

Issue 158

July 2007

**ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER
GROUP**



HOT KEY

SUMMER 2007

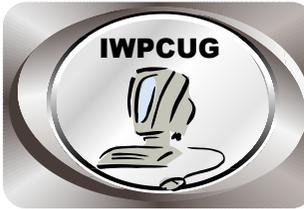
Roger Brown was giving
a very interesting talk on
Adobe PhotoShop
but we seem to have caught
him looking rather fed up !
Sorry Roger



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The Isle of Wight Personal computer User Group

The Isle of Wight PC User GROUP Welcomes all owners and users of IBM compatible Personal Computers.

It is a group which seeks to exchange ideas and any new information.

Our meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at **The Riverside Centre, Newport** from 7.30 to 9.30 pm

Visitors are welcome. Membership is £6 per annum

A charge of £1 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

Yahoo iwpcusers: **iwpcusers@yahoo.com**

See page 5 for how to join

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The Annual Club BBQ on August 1

This will be held again at Bembridge Lodge, 114 High St, Bembridge. It would assist catering for the event if you could let me know if you are planning to come, no definite commitment needed just some idea of the numbers expected. It would be appreciated if you could either call on 873853, or email **david@vectis-webdesign.com** before 25 July.

Please keep watch on the WebSite for details of future meetings

ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER GROUP COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Contact details removed prior to putting on web site

Chairman: David Groom

Vice-Chairman: Cliff Maidment

Treasurer: Bob Groom

Secretary: Susanne Bone

Membership & Database Secretary: Ray Boote

Committee Member: David Broughton

Committee Member: Roger Skidmore

HotKey Editor: Bob Groom (as above)

Suggestions for new events, topics or speakers for talks are always
welcome.

Please contact any committee member or the Editor with your ideas

If necessary we may be able to find a speaker for your subject

Chairman's Report

I am aware that for some of our members HotKey is the only method by which they receive communication from the club. And therefore some news which has already been disseminated by the egroup or the website may still be unknown to those members.

This is the first HotKey after our AGM in February, there should have been a spring edition but regrettably for reasons explained later this did not appear. The good news is that at the AGM the club decided to continue for at least another year. So far we have managed to find speakers for each of our meetings, and although the forthcoming events section on page 2 seems a little sparse I am confident that we shall have meetings for the remainder of this year.

Peter Lovely had been the editor of Hotkey for the past year. As many of you are aware Peter had not been in the best of health, and he sadly passed away in April. Bob Groom has kindly agreed to take on the role of acting HotKey editor, but if any other member wishes to take this on then please contact me.

We were fortunate that Sir Norman Echlin had been our Honorary President for a number of years, and unfortunately he too passed away in April. There is no requirement in the club's constitution to have an Honorary President, and the committee have decided there will be no replacement for Sir Norman.

At the AGM consideration was given to whether the current requirement in the constitution that the committee must meet at least once a month could be varied to give the committee more flexibility. It was agreed to put a notice of an EGM in the spring HotKey and to take a vote on this at the next available monthly meeting. With there in fact being no spring edition the earliest practical date on which an EGM could take place is now the September meeting, and the committee have decided that we will now wait until next year's AGM to propose this amendment.

The club continues to receive the occasional visitor to our meetings, and a number of these new visitors subsequently become members and I welcome them to our club. This does show the value of promoting the club, and to this end our meetings are advertised in the Newport edition of the Beacon, the Village Talk section of the County Press, and the Weekly Ad. Roger Skidmore has produced a poster to promote the IWPCUG and if anyone can think of places this can be displayed please contact him for copies.

May I wish you all an enjoyable summer, I hope to see many of you at our summer BBQ, details of which are on page 2.

Extracts from the E-Mail Discussion Group

The e-mail discussion group has been dominated lately by SQL, PHP and Apache. **Brett Clark** asked if anyone had experience of writing an access database for use on a PC and even for sharing on a network, as he would like to write a database for running on a web site. This is a complex subject for me but I'm sure Brett got plenty of good advice from the replies posted by **Gwynn White, David Groom** and **David Broughton**.

Barry Cant had a problem regarding activating the mouse on an old W98 computer. **Brett Clark** and **David Groom** were able to offer some suggestions.

Barry Cant also asked – if I created a password to log in to Windows XP Professional with Sp2, can I get rid of it if it is no longer required? I couldn't find any replies to this one.

Jerry Tepper raised a question for WINDOWS XP users regarding the strange loss of some options in the task bar panel.

