

# BYTES & PIECES

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## VICE PRESIDENT RESIGNS

At the AGM, Peter and Cindy Campbell agreed to remain on as interim Vice President and President respectively. The original proposal was that they would only agree to the extension if there were no General Meetings during that period. However, after discussion, this was modified. A proposal limiting the extension to 90 days was lost, only because the meeting wanted to allow some flexibility and making arrangements to replace Peter and Cindy.

It was proposed that chairing of General Meetings be rostered using any members and Committee Members willing to chair them. As the main function that the Vice President performs is that of chairing meetings in the absence of the President, this arrangement effectively makes the position of Vice President redundant. However, it remains as one of the Office Bearer positions under the revised rules.

Peter had wanted to stand down from the Committee more than two years ago and decided that he would tender his resignation now so that he could concentrate on the development of the website and the production of newsletters.

His resignation was accepted by the Committee, who will now appoint someone to the vacant position either from the Committee's own ranks or from the membership. They will also decide, if they appoint an existing Ordinary Committee Member to the position of Vice President, whether they need to replace that person, or reduce the Committee to four Office Bearers and three Ordinary Committee Members, as permitted under the revised Rules of the Association.

## PRESIDENT TO RESIGN IN FEBRUARY

After Peter's resignation had been accepted, the President indicated that she **will** tender her resignation from the Committee in February next year. Her position will need to be filled and it is desirable that an “understudy” be found **immediately** so that the President-to-be can acquaint him- or her-self with what the Committee is planning for next year.

Any volunteers?

Cindy only agreed to an interim extension to allow us to complete the AGM, pass the revised Rules and begin reorganising the Group. By February next year, that reorganisation, including a move to a new venue if viable, should be well under way. Even if it isn't, Cindy is emphatic that she will not extend further.

## MICROSOFT AT IT AGAIN?

Stephen Lynch reporting in the New York Post seems to think so.

*November 6, 2003 - As the final remnants of its massive antitrust trial are swept away, Microsoft Corp. plans to tempt fate - and the courts - all over again.*

*The company's new version of Windows, code-named Longhorn, will "bundle" a number of programs that compete directly with a range of software and online players - from AOL to Google to Macromedia.*

*The Justice Department's antitrust case against Microsoft, the last appeal of which could end this week, was prompted by the embedding of Microsoft's Internet Explorer Web browser into the Windows operating system. Rival Netscape, among others, considered such bundling a misuse of monopoly power. Nonetheless, Microsoft plans to bundle instant-messaging technology, Internet search tools and animation capabilities into Longhorn, which is due in 2005-06.*

*"From all I've been hearing, the same general strategy is in play," said Bert Foer, president of the American Antitrust Institute. "They see something that can be linked to the operating system, and they either do it themselves or buy it up. There's zero price to the consumer. It's impossible to compete with that."*

*Microsoft Chairman Bill Gates showed a demonstration of Longhorn that included the company's instant-messaging application on the desktop. That could shoulder out IM products from AOL and Yahoo!. Gates also highlighted the program's improved search capabilities, which may compete with Web powerhouse Google.*

*Longhorn's document standard could represent a threat to Adobe's Acrobat, and sources told Internetnews.com yesterday that Microsoft was working on animation tools, code-named "Sparkle," that would target Macromedia's Flash technology. Some of Longhorn's functions won't even work unless customers buy Microsoft's server software, rather than competing products from firms like Novell or IBM.*

*There's speculation that Microsoft may include some e-commerce and online music components, undercutting businesses like iTunes or even eBay.*

Microsoft have also announced that the next version of Internet Explorer will require Longhorn to operate and will not be available as a stand-alone product.

While having everything in one box does offer the customer some convenience, the desirability needs to be measured against antitrust provisions and the benefits of competition. Remember when Bill Gates said the DOS didn't need further improvement and then went right on improving it because of competition from DR DOS?

I was going to write that I would like to see a version of Windows stripped of all the bundled software. But then I thought "No, some things do need to be included. For example, Notepad to write batch files. And what about maintenance tools? And, if maintenance is part of the operating system, what about security – antivirus and firewall software?" What do you think should be included as part of the operating system and what should be available separately so that you can choose from competing products should you so wish? Post your answers to the HCUG-List so that we can get some discussion going.

Remember the HCUG-List is open to all computer users, not just our members. Get your friends to sign up now.

## **“NEW” WEBSITE**

Have you had a look at our new, fast loading website, yet? The entire site was constructed with Frontpage 2002 and is managed and uploaded with that application too. I have found a few bugs in Frontpage, but, overall, it works well and has certainly saved me a lot of time.

When I launched the revised site, I said it was a work in progress and I am pleased to announce that this week there will be a major addition to it – a feature article that is too long to include here. You can either read it online, or download a PDF version and print it.

What's it about? Point your browser to our website on Thursday and have a look. It will be there by then! And don't forget to check the Daily Cartoon. Glasbergen really does have a wonderful and slightly wacky sense of humour, which I am sure most people will enjoy.

<http://hobartpcgroup.org.au>

## **GETTING WINDOWS XP TO BEHAVE**

Prefer the old Windows 9x look to XP's new one? Does your computer keep trying to dialup? Don't like XP's Zip Folders or its picture viewer and would rather use applications of your choice like Zip Genius and XnView?

You can fix all these things and more if only you had the information. Well, I've found a site where there are solutions to eight of the most complained about features of XP, including those listed in the previous paragraph. Take a look at:

[http://www.peretek.com/documents/getting\\_xp\\_to\\_behave.htm](http://www.peretek.com/documents/getting_xp_to_behave.htm)

## **OFFICE 2003 PATCH**

Despite extensive beta testing a major flaw has slipped through and Microsoft has therefore released the first 'critical' patch for Office 2003. The flaw, which could result in lost work, applies to Word, Excel, and PowerPoint. Outlook, the fourth major application, is not affected.

Problems may occur when documents created by one of the three Office 2003 applications include a graphic built with the OfficeArt tool, and are opened and saved by an earlier version of the application. When the document is returned to the Office 2003 app and opened there, it may be corrupted, may not open at all, or may open but with some of its content missing.

The fix can be downloaded from its website, but, at the time of writing, had not been included in automatic update service.

<http://office.microsoft.com/officeupdate/default.aspx>

## **BUY BUY**

If you have something for sale, or notice a bargain around town, let everybody know through the HCUG-list and this newsletter. Remember the list is open to everyone, not just Group members, as is this newsletter.