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Newsletter December 2022

From the Chair

This is a brief note from me as there isn't much to say that was not covered in the November Progress Report.
It has been another challenging year for SeniorNet, managing our way through the continuing uncertainty about Covid and the various levels of restrictions for much of the year. There has also been the added workload involved in streamlining our operations.

On the bright side, once restrictions lifted, we were able to offer a range of well attended courses, some repeats by popular demand, and some new. It was good to see members bringing a buzz back to SeniorNet after what had been a very quiet period.

Much of the hard work has now been done on streamlining SeniorNet; it is almost summer, and there are holidays (even if only staycations) to look forward to. I would like to take this opportunity to, again, thank all the hard working volunteers for their invaluable contribution to SeniorNet and wish you all a very happy holiday however you celebrate the season.

As you will see from Allan's education report, we have a lot to look forward to in 2023.

Best wishes

Pam Fletcher

Did you know this about SeniorNet?

by Ricky Berg

In 1968, Dr Mary Furlong founded an organisation that grew out of a research project, funded by the Markle Foundation, to determine how computers and telecommunications could enhance the lives of older adults.

The Markle Foundation is a New York-based private foundation established in 1927 by American industrialist and financier John Markle and his wife Mary, with the focus on technology, health care, and national security.

Mary Furlong is a Doctor of Education with special interests in, and a leading authority on, longevity in commercial and corporate businesses.

With an interest in how technology enhanced the lives of older adults, Mary Furlong encountered much scepticism as she tried to find funding for a programme to support seniors using computers. However, in 1986, the Markle Foundation recognized the potential that existed, and funded a research project based at the University of San Francisco.

Five "Learning Centres" were opened with twenty seniors that year, based on the principles of being a *non-profit organization specializing in computer and internet education for adults 55 and over and those in need*.

Apple Computers donated computers to the individuals and Centres.

At that time, the SeniorNet Computer Learning Centres were operated by volunteers across the United States with a standardised curriculum provided by SeniorNet headquarters. Their banner proclaimed "Education & Empowerment".

In 1992, SeniorNet 'went global' with a new Learning Centre opening in Wellington, New Zealand. We celebrated our 30th anniversary at the volunteers end-of-year lunch with a cake.

SeniorNet now has additional international affiliations in Nepal, Korea, China, Russia, and Sweden.

Whilst the USA seems to have a paltry 30 Learning

Centres, NZ has 50 spread throughout the country, and Australia has about 35 (they are affiliated to the Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association).

With the passage of time and acceptance of mainstream computer programs and applications, Learning Centres have moved to helping teach seniors about mobile phones, how to manage mobile banking, using social media, and online shopping.

Much SeniorNet activity these days is also dedicated to helping with 'How do I do this?' with the latest technologies.

Education report

By Allan Chee, Convenor Education Committee

Several courses in the second half of 2022 were well supported by our members. The Supergold Card and the two Genealogy courses attracted 19, 20 and 20 participants respectively during August and September. From the feedback, we developed a " hands on" Genealogy course that Mary Newman is running on the first Tuesday of each month.

In October, the Streaming TV and Wifi in the Home course, was attended by 21 members, due in large part to Vodafone announcing that they were closing down their TV service in New Zealand. The service has now been extended to the end of February 2023.

November brought two sessions run for us by Trademe on accessing their site. Both sessions attracted more than 20 people.

From the feedback and comments on these courses our Education group will offer the following topics early next year:

10 February TV apps, Freeview and satellite TV.

21 February Cybersecurity and scams – a speaker from CERT.

16 March Passwords.

31 March Phones: mobile data, roaming data, hot spotting, wifi, removal of the copper network.

11, 18 April; 2, 9 May Smartphone Driver's Licence.

18 May   Google Lens app.

Ongoing sessions:

Apple apps : Every second Wednesday of the month

Genealogy practice sessions: First Tuesday of the month

We also hope to engage speakers from Triton hearing, WCC Archives and National Library. If you have any other suggestions for us to consider please don't hesitate – let us know.

Have a Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and a safe Christmas with your family. Perhaps you will get a new device too!! I already know of at least two members who have new or 'hand-me-down' smartphones that they now need tuition on how to get the most out of them.

The copper network and landlines

In our December 2021 newsletter we wrote about telephone and internet connections. Questions continue about the withdrawal of the copper network, its replacement with fibre and what will happen to landlines. This report *5 Things to know about Copper Withdrawal* answers them as does a recent interview on RNZ *Copper land-lines to go, concerns for vulnerable*

Can your smartphone help your memory?
By Alan Royal

Using digital devices such as smartphones could help improve memory skills, rather than causing people to become lazy or forgetful, finds a new study led by University College, London (UCL) researchers. The findings show that using a digital device as external memory not only helps people to remember the information saved on the device, but also helps them to remember unsaved information too.

Senior author Dr Sam Gilbert (UCL Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience) said, "We wanted to explore how storing information in a digital device could influence memory abilities. We found that when people were

allowed to use external memory, the device helped them to remember the information they had saved into it.

This was hardly surprising, but we also found that the device improved people's memory for unsaved information as well. This was because using the device shifted the way that people used their memory to store high-importance versus low-importance information. Far from causing 'digital dementia,' using an external memory device can even improve our memory for information that we never saved."

The above is a summary of [the original study](#).

