BMUG PDF enewsletter 3

steering committee

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David Dixon
Don Patrick
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our email addresses are on the website...

Contents:

DON'T FORGET

15 October meeting, 4.00pm Ocean Grove Neighbourhood Centre— Digital Pictures and the Mac

Please help by bringing along your own favourite photographic accessory or piece of equipment for "show and tell". We will have a group workshop and ample opportunities for you to ask questions.

September meeting

We had an excellent attendance, again, and gained an encouraging group of new members. During the iPod group workshops, it became apparent that we had a very knowledgable member in Dick Brown, and he has kindly volunteered to join the committee. This gives us confidence that we will have plenty of talent to draw on when we get hold formal elections later in the year.

We can't stress too much that we really need to hear from our new members, especially Mac beginners, because your feedback enables us to plan meetings ahead, to choose topics for demonstrations.

Obviously we value our expert members — and there are plenty of them — but our main reason for being is to get Macintosh beginners off on a sound foundation of knowledge and skills. That's why we want to get as much feedback as possible. You know how to do it — just email us via our club website with any criticisms, queries, or suggestions.

We assure you that the committee is always ready to put on a special session or tutorial should a particular demand emerge from members' emails.

We promise to keep our meetings and writing as **"geek free"** as possible, but...

TIP: try clicking on any underlined text or the advertisements in this enewsletter...

BMUG website

email BMUG

Do you visit any webcams regularly?

You are probably be aware that webcams are widely available to provide information on, for example, surf or snow conditions around the world. A year ago, we were staggered to see the empty flooded streets with debris blowing around when we viewed webcam traffic images of New Orleans highways during the storm.

Just recently, my wife and I had the surreal experience of speaking to our daughter on the phone at Imperia, Italy, where she was attending a yachting regatta. Why so surreal? Well, she was jumping up and down and waving her arms around in front of the quayside webcam at the time!

iPod Accessories

The iPod has entered the world as a easily transportable carrier for digital music and other data, as a fashion item, as a concept and even as a source of several new words for the English language, all of which can thankfully be used in mixed company and in front of children! It has also spawned a whole world of accessories, some made by Apple themselves, but without doing a comprehensive market survey, I would estimate that most are made by other manufacturers. There are hundreds now, but they can be broken down under a few main headings, protection, carrying, listening and recording.

Carrying and protection are almost the same category, but some provide more protection than others. This varies from a stretchy rubbery skin to a tough aluminium box via leather and neoprene. Some are intended to hang round the neck, some clip on the belt or strap round the upper arm. The range is huge and now well-known fashion designers, Gucci etc, are marketing cases for the iPod. This article will not go into this area as it is very much a personal choice as to how you wish your iPod to be, or not be seen.

Listening to the music you are carrying around is obviously the main concern. You could stick with the in-ear phones that come with the iPod and be reasonably happy, that is until you hear some of the alternatives.There are some in-ear phones that sit further in the ear than the Apple supplied ones and you may find these better suited to your needs. The simplest upgrade is some higher quality headphones. These would usually be a bit larger and more obvious as they sit over the ear rather than inside, but the increase in listening pleasure is huge.

I can't get on with the in-ear phones, they always seem to be on the point of falling out and if I gently press them further in, the increase in sound quality is so marked, that I wonder why I even bother with them.

That briefly covers listening on the move, but if you are at home, in the car or in a hotel then the choices are different as the iPod can play through other sound systems, Hi-Fi's, radios or portable systems dedicated to iPods. The secret is getting the sounds from the iPod to the system.

The Griffin iTrip

One of the first products in this field.

This is a small FM transmitter that fixes to the iPod and transmits a low power signal that can be picked up by any FM radio/tuner within approx. 10-15m. You choose a frequency on the radio

that appears to have no FM station near it, this can be tricky sometimes, then choose that frequency on the iPod, press play and your music will flow out of the speakers.

This applies to any FM radio whether it's the kitchen radio, the hi-fi in the lounge, in the car or in a hotel room, truly music on the go. There are other versions of this system by other manufacturers. Then there are systems that use a cable connection between your iPod and the radio whether it's in the home or in the car and some car makers are now marketing cars with iPod friendly radios.

