

***Development Kit 2***  
***to help start New***  
***Seniors Computer Clubs***

Produced by **ASCCA**

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## ***Introduction***

This Development Kit is presented as a guide to be used to help form a Seniors Computer Club that will be auspiced by another organisation such as a Retirement Village, Community Technology Centre, Seniors Citizens Centre, U3A, Probus or similar organisation . It has been written to make the establishment of a club as easy as possible. Feel free to adapt any section to better meet the needs and interests of the members of the club you are forming.

This kit is to be used by Organisations, individuals or groups who want to see a Seniors Computer Club established in their area, and are prepared to act as the driving force to see the establishment of such a club

As the club to be formed is for residents of a Retirement Complex or members of an Incorporated Association or Organisation it should already be covered by the parent body so there is no need to consider separate incorporation or public liability insurance. If a club formed in a Retirement Complex decides to allow membership from the local community it will be necessary to ascertain if the Retirement Complex's insurance covers those who do not live in the Complex.

Incorporation advice is not included in this Development Kit but **ASCCA** will be happy to offer advice on Incorporation should you want it. Development Kit 1 is the Kit to use should you plan to establish an Incorporated Seniors Computer Club.

The Kit has also been published electronically and can be downloaded from **ASCCA's** Website [www.seniorcomputing.org](http://www.seniorcomputing.org) after clicking on *Development Kit*. If you prefer the kit can be read on-line and printed out as required.

**ASCCA** is anxious to provide as much support as possible to help start new Clubs; contact is available by email, telephone or snail mail.

*Nan Bosler,*  
President,  
**Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association**

## ***Why Seniors Come to Computer Clubs***

Many Seniors arrive at a club and confess that son or daughter has just bought a new computer and has given them the old one. They hasten to add that the son or daughter is extremely clever but very busy and they haven't had time to show them how to work the computer. Usually the son or daughter expresses the reassuring comment to their parent that it is quite easy and that they should have no trouble. After a pause the Senior then quietly asks "*Could you show me how to turn it on please?*"

Yet others come to a club because their family has encouraged them to '*go and do something about learning to use a computer*'. However, they don't even know if they want to use a computer! The Clubs assure them that they can learn to use a computer at the club to find out for themselves if they want to become a computer user.

Seniors who have recently retired and have had some computer experience in the workplace join because they want to extend the perimeters of their knowledge and learn how to use a computer for their own purposes.

It is pleasing to note that the computer skills gained by Seniors are often used to enable them to participate in other community groups, eg. as Secretary, Treasurer etc. Others use their new skills to take up work, usually part time and very often in a family business.

The Internet draws other seniors to a club. Some want to be able to keep in touch with friends and families. Yet others want to learn how to use the Internet to shop, chat, research, buy and sell shares, and pay bills.

Age is certainly no barrier. One lady decided at the age of 93 that she would like to write her memoirs and she decided to learn how to use a computer to help her achieve her objective. She is now 97 and has published two volumes of her memoirs!

Another lady, aged 84, wrote to *The Australian* complaining that no-one had offered to teach her how to use a computer. One of our club members saw the letter and passed it on to the club nearest to where the writer lived. She was invited to join the club, did so and now delights in the work she can prepare using her computer for her local CWA group. She has been heard to say:

*You know, when I visit my friends in hostels and even nursing homes, instead of glumly contemplating my future entry, I look about to see where my computer will fit, and think happily of all the time I'll have available to work on it.*

Learning is a life-long experience and if a Senior is motivated to use a computer and seek the support and encouragement of peers at a Computer Club for Seniors that person is likely to succeed.

## ***About ASCCA***

The ***Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association*** (known as ***ASCCA***) is a non-profit organisation linking Computer Clubs for Seniors and became an Incorporated Association on 14 August 1998. It is now a Company limited by guarantee and is a Public Benevolent Institution. It is the peak body for Seniors and Technology. ***ASCCA*** provides a channel for communication between like-minded people, who want to share in the potential of the computer age to serve their individual and community goals.

Membership of ***ASCCA*** is open to all Computer Clubs for Seniors, Organisations with a membership of seniors, and Organisations that recognise the value of computer technology for seniors. Cost of Membership is \$100 per year.

The Association will advise and support; help establish new clubs, liaise with the three spheres of Government and other organisations on behalf of the membership, undertake projects, organise seminars and like activities and seek out discounts and advantages for members. It has become a catalyst to enthuse, encourage, empower and assist seniors to explore the satisfaction and advantages of using computer technology.

