

## Welcome

This month's new members:

Ngairie McFall  
Cheryl Beaton  
Leny Engel  
Doreen Small  
Jennifer Malthus  
Murray Gillespie  
Alan Crocknell

## HELP DESK

The Help Desk is open most Thursday nights from 7.00 p.m. to 9.00 p.m. These are proving very popular. Unfortunately we do not have many members willing to help out and it has been left to two or three to attend to your problems. One night we had 9 people so we weren't able to attend to everyone as much as we liked.

Our members are all volunteers and are not computer technicians or software experts. We can help with minor issues but often time is taken up where attendance at a course would be more appropriate. Usually with technical issues we cannot help and would suggest that you approach a computer tech. Please be patient if we take time to get to help you.

You can seek self-help by using the Help menu on your computer. All programs have a Help menu usually on the top bar. Windows Help is found in the Start menu panel. If you are working on some application pressing F1 at the top of your keyboard will give you access to the help files.

You would have covered this in the Computer Awareness Course. Lots of help is available on the internet. Go to Google and in the search panel just type what help you want. E.g. "Place indents in MS Word 2007". Also try the City libraries which have a huge range of computer books.

## Obsolete File Formats

A friend whose father had passed away had been handed a number of CD's which contained numerous files and photographs. They inserted the CD in their Windows computer and Explorer listed the files with mostly cryptic names.

As you know Microsoft places a three letter extension at the end of the name preceded by a dot. This extension usually tells what the type of file it is. For example .doc is a Microsoft Word document. There is no standard file format; each software maker will have their own. Some such as .jpg (photographs) are generic.

My friend found that many of the files had .MIX as the extension and others .PFS. We had no idea what they were but the size of the .MIX - 250Mb - indicated that they could be photographs. Each time we tried to open them Microsoft said it couldn't find an application. So a search of the internet was made and it was found that they had been created using Microsoft PictureIt! an obsolete program.

It was probable that we might find a converter but no luck with our searches. The only option was to see if we could get a copy of PictureIt! but it doesn't

run under Vista. So far out of luck on this one. The .PFS had been created in First Choice, an obsolete MSDOS word processor so also no luck here.

The upshot of this is that it was nigh on impossible to open the files. The lesson being that no matter what program you use it is really important to save in a recognized format.

Often if you upgrade your computer the existing software is not compatible so you will need to convert it. Generally for any text documents using PDF is fine so long as you don't want to edit it. For long term use .txt. Microsoft uses .DOC but have many versions over the many years which are not always compatible. You will lose formatting but any computer and operating system will open these.

For photo's use .jpg or preferably .tif. This issue is much worse if the files were created under another operating system.

There are a couple of free programs that will convert file formats XnView 400+ graphic formats and Irfanview.

**Irfanview**  
[irfanview.com](http://irfanview.com)  
**XnView**  
[xnview.com](http://xnview.com)

## Tiny URL

Throughout these newsletters web links are given using this Tinyurl. This converts a long url to a very short one using a mathematical algorithm. The actual link to the web page is the last 6 characters after the / symbol. Tinyurl stores this link on its own site so when you click on the link you go to this site which decrypts the link and passes you on to the site you wish to view. I was asked how you could find out what the site was without

actually going there. Easy. Go to Tinyurl.com and click on the **preview** feature and then click **enable**. In the following example the link [tinyurl/c3cqdq](http://tinyurl.com/c3cqdq) points to a Wikipedia article. More details at [Tinyurl.com](http://Tinyurl.com)



### Preview of TinyURL.com/c3cqdq

This TinyURL redirects to:

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presentation\\_software](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presentation_software)

[Proceed to this site.](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Presentation_software)

## MICROSOFT WINDOWS 7

You may have noticed talk about Microsoft's next "update" - Windows 7. Due for release in September(?) it has been distributed in Beta (trial) form. It will be sold in 6 different versions - Vista has 4. It is supposed to fix all the criticisms of Vista and is what Vista should have been. Don't be tempted to upgrade to Vista - wait until W7 has been out for a while. Many people continue to use XP 65% and you can continue with this now 7 year-old programme if it works for you. There is no word yet on whether you would need to update your other software to be compatible with W7 but given Microsoft's past you will. Apple will be releasing Snow Leopard in June, an update to Leopard. Apple claim that this will significantly reduce system overheads. One big difference here is that Apple have only one version which costs \$199 (NZ) and comes on 2 DVD's with a huge range of software, it covers all users from low end to top end. Microsoft's near-equivalent top line Vista Ultimate costs \$500 (NZ). Who's making money here?

