BMUG PDF enewsletter — December 2010

committee

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Dick Brown, *Intermediate Group Co-ordinator*
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Email Marg...

Superb Apple Christmas solutions...

Cards, calendars and photo books illustrated with your own special photographs are absolute winners in the Christmas stocking.

If you haven't ordered any of these brilliant iPhoto products yet, you don't know what you & the family are missing!

Tuesday November 9 meeting

Members were shown a hand-held digital projector. This can be used with a computer, camera, iPod Touch and iPhone. It allows you to show photos, plans, designs etc in a larger format on a wall or screen. The Apple TV was also described and it is possible that this may be demonstrated at a later time.

December 14 meeting — Xmas party

The December meeting will be all-together with a guest speaker, Damian O'Halloran. Damian has his own consultancy business — fixing those dreaded problems computers sometimes give us.

Following his presentation we will have our usual Break-up nibbles and drinks. We certainly hope to see you there!

Contents:

Email Steve...

Make a HelpDesk booking...

Season's greetings

This is the last newsletter for 2010. It has been a year of change in structure and members have participated readily. Late November the Committee met with Dick Brown and Don Patrick to plan for next year. These plans are outlined in the newsletter on P 5.

To those members who demonstrated, showed what they had done or provided tips to the group at the start of meetings, we thank you. It's not easy to get up in front of a big group to do this. It is hoped to continue this in 2011 so if you think of something you would like to share, let Greg Melville know.

The Committee wishes members and their families a happy and safe holiday period and look forward to seeing you early 2011, same place, same time.

Marg Evans,
President

TOP TIP — converting cassettes to digital sound

A lot of you will have cassettes in boxes or drawers, well here is a way to convert them to CDs. There are two programs I know of that will achieve this, firstly Spin Doctor – this program comes as part of Toast. The other one is Audacity, which I believe you can download, free.

1. Launch Spin Doctor

A project window appears, Choose *New Recording* and continue by connecting the Source such as Tape deck or turntable as advised. Before you begin, adjust all the settings to suit your recording.

Select Input device — I use USB AUDIO CODEC. By doing this, it will change the input Source for you, or choose *Line In* if no USB AUDIO CODEC.

If your audio source is correctly connected to the selected input, the level meter will light up when you switch on your input source. If you would like to hear the playthrough while using recording, click *Play Input through Speakers.*

Adjust the audio input level so that no red shows up. To do this, cue your audio source to play a reasonably loud portion of your music. The levels change colour — blue, green, yellow and sometimes red. Adjust the volume on the audio source, so that the levels appear mostly in the upper green for the best recording quality.

2. Choose recording quality i.e CD Quality or DVD

You are now ready to Record. Cue your audio source at the point you want to start recording. To pause to allow you turn the cassette, just press the pause button. Turn the cassette, press *record* and continue recording. By choosing " Automatically stop recording"you select the time you wish to stop. Remember if you let it stop on its own, you will have to start a new recording for the rest of the cassette.

You cannot hurry a recording, if it takes 45mins. It has to play that length of time. You can edit any excess recording in your tracks later.

When your recording is finished *Recording Successful* appears on your screen. Press *Continue.* Complete the recording session by naming your album and Artist. then click *Finish.* A window appears saying *Creating a waveform.* This may take a few moments. Now you see the waveform

3. Using the waveform display

The waveform display is where you create and edit tracks. The upper waveform always shows the entire recording. The lower waveform shows your tracks and can be enlarged to show as much detail as you need. As you add tracks, they appear on the lower waveform as coloured rectangles.To play a track, double click on it in the display.

Before you begin, if you prefer go to Spin Doctor preferences , click on *Waveform & Tracks* in the menu bar, then click on *Auto-define* immediately after recording is complete and defining will be completed for you.

Auto Define splits your recordings into separate tracks by looking for periods of silence within a recording. But, of course, not all pauses in a recording signal the beginning of the next song. Use the controls on this panel to improve the results of Auto Define.

