



# MANLY MOUSE

Newsletter of Computerpals for Seniors - Manly Inc.

June 2007

## Back to Basics

**A** Back To Basics presentation will be shown by Graham Clark at our next monthly meeting, Thursday 14 June at 2 pm in Manly Library Meeting Room. Beginners will find this meeting really important but more experienced members will be able to reinforce their knowledge and find other ways to do things. We will be looking at folders and files, the making, naming and saving of them. How to locate folders or files, how to move folders/files, how to copy folders/files to another location and how to rename folders or files. Learn the various methods of highlighting text and graphics, copying and pasting text and pictures, and cutting and pasting (yes, there is a difference between copying and cutting). Learn how to drag and drop files, graphics and text. In Windows, you will learn how to move icons around on your desktop, how to add or remove an item from the start menu or taskbar, how to create a desktop shortcut icon, how to delete unwanted desktop icons, how to show a favourite photo as wallpaper on the desktop and how to change the screensaver. All this and lots more as we will have a Q & A session following where we will attempt to show you other "how tos". As usual there will be door prizes, refreshments and a chance to talk to members and tutors.

**‘Beginners will find this meeting really important’**

**L**ast month Jack Newton explained Microsoft desktop publishing program Publisher in his amusing and interesting way, showing us what a good program it is and how easy it is to do things that would be difficult or impossible to do at all on Word. With a 1.5 metre Publisher advertising banner draped across the rostrum, he showed how Publisher can be used to produce publications ranging from banners to books. He claimed that anyone with a basic knowledge



of word processing could soon graduate to desk-top publishing. While acknowledging the word processing basis of Publisher, he illustrated its different methodology by showing how text, pictures and ‘call-outs’ could be moved around and layered on a page to give a stunning range of visual effects. There was a delay at the start getting the internet to work but what followed was well worth waiting for.



**Tutors Wanted:** Have you ever thought about giving a little back to the club after having mastered the basics and more? We are in need of more tutors and we feel that there would likely be one, two or more of you who have gained enough skills and may now be interested in becoming an assistant tutor. If you feel that your knowledge is such that you could pass some skills onto our newer members we would love to hear from you. We



would offer you a comprehensive training session and would then pair you with an experience tutor. Even if you cannot commit to a regular weekly session we would still like to hear from you as we do need backup tutors to relieve from time to time. We all are still learning and our tutors readily admit to learning a little more every time they teach. Do think about it and

if you are interested, please contact Graham on 9948 3527 or else email him: [gac@theplanet.net.au](mailto:gac@theplanet.net.au)

## Message from ASCCA Australian Computer Clubs Association

***Do you have a way with words? Writing is a creative pastime that brings the writer great enjoyment. To share this pleasure with others why not enter an exciting new ASCCA Competition. Even if you think you can't write ... we know you can!***

*We want to hear your stories or poems!*

**You may wish to enter a Portfolio of all three sections of the competition, or just write one story and enter any one of the three sections!**

### **A memorable happening**

based on something that really happened to you. As seniors the problem will be deciding just which of our many happy, sad, outrageous or interesting memories to share.

### **What learning to use a computer has meant to me.**

Your experiences could inspire others who are a little frightened of "taking the plunge".

### **I wish ...**

Paint a word picture of a dream you would like to have come true for you. We are never too old to dream!

***Happy Writing!***

The Conditions for entry, dates, etc. are on the Club Noticeboard. Have a go. The club will be proud of you.

**W**e are most certainly proud of our Tutor Jan Schoots.

From FEATURES Manly Daily 24 April 07  
**'Brain power, not stitching by hand in this prized embroidery'**

COMPUTERS have helped save more than a stitch in time for one embroidery expert - they have helped her win three awards at the Easter Show.

Jan Schoots' 3D designs wowed the judges of the handbag and embroidery sections at Sydney Showground last week.



