



# Newsletter

March 2024

[www.rotoruaSenior.net](http://www.rotoruaSenior.net)

Member of NZ Federation of SeniorNet Societies

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## From the Chairman

Hello members

Partly driven by some recent changes in Federation policy, your committee is considering incentives to attract new members. This may result in changes to the subscription and membership structure, and we will advise you of any outcomes very soon. There will not be any significant implications for existing members.

Anna and I recently celebrated our 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary, and this led us to resurrect our black and white wedding photos. This set me thinking about the huge changes in photography since that time.

Soon after we were married, we moved to the West Coast with all its magnificent scenery. We invested in a simple 35mm camera and took hundreds of Kodachrome slides of the scenery and family. Options were limited as the camera was fixed focus. Because of the film cost, we were very selective in choosing what to photograph. Exposed films had to be posted to South Africa to develop, taking about three weeks to return. Being in slide format, there was no way of editing or cropping them.

After a couple of years, we moved to Sarawak in Borneo. As an international aid worker, I was able to buy a magnificent Minolta SLR and a zoom lens duty free. This was a revelation, and over following years in New Zealand and overseas, I accumulated thousands of colour slides before the advent of digital cameras.

A few years ago, we selected around a thousand of our most treasured slides and had them digitized. I now find it amazing that I can have all those old memories on one USB stick. I can edit, enhance, and crop the photos, and print them in high quality in my home office. I can produce photobooks and can assemble photos into PowerPoint presentations.

Isn't technology amazing!

Regards

Keith Garratt

*Rotorua SeniorNet is just one of over 20 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.seniornet.nz](http://www.seniornet.nz)*

# Next members' forum

**Parkside Monday 11 March 2024 2-4 pm**  
Recognising and dealing with Scams

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## **From Bert, Activities Co-ordinator**

One of the most useful apps to be found on our digital devices would be Google Maps. It beats using a paper map hands down. The instant you open up the app it shows your current location. Should you be travelling in a strange city and you have become lost, you can ask for directions to your accommodation or a known area to get your bearings. The map also shows points of interest in your immediate location which include gas stations, transport terminals, restaurants, shops and many other useful tips at a glance.

The screen has a zoom function which allows you to zoom in for more detail or to zoom out when you need to find the next suburb, town, or city.

When you are planning a journey by entering a destination and a start point your screen shows the route on an appropriate scale with any alternate routes that may be quicker when traffic conditions change. The screen will show you the duration of your planned journey whether in a car, a bus, a train, or walking.

During the journey your device will give directional instructions such as, "take the next turning right on Small Street", or "the third exit at the next roundabout". Should you take a wrong turn or miss an exit on the motorway google maps will recalculate to reach your destination from your new position. In the event that the road you are using is experiencing heavy traffic or delays due to road works google maps will warn you of the situation and offer an alternate route if one is available

You can plan your journey to pass through any waypoint you may have specified. You may, for instance, decide to divert to visit a friend on the way to visiting your designated destination.

A little bit of history:

The technology which allows your mobile phone to tell you your location on the planet was developed over many years by various branches of the US government, including NASA, for tracking its early space flights. The US Navy developed a global positioning system (GPS) for tracking submarines and the Department of Defence built a multi-satellite system of global positioning which became fully operational in 1993. The system was very accurate and was restricted to military use until eventually a less accurate version was released for public use in 1983.

The first GPS was used in a car by Mazda in 1990 and many high-end car manufactures followed suit in ensuing years with built in GPS units. Electronics companies joined in the competition with Navman in NZ, Garmin and Tom Tom, manufacturing systems which could be retrofitted to any car.

In 2005 Google maps provided a GPS app which has been almost universally accepted by the car industry as the GPS data supplier via your mobile phone to provide a map and commentary for drivers using SSB connection.

GPS has come a long way.

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## You don't know what you don't know!

Many of our members have mobile devices or PCs more powerful than they realise and there's so much more they can do besides phone calls, emails, chat and a few Apps. But if you don't know it's there, you're not going to use it!

SeniorNet Manawatu has come up with a plan to nudge members into learning enough of the basics to widen their horizons. It has several check lists of things it's useful to know and here's their one for Internet users:

### Basic Skills

1. **Navigation:** Using the browser's address bar, back button, and tabs
2. **Searching:** Using search engines effectively
3. **Email:** Creating and managing email accounts
4. **Online Safety:** Strong passwords, phishing awareness, data privacy
5. **Typing:** Basic keyboarding skills

### Essential Features:

6. **Bookmarks and similar features:** Saving favourite websites
7. **Web Forms:** Filling out online forms
8. **Online Shopping:** Payment methods and secure transactions
9. **Social Media:** Responsible and safe usage on Facebook, Instagram
10. **Online Maps and Navigation:** Using tools like Google Maps

### Useful Websites:

11. **Khan Academy, Futurelearn, OpenLearn:** Free tutorials on various topics
12. **Duolingo:** Learn new languages for free
13. **Creative Commons:** Free music, images, and creative content
14. **Wikipedia:** Vast repository of information
15. **Google Arts & Culture:** Explore museums and art virtually
16. **Project Gutenberg:** Free e-books
17. **TED:** Inspiring talks on diverse topics
18. **Lifehacker:** Tips and tricks for everyday life
19. **Mental Floss, Snopes:** Interesting facts and stories, true or false
20. **Instructables:** DIY projects and tutorials

