the Allyn and Williams Rivers. Grants along the Williams followed to men such as Duncan Mackay, John Verge, James Dowling (later Chief Justice of NSW) and others, who, with their assigned convicts, began clearing land and building houses around a district first known as Upper William. With a Court of Petty Sessions in 1833 and gazetted in 1838 as the village of Dungog (a local Gringai word), it had a court house, lock-up and an increasing number of inns, shops and houses.

Today, Dungog has a population of around 2,400 residents and is based on the Williams River in the upper Hunter Region. Many fine old buildings remain in the town (and surrounding district). Many of the older homes in town and around the district have been bought and renovated by "tree changers" who have seen the old world charm of this area.

We have secured the services of Mr. Alan Nash, a 4th generation resident of the district who has kindly offered to show us the historic highlights of the main street, where those with a passion for photography will have ample opportunities to increase their "portfolio of pics". We have also arranged for the "Friends of James Theatre" to give us an inspection tour of this famous old cinema, the oldest fully enclosed purpose built cinema still operating in Australia, and one of only 4 picture theatres in NSW with Spanish Mission Style facades. Other activities

on the day include Pedalfest, Dungog Arts Society Annual Exhibition and the Monthly Markets, so there will be plenty to see and do.

As we will be driving our own vehicles, I recommend that members join with others to car pool (especially helpful to anyone alone and otherwise not inclined to travel themselves). Anyone needing to carpool and others willing to share - please indicate on the form or make those arrangements directly with your friends. We will endeavour to link up people who don't otherwise know someone to go with.

The timetable for the outing is as follows;

9.30am: arrive and meet at Cafe Dungog (122 Dowling St.) for morning tea

10.00am: transfer to James Theatre for inspection (gold coin donation) and then for a guided tour of main street points of interest

12.30pm: lunch arranged at Cafe Dungog

1.30pm: re-commence guided tour (or free time)

3.00pm: complete guided tour - head for home (afternoon tea optional and at members discretion)

With the Federal Election now to take place on this day (not very considerate of them) and with a subsequent increase in population, **we have arranged morning tea and lunch.**

Brenton Elsey
(Social Organiser)



Remember this is also a DigiPals opportunity

DigiPals Photos



Thanks to Allen, Barry, Beryl and Brenton for their snaps from the DigiPals trip to the rocks.



Writerpals Report

Our topics for August were

1. My Favourite Chair
2. The tumbledown - house, shack, shed, whatever.
3. The Smoking Gun.

As always, writers were encouraged to “turn your imagination loose and see where it leads you” and that is exactly what we did.

After all our efforts were shared and commented upon, we discussed our recent visit to Stroud and our thoughts about the differences between our ways and theirs. We came away with mixed feelings but overall decided we would prefer to expand our own ways of doing things rather than change to a style we aren't all comfortable with. (I know I have committed a no-no and finished my sentence with a preposition but.....)

Anyway, our numbers are down each month at the moment because of people gadding off to all corners of the globe and we will not be back to full strength for a couple of months yet as the travellers return and others take off for parts unknown.

ASCCA entries need to be winding up ready for submission as the contest closes (or closed) on Monday 2nd September. Good luck to everybody who has put in an entry.

Advance warning for October

1. What in the world!!!!
2. Well, who'da thunk it????
3. Wow! What a -----!!!!
- 4.

Cheers & blessings

Carmel



Above : Shots from our AGM taken by our resident photographer Barry

EDUCATION REPORT AGM August, 2013

As the only member of the club to have been active since the very first meeting in 2000, I've seen all the changes. And there have been many.

We started without a single computer – now we have 12 desktop computers and 3 laptops with another one soon to be purchased.

We began with only 4 of us as tutors, but now we have over 40.

Windows 98 was the operating system we used, but over the years we've progressed through XP, Vista, Windows 7 and now we've taken a leap to Windows 8. Before the end of the year we'll have Windows 8.1 installed. Already the courses are under preparation for Windows 8.1. Each new version of the operating system has required changes, many of them quite extensive.

Our computers have increased immeasurably in power, while monitors grow bigger with every new purchase. From tables made from second-hand doors, we have purpose-designed desks and swivel chairs so that everyone can "rotate" when needed.

From the data projector and screen, there is now a massive TV which will display photographs to their best advantage and give sharper displays for other courses which may use it instead of LanSchool which has served us well for a number of years.

Change has been the name of our game since day one. We progressed from ad hoc assistance to members who came in from the street to the Council's computer laboratory beneath the King Street car park – to having structured courses written specifically for our members long, before anything of quality was available elsewhere. We experimented with courses of various durations and found that five weeks seemed optimal for quite a few years, but now there is an increasing demand for courses of two or three weeks. Perhaps we're becoming busier than we were a few years ago. Again we'll try to adapt to give our members what they want from the club.

