Newsletter July/August 2018

From the Chair

Hi Everyone

Over half way through the year, which must make us nearer to spring and summer. What a nice thought.

It was very disappointing to your Committee that we could not have a meeting at Kelston last month due to a power outage. Unfortunately we were unable to let you know in time as even the Council did not know about it.

We hope to make it up to you this month with a special guest speaker, Grant Sidaway from Wellington. Many of you know Grant who puts together our Gismoe Magazine and runs the SeniorNet Federation. He is always entertaining and a fund of knowledge.

Please keep in mind our Help days on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month, held at our Learning Centre. They are proving very popular. Our visitors all comment on how warm and comfortable our new premises are so if you have not yet paid us a visit we would love to see you.

Regards

June Lay
Chairperson

You know all those things you've always wanted to do?
You should go do them.
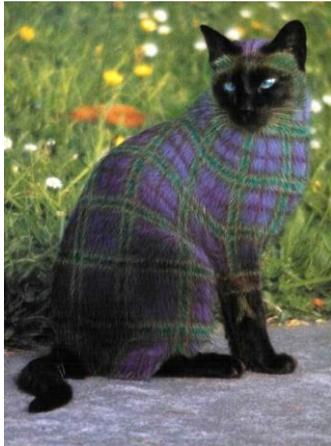
Greetings from the Tartan Tatler

It's all around us!

If you're like me, I know those of you who attended the fascinating Kelston meeting where Alexander Bartley spoke to us about Artificial Intelligence, Bitcoin and Blockchain will still be thinking about the wonder of it all. It sounded a bit like an Aladdin's Cave. What next, you may well ask?
I found a couple of interesting articles about AI and Blockchain which I hope will give you some more food for thought.

And now for some nostalgia, from a time before any of us knew anything about computer technology. I'm sure many of you still remember the following foods:

EATING IN THE FIFTIES

Pasta had not been invented. It was macaroni or spaghetti.
Curry was a surname.
A take-away was a mathematical problem.
Pizza? Sounds like a leaning tower somewhere.
Bananas and oranges only appeared at Christmas time.
All chips were plain.
Oil was for lubricating, fat was for cooking.
Tea was made in a teapot using tea leaves and never green.
Cubed sugar was regarded as posh.
Chickens didn't have fingers in those days.
None of us had ever heard of yogurt.
Healthy food consisted of anything edible.
Cooking outside was called camping.
Seaweed was not a recognized food.
'Kebab' was not even a word, never mind a food.
Sugar enjoyed a good press in those days, and was regarded as being white gold.
Prunes were medicinal.
Surprisingly muesli was readily available. It was called cattle feed.
Pineapples came in chunks in a tin; we had only ever seen a picture of a real one.
Water came out of the tap. If someone had suggested bottling it and charging more than gasoline for it, they would have become a laughing stock.
The one thing that we never ever had on/at our table in the fifties ... was *elbows, hats and cell phones.*

(Yes, I know some of the words are in American English, but we can still reminisce!)

Monthly Meeting

Remember our monthly meetings at Kelston Community Centre are held on the **3rd Tuesday of every month at 10 a.m**. Circle the days on your calendar; put it in your 2018 diary now!

The next meeting will be on Tuesday, **17 July, 2018.**

Help Days

On the 2nd and 4th Tuesday of the month 10am to Midday. We would appreciate a $2 donation for help given.
This time is also suitable for those wishing to enquire about classes, joining SeniorNet or just generally finding out a bit more about what we do.

Arts and Culture

We're thinking about offering an Arts and Culture workshop. We can show you how to navigate around a fascinating website and learn how to do magical things at the press of a key. If you would be interested in this workshop please phone Pam, 8272156, and let her know. Then we can organise a day and date.

Google Lens

Google just added one of its most futuristic features to every Android phone.
Google Lens is the new addition to Google's latest smartphone.
Lens is designed to be a visual search engine, using your smartphone's camera to identify what you see in the real world. Lens works like a "smart" magnifying glass. Using your phone's camera, you can look up things like artwork, landmarks, flowers by snapping a photo, then using the Lens button in Google Photos. But perhaps the coolest thing about Lens is its ability to read. . . If you take a photo of a business card, Lens can create a new contact with the information printed on it. Or if you photograph something with an address on it, Lens can pull up Google Maps directions, saving you having to type it in.
If you take a photo of the network names and password listed on the back of a router, it can automatically connect you to wifi.

