

## Membership

Membership has now reached 511. There has been steady interest from new members wanting to join the club over the Christmas break, and we currently have a waitlist of 27 (22 XP and 5 Vista). Several students are very close to completing Fundamentals which will free up training slots for the new members. (This time last year we had 508 members and spare Fundamentals training capacity.)

## Fundamentals Training

### Trainer Assessment Test

Fifty-eight Trainers have now taken (and passed) the new Assessment Test, and all Trainers and Helpers that chose not to take the test have been issued with Assistant Trainer badges.

### Flash Drives

As announced last year, all new students starting Fundamentals will be given a Manual and a Flash Drive pre-loaded with the 5 basic Fundamentals files. The down side of this is that all these Flash Drives look the same from the outside, and show in My Computer as "Toshiba (H:)" or similar – which makes identification a bit of a problem. When showing new students how to use Flash Drives during their first lesson, would you please ensure that they are "**renamed**" with the student's own Christian name. If you are unsure how to do this please ask your Senior Trainer.

While on the subject of flash drives, we have been asked to repeat the last Mailout's request that you please teach your students to manually virus check their flash drive at the beginning of each lesson, and not to rely on the automatic background checking.

### Fun Manuals

As announced last month, all three manuals are being updated to correct errors and remove all references to Floppy Disks. Leigh has pretty much completed PC and XP Fun (thanks Leigh) but Eleanor is lagging with Vista.

### New System for Apologies

The current system for phoning the Office to register apologies for non-attendance at any class is just too cumbersome, doesn't work, and will be changed. Our course sessions are organised by either Roster Officers (for Fundamentals) or Course Coordinators (for Optional courses). These are the people who have the contact details for all the students on their courses, know when the courses are running, and are the people who need to know when someone is unable to attend class. Currently, even if a student or Trainer phones the Office in good time, through no fault of the Office Staff, the message often doesn't get to the Roster Officer / Coordinator until shortly before the session starts – which is much too late for them to do anything about it. For example, the Roster Officer may call in a Relief Trainer to cover an expected Trainer shortage, only to arrive at the club and discover that 3-4 students have left Apologies on the answer machine, and the Relief Trainer is not required after all! Alternatively, they can arrive to find a full complement of students and apologies from Trainers.

Manuals will soon have a pre-printed adhesive label inside the front cover identifying the session, and the name and contact details for all Apologies. The existing instruction in the Fundamentals Manuals asking people to notify the Club, will be amended to direct them to the new label, which will be course/Fun Session specific. A possible format is shown below.

<b>Apologies - Tuesday Morning Fundamentals</b>	
If for any reason you are unable attend class, please notify the person below giving as much notice as possible	
<b>Roster Officer:</b>	Sandra Self
<b>Email:</b>	
<b>Phone:</b>	9639 0208

<b>Apologies - Graphics</b>	
If for any reason you are unable attend class, please notify the person below giving as much notice as possible.	
<b>Coordinator:</b>	Eleanor Ball
<b>Email:</b>	leightel@aapt.net.au
<b>Phone:</b>	9634 1498

Phoning the Club with apologies should now be the last resort when all other options fail.

### Fun CDs

Students often leave their CDs in the computer when they go home. When the CD is found, one of two things happens. If the CD is correctly labelled with the student's name, Office Assistants make the effort

to ring the student and tell them that their CD is in the Office waiting to be collected. If the CD is unlabelled, it goes straight to the Lost Property box in the kitchen. So, firstly, please ensure your student writes their name on the CD when it is issued (there is a suitable pen in the drawer in the Office). Secondly, if a student says they have "lost" their CD, please check the Office and the Lost Property box before going to ask for a replacement.

### Relief Trainers List

We are always on the look out for Relief Trainers, so if you are a Fundamentals Trainer, and are willing to do an extra training session occasionally, please consider adding your name and availability to the Relief Trainers List in the corridor.

### Office Assistants

If you know of anyone who might be interested in becoming an Office Assistant (either on a permanent basis or just as relief cover for holidays and sickness), please contact Barbara Browne on 9639 8636.

### Promoting Optional Courses

The autoplay promotional PowerPoint CDs are now being distributed to new students, and the enhanced version will soon be available for you to copy to your flash drive if you wish.

## **Club PCs**

### Windows Updates

Just a reminder – the Maintenance Team will now do all Updates, so any Updates Available notifications should now be ignored by clicking on the **X** in the top right-hand corner of the "balloon" in the System Tray.

### USB/Sound panels on the fronts of PC

The sound panels on the fronts of the PCs are still causing a few problems which hopefully will be resolved in the near future.

## **New, Updated and Deleted Courses**

### e-Bay Workshop??

The possibility of an eBay and Buying on the Internet course is still being investigated, if anyone has any information or interest in developing this course, please contact any Senior Trainer, who will be only too happy to pass the message on.

### Linux - Writer

Bill Butts and John Greenlees are developing a course using the Open Office program "Writer" (the "open" equivalent of Microsoft Word). There will be a demonstration of Writer at the February Monthly Meeting, and a Clipboard for expressions of interest in this course will be available.

### Genealogy Workshop???

As genealogy is such a vast and varied topic, Ella Ross and Wendy Hoare are investigating a 2-session Workshop, with Session 1 introducing the very popular program Family Tree Maker, and Session 2 demonstrating how you can use the Internet to discover more about your family history now that you know how to display it in Family Tree Maker. Watch this space!

## **Windows Live Messenger Version 9**

Several members use Windows Live Messenger Version 8.5 which has a Shared Folders capability. Microsoft has now released Windows Live Messenger Version 9.0 but this version no longer supports Shared Folders although this is not made clear at the download website. So if you currently use Version 8.5 and want to retain the use of Shared Folders don't upgrade to Version 9. By the way, the Shared Folder capability is being moved to a new Microsoft product called SkyDrive which gives you 25GB of free storage up on the Internet which can then be shared publicly or privately.

## **Windows 7**

Well, as some of you already know, Vista is on the way out! The next Windows Operating System (Windows 7) is due for release at the end of this year. Windows 7 reputedly fixes lots of Vista's problems, and runs on a much smaller (as in less powerful) PC. Our current plan, as when Vista was released, is to sit back and wait to see what happens. We are not planning to teach Windows 7 until at least early 2011.

Peter's advice to people wanting to buy a new computer is unchanged – buy hardware that will run Windows Vista (it has the highest hardware needs), but install XP now, with a view to upgrading when all the bugs have been ironed out of Windows 7. (Microsoft indicate that XP for new PCs will be available until at least the middle of 2009.)

### **Office 2007**

For anyone wanting to purchase Office 2007, Bing Lee currently have the Student & Teacher Edition on special for \$129, the lowest price I've seen.

### **Monthly Meeting**

The February monthly meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2009 will include two in-house presentations about our own Optional Courses - **Publisher**, and the proposed **Open Office Writer**. (There will be no Trainers' meeting in February.)

*Peter & Eleanor*