

Issue 190

JULY 2015

ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER
GROUP



HOT KEY

SUMMER 2015



Steve Suffers shows a picture of his homemade
copper heatsink, at the talk given by Roger &
Steve in May

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The Isle of Wight Personal Computer User Group

We welcome anyone who has an interest in computers and related technology and what you can do with it.

We are a group which seeks to exchange ideas and new information.

Membership is £12 per annum

Our meetings are normally held on the first Wednesday of each month at

The Riverside Centre, Newport from 7.30 to 9.30 pm

Visitors are always welcome.

A charge of £2 is made per meeting, which includes tea or coffee during the break.

If you would like to know more about us, you are most welcome to come along to one of our meetings, or you can contact one of our Committee Members listed on page 3.

The Club Website address is **www.iwpcug.org**

We also have an e-group discussion area on

Yahoo groups: **iwpcusers@yahoo.co.uk**



FUTURE MEETINGS

<u>Date</u>	<u>Subject</u>	<u>Speaker</u>
5 August	Summer BBQ	Bob Groom
2 September	Windows 10	David Groom
7 October	TBA	
4 November	Mini-talks	various

ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER GROUP COMMITTEE

Chairman : David Groom

Treasurer : Phil Rogers

Secretary : Susanne Bone

Membership and Database Secretary : Roger Skidmore

Committee Member : Steve Sutters

Committee Member : Soren Johanson

HotKey Editor : Bob Groom

Committee Member : Mike Hoar

Contact details removed prior to publishing
on the internet.

Suggestions for new events, topics or speakers for talks are always welcome.
Please contact Steve Sutters, or any committee member, with your ideas.
If necessary we may be able to find a speaker for your subject.

Chairmans Report

Firstly an apology for the late delivery of this edition of HotKey. For personal reasons I have needed to make a number of extended trips down to Devon in the last few weeks, and this has caused some disruption, and I'm afraid the production of HotKey was one thing which was affected.

We have had some excellent talks recently, and as always these have covered quite a variety of topics, and been aimed at differing levels of computing expertise. Sadly the number of people attending these talks remains at a low level - well below 20. It does make it difficult to ask potential speakers to put in the necessary time for preparation and delivery of a talk when the number of attendees is so low. We took steps a few years ago to secure the financial footing of the club in the face of dwindling membership, but this does not stop the fact that it may be impractical to continue in the way we do with membership / attendance levels at the current numbers.

Lastly I extend a warm welcome to you and your other halves to join us for the summer BBQ next month. More details below.

David Groom

The Annual Club BBQ on Wednesday 5 August

This will be held again at Bembridge Lodge, 114 High St, Bembridge.
Starting at **7:00pm (note the earlier start than normal meetings)**

It would assist catering for the event if you could let me know if you are planning to come, no definite commitment needed, I just need some idea of the numbers expected. It would be appreciated if you could either call on 873853, or email david@vectis-webdesign.com before 3 August.

As usual the invite is extend to members' wives / husbands / etc.

Stay Clear of the Darknet

The online world, like the world in general, has a dark side, known as the "Darknet." There lurks clandestine drug deals, illegal weapon purchases, money laundering, forged documents, child pornography, and even hitmen for hire.

One of the largest conduits to the Darknet was taken down by the FBI in 2013. It was called "Silk Road," euphemistically named after a network of roads that facilitated trade in silk and other exotic goods between Europe and the East from the second century B.C. to the fifteenth century A.D., when shipping became more economical.

But the Darknet is still extant. Silk Road 2.0 went operational soon after the shutdown of the original Silk Road, then it too was shut down by the FBI. Soon after another Darknet service, Diabolus Market, renamed itself Silk Road 3.0 to take advantage of the Silk Road's name recognition.

Another conduit of the Darknet, The Pirate Bay, was taken down by Swedish police in December 2014. It was a place where you could find pirated software, music, films, TV shows, books, and other proprietary content, and it too has been replaced by similar services.

In the just published book *The Dark Net: Inside the Digital Underworld*, author Jamie Bartlett talks in detail about such online criminality. The Darknet, he says, is a place "where users say and do what they like, often uncensored, unregulated, and outside of society's norms. It is dark because we rarely see these parts of digital life, save the occasional flash of a sensational news report or shocking statistic."

