Ipswich SeniorNet

September 2026

"Seniors helping seniors use computers and the internet"

SeniorNet Association Inc.

www.seniornet.com.au

President's View

This Friday we celebrate 30 years of SeniorNet in Ipswich at the PA Hotel – try to come before 11 as we only have an hour before lunch. You will have plenty of time to chat then.

Some quotes from the early days:

> Ken Olsen (1977): Co-founder of Digital Equipment Corporation, stating, "There is no reason for any individual to have a computer in his home."
>
> George W. Mitchell (1966): Federal Reserve Board member who testified, "You are not going to have a computer in your home, but you are going to have a telephone..." with a little keyboard for bank tasks.

But by 1984 the IBM 'skunkworks' in Florida had developed a desktop computer with a minimal memory and running only on 360kB 5¼" floppy disks. Thus it could only do one task at a time (a bit like a smartphone). The cat really got out of the bag when Compaq reverse engineered the patented IBM BIOS chip and everybody could flood the market with personal computers (but IBM still sold theirs at a premium as the real McCoy).

Global Info Links (GIL) project was Australia's first local-government-established Internet Service Provider (ISP) and community information network, launched by the Ipswich City Council in 1994 because the existing network suppliers were not user friendly.

As a spin off SeniorNet was founded. The technology then (IBM PC-XT) has evolved to today's multitasking PC, smartphones and tablets and now SeniorNet continues to serve locals in "Seniors helping Seniors".

"To err is human, but to really foul things up you need a computer" Often attributed to Paul Ehrlich

John McVeigh

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Social Events



Lunches

Friday 18th September
30th Anniversary Celebration starts at 11am at the PA Hotel

Friday 16th October at noon
Bangkok Thai Yamanto. Meals from $14

Friday 20th November at noon
Walloon Hotel. Lunches from $16

Just Friends Social Group

Sunday 13th September
Lunch at Punjab Curry House, Redbank Plains. Lunch special $14

Sunday 20th September
Lunch at Club Parkview. Lunch specials $16.

Sunday 27th September
Coach trip to Noosa Botanical Gardens
The gardens overlook Lake Macdonald and as well as a wide range of plants it houses prizewinning statues. We then lunch at Cooroy RSL and return to Redbank. Cost of coach S60.

Sunday 25th October
Coach trip to Stradbroke Island
Lunch will be at Amity Point Community Club. BYO morning tea on the ferry. Pickup 8.00am Redbank Plaza. Leave on 9.30am ferry, return on 4.30pm ferry. Bus, ferry and lunch inclusive cost $75.

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

Sponsors: Ipswich City Council, the Queensland Government and Microsoft

SeniorNet Workshop Programme: September – October 2026

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
16th September **Basic Excel 2** *Ken Curwen*	17th September **Introduction to Computing** *John McVeigh*	18th September **30th Anniversary Function** *PA Hotel*
23rd September **Basic Computing** *John McVeigh*	24th September **Introduction to Computing** *John McVeigh*	25th September **Family History: Sources** *Esmae Mander*
30th September **Basic Excel 3** *Ken Curwen*	1st October **Introduction to Computing** *John McVeigh*	2nd October **Coffee & Chat** *Blue Care*
7th October **Basic Computing** *John McVeigh*	8th October **Introduction to Computing** *John McVeigh*	9th October **DNA Interest Group** *Bette Fritz*
14th October **Excel 4** *Ken Curwen*	15th October **Introduction to Computing** *John McVeigh*	16th October **Social Lunch** *Bangkok Thai*
21st October **Basic Computing** *John McVeigh*	22nd October **Introduction to Computing** *John McVeigh*	23rd October
28th October **Excel 5** *Ken Curwen*	29th October **Introduction to Computing** *John McVeigh*	30th October

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**

Workshop Topics Described

Basic Computing

These classes are for the absolute beginner, enabling you to find out enough to take part in our main Introductions programme

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.

Excel 3

See how to format cells. How to print your worksheet.

Excel 4

How to sort material in your worksheet. Basic arithmetic calculations and the use of relative values in formulae

Excel 5

Formulae in Excel – how to do complex data manipulation

Family History: Sources

Searching almanacs, directories, and gazettes can be a useful way to discover information about people, places, and events from the past. By using these sources together, researchers can gather detailed historical information and build a clearer picture of the people and communities they are investigating.

Introduction to Computers

If you are new to using a computer or are not confident around computers, come and find out about the basics. These classes are user-driven; the content will depend on the requirements of those attending.





SeniorNet Members attending a presentation on Energy for Seniors



Recipe of the Month

Snickerdoodles

I was introduced to snickerdoodles by my conductor at the Bach Choir. Normally I regard American recipes with total distrust, but this is the exception.

