Meeting 08/07/2015

We had 12 members at the meeting on 8th July at Bacton Village Hall . There were 3 apologies.

This was the third time at BVH and, following the previous two successful meeting, the members present agreed that we should make it our permanent venue.
I've notified Stowupland High School and thanked Wendy for her help and hospitality over the last 5 years.
I've also made the necessary arrangements with the BVH Committee Chairman for us to have use of the hall, 2nd Wednesday of the Month, 1.30 – 4.00 pm for the foreseeable future.
The hire charge for the 2 1/2 hours is £15.00 which means that we will pay £1.00 to £1.50 pp depending on numbers present (this rate is lower than any competing venues in the Stowmarket area).

Whilst most members can bring their own laptop and/or tablet to the meetings there are one or two who don't use them. This should not normally be a problem as people can share resources plus others may still have redundant laptops which can be lent out. Please remember to fully charge the batteries before leaving home and/or bring along the chargers – we should be able to find enough extension leads.

Agony Corner:

1. 'I'm having difficulty getting/installing the 'free' Avast security programme?'

- Avoid anything that says 'Free 30 Day Trial'.
- For secure downloading without the chance of PuPs, go to https://ninite.com/ , then in the Security list, tick the 'Avast' box, then the green 'Get Installer' button.
- This will save a file in your downloads folder. Double click this (whilst still connected to the internet) and Free Avast will install.

2. 'I download pod casts to my iPad but they take up a lot of space. How do I delete when I've finished with them?'

- Launch the Podcasts app from the Home screen of your iPhone or iPad.
- Tap into a podcast series from the My Podcasts section.
- Find the podcast episode that you'd like to delete from your device and *horizontally swipe across the title of it*.
- You'll now notice a red delete button pops up off to the right. Tap on it.
- That podcast episode will be automatically deleted from your iPhone or iPad. You can still stream them or re-download them any time you'd like in the future (attached jpeg for illustrated instructions – original email).

Topic for the Day:

Photo manipulation - and a survey of free software available. A review of what you can achieve without having to invest in expensive software like PhotoShop, PS Elements, Lightroom, Serif Photo Plus etc.

There are numerous free programmes, some installed on your local machine, some operate entirely 'in the cloud' and some do both.

I provided a set of photos so that all could play around and experiment as required.

We downloaded several programmes using **Ninite**. This web site guarantees that anything you download is free from nasties such as PuPs.

Go to https://ninite.com/ , then look at 'Imaging'. Check the boxes of interest. We decided on **Paint.net, Irfanview, FastStone and Picasa.** Gimp is very good but perhaps too advanced to be considered in this exercise.

After the required boxes are checked, click the large green box 'Get Installer'. This downloads a file to your PC downloads folder. Double click this and the installer then collects the necessary files and installs all the required programmes on your machine (we discovered that, of course, you still have to be connected to Wifi to progress with the installation!)

Irfanview. This is one of my favourite programmes which I use frequently when I want a quick fix for my pictures. It doesn't support layers or such procedures as cloning but has more than enough editing features for most people's requirements. Irfanview supports an enormous range of file types and will even open up RAW files. We experimented with cropping, resizing, renaming, auto colour correction and slide show making to name but a few. (To get the best out of Irfanview, go to the home page and download the latest plugins http://www.irfanview.com/) .

FastStone. This was a new one for me, discovered when researching for this session. It impresses greatly, supporting layers, cloning and all the other brush and editing features to be found in the likes of Photoshop Elements and Serif Photo Plus software. We looked at several of these functions and noted that there is an unusual and very useful feature 'Design and Print'. This enable you to arrange several images on a page and add all sorts of effects (borders, shadows etc. etc.)
Suggest you experiment for yourself. (Always remember, if you are going to edit a photograph in any of these programmes, to work on a copy – not your original photo).

Paint.net. We didn't have time to check this out in detail but it functions in a very similar way to FastStone (and PS Elements).

Picasa. We've looked at this in detail in the past so today we just had a quick look at its face recognition capacity.

Others looked at..

Pixlr. This application has several incarnations ranging from full web based operation, a desk top application and a web app extension. All have their uses and you should explore to see what's available. Go to https://pixlr.com/ to see all the alternatives.

Photomatic Essentials. A free version of a paid for application (courtesy Digital Photo Magazine). Very good for making HDR pictures from 3 bracketed jpegs or a single RAW one. I've put the exe in a zip file in Dropbox, (link provided for members in original email).

Android/iPad. There was a question about similar programmes available for tablets. This web site has all the answers http://tinyurl.com/p7ejwyv

Next Meeting:

Date: Wednesday 12th August – as above, will be held at Bacton Village Hall

Topic for the Day: **Windows 10 –** a review of information so far; who has installed it yet? What were your experiences? Should I install now or wait? All contributions gratefully received!