You won't find any Darknet services through a Google search or by randomly clicking on links from other websites. To access it you need a special web browser called Tor, which began life as a project of the U.S. Naval Research Laboratory and which can be found online today.

Tor protects the identities of those using it and the sites browsed by repeatedly encrypting its activity with the help of a number of different network nodes around the Internet. Users buy the illegal goods and services using another service, Bitcoin, which also uses encryption to hide users' identities.

Perhaps the most shocking service offered is called the Assassination Market. There are five explanatory instructions listed on the opening page: Add a name to the list, Add money to the pot in the person's name, Predict when that person will die, Correct predictions get the pot, Making your prediction come true is entirely optional.

Needless to say, activities such as these illuminate the most vile aspects of human nature. Those involved in these activities often justify them with libertarian politics. They regard freedom to act as they please as the highest value, and they abhor any kind of government interference, oversight, or regulation.

Darknet marketplaces work much like legal marketplaces such as Amazon and eBay, says Bartlett, director of the Centre for the Analysis of Social Media, which is affiliated with the University of Sussex in England. User review systems identify those vendors who provide customers with the products advertised and good service and those who don't.

Given that those involved in the Darknet regard themselves as being above the law, however, it's not surprising that it's easier to be scammed there and even have your identity stolen than at legal online marketplaces and ecommerce sites.

The decentralized nature of the Internet is what makes Darknet activities possible. There's no "Internet Central." From its beginning the Internet was designed, initially by the U.S. Department of Defense, to be able to operate even if part of it goes down. Internet traffic just finds another way to get to its destination. As with any technological breakthrough, this can be both blessing and curse.

Tor and Bitcoin are used constructively as well. With Tor, people living in countries with oppressive governments can browse the Internet and post to discussion groups without fear of being prosecuted, imprisoned, or even killed. It can also be used for whistleblowing and news leaking. Tor, in fact, won the Free Software Foundation's Award for Projects of Social Benefit in 2010. With Bitcoin, people living in developing countries who have little access to banks and other financial institutions can participate in online commerce.

In the concluding chapter of his book, Bartlett writes, "Transformative technologies have always been accompanied by optimistic and pessimistic visions of how they will change humanity and society.... Technology is often described as 'neutral.' But it could be more accurately described as power and freedom.... Power and freedom endow our creative and destructive faculties."

Reid Goldsborough is a syndicated columnist and author of the book *Straight Talk About the Information Superhighway*. He can be reached at reidgoldsborough@gmail.com or reidgold.com.

Mike and Sean - the Beginning

The background:

13th August 1987 the Queen was to open the British Australian Heritage Society ("BAHS") Centre in St Thomas Church, Ryde. The society was formed on the back of the bicentennial celebrations of the Australian First Fleet sailing, since Ryde was the last British land they stood on, and many of the crew were said to have been at a church service in St Thomas's before they set sail from the Mother Bank anchorage just off Ryde. (In actual fact the first deaths on the First Fleet never made it beyond the Mother Bank, as they died on board, and were buried in the grounds of the church.

Around four days before this, I was working in Newport at my desk at Medina Housing totally oblivious to the panic that was growing in stature in Ryde.

Ian Lauder later informed me that the sales and Marketing Manager of Acorn who had had a team down for around a week and a half had set up and provisioned two sets of the brand new Philips Laser Disc system along with two BBC Acorn Masters which controlled and presented the contents of the new one foot CD being that of the "Doomsday Project", was beginning to appear very nervous.

The reason behind this was that they had two blank screens that were supposed to be up and running as live terminals and were to be commissioned and turned on by the Queen on her visit opening the connection and the centre. These screens were designed to demonstrate a BT database on a remote server on the main BT hub somewhere up country; this was very early demonstration of the vision of tomorrow and connectivity between users etc.

These “blank Screens” were at the heart of the whole demonstration and the guy in charge was now saying if they don’t work we will bypass this part and make the Centre itself the headline act for the Queen to open.

This was apparently causing great despondency with James the Acorn representative, and it also had the girl Friday from BT rather agitated and somewhat “glowing”, the reason for their nervousness was that both the managing directors of Acorn and British Telecom were due to hand shake the Queen outside the centre and if the kit was not working it was going to be bypassed leaving them rather red faced somewhat embarrassed. Thus the word from on high was, get it fixed at any cost....