The prime objective of the clubs is to teach seniors to use and enjoy computer technology. Each club has a number of members who act as tutors or trainers. The important difference in this learning style is that most older people prefer to be taught by people of a similar age, they want to learn specific things and not undertake a course of information that may or may not be of use to them. Most of all they want to learn at their own pace.

Seniors can be hesitant to attempt to use computer technology, they can be plagued by negative thoughts - will I be able to do it? - could I make a fool of myself? Seniors Computer Clubs provide an excellent solution - they provide a friendly and non- threatening environment. The new member gains confidence in using a computer and in using the programmes on the club's computers.

***ASCCA*** manages enquiries from people living in many parts of Australia seeking computer clubs in their own areas. Advice has also been sought from South Africa, USA, Canada and New Zealand.

***ASCCA*** has produced this Development Kit as a resource and useful tool to be used as a blueprint to encourage the development of Seniors Computer Clubs within a locality. It may be as an activity in a Retirement Village, a Community Technology Centre, an incorporated community group, as or a group within an organisation such as a Senior Citizens Centre, a Probus Club, the University of the Third Age (U3A), or similar organisation.

The kit covers all that you need to know to start a computer club, or actually any other type of community group.

***ASCCA*** has established worthwhile contacts in Government Departments, Corporate Organisations and Educational Bodies through a willingness to participate in workshops, forums, conferences, etc. ***ASCCA*** has participated in activities and events for the International Year of Older Persons, the International Year of Volunteers and for 2002 Year of the

Outback. **ASCCA** has been represented at many Conferences, Congresses, Expos and Seminars - presenting papers and conducting workshops.

Seniors Computer Clubs are helping to meet the needs of seniors who want to know more about computers.

Clubs have a variety of software installed on their computers to suit the needs and interests of their members and include word processing, spreadsheets, databases, desktop publishing, graphics, financial packages etc. Established clubs are linked to the Internet.

Clubs usually have a monthly meeting where guest speakers are invited to demonstrate new software or hardware, introduce a Website such as their local council's Website, or explain how to use ATMs, EFTPOS, phone banking or the Internet for banking.

These Clubs provide a non-threatening and friendly environment where seniors can learn from seniors. They can learn what they choose to learn and they can learn at their own pace.

Trainers in computer clubs are volunteers who pay to belong to the club. Some clubs waive term fees for trainers.

Training in the clubs is usually on a one to one, to a one-to-three basis. Some clubs offer small classes as an option on specific software programmes. Clubs have also developed special interest groups ranging from family history to card making to Stocks & Shares Management. Those participating in special interest groups usually have some basic computer knowledge and find the small group excellent for learning and interaction.

## **ASCCA Objectives**

- **ENCOURAGE** seniors and people with disabilities to explore the advantages and satisfaction of using computer technology
- **EMPOWER** seniors and people with disabilities by providing learning opportunities
- **EXPAND** communications opportunities
- **ENCOURAGE** options to enable seniors and people with disabilities to enhance their lifestyle
- **ASSIST** seniors and people with disabilities in the development of skills to enhance participation in community activities
- **BRIDGE THE GAP** between the generations through the use of computer technology
- **INCREASE** self esteem and independence

## **Advantages of Joining ASCCA**

**ASCCA** has written two guides that are given without cost to individuals or groups of people to help them establish a Seniors Computer Club in their area. It may be as an incorporated club or a group/club/activity under the auspices of an already established organisation. **ASCCA** will provide as much support and encouragement as possible to help with the establishment of that club. This support will include suggestions regarding promotion, insurance, incorporation, equipment etc.

After the club is established formal membership of **ASCCA** usually follows. All clubs are autonomous but **ASCCA** will liaise with the three spheres of Government & other organisations on behalf of the membership, organise seminars and like activities, undertake projects, offer advice on all matters if requested and seek out discount opportunities for member clubs.

There are many advantages to be gained by joining the *Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association*. I have listed just a few.

1. To become part of a network of clubs to share information.
2. To have a louder voice, because of combined numbers of members when seeking support from government departments, corporate bodies or business entities.
3. To be able to acquire free software organised through **ASCCA**
4. To be able to seek advice and support from **ASCCA** in all matters.
5. To be able to share in the discounts organised by **ASCCA**
6. To have a free Website presence organised by **ASCCA**
7. To be able to participate in a variety of community activities which will help seniors find out about using computers and give you the opportunity to promote your own club
8. To have a discount price for attendance at Seminars, workshops etc. organised by **ASCCA**

Each club is given an information kit as soon as they join. This kit provides a variety of information on such topics as funding, newsletter, free and discounted software, suggested guest speakers, etc. It is only available to financial members of **ASCCA**.

