NEWS

SeniorNet (Pakuranga) Inc

12 Ben Lomond Crescent, Pakuranga Auckland 2010

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MAY 2025

Established in 1996 especially for Pakuranga, Howick and Botany residents

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MAY HELP DAYS

5 May (Mon)	1:00 PM
14 May (Wed)	1:00 PM
22 May (Thu)	1:00 PM
27 May (Tue)	10:00 AM

3 NEW MEMBERS

Kerry-Ann Watts
Collin Bliss
Neil Nicklin

Our next Meeting,

Friday 2nd MAY

at 10.00am

St Andrews Church Centre

Corner Ridge Rd and Vincent St

The main entrance is in Vincent Street with parking in the grounds and disabled parking near the basement entrance.

Visitors welcome

The early speaker will be the bright and breezy Kate with another surprise presentation.

The main speaker will be Peter Wilson and his address is titled "**North Korea Explained**".

Peter is an agriculturalist who spent four decades working on agricultural improvement projects throughout the Asian/Pacific Region. This included working in North Korea on two occasions - expanding small animal production in 1997, and improving cropping rotations in 2007. Subsequently he has visited North Korea a further six times in his capacity as Secretary of the NZ DPRK Society. Over the past two decades he has been involved in the implementation of 24 small projects ranging from provision of technical books, flood relief funding and cultural exchange visits.

BITS & BYTES

Brian Erikson

You are excused if this makes your eyes water, but it's the reason behind why some membership and course information may be late or conflicting in the next little while. Information is not lost, it's just not being shared as it should.

We use a Microsoft program named Access with Applications developed by Graeme Fitzgerald using his vast industrial experience in these Applications. These are set up on the Treasurer's PC, the Membership PC, the Course Coordinator's PC and the Learning Centre Tutor PC.

The inputs from all these devices are shared via a Microsoft Cloud service called OneDrive. It worked well for over 7 years and enables each committee member involved to do their stuff at home and in their own time. The result is that new members get a welcome letter and receipt, renewing members get a receipt, overdue members get a reminder.

Courses are planned and entered into the website and the schedule of courses is set up in the Tutor PC at the Learning Centre. You get an invitation to book on a course and when you are recorded as attending the hours and payments are logged and enable course reports to be prepared for internal use and as a claim for support payments from the SeniorNet Federation. While all this happened manually years ago it was always in delay and consumed a lot of committee members time.

All this is done via OneDrive and the records we are required to keep are fully backed up without our intervention.

However, the OneDrive link to each of the PCs over the internet is critical and we noted it started to fail about 6 months ago with the Treasurer's PC. We found a manual workaround. A few weeks ago it cropped up on the Course coordinator's PC and lately on the Membership PC.

It was not an issue Microsoft talked about but using their Copilot I found they do acknowledge the issue, they call it a Server-Side issue so it's internal to OneDrive and as they can't say when it will be resolved they recommend we change to another Cloud service. They didn't offer a name, but DropBox is one. Unfortunately it would cost $90 per month in our setup.

The realistic option of many is Google Drive and I've set up some test PCs to work out how do to the transition and Robin Tuckey is contributing having had some extensive use of Google Drive.

Ramblings

Dawn Howarth

It sounds like Brian and Mike have their work cut out for them. I certainly can't help.

I hope you had a happy Easter and were able to share it with friends and family. I shared it with friends and neighbours and it included quite a few nana naps. Glorious.

I also had a couple of days in Rotorua last week for my brother's 80th birthday. Eight of us met and stayed in a hotel there where we could be together, dine together and enjoy being together for the first time in a long time. I did the Redwood treetops walk and loved it. Those trees are amazing, so tall and so straight. They are just over 100 years old I think but a slice from an old Redwood on display there must have come from California and is over 2000 years old showing the rings that go back to before Christ was born. Our First and Second world wars show just on the bark at the edge. I wonder why it was cut down in 1952. Anyway they were a majestic sight that I won't forget.

Kate's Take

Kate Senner

The Story of the William C Daldy, Auckland's Steam Tugboat

Keith Ingram MNZM. JP

A big thank you to Keith Ingram for his fascinating talk on the history and restoration of Auckland Harbour's, 90 year old, steam tugboat.