Sweet treats

By Penny MacDonald

Recently we've enjoyed some delicious baked goodies at some of our events. We have been fortunate to be approved as a recipient for GBB baked goods delivery in the last few months which enables us to share kai and connect when attending selected workshops.

SeniorNet Wellington are very conscious that social isolation can be a particular issue for older people. Many have had a tough time over the last couple of years with Covid restrictions making some still hesitant about venturing out and more reliant on technology to communicate with others. SeniorNet has made a special effort to provide opportunities to socialise, and morning tea and a chat are an integral part of our educational sessions.

For those who may not be aware of GBB or for anyone wishing to become a volunteer here's what GBB does. [Good Bitches Baking](#) is all about spreading a bit of sweetness in our communities. Their aim is to give a moment of happiness to people going through a tough time.

Anyone can be a Good Bitch – it's a very admiring and gender-inclusive term. Good Bitches are people who want to help those in their community who are having a tough time. You don't have to be a master baker, because it's the kindness in your intentions that matters more than the final product.

It is easy to join and roster yourself for a day that suits you best. This might be a bake and deliver (as we have for SeniorNet), bake for the Sunday pickup when another volunteer collects your items or be a driver that does the pickups. All boxes and labels supplied - it is incredibly easy and rewarding to be involved! Click here to see about being a GB!

Fourteen ways Google Lens saves your time on Android phones

By Alan Royal

Released in 2017, the downloadable Google Lens app is essentially very powerful image recognition technology. It is designed to show the user relevant information related to objects it identifies using visual analysis.

In simpler terms, whatever you look at using the Google Lens app with your device's camera will then bring you lots of information about whatever you/the camera is seeing.

When directing your phone's camera at an object, Google Lens will attempt to identify the object by reading barcodes, QR codes, labels, and even text, and show relevant search results, web pages, and associated information.

You'll not only be told the answer, but you'll get suggestions based on the object, like nearby florists if you are looking at a flower.

In another example, when pointing the device's camera at a Wi-Fi label containing the network name and password, it will automatically connect to the scanned Wi-Fi network.

It can also understand what you're looking at and use that information to copy or translate text, identify plants and animals, explore locales or menus, discover products, find visually similar images, and take other useful actions.

Install the Google Lens (GL) app on your Android and teach your phone some new tricks.

1. GL's most potent power is to grab text from a document — a paper, book, a whiteboard, or anything else with writing on it. Just open up the GL app, point at the image text and tap the "Search with your camera" at the top of the screen.

2. Click Text and Select all. This copies text to the clipboard for pasting anywhere-even to your computer!

3. The GL app can also read selected text out loud by selecting Text and clicking Listen.

4. The app can pull and process text from images including from both photos and screenshots. To grab a screenshot press your phone's power and volume-down buttons together — then open the GL app.

5. After you've selected any text from within the GL app, swipe your finger toward the left on the row of options in that bottom-of-screen panel — the one with "Copy text," "Copy to computer," and so on.

6. In addition to searching for the text from an image, GL8. can search the web for other images that match the actual object within your photo or screenshot.

7. If you see something with a date involved, say a flyer, a billboard, an appointment card, or a physical invitation, instead of typing the info into your digital calendar just open up the Google Lens app. It will bring up a Create calendar event option.

8. The GL app will recognise the nature of the info and prompt you to save the contact information.

9. If you have an address or number on a business card, on a letter, or even on the front of a random business's door, open the Google Lens app, point your phone at it, and tap the text.
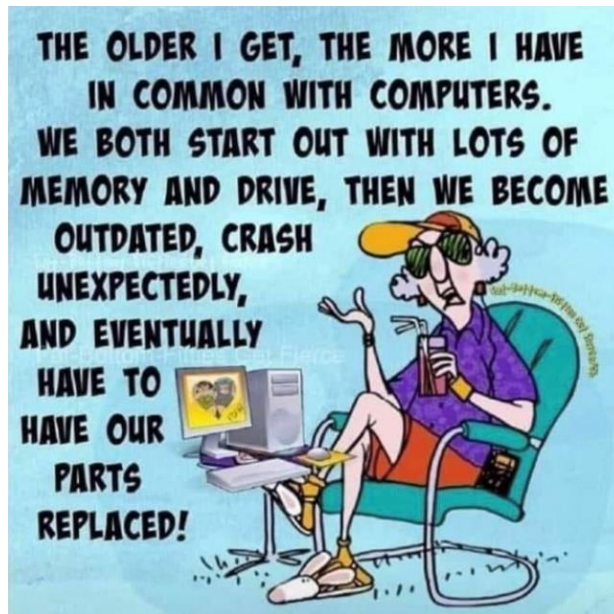
   The GL will offer the best option e.g. address for a new email, number to call or text in your dialer or message app. Alternately, take a photo and then pull it up in the Lens app.

10. The Google Lens app has a built-in translation feature. To find it, open the app, aim your phone at the text, and tap the word "Translate" along the bottom edge of the screen.

11. GL will act as a calculator. Point your phone at the equation in question — whether it's on a whiteboard, a physical piece of paper, or even on a screen in front of you. It will be solved.

12. GL can scan and show barcodes and QR codes for their information.

13. Looking at an image within images.google.com on your phone's browser? Look for GL in the upper-right corner.

Tapping will give you information about the image. Opening an image in Google Photos and tapping the Share button will allow GL as a choice for further GL actions.

14. To open GL in a hurry say "Hey, Google: Open Google Lens."

[Download the full article from this site](#).