



Newsletter

October 2021

Member of NZ Federation of SeniorNet Societies

Postal address: PO Box 2090, Rotorua 3040 Phone: 022 6879299 Email: rotoruanet@gmail.com

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Editor contact
rotoruanet@gmail.com
Website
www.rotoruasenior.net

From the Chairman

Hello all

This has been a frustrating year for SeniorNet in Rotorua. As you know, we had to vacate our long term premises at Regency Park, and we are now hamstrung because of Covid restrictions. Let's hope that we can return to normality before long.

For my wife and I, an idea that we came to during lockdown was to rearrange our living room. This meant shifting our TV and accessories to another wall. However, that wall does not have a terminal for our satellite dish, which we used to view TV through a SKY recorder and more recently a Freeview recorder. The thought of the hassle and expense of wiring in a new satellite outlet made us call a halt to our plans.

However, the thought came to me that, with fast fibre Internet and good WIFI, maybe we do not need an aerial or dish to connect to the outside world, so we went ahead and made the shift. It has worked out well. Our smart TV gives us direct access to services such as Netflix, Neon and Youtube. For other viewing, I use an Android tablet or phone casting to a Chromecast in one of the TV HDMI inputs. This gives us access to TVNZ and TV3 on demand, including live TV, and to the Curiosity Stream documentary channel (which I recommend). If I find I cannot live without SKY Sport, I can subscribe to online sports services. We don't miss the ability to record, as programmes are available on demand.

For those of us with hearing problems, I have discovered that most streamed programmes provide subtitles. For Netflix, drop down the programme menu and select options under Audio and Subtitles. For others, you may need to search for and select a CC (Closed Caption) option.

Happy viewing
Keith Garratt
Chair

Rotorua SeniorNet is just one of 75 local groups in the New Zealand Federation. If you would like to know more about what goes on elsewhere, OR what discounts or services are available to members, go to the Federation website.

www.rotoruasenior.net

Next members' forum

Monday (TBA) 2021

2 pm

Our monthly members' forums are at Parksyde Centre, Tarewa Place, on the second Monday of each month at 2 pm, with interesting talks followed by afternoon tea. Visitors are welcome.

From Bert, Activities Co-ordinator

Here we are, Monday morning September 27, and this time of the month I am normally writing something for the SeniorNet newsletter. I would, under normal circumstances, also be attending the SeniorNet drop in at the Rotorua library.

These two things coinciding made me realise two things. The first is that I really miss those sessions at the library. I miss getting together with the team and catching up with everything that is happening with them and I miss the stimulus of working with our members and the general public to resolve their problems.

I am not always as busy as most of the team but I sure learn a great deal from some of the queries that people present, that have everyone scratching their heads. The great strength of the drop in sessions is that everyone is learning.

The second realisation is that when I sit down to write something for the newsletter the subject matter is almost always something that has arisen as during a "Drop In" session. I am really at a loss for something to write about this month and I am keeping my fingers crossed that New Zealand will reach the 90% vaccination target soon, which will allow us to return to some sort of normality. On a personal note I will not be sorry to lose the face masks either as I have found that when I am wearing a face mask my glasses become fogged, which makes even simple tasks such as making a payment in a shop quite difficult.

Looking into the future with an eye on what is scheduled to happen in the Family History field, I am looking forward to the release in January of the British Census returns for the year 1921. (Census returns in UK are not allowed to be published for 100 Years.)

The first world war, followed by the Spanish Flu pandemic, was arguably the greatest demographic upheaval on a world scale that there had ever been. Literally millions of young men did not survive the war and a figure of 50 million deaths were attributed to the Spanish Flu. Many wives were widowed and children left fatherless and there was no welfare state as we understand it today. Many returned soldiers were disabled and/or suffered from psychological trauma. Many families living in New Zealand are here because their grandparents emigrated following the war.

The information provided in the 1921 census will enable people who are interested in their own family history to track the events that would have had a real impact on where and how they are living today.

I realise that not everyone is interested in discovering their past but for anyone who has vaguely wondered about the how, why, when and where of their ancestors there has never been a more rewarding time to start looking.

The past 10 years has seen amazing advances in the ability to search on a computer - a whole world of data from public records stored in huge databases and freely available to everyone.