Dock

Apple used to include with the Pods a 'Dock'. This is a stand or connector that allows the iPod to be connected to the hi-fi or radio by an audio lead. It is also connected to the mains so the iPod gets charged as it is playing the music. A word of warning here. I have found out from bitter experience that you do not leave the iPod on the Dock for extended periods when you are not playing music, it wrecks the battery, completely! The Dock is no longer included with iPods, but you can still buy them.

An advance on the Dock is one of the many portable speaker systems that incorporates a Dock. These resemble a portable radio, with a place, usually in the middle of the front, to 'plug-in' the iPod. You either connect to the mains, or some units have batteries. Simply press play and off you go. Computers Now loaned a Bose version of this system which was demonstrated at the last meeting and it produced a very acceptable sound quality. Apple produce their own model, which, according to the reviews, gets the highest sound quality rating, but this is a very subjective area and a listening is recommended before buying. Take your own iPod and listen to your own music when you do the audition.

Griffin iTalk.

This accessory is about the same size and plugs in the same way as the iTrip, it then allows sound to be recorded onto the iPod. These recordings are downloaded as a 'Voice Memos' playlist in iTunes the next time the iPod is connected to your computer. The iTalk actually allows the sounds to be played back on the IPod after you've made the recording as a quick check at a very basic quality level. Earphones can also be plugged into the iTalk to monitor the recording, as a recording is being made and also as a better quality play back in the field.

I hope this has acted as a useful round up of the add-ons shown at the last meeting. As I've hinted, this was scratching the surface, there are many, many more accessories available and if you buy any bring them along, we'd all be very interested in having a look.

All these (and more) accessories are available from Computers Now, Geelong and any of the big Melbourne stores. Streetwise, in Hawthorn, has an excellent on-line iPod catalogue:

Computers Now
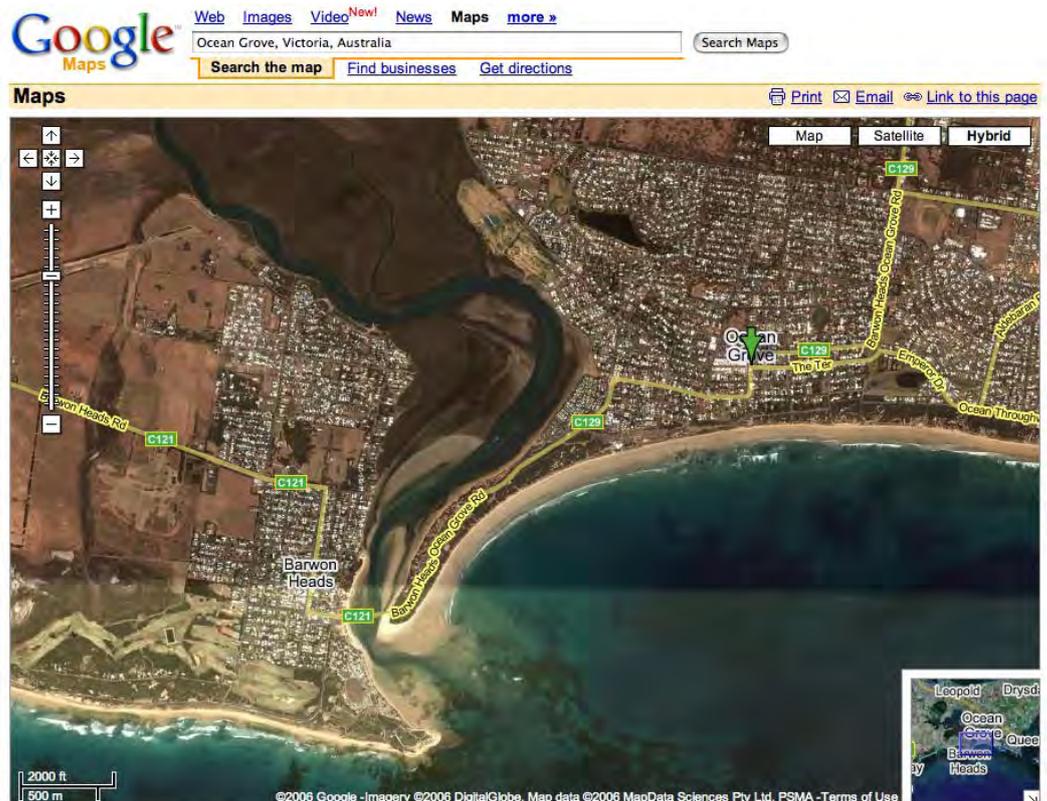
Streetwise

Dick Brown

Google maps

You may have noticed the link on our club website to the Google map of the Bellarine. If you haven't experimented with the Google Map application, you should give it a go, as it is great fun and a surprisingly useful resource for enriching everyday life. Maybe you are reading a novel set in a distant location, maybe you have a friend or relative who lives overseas. Either way, you can get a real sense of their neighbourhood by zooming in...

