Ipswich

SeniorNet

Net

July 2025

"Seniors helping seniors use computers and the internet"

SeniorNet Association Inc.

www.seniornet.com.au

President's View

On Other Pages

Social Events

Lunches

Friday 18th July

Christmas in July at the PA Hotel

See page 4.

Friday 15th August

Lunch at Falvey's Hotel, Yamanto. Members from $15. Membership is free – arrive a few minutes early.

The President has requested that I write thoughts on his behalf...so here goes

Firstly, I would like to thank Phil Buchanan, who was heavily involved with the creation of SeniorNet, and taught our first trainers; he then joined SeniorNet fifteen years ago when he retired, and taught classes until COVID broke out; and repaired computers for members. As you would all know I have relied heavily on Phil for the tech talk articles in the newsletter.

However Phil is giving up his computer repair business and therefore will have less ideas for articles so I will have to "Phil" in. I tend to have more ideas about Android devices so the topics of my articles will be biassed in that direction.

Also, you may know that I bring home-made biscuits to my workshops for morning teas; and I enjoy cooking anyway. So I will be including a recipe of the month from my personal collection for you all to try.

We should also thank Judith for organizing the "Christmas in July" lunch (see page 4).

I asked my AI for some material on the real state of crime in Australia:

While headlines and political campaigns often spotlight crime and punishment, the reality on the ground is strikingly different: most Australians are remarkably law-abiding, and quietly generous.
In fact, the proportion of people repeatedly involved with the criminal justice system is exceptionally small. Our communities, by and large, run not on fear, but on shared values and an unspoken civility. It's easy to forget, amid the noise, that we are a nation far more defined by cooperation than conflict. This isn't to say crime doesn't exist it does-but it's important to acknowledge the broader truth: the Australia we live in is mostly peaceful, responsible, and kind. And that deserves its moment in the spotlight.
Copilot

My own take on this – less than a quarter of a percent of Australians are criminals – with most committing two or three crimes. To misquote the Parable of the Lost Sheep "There will be more joy in Parliament over one sinner than over one hundred and ninety-nine righteous persons".

Ken Curwen

Just Friends Social Group

Sunday 13th July
Lunch at Falvey's Cecil Hotel. Lunch specials $14

Sunday 20th July
Lunch at Commercial Hotel, Redbank.. Lunch specials $16

Sunday 27th July
Coach Trip to Caloundra Market and Queensland Air Museum
In the morning see around the extensive markets, then buy lunch at the Bowls Club.. After lunch (optional) visit the Queensland Air Museum (entry $18).. Cost $45.. Pickup time 8.00 Redbank Plaza

Sunday 31st August
Coach Trip to Mooloolaba for a one-hour canal cruise..

See how the rich folk live!. After the cruise buy lunch at Maroochydore RSL.. Fare $60.. Pick up time 8.00am Redbank Plaza

Just Friends is not affiliated to SeniorNet.. The Editor organises group activities.. Ring on 3389 2950 for information

SeniorNet Workshop Programme: July – August 2025

Congregational Church Sunday School Hall at 117 Wildey Street, Raceview

Workshop Times 9-11am; however the hall is booked for the whole morning and this allows continued use of the facility if subject matter or participant interest requires it

Summaries of the workshop topics start on the next page

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
2nd July	3rd July AI – Helpful or Intrusive *Margaret Jensen*	4th July Coffee & Chat *Seniors Enquiry Line*
9th July Microsoft Word *Ken Curwen*	10th July Exploring QR Codes *Margaret Jensen*	11th July Trove *Bette Fritz*
16th July Libre Office 3 *Joan McKenzie*	17th July Exploring Be Connected *Margaret Jensen*	18th July Lunch - Christmas in July *PA Hotel*
23rd July Microsoft Word *Ken Curwen*	24th July Introduction to Computing *Margaret Jensen*	25th July Finding Family and More *Esmae Mander*
30th July Libre Office Draw 1 *Joan McKenzie*	31st July Introduction to Computing *Margaret Jensen*	1st August Coffee & Chat *Trevallan Centre*
6th August Microsoft Word *Ken Curwen*	7th August Introduction to Computing *John McVeigh*	8th August DNA Interest Group *Bette Fritz*
13th August Libre Office Draw 2 *Joan McKenzie*	14th August Introduction to Computing *John McVeigh*	15th August Social Lunch *Falvey's Hotel*
20th August Microsoft Word *Ken Curwen*	21st August Introduction to Computing *John McVeigh*	22nd August Logical Photo & Document Storage 1 *Esmae Mander*
27th August Canva *Joan McKenzie*	28th August Introduction to Computing *John McVeigh*	29th August Logical Photo & Document Storage 2 *Esmae Mander*