Bert Harris

FYI/FYE (For Your Information/From Your Editor)

A Bit of a Wander Down Memory Lane ...

We have come a long way from the days when a computer was made up of three separate pieces of equipment – a screen, a central processing unit (CPU) and a keyboard. Not even a mouse in the early days and those 5¼” (literally) floppy disks! Really, the biggest difference between that and the electronic typewriters of the day was the separate pieces of the computer!

As a teacher of shorthand, typing and accounting, I found that, by the time we reached about our third update of the new-fangled computers, the best thing about them was the word processing program, WordPerfect. Our keyboards had the 12 function keys along the top row and, if my memory is correct, F11 was the one that gave us ‘Reveal Codes’. These showed the computer’s formatting in a pane below the text. For both teaching and learning, this was a wonderful tool and really helped those students who didn’t have a very good command of spelling and/or grammar – and in South Auckland, that was the majority!

Now, it’s possible for the computer to do almost all the data entry, formatting and correcting for us, using the keyboard and/or voice. Wonderful for those who are unable to perform these functions themselves, but are they really that useful for the rest of us? Also, is computer use, in itself, a healthy activity for our younger generations?

There are quite a few studies that have found a link between over-use of computers at primary school level and poor learning outcomes. A typical example is this 2019 study.

*“For instance, students in France who reported using the Internet at school for a few minutes to a half-hour every day scored 13 points higher on the PISA reading assessment (which is also used here in NZ) than students who reported spending no time on the Internet at school. Meanwhile, French students who were online in school **for more than 30 minutes** per day consistently scored lower than their peers on that same test.”*

<https://psmag.com/education/computers-in-the-classroom-may-do-more-harm-than-good>

Many of us will have grandchildren who will be spending much more time on computers than 30 minutes a day. Those of us who have taught, have probably seen the results in our own classrooms – the child who can't stay awake (well, when you are gaming until 3 am with your mates in China, getting up to be at school by 9 am is a bit of an ask!), the child who can't concentrate, the child whose speech is undeveloped, the child who speaks with an American accent – they all exist, in both primary and secondary schools.

What can we do about it? We know that children and teenagers can tune out adult voices extremely easily, so that leaves drastic measures like 'accidentally' spilling a drink on the equipment (expensive and **definitely** not recommended!), hiding the equipment, etc. Or, we can offer alternatives – go outside and play a game; teach them some of the old games we used to play – 4 square, skipping, backyard cricket (but maybe with a tennis ball), hopscotch, etc. Read books to them, have colouring books handy, get some butcher's paper and crayons and let them draw. If you're brave, do jigsaw puzzles or play board games, but be warned! Today's children are often poor losers. Many are raised to expect success at all they do, at the first attempt.

After all that, maybe helping the younger generations learn to deal with failure is the best thing we can do for them! I wonder how many apples dropped in front of Newton before the penny dropped and the Law of Gravity was discovered in 1687? Yes, I looked that up on the computer, but I still don't understand the gobbledegook of physics.

Ngairé

Federation Hangouts: A User's Perspective - Alan Armstrong

Since I retired from SeniorNet Rotorua a couple of years ago with mobility problems I've spent most of my time at home, found Zoom really handy for staying in touch, and lockdowns have been no big deal.

When SeniorNet NZ began Zoom Hangouts a few months ago I joined and found them very good value. Guest presenters run half hour sessions twice daily (10 am and 1 pm weekdays, Fridays 1.30) that aren't just about computers but also topics of general interest like how to drive and maintain an electric car, an implanted defibrillator that keeps its presenter alive, on-line shopping, Wikipedia, artificial intelligence and more. Later there'll be a member registration system and Apps for smartphones, but for now anyone with a browser can join in. Easy to join (instructions below) but sessions start on time and please check your camera, microphone and speaker are working before you join.

Learning Centres around the country have some really talented presenters and several are developing Special Interest Groups. Also each Regional Rep has a full Zoom licence that Learning Centres can use to run their own local or regional sessions. SeniorNet NZ has partnered up with Google and the plan is to get 10,000 members around the country taking part by the end of the first year.

