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Newsletter May 2022

From the Chair



Welcome to another edition of the Newsletter. Covid again thwarted our plans to recommence courses and workshops at the beginning of this year. Now that Omicron infections have peaked in the area we have started rescheduling workshops and courses. The first of these are already on the website and appearing in the Weekly News emails so do check them out.

We have removed the requirement for a vaccine pass to attend sessions at Anvil House but are asking visitors to wear masks – to protect both themselves and others. We are continuing to monitor active Covid cases in the Capital and Coast DHB and may need to review our safety setting if there is a significant increase as we head into winter and international visitors return.

Our AGM on 27 April was a month late but it was worth the wait. Active Covid cases were less than half they were at the peak of the outbreak and we felt confident enough to offer members the option of attending in person as well as via Zoom. Numbers were still down on pre Covid years but 34 members attended in person with another 10 attending via Zoom. That is the largest gathering we have had for some time and it was good to see so many familiar faces and friends.

There was general agreement at the AGM to the proposals set out in the 'Next Steps' paper, which had been distributed beforehand. The Strategy Group, consisting of Allan Chee, Geoff Cameron, Graeme Munro, Michael Munro, Mary Newman, Bruce Ralph, Ricky Berg and myself have not been idle. We are well on track to move out of Training Room 12 by September of this year and are working on a plan to dispose of surplus equipment

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and furniture. We have also started work on reviewing our educational programme and looking at ways to streamline our management and administrative processes.

We still need volunteers – particularly in the office, but also tutors/tutor helpers. Please consider helping out. It can be very rewarding being a volunteer and seeing the difference you can make. Everyone has something to contribute so if you are able to help, in any capacity, and would like to know more please contact me through the SeniorNet office email wellingtonseniornet@gmail.com or phone no 4731510.

Pam Fletcher

Introducing our tutors

Graeme Munro

I first started taking an interest in computers when I used a pre-Windows PC, mainly for recording financial information on a database, at my workplace in the early 1990's. When the office computer system was upgraded, the old PCs were sold off to staff and I brought one home to use for basic word processing as well as playing some games. Despite the computer being very limited in storage capacity and memory it was great to muck around with and try out various software programmes, as well as taking it apart and seeing what was inside the box.

In the mid-1990s I purchased a computer running Windows 95 which was a huge improvement on the old one and enabled me to connect to the internet with a dial-up phone connection. It was very primitive compared to today's! That PC has of course long since gone, along with several others since purchased as upgrades.

Although I haven't had any formal training in technology, my interest in computers has continued since then both installing and upgrading my own devices as well as assisting others to set up their own systems and helping to diagnose problems. When I retired in 2012, I joined SeniorNet Wellington to both learn more and to share my own knowledge with others. I had no intention of becoming a tutor, however it wasn't long before my arm was twisted to assist in the running of Word Processing classes. This soon developed into organising the classes as well as tutoring them.

Although a reluctant tutor at the beginning, I have enjoyed my various teaching roles and get a lot of satisfaction from being able to help

members to improve their own knowledge of technology. Running the Android SIG in particular is very rewarding as participants' questions can often be quite challenging and I'm always learning something from each session. I also enjoy participating in the Help Centre giving one-on-one help on a wide range of problems.

Bruce Ralph, the Apple Mac guy

I will share with you two very interesting goals or milestones, that, on reflection, I realise were actually a step up the ladder, whilst also proving how life unfolds in mysterious ways.

First was as a young 19 year old biker racing at a club meeting at Paraparaumu Beach 'leading the pack' (goal) but in the soft sand that I inadvertently rode onto, the Triumph quickly succumbed from 90 to zero



my Triumph 500cc 1970's photo

in a remarkably short distance. After a few days I left hospital; whilst there I probably subconsciously reassessed ideas on extending my life. Racing was no longer for me!