The tugboat was named in memory of William Crush Daldy (1816-1903) one of Auckland's founding fathers. Born in Rainham, Sussex he went to sea at the age of 16 eventually sailing his own schooner, the Shamrock, to NZ in 1840.

The William C Daldy

He established a timber mill on the waterfront for shipping repairs and he became Auckland's first Harbour Master. In 1871 he was appointed the chairman of the Auckland Harbour Board and he was the founder of the Auckland Coastguard.

The Barque, Pamir, 1938

The William C Daldy was built on the Clyde in Renfrew, Scotland at the John Brown shipyard, in 1935. By this time most ships were being fitted with diesel engines but Auckland decided to stay with coal fired boilers and steam engines.

It took 84 days to sail from Scotland to Auckland arriving in January 1936. It made stops in Algiers, Port Said, Aden, Colombo, Djakarta and Port Bowen, Queensland to replenish the coal bunkers.

In 1938, the steam tugs, William C Daldy and the Te Awhina were responsible for manoeuvring the barque, Pamir in and out of Auckland Harbour. With its 3,800 m² of sail, the Pamir was, at that time, the only trading ship totally reliant on sail.

In 1958, the William C Daldy "saved the day", during the construction of the Auckland Harbour Bridge. As the centre span was being floated out on a barge the weather changed and in 50 knot winds the barge began drifting towards a reef. This span had been made in Japan and if it had crashed into the sea the project would have been delayed by at least a year. The William C Daldy was deployed to hold the 1200 ton, 580 foot bridge section, in position, maintaining a sustained pull for more than 36 hours and burning 40 tons of coal.

The William C Daldy saves the Auckland Bridge

At the heart of every steam boat are the boilers. In the William C Daldy there are twin, triple five Scotch boilers. (A Scotch marine boiler is a type of fire tube boiler that was commonly used on ships in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. It's a horizontal, cylindrical boiler with one or more furnaces (fire boxes) at the front that lead into a combustion chamber and then into fire tubes surrounded by water. Steam is produced at a pressure of 185 pounds per square inch. Each boiler holds 20 ton of water and at all times two stokers are required to feed the fireboxes. 50 ton of coal is stored in hoppers either side of the ship. When originally built and used as a working tug the hoppers would contain 85 ton of coal either side. At the present time, coal costs in the region of $600 per ton. The steam drives two 1950 horsepower engines that operate the propellers but there are also additional steam engines that run other equipment on the ship. There are 17 steam engines in total. The 15 smaller ones drive various systems on board from generating electricity for lighting and cooking to running the condenser that converts the steam back to water.

Number 1 furnace waiting for addition of more coal

A coal powered boat is not like a diesel powered vessel that can engage the engines instantly. In a steam vessel the furnace has to be lit and stoked to generate enough power to produce steam to activate the engines. If a days sailing is planned the stokers and engineers will start work at 3am. When fully loaded the William C Daldy weighs 750 tons with about 3.8 metres of draught. Consequently, a great deal of skill is required to bring the boat alongside without damaging the tug or timber piles of the wharf.

Keith explained how difficult it is to master the steering of these older vessels as they rely on a mechanical telegraph to convey instructions from the bridge to the engine room. The helmsman pulls the lever to the required speed on the bridge and the engineer pulls his lever to match in the engine room to acknowledge the instruction. There are no gears. The speed of the vessel is controlled by the amount of steam that is supplied to the engines. There is always a lag between the instruction to the engine room and the vessel's response so the helmsman has to anticipate the necessary speed for each manoeuvre. On modern vessels, engine control is electronic and instantaneous, but a steam engine may take up to 40 seconds to respond.

Telegraph on bridge

Telegraph in engine room

Boat in dry dock showing the two polished propellers

To maintain its Seaworthiness Certificate the William C Daldy has to go into dry dock every two years to be surveyed. This is a very expensive procedure. To reduce the cost, the crew endeavour to share the dry dock facility with another vessel. However, this puts pressure on the maintenance team to complete work on time. At 90 years old, the vessel is in constant battle with corrosion. The hull plates are required to be between 12-14 millimetre thick. Replacing a single plate

costs $6000, and the dry dock maintenance may be as high as $150,000.

