



Switched on Seniors

Newsletter of ComputerPals for Seniors – Newcastle
A Member of ASCCA

VOLUME 12

ISSUE 9

OCTOBER 2011



PRESIDENT'S REPORT

In the role of President one's perspective is slightly different and I find myself observing activities with interest.

I was very pleased when I walked in on enrolment day on 2 September. It was quite busy with all the girls obviously handling the situation well and an air of enjoyment in the room. There was Denise, Maree, Judy, Carmel, Elaine and Mitzi all seemingly enjoying themselves. There were also a couple of men hanging around in the background in case they could be of any help.

Our Website is looking particularly good with some new photographs and up to the minute information. Well done Bruce.

September is ASCCA Competition month. Our Digital Photography Group, DigiPals pulled together a Club entry with 22 members contributing and a further 7 individual entries. A number of members of our Creative Writing Group, WriterPals, submitted entries. Our Webpage and Newsletter are also entered. The only category that we have no entry in is Photo Slide Story, at least if we have I am not aware of any. Winners will be announced at the ASCCA Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 16th November, 2011. I wish everyone who has entered good luck.

PROSTATE CANCER, those awful words, is a reality for many men. Become more informed, HUNTER PROSTATE CANCER ALLIANCE will be giving an awareness talk at our Morning Tea on 17 October.

I have been along to a couple of the workshops that Bruce Deitz has started giving at Domayne Kotara. Not only are the workshops informative but the discounts are great. Tanya and I did not come home empty handed. Well done Bruce. Domayne staff are surprised and delighted by the response. If you have not been, think about it and then go along and take a friend who is not a member of ComputerPals.

A little bit of trivia, ComputerPals for Seniors Newcastle, our club, is one of 157 computer clubs for Seniors in Australia that are registered with ASCCA. The implication is that there are somewhere between 30,000 and 60,000 Seniors who belong to one of these clubs. That is a large number of Seniors engaged in lifelong learning. Tell your friends.

Does anyone out there know of something that we are not doing that we should be doing for our members? I do mean in regard to Seniors mastering Technology. If so please tell us.

Your President

Lindsay Threadgate

President Computerpals Newcastle Inc.

Committee Members

President: Lindsay Threadgate

Secretary : Maura Rainbow

Treasurer : Maree Field

Vice President : Rob Golledge

Ass. Treasurer : Michael Pitt

Education Officer: Bruce Deitz

Technical : Neville Clifton

Rosters : Denise Brandon

Newsletter / Webmaster:
Bruce Carter

Tutor Roster : Mitzi Gordon

Social Organiser / DigiPals:
Barry Keen

Committee : Elaine Butler

Teams

- Technical
- Rostering/Enrolment
- Education
- Web Page

Contact Us

Committee members listed above may be contacted by following the instructions on the CONTACT US page on the club website.

Next Enrolment Day

Friday 21st October commencing 10am to 11.30am

Fridge Buyback Extends to Newcastle

I have had an email regarding the Fridge Buyback Scheme as there is a rebate on old fridges available. It is supported by the NSW Climate Change Fund and Councils. Full information can be found on; www.fridgebuyback.com.au or by calling 1800 708 401.

Committee Report

- Nev reported that the technical side of computers is going well and he has a band of useful volunteer helpers.
- Bruce Deitz is continuing the Domayne lessons and has been involved with a "train-the-trainer" meeting where there is now a wider appreciation of their roles.
- Members will be emailed vacancies for future sessions. Thank you for prompt payments by members.
- The Morpeth Social Outing has been moved so it does not coincide with the long weekend, although it is on the last Saturday of the School Holidays.
- GeneaPals had an attendance of 20 for their last meeting, where they browsed ancestry.com on an immigration search.
- WriterPals is still operating well but needs more members. Don't be daunted by the thought of writing. It's free of those red marks you may have experienced when at school all those years ago.
- www.thepcpioneers.com is a useful website for information on the history of computers.



"There are better ways to log off."



Report by Graham



Digipals Report

September has almost gone but the warm weather is here. Classes have been well attended and the demand is still there. Most of those who have attended the classes are amazed at just how magical their cameras are and we hope that they are being used more and more. Our Picasa classes are really enjoyable and Carolyn continues to enthuse attendees and give them exciting challenges.