4. Creating tracks manually

Tracks can be created manually using the lower of the two waveform displays. By the way, the track list will be empty if you have not defined any tracks . Make sure this is completed. To delete a track, select a track in the lower timeline or in the track list and press *delete*.

If you want to save your recording, go to Spin Doctor Menu and *Save Active tracks*. Other choices are *Send to iTunes*, or *Burn a CD* Make sure the tracks you want to send to iTunes are active. The tracks are active if the Active checkbox next to its name is selected in the track list. Click the   iTunes button   in the dialog box that appears, and select a file format from the drop down list. I use MP 3. Click *OK*. The tracks are sent to iTunes and you will find them in a playlist titled CD Spin Doctor.

Use the Toast menu in CD Spin Doctor to send an entire recording to Toast or just the tracks you select. You can choose to have the tracks added to an Audio CD project or a Music DVD project.

Good luck with your recording transfers!

Philomena Rogers

Planning for 2011

Late November the Committee met with Dick Brown and Don Patrick to plan for 2011. A lot of ideas were discussed and how the year would be structured. Changes were felt needed to maintain the interest of members. Groups and their compositions were discussed and through this it was found the need to relocate some, merge some and allow more flexibility and movement between groups depending on the topic being covered.

It was decided to plan for the first four months and then meet again at the end of March to revue the format and plan for the rest of the year.

January: Combined meeting — creating photo books
Dick Brown will look at iPhoto books plus alternative book production places on-line.

February: photo books follow-up
Groups will look at what was presented in January in more depth, give examples of what they may have tried themselves and solve problems encountered.

March: Combined Meeting hardware and maintenance
Looking at what is on your computer and products to assist you.

April: follow-up
Groups will look in depth at the topic presented in March

Marg Evans

Dear Aunty Mac,

I have just begun work as the editor of *The Hoody*, the magazine of the Bellarine branch of the Bird Observation and Conservation Australia group. To do this, I've needed to master *Pages*, which is wonderful publishing software. Our President said of the first issue:

"Neil, what a terrific newsletter — the photos look great and I hope that it inspires all of us to contribute for subsequent issues.

Congratulations!!"

Thanks are very much due to BMUG. Exploring *Pages* in our Intermediate group inspired me to give it a go.

Neil Hickman

TOP TIP — rotating multiple images in iPhoto

If you have imported some photos that are the wrong way up, here's an easy way to sort them out without lots of tedious clicking.

Sometimes, when importing lots of images, you can end up with several that are offset by 90-degrees. The usual cause is to do with the way the camera was held when the photos were taken.

If you have a large number of photos that need to be corrected, then it can be a real chore to rotate them one at a time.

The simple technique shown here can be employed to correct the orientation of multiple photos at once.

Step 1: Select your album, folder or event

Select the album, folder, or event that contains the images you want to work with. The images will be displayed in the main window. Make sure that only the images you want to affect are displayed.

Step 2: Select all images

Highlight all the images in the folder, displayed on the right hand side of the screen, either by dragging a selection window around them or using the Cmd+A keyboard shortcut. The selected images are shown with a yellow border.

Step 3: Deselect unwanted images

If the folder contains any images that don't need to be rotated, you can remove them from the selection by holding down the Command key as you click on them.

Step 4: Rotate images

Now you can rotate all the highlighted images through 90-degrees with a single click of the Rotate button, which is found at the left of the toolbar at the bottom of the window. Instead of using the Rotate button, you can use the Cmd+R keyboard shortcut. As an alternative. Alt+Cmd +R rotates the selected images in the opposite direction.

Take care...

A photo's orientation is stored as part of the image file. This means that if you rotate an image, it alters its appearance in the photo library and in every album, slideshow, book, calendar, or card in which it appears. Therefore, if you want to leave the original file unaffected, make a copy of the image first and then rotate the copy.