While in dry dock, the propellers are polished. These are not the original steel steaming propellers that brought her to New Zealand. The current four-bladed, 4-metre- diameter towing propellers have greater surface area, making them more efficient under heavy load and at lower RPM. They are best suited for developing strong thrust. They are made out of phosphor bronze. This material forms a protective oxide layer that resists corrosion in sea water, it can handle mechanical stress and resists fatigue cracking. However, this 90 year old vessel can still reach 13 knots which is the same speed it achieved when it was originally built. It has reached this speed at the Auckland Anniversary Regatta..

There have been many times since retiring from service as a tug boat on the Waitematā Harbour that the William C Daldy has faced the threat of being scrapped, but a small group of enthusiastic volunteers was determined to keep her seaworthy. In 1978, the William C Daldy, Preservation Society Inc was formed. Since then, it has operated as a membership-governed society with its own committee dedicated to preserving the tug as a living example of Auckland's maritime heritage. Although it is available for charters and public sailings from September to May it cannot generate sufficient funds to cover its operating costs so it relies on donations and legacy donations.

They are always looking for volunteers across a range of disciplines. For example, deckhands, engine room assistants, caterers and tour guides. They especially encourage young people with an interest or skills in engineering as many of the current engineers are silver-haired and eager to pass on their knowledge to a younger generation.

To learn more and support this wonderful endeavour, go to daldy.co.nz

K Senner Apr2025

Search engines and AI powered assistants

Having an interest in the various search engines and AI applications that have become available in recent years, I realised that some seemed to be doubling up on functionality. I decided to investigate. There are many companies that are creating their own AI models, Probably, at the forefront has been Open AI's, ChatGPT, Google's Gemini and Microsoft's Copilot. Some companies have incorporated these models into their own search engines while specialist AI companies have created models that excel in specialist areas.

Google

So, what is the difference between the **Goggle App** and the **Chrome App**. Is there any advantage in having both Apps on your device? The **Google App** and the **Chrome App** serve different purposes, though both are Google creations.

Chrome

Google App
- Primarily a search and discovery tool.
- Provides quick access to Google Search, Google Lens, voice search, and personalized news feeds (Google Discover).
- Has AI-powered features, including Google Assistant integration.
- Best for people who want fast answers without necessarily opening a full web browser.

Chrome App
- A full web browser with tab management, bookmarks, history, and saved passwords.
- Supports advanced web browsing features like incognito mode, extensions (on desktop), and syncing across devices.
- Best for browsing multiple websites, signing into web services, and managing online accounts.

Is there an advantage to having both? Yes, if you use Google services frequently:
- The **Google App** is faster for quick searches and personalized news.
- **Chrome** is better for full browsing sessions, managing tabs, and using saved logins.

They complement each other well, as searches in the **Google App** can be opened in **Chrome** if needed. If you mainly browse the web, **Chrome** alone may be enough.

Copilot, Edge, and Bing are all Microsoft products, but they serve different functions:

Copilot

Microsoft Copilot App
* A chat-based AI assistant, similar to **ChatGPT**.
* Helps with answering questions, summarizing text, generating ideas, and creating images.
* Can integrate with Microsoft 365 apps (Word, Excel, etc.) for AI-powered productivity.
* Best for AI-powered assistance and task automation.

Edge

Microsoft Edge App
* A full web browser, like Google Chrome or Safari.
* It is Chrome but optimized for Windows and Microsoft services.
* It includes **Copilot AI** integration, vertical tabs, and collections (for organizing content).
* Best for browsing websites, managing bookmarks, and syncing across devices.

Bing

Microsoft Bing App
* A search engine app, similar to the Google App.
* Provides web search, image search, and AI-powered Bing Chat.
* Offers Microsoft Rewards for using Bing searches.
Best for quick searches and accessing AI-powered search features.

Are there any advantages running all three applications?
- If you just want AI assistance, **Copilot** alone is enough.
- If you browse the web frequently, **Edge** is useful as a default browser.
- If you prefer Microsoft's search engine, **Bing** can be an alternative to **Google Search**.
- **Edge** and **Bing** work well together, as **Edge** has built-in **Bing search and Copilot features**.

