

# Computer Pals for Seniors ~ The Hills Inc.

## Notes on Q&A Help Forum held on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> August 2006.

**Introduction.** The forum was held after the Annual General Meeting and morning tea and commenced about 11:40 am. The panel consisted of Ted Kemp (digital cameras), Ken Caldwell (hardware); Peter Fowler (XP operating system); Ella Ross (email and Internet) and Joe Vaughan (MS Word). The demonstration computer was operated by Eleanor Ball, the roving microphone by Gilbert Cowlshaw and the moderator was Bill Butts. Sheila Cocksedge recorded the discussion, manually and on tape. A summary of the discussions follows. Further details may be obtained by contacting the appropriate panel member.

**Q 1: Question Box:** My computer came complete with an operating system but no other applications. What applications need I purchase in order to be able to write documents such as simple newsletters?

**A1: Ken Caldwell:** If you purchase Microsoft Office you will get a word processor (Word), a spreadsheet (Excel) and other applications as well. However there are free packages available that do these tasks (and others such as drawing). Open Office is one of these. Ken Caldwell is willing to prepare a disk of this free software at the cost of the media (CD or DVD blank). Currently Computer Pals does not train people to use this free software.

**Q2: Question Box:** How does System Restore work and should I switch it on?

**A2: Peter Fowler:** System Restore is a program within the Windows Operating System that tracks your programs and your computer's configuration settings and records this information regularly. If you experience trouble with your computer, say after downloading and installing a new program, you can return to the previous computer state using System Restore. However, you must make sure that System Restore is turned on. It is not on when Windows is first installed. To turn it on, right-click on My Computer (probably on the Desktop) and go to Properties>System Restore. Make sure that the checkbox Turn off system restore on all drives is not ticked. If there is a tick (✓) in the box, click on it to remove it. System Restore is then turned on. If you want to restore your computer to an earlier date click on Help and Support in the Start Menu and then click on Undo changes to your computer with System Restore. Read the information provided and follow the prompts. Note that System Restore does not change any application files you have saved, such as word documents or pictures. It does remove changes you, or your programs, made to Windows settings (usually) any new programs you have installed since the last Systems Restore. For more information see Peter's blog at <http://psf.bigblog.com.au/>. Finally, if you discover a virus on your computer turn System Restore off until the virus is removed in case it is captured in the System Restore file and therefore not removed from your computer.

**Q3: Question Box:** When Forwarding an email how do I get rid of all the email addresses shown in the original?

**A3: Ella Ross:** Before you forward an email to someone else, edit out any parts that are not needed by the new recipient. To do this first click on Forward and highlight and delete any parts of the message you don't want to send, including addresses of other people if you wish. If you are forwarding an email you received from someone else (or just sending one you created) to several people, you can avoid them receiving a long list of names and addresses by sending the email to yourself and placing the name of your recipients in the BCC (Blind Carbon Copy) box. Note: If this box does not appear when you create (or go to forward) an email, go to View on the main Menu Bar

of the New Message or Forward Message window and make sure that All Headers is ticked. When it is ticked the BCC box becomes available. Note that Outlook Express does keep a record of all the addresses to whom you sent a BCC. To see this record select the email concerned in the Sent Items folder, right click on it and click on Properties. A list of recipients and their addresses appears.

**Q4: From the Floor – Jack Seager:** Is any member using the latest version of Visual Basic?

**A4:** No member responded. If you are using it, please contact Jack.

**Q5: From the Floor – Malcolm McKenzie:** Earlier this year the demonstration computer in Room 1 was typing incorrect letters on to the monitor screen. For example, press the R T Y keys and the letters P Y F appeared on the screen. Why is this and how can it be corrected?

**A5:** The common and standard keyboard is the QWERTY keyboard. However, there is another type of keyboard called the Dvorak keyboard which has the keys arranged in different places so that a speed typist has quicker access to the most used keys. So if you type RTY on a standard keyboard but your computer's software is set for a Dvorak keyboard, the letters PYF will appear on the monitor screen. Somehow the demonstration computer had been set so that it "thought" that its keyboard was a Dvorak keyboard, hence the nonsense produced. Dominic has removed the offending software from the demonstration computer so this problem should not occur again.

**Q6: From the Floor:** Does anyone use Microsoft Access and can they help me?

**A6: Jack Seager:** Yes, I can help you.

**Q7: From the Floor – Sylvia Fenech:** My computer has slowed down a lot. Can I delete temporary files to improve its speed?