The call for help!

Various telecom and Acorn engineers were trying to find a solution, each looking at the issues and blaming each other as non-compatible kit being used. Ian at that time was in charge of what was known as the Agemics unit within the BAHS and was also now getting very nervous as the whole selling angle for them was being put in jeopardy with the systems not working.

I was not aware of any of this until I had a call from the shop “Wight Computing” from Ron who was manning it at the time; Ian had wandered up the town looking for anyone to assist. I was intrigued with this call so made excuses to leave early and met up with Ian at the centre. Previously I had known about this rather new high tech centre in the heart of Ryde and was suitably impressed with all the technology that was there and on show. John was still there from Acorn and he was also clutching at straws and he ran me through the issues, but basically “it don’t work” was the order of the day.

Well, as far as BBC’s went I had played with one, but I had not dived into the heart of the beast, but the Philips player and Doomsday were rather interesting so I thought I would get to grips with what the issue was and then see who I could find to assist.

Within an hour or so of that evening I had remembered that Peter Lano (Prudential door to door sales guy) had an original BBC and may well shed some light on what was going on. I gave him a call and he immediately said well above my head... however I know someone who works in Space... well not actually in Space more Portsmouth, but he lives in Ryde. I said super and could

he introduce us, and within a very short space of time No pun intended ... we were standing on Mike's doorstep asking if we could have a word. We were ushered into the front room .. well more like a big boys toy shop as there were more computers, TV Video recorders and technical stuff than I had in the shop! My sort of front room ? . Anyway, I appeared that Mike worked for Matre Marconi in the digital /analogue department, building satellite parts for a living! To this end I quickly outlined the problem and said would he like to have a look? As it was only a five minute drive he said yes, I am sure Mike would have have thought about it far more if it had been Newport at the time!

Later that evening we found ourselves again playing with the BBC Master and the BT modem and still looking at the rather blank screen. But Mike was intrigued and as we all know he was not going to give up as a problem is like a magnet to Mike!

There was a lot of nodding, "can't understand it" was the favourite phrased being bandied around, "should work" another ! Well nothing was resolved that evening and there was only one day left before the fan would be coloured. Everyone agreed to keep thinking and come back tomorrow to re-engage with the issue.

Mike and ,I along with Peter, dropped Mike back at his place, we had already identified that the 300 baud modem in play could be the source of the issue and a far better one should be asked for from BT. Thus I tasked myself to see what could be done, so later on that evening I called John Primmer, a very good friend, who happened to be an engineer in the local telephone exchange (not 100mts as the crow flies from the church). On hearing our issue he said we could run quite an efficient system if only we had known in time, I said like what, he mentioned you could have an X25 PAD as it was known as which would give us a very fast direct link to the exchange and beyond, tie this up with a 2400 modem and you would have no trouble.

Mike in the meantime was fast into his hole and looking for a solution based on the fact that the VT100 Emulator in play did not work.

Armed with this I woke up the next morning with a mission, I called John (BT) and said who should I talk to with clout, he told me you need to chat to area. Having established the phone number I went to work and on chatting to the area divisional manager, I have to say it's so easy when you mention HRH and

Managing Director in same sentence - not one but two PADS and modems were being ordered as we spoke! Three hours later they arrived, to the total mystery of the actual BT engineer who had been pulled off a job in Freshwater with a "Do this NOW and make it work by twelve" message delivered to him personally by phone from the area manager.

Objective one done, now Mike did not return until the evening but when I picked him up he had a sly smile across the face, bearing in mind I had only known him for less than 24hrs I was not sure what to make of it. However off we trotted to the Centre offices.

Its now 24 hrs from a decision needing to be made to pull operation A, the launch, and switch to plan B, so there was no time to waste. Mike entered the room, everyone was mulling around interested in what he was doing but totally oblivious to the technical aspects in play. Mike opened his pockets and produced a small box containing what appeared to be chips, on closer examination these were in fact a number of EPROM's (erasable programmable read only memory), each he said had a different emulation of the VT100 protocol, as he thinks it's this that is not handshaking correctly and allowing the dog to see the rabbit or in this case the BBC master to read the BT servers database data correctly.