Cost of membership is \$100 per annum. It is interesting to note that during the last twelve months many of the **ASCCA** clubs received more than \$1000 worth of free software, plus other discounts and advantages organised through **ASCCA** - a fair return on \$100!

## ***Getting Started***

### **Establishment of a Computer Group within a Retirement Village, or an established Organisation/Association**

Seniors Computer Clubs have been operating successfully since the early 90s. These clubs are open primarily to those over 55 years of age who are no longer in full time employment and to those who have a disability. **ASCCA** has recognised that those living in retirement villages are often isolated because of lack of mobility or lack of transport and has established groups within some retirement villages.

Computer technology is creeping into almost every aspect of life and Seniors are finding it necessary to explore and use this medium of communication. Those living in rural areas are realising that they have to depend more and more upon technology for everyday needs; older people separated from family and friends are using the Internet to maintain close links with them; while many with a disability are revelling in new found options opened up for them by computer technology.

By mastering the use of simple computer technology older people are finding their general well being and independence strengthened. Communication is vitally important to us all and computer technology offers a level of communication previously unknown in the world.

- Retirement villages offer residents far more than accommodation; they also provide a lifestyle that can make retirement enjoyable. Many offer recreational and educational activities for residents. An increasing numbers of seniors are keen to explore the advantages and satisfaction of using computer technology and forward thinking administrators are considering the establishment of a computer club as one of the facilities within a retirement village.
- There are many well organised and well managed Senior Citizens Clubs and organisations within Australia that are now listening to requests from members for a computer group.

### **Establishing Interest**

1. Publish a small article in the village or club newsletter stating that you are interested in hearing from residents/club members who would be interested in participating in a computer group. If the organisation accepts membership from the general community organise a small story in the local newspaper.

### **Initial Planning with Management**

This discussion can be initiated by a resident or by Management.

1. Discuss at management level the possibility of starting such a group. -
  - i. Should such a group be an activity under the auspices of the retirement village/Senior Citizens Centre?

- ii. Or should the group incorporate as an independent organisation operating within the retirement village/Senior Citizens Centre?
  - iii. Would management assist with the provision of equipment for the group?
  - iv. Would accommodation be made available to the group?
  - v. How would the finances of the group be managed?
2. Once these matters have been discussed/resolved with Management meet informally with those who show initial interest and advise them of the type of club that would be appropriate, ie. activity of the retirement village/Senior Citizens Club; or an incorporated club.
  3. Decide on a location and time for a meeting of residents or members.

## Planning the Meeting

1. Organise speaker from **ASCCA** (if possible) to discuss what could be expected from such a club.
2. Have the group that showed initial interest design a poster to be put on village/club noticeboards. Perhaps office could make sufficient copies for all noticeboards.
3. Organise refreshments - if there are going to be any
4. Establish a contact person and phone number or address before the meeting to enable those who attend the meeting to be able to contact the group at a later date without having to go through management. Prepare an interim membership form. Delegate someone to bring an attendance book and to keep minutes of the meeting.

## The Meeting

The meeting should be very relaxed but kept focused. All those attending should sign an attendance sheet and receive a copy of an interim membership form.

- i. Speaker to outline the formation of a Computer Club/group; what members could expect from membership and what responsibilities membership carries.
- ii. Stress the need for both beginners and more experienced computer users. Computer clubs provide the opportunity to learn and to teach.
- iii. Be prepared to allow plenty of time for questions and answers
- iv. Establish the feelings of the group - encourage the benefits of the proposed club/group. Discuss the need to form a committee.
- v. Motion required from meeting to form a steering committee.
- vi. Elect a steering committee. Term of office for steering committee to be decided by meeting. Eg. 3 months, 6 months or until their brief is completed.
- vii. Make a date for the first meeting of the steering committee

After the meeting collect the completed forms from interested people. As a fee structure hasn't been established it is inappropriate to collect fees but the meeting may agree to make a small donation eg. \$1, \$2, or \$5 to help with initial costs. This would need to be the decision of the meeting and the donation optional.

## **The Role of the Steering Committee**

The Role of the Steering Committee is to:

1. Locate appropriate accommodation. Negotiate space and conditions. If the club is to be an activity of the Retirement Village or Seniors Club there is unlikely to be any cost. If the club is to incorporate as a separate entity ascertain if there will be any cost.
2. Develop a set of rules for the new activity or a proposed constitution for a separate club.
3. Find out about public liability insurance if a separate club; or confirm that the Retirement Village or Seniors Citizens Centre insurance will cover the new activity.
4. Ascertain how the activity/club will manage their finances - eg. Separate bank account.
5. Propose a fee structure based on running costs of the activity/club.
6. Prepare papers for incorporation of club if it is a separate organisation.
7. Investigate ways to obtain hardware and software.

