Way back in July the club held an Open Evening as part of the Penarth Holiday Festival.

Most visitors arrived quite early. They were able to view a presentation about the club's aims and activities on our big screen as well as browse over some static displays and talk to members who had brought along their own computers to show the sorts of things they use them for.

One display consisted of computer components that are normally hidden inside the machine. They were available to be picked up and turned over and accompanied by a card with a brief description of what they were and what they did.

Club members answered whatever questions arose. They were also able to chat over any problems that visitors were experiencing with their computers. This they did (probably with varying success).

The chairman took the opportunity to address the assembled mix of visitors and members. He thanked them for coming and continued with an informal chat about the club; why it was formed and how it operated for the benefit of the members.

There are many aspects to computing and not everyone is interested in all of them. Indeed, some folk might be concerned only with one or two areas such as emails or family history.

Interests, like fashions, change over time. The club deals with this by asking the members to suggest topics for the talks. These topics will be adopted provided it looks popular and we can find someone able to give an interesting talk.

The club occasionally invites guest speakers to talk on topics of general computing interest – always in plain English!

The club does not demand that people join in order to attend, but charges a visitor's fee per meeting instead. In modern political jargon it means 'choice', but it means that several people are able to choose just a couple of relevant talks to suit their preferences.

In fact, the club has such a friendly atmosphere that some members come anyway – but they all insist that every time they come they learn something.

That applies even to the talks they have attended before for two reasons: there is always something new and they are reminded of older things that they had forgotten.

As the evening closed the chairman was pleased to hear several positive comments about the evening. For his own part, he was surprised and delighted to meet an old friend from too many years ago to own up to.

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In Brief

Computer Club

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