There were also discussions on other problems connected with loss of pictures and attachments removed by YAHOO. Suggestions came from **Rob's Groups, Gwynn White, David Broughton** and **John Atkin**.

If you have any problems, questions or suggestions why not e-mail them to our discussion group. If you are not yet a member, it's easy to join. You will also receive the latest information of meetings.

HOW TO JOIN THE E-GROUP

Send a blank e-mail to: **iwpcug-subscribe@yahoo.com**

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

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

Roger's Keyring Memory stick set of Utilities

11 May 07

I always carry a physically small 64 Mb USB stick around attached to my keyring – sort of Swiss army-knife of utilities. You never know where you might be and what might be needed. I could always do with a slightly larger capacity one but I reckon 64 Mb should be enough for anyone. I've listed my files in Access and merged them into a directory listing below, so it's easy to keep the list up to date. Of course it's always changing and suggestions are welcome.

Most of the programmes are free (or were free on cover disk) but you can check on the web. Some are actually worth buying – there, don't be mean! I haven't listed the obvious ones like free anti-virus because they are definitely available on the web any time. I use AVG anti-virus, AdAware from Lavasoft and Spybot, but most importantly I use Mailwasher to look at my e-mail *before* downloading.

Roger Skidmore, 01983 822900,
rogerskid@supanet.com

Programme Name: BackRex Expert
Executable file: br-expert25.exe
Website: <http://www.backsettings.com/>
Description: Backup Outlook Express, etc.

Programme Name: Belarc Advisor
Executable file: advisor.exe
Website: www.belarc.com/free_download.html
Description: Very full diagnostic programme. Produces a full report on hardware and software as HTML document in Internet Explorer, including details of main processor.

Programme Name: DBQuikSite ver 1.5
Executable file: dbqwiksitepro15.zip
Website: www.dbqwiksite.com/
Description: Utility to create html tables out of dBase and Access databases.

Programme Name: eXpert PDF Standard 3
Executable file: expert_PDF3_Covermount_AQ_UK.sfx.exe
Website: expert_PDF3_Covermount_AQ_UK.sfx.exe
Description: PDF creation programme

Programme Name: FastStone Viewer
Executable file: FSViewerSetup.exe
Website: <http://www.faststone.org/>
Description: General purpose viewer - versatile and completely free

Programme Name: Fineprint
Executable file: fp543.exe
Website: www.fineprint.com
Description: Print viewer and organiser. Print to screen and decide what to do with it (you'd be surprised!)

Programme Name: FSCaptureSetup.exe
Executable file: FSCaptureSetup.exe
Website: <http://www.faststone.org/>
Description: General purpose screen capture - versatile and completely free

Programme Name: Generic_USB driver
Executable file:
Website: <http://www.rogerskid.org.uk>
Description: Generic USB driver for Windows 98 - see contents menu on given link

Programme Name: MailWasher 4.0
Executable file: mailwasher_pro50.exe
Website: www.firetrust.com
Description: Spam Filter - paid for version has effective heuristic spam awareness

Programme Name: Memturbo
Executable file: SETUP.EXE
Website: www.memturbo.com/
Description: Utility to manage memory utilisation - especially Win 98 where memory is often used by system resources and not returned as available.

Programme Name: NoteTab Lite
Executable file: NoteTab_Setup.exe
Website: www.notetab.com
Description: NoteTab Lite is a text editor with a variety of controls and facilities.

Programme Name: pdfFactory
Executable file: fpp243.exe
Website: www.fineprint.com
Description: Printdriver for creating PDF (Acrobat Portable Document Files). Works well with Fineprint (qv)

Programme Name: Photocopier
Executable file: cp.exe
Website: <http://www.nicocuppen.com/download.php>
Description: Photocopier 3.02 - NEW

Programme Name: photoshop_album_SE_3_0_ue.zip
Executable file: photoshop_album_SE_3_0_ue.zip
Website: <http://www.adobe.com/products/photoshopalbum/starter.html>
Description: Adobe's useful starter photoshop_album_SE_3.0 probably all you'll ever need!

Programme Name: Powerdesk
Executable file: pd5free.exe
Website: www.v-com.com/product/PowerDesk_Free_Trial.html
Description: Enhanced file manager with lots of user friendly features. Never use Windows Explorer again! (Look for free express/lite version on the VCOM website).

Programme Name: Registry mechanic
Executable file: rminstall-4.0.0.116-pcplus0106.exe
Website: <http://www.pctools.com/>
Description: Registry Cleaner etc.