Help will be available to assist you through all of this if required!)

## **Support and Encouragement**

1. The Australian Seniors Computer Clubs Association (**ASCCA**) can provide advice on many probable issues - this advice is available without the need for membership.
2. Membership of **ASCCA** is open to Seniors Organisations interested in the use of computers by Seniors; Computer Clubs that include seniors among their membership and Computer Clubs for Seniors. The membership fee per club is \$100 per annum.
3. See an outline of Computer Pals for Seniors “Greenville” on page 30 to give you an idea of how another club runs. Each club will be slightly different, reflecting the needs, skills, available accommodation and interests of its members.
4. Be aware that this development plan is a guide only and may need to be adapted to your area.
5. Most importantly remember that help, or a sounding board, is only as far away as your phone or email.

## **Accommodation**

Ideal requirements for club-room:

- Area of at least 3 metres by 4 metres,
- Secure, so that computers and other equipment are not at risk of theft or damage,
- At ground level so that wheel chairs and those with limited mobility have access,
- Relatively quiet to facilitate instruction,
- Available 9 - 5 Monday to Friday, and of course, because we are a *very* non-profit organisation made up of seniors many of whom are pensioners, with a relatively low, or subsidised rental,
- Preferably close to parking and public transport,
- Access to a telephone socket if club plans to access the Internet.

This small area should be used for training and small meetings. A larger area is also required for general meetings and special functions. If possible this should be in the same building as the workroom.

## **Your Management Committee**

**Each club should have a management committee. A set of job descriptions has been prepared as a guideline. It is normal to have at least a President, Secretary, Treasurer and Public Officer. Each club will have to decide the number of people on their committee and the roles those committee members will take.**

---

### ***President***

The President :

1. Will be a financial member of [club name]
2. Will be responsible for chairing all meetings.
3. Represent the Club when liaison is required with Federal, State or Local Government Departments, and other organisations
4. Is responsible for the smooth running of the Management Committee and should endeavour to ensure that all actions of the committee comply with the requirements of the Club's constitution.
5. Will be the final arbiter within the Club of matters pertaining to grievance and complaint. Should the President be unable to find a solution that is satisfactory to all parties concerned with a specific grievance or complaint reference should be made to an independent arbitrator.
6. Will prepare an annual report covering the happenings of the previous year for the Annual General Meeting.
7. Should be computer literate, or prepared to endeavour to learn how to become competent in the use of a computer.

### ***Vice President***

The Vice-President:

1. Will be a financial member of [club's name]
2. Will be responsible for chairing all meetings if the President is unavailable.
3. Will assist the President in the smooth running of the Management Committee and should endeavour to ensure that all actions of the committee comply with the requirements of the Club's constitution.
4. Should be computer literate, or prepared to endeavour to learn how to become competent in the use of a computer.

### ***Secretary***

The Secretary;

1. Will be a financial member of [club's name]
2. Will be responsible for taking the minutes of all committee meetings. A copy of the minutes of each meeting will be kept in a book which is kept specifically for such purpose and signed by the chairman of the next meeting as a true and correct record.
3. Will attend to the correspondence of the club.
4. Will submit a list of all correspondence, both incoming and outgoing, to each monthly meeting.
5. Should be computer literate.

### ***Assistant Secretary***

The Assistant Secretary;

1. Will be a financial member of [club's name]
2. Will work in close co-operation with the Secretary, and undertake tasks as requested by the Secretary.
3. Will undertake the role of Secretary should the Secretary be unavailable.
4. Will be responsible for arranging guest speakers for the monthly general meeting.
5. Should be computer literate, or prepared to endeavour to learn how to become competent in the use of a computer.

### ***Treasurer***

The Treasurer;

1. Will be a financial member of [club's name]
2. Will ensure that the financial affairs of the Club are properly recorded and kept in order.
3. Will submit a financial report to each monthly meeting. A copy of such report should be included with the minutes as a permanent record in the minute book.
4. All payments made between meetings must be ratified by the Committee at the next meeting.
5. Will prepare the Club's financial books for an Auditor prior to the Annual General Meeting.
6. Will present an audited financial statement to the Annual General Meeting.
7. Will keep the Clubs Asset Register up to date.
8. Should be computer literate.