You can join the mailing list for a weekly "what's on" at seniorhangouts@seniornet.nz and here's the rest of this week:

10 am	Day	Topic	Buddy	Location
30 Sep	Thu	Password Managers: What are they and are they Safe	Kevin Fletcher	SeniorNet Manawatu
1 Oct 1.30pm	Fri	Q&A and what's new for users	Ron Shackleton	SeniorNet Whanganui

If you have Zoom installed click **Join** a few minutes before starting time then enter Meeting Code **594 568 0835** and Password **SH123**.

If you don't, use this link in your browser. It doesn't have all the Zoom App facilities and you have to answer a few questions. but it works:

<https://seniornetnz.zoom.us/join/5945680835?pwd=TndGQ2pFNmtPNGNQOVpIT2hyOW80UT09>

If you want coaching my email is mirihika@orcon.net.nz ph 07 349 6344

A BANK LOAN TO A SCOTSMAN (as relayed by Lois)

A Scotsman (wearing his kilt and a bonnet) walks into offices of private bankers, Coutts & Co. in the Strand, London (Bankers to the Royal Family since 1820) and asks to speak to the manager. He informs him that he is going abroad on business for two weeks and needs to borrow £5,000. The Manager tells him that Coutts & Co. would only be too delighted to meet his requirements, but that he should understand that since he is not a client of the Bank, it would need some modest security for the loan.

So the Scotsman opens his sporran, takes out the keys and documents of a brand new Ferrari parked in front of the bank, and hands them to the manager saying "Will this do?" He also produces the car's log book, and after a phone call everything checks out fine. The manager agrees to accept the car as collateral for the loan; the cashier hands out £5,000 while the bank's porter drives the Ferrari into the bank's underground garage for safe keeping.

Over lunch the manager tells his colleagues the amusing little story of how a simple-minded Scot from North of the Border secured a loan for £5,000 offering a £120,000 Ferrari as collateral and they all enjoy a good chuckle as they sip their Port.

Two weeks later, the Scotsman returns, repays the £5,000 and the interest, which comes to £15.41. The manager says, "Sir, we have been more than happy to have had your business and this transaction has worked out very nicely, but we are just a little puzzled. While you were away, we checked you out and found that you are in fact a wealthy property investor. What puzzles us is why would you bother to borrow £5,000 from us?"

The Scotsman replies: "Where else in London can I park my Ferrari for two weeks for only £15.41 and expect it to be still there when I return?"

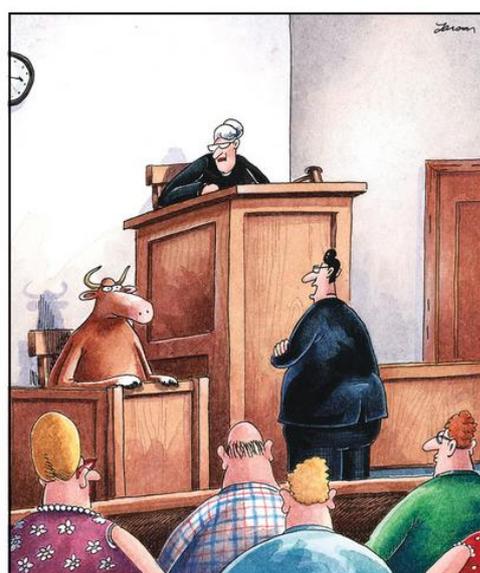
Aaah - those canny Scots!

Committee and Tutor Contact Details

Chairman	Keith Garratt	07 357 2020	Tutors	
Vice Chairman	John Sommerville	021 181 5193	Bert Harris	07 343 7232
Secretary	Rob Grant	07 345 4222	Eric Cameron	07 362 4848
Treasurer	John Sommerville	021 181 5193	Gene Rigney	027 572 4363
Web Master	Keith Garratt	07 357 2020	Jaz Zabkiewicz	07 345 9056
Newsletter	Ngaire Tucker	027 290 7347	John Sommerville	021 181 5193
Technician and Database Manager	Gene Rigney	027 5724363	Keith Garratt	07 3572020
Course Coordinator	Bert Harris	07 3437232	Ngaire Tucker	027 290734



"Hit the bird, Ruth—he's stuck."



"Look. We know *how* you did it—*how* is no longer the question. What we now want to know is *why*. ... Why now, brown cow?"

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