But let's begin by looking at Google in more detail. You may not be aware that there is a better place to start than at the standard US home page, Google.com. From there, you can click "go to Google Australia", and I recommend that you make this page your personal Safari home page, because it adds the invaluable search button, "pages from Australia", a button which greatly facilitates finding local sites.

Google maps

Now back to Google Maps. You can find this resource with a Google search and bookmark the page. The interface is quite self explanatory, starting with a "search maps" box into which you type your location — "Brunswick, Australia", "Baffin Island, Canada", or whatever. As the map opens, you may choose to view the map, the satellite image or a hybrid of map and image, and you may choose to zoom in or out.

All this is very similar, of course, to Google Earth, but in my experience, the database of places that Google maps recognises is much more comprehensive, so you are far more likely to be successful with your search.

'Getting started' manuals — a bargain at $2...

We are very proud of our small but growing library of *do it yourself* manuals for the Macintosh, all written for you, our members, by members. They presently include:

iChat with your Mac — the BMUG guide to getting started

If you haven't experimented with this fun piece of software that comes free with System OS X, you are missing out! iChat enables you to eliminate many expensive long-distance calls from your phone bill.

Music and listening with your Mac — the BMUG guide to getting started

7 pages of concentrated tips from an enthusiast. This manual expands on many of the issues raised at our September meeting.

Mail tutorial

Comprehensive notes by local Mac guru, Steve Cooper, of MacAssist, who gave an excellent presentation at our August meeting. Incidentally, Steve is always available for consultancies, including hardware installations, setting up internet connections, and troubleshooting, for a very reasonable fee.

iWeb with your Mac — the BMUG guide to getting started

As you may know, Steve Craddock has written and produced his own website, as has Don, who also created the club website. These sites were all produced in Apple's beginner software, iWeb, which comes as part of the iLife software suite. This manual takes you right through from start to publication, and is aimed at enabling any member to set up a family or hobby site without spending months mastering technicalities.

Some members' sites include:

Don Patrick: **http:/members.iinet.net.au/~donpatrick**

Steve Cooper: **http://www.macassist.net.au**

Steve Craddock: **www.stevecraddock.id.au**

Keyboard Shortcuts

Keyboard shortcuts are a great way to save time and reduce the effort of dragging the mouse around to find pull down menus.On the Mac they are generally consistent across all applications so it won't take long to learn them.

In any menu, they will be found adjacent to menu items, and most Mac enthusiasts are unconsciously aware of all the basic ones for saving, new page, cutting, pasting and so on. Here are two images from Word, showing some everyday shortcuts:
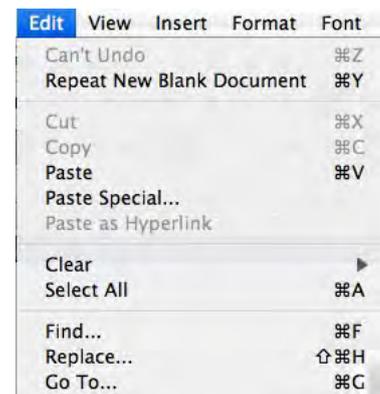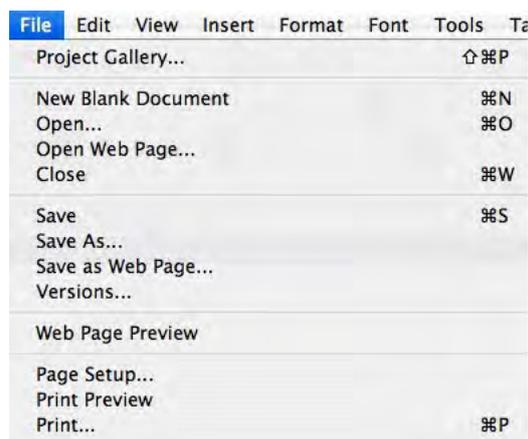
Other shortcuts are even more interesting. My favourite is:

shift/control/Command/4
This turns the cursor into a small crosshair that can be mouse clicked and dragged around anything at all on the desktop. When you let go of the mouse click you will hear a soft camera shutter noise, which saves your selection on the clipboard. By moving the cursor to where you want to paste the selected area you can then command / V the selection to place it at the cursor.