### ***Assistant Treasurer***

The Assistant Treasurer:

1. Will be a financial member of [club's name]
2. Will work in close co-operation with the Treasurer, and undertake tasks as requested by the Treasurer.
3. Will undertake the role of Treasurer should the Treasurer be unavailable.
4. Should be computer literate, and prepared to endeavour to learn how to become competent in the use of an appropriate accounts program.

### ***Training Co-Ordinator***

The Training Co-ordinator;

1. Will be a financial member of [club's name]
2. Should be computer literate.
3. Will be responsible for the overall co-ordination of the trainers.
4. Will encourage a friendly and supportive atmosphere for all members prepared to give their time as trainers.
5. Will be responsible for the initial handling of any complaint that relates to training from either members or trainers.
6. Should seek out and encourage involvement in the training process by other members of the club who have skills and knowledge to share.
7. Will investigate possible training opportunities, purchasing opportunities, enhancement of equipment to the advantage of trainers.
8. Will work in close liaison with the Equipment Co-ordinator.

### ***Equipment Co-Ordinator***

The Equipment Co-ordinator;

1. Will be a financial member of [club's name]
2. Should be computer literate.
3. Will be responsible for the overall co-ordination of the hardware and software held by the club.
4. Will keep as up-dated as possible on appropriate hardware and software which should be obtained by the club.
5. Will be responsible for the maintenance of the Club's equipment.
6. Will ensure that records are kept of the hardware and software held by the Club and prepare a list for annual audit.
7. Will ensure that the Club holds appropriate proof of ownership/license for all software on the Club's computers.
8. Should investigate, when appropriate, the best prices and opportunities available for the purchase of hardware and software by both the club and individual members.
9. Will work in close liaison with the Training Co-ordinator.

### ***Public Officer***

The Public Officer

1. Will be a financial member of [club's name]
2. Shall be appointed by the Management Committee.
3. The role and responsibilities of The Public Officer are as defined by *the Associations Incorporation Act 1984*
4. Is responsible in bringing all documents received by him/her to the attention of the Management Committee as soon as practicable.
5. Must keep a register of Committee members.
6. Must lodge with the Department of Fair Trading Annual Statements as required by *the Associations Incorporation Act 1984*
7. Shall keep the Common Seal of [Computer Pals for \_\_\_\_\_ Inc] in safe keeping.

NOTE: The Public Officer is not elected but is appointed.

### ***Publicity Officer***

The Publicity Officer;

1. Should be a financial member of [club's name]
2. Should keep a copy of any publicity relevant to the club. These cuttings should be mounted on A4 paper and kept in a display book. Each cutting to have recorded the paper/magazine it appeared in and the date.
3. Should seek appropriate opportunities to promote the club and its activities.
4. When possible he/she will discuss proposed promotion and publicity with the executive of the committee before taking action.
5. Should be computer literate and all press releases should reflect such competency.

**Note:** If there is not an elected publicity officer this role could be included in the job description of any of the Office Bearers or Committee Members.

## **Additional Roles**

Tasks to be included in job descriptions - or specific roles for committee members who are not office bearers:

### ***Membership***

(This is usually part of the role of Treasurer) keeping records; reminders - to individuals or through newsletter or noticeboard?

Ensuring adequate membership forms available for prospective members.

### ***Housekeeping / Maintenance Officer***

Maintenance of furniture in clubroom.

Investigate availability and price of additional furniture required in clubroom.

Organise purchase of any additional furniture approved by committee.

Have petty cash approval to set amount for purchase of minor requirements without reference to Committee.

### ***Catering Officer***

Make sure that there is sufficient tea, coffee, sugar, milk and biscuits available when needed.

Look after the catering for special functions.

Organise replacement of missing/broken cups etc. as needed.

## **Agenda & Minutes**

### ***Example Agenda***

#### **AGENDA**

**Meeting of Computer Club for Seniors Greenville Inc. to be held in Greenville  
Community Centre at 2.00 pm, Thursday 7 February 2002**

1. Meeting Opened, Welcome
2. Present:
3. Apologies:
4. Minutes of last Meeting:
5. Business arising from Minutes
  - i. Insurance Policy renewal
  - ii. Grant Submission
6. Correspondence:
7. Financial Report:
8. Training Co-ordinator's Report :
9. Equipment Co-ordinator's Report :
10. General Business:
  - i. Open Day for Seniors Week
  - ii. Newsletter
11. Date of next meeting:
12. Meeting closed:

## ***Example Minutes of a Meeting***

**Minutes of Meeting of  
[Computer Club for Seniors Greenville Inc.]  
held in Greenville Community Centre  
at 2:00 pm, Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2002**

**1 Present:**

Jan Gow (in the chair), Mary Smythe, John Figgers, Jill Anson, Peter Able, Ken Anderson, Alex Jenson

**2 Apologies:**

There were no apologies

**3 Minutes of last Meeting:**

Minutes of last meeting were read. Acceptance moved by Mary Smythe, seconded by Alex Jenson, all in favour.