**A7: Peter Fowler:** To delete temporary files download ccleaner (also called "Crap Cleaner") from the Internet and run it. It removes a lot of the temporary files and this can help speed up your computer. But other things affect the computer's speed; it's a long topic. Also defrag your hard drive. Fragmentation occurs when parts of a file get detached from the main part of the file and moved to a different location on the hard drive. If a file is fragmented the computer takes longer to find all bits of the file. Defragging puts the parts together again. Viruses, spyware etc. can also be the cause of a slowdown. Use a virus checker like the free Avast! and also free adware scanners like Spybot Search and Destroy and Ad-Aware to remove these nasties. If you go to Peter's blog site <http://psf.bigblog.com.au/> you will find links that enable you to download these free programs. To check if any spurious program is running on your machine, right-click on the Taskbar next to (but not on) the **start** button. Click on Task Manager and then on the Processes tab when the Task Manager window opens. When the computer is idle most processes listed should not be using the CPU (the number 00 should appear in the CPU column). Only System Idle Process at the bottom of the window (about 96-99), Explorer and Task Manager itself should be using the CPU. Total CPU usage (bottom of the window) should be less than 10%. If it is significantly more there may be an invader running on your machine, or it may just be doing some housekeeping tasks by itself.

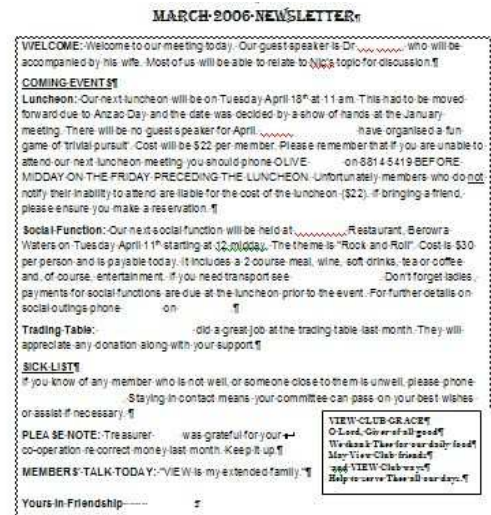
**Q8: From the Floor – Alan Rains:** How can I convert an old 78 record into a music CD?

**A8: Max Thomas:** "I have done hundreds of these; you just need the right software (AV Rack, Goldwave and Nero)." Max simply connects the speaker outlets of his player (after removing the speakers themselves) directly to the sound card in his computer and plays the record. Warning: This can be a bit dangerous as the input power level to normal speakers may be too high for the inputs to the sound card. You would need to keep the Hi-Fi volume control very low! Ted Kemp pointed out

that if you take the signal directly from the turntable deck (and not through the record player's speaker system) you will need what is called a pre-amp between the turntable and the computer. Another member (contact details not recorded) is using the free Audio editing software Audacity. It allows you to export the file as either a wave file or an MP3 file. Members wanting more information may contact Max on 9622 8386.

**Q9: From the Question Box:** In a one-page newsletter I produce every month for a local Club, I place a wavy-line border around the bottom several paragraphs (not a page border). I then insert a text box, with a line around it, near the bottom right-hand corner of the page. The layout is "square". As soon as I do this the section of the wavy line border immediately below and also to the right of the text box just disappears. Why? How can I get it back?

**A9:** Using a "soft return" (hold down Shift key and press Enter key) make sure all lines of text end before the left-hand edge of the text box. Now select the text box and change the layout to In front of text. The border reappears. If the box is on the left-hand side of the page the solution is more difficult. Helpers at the Forum were unable to solve this problem. Can you?



**Q10: From the Question Box:** The Address Bar has disappeared from the My Computer window. Where is it and how can I get it back? Several members have reported this problem to Fun trainers.

**A: 10 Bill Butts:** Either the Address Bar has not been selected in the View menu or it is on the screen but has migrated to somewhere where you can't see it at all or can't see all of it. Do this:

1. On the Menu Bar click on View and then Toolbars. Make sure there is a tick (✓) against Address Bar. If there is not, click on it to select it.
2. If the Address Bar still does not appear (or is in the wrong place) again go to View>Toolbars but this time click on Lock the Toolbars so that they can be moved. (The tick (✓) disappears.)
3. If you can see the edge of the Address Bar at the right-hand end of the Navigation Bar, place your mouse pointer over it and when it becomes a double-headed arrow press and hold down the mouse button. (Don't wait for double-headed crossed arrows). The Address Bar can now be dragged back to its rightful place below the Navigation Bar.
4. Finally Lock the Toolbars again.

**Q11: From the Question Box:** I am unable to view the attachments that come via Hotmail. I am using Outlook Express.

**A11: Ella Ross:** If you can't view PowerPoint shows that you receive as attachments you need to install PowerPoint viewer (assuming you don't have PowerPoint). You may need to adjust the security levels you have set. On the Outlook Express Menu Bar go to Tools>Options>Security and make any necessary changes.

THE END