During the month an enthusiastic group had a magical day out at Hunter Valley Gardens, the photographs are testimony to the fact that the man with the whistle has a special relationship with the Weather Bureau. Click on to our Digipals site to see some really good photos. See the separate report on this glorious day out.



Our next outdoor shoot is on October 8 at lovely Morpeth, it promises to be a special day as Morpeth has so much that will interest our members. We will meet at the lovely old Campbell's Store in the main street and from there we will spread out and take some interesting photos. We will regather at about 3.30 back at Campbell's for our usual friendly debriefing and a tea, coffee or cool drink. Make sure you wear your badge as Barry has negotiated a special deal for coffee or tea and scones.

Our Hunter River cruise has proved to be extremely popular and we are expecting over 50 members to make the trip. However, payment of the balance is now due so please send your cheque for \$49 to the Treasurer as we have to pay the organisers early in October. This trip promises to be the highlight of our year.

Camera prices continue to tumble and it is now possible to buy a "reasonable" point and shoot camera for under \$100. This is a wonderful way to start children on an adventure with photography that will last them a lifetime. I suggest you buy a brand name camera that is well known and make sure the lens is an aspherical ground glass one. Some cheaper cameras come with plastic type lens that may warp if the camera is left in a car parked in the sun. Today's digital photography costs nothing other than the price of the camera and with photos costing as little as 10c per standard print it is not an expensive past time.

Get excited about taking photos, we're about to have a wonderful summer, get outside and enjoy the wonderful country we live in.

Happy Snapping, Graham.

SOCIAL REPORT

Barry Keen (Social
Secretary / DigiPals)



**“Next month is a
planned visit to
Morpeth. ...”**

SOCIAL REPORT - SEPTEMBER



Our venture off to the Hunter Valley Gardens and their ‘Festival of Flowers’ was another great day out. The weather once again was fantastic and whilst the spring flowers are in early stages they were a very nice backdrop for our wandering. We also enjoyed the ‘train’ ride around the gardens along with the information related by our driver.

We made an early start at 9:30am in order to be in the Gardens for the start of their program for the day and were entertained by a very nice jazz band and a ‘resident’ artist in the rotunda demonstrating her art as she used pastel and paint on a floral still life.

Lunch was either obtained at the gardens cafeteria or across the road in the HVG Village.

In all a very pleasant day – most stayed on ‘til about 3pm and virtually made a day of it.

Next month is a planned visit to Morpeth. Our normal day out would fall on the first Saturday of the month but because it’s the October Long-Weekend and expected bus loads of people there I’ve taken it under advisement to shift the date to the following Saturday the 8th. Object of the day will be to wander around looking at the ‘old’ buildings and soak up the history and no doubt there will be good excuses to pop in to the stores and check out their merchandise as well as the galleries.

I’ll be away in Sydney myself so won’t be there to muster the mob with my whistle. I’ve had to delegate the job and Graham Woolridge has agreed to step in and lead the party (he said he doesn’t have a whistle – but does have a whip! Ouch!)

Meeting time will be 1:30pm at Campbell’s Store – 175 Swan St, Morpeth. After you’ve ‘done over the town’ you’ll meet back there for a relaxing social chat and cuppa in the Servant’s Quarter’s Tearoom, (renowned for their fresh baked scones with real jam and real cream) at 3:30pm.

I’ve negotiated a ‘group’ price \$7.50 pp which provides a bottomless cup of tea/coffee, 2 scones, jam & cream.

I do have to let them know numbers to confirm our ‘group’ price so need everyone to complete the ‘form’ and ‘submit’ it. See the link on the club’s website Social page or access it from the email.

Don’t forget your cameras – I want to see all your photos of the day.

Cheers

Barry Keen (Social Secretary)



WriterPals Report

At our meeting this month, we greeted two new members and then shared what we had written and the insect world will never be the same again. We heard the story of the rabbit migration – with a twist! – and then the story of a naughty kitten that successfully blamed the innocent dog for the mess he made! Well done!

Our small group continues to delight me with the depth of talent displayed. I find myself each month awaiting the second Monday with gleeful anticipation, knowing I am in for a wonderful afternoon.

