

Why you have received this email: This is the first issue of a new format mailout that will continue throughout 2007 on a monthly basis. It is being sent to all trainers of Computer Pals for Seniors – The Hills Inc. and replaces the 2006 mailouts which were restricted to trainers of the Computer Fundamentals course (and other members by request). The Fun Help Files will continue as and when required, and will remain for Fun Trainers (or by request) only. If you receive this mailout in error please email Eleanor (leightel@aapt.net.au).

Now read on.

Training Overview: As you may or may not know, all training in our club is now “overseen” by the Training Sub-Committee, which meets monthly; Training Sub-Committee suggestions are then submitted to the Management Committee before being implemented. The Training Sub-Com is chaired by Peter, our Senior Training Officer, and the committee members include Jill, all Senior Trainers and Eleanor. At our December meeting, we decided that better communication with all our trainers was an absolute priority for the future, so, welcome to the new style Trainers' Mailout that will lead us into 2007 – a year in which we are determined to keep trainers aware of what is happening throughout our club.

We accept that not all trainers are able to attend trainers' meetings following the monthly meetings, and also, that for the recent past, these have been focused on the development of the new Fundamentals Course Manuals (PC and XP Fun) and have largely ignored other courses in the club. They have therefore held little interest for non-Fun trainers, who have been sadly neglected as a result. This will change in 2007, and we have decided on a three-pronged strategy to keep everyone informed – namely email mailouts, the club web site and trainers' meetings.

Monthly Trainers' Mailouts: were originally introduced earlier this year for Fun Trainers (and any other trainers who chose to sign up for them). These will now take on a new format and will become the main method of communication with all trainers throughout the club. Future editions will be coordinated by Eleanor and distributed from the PC in the Club office – generally in the first week of the month, and following the Management Committee Meeting - so that Trainers get training news hot off the press. The contact email address at the club is cphills@tpg.com.au. There are several reasons for expanding our use of email: we are a Computer Club, and our sole purpose is to teach seniors to use computers in their daily lives – yet we, as a Club, are still largely relying on the telephone for all our communications. Also, as there are now over 400 members and more than 80 trainers in the club – we cannot possibly maintain contact with you all individually by phone. Lastly, the biggest advantage of email is that, unlike the telephone, the sender and the recipient do not have to be available at the same time in order to communicate.

The Club Website: <http://users.tpg.com.au/cphills> has been completely redesigned over the last few months, and now holds a wealth of information for anyone wanting to find out anything about our club – its aims, its fees, its courses and their planned frequency, together with back issues of all the Club Newsletters since July 06. As well as visiting the site regularly for your own benefit, we would also like you to encourage those you teach to go there too. There is also a special 'Trainers Only' section which is currently accessed by clicking on the side door of the club photograph on the web site Home page. There you can find out extra information relevant only to trainers. For example, all the Help Files and Trainers' Mailouts are available there, together with advance notice of the new courses under development.

Trainers' Meetings: In 2007 the Club will be holding "new format" Trainers Meetings that will include content relevant to all the Club's Trainers whether they train PC & XP Fundamentals or one of the many Optional Courses. If you are a Trainer, please try to attend these meetings which, because of numbers, will be held after the General Monthly Meetings in the Harvey Lowe Pavilion. The first of these Trainers' Meetings will be held after the General Monthly Meeting on Wednesday, 14th February 2007. Looking forward to seeing you all there!!

Changes in Terminology: In an attempt to standardise the various terms used in and around the Club our courses will now be classified in terms of method of delivery – either “one-on-one” or “group”, and the term Workshop will be replaced by “short course”. In terms of content, courses will be either Computer Fundamentals (PC & XP Fun) or Optional Courses (MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Digital Camera, etc). These changes have now been incorporated in the Newsletter, website, and new editions of advertising leaflets.