To find out what we can do to improve the services we offer, a survey has been prepared, and so far over 100 replies have been received. Already there are definite trends becoming apparent with increasing interest in tablet computers being one of them. We already have a course for the iPad but it is obvious that Android and Windows tablets will surely become more popular.

With the establishment of our DigiPals, GeneaPals and WriterPals groups, we've been able to offer something additional for some of our members, so don't be surprised to see a new group of MobilePals armed with their tablet computers. Again it's all about change.

With the increasing popularity of social media, some of our members have expressed interest in learning about FaceBook. This is fine, but we probably also need to consider other options such as Google+, Jump-in, Instagram and Twitter. We'll need to adapt to these new influences.

There will be further and numerous changes needed in the near future with the major companies emphasising cloud-based computing as well as the increasing popularity of mobile devices replacing the traditional desktop. No longer is a phone a simple phone. With the new smart phones, people are carrying computers in their pockets. The same applies to the former MP3 players. Devices such as the iPod now encourage Internet and email access.

Where will it end? Who knows. But one thing is for sure – while ever the members of this club, and in particular, the tutors and committee are prepared to meet the challenges of change, our club will continue to provide outstanding, and in many cases, unique services to our members.

As I've done for many year, I'll express my deep and sincere appreciation to our tutors, because without their dedication we'd have no club.

Thank you all, and I extend my best wishes to my successor, in the role of Education Officer.

Bruce Deitz

ComputerPals Mission

Our mission is to assist clubs to educate seniors in the use of computers as a way of enriching their lives and making them more self-reliant.

We bridge the generation gap and assist seniors to find ways to benefit the community through their collective experience and knowledge.

Tutors

The Tutors and their assistants are also Seniors and conduct the courses in a relaxed atmosphere. Your questions are welcome during the classes and there is no need to feel embarrassed if you need to ask for something to be repeated. The classroom is fitted with a hearing loop for those people who wear hearing aids.

Best Wishes

For our members who are celebrating birthdays and anniversaries - congratulations! To those who are ill our best wishes for a speedy recovery

Condolences

To all of our members who have lost loved ones recently, please accept our condolences.



ASCCA is the Australian Seniors Computer Club Association.

ASCCA exists to support and encourage seniors to take advantage of modern information technology to meet their individual needs and to provide further challenges. ASCCA's Newsletter and its informative items can be accessed on the web site at www.ascca.org.au

Important Committee Members of Your Club

Outgoing Immediate Past President : Lindsay Threadgate.



Tutor Roster : Mitzi Gordon



Technical Officer : Neville Clifton



Retiring Education Officer : Bruce Deitz



Rosters : Judy Wallace





Do I Need To Upgrade to Word 2013?

Do you want to use a tablet or touch screen for word processing?

If your answer is yes: Upgrade is probably a good option.

If your answer is no: Don't need to unless you want some of the new features listed below.

If you own a tablet or are might be purchasing a touch-screen laptop or touch screen monitor for your desktop, then Microsoft Word 2013 has many advantages.

This version is actually the first word processing software designed to be equally compatible between a touch screen and a keyboard.

If you want to take full advantage of this feature, you could also subscribe to Office 365, Microsoft Office's new "Cloud" environment. Cloud computing means that you store your documents on the Internet. Then you can access them on any device simply by logging onto the internet. Most cloud services do require a subscription, and Office 365, is the same.

If you don't need to subscribe to the cloud you can purchase the desktop version and still benefit from Microsoft Word 2013.

So how is Microsoft Word better for touch screen users?

- **Better wrapping with Live Layout and Alignment Guides:** with Word 2013. When you insert images, tables, Smart Art, and even videos, you have better control of the layout. Not only are Layout Options available to the right of the object, but there is a new feature called Live Layout. Other versions of Microsoft Word have similar features, but not as user friendly as Live Layout. With Word 2013, when you resize or move an object, the rest of the document automatically hadjusted to the changes. Not only does it automatically adjust, it also gives you Alignment Guides. These guides are a line that you can use to make sure your objects are all aligned properly.
- **Resume Reading:** If you leave home with a document in the works and have to go somewhere else you may lose your train of thought with the document. However, with Resume Reading it brings you back to where you left off. If you have the "Cloud" version and laptop you can resume the document at your new location.
- **Easier Headers and Footers:** you can easily insert my document title, author, file name, and file path with just a couple of clicks of my mouse, or even better, taps of my finger!
- **Open PDF documents in Word:** PDFs do translate better into Word 2013 versus earlier versions of Word, especially when it comes to keeping an existing PDF format in tact.

