

Meeting 25/02/2022

1) We looked at the [notes from the last meeting](#), reviewed – just one main matter arising

- Item 9, Rick's slow computer. In addition to the points discussed, it has subsequently been suggested that a Windows update published in December may have caused this slow down.
- Many people around the world were reported to have had this problem. Microsoft quickly issued a fix and then included this with the next update, so that particular issue should now be resolved.
- Rick was sceptical because his computer had been slowing for a long while before and currently was not much better.
- All this led onto the need to check regularly that all available Windows updates have been offered and installed. I shared the screen and showed how to do this, **'Windows key > cog (settings) > Update & Security > Check for updates'** – there's usually at least one. Never believe the initial statement 'You are up to date'.
- We cleared up some confusion. The last **'Feature'** update is **21H2**, launched late 2021 but not rolled out fully until Jan/Feb 2022. (Mine took no more than 15 minutes to download and install).
- To check you have this, click **'View update history'** at the bottom of the page. Attached is a current copy of mine which shows separately the **'Feature updates'** and the (usually monthly) **'Quality'** updates.
- **Windows Defender Ransomware protection** to be discussed at next meeting.

2) **'Family History'**, what is the best programme/website to use?

- Ann has done a lot of work on this. She is able to pass on a lot of useful advice and is happy for group members to contact her on xxxxxxxxxxxx to discuss matters.

3) **'Disappearing Notepad'**, a personal experience worth noting

- I was preparing some changes to the web site and had numerous documents open, including 'Notepad'. To access it, I clicked the icon on the task bar as normal but nothing seemed to happen, no Notepad document appeared.
- I knew it was there so I continued clicking, still no result. Eventually, after much scrutiny I noticed a fine line just above the task bar. Carefully picking this up with the mouse pointer I was able to pull up the missing Notepad window!

4) **'Group communications'**

- A suggestion - our web forum page is little used and it can be quite a laborious procedure to ensure that when there is a query I can be confident that everyone has seen it - so we had a discussion about the creation of a WhatsApp group.
- Most present use this app, some more than others. It does mean the use of a mobile smart phone but your WhatsApp account can be viewed on a PC so typing, for example, is much easier.
- It's free to set up and once done needs no maintenance. I've gone ahead and set up the WhatsApp 'U3A C&T' group with just 3 of us at the moment. Here is (*link deleted*) you need to join – if you view this on your phone with WhatsApp already installed you will join immediately. If you have any problems, just send me your mobile number and I'll do it manually.
- One or two members don't have a smart phone but since the discussion, I've researched the topic and it is possible, using an Android emulator, to run WhatsApp on a PC without the need to link to a mobile phone. To be discussed at the next meeting.

5) **'Uncontrollable Mouse....'**

- Jean called to report a problem in that her PC was behaving strangely, particularly the mouse which was either very sluggish or moving about on its own.
- We looked at the mouse settings but nothing there helped and eventually it became clear that there were more wide-ranging problems. I decided to look at Task Master but Ctrl/Alt/Del did not work either. Obviously something had upset the PC settings.
- We speculated about possible causes, an electrical 'spike' or recent Windows update gone wrong were obvious candidates

- I suggested that she switched off the machine normally (this effectively puts it to sleep) then switch off the power at the mains, wait 2 minutes then switch back on, technically a hard reboot. This is a technique which often works with electronic devices to force a reset, and this proved to be the solution. All worked well thereafter.
- Dave had had a similar problem and solution recently with his printer. This prompted Jean...

6) 'I need to change a cartridge on my printer but it won't stop in the correct position?'

- We determined the model, Stylus SX125. Jean's written instruction differed slightly from the online version found by Dave – he will send to Jean to compare.
- I found a You Tube video 'How to change an ink cartridge on an Epson Stylus SX 125' and shared it on screen.

7) 'File conversion – a tip'

- I've discovered that certain audio and video files can be easily 'converted' without using any conversion programmes or on line tools by just changing the file extension....e.g.
- Videos, filename.MOV (standard with iPhones?) change to filename.mp4 and audio filename.gpp (standard on Android phones?) to filename.mp3
- This can be a quick route if you find a video/audio player which will not play certain formats (although I think that VLC Media player can handle most formats).
- If trying, always change a copy of the file, not the original, in case something goes wrong!

7) Numerous questions and answers.

- I received a query email from Pam and she kindly agreed that we could share the details at this meeting. Attached is an aid memoir I prepared highlighting the various topics.
- We collectively went through them all and, I think, were able to clarify a lot of the issues for her – and other members. Unfortunately, going through these in detail here would not be feasible, but I have the audio file so if anyone wants more information please let me know.
- At the bottom of the page are the usual links to useful GFC Learn articles and we went through just a fraction of these on the shared screen.
- Finally, no one should be afraid to raise any query however basic it may seem – that is what this group is for and there's always something new for everyone to learn.

8) In keeping with the 'Technology' part of the group, Pam had another query

- I have a new 'cheap' TV which works well except that there is a lot of interference on Channel 4. TV in another room works perfectly which suggests that the main aerial is OK.
- We discussed various reasons/possible solutions including retuning to get the most up-to date channels and perhaps a faulty cable. Pam subsequently confirmed, by a process of elimination, that the connecting cable was indeed the culprit.

9) I introduced the group a book I am reading 'Trust No One' by Michael Grothouse

- Subtitled 'Inside the world of deep fakes', this is a book that is both interesting and frightening in the same degree. Videos indistinguishable from reality can now be made, not only for legitimate purposes like film making but for spreading false political/blackmail/fake news information – mostly on social media. It is now possible to create realistic fake content on any smart phone.
- I can do no better than one quote I read "Challenging, enlightening and terrifying, Trust No One asks the question other people are too scared to: what happens when you can no longer believe your own eyes?"
- If I've whetted your appetite, the book is available on Amazon [HERE](#).