NOTE: All Workshops are subject to change if Trainers are unavailable due to illness or other commitments. If possible changes will be listed on the SeniorNet Website or you can contact John McVeigh–Training Coordinator – ph 07 3281 8548 – email *training@seniornet.com.au* to confirm workshops are as listed. It is not necessary to make bookings for Workshops.

Please bring your USB drive with you as it is helpful in many lessons.

* For courses and workshops involving mobile devices (iPads and Androids) please make sure your device is charged and that you have your cable with you

Sponsors: Ipswich City Council, the Queensland Government and Microsoft

Workshop Topics Described.

AI – Helpful or Intrusive

Recently the search facilities of most browsers have been enhanced with Artificial Intelligence engines. This can be very helpful as they can analyse what you want to know, as contrasted with what you have asked for.   But if you did make a very specific request then AI can think it knows better than what you want.

Canva

Canva is a free-to-use online graphic design tool. You can use it to create social media posts, presentations, posters, videos, logos and more. We try it to see if it is useful to us. If you don't have a Canva account, you'll need to create one. This can be done using your email address or by connecting with your Google, Apple, or Facebook account. Open the website canva.com and choose (tap or click on) Start Designing. A sign-in window should open to allow you to create a free account.

DNA Interest Group

Have you done a DNA test, or are considering doing one, and don't know where to go next? Come along!! Through sharing what we know and listening to others I'm sure we will make our journeys much more enjoyable and a lot less frustrating. There is so much more to DNA than the ethnicity that is promoted to entice you in.

Exploring Be Connected

Workshops on line. Exploring the Be-Connected library and on-line offerings.

Exploring QR Codes

What are QR Codes; What are their uses as IT tools…their purpose be it for Research, Marketing, Tourism, Mobile Payments, the list goes on. Are QR Codes safe to use?

Family History: Finding Family and More

Utilising the internet, we hope to uncover more details about your family's past with tools and techniques you may not have explored.

Introduction to Computing

These classes are intended for members, new or old, who need to reinforce their knowledge of personal computer handling. Topics will be offered in response to member feedback, and will be advised in our weekly SeniorNet Training mail outs.

Libre Office

Libre Office is a free suite of apps, similar to Microsoft Office.

The first lesson will be an introduction, but lessons 2 and 3 will be guided by the interests and abilities of the class.

To take part in the lessons, people will need a copy of LibreOffice on their laptops, available free from

https://www.libreoffice.org/

Libre Office Draw 1

Draw is part of Libre Office. It enables you to manipulate pictures and images in many ways – you can even create an entire photo album with it. We will be using it to create a simple advertisement for an event, with text and pictures. To take part in the lesson you will need a copy of Libre Office on your laptop.

Libre Office Draw 2

Draw is part of Libre Office. It enables you to manipulate pictures and images in many ways. We will be using it to create a simple newsletter, with text and pictures. To take part in the lesson you will need a copy of Libre Office on your laptop.

Logical Photo and Document Storage 1

During this workshop we will discuss how to establish and develop a well organised logical collection of your documents and photos. Enjoy a slideshow about how to construct a simple and straightforward method. Creating folders & files will be simply explained which makes for easier searching &/or locating later.

Logical Photo and Document Storage 2

A practical 'step by step' session and follow-on from workshop 1 which will enable you to fully understand this logical method.

Microsoft Word

These classes are designed to take members through all the features of Microsoft Word to the level where you can write essays, letters and records on your own topics. The material to be covered will be guided by the pre-existing knowledge of the participants. Details for each session will be advised in our weekly SeniorNet Training mail outs.