Programme Name: Startman
Executable file: startman10396.exe
Website: www.pt.lu/comnet/desc/startman.html
Description: To manage start-up programmes - will identify unnecessary and duplicate start-up programmes. Improves performance and reduces shut-down difficulties.

Programme Name: Stickies ver 4.5a
Executable file: stickies.exe
Website: www.tom.revell.btinternet.co.uk/download.html
Description: Another post-it note programme but one which works! Can double as a visible multi clipboard utility.

Programme Name: SyncBack
Executable file: SyncBack_Setup_old.zip
Website: www.snapfiles.com/get/SyncBack.html
Description: File copy manager - menu driven Xcopy?

Programme Name: Tweaking Toolbox
Executable file: ttw.exe
Website: www.tweakingtoolbox.com/ttw/index.html

Description: Tweaks various aspects of Windows

Programme Name: Wave Pad

Executable file: wave-pad-setup.exe

Website: <http://www.nch.com.au/wavepad/masters.html>

Description: Possibly better than Audacity?

Programme Name: Windows Washer

Executable file: winwashreg.exe

Website: <http://www.webroot.com/consumer/>

Description: Windows Washer - clear everything out

Programme Name: WinZip

Executable file: winzip81.exe

Website: www.winzip.com/

Description: Zip manager - the one everyone uses and which integrates with Powerdesk (qv)

Programme Name: X-Fonter

Executable file: X-Fonter-setup.exe

Website: users.pandora.be/eclipse/

Description: Font Manager - installs, uninstalls, catalogues, etc (see also font utility from www.MyTools.com)

Programme Name: XXCopy

Executable file: xxcopy.zip

Website: www.xxcopy.com

Description: XXcopy will copy files and directories in DOS mode. Can be used to clone whole disks by deleting files on target disk not existing on source disk.

Microsoft Vista.

“Yes, no, or wait”. This was the reply to the question “Should I buy Microsoft Vista?” given by Dennis Parkes of DP Computers in Ryde and the theme of the talk he gave to Members at the Riverside Centre in Newport on 4th April.

Should I buy it?

The answer would be yes if the buyer was purchasing a computer for the first time or replacing one and had no existing hardware that they wished to continue using. Possibly it would also suit someone who was upgrading their peripherals.

Why wait?

To be realistic, current drivers are not going to work. Quality equipment will work once drivers are available, cheaper peripherals will probably never do so and will have to be discarded. Additionally, there are problems with the existing modems on AOL and Tiscali broadband.

Manufacturers will bring out new types of equipment in due course, such as touch-screen devices which would then make Vista an attractive buy if one wanted to use these technologies.

There are the usual teething problems. Updates are coming thick and fast – 90 since Service Pack 2 alone.

People using XP do not need to make a rushed decision, as XP will probably be supported until 2010 by phone and until 2012 online.

Dealers can apparently offer a Vista Health Check for those considering purchase which would clarify whether it would be suitable for their system.

Styles of Vista.

Vista, which is based on XP Professional, comes in 4 styles:

Home Basic

Home Premium (which was demonstrated at the meeting)

Business

Ultimate Ultra (includes business + media centre + data recovery)

Features of Vista.

Some interesting features were shown, including the transparent title bar which enables the user to see any screens behind it.

Processor speed is displayed automatically.

Among the features of the Gadget Bar is a facility to change the clock style.

Useful ideas included post-it notes, calendar and weather displays.

The control panel looks rather different; there is no start button, just a circle.

Also available are:

Device manager

Microsoft SAM

Administrative tools.

Defragmenter.

Problem reports are improved, in that it tells you the reason for any shut down (power cut etc.)

Software works within its own memory so this memory is available when software is shut down. Similarly, crashes only affect the relevant area of memory.

There is a predictive text search facility on the run bar (not *quite* as intuitive as in the ads!). There is no need to specify “within text” etc. when searching.

“Windows XP with funky bits”.

Microsoft has designed Vista for the entertainment market. Described by the speaker as “Windows XP with funky bits”, this operating system can provide a connected home with no need for hi-fi or video recorders. Potential purchasers should be aware that the media centre is not available in the Home Basic version.

What would it cost me?

Microsoft has changed its selling strategy which can reduce the purchase price. The software is now available without a major hardware upgrade. Vista can be sold by a dealer in a sealed pack. The buyer then becomes the system builder but can only install the software on 1 PC.

Otherwise, the package sold in stores for around £220 can be transferred to up to 3 computers.

Internet Explorer 7

At the beginning of the year Microsoft introduced Internet Explorer 7, the most radical change to IE in ages. Unfortunately it is only available for XP & Vista.