Updated Fundamentals Manuals: By popular demand, the major change in the Fun manuals for 2007 is the inclusion of the Exercises in the main text of the manual rather than at the end. Trainer input has also been used to review, amend and rewrite the main text of XP Fun, with special attention being paid to the very important section on Storing Information. As part of this revision, a new Sign-Off card will be introduced to record the student’s progress through both PC Fun and XP/Win 98 Fun. (Draft Copy attached). Trainers are asked to fill in the sections completed and sign and date this at the end of each session, thus giving a clear record to the student, the Club, and any trainer who may teach the student in subsequent weeks, of the topics covered so far, the rate of progress through the course, and non-attendances. Being on card, we hope this will be easier to slip in and out of the sleeves of the manual to indicate the starting point for the next session, and also sturdy enough to last as a record of progress through both Fundamentals courses. (This card will replace the white paper sheet which is not being used consistently by all trainers.)

Copies of the new PC and XP Fun manuals (in sleeves without binders) will be available for all trainers when we re-open next year– please add your name to the list on the Club Noticeboard (or email Eleanor) if you would like copies. (Windows 98 Fun may take a little longer, and will only be available as and when required to teach Win 98 students.)

Relief Trainers: The Club needs a Relief Trainer List for Computer Fundamentals to cover holidays and sickness, etc. Hopefully, by the time you read this, you will have already given your name to your Senior Trainer as being willing to come in for an occasional relief session – if not, please give it serious consideration. This special offer is also open to non-(at the moment) Fun trainers, so if you are happy to serve in this way please email Eleanor (and add your name to the Train the Trainer course clipboard if you would like a bit more course-specific information from Peter).

Jump start on some Optional courses If students are desperate to start on the Optional courses, they are now permitted to sign up for Internet & Email, Digital Cameras and Computer Building (these three only) once they have completed PC Fun and while still attending XP/98 Fun sessions. The Senior Trainers of these three Optional courses will then chat with them to assess their current skill level before accepting them on their courses. This will help the more able students progress faster, but does not mean that they can skip XP (or 98) Fun – these are still mandatory pre-requisites for all other Optional courses.

Optional Courses The fees for all the Optional courses have been reviewed taking into account the cost of manual creation and printing and the total number of hours of teaching included in the course. Based on the formula used to calculate fees this means that from February, Publisher and PowerPoint (both 6 weeks of 3 hours per week) will now cost \$30 rather than \$25 – an increase yes, but still extremely good value. To clarify the position on two other recently asked questions: a) Course manuals are not designed as Teach Yourself manuals, so will not be sold separately to students not enrolling in the course, and b) Anyone wishing to repeat a course will pay the full course fee, and receive a new up-to-date manual.

New Courses The VoIP Course Manual is in draft form, and is currently being reviewed by Senior Trainers. The Embellish, Creative Writing and Vinyl to CD conversion courses are all in the development stage.

In summary: As not all trainers are able to attend General Meetings on the second Wednesday of the month this Trainers’ Mailout will be the major tool for keeping in touch with our trainers. Any trainer without email at home will receive their copy courtesy of Australia Post. We feel that this is an important part of being a trainer with Computer Pals-The Hills, but if you do not wish to remain on this mailing list then please contact Peter or Eleanor to discuss your reasons.

Peter, Bill & Eleanor

Fundamentals Course Sign-Off Card

SESSION NO.	DATE	SECTIONS COMPLETED THIS SESSION	TRAINER'S SIGNATURE
PC Fun	These are not intended to be realistic session targets - just an example of using the Card!		
1	29/1/07	1-11 including Ex 0	Eleanor
2	5/2/07	Ex 0, 12-15 including Ex 1 and Homework Task	Eleanor
3	19/2/07	Apol for last week. 17-26	Eleanor
4	26/2/07	27 - 34	Eleanor
5	5/3/07	35-48	Eleanor
6	19/3/07	Apol last week. 49-61. Hats and ties as homework	Eleanor
7	26/3/07	Complete Hats and Ties. XP Fun.1-3	Eleanor
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Fundamentals Course Sign-Off Card

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Hopefully, we will not need many entries on this side!