Ingredients for 30

250g butter, softened
240g caster sugar
90g almond flour
2 large eggs
2 tsp vanilla bean paste
2 tsp cream of tartar
1 tsp baking soda
410g self-raising flour, sifted
50g caster sugar
3 tsp ground cinnamon

Method

In the bowl of an electric mixer, beat the butter and sugar until light and creamy.
Add the eggs, one at a time, mixing one in thoroughly before adding the second. Beat in the vanilla bean paste.
Add the cream of tartar, baking soda and salt.
Finally add the flour ang combine gently.
Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.
Pre-heat the oven to 175C fan-forced and line two trays with baking paper.
Combine the sugar and cinnamon in a bowl.
Put 40g portions of dough on the tray leaving at least 5cm between each one and then roll into balls and coat with cinnamon mix.
Bake for 12-14 minutes or until golden. Leave them to rest on the tray for 10 minutes and then transfer the biscuits to a wire rack to cool completely

Tech Talk

eWaste Connection

Been cleaning out the workshop over the last few weeks and collected quite a pile of old computers, monitors, keyboards and other computer components. There is an organisation called eWaste Connections in Ipswich which will take all this material. They are at Bundamba in Agnes Street behind Bunnings (other locations are Kenmore and Yeronga). They have a website here where you can read their mission and the sorts of materials they will take for recycling – see list alongside as the website doesn't work quite to plan right now.

So if you have any old computer or electrical items (and it is on their recycle list) take them to eWaste Connection and support a local charity while minimising landfill and avoiding dump charges.

Phil Buchanan

Examples of items we accept:

- Televisions
- Microwaves
- DVD players
- Speakers
- Computers / Laptops & peripherals
- All Apple products
- Sewing machines
- Monitors
- Radios
- Microphones
- Fridges - working units only
- Lamps
- Printers
- Cords
- Mobile phones
- Vacuum cleaners
- Cameras
- Headphones
- Blenders
- Remote control cars
- Keyboards
- Audio equipment

AI Fail

AI has a big problem in handling some queries in that it doesn't understand the concept of a date. It knows year numbers exist and can map events to years but it does not understand that the answer to a query can be date dependant as well.

I asked Google (effectively Gemini) how to pay for travel on public transport when you don't have a Go card – this would be required for a Just Friends trip I have in mind. This was Gemini's response

> *How to Take a Brisbane Bus Without a Go Card*
>
> *If you don't have a go card, you can still take public transport in Brisbane. Here are the steps to pay for a TransLink trip without a go card:*
>
> *Purchase a Paper Ticket: You can buy a paper ticket at the bus driver's window or at fare machines at the bus station. The cost is typically AU$4.60 per person.*

I have highlighted the obvious error – as of two years ago you can travel anywhere on public transport for 50c. But you cannot travel on a paper ticket.

I rest my case.

Ken Curwen
PS deep down in the TransLink site is a way to handle group tours – you buy a special card for $18 that's good for 36 people in a single transport mode. Don't try it in the rush hour!

AI Success

Years ago I bought very nice trouser hangers from Woolworths – they are wide enough to hold my clothes for under cover drying stretched out as if on a washing line. Being plastic, they are starting to wear out (the spring breaks). But they are no longer sold anywhere. So I asked Google Lens to locate them. It turns out they are made in Australia by Fischer Plastics and AI found me an eBay seller. It all took five minutes from my request to placing an order. Try searching for a trouser hanger on eBay yourself – there are 18000 varieties to run through!

