There is an old saying: "Nothing is as permanent as change". This has never been truer than in the world of technology. Anyone who has not spent the last year in a cave must have heard of HD (High Definition) TV and 3D cinema. Digital cameras can take high-resolution pictures and record high-definition video.

The Apple iphone 4 is available along with a staggering range of over 200,000 'Apps' (the little software gadgets that can be added to your phone). There are thousands of other 'Apps' available for other manufactures' phones as well.

I recently saw one App used to identify an aircraft in flight. Locate an airport and individual flights are shown on a map display in real time. Any flight can be identified from regularly updated information transmitted to the control tower. The information is displayed along with a picture showing the type of aircraft. Impressive.

Apps make use of sensors already installed. Those used to keep the picture on the screen the right way up can also be used to drive a spirit level App.

Radio and TV programmes can be picked up later from, say, the BBC website and watched on a computer or a mobile phone.

Mobile phones can take pictures and email them around the world in seconds and computers can make telephone calls.

Convergence, as it is called, will make it hard to decide if what you are using is a telephone, camera or computer.

A computer used to fill a room; then a wardrobe; then a cabinet; then a box on a desk before becoming a laptop. They are now reduced to notebook or netbook computers. As they have reduced in size they have increased in speed capacity and reliability.

We used to look at photographs using a slide projector. Now we have home cinemas where the computer can display the pictures or send them to a projector for larger display – but not just still pictures; films from DVDs or video cameras as well. It will soon be commonplace to use your computer to connect to a website and choose any film from thousands and watch it in your home cinema at any time.

With a home network the listening or watching is independent of the location of your entertainment centre.

You can already download thousands of books to your electronic book reader; carry them all with you and read them at your leisure.

Oh yes; and the software is constantly developing as well, so more things can be done and will be done. It is all intended to make life easier and more enjoyable.

We might be fascinated by the concept of all this development, but need help to get the benefit. That's why the club members get together.

The next meeting is on Tuesday 28th September at All Saints Lesser Hall, Victoria Square, Penarth. 7.30 pm for 8.00. Steve will show how control your computer's appearance. Visitors and new members always welcome. For more information ring Howard on 029 20708439.

In Brief

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