

East SIG Report - November 2015

The meeting opened with Paul Woolard welcoming all members present and any new members. Unfortunately it was the same old faces.

The first session was Q&A with George Skarbek.

Q: Yesterday after updates to Windows 10 the start button stopped working. A search revealed other are having the same problem. Can you help?

A: Yesterday's update was over 1GB and after a long upgrade process everything worked on my PC except the HDMI port when connecting to a projector. However when I got home later and connected to my TV, the same HDMI port worked. The problem seemed to be with low cost HDMI cables and the version of the cable. i.e. HDMI 1.0 through to 1.4. Other reported problems after applying upgrades to Windows 10 are with Word and Excel. I would recommend waiting before you accept Windows 10 updates. However in January updates will be recommended so will be harder to put off. I am unable to help with your problem and the Start Button not working.

Many Windows user wait until Service Pack 1 (SP1) is released before upgrading to a new Operating System. Tonight (12 Nov) the equivalent of SP 1 will be available and is likely to be over 1GB in size.

Q: Why is Windows 10 being forced on us?

A: My theory is to direct traffic to MicroSoft which in turn increases its advertising revenue. Windows 10 will change the default search engine and home page of all your browsers to MicroSoft search engine Bing.

Q: Can you delete the Windows 10 reminder that keeps popping up?

A: You cannot delete it, but you can rename the file GWX.exe to stop it appearing. To get rid of the icon permanently, uninstall update [KB3035583](#) which is responsible for these notifications: The best option is just to ignore the message and close it when it appears.

Q: I'm running Windows 8.1 and a colleague sends me pdf documents that I copy and paste into Word. Now when I do that, the first part of the document is in English and the second part is in an unknown foreign language. What's happening there?

A: I've never seen that nor do I put pdfs into Word so I'm unable to help.

Q: If Windows 10 changes the Search engine and Home page can you change these back?

A: Of course you can. Go to Settings and Home page and change to www.google.com if you want Google as your search engine.

Q: I'm having trouble with Avast antivirus. When I open a page the Avast wheel keeps spinning and I have to wait ages before I can do anything. This is driving me crazy. Can you help?

A: I don't use Avast, but in the last week I've changed from Nortons to Kaspersky antivirus. A German website that compares antivirus programs always rates Kaspersky highly in all categories. City Software eStore is currently selling Kaspersky for \$39 for a 2 year licence. You download the software and then enter a 25 digit number you're given. I'm not sure where Avast rates on the list so cannot help further.

Q: I use Outlook for email with 3 email addresses. In the past messages open on the right but now they open on the left which I find very annoying. How can I get I get them to open on the right?

A: No one else has observed this problem so it was left unsolved.

Our next presentation was by George Skarbek on “Night Sky Photography” with an emphasis on astro photography. A good DSLR camera with large sensor is preferred but a good midrange camera will still give good images. Other equipment required are a camera with a wide angle lens, a tripod, a remote shutter release (not essential but very helpful), a torch and warm clothing for winter. A torch is required as the best results will be obtained on a moonless night well away from city lights and pollution, say 200km minimum in the case of Melbourne.

For photography of the night sky camera settings need to be set to manual focus, exposure and aperture. Care needs to be taken when focusing on infinity and George found by experience that it is best to set this during the day and mark the point on the focus ring to be able to repeat the reading at night. In many cameras the infinity mark on the lens may not focus exactly on infinity and result in an out of focus photo. Start with an ISO setting of 3200 to 6400 with 10 to 30 seconds exposure time. Use the maximum aperture or half a stop down for a sharp photo. The earth rotates at 15 degrees per hour and this rotation will cause stars to elongate if the exposure time is too long. To calculate the maximum exposure time you can use, divide 600 by the focal length of the camera, 35mm equivalent. George displayed a number of photos of the Milky Way taken at Ayers Rock. George recommends including a little foreground in your photos to give them perspective. A photo taken in Melbourne at night looking towards Mt Dandenong using the same camera settings as he used to photograph the Milk Way, looked like it was taken in daylight due to night lights and pollution.

After the break Stuart Bedford presented “Is Privacy Dead” or “How we are tracked, traced and databased”. Stuart indicated that privacy is a personal thing but he believes we are close to George Orwell’s novel “1984”. Areas where our privacy is tracked are CCTV in shops and on the street by councils, credit card and loyalty cards, toll roads, competitions surveys and raffles, barcodes on boarding passes, GPS data on mobile phones, photographs containing EXIF information, bio metrics and data mining by your computer operating system. Stuart found 13 pages of privacy settings in Windows 10. Using a program by O&O called “Shutup10”, Stuart was able to turn off all privacy issues in Windows 10.

Stuart gave the following tips to reduce intrusion into your privacy:

- Don’t give out personnel details unless you have to,
- Use a VPN such as IPvanish,
- Turn off all telemetry in your operating system,
- Use a non tracking search engine such as Duckduckgo,
- Use adblock browser on your mobile phone,
- Use an operating system less prone to attach e.g. Linux,
- Don’t respond or unsubscribe to unsolicited emails,
- Delete emails and attachments from senders you don’t recognise,
- Use the “do not call register” and screen other calls,
- Shred all personnel documents before discarding.

Is privacy dead? Stuart believes it is dying fast and terrorism is giving governments an excuse to kill privacy although.

Neil Muller