

Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association **ASCCA**

ABN 47 097 847 642

NEWSLETTER April 2009

Vol 11 No 3 ISSN 1446-862X

HIGHLIGHTS FROM ASCCA/MICROSOFT SENIORS WEEK EVENTS

On Tuesday 17th March those people who attended the Microsoft **"TECHNOLOGY IMPROVING ACCESSIBILITY FORUM"** were inspired by the speakers and presenters. Microsoft attracted an impressive list of delegates ranging from corporate, technology and government representatives to leaders and advisors from disability services, the media, and volunteer organisations.

For most - the highlight must have been the Keynote Address by Professor Ron McCallum AO, Deputy Chair of Vision Australia and member of the United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. He previously served on the former Royal Blind Society Board and was the Dean of Law at Sydney University for a five-year term. In 1993, he was appointed to a full professorship. He has written widely on industrial law and has also worked on industrial relations taskforces for several State Governments. He also taught labour law at York University in Ontario and Duke University, North Carolina, and was appointed to the National Academy of Arbitrators.

Under any circumstances Professor McCallum would stand out as a high achiever and leave his audience impressed by the breadth of his work. However after discovering he has been blind since birth, and has overcome huge obstacles in living through a time when society did not accommodate the specific needs of people with disabilities; Ron's spectacular success left his audience breathless with admiration.



The Forum reinforced the importance of the work of ASCCA in striving to provide access to computer technology to all seniors. We learned about the software and hardware available to those who have sight impairment, and realised already knowing how to use a computer would mean that blindness in later life originating from one of the common causes like macular degeneration or diabetes need not isolate us as we may have feared. We were told by Professor McCallum more than 70% of the blind people in Australia are over 60 and most of these people grew up sighted, and find it difficult to learn to use the new technologies without being able to see.

We were introduced to "DAISY" which stands for Digital Accessible Information SYstem. <http://www.daisy.org/> Daisy is an international XML-based standard which enables navigation within a hierarchical structure consisting of text synchronised with audio. There is also a Sonata Software/Microsoft open source "Daisy AD-In" available to assist blind computer users.

"DAISY" books can be read on a portable player, known as a digital playback device, or on a computer with DAISY software. These players are easy to use, prompting the user and describing the function of each button so there is no need to remember too many instructions.

Did you know that numerous newspapers and magazines are routinely and instantly available to Vision Australia Library members through this digital technology?
<http://www.visionaustralia.org.au/>

While the food itself was delicious and plentiful, lunch was a time to explore some of the amazing adaptive technology that is now available to help people with many different problems, and to meet and converse with our speakers and fellow delegates. Imagine the relief of people who for the first time in their life are able to communicate their needs and feelings with a small touch screen device like those being demonstrated in the picture on the right.



See page 2 for a report on the Travellers Tales Seminar

ASCCA Notice Board - Dates to Remember in 2009

Wed 22 April - ASCCA Members Meeting - Level 1, 280 Pitt Street, Sydney, NSW

The ASCCA Competitions for 2009 will be launched at this Meeting.

11-17 May 2009 - National Volunteer Week - Theme "Volunteers: Everyday people, extraordinary contribution"

5 - 12 June - National e-Security Awareness Week

Tues 18 - Wed 19 August - 11th ASCCA Conference - Powerhouse Museum

19 November 2009 - ASCCA Annual General Meeting



If you belong to any ASCCA Club YOU are Invited

At the ASCCA Members Meeting which will be held on Wednesday 22nd April we will be launching a new Manual on "Accessibility Features in Windows and Web Browsers" which has been written by Dr. Scott Hollier, Project Manager, New Media, Media Access Australia. The manual explains accessibility features in XP, Vista and Windows 7 and the information in the manual will be of great use to all of us. Each person attending the Members Meeting on 22nd April will receive a free CD ROM copy of this new manual.

The Annual ASCCA Competitions will also be announced at this meeting - so come along and find out about these, plus an exciting new competition we are planning for 2009. We have been working hard to make these competitions even more worthwhile and enjoyable for all our ASCCA members throughout Australia. To enter you just have to be a member of any ASCCA member club.

MORE HIGHLIGHTS FROM SENIORS WEEK - TRAVELLERS TALES

There is no doubt about the enthusiasm of those "Grey Nomads" who are renowned for working hard at "spending their children's inheritance". The applications for the "TRAVELLERS TALES SEMINAR" had to be closed well before the 19th March because ASCCA was inundated with eager applicants.