Organising your photos

Organise your personal photos within your Laptop, NOT within your mobile phone. Gather all your Photos from different Folders, Drives, and Devices into one Central Location - this could be a dedicated Folder on your Laptop or an External Hard Drive. Organize your Photos by Year or Event, by Descriptive, with Keywords or Tags; consider cloud Storage Services and Backup regularly.

Trove: Searching Old Newspapers

Thanks to the National Library of Australia digitising a vast number of newspapers, gazettes, magazines, maps and more, we are able to access these for free online, much to the envy of the rest of the world as in most countries they have to pay for such a wonderful resource. We can show you how to get the best results when searching these old newspapers, up until approximately 1954, and what you can do with that information once you have found it.

CHRISTMAS IN JULY

Members and friends are invited to attend.
Friday 18th July 2025 at 11.30a.m.
Function Room, Char'd at PA Hotel, 170 Brisbane Rd., Booval.

Cost: $27.00 each.

Please transfer payment by 14th July 2025,
SENIORNET ASSOC INC., BENDIGO BANK,
BSB 633 000, Account 129 070 264
and include SURNAME as reference.

Bookings essential for catering purposes –
Please advise any dietary requirements.

RSVP - 14th July by emailing Karen, Social Co-Ordinator,
EMAIL; srnetsocialcoord@gmail.com

Welcome New Member

Hedda Pike

Tech Talk

Things we used to do...(that we don't need to do anymore)

Technology changes but sometimes our ways of doing things or the things we believe, do not keep pace with the changes. There are a practices we used to employ which are really not needed anymore but you may still hear people advocate for their use. Below are three examples of things we don't really need to do anymore. They are not really wrong – it is just that technology has moved on and made them redundant.

Defragging

Over time the data on the older mechanical-type hard drives becomes fragmented. This means that instead of being stored in one continuous block, the data for a single file (a Word document for example) can be scattered all over the disk and requires additional time to load as the read head of the hard drive must move to various locations. Defragmenting (or 'defragging') is the process of rearranging this data so that data which belongs together is continuous. This was important to do from time to time with the older mechanical, spinning disk hard drives. Microsoft introduced a defragmenting routine into Windows which means this is done automatically on the older drives and negates the need for third party programs.

Modern drives such as solid state drives (SSDs) work in a completely different way to the old hard drives. Defragmenting is not necessary. In fact, attempting to defragment a modern SSD can actually shorten its life..

Disk Clean Up/Optimisation

There are many programs around which claim to optimise your storage and clean up unnecessary files. Some of these work but many perform unneeded operations or require additional money before they will actually do the work. Windows (both Windows 10 and Windows 11) includes Storage Sense which will clean up temporary and unwanted files as needed. You can find it in **Settings→System**. Turn on *Storage Sense* and let it do its thing. Too many of the alternative programs either fail to do what they claim or, at their worst, can actually do more damage.

Partitioning/Second Disk

This one is still a bit contentious and there are advocates for and against. The concept is that you partition or divide one physical drive into two or more logical drives. It will appear to your computer that you have two drives even though there is only one actual drive. You would install your operating system and programs onto one partition and your data onto the other. The theory was that this would help to protect you from malware infections and, if your operating system ever needed to be reinstalled, this could be done without impacting your data. The real issue here is this ignores the most effective way of mitigating these issues and that is to have an effective backup strategy. Even if you only need to reinstall the operating system on one partition, you will still lose valuable data such as bookmarks and passwords in browsers and saved emails which are generally stored on that partition. Having two partitions can make backing up more complex since you now have two (or more) partitions to deal with.

In a similar vein it was common to install two separate drives in a new computer. This was largely driven by the advent of solid state drives (SSDs). In their early days they were quite expensive so installing a smaller SSD to hold the operating system and programs and a larger mechanical hard drive to hold data was a way to contain the overall cost. Today SSDs are much cheaper and it makes things simpler to install a suitably sized SSD – less cables and easier management. There are still good reasons to install an additional storage drive if you find yourself running out of space – it is easier than replacing the main drive and then having to reinstall everything – but if you are purchasing a new computer it is simpler to get it with a single drive large enough for your anticipated needs. To install a smaller SSD and a larger hard drive would cost around $80. To just install a 1Tb SSD (which should cater for most needs) costs around $90 – so the cost saving of the past is just not there. Again, if you do not have a good backup strategy, you are going to be in a pickle if a drive dies whether you have one or more.