You can get Google Lens on your Android by updating Google Photos app. If it has rolled out to your device, it will show up as a tiny magnifying glass at the bottom of your screen when you take a photo or open one.
(Thanks to Lorraine for this article)

If you are interested in a workshop on Google Photos please ring Pam on 8272156. If three or more members are interested we'll organise a workshop for you. *Ed*

W10 and AI

If you're a Windows user, you probably know that Microsoft typically has problems when it rolls out updates for the operating system. Things were no different earlier this year when the Windows 10 April 2018 Update was released.

In fact, it had quite a shaky beginning. Many users weren't even able to access the April update until May.

After the update finally started rolling out, it's been a great success. That's mostly being attributed to Microsoft's use of artificial intelligence (AI).

Microsoft wrote: "For the first time we've leveraged AI at scale to greatly improve the quality and reliability of the Windows 10 April 2018 Update rollout. Our AI approach intelligently selects devices that our feedback data indicate would have a great update experience and offers the April 2018 Update to these devices first.

As our rollout progresses, we continuously collect update experience data and retrain our models to learn which devices will have a positive update experience, and where we may need to wait until we have higher confidence in a great experience. Our overall rollout objective is for a safe and reliable update, which means we only go as fast as is safe."

What's happening is, AI analyses data on device characteristics including hardware and software. When Microsoft determines its update will be a good experience for a particular machine, it finds others that are similar and they are selected for immediate delivery.

The more data are collected, the more accurate the analysis, which lowers the chance for glitches. Microsoft said this has been one of the most successful updates in recent history.

They say there are higher satisfaction, fewer known issues, and lower support call volumes compared to previous Windows 10 releases.

This is great news for Windows users. If the implementation of AI speeds up the update process *and* makes it safer, it's a win-win for everyone.

Uber and AI

Uber is thinking about adding artificial intelligence (AI) to its repertoire. And this is why - one of the biggest complaints that rideshare drivers have is when passengers are inebriated. We've all probably heard horror stories about passengers being belligerent and eventually vomiting in the backseat of a driver's car.

Uber has applied for patented AI technology that would determine the level of intoxication of a potential passenger. If the person requesting the ride is extremely drunk, the driver doesn't have to pick them up.

Apparently, the Uber app would track how fast and accurately a passenger is inputting data, the speed that they're walking, as well as the angle at which they're holding their phone. This information would help determine if the passenger is intoxicated. The patent request claims the AI system would recognise "uncharacteristic user activity."

This feature might be a good thing for Uber drivers, but what about its customers? One of the reasons people use rideshare companies to begin with is when they are out on the town having a few drinks and don't want to drive home. In fact, Uber has in the past worked with organizations like M.A.D.D. (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) to encourage people to use a rideshare service instead of driving while intoxicated. Hopefully this AI feature doesn't hurt that campaign. However it's possible that the feature might never make it to the Uber app as not all patent applications actually become products or features.

Blockchain

Blockchain is a decentralised public ledger of transactions. It was first developed along with Bitcoin by Satoshi Nakamoto. However, no one is still 100% sure of Nakamoto's identity or whether it's a single person or a group. A blockchain is exactly as it sounds. It's a digital chain built up of blocks (transactions). The main difference between this type of record keeping and a traditional ledger is everyone shares it. Every node

computer involved in the transactions maintains an updated copy, which is updated and sent with every transaction or new block.

All transactions are in chronological order, making it simple to reference data by a set date. It was developed to ensure no single person had full control over the accounting side of Bitcoin, which is why the cryptocurrency and all variants self-regulate and stay anonymous.

Blockchain was started in the early 90s by Dave Bayer, W. Scott Stornetta, and Stuart Haber. They started by trying to uncover the best way to time-stamp digital documents securely. This then led to the concept of collecting documents into blocks for more efficient time-stamping.

It wasn't until 2008 that Satoshi Nakamoto took their initial concept and turned it into what we all know as today's blockchain technology. By creating a public ledger, the potential for double spending of digital currency is eliminated without having a set third party involved. With the creation of Bitcoin, Nakamoto needed a way to ensure the integrity of the currency and each transaction.

Blockchain then evolved to be even more effective with the creation of a second generation system called ethereum. This allows for transactions beyond cryptocurrencies, such as bonds or loans. These smart contracts have paved the way for the introduction of blockchain into other industries.

Despite blockchain being tied forever to Bitcoin, it's not limited to just cryptocurrencies anymore. Many industries, such as Banking, Shipping, Law firms, are taking advantage of a decentralised public ledger to maintain more secure transactions and updated records while eliminating the middleman. It's more efficient and cost effective when implemented correctly.

SECRET TO ETERNAL YOUTH

Don't worry.

Old age is always ten years older than you are...

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