Mike popped in one and flipped the little handle by the side closing the gates on the legs of the devices, Bing Bong green screen blank No change.....Mike popped in another , was he right..... Same again..... green screen blank No change, luckily Mike had a handful of these EPROMs and continued to try.

It appeared Mike was trying the ones he knew first, ie he owned them or had a manual, and then he went on to weird models and it was on the either EPROM that the world and our destiny changed forever. Instead of the Bing Bong ..Blank There was Bing Bong..... FLASHING GREEN CURSOR AND the words VT100 Joy of joys..... and you should have heard the girl and James they were in hysterics dancing around clapping and very happy - their world was saved!

Anyway, when the back slapping calmed down we started to ask Mike what gave you the idea etc. and how did you find this answer. The answer came fairly fast and without any sort of thought as to the why's and wherefores Ah that one

came off the University of College London as one of their emulations....At this moment I realised “Houston we have a problem” for our Mike (as I now adopted him) appears to have “half inched” / “lifted” / “Pirated” the damned thing that was now going to be operated by the QUEEN..... Oh crap!

Eyes looked at each other and everyone was sworn to secrecy, it worked and we had no time left to sort anything else we go with what we have got, damn the torpedoes.....With the new PAD now in play and the VT100 emulator working well it was soon up and running and performing remote searches and displaying the Irish souls who had been on the First Fleet.

On the day

As a lovely gesture I got rapid clearance from those that do and was allowed to line up with the good and bad of the crew who were introduced in the line-up. Mike on the other hand was not invited, it was not my fault ... I keep telling him this.

The Queen and Prince Philip came played with some buttons and did the tour and left, all very exciting and lasting at least 20 minutes so much work for so little time! However, we now realised that we had just been a party to the Queen operating pirated software, is that a hanging offence?

The above article is taken from the notes Sean Colson used at our June meeting, talking about how he and Mike Parsons first met

Joining the Yahoo Group

Send an email to: **iwpcusers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com** with “join” in the subject line.

All members are encouraged to join this group (which costs nothing and is private to club members) in order to keep in touch with events and to join in with the discussions.

You can also keep in touch by regularly visiting **www.iwpcug.org**

Portable Devices Versus Laptop and Desktop PCs

In the constantly changing digital world, small portable digital devices such as smartphones and tablets continue to gain, though desktop and laptop personal computers are still to be reckoned with.

Google, the country's largest search company, announced in May that for the first time the number of mobile Google searches in the U.S. surpassed the number of searches conducted with personal computers.

Partly in response to this trend, in April Google began penalizing websites that aren't available in mobile-friendly versions by ranking them lower in search results by those using mobile devices. Google sent emails to sites it deemed weren't mobile-friendly. It offers web developers its free Mobile-Friendly Test tool, with developers responsible for enacting any changes.

Verizon, the country's largest telecommunications company, is also making waves with mobile. In May it announced plans to acquire AOL, the once mighty online service that got millions of people connected for the first time over dial-up telephone lines in the 1990s.

AOL may be a shadow of its former self, but it's strong these days in the mobile and video advertising spaces, and it's for this reason that Verizon is going after it. AOL owns technology for automating ads using computer algorithms that target specific audiences as well as a real-time bidding platform that helps advertisers place video ads.

Formerly known as America Online, AOL also owns the popular websites Huffington Post, TechCrunch, and Engadget. And despite the emergence of broadband Internet access fifteen years ago, AOL still has 2.1 million dial-up subscribers. The Verizon-AOL deal is expected to be completed in a matter of months if regulators approve. AOL would become a Verizon subsidiary.

Despite the popularity of mobile, consumers, businesses, and other organizations continue to buy millions of desktop and laptop PCs. But this market continues to slowly shrink. Worldwide PC shipments totaled 71.7

million units in the first quarter of 2015, according to estimates by market research firm Gartner. But this was a 5.2 percent drop from a year earlier.

Desktop PCs led the decline, with sales of laptop PCs actually growing. Gartner is predicting a moderate drop in overall PC shipments for all of 2015 but "slow, consistent growth" over the next five years.