Another variation on the same them is Shift / Command / 4. This is how most of the illustrations in the club newsletter are created. Your cursor becomes a crosshair again but the selected area is turned into a jpeg image and left on the desktop and described as Picture 1 - Picture 2 etc. (Note that you only get one go at it so you can't select an area and then move it into position).

So every time you are using your machine, remember to glance at menus and note the keyboard shortcuts — they make life much easier.
David Dixon

How did you become a Mac convert?
Margaret Boyles tells us that recently, a young woman and her two friends had a University project to complete which necessitated filming them training three people on a specific task. They borrowed a video camera and successfully had the project filmed. Next step was to edit the video footage, put in titles, credits and so on, and produce a completed film.

Now these three girls all used "one of those other computers" and had no suitable software to enable them to complete their project. One of our BMUG members came to their rescue with the offer to let them use "a good computer".

The Mac, and its fantastic software, including iMovie and iDVD, rescued these damsels in distress, and they were absolutely delighted with the finished project. There is every likelihood that the kindness of our member has converted the three girls to Mac users...

Do you have a story to share about your experience of showing your machine to a friend? We'd be delighted to publish it.

Members' marketplace — *wanted or for sale...*
BMUG members are always welcome to send us brief descriptions of any computers or accessories you would like to buy or sell. Obviously the club cannot take responsibility for any grievances that might arise from transactions, so keep the descriptions of gear as accurate as possible.

for sale...
Iomega zip drive & a few cartridges
free to good home, ring Steve on 5254 2576
wanted...
good second-hand flatbed scanner to connect to a current machine — not scsi
ring Steve on 5254 2576
wanted...
Apple add-on floppy drive
if you have one to give away or sell, email Theo Van Alkemade at:
theovanalk@optusnet.net.au

Check out the new Mac Basics Superguide at the Take Control website...

Here is an image from this highly recommended and very comprehensive manual for beginners:

Topics covered in this 78 page book include:

- Mac OS X at a glance

- Finding your way in OS X

- Using the dock

- Setting system preferences

- Working with applications

- Opening, saving and printing

- Troubleshooting your Mac; and much more...

And remember, club members get 10% off any download of a *Take Control* ebook by quoting the club discount code: CPN31208MUG

a full list of Take Control titles may be seen at...

The fantastic MacBook raffle — tickets selling fast!

The Apple Macintosh Users Society of Melbourne (AUSOM) has invited BMUG to take part in its annual December Raffle. (Drawn 2nd December 2006)

This year, the prize is a great top-of the-range MacBook!

Tickets are priced at $5.00 each and the GREAT NEWS is that for every ticket sold, BMUG gets to keep $2.50.

Buy your ticket/s at the October or November meeting and help boost BMUG funds. Books of 5 tickets are also available to take home to sell to your family and friends.

For tickets and/or ticket books just email Margaret.
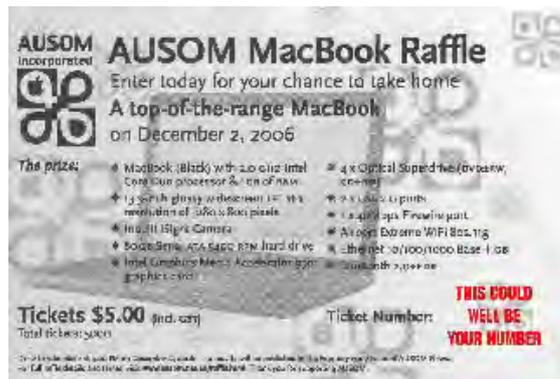
*Remember, we
welcome your
suggestions,
questions,
tips, favourite
widgets, ideas
for meeting
topics...*

BMUG raffle — the latest computer manual courtesy of Peachpit or O'Reilly books

Following the September travesty when Ron Begg drew his own ticket (boo, hiss!) we will be selling tickets at our October meeting for another draw at the end of the November meeting. Members are reminded that tickets are $2 each or 6 for $10. You need to be present to claim your prize.

contact BMUG on:
• website: http://www.bellarinemac.org.au
• email: info@bellarinemac.org.au

8