Then the second goal was to get into the lucrative IT business, and sell Apple. In 1984 I started to achieve this working for various Wellington Apple Dealers and progressing well. Once settled in Auckland I started as a home-based independent Apple technician and reseller. Work built up over 10 years allowing me to open the first for New Zealand, an authorised 'AppleCentre' shop located in Albany; I opened this boutique computer shop in 1998. (Goal achieved)



Home Office 2005

Working as an owner manager I especially enjoyed the challenge of operating my own successful retail business. The shop was very successful selling Apple products and was awarded Top NZ Apple Sales for 1999 and 2001, each rewarded with a trip to the AppleExpo, at that time, a yearly event in San Francisco.

So, I had started working with Apple Products back in 1984, and accumulated 23 years in the

Apple industry, working with many Apple dealers and in just about all positions: as humble but very knowledgeable technologist, prosperous and innovative sales person, dedicated but frustrated manager, highly aloof 'snobby nosed' consultant, and of course finally, a convivial director-owner- manager of the Apple Shop. This whilst always wearing a



Cambridge suit and tie, if you know what I mean!

Yes, outgoing introverts do exist, I am one. One who also scores very high at perceiving relationships, solving problems and thinking sequentially. So that's me!

Education Sessions May – July

By Allan Chee, Convenor Education Committee

Now that the AGM has been held, we can get back to looking at what courses and workshops we can offer to you the members. Covid has been a pain and has curbed a lot of what we originally planned. But now that restrictions have eased, this is what we propose to offer in the coming months, in addition to our regular monthly Special Interest Groups (SIGs).

The hands-on 'Smartphone Drivers' Licence' series for Apple and Android phones started on 17 May, followed by Session 2 on 31 May, Session 3 on 7 June and Session 4 on 14 June. Our Apple Mac guru, Bruce Ralph, will run an Apple Keynote session on 25 May. Keynote is Apple's version of Microsoft PowerPoint. Jonny Smith from Wellington City Library will do another session on 1 June and show us the library's e-resources. This was a very popular session last year so book in soon!

The Digicam group on 9 June will have a special guest presenter David Wilcox who will showcase some startling pictures featuring his light-

painting techniques with Landscapes and Portrait images. He will also discuss his views on composition and editing, plus an introduction to free programmes to assist. Following the presentation there will be a “cuppa” to accompany your own sandwich or biscuits.

Alan Royal is keen to keep us up-to-date with a Google Tools Session tentatively scheduled for Thursday 30 June.

On 5 July our new tutor Keith Benson will start a new course titled ‘Outlook for Seniors’ on the mail app Outlook. Microsoft Outlook is a free application, with many features, for Android and Apple phones and tablets. It’s likely that 33% of our members are using an Outlook mail interface, either with an @xtra.co.nz or an outlook.com email account so this course may well be of interest.

Other courses in July will be a ‘Google Docs’ course on 7 July, ‘Apple Safari browser’ on 19 July and a new course titled ‘Internet-of-Things (IoT)’.

Keep an eye on our [website](#) or the weekly emails for the details of the sessions and how to register.

Which smartphone to buy?

by Mary Newman

Our members sometimes ask tutors for recommendations on which phone to buy. This article [Best Phone NZ 2022: what’s the best smartphone I can buy in NZ?](#), recently published in the DomPost, is one of many guides though it does recommend phones that are pretty pricey.

Users who want a basic phone to do phone calls and text messages will not need to buy an expensive phone. But it is wise to future proof when buying a new phone as users may start to use the camera or apps that they hadn’t used before.

What to look for when buying a phone

- Price
- What size is the phone? A smaller phone is easier to fit in a pocket but a phone with a larger screen is better for accessibility or if you watch videos or edit photos
- Accessibility. Is the keyboard a decent size for chubby or arthritic fingers.