Those people who attended were pleased with the varied program which included the importance of good planning to ensure a safe trip, as well as keeping in touch while away, and saving your precious memories when you return. A comprehensive and enlightening tour of the Smart Traveller Website <http://www.smartraveller.gov.au/> was presented by Rachel Wilson who is the NSW Deputy Director, Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade.



Annette Stuckey's step by step instructions on preserving your travel experiences with Microsoft PhotoStory 3 and Microsoft Moviemaker were well received, and even those in the audience who had used the programs before learned new ways to make their travel presentations more exciting. Annette, who is the Secretary of the Westlakes Seniors Computer Club and an ASCCA Director, used some fascinating African Safari photos taken by Ivan Scale from Westlakes to create her demonstration story.

Tony Lenn, who is the ASCCA Office Manager, and a member of the Mosman Seniors Computer Club used his experience as ASCCA's Blog-keeper to show how easy it is to take your family and friends along on your trip by setting up a blog. The term "blog" is a blend of the words "web" and "log" and describes a

user-generated website where entries are made in journal style. Although a blog looks in many ways like other websites - Tony assured his listeners it is easy to post a blog as you don't need the technical skills of a webmaster, and it encourages interactive feedback from your readers. It certainly sounded like the ideal way to communicate while travelling.

See page 5 for a report on the Carers Seminar



MORE ABOUT PERTH ACHIEVERS

The Perth Achievers Club which joined ASCCA in 2007 is an activity within the Citiplace Community Centre. It was set up in the 1960s as the result of cooperation between the congregation of St. Andrews Church Perth and the Perth City Council. This concept of a meeting place for Perth seniors who lived alone came about after the Rev. James Reid from St. Andrews Church Perth won a Churchill Scholarship and went to England with his family for study.

On his return home a year or so later he suggested the plan to his church members and Perth City Council was approached with the proposal to dismantle the old McNess Hall and build an Elderly Persons Centre, plus a McNess Hall above for church use and a caretakers unit above that. The City was given the Seniors Centre for twenty one years at a peppercorn rent of one shilling a year.

This proposal was quickly accepted and it wasn't long before the Drop-in-Centre was in use. Sandwiches and scones were supplied by the council and biscuits and cakes were purchased from the historic Mills and Wares Company; by now joined with Arnotts.

There were toilets, showers and towels available for men and women at a low cost. There were books and daily papers provided by the City of Perth plus a reading room.

It was after the Northbridge Lions Club, with the help of the St. Andrews Church members, provided a Christmas meal for the users of the centre that a small group of people who called themselves "The Achievers", was formed. The goal of this group was to assist in the raising of funds to continue the Christmas lunches in the McNess Hall.

The Perth Achievers moved to Citiplace about 1989. Citiplace is open five days a week (except for public holidays), and is for anyone fifty five and over.

Meals are reasonable - from cooked breakfasts to hot lunches - plus morning and afternoon teas. There is a Hairdressing Salon, a Podiatrist and an Op. Shop. A wide variety of activities such as films, dances, carpet bowls, yoga, Scrabble and many more is available. Computer training has now been included in the programs offered.

Thanks to Anna Thompson for this brief history of a fantastic community facility with which ASCCA is pleased to be associated.

AN IMPRESSIVE PATRON FOR BRISBANE SENIORS ONLINE

Brisbane Seniors Online BSOL had a big year in 2008 with continuing growth in membership, the appointment of Hazel Imison and Ben Munford as life members and the excitement of Val French accepting their invitation to become the Club Patron. The Central Training Centre has also been refurbished and reorganised so that it can now cater for 50 people at a time to help with the ever increasing popularity of the training sessions on offer in addition to Online Help.

Val French is a journalist who is a member of the Order of Australia and has a Centenary Medal and Commonwealth Senior Achiever Medal. She certainly has impeccable credentials for the role of Patron of such a group as BSOL; and how lucky they are to have such a busy lady agree to accept yet another volunteer role. Val initiated the Queensland and National Media Awards to help address negative ageing and has represented Queensland on the Australian National Association of Mental Health. She was vice-president of the Queensland Mental Health Association and Relatives and Friends of the Mentally Ill. She was co-founder and foundation President of the Queensland Council of Carers (Carers Qld) and one of the founders of the first national carers association.