From the moment you open it it is different. It has a changed look, it is less cluttered, more streamlined, a whole load of icons now gone.

Although this has now been available for six months I still find that some people have not fully explored the new features, and so I will outline them in this article.

Tabbed browsing

Perhaps the most radical change is the introduction of tabbed browsing (something which has been available in its competitor products Firefox and Opera for years). Previously if you wanted to open more than one web page at the same time you needed to open a completely new instance of Internet Explorer. Not only was this time consuming, as a new instance of the program had to load up, but it also was more memory intensive.

Tabbed browsing allows you to open more than one web page in the one copy of Internet Explorer, each web page can be accessed by clicking on a tab below the main menu bar. If you have a lot of tabs open and forget which one has what on each page then you can look at the “Quick Tabs” page to the left of this menu bar which shows thumbnails of each of the pages which are on the separate tabs

There is the ability to save the tabs which you have open as a tab group. Tab groups then show up as a folder in the favourites list and can then be all be opened together with one click at a later date.

Instant Search

Previously if you want to perform a search for the internet through a search engine such as Google you first have to click the search icon, this brought up a new panel in which you performed your search. Now there is a search box right next to the address bar from which you can search Google..

Although Google is the default search engine additional search engines can easily be added.

Page Zoom

Whilst the ability to increase text size was found in previous versions of Internet Explorer it was not so easy to reach as it is now. Another useful feature is the ability to zoom to a page to different sizes. not only does this increased text size but also increases the size of images and other elements on the page. In effect magnifying the page. This is immediately available by clicking on the zoom control in the bottom right.

Improved Printing

A common problem experienced in the past was that of printing web pages. Particularly because computer screens tend to be landscape format whilst the printed page and normally portrait, but also because of problems of fixed elements such as images, it was often quite difficult to print what you saw on screen. Quite often the right-hand edge of many web pages simply disappeared when printed. Although with careful design for a designer can overcome many of these problems, quite often they did not bother. Luckily the new version of Internet Explorer is much better at scaling Web pages for printing