High-tech features were key to the competition, Ms Schoots revealed, who volunteers for Computerpals at Manly Senior Citizen Centre on Pittwater Rd.

Her entries were designed using \$3,000 computer software which sends instructions to an \$8,000 sewing machine.

"Nothing is done by hand, but it's a lot of hard work and brain power getting it to work properly," Ms Schoots from Harbord said.

Initially, the evening-bag entry was made for Machine and Textile Magazine, in which her designs are so popular that she features in it twice a year.

"I've probably been doing this for the last 10 years - I started doing this because I really wanted to do machinery and embroidery, I love to create," she said. "I've got quite a few quilts at home."

A bed quilt can take up to a year to make, Ms Schoots said, who won first prize for a block-design latte (correct) quilt last year.

She uses a template then adds her own designs - current favourites are leaves and 3D extras.

"I love entering competitions," she said. "I do think my entries tend to be more high tech than the others."

**But that's not all! She won the top prize against categories 70-76. Also a Bronze Medal, Standard of Excellence, 2 Firsts and a Highly Commended.**



### Green light for in-flight mobile trial

Do not be surprised if, on your next domestic Qantas flight, an attendant announces it is safe to switch on your mobile phone. In a three month public trial beginning soon, Qantas is using a single plane from its Boeing 767 fleet to evaluate whether or not in-flight mobile phone use is a good idea. The Qantas trial is one of the first of its kind in the world; Emirates and Ryanair have announced plans to follow suit later this year.

Qantas passengers, who will not know their flight is using the mobile-enabled plane until they board, will only be able to send SMS and email messages. Voice calls were purposely disabled to prevent chatty phone users from disturbing other passengers.

Lesley Grant, Qantas's group manager of customer product and services, said the airline's business travellers had expressed strong interest in using their mobiles in the air because it would allow them to continue working uninterrupted.

If the trial is successful, it is likely Qantas will enable mobile phone use on all of its flights, and it has not ruled out allowing voice calls.

### Hard disk failure rates 'up to 13pc' Barbara Gengler

The Australian HARD disk failure rates are much higher than manufacturers claim, according to a new study by researchers at Carnegie Mellon University. The researchers found that large-scale installation field usage appears to differ widely from nominal datasheet MTTF (mean time to failure) conditions, as the field replacement rates of systems were significantly larger than expected, based on datasheet MTTFs.

The study found the failure rate for most drives was 2-4 per cent, and as high as 13 per cent on some systems, compared to manufacturers who list a failure rate of roughly 0.88 per cent.

All types of drives were examined from high performance computing sites and internet service sites.

The study found that failure rate is not constant with age, and that, rather than a significant infant mortality effect, the researchers see a significant early onset of wear-out degradation.

According to the study, while it is often assumed that disk failures follow a simple fail-stop model, where disks either work perfectly or fail absolutely and in an easily detectable manner, disk failures are much more complex in reality. For example, disk drives can experience latent sector faults or transient performance problems. Disk/Trend analyst James Porter told US reporters there is not any reliable way to statistically review the reliability of disk drives, as used in the field. "There are just too many different kinds of usage sites, too many variations in management skills and a variety of disk drive types," he says. The researchers concluded that for drives less than five years old, field replacement rates were larger than what the datasheet MTTF suggested by a factor of 2-10. For five-to-eight-year-old drives, field replacement rates were a factor of 30 higher than what the datasheet MTTF suggested.

### Knowing the Basics of Using Computers

is the first step for any club member new to computers. It is also a great help to many who are no longer novices in helping them to get the best out of Microsoft's Windows 98 and XP. Manly Computerpals' Thursday afternoon training sessions runs an on demand 'Computer Basics' course. Members wishing to attend this course are advised to register their interest on the appropriate roster sheet. These courses are free to financial members and are in addition to the normal one-on-one tutored session.

### Welcome to new members:

Mary Chisholm; Meya Graf;

Francis Hendry; Harry Hintze; Fran Kelly;

Moya Land; Keren Miller; Barbara Stevens.

