

Peel SeniorNet Association Inc.

President's Annual Report for the Year 2005/2006

This past year began with the President Merv Brindley holding office for only five months, as in April 2006 he resigned from this position and the committee due to health reasons.

As Vice President I assumed the position of acting President and Gwen Swaby was elected to fill the position as acting Vice President for the remainder of this term.

I would like to express our thanks to Merv for his time in office when he helped achieve several significant benefits for the members that included negotiating more favourable details for PSN to use the SCC Computer room without charges, on the first and third Wednesdays of each month, in return for PSN members volunteering their time to assist in manning the room during the SCC General Access sessions.

Merv was also instrumental in arranging the supply and delivery of the popular "Blakes GoGuides for Computers" that were used by many in the various training programs run by our training officer, Tom Hoffman.

Always promoting the social occasions held for members, his presence made everyone feel welcome and he contributed greatly to making these events a success.

Activities:

Monthly Meetings

Membership this year eventually stabilised at 140 members and the meetings held on the fourth Monday of each month were generally well attended, usually by some 50 to 60 members and gave us an opportunity to hear from a varied assortment of speakers on a range of interesting topics as well as using the time to network and chat about matters of mutual interest during the afternoon tea break.

Members who had items that had been superseded or that were no longer needed, were given the opportunity to display them for sale on every third month at the Trade Table and this proved to be quite popular in allowing members to browse and buy useful articles at a very reasonable cost.

Good use was made of the PSN Laptop to enable messages and information of general interest to be forwarded to all members from the email address set up by Tom as psn_mail@iinet.net.au, and this system was administered by committee members on a monthly roster basis.

Members Register

Ed Crane has done an excellent job in updating and maintaining the register of members in a format that can be continued by whoever takes over from him in the future.

Socials

We have to thank Gwen for her efforts in organising such a varied program of regular social get togethers at morning teas, lunches and outings, all of which were attended by those appreciating the opportunity of strengthening relationships and enjoying getting to know other members better as well as often finding help for our different problems encountered using the computer.

Apart from these events at such venues as the Mei Jing Restaurant, WA Botanic Gardens, Ninos, Cicerellos, Merchants Tea House and other local spots, a Mystery Tour in December proved very popular for those who went.

Training

Tom Hoffman as training officer has provided opportunities throughout the year in the SCC computer room for members to increase their skills and knowledge of many of Microsoft's programs such as Word, Excel, Power Point and Publisher and we have also been fortunate in having Kath Sheehan to help with running courses on the complexities of how best to use digital cameras, which varies considerably due to so many makes and models available these days.

First Click Courses

In May the committee successfully applied for a government grant to run the First Click Training course for beginners after being encouraged by Angela Lewis, the present co-ordinator of the SCC and formerly a member of PSN.

The program was also arranged and administered by Angela who represented the Mandurah City Council as a joint participant in presenting the program to the general public of the Peel Region.

Subsequently, in August a training program for a series of four week courses, was commenced and run by Iris Harrison in the SCC computer room and also by Tom who conducted the course at the Billy Dower Centre.

This program has resulted in giving an opportunity for sixty people from the Peel District to become proficient in the basics of using a computer.

PSN as the sponsoring body for the course also gave each graduate access to using the buddy system for a month after completing their course to take advantage of help from a buddy in their district if they had any problems.

This gave them the chance of realizing some of the advantages of joining PSN at a later date, which they were encouraged to do.

The Buddy System

Members who confront any difficulties with their computers have continued to take advantage of this helpful system to call on the buddy for their local area to assist in trying to find solutions to whatever the problem may have been and we are very grateful to those who have volunteered their time and experience in this regard. In March we held the first session of "Meet the Buddies" when recent new members and the buddies all met in the computer training room where we had a very informal and productive time in discussing and helping with demonstrations and answering questions about various aspects of computer use.

PSN Website

Tom is to be congratulated for his efforts in the maintenance and ongoing, refining and presentation of the website that is a credit to our organisation as well as serving the purpose of updating and keeping members in touch with the social and training events and activities. Recently he has started helping Russell Masters to familiarise himself with running the site as we will then have a back up operator on the occasions Tom may be absent.

Community Assistance Grant

A recent submission to the Mandurah City Council for finances granted under their Community Assistance Program has been successful and we now have funds available for the printing of Glossy Brochures and a Banner.

Using these at prominent avenues in the Peel District will help raise the awareness of the general public of our existence and the benefits offered to those seniors desirous of advancing their use of the computer and associated areas.

Visitations

In November last year Pat Perry and several members representing the Merriwa RAAFA Computer Club attended our normal monthly meeting and then in February Colin Porteous, the President and one other lady from the Busselton Seniors Computer Club were welcome visitors. On these occasions each representative gave some interesting highlights about activities of their respective clubs.

Seven of our members led by Gwen visited the Bunbury Seniors Computer club in September and came back very impressed with the way they have established their club and how it was operated with the support of many of the local businesses.

Committee

As Gwen and Sheila will not be among the nominations for the new incoming committee, I would like to extend to each of them the grateful thanks on behalf of our committee members and the general membership for a particularly fine effort on both their parts in fulfilling the tasks of their office with such a degree of faithfulness, commitment and expertise in their own special ways.

Gwen in particular has been a member of the committee for the past five years and we appreciate all her tireless and dedicated work as a past secretary and social organiser who is always willing to help members with any queries about the club activities in general.

Sheila took over as secretary when there was a great need to re-organise the system of maintaining records and keeping up to date information from the committee and general meetings. She has displayed her special talents in this field with accurate, efficient and timely detailed accounts of these events which are necessary for maintenance of the club records.

To all the other committee members I would also like to record my very sincere thanks for the way everyone has co-operated in our meeting times and the generous help from all in making it an enjoyable experience of seeing the way members continue to attend and show an interest in the clubs activities.

I have already mentioned the extent to which Tom has been involved and in a similar vein, Dixon as treasurer, Christine as newsletter editor and birthday emails, Arthur in obtaining our guest speakers, Bill with his welcoming letters to new members and Tess as a valuable helper and stand in for Sheila, have all participated in helping to continue the club activities in a relaxed yet purposeful direction.

After four years on the committee I shall also not be standing for re-election, however I look forward to continuing my membership and activities as a buddy.

Since joining PSN some six years ago I have appreciated the opportunities that have enabled me to broaden my understanding and knowledge about many aspects of using a computer from the input of so many members and activities during this time.

I would trust that amongst the members there will always be those willing ones who will offer up some of their time and experience to assist in running the club's activities for the future years as it is an area which many seniors will benefit from in this technological age.

I wish the new committee all the best for the coming year.

Robert Stewart
Acting President
23rd October 2006