Lenovo and HP were the only two PC makers among the top five that experienced an increase in overall PC shipments in first quarter 2015, according to Gartner. HP and Dell, in order, sell the most PCs in the U.S., though Lenovo and HP sell the most worldwide. HP and Dell are followed in U.S. sales by Apple, Lenovo, and Asus.

Much about the future of PCs depends on the success of Microsoft's next operating system, Windows 10, which should be available on new PCs and as an optional upgrade to existing PCs this summer. With Windows 10 Microsoft has moved away from the Windows 8 tablet interface hated by so many PC users and rediscovered a PC interface. The company is also breaking with its tradition and making upgrades to it from Windows 8.1 and Windows 7 for free.

Portability has its advantages, but larger portable devices such as laptop PCs and stationary devices such as desktop PCs let you do certain tasks faster and with less stress to your body.

A larger screen makes it possible to see more and is easier on your eyes and neck. Typing on a larger, separate keyboard is faster and is easier on your hands and wrists. Larger devices have faster processors and more memory and storage space, which can make them more appropriate when working on photos, video, and music, doing computer-aided design and computer programming, and playing computer games. Larger devices typically also let you work on more than one task more conveniently.

Nonetheless, there's a certain magic to portability. Here's just one example that really drives home how a small device can help you get around. It's the Apple Maps Dropped Pin trick for finding where you parked your car.

Before you leave your parked car, turn on your iPhone and open Maps. Tap the location arrow at the bottom left to highlight your location. Tap the i button at the bottom right, then tap "Drop a Pin." Exit Maps and turn off your phone.

To get back to your car, turn on your phone and reopen Maps. Tap "Dropped Pin" then "Directions to Here" to get walking directions. When you're back to your car, tap "Remove Pin."

You can employ a similar trick with an Android phone and Google Maps.

Reid Goldsborough is a syndicated columnist and author of the book *Straight Talk About the Information Superhighway*. He can be reached at reidgoldsborough@gmail.com or reidgold.com.

Mike Hoar - A computing Biography

I left school for university in the late 60s and studied to become a civil engineer.. As part of the studies we learnt to program using a language called Algol 60. This involved typing your program onto punch cards, handing them in through a hole in the wall and collecting the results the day after. Writing and debugging a program was a slow process and programs were not very large, we measured them by the size of box used to carry the cards in. Results were printed on a long scroll of A4 size pyjama paper.