If you are not listed here you will be next month.

**Urgent Reminder:** Please put your first name, surname and phone number on the lesson roster sheets. It is very frustrating for us when we need to contact anyone to have to go chasing up phone numbers or surnames; Please remember we are all volunteers, don't give us more work to do. Many thanks for your cooperation.

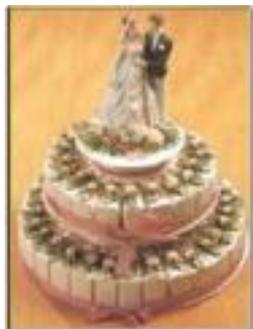
### Tutors' Roster (subject to change)

Monday	9 am – 1 pm	Graham Clark & Lyn Nicholls
	1 pm – 5 pm	David McAdam & Arthur Johnson
Tuesday	9 am – 1 pm	Tony Vanderwalle & Wally Gora
	1 pm – 5 pm	Lyll McNeish
Wednesday	9 am – 1 pm	Ted Hulbert & Phillip Moss
	1 pm – 5 pm	Harry Agüero & Elaine Johns
Thursday	9 am – 1 pm	Closed
	1 pm – 4 pm	Elaine Clarke & Jack Newton COMPUTER BASICS INTERNET
Friday	9 am – 1 pm	Ern Cohen & Brian Winter
	1 pm – 5 pm	Ron Peerless

**IF YOU CANNOT ATTEND A CLASS PLEASE PHONE THE CLUB 9976 0930 AND ADVISE DUTY TUTOR TO ALTER LIST**



## Do You Remember, Darling?



All of us remember being asked "Do you remember, darling . . .?". But many of us, to our cost, rarely remember what we are being asked to remember. So, if you do not remember what your wife wore on the night you proposed or your wife does not remember the time when Bobby Fulton scored those magnificent tries, then take comfort from the fact that your grandchildren will never ever face the same problem—Microsoft has been working for the past six years on

the project MyLifeBits which can solve such memory problems.

The article, 'A Digital Life'\*, written by two Microsoft Research scientists, Gordon Bell and Jim Gemmell, describes their work on making it possible to completely record a person's life into a computer database.

Computer memory is becoming larger and cheaper (Hitachi are now selling a hard disk drive which holds one terabyte—that is one million, million, million bytes—of data). According to Bell and Gemmell one terabyte is enough storage to hold digital information on all you read, all the music you buy, eight hours of speech and 10 pictures a day for the next 60 years! Their forecast for data storage capacity in 20 years time is for an incredible 250 terabytes.

Couple this memory capability with the fact that currently available sensors can monitor such parameters as heartbeat, blood pressure, temperature, oxygen levels and it is no great technological leap to realise that one's health can be continuously monitored and recorded on a computer database. Micro-sized digital cameras, microphones and global positioning systems can record where you are and what you say. Sense-Cam, a personal wearable camera developed by Microsoft Research can sense and take photographs of the wearer's contacts whenever it senses a person nearby and photograph the location whenever the wearer moves to a different place.

The software to quickly find information in such massive databases is still being written and with it one will be able to digitally recall events which occurred many years previously. Conversations will be able to be replayed along with pictures of the places and people who were there.

The MyLifeBits technology will enable one to answer the 'do you remember' question and, for example, to relive what was said the night a proposal was made and to experience again the day the home team took out the championship.

This computer technology will be available to our grandchildren and with it a world quite different to the one we now know. Can you imagine a world in which everyone's passage through life is continuously monitored and does it portend an Orwellian future? Technology is ethically neutral—it is how the technology is applied which is important—caveat emptor! JN

\* Bell & Gemmell, Scientific American, pp 40 - 47, March 2007.

## Data stored in bacteria DNA

These days, data get stored on disks, computer chips, hard drives and good old-fashioned paper. Scientists in Japan see something far smaller but more durable - bacteria.