Peter Baldwin

Rotate in iPhoto 11

Rotate has moved from the main page to 'Edit' in iPhoto 11, but that only works for single images. To rotate multiple images, select them in an album or event, then go to *Rotate*, in the 'Photos' menu or use the appropriate keystroke shortcut.

Editor
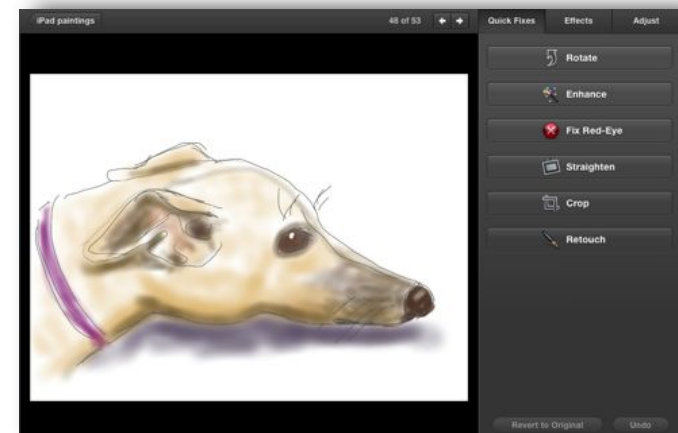
The things that can go wrong...

For three weeks I have had a curious, and as it turned out, difficult to identify, problem with my 27" iMac. The story goes like this...

I'm someone who likes to shut down my computers each night and start them up again each morning, my justification lies in the knowledge that the operating system then gets a chance to complete its background tests and repairs (they happen behind the scenes at startup and shutdown), something that would not happen if the machines were just put to sleep. I guess another reason for shutting down is that I might just save a few cents off my electricity bill.

So to the problem which commenced every time I put my hand around the back of the iMac and pressed the power button. What follows this action is a normal grey screen and then...well...absolutely nothing...no Grey Apple...no rotating gear wheel...no muffled and reassuring sound of a hard drive doing its thing....nix, nil, nothing for 2 minutes, sometimes 3 minutes or even 4 minutes, after which the Apple and gear wheel appear and startup continues as normal.

Being a somewhat dab hand at identifying Mac problems, I decided to carry out the following tasks, not necessarily in this order...

— Repair Permissions
— Repair Hard Drive
— Run Maintenance Utility
— Reset Startup Disk
— Zap PRAM
— Power Cycle the Mac

No luck over a number of days, at which point I panic a bit and phone Applecare.

The usual third degree ensues but I am eventually permitted to talk to an Apple Technician in Brisbane who, when he hears the things I had done, immediately offered me an on site repair.

A day or two later the local authorised Apple repair guy rang and he firstly said he thought it was my Hard Drive and asked if I had a backup..."Do I have a backup, I'm a backup fanatic!" He also suggested that it could be faulty RAM and said he would bring some verified RAM when he came.

Next day he arrived on board his trusty motorcycle and proceeded to run some tests most of which I had already done.

Here I remind readers that this problem only occurred at startup and ONLY at the very first startup of the day. It seemed that when the iMac warmed up everything was as normal. The upshot being that much of the testing had to take place at the start of the day and only one thing could be checked each day.

So here's what transpired...
Day 1 after the repairman had inserted his 'good' RAM — slow startup so my own RAM was eliminated...
Day 2... Keyboard Batteries replaced (they read 18% at the time) — slow startup again, not the keyboard...
Day 3 startup from and external bootable hard drive (set to do so in System Preferences the day before) — slow startup again so not the internal HD...
Day 4 unplug all the peripherals (there are 7+ of these) — would you believe NORMAL STARTUP!

Not finished yet, which one of the peripherals is causing the problem? At this stage I communicate with the Apple repair man again and he does what we all do at times, he consults with a colleague who had actually experienced a similar problem with his own Mac and it turned out to be a faulty connecting lead. My friendly repair man also indicated that this is where Apple's responsibility finishes, as a faulty 3rd party device is not their problem.