Kate's Take continued ...

What are the differences between **ChatGPT, Perplexity, Claude and Gemini**?
ChatGPT, Perplexity, Claude and Gemini are all AI-powered assistants, but they have different strengths and limitations.

ChatGPT (by OpenAI) – November 2022
* A general-purpose AI assistant, good for conversations, creative writing, and coding.
* Works from a knowledge base that is updated with each new version.
Free version (GPT-4o) has a daily message limit, though OpenAI doesn't specify.
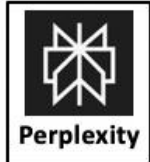
Perplexity AI – December 2022
* Designed as an AI-powered search engine rather than a chatbot.
* Focuses on providing sourced answers and citations by pulling data from the web.
Free version: Allows unlimited basic searches but some AI features restricted.
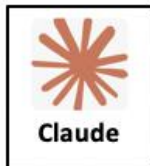
Claude (by Anthropic) – March 2023
* It has clearly defined core AI principles. It focuses on being helpful, honest, and harmless.
* It is good at long-form reasoning and analysing large amounts of text.
Free version: Offers limited daily usage.

Gemini (Google AI) – March 2023
* Good for research, Google integration (Search, YouTube, etc)
* Live search and citations make it strong for current events.
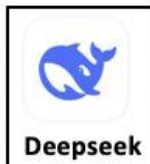Free version: May be slower during high demand

And what about, "The more recent kids on the Block", **Grok** (Nov 2023) and **Deepseek** (Jan 2025)

Grok (by xAI, Elon Musk's AI company)
- Integrated with X (Twitter) and designed to be edgy, humorous, and informative.
- Pulls real-time data from X posts for up-to-date responses.
No real "free version"—only available to X Premium+ users.

DeepSeek : Developed by Chinese AI company **Deepseek**, focused on multilingual and research-based AI.
- Strong in coding, math, and reasoning tasks.
- Provides AI-powered programming assistance.
Free version: No information but usage may be restricted based on global demand.

Which AI application should you choose? According to **ChatGPT** ☺
- If you're looking for AI-assisted real time, web searches, with sourced citations, **Perplexity**.
- If you need detailed reasoning or long text analysis (100,000 words), **Claude**.
- For versatile AI chat with a knowledge base cut off June 2024 for present version - **ChatGPT**
- For web searches, analysis of images and with direct access to Google - **Gemini**
- For coding/math tasks → **DeepSeek**
- For real-time, Twitter(X)-based responses → **Grok**- However, I ask the question, does it filter out the misinformation and conspiracy theories prevalent on X when we know Elon Musk has sacked most of the moderators???

A WORD OF CAUTION
All of the AI apps discussed above can make mistakes. These are called **AI HALLUCINATIONS.**
When requesting important factual information always check the results. It is also important to read the "Terms and Conditions". Some of these applications retain your search history and may use your data.

K Senner Apr 2025

COMMITTEE

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COURSE TIMETABLES, HELP DAYS AND COURSE BOOKING INFORMATION

To view all SeniorNet courses and timetable, click here
http://www.senpak.nz/courses/

MAY HELP DAYS

5 May (Mon)	1:00 PM
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NO APPOINTMENT NECESSARY

We just had a guy come into our auto parts store asking if we sold longer dipsticks, because his doesn't reach his oil anymore.

Course Booking Information

* You need to be a member of SeniorNet to take part in our classes.

* If you need assistance in deciding on a course, please contact the Tutor who will answer any questions and also take your booking.

* We require you to pay a course fee to cover the cost of notes and other expenses. Please bring the correct cash to the first session.

* Our Courses are all held at our Learning Centre at

    12 Ben Lomond Crescent, Pakuranga.

* Please park on the road or in the Gym carpark across the road as no parking is permitted on site. **If you use the gym parking (not available Monday or Thursday mornings) it is important that you park on the left, next to the gym. You can printout the parking advice from our website (under the Courses tab) or write your own and leave on the dashboard of your car.**