HOT KEY

Winter Edition 2004/5

In This Issue   Pages

FUTURE MEETINGS

Date	Subject	Presenter
5 Jan	Dictation Software	Bob Groom
2 Feb	Annual General Meeting Followed by a talk, if time permits.	Andy King
2 Mar	What's new or what might come up	Dennis Linzmaier
6 Apr	To be decided	
4 May	To be decided	

Cover picture –By Roger Brown, taken at a meeting on !st December when Roger gave a talk entitled "What to do with your photos after you have taken them

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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 new information. Our meetings are on the first Wednesday of each month at **The Riverside Centre, Newport. At 7.30 - 9.30 pm.**

Membership is £6 per annum

Visitors are welcome.

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, either come along to one of our meetings or contact one of our Committee Members listed on page 3.

Club's Website:-
   www.iwpcug.org/

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We also have an e-group discussion area :-
Yahoo iwpcusers: **iwpcusers@yahoogroups.com**
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ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER GROUP
COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Honorary President: Sir Norman Echlin

Chairman: David Broughton

Vice Chairman: David Groom

Treasurer: Bob Groom

Secretary: Vacant
>   **Acting Secretary:** David Groom

Membership Secretary: Ray Boote

Hot Key Editor: Vacant
>   **Acting Editor** Ray Boote

Committee Member: Dennis Linzmaier

Committee Member: Cliff Maidment

Committee Member: Roger Skidmore

Disability Resources Co-ordinator: Helen Edom

NOTICE OF AGM

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Isle of Wight PC User Group will be held on Wednesday, 2nd February 2005 at 7.30 pm at The Riverside Centre, Newport. Nominations are requested for Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Secretary and up to eight Committee Members. Please send nominations to acting secretary David Groom. You may nominate yourself. Seconders are not necessary at this stage.

ISLE OF WIGHT PC USER GROUP
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
AGENDA

1. Approve the minutes of the AGM held on 4th February 2004 (copies are available from www.iwpcug.org/~minutes/agmmin04.htm).
2. Matters arising from the minutes.
3. Receive reports:
   3.1 Chairman
   3.2 Treasurer
   3.3 Secretary
   3.4 Membership Secretary
   3.5 Other activities: Computability, Hot Key, Library, Cover Disk, Website, Egroup, Marketing, Riverside Liaison.
4. Elect a new Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary and Membership Secretary.
5. Elect a new Committee (up to a maximum of eight).
6. Set the Annual Subscription.
7. Appoint an Independent Examiner.
8. General discussion on the management of the club.

Chairman's Report, December 2004

Training Videos

Christine Jenkins has donated a set of four CDs produced by CATS (Computer Assembly Training School). Whilst they are referred to as "videos" they are not video tapes and they are not DVDs. So what are they? They start up automatically when inserted in your computer's CD drive and show a small screen about a third the size of the actual screen in which a person introduces and then demonstrates certain aspects of computer assembly and maintenance. At first we thought that they might be suitable to show at a meeting but that would be a bit boring for most members so instead we are making them available on loan. As for the answer to the question, they are normal computer CDs containing programs and data for

producing video and sound. Nothing has to be downloaded to use them.

Annual General Meeting

The AGM is once more looming into view. I went on about this last month so will leave the matter with just this one comment: the prospects for the club are looking seriously dim unless we can inspire members to volunteer themselves to the Committee to help organise the activities of the club, mainly meetings.

Hot Key and Cover Disk

Ray Boote has kindly produced a Hot Key for January 2005. You may be reading this report from the magazine, but it also appears on the web site and is sent to all members (about 49) on the egroup. Thanks to all the contributors. And we even have a Cover Disk produced by Roger Skidmore and copied 100 times by volunteers to provide a copy for everyone. This cover disk is mainly in connection with the talk by Roger Brown on managing your photographs. Roger S is thinking of producing another later on in 2005 containing a similar set for managing audio files. I shall be looking forward to that.

Audio Formats

Who knows about audio formats? We are looking for someone to give a talk on this. We want to know about the different techniques in current use for compressing audio and what effects it has on quality, plus how to convert between the different formats, how to record from an external analogue source and how to make audio CDs. Suggestions, please, for a speaker.

Computability Section

Roger S has produced a comprehensive report for 2004 on the activities of this little-known charitable activity of the club. Over 30 organisations or persons have been assisted in the last year with computers, equipment and/or expertise. So successful have been these activities that more clients are wanted to reduce the mountain of old computers that are currently stored in Roger's garage! So if you know of someone who finds it difficult to work with a keyboard or someone who is lonely and might find email and the internet a rewarding activity, please let Roger know. There is a lot of information about the Computability Section on the web site.

