



Newsletter

April 2022

www.rotoruasenior.net
Member of NZ Federation of SeniorNet Societies

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From the Chairman

Hello members

Just before I sat down to write this, I was reading an interesting opinion piece in the Rotorua Daily Post about how much better life is now than 50 years ago. It gave a lot of examples round matters such as health, transport, housing, household appliances, recreation opportunities, food, travel, entertainment and social attitudes.

This set me to thinking about the ways that SeniorNet has had to change and adapt in its nearly 40 years of existence. When it first started in the 1980s, it was mainly to help older hobbyists with those new-fangled things called personal computers. There were no mobile phones and no Internet. The word "online" did not exist.

SeniorNet's focus remained on PCs until just a few years ago. When I first joined about eight years ago, new members received several weeks free lessons on how to use a computer. Beyond that, the emphasis was on formal classes on subjects such as Microsoft Word or PowerPoint. Now, technology can no longer just be a hobby. It has expanded to include things such as mobile phones, tablets and smart TVs. The Internet has become more and more pervasive and essential for everyday life. There is increasing mention of the "digital divide", recognizing that there are people, particularly among the older generation, who are being left behind. The move away from cheques to online banking is just one example.

SeniorNet is adapting from being a club helping its own members, to one providing a wider service in the community, helping bridge the digital divide. In Rotorua, we are running the "Talking Tech on Tuesdays" sessions at Parksyde, and we hope to soon get back to our drop-in sessions at the library as Covid permits.

Regards
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 14 April 2022 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

"What about the good old days!"

I recently read an article which highlighted a recent trend for a massive wave of nostalgia for the "good old days", which were apparently in the 1950s. I am pretty sure that the people espousing this theory either were not there or that their memory has become very selective. There is a very true saying about people only remembering the good times.

As the 1940s rolled over into the 1950s I was a newly-minted teenager. That is the age when you believe the world revolves around you but you are reminded on a daily basis that it does not! The realities of this period were that our home entertainment consisted of an old cabinet wireless with which you could tune into three stations, a 14-inch black and white TV which had one channel for a few hours each day and a wind up gramophone which played 78 RPM shellac records through a steel needle which was guaranteed for only 80 plays.



We could go to the movies and watch mostly black and white feature films through a cloud of nicotine smoke.

Our house had a telephone which was a rarity back then. Local calls incurred a small charge, calling elsewhere in the UK was a substantial outlay and calling overseas was millionaire territory.

The least expensive method of communication was to handwrite a letter, buy an envelope and postage stamp and trudge to the nearest post office or letter box.

Our main sources of information were from the wireless news, our daily newspaper and the newsreels at our local cinema. TV news was still very much in its infancy. Should we require any background information to clarify any questions raised by the news we had to resort to our little box of encyclopaedias or we could go to the local library to look up the subject in the multi volume Encyclopaedia Britannica series.

I guess by now you are wondering where I am going with this. The point I am about to make is that all of the above activities can be sourced from a single device, namely your mobile smartphone, which I agree is not an inexpensive item. However, when you consider all of the things it can do for the price you pay is astounding.

You can make phone calls with instant one click dialling to the people in your contacts list. Added to this a messaging system to augment voice calling. You also have an answering service if you are unavailable, and so on. You may wish to write a letter or send an email to either one or a group of people. No stamps or envelopes or walks to a letter box involved.

“But wait ! That’s not all!”

You can access and store all of your musical favourites on your device. The latest world news is a couple of clicks away. Should you need further information you can try Google or Wikipedia or go down the endless rabbit hole of Youtube. Should you need a second opinion there are endless numbers of bloggers out there willing to offer their advice.

Of course, you know all of this and all about taking pictures and forwarding them to your family and friends. You know that you can plan journeys in Google maps and look for bargains on “Trade Me” or get the latest “Weather Forecast” in your local area or anywhere in the world.

The list of useful, interesting and informative things it is possible to engage in is almost infinite.

It is an unfortunate fact that most of the people in our age group only use their phones to make the odd phone call or send an occasional text or email and that is it. There are so many more things that can be done which can make life easier and often save money or answer a question that may be causing you some anxiety. Your phone can be your assistant, your help in an emergency and a source of entertainment and knowledge. SeniorNet was established with the purpose of helping Seniors to participate fully in the digital age. The Covid epidemic has forced us to rethink how we deliver our message and our new endeavour at the Parksyde is our attempt to reach a wider audience. Please come along on this Tuesday morning at 10 am and give it a try. Take advantage of all that new technology rather than be overwhelmed by it.

Bert Harris

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

A reminder from the Treasurer – last year (2021) we didn't have to pay any membership fees. However, this year we are back up and running, so membership fees are now due, as follows:

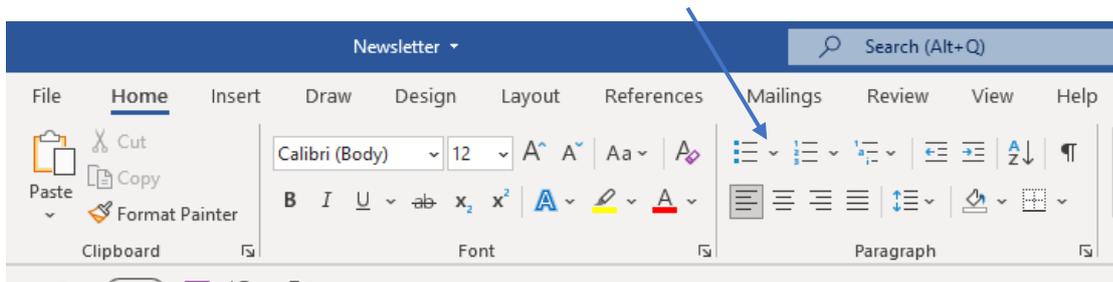
- * \$30 per member (no couples discount)
- * Pay to Senionet Rotorua, at
- * Bank account: 38-9008-0413804-00.

Remember to put your name in there! You can also find the information on our web page www.rotoruasenior.net.

All of that reminds me of one of those small things that we find out about using different programmes, but that others may not have picked up on. The **bullet points** above are an example. If you are working in Word, these are on the **Home** menu bar. (See next page)

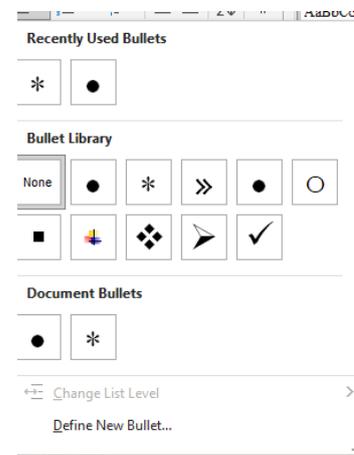
As long as what you are doing is not a legal, formal or otherwise set-format document, you can have great fun with them. Today, I have used asterisks, just because dots are a bit ho-hum. But, depending on your mood, the weather, the occasion ... you can use all sorts of bullet points!

Just click on the ▼ symbol beside the bullet points



This brings up the options on the right. If you choose the bottom option 'Define New Bullet', it is then possible to create a bullet from a symbol, picture or another font.

Some of the things I have used have been birthday candles, emojis, cat/dog pictures, road signs, etc. This all depends, of course, on the intended readers. But fun can be had!



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