Do I Have to Use a Microsoft Account with Windows 11?

The quick answer is 'No' ... but it is complicated. Microsoft would like everyone to use a Microsoft account with Windows 11 and has made it increasingly harder to do otherwise.

The alternative is called a local account and, like the name suggests, it is an account that is local only to your computer. You have a username (of your choice), you can have a password if you wish and there is no direct association with Microsoft when you login. You can still login to Microsoft apps such as Microsoft Store or OneDrive. I have a Microsoft account which I use with Microsoft 365 and OneDrive but I still prefer to use a local account when I login to my computer.

There is nothing inherently wrong with using a Microsoft account. It is just that it should be your preference (it is your computer after all) and many people do not like being dictated to by Microsoft. Of course Apple and Google do much the same when you setup a new phone or tablet.

There are ways to bypass Microsoft's insistence on a Microsoft account if you wish. Some of these have been shut down by Microsoft but others still work. I am not going to list them here since there is some complexity to them. There are plenty of videos on YouTube showing how to do this and watching a video is probably preferable to just reading about the method.

One thing: if you are going to use a Microsoft account you **MUST** create an alternate contact which can be used should you get locked out of your account. This could be another email or a mobile phone number (preferably both). A mobile number is useful since if you are locked out of your computer you may not be able to access your alternate email. Mobile is also usually faster at receiving the code Microsoft sends to use for authentication. If you ever have a problem with your account or forget the password, this alternate contact will be used to prove your identity. Without it you risk finding yourself locked out of your account and your computer. And at least one of these alternate contacts should be something you can access (like your mobile phone). It is not helpful having an alternate contact belonging to a son or daughter if they are not physically present or can't be contacted easily.

You can find out what alternate contacts you may have setup by signing in to your Microsoft account:

https://account.microsoft.com/account

and then go to *Security* and *Manage how I sign in*.

New feature in Snipping Tool

The *Snipping Tool* has been around for some time. It underwent a name change to *Snip & Sketch* and now, in Windows 11, it has reverted to *Snipping Tool*. It has always been useful for taking quick screenshots of web pages or error messages but there is now a new feature.

If you open *Snipping Tool* and take a new screenshot, you will see a new option in the tool bar.

If you move your mouse pointer over it, a pop-up will say *Text actions*. Click on this and *Snipping Tool* will attempt to recognise all the text in the screen shot. If this is a screen shot of a web page that is not too hard but it will also attempt to extract editable text from an image. Once extracted you can copy this text using the right click menu and paste into another application such as Word. It also has a handy redact function for hiding personal details.

More information on Snipping Tool and its features is here.

The Ask Leo! YouTube channel has a video on this new feature
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OXasYNtnkfI

Phil Buchanan

Potty History

The Black Death

I mentioned the Plague of Justinian in last month's Potty History.. The Plague came in waves throughout the Dark Ages but in medieval times this event stood out in its massive impact on the population and in the subsequent dramatic changes which heralded post-feudal society as we know it today.

The Black Death was caused by the bacterium, Yersinia Pestis, which is carried by rats.. Fleas are then the vector to pass it on to humans – the earliest known human cases date from over 4000BCE.. It seems to be endemic in central Asia, and to break out when the trade route (the Silk Road) from China to Europe is open.. After the Plague of Justinian the Silk Road was largely closed until the Mongol Empire extended from China to Hungary.. The Doors of Hell opened for a population with no immunity to the Plague.

The first major European outbreak occurred in 1347 when Genoese merchants, fleeing infected Black Sea cities, arrived in Sicily, unknowingly bringing the disease with them.. From there, it spread rapidly across the continent, facilitated by trade networks, overcrowded cities, and poor sanitation.. The prime form taken by infection was bubonic – gross swellings of the lymph glands from which the bacteria enter the blood and kill the patient within days.. But the bacteria also spread to the lungs allowing for pneumonic (airborne) transmission, making it even deadlier as it enters the bloodstream directly.. . In crowded medieval cities, this accelerated the plague's devastation, overwhelming populations at an unprecedented rate.