The Club's Web Site

I have managed the club's web site since it was set up in 1989 when I started to learn about HTML (though Mike Cahill did it for one year). I shall be very happy to hand it over to another member if anyone would care to deal with it. The main priority of the site is the "Future Meetings" area to let members have up-to-date information about the next meetings. But the news section is also important, plus general information about the club and who is running it. This information does not change a lot but needs to be reviewed from time to time. You don't have to be an HTML person, though it helps.

David Broughton (Chairman)

Extracts from the E-Mail Discussion Group

A lot of the e-mails have been about paying subscriptions on –line. Details of how to do this are shown on page 8.

Roger Skidmore asks if someone could list reasons why two small groups of exceptionally nice people with a common interest in computing cannot share their interest with a common e-mail group and common meeting room? Roger also asks why anyone with a problem with that meeting room's management cannot find reconciliation through chat and discussion over a cup of tea.

On this subject **John Atkin** mentions some of the problems we have had in the past such as last minute changes to venue, double booking of rooms and parking for the disabled. He feels that we were tolerated rather than welcomed at Riverside.

Christine Jenkins is amazed why the Computer Club has stayed at the Riverside for so long. The list of reasons to leave was endless.

David Groom says that the reason why the IWPCUG stayed at the Riverside is because the majority of members were not interested in moving. Earlier the committee conducted a poll which received 37 responses. One question was on a possible move from the Riverside Centre to Rookley Village Hall. The results were: 24 no opinion, 3 in favour and 10 against. Admittedly the members were only given a straight choice between the two venues, and were not asked " do you want to move away from the Riverside Centre?". It's no use asking people to move if there no alternative venues which are more suitable and more favoured by the majority of members.

There has been much discussion lately regarding Rogue Diallers. To find out more about this subject **David Groom** has kindly written an article entitled Modem Hijacking, see pages 13 and 14.

HOW TO JOIN THE E-GROUP

Send an e-mail to: **iwpcusers-subscribe@yahoogroups.com**

All members are urged to join this e-group (which costs nothing and is private to club members) in order to keep in touch with events and join in discussions. You can also keep in touch by regularly visiting **www.iwpcug.org** particularly for the latest details of meetings.

I read somewhere…

That scientists have discovered a new material with a thickness of just one atom that could revolutionise the computer industry. The discovery of a substance called Graphene, could pave the way for computer chips to be made from a single molecule. Graphene is extremely flexible and strong with extraordinary electronic properties this means that super fast transistors could be made within ten years.

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That online auctions are very popular in Germany where their equivalent of our ebay is a website called *azubo.de.* On this site they are auctioning the right leg of the statue of Saddam Hussein. The last I heard is that the bidding stood at 56,000.00 Euros.

I'd want an arm and a leg for that much.

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That the top toy of the year award by Hamley' over 130 other toys is a robot called Robosapien. I understand that this robot can burp, fart, grunt, wolf whistle, kick and do kung-fu among many other things. Priced at £79.99

I offered to buy my wife one for Christmas but she said " no thanks I've already got one"

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"Spam, Spam, Spam, Spam"

I read in a newspaper recently that Bill Gates receives four million unwanted e-mails a day. This was revealed by Steve Bulmer Microsoft's chief executive at a conference in Singapore, He said " Bill receives four million pieces of e-mail per day, most of it spam, there's a whole department needed to take care of it". A computer program weeds out the spam messages bound for Gates's inbox, while several staff are assigned to delete the junk mail every day. The upside of this is that Gates has decided to turn his attentions to battling spam.
Spam is now regarded as one of the biggest threats to the Internet, with some experts saying that it takes up to 80 per cent of the worlds online traffic. Gates now wants to join forces with Internet firms like AOL, and Yahoo to develop software which replies automatically to junk e-mailers and floods them with their own spam.
At a conference earlier Gates said "Spam will soon be a thing of the past".
Ed

.Paying Subscriptions Using an On-line Bank Account

Members may, if they wish, pay their subscriptions (£6) for 2005
into the club's HSBC Bank Account:

Sort code: 40-39-17
Account number: ********
Account Name: Isle of Wight PC User Group
Make sure you give your own name as reference.