The four characters that represent the genetic coding in DNA work much like digital data. Character combinations can stand for specific letters and symbols - so codes in genomes can be translated, or read, to produce music, text, video and other content.

While ink may fade and computers may crash, bacterial information lasts as long as a species stays alive - possibly a mind-boggling million years - according to Professor Masaru Tomita, who heads the team of researchers at Keio University. Tomita shrugs off the obvious question: "Who in the world is going to read bacteria?" "Many people never even thought about storing data for thousands of years," Tomita said. "This may sound like a dream. But we're thinking hundreds of millions of years."

The Associated Press [australianIT.com.au](http://australianIT.com.au).

## Powerhouses in your lap

PC or laptop? ... Dell's XPS M2010 blurs the dividing line. Icon

Notebook computers are surging in popularity and will soon leap ahead in performance and style, writes David Flynn. Your next notebook computer will have much longer battery life, faster wireless communications, a thinner profile and the ability to match some desktops in the gaming stakes. It will also look more stylish than existing models and have room for your own personal touches in the same way you can customise your mobile phone. Intel's launch of its fourth-generation Centrino platform this week, codenamed "Santa Rosa", will form the foundation of a new range of notebooks that manufacturers will release over the coming months.

Notebooks are fast becoming the home computer of choice and the next generation of portables are shaping up as an exciting blend of performance, function and style. If your home PC is a desktop system, you'll soon be in the minority. Once the exclusive domain of business users and the very well-heeled, laptops are finding their way into an ever-increasing number of homes, bags and backpacks.

Market-watcher GfK Australia says local retail sales of notebooks overtook desktops in November 2004 and since then have enjoyed a steady northbound trajectory while desktops present a negative mirror image. Last year ended with consumer notebooks outselling desktops by more than two to one.

## Telstra trials cable upgrade

Amidst the daily distractions of Telstra's tit-for-tat broadband battle with the ACCC, the telco has been quietly testing a significant upgrade to its existing cable broadband network. A source inside Telstra confirmed the company had offered a select group of staff the chance to trial a "new technology for the cable network" that would offer a "significantly better broadband experience" than what is available today.



**TV Tuners** You can watch TV on your computer if you install a TV Tuner. A basic digital TV tuner kit will include a TV tuner card and some software to record and watch TV. Most mid-range TV tuner bundles also include a remote control and infrared receiver, which is used to drive the tuner software. These will often include a digital radio tuner too, which also allows the user to receive digital radio broadcasts. Basic models often forego the remote control, but if you're planning on using the computer as a TV, it's a crucial component. Digital TV tuners are available as both internal cards that fit into a PCI slot or as external USB devices. An internal card requires a spare PCI slot, as well as a desire to open your computer up to install it. This isn't technically challenging, just a little daunting if you've never done it. Internal cards tend to be cheaper than their external brethren, but they're a little less flexible. Internal cards start around \$140 and go up to \$250. An external device is the only viable solution for notebook users, also favouring those that don't want to mess around opening their computers. Better yet, they're portable. External tuners start at around \$160 and go up to \$300.

## Why Turn Off Message Preview in Outlook Express?

The message preview pane in Outlook Express is really nice and useful, but it comes with the risk of catching a worm or virus by just previewing a message.

That's why it is best to disable the preview pane for security reasons in Outlook Express or at least to turn off automatic loading of remote images.

To disable the preview pane in Outlook Express:

Select View | Layout... from the menu in Outlook Express.

Make sure Show preview pane is not checked.

Click OK. You can also click Apply to put the new settings into effect without closing the configuration dialog.