With medieval medicine incapable of handling such an outbreak, the sheer scale of death led to mass graves, abandoned towns, and widespread fear.. The Church, unable to provide answers or relief from the plague, saw its authority questioned.. The high mortality rate among clergy and the Church's failure to protect the populace led to a decline in its influence.. This disillusionment paved the way for alternative religious movements and a more personal, introspective spirituality among the laity.. However the Black Death prompted early public health measures, including quarantine practices.

In England half the population of four million died, and it took nearly three hundred years to return to its pre-plague size.. The most immediate consequence was a halt to the Hundred Years' War.. Urban centres, once densely packed, experienced shifts in population as survivors sought healthier, less crowded environments.. Land ownership changed hands more frequently, and many abandoned villages were left to nature.

In the long term, the decrease in population caused a shortage of labour, with subsequent rise in wages.. The landowning classes saw the rise in wage levels as a sign of social upheaval and insubordination and reacted with coercion.. In 1349, King Edward III passed the Ordinance of Labourers, fixing wages at pre-plague levels.. The ordinance was reinforced by Parliament's passing of the Statute of Labourers in 1351.. These legislative measures proved largely inefficient at regulating the market, but the government's repressive measures to enforce them caused public resentment.. The Peasants' Revolt of 1381 was largely a result of this resentment, and even though the rebellion was suppressed, in the long-term serfdom was ended in England..

Culturally, the omnipresence of death influenced art and literature, leading to themes centred on mortality and the afterlife.. This period also saw a shift towards vernacular languages in literature, as seen in the works of Geoffrey Chaucer.

I have a personal interest in this.. While studying engineering at Cambridge University I was enrolled at Corpus Christi college.. The college was founded as a consequence of the Black Death – during which the clergy were charging exorbitantly for burials.. Therefore the town guilds of Corpus Christi and the Blessed Virgin Mary co-founded the college to educate clergy who would be required to bury members of the guild for free in perpetuity.
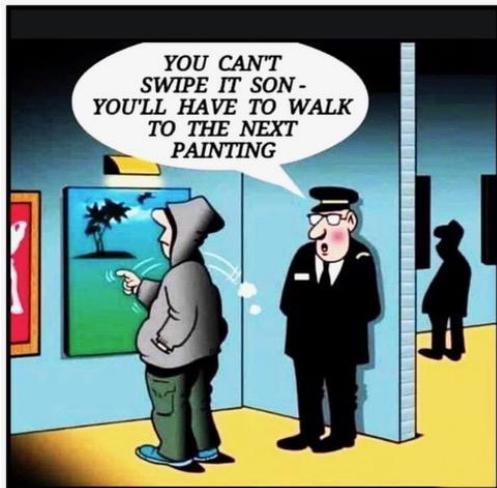
Ken Curwen, with help from Gemini and Wikipedia

Humour

Last Drinks?

A guy sits down at the bar and orders drink after drink.

"Is everything okay, pal?" the bartender asks.

"My wife and I got into a fight and she said

she isn't talking to me for a month!"

Trying to put a positive spin on things, the bartender says,

"Well, maybe that's kind of a good thing. You know,

… a little peace and quiet?"

"Yeah.. But today is the last day".

When your girlfriend is moving in with you and she arrives with her stuff

YOU CAN'T SWIPE IT SON - YOU'LL HAVE TO WALK TO THE NEXT PAINTING

I CAN'T SEE WELL ENOUGH TO SHOP ONLINE

SO I'LL JUST DRIVE TO THE STORE

I felt uncomfortable driving into the cemetery.

The GPS blurted out "You have reached your final destination."

Apparently there's a third option between burial and cremation.

Further Information

SeniorNet Committee

The listing of the 2025 committee can be found here.

Computer Repairs

A listing of repairers who our members have found satisfactory can be found here.

Disclaimer: While we have made every effort to give accurate information and tips in this Newsletter, we cannot guarantee that their use will provide the desired results in all circumstances. In no event will the Editor or SeniorNet be liable for direct, indirect, special, incidental or consequential damages arising out of the use of URLs and tips given in this newsletter.. *We recommend members verify details before acting on information or suggestions contained herein*. The Editor would appreciate being informed of any erroneous information so that it may be corrected.

Ken Curwen. Newsletter Editor..