- Do you have a preference for the operating system: Apple iPhone (iOS) or Android? Consider compatibility with other devices like an iPad, tablet or computer.
- Do you need 5G capability? All mobiles are suitable for a 4G network. 5G allows faster download speeds and is good for anyone watching movies but probably not necessary for the average user.
- Do you want a good camera?
- Is the phone storage capacity sufficient if you take a lot of photos or use a lot of apps?
- Battery life

Podcasts, radio's future?

by Ricky Berg

So just what is a podcast, and what does the word mean?

Simply put, a podcast is an audio programme, just like radio, but can be listened to wherever and whenever you like. The word itself is a portmanteau of *iPod* and *broadcast*, although some say it is an acronym for *Personal on Demand Broadcast*.

Unlike live radio, podcasts are digital audio files made available on the internet for downloading to a computer or mobile device, and often typically available as a series. More importantly, 99% of all podcasts are free of any charge. You can also 'subscribe' to a specific podcast, and you will get TXT or email notifications when the next in a series is available again unlike scheduled radio or TV, podcasts are released at the whim of their creators.

On this basis, you could listen to a podcast whilst driving, walking, on public transport or warmly in bed on a winters' night. Any device capable of playing a digital audio file can be used, and listened to via speakers or headphones. Some podcasts are available directly off a topics' website, so unless you want to listen on the move, a simple click on the Play button will get you your listening pleasure.

Another important feature is that you, the listener, can stop, pause, or control the replay at any time you wish.

A podcast may be about politics, books, music or quite literally anything that a human might think of or want to talk about. The range of subjects and topics of podcasts is phenomenal, as a quick internet search will reveal (as of April 2021, there were a total number of 850,000 active podcasts with more than 48 million episodes, whilst current estimates cite some 2 million podcasts). Some podcasts have been prepared in a

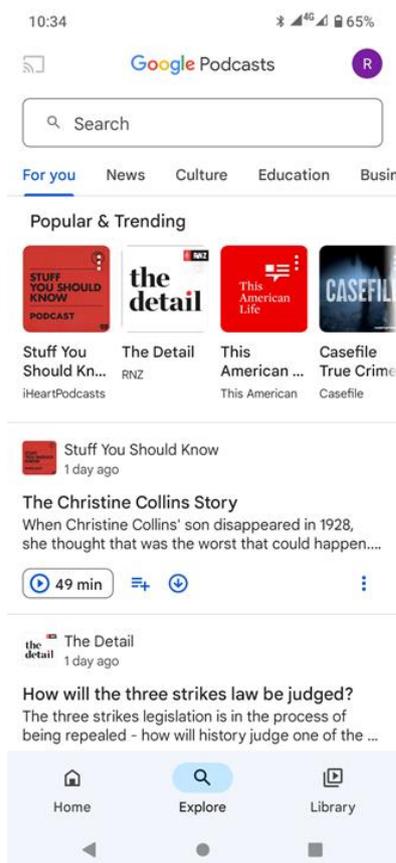
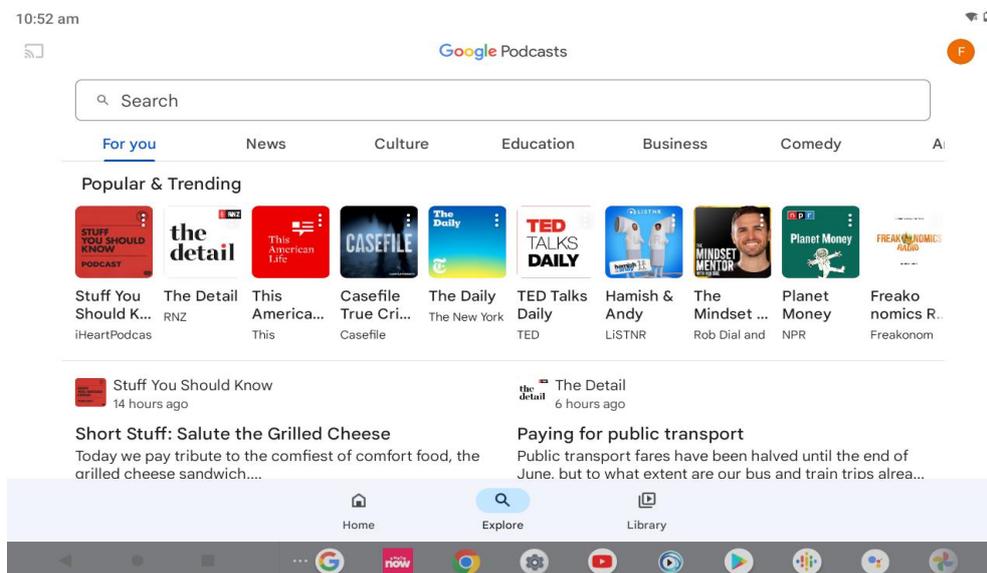
structured manner, whilst others may be completely improvised, and generally 20 to 40 minutes in length.