### Windows 7

[tinyurl.com/3qy28n](http://tinyurl.com/3qy28n)

### Apple Snow Leopard

[tinyurl.com/4wfc8](http://tinyurl.com/4wfc8)

## The Misplaced Apostrophe

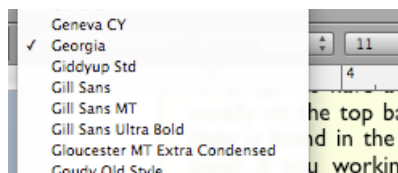
One of the biggest mistakes made by writer is misusing or not using apostrophes. Often you may see "Banana's Cheap" or "Lets go to town". What about "Photo's printed" or "two days time". Did you spot the errors? Confused? Well, no longer. A new web site has been set up to help you on this. Set up by an organization in England to preserve the correct use of the apostrophe it aims to educate and provides a number of tutorials.

**Apostrophe Protection Society**  
[apostrophe.org.uk](http://apostrophe.org.uk)

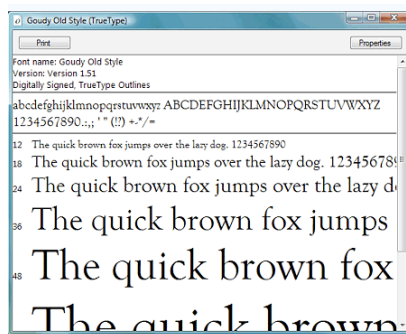
## Fonts

Not the church type but those we use on our computer. Your computer will come with quite number of Fonts - actually the correct name is *Typeface* - and each software programme will install more. The art of using typefaces and page layout is called *typography*.

To see what fonts you have installed on your computer you can open any programme and looking under the font menu you will get a list. But depending on the programme you may not see the style until you type it in.



Windows provides a way for you to see all of your fonts, the styles and available characters. In XP and Vista click **Start|control panel|fonts**. Double click any font to get a preview. In Vista



## Genealogy Notes

If you are using the internet to search records, such as church baptisms, census and so on you will find that most of this has been transcribed from manual text. Experience has shown that during the transcription the reader has had difficulty interpreting the original text. Having got the transcribed text try to get a computer view of the original. Using your zoom feature enlarge the text and

you may have to click **Appearance and Personalization|fonts**. You can then print out the font style.

You are not stuck with the fonts that come with you computer. There are many sites offering free fonts, either as a package or singly. One site that has many is 1001freefonts.com - they have more than that. One neat service they have is that you can send them a copy of your handwriting as an alphabet and they will produce your personal style of font for a fee of course.

## Shrewsbury

This is one from their Old English category. They also sell 10,000 fonts for US\$19.95 Available for both Windows and Mac. To install your fonts follow the instructions from Microsoft.

One problem, especially with Windows, is that it loads each one into memory ready in case you need it. Ideally you use a font manager which we will discuss next month.

### Microsoft Fonts

[tinyurl.com/8gsm6](http://tinyurl.com/8gsm6).

### 1001 Fonts

[tinyurl.com/kgkn](http://tinyurl.com/kgkn)

### Linotype.com

[tinyurl.com/cmudz8](http://tinyurl.com/cmudz8)

Next issue:

AMP Font Manager

decipher the letters. Look at all of the text to decide what each character is, but never assume anything. This does test your skill and you will often find the transcription incorrect which will lead you down the wrong path.

Some help and tips available at:

[tinyurl.com/de8vyw](http://tinyurl.com/de8vyw)

[tinyurl.com/dghfu8](http://tinyurl.com/dghfu8)

[tinyurl.com/c7eaqu](http://tinyurl.com/c7eaqu)