**4 Business arising from minutes**

- i. **Insurance Policy renewal.** Jill Anson advised that the insurance policy has been renewed.
- ii. **Grant submission.** An application for a Greenville Council Community Development Grant has been submitted. Funding has been requested to establish a Family History Resource Unit within the club so that we can commence a special interest group for members keen to learn how to use a computer to record their family history. Alex Jenson was congratulated for preparing such an impressive submission.

**5 Correspondence In**

Account for rent from Greenville Community Centre Management Committee.  
Newsletter from ASCCA

Information about Seniors Week from Department Ageing Disability & Home Care

**Correspondence Out:**

Grant Application to Greenville Council

Get well card to Jim French

**6 Financial Report:**

Present balance of account is \$3,577.49 and there are no outstanding cheques. Treasurer, Jill Anson moved that the financial report be accepted, seconded by Peter Able.

Cheques 504 - 510 drawn since the last meeting were ratified.

Moved Peter Able, seconded Ken Anderson.

No accounts were tabled for payment.

**7 Training Co-ordinator's Report:**

Jim French has been away ill for the last two weeks and it is unlikely that he will be able to resume as a trainer for at least another three weeks. Ken Anderson has taken over Jim's students with the help of a one of our potential trainers, Kathy Freedman. Two of the trainers are brushing up on Windows XP (the software given to us by Microsoft) so that they can begin teaching it.

**Equipment Co-ordinator's Report:**

Computer No. 4 has been upgraded and now has CD-ROM capabilities. The new software programme Windows XP has been installed on three machines as per the licence agreement. John Figgers has undertaken to investigate various scanners to ascertain which one will be the best to purchase.

**8 General Business**

**1 Open Day for Seniors Week**

Council will promote our open day that will be held 25<sup>th</sup> March, 10 am to 4 pm.

Up to 6 people can be taken each hour. Final details to be organised by the trainers. Mary Smythe to organise refreshments for the day - just tea/coffee & biscuits.

**2 Newsletter**

Notice about discount offer for members purchasing Quicken Deluxe to be included in next newsletter. Clubroom phone number to be included under our address on the right hand side of the Newsletter banner.

**10 Date of next Meeting**

Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2002 at 2:00 pm.

**11 Meeting Close**

Meeting declared closed 3:50 pm.

-----  
Chairman. 7/3/02

## ***Insurance***

**If the club is established under the auspices of a Retirement Village or Organisation, the necessary insurance cover may already be in place. Check with Management.**

1. All clubs should have the cover provided by a Public Liability Insurance Policy.
2. The following insurance is suggested as a minimum for all Computer Clubs for Seniors:
  - i. Public Liability Insurance for \$5M \*
  - ii. Contents - including theft
  - iii. Volunteer Insurance

\* If your club is hiring premises it is necessary to ascertain if \$5M Public Liability cover is sufficient. E.g. Most Councils require that all their hirers carry a \$10M Public Liability Insurance Policy

## ***Finance***

If a club/activity is operating within a Retirement Village or auspiced by another organisation it will be a decision of Management to decide if the finances of the group will be handled by the group or by management. The following guide applies to the clubs/groups managing their own finances.