## Highlight Important Emails With Colour

Outlook Express. If you'd like a certain sender, subject, or other criteria to appear highlighted in colour when it appears in Outlook Express and therefore stand out from the rest, here's how you do it: Select the message from which you want to create a rule, by highlighting it and selecting "Message" on the top toolbar and "Create Rule From Message" which appears in the context menu. Now, select your "If" criteria, for instance, Where the from line contains (the email address of the sender which you have selected appears) then select the actions for your rule, scroll down to "Highlight it with colour." Click on the word "colour" and select the colour you want from the available 16 colours shown there. You can also highlight with colour based on "subject", if the mail contains an attachment, whether the message body contains certain words, and many others. This can be a very useful tip if you want to be immediately aware of an important email even before you read it.

**Opening PowerPoint files** If you receive emails that have a PPS file attached and have downloaded

the Power Point viewer and even gone into the Folders Association option and associated PowerPoint Viewer with PPS and you still cannot get the file to open there may be a snag which is described by Ramesh Srinivasan at his troubleshooting site (<http://windowsxp.mvps.org/ppsoopen.htm>). Sometimes PPS files won't open from within Outlook Express but they will open if saved onto the computer and opened directly. You can download the fix or follow the manual instructions to solve this problem.

## Snap to attention Icon

Bring out the best in your photos with a digital scrapbook, writes Helen Bradley in Icon.

Compiling digital scrapbooks is a popular hobby and loads of fun. However, the process once taxed your graphics skills. Now Scrapblog has made it all much easier. The site is worth a look for two reasons: putting together scrapbooks is a great way to display your favourite photos and visiting the site is a chance to check some cutting-edge internet technology. Scrapblog Scrapbook Builder is free at <http://www.scrapblog.com> Click the Get Started button and, when the application opens full screen, choose Start with a theme and preview the available themes. Choose one and preview the layout examples to see the variety of options you can create using this theme. Click Done to accept your theme and wait as it loads.

Click the Get Photos button and upload your photos - you can use photos stored on your computer or in PhotoBucket, Yahoo Photos, Flickr or Webshots. Once you've selected the photos and clicked Done, they'll appear in the photo area down the left side of the page. Drag and drop a photo on top of an existing photo to replace the sample photo with your own. This works best if the two photographs are the same orientation or if you place a square photo over a circular frame.

If you need to crop your image, drag it onto the layout and in the Edit area click the Crop tool and then select a crop option such as circular, rectangular or star. Drag the shape over the photo, size it to suit and click Done.

To create the edge around the photo, click the Shadow box to apply or remove a shadow and use the Border options to create a style and colour of border.

In the Select a Colour area you can use the eyedropper to sample a colour from the layout or your photo and add it to your colours and it will be there whenever you return. Click Done to finish.

To add frame elements, click the Frames collection and drag and drop a frame on your photo. To get more frames, click Get Frames. To alter the layering of objects on the page click the object to alter and then select the Backward or Forward button on the editing bar.

Add text by clicking Text & Balloons and select a text element and drop it onto the page. Type your text in place of the prompt, select the text and then format it by selecting a font face, size and colour. If



you make a mistake, click the Undo button and move backwards through the steps you've performed.

You can change the background image and add stickers from the Stickers collection to embellish your page. Stickers can be rotated and their opacity can be varied to make them partially see-through. You can also create and fill shapes using the Shapes collection and place these behind other objects by adjusting the layering.

When you have your page complete, save it by clicking the Save button. At this point you'll need to register by creating a name and password and a folder for your images.

You will also need to determine whether your pages should be private or public and then click Done. You can now create a second page and configure transitions and music for them.

**A** 45 year old woman had a heart attack and was taken to the hospital. While on the operating table she had a near death experience. Seeing God she asked "Is my time up?"

God said, "No, you have another 43 years, 2 months and 8 days to live."

Upon recovery, the woman decided to stay in the hospital and have a face-lift, liposuction, breast implants and a tummy tuck. She even had someone come in and change her hair colour and brighten her teeth. Since she had so much more time to live, she figured she might as well make the most of it.