So I'm now on my own again, and unfortunately I must add 7 wires to my 7 peripherals as possible suspects and now I'm looking at a possible further 14 days of tests!

To cut a far too long story short, on day 6 of this further testing, it is the turn of my D-Link USB hub. It turns out that disconnecting this piece of kit enables a normal startup. I have a spare brand new USB cable on hand and make the replacement, and next morning with everything plugged in, the computer starts normally. Thank goodness, I don't have to test the last few peripherals!

Dr Frankenstein & Igor zapping the PRAM

The moral of the story is, take out an Applecare extended warranty by all means, but if you have a problem it will certainly speed things up considerably if you teach yourself a few self-help measures to try and locate the problem yourself.

By the way 'Zap the PRAM' is an old and valuable trick to keep up your sleeve — to do it you really need 3 hands. Restart your computer whilst holding down the following four keys — Command/Option/P/R (note a wired keyboard may be required).

Continue to hold the keys down until you hear the "boing" sound for the second time then release them.

What is PRAM, I hear you ask? Well if you insist on the full name, it is Parameter Random Access Memory and it is a little chip that remembers all those things your Mac needs to know each time it starts up. These items can sometimes get confused or corrupted and may prevent proper startup.

Here's the full list...

- Status of AppleTalk
- Serial Port Configuration and Port definition
- Alarm clock setting
- Application font
- Serial printer location
- Autokey rate
- Autokey delay
- Speaker volume
- Attention (beep) sound
- Double-click time
- Caret blink time (insertion point rate)
- Mouse scaling (mouse speed)
- Startup disk
- Menu blink count
- Monitor depth
- 32-bit addressing
- Virtual memory
- RAM disk
- Disk cache

Don Patrick

New app — *Vote Victoria*

Top marks to the Electoral Commission for producing this interesting app which, for the first time, gives iPad and iPhone owners the opportunity to get involved in the election as it happens, wherever they may be.

It provides basic information prior to the day, including the location of polling booths and offices for early voting. There is even a handy *YouTube* video that explains how to vote, and though we old-timers may think that's a bit of a joke, there are many many young people who will be voting for the first time. This video, reaching them via their main means of communication, their phones, may well help thousands avoid voting incorrectly. We surely want all the votes to count! Many thousands of people vote informal because they do not understand that they must number *all* the boxes if they vote 'below the line'.

The app obviously has potential, but right now, it provides only limited functions. For any detailed analysis, you are taken out of the app and to the Electoral Commission tally room website. Nevertheless,the authorities have responded to an obvious need, and we will undoubtedly see many further developments in this field

Steve Craddock

Give an old Mac a good home...

We have received the following request from Glenn Westergren at Kalkarindji Community (formerly Wave Hill Station) in the Northern Territory, and we hope there may be a member with a superseded Mac out who can help out. Earlier models are OK, but they **must** be able to support OSX. If you can help, please contact Glenn directly, or email June.

June Brown

Glenn's request is in the next column, as you see...

Email June...

iMac Digital Media Lab

To whom it may concern...

My name is Glenn Westergren. I'm a teacher in Kalkaringi, a remote community 40 kms west of Halls Creek in the Northern Territory.

I'm trying to acquire a small number of 2 to 3 year old iMacs to establish a digital media lab for our school. Teaching digital media skills is a great pathway for improving numeracy and literacy for our students. Our Windows based ICT environment is not optimal in this regard.

Our funding is quite limited for this venture so I'm on a mission to find any form of support from interested parties that wish to assist our indigenous students in obtaining skills that will increase their chances at gaining employment down the line.