1. It will be necessary to open an account in the name of the new club. This account should preferably be a cheque account. Be careful that the account is not opened as a business account because the fees charged will be higher than for a not for profit, community account.
2. It is usual for the President, Secretary and Treasurer to be signatories for the account but many clubs include a fourth committee member. The authority to operate the account must require at least two signatures to operate. It is advisable that those signing cheques should not be related.
3. All amounts received by the club must be receipted and banked in full as soon as possible after being received.
4. The Treasurer holds the cheque book and is required to keep an accurate record of all transactions. It is recommended that cheques should be signed by both signatories at the time the cheque is drawn.
5. All expenditure must be authorised by the committee. It is usual to authorise the Treasurer to make any regular payments between meetings but these payments must be ratified at the next committee meeting. All financial matters should be recorded in the minutes.
6. The Committee will usually authorise the setting up of an impress petty cash system for the Secretary and probably the Equipment Co-ordinator. A motion to this effect must be moved and seconded, and voted upon by the committee.
7. What is an impress petty cash system? An amount is set ie. \$100. The person authorised to use it is required to keep a record of any amount spent, (usually in a notebook kept for the purpose); and have a receipt to substantiate it. The amount spent is deducted from the opening balance of \$100. When the \$100 is almost expended the person authorised to use the impress petty cash system submits a record of the amount spent to the committee meeting and the Treasurer issues a cheque to 'top up' the petty cash to the original \$100. Petty Cash records need to be submitted with all other financial records to the auditor at the end of the club's financial year.
8. It is appropriate for a computer club to have its financial records kept on a computer. There are excellent programmes available eg. Quicken, Money, Excel. Usually one of the club's computers will have the selected programme installed and the Treasurer will also have the same programme on his personal computer. This enables the Treasurer to work at home on the Club's books. It is also necessary to print out a financial statement each month for inclusion in the minute book.

9. The club's account should be kept in a manner that enables a quick and clear record of both income and expenditure to be easily seen. This is done by keeping a separate column for each type of debit or credit transaction. This enables the club to be able to easily identify just how much money is being paid out for any one item, and facilitates the creation of the annual financial statements.
10. The following tables show some examples of possible column dedication:

Income

Membership fees	Grants	Donations	Bank Interest
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Expenditure

Rent	Hardware	Software	Stationery	Petty Cash
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11. It is the Treasurer's responsibility to prepare the club's books for the annual audit and to present the financial statements at the Annual General Meeting. The Club's Auditor is appointed at the Annual General Meeting.
12. The Treasurer should also maintain the club's Register of Assets.

## ***Equipment Requirements***

One of the first questions asked by those interested in starting a Computer Club is “Where do we get the equipment from?”

Your local Council or businesses can be approached to donate surplus machines when they update their business equipment. Personal computers have a useful life of about four (4) years in business and about ten (10) years domestically or in seniors computer clubs. This leaves about six years of useful computer life in seniors computer clubs!

Some clubs have been given a donation of a computer by a member, or the son or daughter of a member. Organisations such as Technical Aid for the Disabled will sell refurbished machines to a club for a reasonable amount.

### **Suggested Initial Equipment List**

The following suggested list of equipment will give you a good start.

#### ***Hardware***

Four (4) personal desktop computers (PCs). If possible, your computers should be Pentium 1 or better. Most clubs find it much easier to obtain and use PCs. The newer the computer, the longer it is hopefully going to last and the maintenance should be less.

The screens on these computers should be at least 15” (38 cm) diagonally so that visibility and clarity is maximised.

A colour printer is a useful addition, so that learners can print their work.

#### ***Operating Systems***

The operating system on these computers should be Microsoft Windows 98 SE, or Windows 2000 or Windows XP. Some clubs are experimenting with alternate operating systems.

#### ***Application Software***

These are the programs that run on the operating system eg. **Microsoft Works Suite Works Suite 2001** integrates six products into one, including the full and latest versions of Microsoft Word, Works, Encarta® World Atlas 2001, Money, Picture It!® Publishing, and AutoRoute® 2001 Plus you get Internet Explorer 5.5 and Outlook® Express for Internet and email use. or **Microsoft Office**, integrates Word, Excel, Publisher, Front Page, PowerPoint and Access.

Before purchasing these programs check to ensure that your computer(s) can run the software, by checking with the minimum requirements. To run effectively, most programs require significantly more than the minimum requirements.

Virus protection software is an important application that is essential if people practice their work at home and use 3½” disks to transfer information, or the club is connected to Internet. (Vet anti-virus is available free for all your computers if Club is a financial member of **ASCCA**.) It should be noted that you need a separate copy of each software programme for each machine.

## ***Furniture***

You will need tables for the computers and other equipment. Pay careful attention to the height needed for the tables.

Chairs for each of the computers plus additional chairs for the trainer(s). Ideally these chairs should be ergonomic. That is, they have padding, are height and back adjustable, have lower back support (no armrests) and limited floor movement (castors on carpet, or sliders on lino/wood).

A lockable library or filing cabinet where you can keep spare disks, programme originals, printer paper and cartridges plus the club's minute book, correspondence etc.

Tea making facilities (optional).

Power connections (minimise the number of power points needed by using power blocks), with surge protection equipment.

## **Future Planning**

A wish list would include the following equipment:

2 new computers

A phone connection and a modem for Internet connection.