One of the easiest ways to view the vast array of podcasts available, particularly if using an Android tablet or phone, is to simply tap on the

Google Podcasts App icon, which looks like this: 

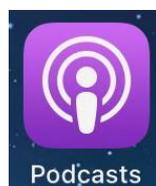
Google Podcasts is essentially a directory of the multitudes of podcasts available, and allows you to either listen immediately (streaming), or to download the audio file for transferring to another device.

Here are examples of opening screens when using the Google Podcasts App on a tablet, and a phone.



Other mainstream amalgamators of podcasts are Spotify and Apple Podcasts, which can be accessed either directly off their websites or using their respective Apps. Naturally there are many more podcast directories available using various independent Apps, including Castbox, PodBean, Stitcher, and PodChaser.

For a start, I'd recommend that you choose a podcast topic centred round something that you are already interested in, so give it a go ... the podcasting world is waiting for you.



Safe disposal of e-waste

By Mary Newman

There are a number of places where we can dispose of our old electronics responsibly. It's disheartening to walk past skips and see TVs, computer screens and appliances dumped when our city has several places for disposal: Noel Leeming, the Sustainability Trust and the Southern Landfill.

Before disposing of old computers, tablets and phones it's important to ensure that you have signed out of any accounts (Apple, Samsung or Google accounts) and that your personal data like photos has been deleted. If you're not sure what you need to do then contact SeniorNet and someone can advise you.

Noel Leeming

Noel Leeming (one of SeniorNet's sponsors) offers two schemes for disposal: mobile phones and other devices.

Noel Leeming's [mobile phone recycling scheme](#) operates in a partnership with a government-accredited recycling scheme. They will take mobile phones, chargers and batteries and refurbish or recycle them. For every recycled phone Noel Leeming will donate money to [Sustainable Coastlines](#), a charity protecting our coastlines and waterway. Just drop your old phone off at any store.

Their [e-waste disposal](#) operates in certain stores and it's best to check which stores participate and what will be accepted: laptops and cables, tablets, notebooks, palmtops, computer monitors, accessories like mice, keyboards, webcams, USBs, modems, printers, scanners, cameras and video cameras.

Sustainability Trust

The [Sustainability Trust's e-waste scheme](#) will accept a wide range of e-waste including small household appliances such as microwaves, DVD and video players. There are charges for items, except for mobile phones.

They also collect [many other items for recycling](#) like gumboots and razors. Perfect for anyone downsizing or spring cleaning.

The Trust is located in Forresters Lane, off Tory St, opposite Bunnings and there is parking outside.

Southern Landfill

The [Southern landfill](#) will accept most e-waste at the Tip Shop where it will be reused or recycled. It's free except for TVs and monitors.

Batteries

The Council is collecting used batteries to prevent them from going to landfill. You can drop them off at the following places: Island Bay Community Centre, Karori Library, Kilbirnie Library, Te Awe Library (Brandon St), Newlands Community Centre, Tawa Community Centre, the Tip Shop at the Southern Landfill. Check [here](#) to confirm which types of batteries are accepted.



We acknowledge the contributions of our supporters and sponsors. Please support them too

