



History of the Glengara Seniors Computer Club.

Formerly known as the “Glengara Computer Group”

The first meetings of residents who were interested in computers were started by Rob Harris in 2000.

These meetings were held in the Gatehouse once a month on the third Thursday at 4-00 pm. Rob used a notebook (laptop) unit running Windows 95. It was difficult to see a laptop screen so an external monitor was used initially. A VGA to composite video converter unit was acquired and this allowed the large screen projection TV in the Gatehouse to be used.

During 2001-2 interest dropped off and Rob finally discontinued the meetings through lack of numbers. This was a bit of a disappointment for everybody concerned.

Computers play a big part in the internal TV station, Glengara TV, where the PowerPoint program is employed to generate a continuously running slide show.

In March 2003 John Marks restarted the meetings, after circulating a flyer for interest in the meetings. There was an instant return with over twenty acceptances. The first meeting was in the Gatehouse. John brought along his own computer, a bulky operation. There were fourteen residents who attended that meeting.

As we needed to have a larger screen, Rob and John used Rob's PC/TV converter to connect to the large TV screen in the gatehouse. This was a success as everybody could not see what was going on.

Meetings were held on 1st and 3rd Tuesdays at 4-00 pm. This was later changed in June to the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays. A small charge of \$2-00 a meeting was agreed to help in funding new equipment.

Various speakers from outside the village were invited and gave very interesting profile of their subjects. John Marks and Tommy Thomas also covered a number of subjects and the group grew to around twenty members with 12 to 14 attending each meeting.

The big break came when the Country Club was being built and we were informed that a computer room was to be included in the building. After several changes to the plans the computer room was finally on the ground floor with no outside windows. It was larger than we expected and there were ten internet connections and sufficient power points for the equipment. A small kitchenette at the far end with four cupboards and a set of drawers.

Benches were asked for; instead there were four large office tables complete with retracting shelves for the keyboards.

A request for a computer was presented to the Glen Group Board and as a result we received our first XL system.

John through his Investment Advisor, John Cerniauskas, received several complete computers and monitors before the opening of the Country Club.

Our first general meeting held on the 8th February in the recreation room was attended by 42 residents. This was a bit of a shock as about half that number was expected. Meetings were held on two days each month with a range of subjects were presented.

The Team was formed to manage the group and it was decided that we were to be a special interest group so we could look after our finances without going through the Glengara Village Residents Committee.

The fees for membership were set at \$30-00 for single and \$50-00 for couple in a villa. This was agreeable to all.

Over the following period the group changed its name to the "Glengara Seniors Computer Club" for registration of a business number and a tax file number. Also a broadband connection was established and eventually our own web page, thanks to Tommy Thomas. The present logo was chosen from a number of submissions and it is in keeping the aims of the club.

During the following years grants were obtained from Wyong Shire Council and Department of Veterans Affairs. These grants enabled the club to purchase new equipment, two PC's, an Apple Mac and a notebook unit, also access to Exetel broadband.

Beginner's classes were arranged and at the end of 2006 18 members had completed the course and were presented with a certificate. These courses are continuing over the coming years.

Microsoft through a subsidiary has supplied us with software and has been a great help to the group.

Our first annual Dinner September 2006, held in the Country Club was attended by 74 members, partners and guests. Shereen & Dieter of C.A.T Computers presented the club with a black laser printer.

At the end of 2006 the club membership numbered seventy (70) a figure that was thought impossible earlier on. The computers are well used by the members but unfortunately outsiders have used our facilities without letting us know, as a result in February 2007 a password had to be installed on all computers.

By March 2007 our membership was 67 with fees still at the previous level. As a result of our good financial position a new computer was purchased with the new Microsoft Vista system installed with Windows Office Professional 2007. All Trend Micro PC-Cillin Anti virus programs were renewed and a regular upgrade and system clean was carried out.

At the end of April we had an unexpected windfall, a grant from The Department of Families, Community Services & Indigenous Affairs which had been rejected in 2006, but had stayed in the system, was received. This grant provided another Windows Vista computer and further upgrading of equipment. All computers now have either 17" or 19" flat screen LCD monitors. Also some new Microsoft Vista reference books were purchased.

On 17th May 2007 our Team Leader John Marks was awarded a NSW Seniors Week Achievement Award for Community Service/Volunteering for his work in setting up and leading the village computer club.

It was at this time that the new owners of the village, AMP Capital Meridien through the CEO Ian Ramsay, informed us that the computer club was to be transferred to a larger room upstairs in the Country Club. The club was requested as to the type of benches, cupboards & power/Ethernet points that would be required. After intense consultations the final requirements were laid out. The club purchased the two ceiling fans to help the budget.

The PABX was an extension from the Billiard room. There are 21 double power points, 13 Ethernet points 9 workstations with two extra for laptop/Netbook computers.

All computers are connected to a wireless modem and are working well.

The move to the new room was successfully carried out on the Saturday 25th October 2008.

2008 has been tight for funding with only a grant from Mingara Recreation Club which was used to update 5 monitors to 22" wide LCD's . Also the purchase of a 100 inch wall screen.

An Apple Mac computer was donated to the club. At the start of 2009 the club has 2 Apple Mac's, A notebook with Windows XP, an 7" EEPC, 2 Window's Vista & 3 Window's XP, 2 colour & 1 black printers and a multiuse scanner.

In late 2008 it was decided that the computer club draw up a constitution. This was eventually drawn up after much discussion and changes and the final draft was accepted by the team. All members were notified that it can be viewed in the computer room and through our web site.

John Marks
17 February 2009