Ken Curwen

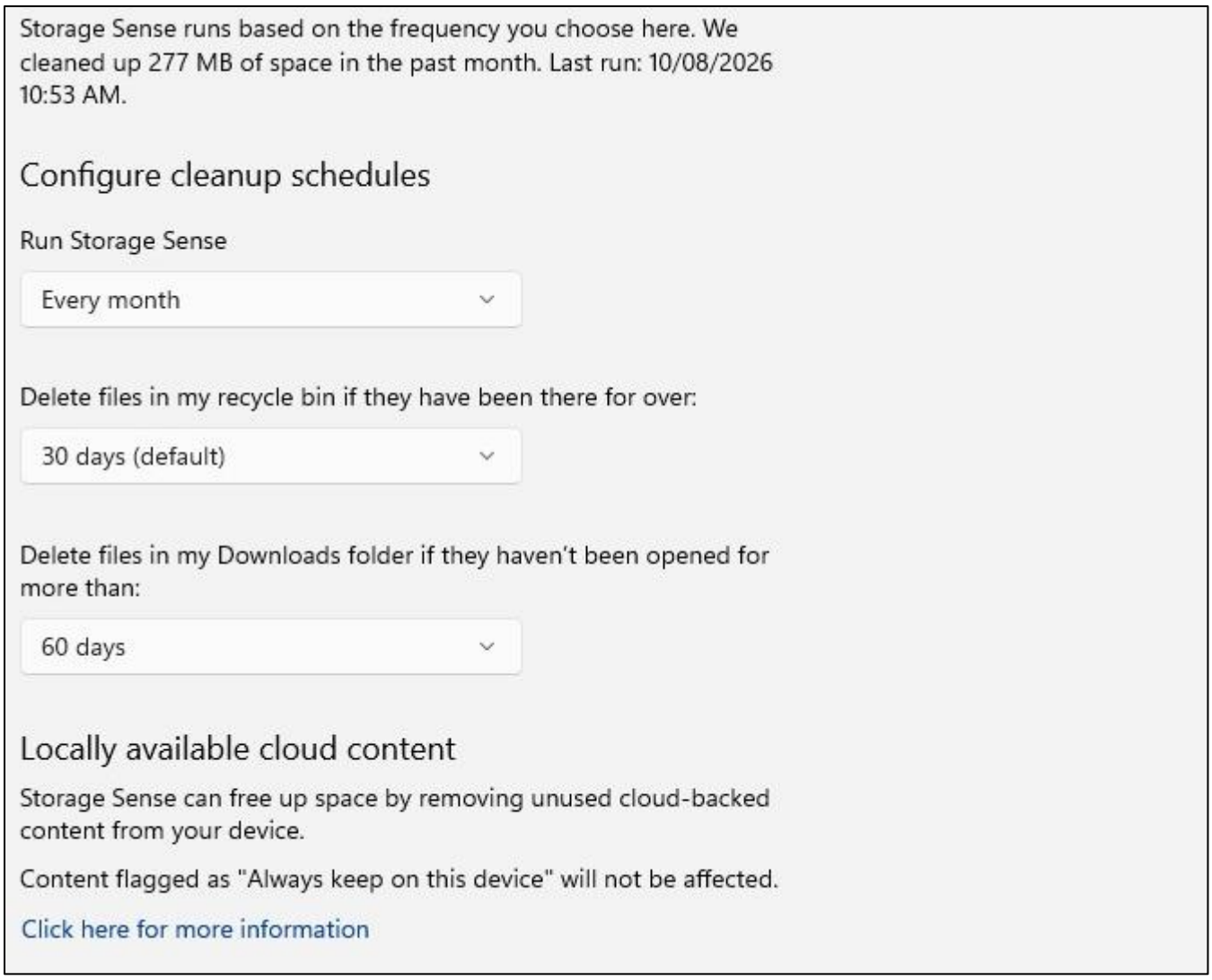
Storage Sense

Deep inside Windows 11 is a very useful utility which can be used to decide what to keep and what to discard. It runs by default but you could well wish to change some of its settings.

Go to Settings→System→Storage→Storage Sense. You will get something like I have shown below (continued on the next page) – but I have changed the download setting to 60 days. This means that if I haven't used something I have downloaded (that includes images from my other devices) it won't be clogging up the downloads folder. Like the Kondo (KonMari Decluttering) Method for possessions.

Ken Curwen





Potty Extras

While writing the Rosetta Stone article I did a bit of sideways searching and found the following bits of Potty Information:

Alexandria the Great

Alexander the Great founded 20 cities by the name of Alexandria, ten of which still existed a century after their foundation. Alexandria in Egypt still is the major port for the country because it is on the ocean side of the Nile Delta.

(I can think of someone who would be jealous of this but renaming the Port of Los Angeles as Port Trumpish wouldn't cut the ice)

Ken Curwen

Alexander's Coffin

When Alexander died he was put in a coffin and a MASSIVE hearse was dispatched from Babylon to Macedonia where he would be entombed in an appropriate mausoleum.

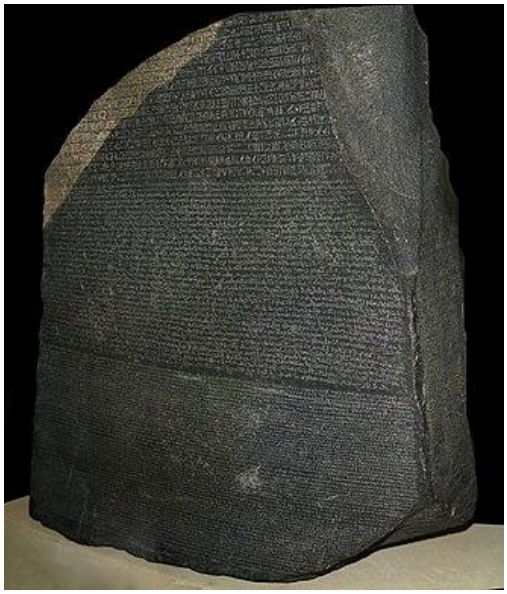
But Ptolemy decided he wanted to create Alexander's mausoleum in Alexandria. So he dispatched troops to hijack the hearse and re-route it to Egypt. Alexander's tomb became a tourist destination for about 600 years…but then vanished as the Western Roman Empire collapsed.