But if you do pay this way, please also send an email to the membership
secretary, Ray Boote, ray.boote@ic24.net . Note that payments made
directly to the bank are not seen by the Treasurer for anything up to six
weeks later so if you don't tell the membership secretary it may be some
time before your membership is noted in the database. New members must
fill in an application form, available from Ray Boote and from the web site
at www.iwpcug.org/docs/memfrm.htm .

If you wish to rejoin by sending a cheque, please send it to the Membership
Secretary (Ray Boote), not the Treasurer, made payable as above.

David Broughton.
Chairman.

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I apologise if this edition of HOT KEY is not up to the usual
standard. My excuse is that I have had to throw it together rather quickly
with it being Christmas time and the Printers want it as soon as possible.
Hopefully this will be the last edition I will be producing and that
someone will come forward at the AGM and volunteer for the position of
Editor. That is if the membership decides at the AGM it wants to continue
with HOT KEY.

Ray Boote (Acting Editor)

Review of Previous Meetings

On 3rd November Andy King gave a talk on managing and organizing your computer. He demonstrated the use of a number of utilities which he uses on his own computer and provided a fact sheet showing the websites from which these can be downloaded. A copy of the fact sheet can be obtained from the Ed.
The meeting was attended by 20 members and two visitors.

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On the 1st December Roger Brown's talk was entitled "What to do with your photos after you have taken them." Roger demonstrated how to manage your photos in files and folders, and how to prepare them by resizing, cropping etc for including in a slide show. He then selected the photos and transferred them into a slide show and put them in the order required for showing. Next he added transitions, text, clip art and background music. Finally this was burned to a CD.
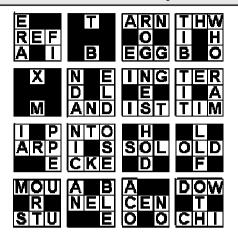Roger then demonstrated a slide show he had prepared earlier.
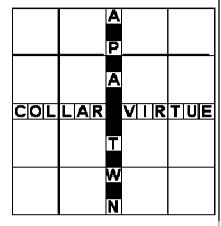This meeting was also attended by 20 members and two visitors.

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Bill Maden has sent me an e-mail to tell me that due to increasing years and failing health it is impossible for him to attend our meetings therefore he will not be renewing his membership of IWPCUG. Bill is one of the founder members and says that he has enjoyed his membership of the group and would like me to pass on his best wishes to all our members for the future. Thanks Bill I'm sure our members would like to wish you all the best in return. Ed

SHATTERED CROSSWORD

Part of the puzzle this month is to reconstruct a crossword. The diagram on the right has 16 spaces into which you must place the 16 fragments at the left to complete a crossword of sensible words.

When you have completed the diagram you will be able to find the word that is the answer to this problem:

What is the word for 17 down?

The words are not numbered but you can work them out as the numbering is the same as used for all crosswords: left to right, top to bottom, with one number in each square that is the first letter of a word.

Please send the answer to the question to me, David Broughton, to arrive by 2nd February to be entered into the prize draw.

Addresses are on page 3.

HINT: An interesting way to manipulate the fragments is to use the Paint program that comes with all versions of Windows. You can download the diagram from the web site by right-clicking it. Save the diagram on your computer and use the select tool with the option that the background is transparent. You can then try fitting the fragments into the appropriate place. If you make a mistake, use the Undo button on the Edit menu.

HOT KEY COVER DISK JANUARY 2004
PHOTOGRAPHIC PROGRAMME COLLECTION

Adobe Acrobat ver 6.0 (15Mb freeware)
Website: www.adobe.com/acrobat
Adobe Acrobat Reader - for reading PDF files usually found on the web and used for formal documentation.

Ashampoo Uninstaller (2.8Mb cover disk)
Website: www.ashampoo.com Logs installation to effect full un-installation of chosen programme.

Avery Design-pro (UK) (10Mb freeware)
Website: www.avery.co.uk Label design programme from Avery. Very versatile, can read external database files, will use pre-designed Avery label forms or design your own. Barcode import and conversion facility, graphics import. Basic version totally free and probably all you will need.

Belarc Advisor (700Kb freeware)
Website: www.belarc.com/free_download.html System analyser - see if you really have got a fast enough system

DBQuikSite ver 1.5 (2.5Mb cover disk)
Website: www.dbqwiksite.com/ Utility to create html tables out of dBase and Access databases. Hopefully you may be viewing this info in a DBQuikSite table

Powerdesk (2Mb freeware)
Website: www.vcom.com/product/PowerDesk_Free_Trial.html Enhanced file manager with lots of user friendly features. Never use Windows Explorer again! (Look for free express/lite version on the VCOM website).