After her last operation, she was released from the hospital. While crossing the street on her way home, she was killed by an ambulance. Arriving in front of God, she demanded, "I thought you said I had another 43 years? Why didn't you pull me from out of the path of the ambulance?" God Replied: "I didn't recognize you." (Thank you, Ralph Moritz)

**F**rom [www.snopes.com/humor/business/mouse.asp](http://www.snopes.com/humor/business/mouse.asp)

Mouse Balls Joke: IBM field service memo details the procedure for replacing mouse balls.

Origins: The IBM "mouse balls" memo is one of the oldest bits of Internet jokelore. Examples of it show up in USENET archives as far back as 1989, and scarcely anyone who had an e-mail address back then escaped without receiving this in his inbox more than once, which certainly drops it into the long-beard category with a loud thud.

Was this a real memo? "Real" in the sense that someone at IBM actually wrote it and distributed it to field service techs, perhaps, but it was always intended as an occupational in-joke; it wasn't a "serious" memo that some hapless supervisor inadvertently worded as a hilarious tour de force of double entendres.

MEMO

*Re: Replacement of Mouse Balls.*

*If a mouse fails to operate or should it perform erratically, it may need a ball replacement. Mouse balls are*

The assistance provided by Manly Council to Manly Computerpals is gratefully acknowledged.

now available as FRU (Field Replacement Units). Because of the delicate nature of this procedure, replacement of mouse balls should only be attempted by properly trained personnel.

Before proceeding, determine the type of mouse balls by examining the underside of the mouse. Domestic balls will be larger and harder than foreign balls. Ball removal procedures differ depending upon the manufacturer of the mouse. Foreign balls can be replaced using the pop off method. Domestic balls are replaced by using the twist off method. Mouse balls are not usually static sensitive. However, excessive handling can result in sudden discharge. Upon completion of ball replacement, the mouse may be used immediately.

It is recommended that each person have a pair of spare balls for maintaining optimum customer satisfaction. Any customer missing his balls should contact the local personnel in charge of removing and replacing these necessary items.

Please keep in mind that a customer without properly working balls is an unhappy customer.

**D**id I Read That Sign Correctly?

Did I read that sign right? TOILET OUT OF ORDER. PLEASE USE FLOOR BELOW.

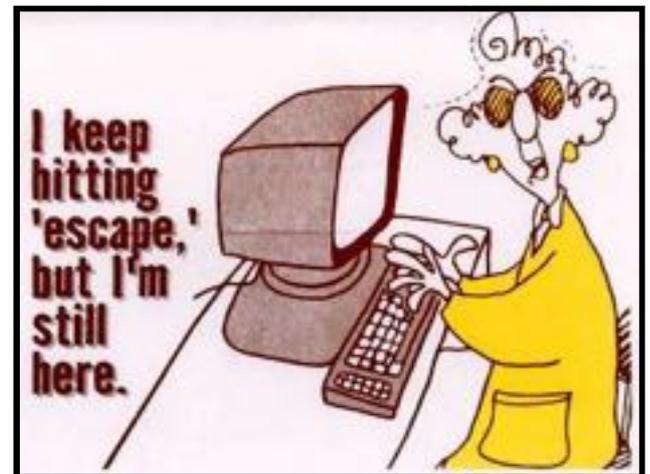
In a Laundromat: AUTOMATIC WASHING MACHINES: PLEASE REMOVE ALL YOUR CLOTHES WHEN THE LIGHT GOES OUT.

In a London department store: BARGAIN BASEMENT UPSTAIRS.

In an office: WOULD THE PERSON WHO TOOK THE STEP LADDER YESTERDAY PLEASE BRING IT BACK OR FURTHER STEPS WILL BE TAKEN.

In an office: AFTER TEA BREAK STAFF SHOULD EMPTY THE TEAPOT AND STAND UPSIDE DOWN ON THE DRAINING BOARD.

Notice in health food shop window: CLOSED DUE TO ILLNESS.



**Disclaimers** Members who bring equipment such as a laptop computer or digital camera to the Club, do so at their own risk and Computerpals accepts no responsibility for damages or loss.

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