The Egyptian Bureau of Antiquities would probably pay a very large bounty to anybody who could locate its ruins.

Ken Curwen

Potty History

Rosetta Stone



The Rosetta Stone as shown on the right is a gravestone-sized monument inscribed with three versions of a Ptolemaic decree. The top and middle texts are in Ancient Egyptian using Hieroglyphic and Demotic scripts, respectively, while the bottom is in Ancient Greek…but why Greek? And what are the two Egyptian scripts about?

Several Persian invasions over 200 years from about 500BC made Egypt ripe for conquest in 332BC by a Greek – Alexander the Great. On his untimely death in 323BC Egypt was taken over by Ptolemy, one of Alexander's closest Companions, who kept to the traditions of Egypt, as did his heirs. But they remained a Greek court and their civil service also communicated in Greek.

Ptolemy V inherited the throne after the unexpected death of his parents at the age of five; so Egypt was ruled by regents of limited competence until he came of age at 14. To emphasise his coronation in 196BC he issued the proclamation immortalised on the Rosetta Stone. There would have been multiple copies made for temples and civic centres.

This particular stone survived because it was reused as building material in the construction of Fort Julien near the town of Rashid (Rosetta) in the Nile Delta. It was found there in July 1799 by French army officer Pierre-François Bouchard during Napoleon's invasion of Egypt; and after Admiral Nelson defeated the French the English took the stone to London where it has been on public display at the British Museum almost continuously and it is the most visited object there. But what did all the inscriptions mean?

The Egyptians themselves had two scripts. The Hieroglyphic script came first, and combined ideographic (pictorial, e.g. a simplified picture of the sun means 'sun'), logographic (a symbol represents a word), syllabic, and alphabetic elements with over 1,000 distinct characters. It was designed by and used by the priests when they were the only literate class. At the time of the Rosetta discovery nobody knew how to read this script.

The Demotic script was a cut down version of the Hieroglyphic, and was more or less alphabetic. It was developed as a literate mercantile class expanded in Egypt. It strongly influenced the Coptic language, which is still used b y the Coptic Church, and thus Coptic became the key to the Demotic text on the Rosetta Stone, given that the Greek text had already been translated from the Ancient Greek text. As a result there were two fully translated versions of the decree by 1805.

So now the time had come to crack the Hieroglyphic script. Jean-François Champollion, a teacher at Grenoble who had devoted his life to this problem, realised in 1822 that the naming of persons had to go outside the normal hieroglyphs – they were in foreign languages and so you could only write them down letter by letter. And to make it easier, the names of royalty were enclosed in cartouches (oval bubbles) to make them stand out. From this, Champollion identified the phonetic characters for k l e o p a t r a. From this and the other foreign names on the Rosetta Stone, he quickly constructed an alphabet of phonetic hieroglyphic characters. He later realised that the same characters were used for earlier Egyption rulers such as Ramesses and Thutmose. From this point, the stories of the Rosetta Stone and the decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphs diverge, as Champollion drew on many other texts to develop an Ancient Egyptian grammar and a hieroglyphic dictionary which were published after his death in 1832.

Jean-Francoise spent ten years chasing a dead language for love, not glory. When the silence of three thousand years finally broke, his name, not Ptolemy's, should have been carved into the Stone.

Ken Curwen, with input from Wikipedia.

Humour



Don't ask.

I have a new car.

It's smarter than I am.

Editor

Paid for a limousine and the driver never showed up. I've paid all this money out and got nothing to chauffeur it.

"I think it is just terrible and disgusting how everyone has treated Lance Armstrong, especially after what he achieved, winning seven Tour De France races while on drugs.

When I was on drugs, I couldn't even find my bike"

-Willie Nelson

Be careful what you say

So, I'm in a bar and two very large women with accents are sitting across from me.
I say, "Cool accents, are you two ladies from Scotland?"
One of them yells, "It's Wales, you idiot."
So I said, "OK, are you two Whales from Scotland?"
I don't remember much after that.

Marital Disharmony

My wife asked if she could have a little peace and quiet while she cooked dinner ...
So I took the battery out of the smoke alarm!

Luck of the Irish

Paddy went to the bank for a loan.
The teller says, "I'm sorry but the loan arranger isn't in today"
'Ok" Paddy replies, "I'll speak to Tonto if he's in?"

Camping

When you spend a small fortune to live like a homeless person

Further Information

SeniorNet Committee

The listing of the 2026 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.