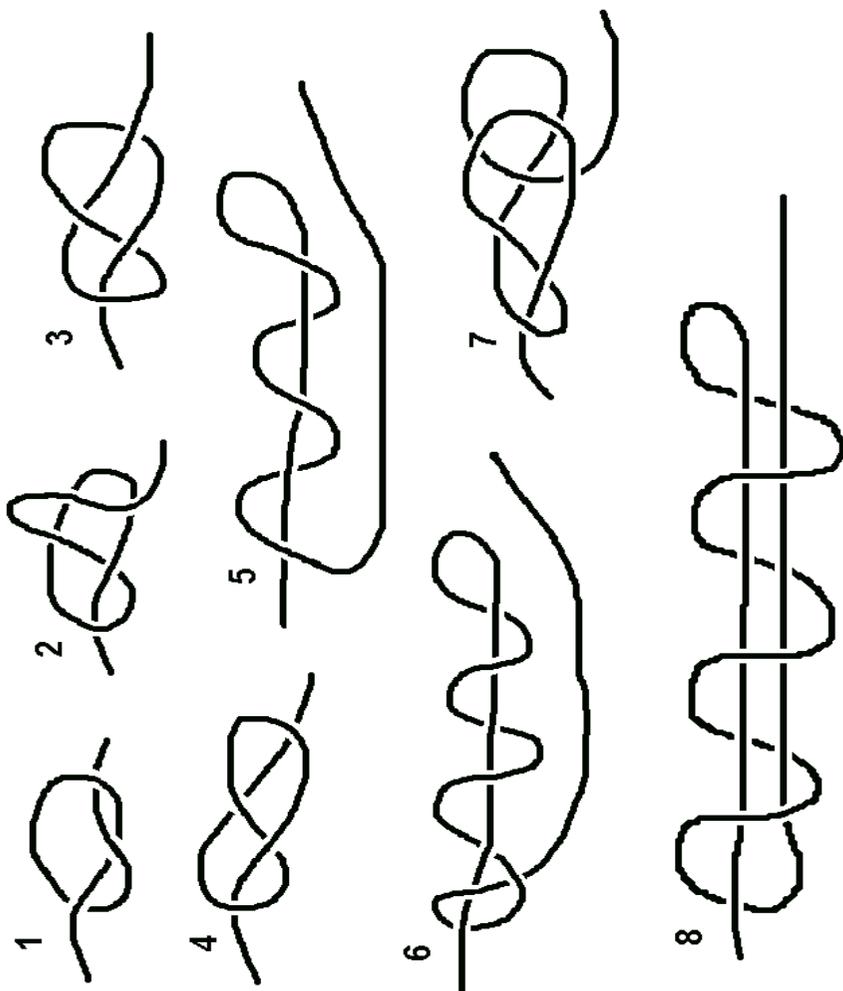
Anti Phishing

As important as the changes outlined above are, the most important changes will for the most part be hidden from the user. Internet Explorer 7 is far more secure than its predecessors. One of the most important improvements is in the ability to spot "phishing" sites. These are websites which try and trick the visitor into divulging important security information, such as user names and passwords for access to online banking, PayPal, etc. the phishing site looks as much as possible like the real site they have duplicated although a careful look at the address bar may show a slight spelling variation on what might be expected. Internet Explorer 7 tries spot as many of the site as possible and throws up an alert on screen.

Other Improvements

IE7 now supports "addons". Browser add-ons can help personalise the way you use the Internet. They extend the core functionality of IE7 to make life easier. Some of these addons are free whilst other have been commercially developed and must be paid for.

There are other changes as well. Transparent PNG images are now displayed, and there is improved support for CSS. This means it should be easier for Web developers to design pages which display the same across different browsers.



PRIZE PUZZLE FOR JULY 2007

KNOTTED OR NOT

These eight bits of string are either knotted or not when you pull outwards on the free ends. The puzzle is to tell me YES or NO to the question

“ Is this a knot ? “ for each of the eight diagrams.

The closing date for answers is Wednesday 1st August

David Broughton (see page 3 for address)

Cover Disk

This month's cover disk contains featured open source software, and the contents of Roger Skidmore's utility stick (as detailed elsewhere in this issue). Open source software is software which not only is free of charge, but in which the source code for the program is also available so that anyone can amend and modify it.

In fact much open source software has already been included in previous cover discs, such as OpenOffice, Inkscape, and Firefox. I have included this month three new open source programs. **Scribus** is a desktop publishing program which is fairly comprehensive, though in early stages of development and therefore seems to have a few issues which need straightening out. However it is an interesting programme to play around with.

VirtualDub is a video capture and editing program, primarily aimed at the AVI format. You can (with the relevant input card) capture video and also edit, stitch together, make minor adjustments, and add audio to existing AVI clips. **NVU** is a wysiwyg website editor, in the same mode as Microsoft FrontPage, or Adobe Dreamweaver.

Also on the disc is the latest version of **Inkscape**, to tie-in with my talk on 4th July.

Lastly the disc contains regular essential software such as AdAware, AVG anti-virus, Spybot, and the latest version of Firefox.

Old Library

At the AGM it was decided to dispose of some of the older books in the club library. I have included a list of the proposed disposals on the cover disc, and unless anyone comes forward and asks for any of these I will dispose of them at the end of August.

Editorial

This is my first attempt, as the new editor, to produce a reasonably readable and informative edition of HotKey.

The variety of material for inclusion has had some effect on the way that I have put the thing together. Also, I don't have Microsoft Publisher or Microsoft Word and this edition was put together using Serif Page Plus (Version 9) and with some assistance from Open Office.

Open Office was necessary because some of the material was produced in MS Word, and this was opened in Open Office and converted to RTF.

In this connection, it would be appreciated if future contributions could be presented in RTF form. There were also a couple of curious fonts used that Page Plus could not deal with, so these had to be replaced.

Page Plus is an extremely comprehensive Desk Top Publishing program and for this booklet I have obviously used only a very small fraction of its capabilities. It has a few funny quirks that need getting used to, but then so do most programs ! As far as I am concerned, one of its biggest problems is that the supplied instruction booklet is not quite what is needed for a program as complex as this !! Much time is spent going to the, again curiously comprised, help file. It all gives me the impression that it was composed by somebody who was already a expert with the program and did not realise that it would be used by people who did not know as much as he did ! How many times does this occur nowadays.

Until a couple of days ago, I would have been "writing " this editorial using a dictation program called Dragon Naturally Speaking, simply by dictating into Open Office. Unfortunately I tried to increase the size of the partition which contained DNS using Partition Magic, which I have been using successfully for probably 8 to 10 years, in fact ever since it first came out. The result was that the partition became totally corrupted to the extent that I cannot now even reinstall Windows on it ! This is the first time that Partition Magic has done anything like this and I really don't know what I did wrong.

This editorial has had to be a one finger typing job straight into Page Plus, which was simpler than doing it in Open Office and transferring it.

As things have worked out, there is almost a surplus of material and this has meant a short Editorial on the back page !