Flatbed scanner

Digital camera

## ***Suggested Training Policy***

### **Training Objectives**

#### ***For Members***

- To encourage members to explore the advantages and satisfaction of using computer technology
- To empower members by providing learning opportunities
- To provide learning opportunities in a manner appropriate to the individual needs of members

#### ***For Trainers***

- To encourage trainers to explore the advantages and satisfaction of using computer technology
- To encourage trainers to make use of the principles of adult education
- To encourage the sharing of skills and knowledge
- To promote the enhancement of skills and knowledge

#### **Principles of Adult Education**

Adult education, or learning, can be considered in four areas:

##### **Tutor Characteristics**

Effective adult learning is enhanced if the tutor follows the following guidelines:

- Gives support, and can cope with individual personalities
- Is enthusiastic, and knowledgeable, about his/her subject
- Is prepared to learn as well as to teach
- Is imaginative and has a sense of humour
- Can think on his/her feet and is relaxed and confident in teaching

##### **Appropriate Teaching Methods**

- Teaching methods should be selected while keeping in mind the members reasons for learning, abilities and previous experience.
- Members should take a role in deciding what will be learned, and the time frame
- Methods used should be appropriate to the objectives and motivation of members and at their own pace
- “I hear and I forget, I see and I remember, I do and I understand”!
- A non threatening and supportive atmosphere should be created

##### ***Adult Learner Characteristics***

- The characteristics of adult learners can be reflective of their independence and wealth of experience

- Motivation for learning can be related to family, personal interest, personal crisis, or work
- Age can influence self esteem and confidence - few want to run the risk of looking a fool or being a failure
- Adult learners need a variety of teaching approaches
- If a session or class is not meeting a member's expectations, if there are insufficient payoffs or if there are conflicting options a member has the opportunity of "voting with his/her feet" - attendance is not compulsory.

### ***Learning Environment***

- A learning environment should be comfortable and conducive to learning
- It should be accessible and barriers to participation should be removed.
- Barriers to participation can include lack of mobility, hearing impairment and poor eyesight.

### ***Tutor Support***

- Regular trainers' meetings should be held, and all trainers encouraged to attend
- All trainers should have the opportunity to contribute to the development of the club through the training process
- It is expected that trainers should all be prepared to teach members what they want to know, if it is within their range of skills, and not impose their preferences upon them. However, other options can be suggested.

A training Co-ordinator should be appointed who will where possible work in conjunction with an Equipment Co-ordinator.

## ***Members' Information Brochure***

**This is an excerpt from a club brochure to give you an idea of how many clubs operate. Computer Pals for Seniors Greenville Inc.**

### **WHO WE ARE**

Computer Pals for Seniors - Greenville is one of a popular and expanding network of similar computer clubs in Australia. The principal aim of the Club is to assist its members in learning how to use a computer and to help members gain an understanding of computers. Assistance is given by people of your own age usually on a one-to-one to one-to-three basis. There is no feeling of being pressured as there might be with formal computer classes. You learn what you choose to learn and at your own pace.

Computer Pals is a members club, a non-profit organisation run by its members. All pay to belong including trainers and our committee. We are all volunteers.

### **TRAINING**

Club trainers are rostered to assist you from Mondays to Fridays inclusive (except on public holidays and during the summer break from late December to early January). At present, to be fair to our members, only one training session per person per week can be scheduled beginning and ending on the hour.

It is worthwhile discussing your level of experience and what you wish to do with a computer, this will assist us to suggest the most suitable trainer. If you already have a certain level of skill and as your confidence grows you could think about becoming a trainer.

### **MEETINGS**

A monthly meeting for all members is held at 2.00 pm on the third Thursday of each month. They usually include an address on a computer related topic given by a guest speaker. These meetings help to increase our understanding of computers and their potential uses. There is an opportunity for members to discuss any matters concerning the club. The meeting concludes with tea and coffee.

### **LIBRARY & NEWSLETTER**

The Club has a growing library including manuals. Some items may be borrowed for up to a two-week period. A newsletter is produced each month containing condensed committee meeting minutes, computer information, and a calendar of future activities.

### **HOW TO JOIN**

If you feel that the Club can help you please complete the application form and together with the \$30 membership fee plus \$30.00 to cover the first calendar quarter lodge these with the duty trainer. Quarterly fees are due on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of January, April, July and October. If you choose to pay for a year's membership in advance then a \$30.00 discount applies.

*NOTE: Fees are set by each club and a club auspiced by another organisation may not need to pay rent or insurance premiums; even after allowing an amount for membership of the auspicing organisation, the fees would probably be much lower than those charged at the Greenville Club.*