

FUN TRAINERS' MAIL OUT No. 003

This is the third mail out to trainers of Computer Fundamentals courses at Computer Pals For Seniors - The Hills Inc. If you did not receive a mail out previously please read the "Conditions" statement at the end of this email. There are currently 40 members on this mailing list; not all of them train in the Fundamentals courses.

1. Brief Report on Trainers' Meeting held at HLP on Wednesday 14th June. Points of discussion were:

(a) Feedback on Win 98 Fun. The only difficulty we know of so far appears to have been caused by computers left half in XP mode and half in Classic mode, with the result that the computer screen sometimes bore no resemblance whatsoever to the manual. Hopefully last month's request for trainers to always complete all 4 conversion steps has eliminated this problem. Eleanor will organise Win 98 Trainer sessions if required (please phone or e-mail if interested).

Some Win 98 Manuals given to trainers have both Win 98 and XP in Classic mode screen dumps. Would the trainers who have these manuals please advise Eleanor whether the extra screen dumps are useful or confusing.

(b) Train the Trainers (TTT) Courses run by Peter Fowler. Peter was introduced to the meeting and spoke briefly about his involvement with the club as an Associate Member and the courses for trainers that he is running. The first group of trainers, who had completed 2 of the 3 sessions at the time of this meeting, had found them extremely helpful and also great fun. Additional courses start on Thursday, 22nd June and Friday, 23rd June with each running for 3 weeks of 2 1/2 sessions. (Note: These courses are running currently - 4th July.)

(c) Length of One-on-one Training Sessions. Now that the "bulge" of new members has eased, students doing one-on-one training could be scheduled for 1 1/2 hour sessions (which would finish after 80 minutes to allow for turn around, a cup of coffee etc.). Jill, as rostering officer, will gradually introduce this system when space allows. Trainers welcomed this initiative being trialled.

(d) Action to be taken on "slack" students. The major point here is that such students should be identified early and their situation discussed with the senior trainer. It is unfair to allow them to continue for a long time and then to tell them their progress is unsatisfactory.

(e) Questionnaire on Fun topics difficult to teach. The one-page question sheet which had already been completed by trainers on the first Train the Trainer course was distributed to any Fun trainers who had not already seen it. Completed forms were returned to Peter to assist him in planning future TTT sessions. See below for the analysis.

(f) Question of the Day: "Drag and Drop". It was suggested that Drag and drop might be too difficult a skill for beginners and that perhaps it should be dropped from the Fundamentals courses. A large majority of trainers, however, did not agree with this proposal and believed that it was a fundamental skill that should be learned early on.

2. Next Club Meeting. This will be the "Christmas in July" function to be held in the Harvey Lowe Pavilion on Wednesday 12th July from 12 noon.

3. Help Desk. The Help Desk will not operate in July but will re-appear at the August meeting (the AGM) in the form of a "Question and Answer" forum, with a panel fielding questions from the floor of the meeting. There was not a lot of interest in the Help Desk at the June meeting and ways of making it more attractive and useful to members are being explored. Any suggestions would be welcomed. Henry Elliott has suggested that members seeking advice could pose their questions via email when they would be passed on to the appropriate Help Desk adviser for him or her to consider prior to the meeting. It would be appreciated if trainers could advise their students of the existence and purpose of the Help Desk and encourage them to seek help either in person or via email (to bbutts@tpg.com.au) prior to the club

meeting. They can also send in questions or "problem scenarios" prior to the August meeting when these will be put to the Help Desk panel.

4. Trainers' Meeting. There will be no trainers' meeting in July.

5. Fun Trainers' Help File. Students have experienced some difficulty in following the "clues" in XP Fun Exercise 6 (Treasure Hunt) because they "lose" the WordPad file with details of the location of the next clue as soon as they begin to look for it in the My Documents window. Gilbert has suggested a solution to this problem and it is explained in Fun Trainers' Help File No. 005, which will be sent out to you in a second July posting next week. (There is no attachment to this email.) Thanks Gilbert.

6. News Update: Some 32 new members joined the club from 1st July and all have been placed in the PC-XP Fun course sequence for one-on-one training. If the number of new members exceeds the one-on-one time slots available, one or more group classes (at least for PC Fun) will be mounted but two-on-one training will be discontinued.

7. Results of Trainer Survey on the most difficult items to teach. The results of the Trainer Survey are discussed in detail during the Train the Trainer Courses but briefly the areas identified as the hardest to teach were :

- PC Files & Folders, My Documents, Saving, Opening
- PC Paint Toolbox, Erasing, Adding Text, Moving, Resizing
- PC Computer Hardware, Software, Operating System and Technical Stuff
- XP My Music, My Pictures specialised folders
- XP Storing Files, Folders, My Documents, Windows Explorer
- XP Create, Open, Save, Move, Copy, Delete Files & Folders
- XP Help Support Centre, Customising , Control Panel

These areas are the core topics for the Train the Trainer Courses on the basis that the more the Trainers know about these subjects the better they should be able to teach students.

8. Operational Matters.

(a) Frequent absences of students in one-on-one training continues to be a concern for the Management Committee. It has been suggested that establishing a more "welcoming" and "social" atmosphere, where new members can make new friends over a cuppa after their training session, may be one way to overcome their reluctance to attend on a regular basis. Please help whenever you can.

(b) Trainers who have Windows 98 at home and are not experienced in using XP, should discuss their situation with their Senior Trainer. It should be possible to allocate them only to students who are learning Windows 98. As far as possible such trainers should not be expected to teach the XP Fun course.

(c) As you know it has been Club policy for trainers and students not to save any files on club computers. However, on occasions you may want to supervise your student while they save a file to My Documents or you may want to demonstrate this yourself. If several files are to be saved they should be placed in the sub-folder of My Documents named XP Fun Course, which should be on all computers. Lionel has advised that, when you or your student (under your supervision) does save a file to a club computer during a training session, the trainer should delete that file at the completion of the session (or supervise the student as they delete it). Also, the Recycle Bin should be emptied at the end of your training "shift". This means that any item you move to the Recycle Bin is unlikely to be available to you the next time you are on that computer. Finally, please do not install any new program on a club computer.

9. Conditions for this Mail Out.

This mail out is compiled by Bill Butts, with the assistance of others, and is authorised by the Management Committee of Computer Pals for Seniors - The Hills Inc.

Please note that all advice is offered in good faith but changes you make to your own computer settings or software are made at your own risk. However, advice offered in relation

to training from the Fun manuals will have no disastrous technical consequences and we hope you will follow it faithfully.

10. Feedback. Your comments, criticisms and suggestions are always welcome but please do not reply to this email. Send me a new email to the same address as previously used (bbutts@tpg.com.au). The same procedure should be used if you wish to have your name removed from this mailing list. Ask and it shall be done. Please note that my computer is protected by Norton Antivirus 2006 and all emails are scanned before transmission.

Thanks for your loyalty and assistance to Computer Pals.
Merry Christmas!
Regards
Bill