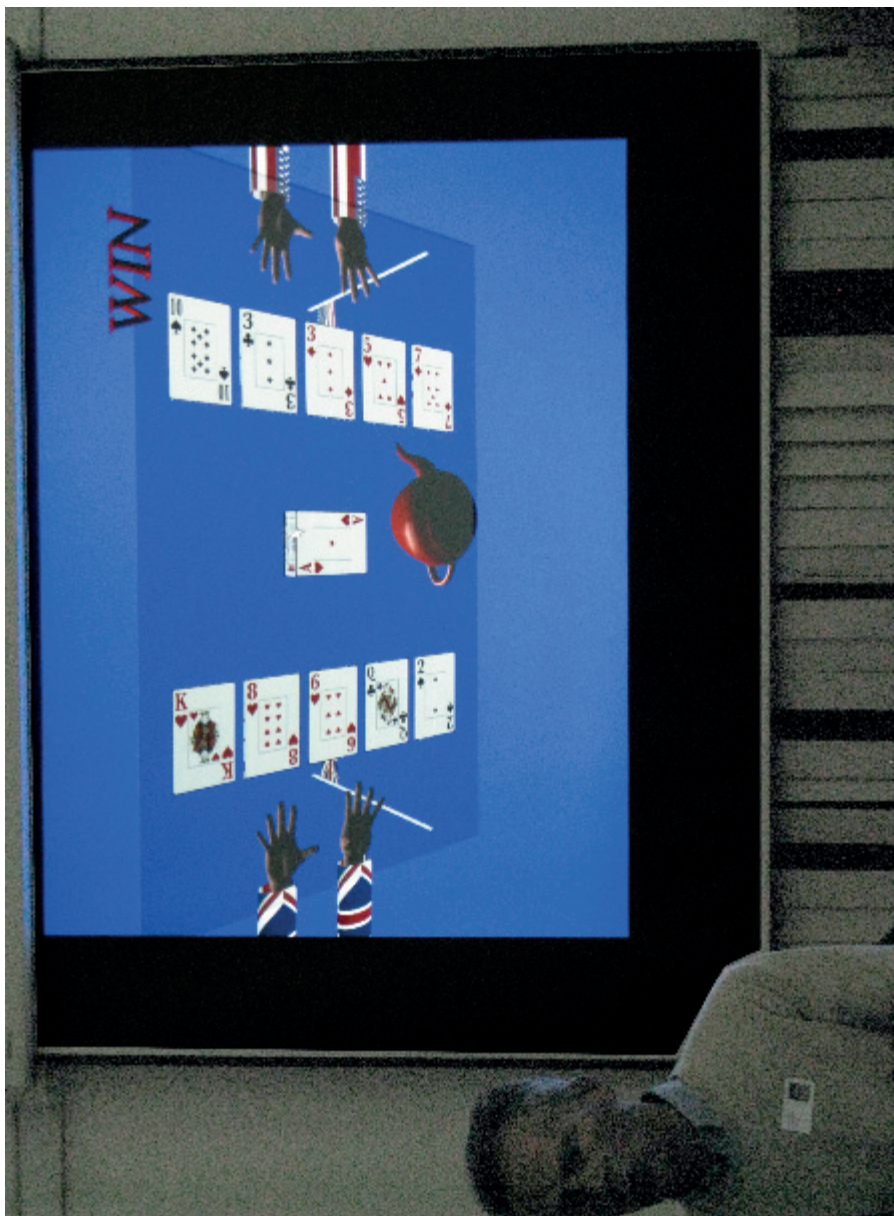
My next meeting with computers and programming was in my job at the Department of the Environment in the early 70s. I was part of a group designing a 250 m long steel bridge and I had to use a computer program to analyse the loads on the bridge. I spent 4 months at a computer bureau feeding 131 Load cases into a computer model and getting piles and piles of pyjama paper results. I then spent another 4 to 5 months compiling the results for use in designing the structure. A more boring job I can't imagine, as this was done by hand using a calculator.

In the early 80s I was in Sweden working as a language teacher and a colleague and I discovered the Sinclair ZX81 and the BBC computers. We decided to try our hand at writing some programs in the form of games for

vocabulary learning. In the years which followed we developed these until eventually we were running a suite of programs on IBM PCs using Microsoft's Visual Basic. There were now monitors with GUI interfaces and tapes/floppy discs (5 1/4inch) for storing the programs. This provided a certain amount of side income which was sufficient to finance my needs for IT equipment.

In the late 80s I again changed profession and joined IKEA in their purchasing division IT department. My prime task here was to provide manuals for computer systems and training materials for training co-workers in how to use them. This included 'training databases'. However, I found that in order to do this I had to learn how the systems worked, how they were programmed, the database structures they used and PC software for producing the materials –Pagemaker, Powerpoint, Word Perfect and various graphic editing programs. As the 90s progressed the software and systems developed and I was involved in this development, specifically for usability issues and development of working methods, and the production of learning materials and manuals. By the late 90s the manuals were being published online and I was getting involved in the production of materials for the company intranet – web programming. Training materials were increasingly wholly, or partly, multimedia videos.

During the early 2000s the systems were seriously upgraded and at the same time I was involved in a project to produce an e-learning platform on the intranet. Unfortunately a week after the company doing this development delivered the final software they went bankrupt and as a result I had to do some reverse engineering to find out how the web site worked so that it could be maintained. This was my serious introduction to Web applications and web development. In the last years before my retirement we started using e-learning very seriously with interactive animated materials and I became more involved in the visual side of things. In order to reduce the costs of producing material I developed a method using Powerpoint and Photoshop to produce animated material with added sound tracks recorded after work in a quiet locality. These elements were combined using off the shelf software to produce Flash files which ran in a browser. This produced materials at 10% of the cost and half the time of using external consultants. On my retirement two years ago I was replaced by two people - maybe I was underpaid.



At our April meeting Richard Burkill talked about simulating games of chance, here we see him demonstrating a game of Poker which he had written in Java

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