Advanced JPEG Compressor (1 Mb trialware)
Website: www.winsoftmagic.com/ JPEG file manager and compressor.

ASmallerImage (800Kb trialware)
Website: www.trivista.com   Easy size reduction

Irfan View (800Kb freeware)
 Website:www.irfanview.com/ Versatile graphics viewer and utility. For full functionality you have to download and install further modules. Basic programme is quite small.
IrfanView Plugins (5Mb freeware)
 Website: www.irfanview.com/ Plugins for IrfanView to handle all file formats
Jalbum (10Mb freeware)
 Website: jalbum.net/ Graphics Album Utility for Web Albums
JASC After-Shot (64Mb cover disk (free))
Website: www.htmlgoodies.com/toolbox/aftershot.html Utility to manage photo images - similar to Thumbs Plus but more basic - probably all you need. From Digital Camera #27

Paper Photo Cube Lite (4 Mb)
Website: www.trivista.com/products/downloads.htm
Will print photos on the sides of a cube

PDF995 (1.4Mb freeware)
Website: www.pdf995.com Free PDF generator - see also other PDF utilities available on
the PDF995 website

Photo Show Express (450Kb trialware)
Website: www.simplestar.com
Easily transfer and size images, add text, music, transitions, clip art, and burn CD's.
Downloads programme as you install. Full version $30. Also PhotoShow DeLuxe with
extra features ($40).

PhotoImpression (139Mb trialware)
Website: www.arcsoft.com/en/products/photoimpression/
Versatile photo editing and management suite. Comes free with some cameras and well
reported on by users. $50.00

PicsPrint (3Mb trialware)
Website: www.picsprint.com/
Graphic image manager - can print album pages with annotations to photos (about $30).

Publish-IT 2 (1.6Mb trialware)
 Website:www.postersw.com/
Basic DTP programme for quick results.

Roxio PhotoSuite 5SE (350Mb cover disk (free))
Website: www.roxio.co.uk/adban/pcpro/upgrade
From PC Pro December 2004 Cover Disk. Password: rox04pcpro. Manage and adjust all
your photos in albums and burn to VCD. Large programme!

Serif PhotoPlus 5 (110mb shareware)
Website: www.serif.com/
Graphic manipulation program

Slowview (800Kb freeware)
Website: www.snapfiles.com/download/dlslowview.html
Very fast and simple graphics viewer and manager. Slow view site is http://
www.slowview.at/ but try the link given here. Good basic management; can crop and re-
size easily, and save in different file formats.
Thumbsplus (10Mb trialware)
Website:
www.cerious.com
Graphics file organiser and much, much more.

If the set-up file does not work, try finding program and running it direct from the disk.
This cover Disk is compiled by **Roger Skidmore**

Modem Hijacking

Could this happen to you? You open your phone bill and find enormous charges for phone calls to premium rate or international phone numbers, but you are sure that you have never made these calls. Modem Hijacking (otherwise known as Internet Dumping , Dialler Hijacking, or Rogue Diallers) has become a problem for Internet users. Virtually any household with a dial-up modem connected to the phone line can become a victim to modem hijacking.

Even if you do not normally use a dial-up modem for accessing the Internet you may still be in danger. Many people have a dial-up fax-modem in their PC, which they use to send and receive faxes. Or maybe you now have a broadband connection, but have left your old dial-up modem still connected as well, even though you don't use it.

What is happening?

A dialler program is just what it sounds like, software which uses your computer's modem to dial a telephone number. In recent months, there has been an upsurge of people discovering diallers installed on their computer without their knowledge. The diallers call up these expensive telephone numbers and in many cases the people stuck with the bill have no idea what is going on until their phone bill arrives.

Once it has executed on the computer, the dialler can be set to load at start up. Once loaded into memory, it can wait for the computer to be idle for a certain amount of time. When it decides that the computer has been idle long enough that everyone is either asleep or at work, it will activate the phone line and dial the expensive number. Some diallers don't even wait for the computer to sit idle, they will just terminate the current connection to your ISP and redial the expensive number, allowing you to still surf the internet oblivious to the costs you are now incurring. The software will typically mute the dialling noises that your modem makes to hide the fact that the modem has disconnected from your normal ISP and is redialling a different number.

The software can change the Dial Up Networking (DUN) settings to force the user to dial the expensive number unknown to the user. It can in some cases erase the user's Internet Service Provider (ISP) number and replace this number with it's own. It can also create a new connection. This number is then used each time the user connects to the Internet instead of their chosen ISP number.