In the words of Jack London, you have to 'go after inspiration with a club' – an interesting concept when one considers the wealth of individuality and diversity out there in everyday life encounters.

Our topic for our October meeting is a bit more difficult – I think I have been a bit too evil with my ideas this time. We are proceeding down a track of some kind and at the end, when we turn the corner – what do we see? What do we experience? It all sounded fine at the time I thought it up and talked to the group about it, but now can't think, brain dumb. Inspiration won't come! Broke my pencil, lost my pen. Bless the writer, then Amen!

If you want to try your hand or need a sounding board for your efforts, please join us on the second Monday of the month at 1 pm. You will be made very welcome.

Cheers & blessings

Carmel

Thanks to Graham for this useful link on protecting yourself online

Protecting yourself Online

The Australian Government has produced a very good free booklet on how to safely operate Online. If you are a regular or even an occasional user of the Internet you should obtain and read this booklet. It can be obtained by calling the Australian Competition & Consumer Commission on 1300 302 502.

You may also visit their website, www.accc.gov.au

The booklet of 32 pages will guide you through the recommended steps that you should take if you use the Internet.

BITS & PIECES



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. To become computer literate at their own pace, in a friendly non-threatening environment and to have fun whilst doing so.

ASCCA's Newsletter and its informative items can be accessed on the web site:

<http://www.ascca.org.au>

- Our club's constitution, as amended at the 2008 AGM, is available to be downloaded and read via the link on the Member's page on the website.
- Don't forget to print the calendar that is available on the Club website

So Far

Courses are well under way and continue to be very well patronised.

To check availability of courses please phone 4961 6576 during office hours.

And the Next Course?

An outline of the courses is available on the website and on notices in the Clubroom. If you need further explanation, the Tutors will be more than happy to advise which course is the most suitable for you to take.

Demand for the courses is high so it is imperative to enrol early and confirm your position by forwarding your payment.

Please check that a vacancy exists in the course before sending payment.

Most Courses are repeated in later sessions.



Best Wishes

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

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.

Condolences

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

Members Quick Tip

Often someone loses a Flash Drive (leave it at ComputerPals) and we do not know who it belongs to.

My tip is for people to do two things:

1. Rename their Flash Drive to something that includes at least part of their name (e.g., LINDSAY THREADGATE GEN 4GB). You can do this by opening Windows Explorer, right click on the Flash Drive, click Rename and type in the new name AND press Enter.
2. Create a file with enough personal detail only to be able to contact you. Call the file "001 OWNER Details" and save it on the Flash Drive so that anyone who finds the Flash Drive and puts it in a USB port will see this file, hopefully open it and be able to contact you.

Thanks Lindsay

HINTS & TIPS

Our Website



www.computerpals.org.au

Important Contacts

Neville Clifton

Technical Support



Contributed through Vic Thompson

E-Mail Tracker Programs

The man that sent this information is a computer tech. He spends a lot of time clearing the junk off computers for people and listens to complaints about speed. All forwards are not bad, just some. Be sure you read the very last paragraph.

He wrote: "By now, I suspect everyone is familiar with snopes.com and ortruthorfiction.com for determining whether information received via email is just that: true/false or fact/fiction. Both are excellent sites.

Advice from snopes.com VERY IMPORTANT!!

- 1) Any time you see an email that says "forward this on to '10' (or however many) of your friends", "sign this petition", or "you'll get bad luck" or "you'll get good luck" or "you'll see something funny on your screen after you send it" or whatever --- it almost always has an email tracker program attached that tracks the cookies and emails of those folks you forward to. The host sender is getting a copy each time it gets forwarded and then is able to get lists of 'active' email addresses to use in SPAM emails or sell to other Spammers. Even when you get emails that demand you send the email on if you're not ashamed of God/Jesus --- that is email tracking, and they are playing on our conscience. These people don't care how they get your email addresses - just as long as they get them. Also, emails that talk about a missing child or a child with an incurable disease "how would you feel if that was your child" --- email tracking. Ignore them and don't participate!
- 2) Almost all emails that ask you to add your name and forward on to others are similar to that mass letter years ago that asked people to send business cards to the little kid in Florida who wanted to break the Guinness Book of Records for the most cards. All it was, and all any of this type of email is, is a way to get names and 'cookie' tracking information for telemarketers and Spammers -- to validate active email accounts for their own profitable purposes.