### Productivity & Communication:

21. **Cloud Storage:** Google Drive, Dropbox, Onedrive
22. **Online Documents:** Google Docs, Microsoft Office Online
23. **Video Conferencing:** Skype, Zoom, Google Meet
24. **Online Learning Platforms:** Coursera, edX, Udemy, FutureLearn
25. **Online Communication Tools:** Google Chat, Messenger, SMS and RCS

### Entertainment & Leisure:

26. **Streaming Services:** YouTube, Netflix, TVNZ+, Spotify
27. **Online Gaming:** Diverse genres of games
28. **Podcasts and Audiobooks:** Educational and entertaining audio content
29. **Virtual Tours and Museums:** Explore places virtually
30. **Online Communities and Forums:** Connect with like-minded individuals - Facebook,

### Senior Hangouts

How much do you already know? What else do you need to know?

There are four more lists at [https://seniornet.inspire.net.nz/learning\\_opportunities.html](https://seniornet.inspire.net.nz/learning_opportunities.html) if these aren't enough for you.

Why do it? Everything you learn empowers you to do a little more than you used to.

**Teaser.** Want to try a quiz where there's a 90% chance you'll get everything wrong? The NY Times recently asked its readers which of these images were real people and which were AI fakes. Try it yourself: [https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2024/01/19/technology/artificial-intelligence-image-generators-faces-quiz.html?unlocked\\_article\\_code=1.Vk0.fcKw.O4t9SErICoI6&smid=url-share](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2024/01/19/technology/artificial-intelligence-image-generators-faces-quiz.html?unlocked_article_code=1.Vk0.fcKw.O4t9SErICoI6&smid=url-share)

Thanks to Alan Armstrong

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

Many of us like to travel around the country, enjoying the journey and the scenery. But we can get pretty irate when our trip is full of road works! I recently travelled to Upper Hutt for a weekend conference, having checked the approximate travel time on the AA website. It said 5 hours 30 minutes, approximately. No problem. Plenty of time to get there before dinner.

Well, it wasn't quite so simple. About 10 minutes south of Rotorua, the traffic stopped. Not roadworks. A logging operation. Trees had been felled on a steep slope beside the road and, as each large trunk was hauled up the slope, the traffic was stopped. Fair enough! I certainly wouldn't want one of those getting loose, rolling down the hill and landing on my car! Besides, it was fascinating, watching the machinery getting the job done. After about 10 minutes, we were off again, one more log safely atop the hill.

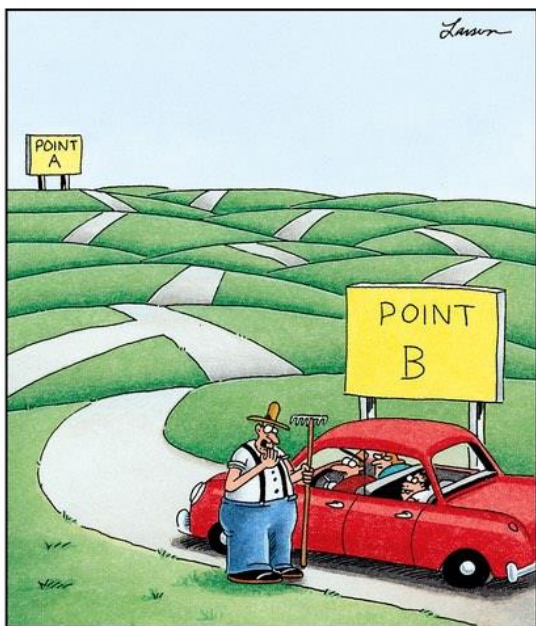
From then onwards, it was 'Road Works Ahead' seemingly every few kilometres. Some were easy – just reduce speed for a bit. Others involved waiting and pitying the people operating the Stop/Go signs. Fortunately, none had the 'Cement Splashes – Wash Car Today!' sign, because that wasn't happening! A couple had speed limits of 10 kph over some very rough, newly-built road base. Great for the old suspension.

Eventually, after 7½ hours, I made it to Upper Hutt (lost count of the road works, though), found the motel and didn't worry about traffic until Sunday when it was time to drive back. Being Sunday, most of the road works were just speed restrictions and, the weather being good, so was most of the driving behaviour. It took six hours, including a stop for refreshments at The Mess Tent in Waiouru.

I love driving around the country, but the sheer volume of roadworks sometimes takes the fun out of it! The conference wasn't that informative, either, but I'll keep quiet on that, or I might end up on another committee!

What's this got to do with computers? Not a lot, except we can still manage without them if we have to. My 1996 car doesn't have any fancy gadgets (except the driver) so I rely on checking online before I go and, if necessary, printing maps. (Did you know, the AA no longer supplies maps?) Hint – make sure the map is up to date. I've occasionally found even Google can be a bit behind the times!

Have fun out there, but drive carefully, too.



"Well, lemme think. ... You've stumped me, son. Most folks only wanna know how to go the other way."

## THANKS TO OUR SPONSOR



How people  
navigated before  
Google Maps or GPS

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