The software could force the computer to bypass Dial Up Networking settings altogether and dial to a pre-set number. This means that although the Dial Up Networking settings appear correct when the user connects to the Internet they will in fact be dialling the expensive number.

Firewalls cannot stop the downloading or installing of diallers, though they may stop them dialling out, nor do anti-virus applications recognise these potential threats.

How do you get "infected" with these programs?

Typically these programs get installed after you have visited certain websites. There is a misconception that these generally come from adult sites, but this is not the case. Whilst browsing the site you might be presented with lots of "pop-up" windows, consider this story of a woman who was looking for downloadable ring tones for her husband's mobile phone. "I got to this site where it said you could download them, but there were TONS of pop-ups that kept getting in my way.

I clicked the 'X' repeatedly to close them out. They were all over the screen. Well, one of them just happened to be strategically placed directly behind another in such a way that by accidentally hitting the 'X' button twice, I ended up hitting an 'Okay' button behind it. Then a download box showed up. I was confused, but not really surprised, as these things can happen for a number of reasons. I immediately 'X'd out of that download before it even got off to a good start, and never thought of it again…until I got the bill."
Alternatively you might be presented with a box asking you to agree to certain terms and conditions, and without reading all the conditions you click to agree the terms, and this starts the installation. However depending on your settings in Internet Explorer it is possible that the code could simply install itself without you having to do anything other than visit a certain web page. It is also possible that the code necessary to install these programs could be contained in an HTML email.

How to protect yourself

If you don't need a dial-up modem in your computer then the best protection is the physical one of making sure that any dial-up modem in your PC is not plugged into a phone line. The number one way to become infected with one of these diallers is through unsafe ActiveX security settings. When Internet Explorer loads a page put together by a distributor of one of these diallers, an ActiveX script is loaded which downloads and runs the program. At the very least, you should make sure your Internet browser is set to reject Active X code or warn you when such code attempts to run. In Internet Explorer, you can set your Internet security settings to "medium" and your computer will never download any ActiveX Controls without your permission. This is the setting recommended by Microsoft for surfing the Internet. (Just go to Tools -> Internet Options -> Security -> Choose Medium at the Bottom) If you're unsure whether your browser is protected, www.SpywareInfo.com/browsertest/ provides a dialler test that can tell you whether your browser is vulnerable.

But it may not be enough…not all diallers are downloaded through ActiveX scripts. They can be .exe files or straight compiled code and not a script or control of any kind.

Always keep your operating system up to date with the latest security patches.

Install and regularly run anti-spyware software such as Spybot, available from www.xjs.org/ff, or AdAware available from www.lavasoft.de

You can ask BT to block all calls to premium rate numbers being made from your phone line, this service is free. However to block calls to international numbers currently costs £1.50 per month.

There is also a program produced by an Australian company which will completely lock down your computer dial-up networking system. stopITnow! is a program which examines Windows Dial up Networking entries and prevents unacceptable numbers from being dialled. It disallows Direct Access dialling, preventing unwanted diallers from accessing the modem. It prevents Windows Phone dialler connections for restricted phone numbers. It also checks the Windows Dial up Networking Dialog to prevent unauthorised users from dialling restricted numbers. It is available for download at www.stopitnow.com.au for a price of US $16.95.

David Groom

Motley Crew

The Isle of Wight PC User Group, a good and motley crew,
They're good at asking questions, and problem solving too.
They know about computers and share with me and you,
The knowledge and experience of a good and motley crew.

The knowledge is wide ranging, throughout this motley crew,
From DOS to Windows Ninety Eight and Windows XP too,
A smattering of Linux can be found amongst a few,
Well known stuff, and some quite rare, comes from this motley crew.

They run their own small magazine, this good and motley crew,
The Editor is on the prod, for items good and new,
If there's enough we'll get a tome, with coloured cover too,
But otherwise a single sheet is all for the motley crew.

With tea and biscuits close at hand, this good and motley crew
Is seated for a talk from .... they can't remember who.
The speaker is successful, he knows it through and through,
Says he'll return, if asked again by the good and motley crew.

The evening ends and the happy souls of this good and motley crew
Depart for home to cogitate, they've learned a lot, that's true.
I hope you've smiled throughout this rhyme, for that has ended too.
No disrespect intended to the good and motley crew.

Gwynn White

More Pictures from meeting on 1st December

Roger Brown