You can do your Friends and Family members a GREAT favour by sending this information to them. You will be providing a service to your friends. And you will be rewarded by not getting thousands of spam emails in the future!

Do yourself a favour and STOP adding your name(s) to those types of listing regardless how inviting they might sound! Or make you feel guilty if you don't! It's all about getting email addresses and nothing more.

You may think you are supporting a GREAT cause, but you are NOT!

Important Contacts

Bruce Deitz
Education Officer



Tutor Roster
Mitzi Gordon



Rosters
Denise Brandon



Instead, you will be getting tons of junk mail later and very possibly a virus attached! Plus, we are helping the Spammers get rich! Let's not make it easy for them!

ALSO: Email petitions are NOT acceptable to government or any other organization - I.e. Social security, etc. To be acceptable, petitions must have a "signed signature" and full address of the person signing the petition, so this is a waste of time and you are just helping the email trackers.

Tips for Handling Telemarketers

Three Little Words That Work!!

(1) The three little words are: 'Hold On, Please...'

Saying this, while putting down your phone and walking off (instead of hanging-up immediately) would make each telemarketing call so much more time-consuming that boiler room sales would grind to a halt.

Then when you eventually hear the phone company's 'beep-beep-beep' tone, you know it's time to go back and hang up your handset, which has efficiently completed its task.

These three little words will help eliminate telephone soliciting..

(2) Do you ever get those annoying phone calls with no one on the other end?

This is a telemarketing technique where a machine makes phone calls and records the time of day when a person answers the phone.

This technique is used to determine the best time of day for a 'real' sales person to call back and get someone at home.

What you can do after answering, if you notice there is no one there, is to immediately start hitting your # button on the phone, 6 or 7 times as quickly as possible. This confuses the machine that dialled the call, and it kicks your number out of their system. Gosh, what a shame not to have your name in their system any longer!!!

(3) Junk Mail Help:

When you get 'ads' enclosed with your phone or utility bill, return these 'ads' with your payment. Let the sending companies throw their own junk mail away.

When you get those 'pre-approved' letters in the mail for everything from credit cards to 2nd mortgages and similar type junk, do not throw away the return envelope.

More Important Contacts

Secretary :

Maura Rainbow



Treasurer :

Maree Field



Most of these come with postage-paid return envelopes, right? It costs them more than the regular 44 cents postage, 'IF' and when they receive them back.

It costs them nothing if you throw them away! The postage was around 50 cents before the last increase and it is according to the weight. In that case, why not get rid of some of your other junk mail and put it in these cool little, postage-paid return envelopes.

One of Andy Rooney 's (60 minutes) ideas.

- Send an ad for your local chimney cleaner to American Express. Send a pizza coupon to Citibank. If you didn't get anything else that day, then just send them their blank application back!
- If you want to remain anonymous, just make sure your name isn't on anything you send them.
- You can even send the envelope back empty if you want to just to keep them guessing! It still costs them 44 cents.
- The banks and credit card companies are currently getting a lot of their own junk back in the mail, but folks, we need to OVERWHELM them. Let's let them know what it's like to get lots of junk mail, and best of all they're paying for it...Twice!
- Let's help keep our postal service busy since they are saying that e-mail is cutting into their business profits, and that's why they need to increase postage costs again. You get the idea!
- If enough people follow these tips, it will work I have been doing this for years, and I get very little junk mail anymore.

THIS JUST MIGHT BE ONE E-MAIL THAT YOU WILL WANT TO FORWARD TO YOUR FRIENDS and LIKE MINDED PEOPLE.

REMINDER NEXT MORNING TEA

Date : 17th October 2011

Time : 9.30am

Location: Islington Public School Hall,
Hubbard St., ISLINGTON

Guest Speaker : Representative HUNTER PROSTATE CANCER ALLIANCE
HPCA is a local charity dedicated to spreading awareness about prostate cancer throughout the Hunter

Topic : Prostate Cancer Awareness