Among her many other impressive achievements Val established "Older People Speak Out" and has been President ever since. She was Queensland Chairperson of: the Commonwealth Consumer Forum for the Aged; The Older Australians Advisory Council; and The Nursing Homes Appeals Committee. She was a member of the Retirement Village Accreditation Committee and the Chairperson of the Ministerial Advisory Council of Older Persons on which she served under various Ministers for five years and has been, and is, a member of numerous government and non-government advisory committees, including for the last 10 years, the Ministerial Road Safety Advisory Committee and for the last three years, the Police Seniors Task Force and committees on housing, intergenerational projects, aged care, elder abuse, grandparenting and social isolation.



Brian Korner BSOL President with Dick Bennett, Val French & Ben Munford

A Wonderful Combination of Enlightenment & Fun

Sirkka Duncan - ASCCA Training Officer

The first year of the 'Train the Trainer' workshops, offered by ASCCA and Telstra Connected Seniors™ collaboration, is coming to the end. I have enjoyed my work with the project which has given me the opportunity to meet with many members from a number of ASCCA clubs across Australia. It's been wonderful to see what a great work the many thousands of volunteers do by helping their fellow seniors into the world of 21st century information technology.

In the past two months I have been to the training rooms of Peel SeniorNet in Western Australia, with their computer room in the City of Mandurah Senior Citizens Centre, in a beautiful setting by the water. Members from Peel SeniorNet, Bunbury Seniors Computer Club, U3A Mandurah and RAAFA Meadow Springs attended the two-day TCS workshop in mobile phones and everyone there was most enthusiastic about learning. It was a pleasure to run the workshop there and I was made very welcome indeed.



The latest workshop was in Berri SA, right along the River Murray. My hosts were the members of



Berri Senior Citizens Club, who have a large building with well appointed computer training room and enthusiastic volunteer base. Thirteen trainers from the Berri Seniors and members from other community organisations took part in a training workshop over two days.

There was also an extra group of enthusiastic learners from the Berri Seniors who came on Saturday afternoon because the two day workshop was fully booked.

I have learnt while running these workshops how much untapped talent there is among seniors. People love to learn, and given the chance we have so much knowledge to offer and pass on to others. I have had great feedback from earlier workshops and I look forward to hearing from clubs offering mobile phone training.

This project is enlightening and also fun, what a wonderful combination!

"Meddling With Mobiles" at Epping

Computer Pals for Seniors Epping has just completed two seven week "Meddling with Mobiles" courses, each with eight students who brought along their existing mobile phones. The basis of their learning was the Telstra Connected Seniors™ material presented by Sirkka at a "Train the Trainer Workshop" at Epping which was attended by members of several Sydney Clubs. Four of the six Epping members who attended this course were involved in teaching the course which was much appreciated by the class members who are all feeling much more comfortable with most aspects of day to day mobile phone use. Two more classes are planned for next term. Thanks Sirkka!



In response to the request from Age Concern England to collaborate with ASCCA on their project to support older people to be inspired in Information Technology Learning - the Epping Club also held a [myfriends online week](#) meeting combined with their regular Monthly General Meeting on Wednesday 18th March. Since then the club has had a visit from David Pieper, an ex-pat member of the Age Concern organisation who is currently visiting his family here in Australia. This gentleman has also visited Nan Bosler at the ASCCA Office to find out more about the excellent work we are doing with seniors and technology here in Australia.

HAVE YOU VISITED THIS WEBSITE?

The Australian Government has a special website for Australians over 50. This provides a single point of access to Government and non-Government information and services for older Australians. <http://www.seniors.gov.au/>

COMPUTERS FOR CARING SEMINAR

The last of the ASCCA Seniors Week Seminars held on Friday 20th March offered something for all computer users. The keynote presentation from Paul Clark, Microsoft Community Affairs Manager was a perfect blend of caring on a personal level through the story of the needs of his own grandparents, and community caring through business and volunteering.



Melissa McKenzie and Duncan Kirk from Coles Online were relaxed and helpful as they introduced us to the many advantages of online shopping and helped us avoid some of the problems we could encounter. Melissa and Duncan kindly returned at lunch time to offer hands on help for anyone who wanted to further explore the Coles online shopping website.

Diane Brentnall, who is ASCCA's Training and Club Development Officer, expertly guided the audience through a series of templates and hidden features available through Microsoft Office 2007. Although the intent was to help carers, it was easy to see lots of other uses for any computer user.