If anyone in your Apple/mac community has any used iMacs they might like to donate to our cause, or other ideas that could help us meet our goal, please contact me by email or phone.
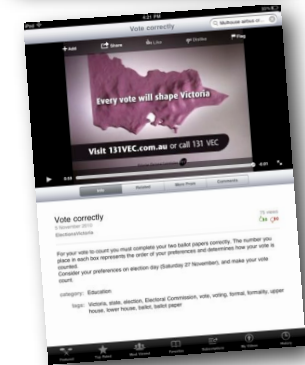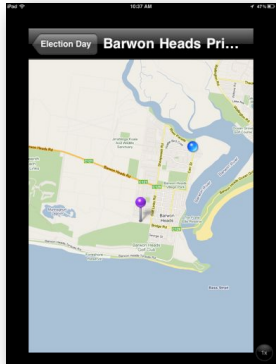
Thanks for your time.
Glenn Westergren
Kalkaringi School, NT (08) 8975 0778, or 0458 120 563

Email Glenn...

Jürgen wants YOU...

BMUG Assist program — breaking news!

This program will attempt to resolve urgent Mac problems which can not wait till the Help Desk is available at a club meeting. Jürgen will be available to take your call on 5255 4517 to help if he can or to give you advice about who can.

HelpDesk

This valuable part of our program operates at every meeting. Please book in advance by email — this gives David and the volunteers time to research your issue in advance.

Help for remote members

Obviously, BMUG can't assist you with BMUG Assist, and you won't be arriving at the HelpDesk, but never fear, we are able to help, in some ways.

For non-urgent matters, why not write an enquiry to Aunty Mac? She and the helper elves can usually provide a solid answer. Often, we can put you in touch with another remote member in your part of the world — two heads are better than one, as we found out when our Healesville remote members got together to help each other very successfully earlier this year.

And finally, in extremis, if you don't have a local Apple store or a tame consultant, and when you've done all your homework by Google searching and reading up about troubleshooting on the BMUG website, email the editor, and we'll see what help can be provided by email.

Editor

Email David...

Make a HelpDesk booking...

Email Steve...

BMUG manuals — mail order manuals

In addition to selling manuals over the counter at our meetings, we sell them by mail order from the BMUG website. And it's so easy! You pay by PayPal, and purchasers in Australia can have any 3 for $20, including postage and packing, while international readers can get two for $20.

Do us a favour, and mention this service to your friends, wherever they might live.

As always, it helps if you order manuals by email to pick up at the meeting, so we know how many to print and bind.
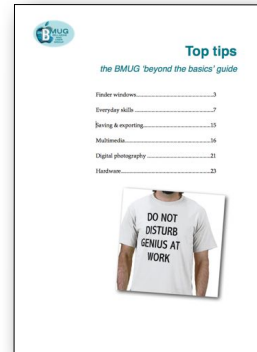
A link to email David with manual orders is provided at left...

Editor

Steve's iPad group

Because the iPad technology is so new and is constantly being upgraded, owners can benefit from handy tips, app recommendations and new ideas. In recent weeks, we have been sharing tips on iOS 4.2, the new operating system, which has given the iPad many new capabilities. When you buy your new toy, email Steve to get on the mailing list and share in the news —we welcome your input.

Steve Craddock

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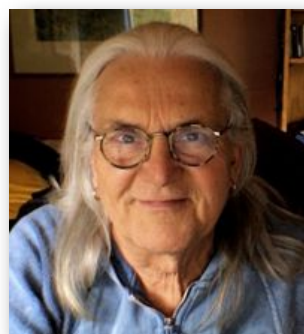**Helpdesk Co-ordinator,**
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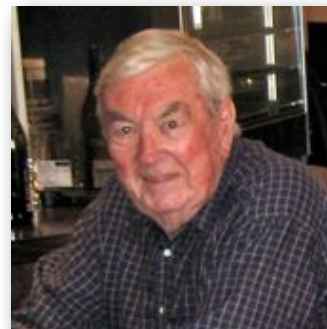
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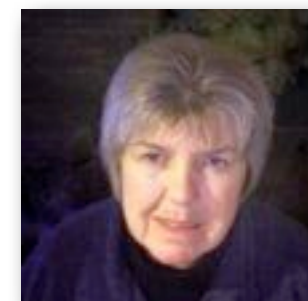**Secretary,**
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