Our next adventure was a tour of the NSW Carers Website with Nina Olle who is the Communications Officer for Carers NSW. Nina was able to show us that, although intended to help carers, this website also contains much information of general use for the wider community.

After lunch Joan Craymer took the audience on a series of explorations through a number of websites packed with information and projects to educate and amuse "children of all ages".

Through the instructions for making a simple generic book with the Microsoft Publisher program, the possibilities of colouring books, puzzle books, and caring books for many occasions were investigated. Other craft ideas like "take-home" special occasion place mats, cards, baskets and boxes were shown and there were suggestions for scanning papers and fabrics to be used for painting or quilting.



Melissa McKenzie and Duncan Kirk wait for our guests to have lunch before being offered a tour of the Coles online website.

Everyone who attended the "Computers for Caring" and "Travellers Tales" Seminars was given a free CD which contained detailed information for all the practical computer demonstrations given by Annette, Tony, Diane and Joan.

THE POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS ...

The Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children's Services, The Hon Bill Shorten MP, has launched a new multimedia tool that will help hearing parents or grandparents communicate with their deaf child.

The RIDBC Auslan Tutor, an iTunes application developed by experts at the Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children (RIDBC), contains short video clips of more than 500 Australian Sign Language (Auslan) signs in context.



The Auslan Tutor application has been designed for use on an Apple iPhone or iPod touch, and can be downloaded from the Apple iTunes store for AU\$49.99. Users are able to search the tutor for words or categories and then view a video clip of those words being demonstrated in Auslan, which is the language of the Australian deaf community.

The tutor is not just for parents but for anyone who has regular contact with someone who is deaf and RIDBC is confident the RIDBC Auslan Tutor has many potential applications and endless possibilities. For more information about the RIDBC Auslan Tutor, call (02) 9871 1233 or visit

www.ridbc.org.au.



RIDBC student Olivia Ford and her mum Renee Ford use the RIDBC Auslan Tutor to teach Auslan signs to Mr Shorten and RIDBC Chief Executive John Berryman (Photography by Fiora Sacco)

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MARGARET PERGER - EUROBODALLA SENIOR CITIZEN OF THE YEAR

Margaret Perger who is the Treasurer of EuroSCUG was recently named Eurobodalla Senior Citizen Of The Year. While excited about this excellent choice, and confident Margaret will be a wonderful ambassador for the seniors in her shire, her fellow club members are wondering how she will be able to fit in any more volunteer work than she already does, and are even seeking an assistant treasurer to ease her load.

The story we have heard is that Margaret is already using this as an opportunity to 'talk up' EuroSCUG. Congratulations Margaret!

MUSWELLBROOK SENIORS COMPUTER CLUB

It is exciting to hear that Muswellbrook Computer Club which was formed with the help of ASCCA early in 2007 under the auspices of the Muswellbrook Senior Citizens Club is doing well. After a little more than two years they have a membership of more than 80 people who are also members of the Seniors Club.

With a training room consisting of six donated computers, two printers and an internet connection all operating on a network, they conduct training in three two hour blocks every week, on a Tuesday and Wednesday, and can extend this to Thursday when required. Training is generally aimed at helping members solve whatever issues they need explained. These can be any mix of basic training, photos, word processing, internet, family tree, slide scanning or other topics as required.

As all of us who teach in other clubs have discovered, it's a poor day when a tutor doesn't learn something new in the process of sharing their own knowledge. The club is grateful to have had donations of computers and equipment from local businesses, and to have received a grant from Telstra to conduct internet training.

Thanks to Keith Harvey who is very involved with Muswellbrook Computer Club, as a Committee Member, trainer and Webmaster for the update on the success of the Club.

Pass on this issue of the ASCCA newsletter by printing copies for distribution, or make a list of all your club members with email addresses and forward it to them.

The newsletter can also be read and/or downloaded from our website: - www.ascca.org.au

You are welcome to copy items from this newsletter but acknowledgment of ASCCA is required.

Membership of ASCCA is open to all Seniors Computer Clubs, Organisations with a membership including Seniors, and Organisations that recognise the value of computer technology for Seniors. Cost of membership is \$100 per year. Corporate Membership is also welcome.

If you fit one of those categories and are interested in joining ASCCA please go to our website www.ascca.org.au or email office@sascca.org.au to find out how to start a club or read some of the advantages of joining ASCCA if you are an existing club. You can download an Application Form.

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Remember this is **YOUR NEWSLETTER**. Please take special note clubs outside Sydney and NSW.

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