



PRODUCT REVIEW

Recycling or Reusing that Old Computer – Part 2 by Alan German

In the first part of this article we saw how to securely delete the hard disk on our old computer prior to recycling it through an E-waste programme. Now, we are going to look at how we might put the old machine to good (re-)use instead of throwing it away.

Old hardware that initially ran Windows XP or Windows Vista may still be suitable for use with another operating system. Think Linux! So, rather than simply recycling an old computer through an E-waste programme, why not see if a Linux installation would perform satisfactorily on the machine? Linux distros (distributions) are available at no cost. Creating and running a bootable Linux disk are both simple operations. And, if the system works satisfactorily on the old hardware, installing Linux to the computer’s hard drive is really easy.

Another advantage of Linux is that, in addition to a fully-functional operating system, a whole host of useful applications are bundled in the distro. So, if your computing needs consist of a web browser, an E-mail client, a word processor and spreadsheet program, music and video players, all of your requirements will be satisfied by downloading a single ISO file. If you don’t like a given application, it can simply be discarded and another program installed in its place. If you don’t like a particular distro, it can be removed and another distro downloaded and evaluated. There are lots of distros – and lots of applications – and, since everything is free, all you need is a little time to find the perfect system.

For our present purposes, we will obtain the latest release of Linux Mint (Version 18.1 – Serena) by simply downloading the distro from Mint’s web site (https://www.linuxmint.com/download.php). There are some choices to be made. Most importantly, we need to know if we need the 32- or 64-bit version of the operating system. For our old laptop, we definitely need 32-bit Linux. Next, we have to choose if we want to download the Cinnamon or Mate edition. These are distros with slightly different desktop environments. Personally, I like Mate, so our choice will be “32-bit Mate”.

Two Canadian mirror sites are displayed from which the file may be downloaded. I usually go with the University of Waterloo Computer Science Club’s file server (although another mirror may prove faster if you are trying to download in “prime time” for the university). Give yourself some time to receive the download as the ISO file is 1.6 GB. Note also that, if you are going to create a bootable disk, you will require a blank DVD rather than a CD. And, if you wish to create a bootable USBkey, you will need a USB drive with 2GB or greater capacity.

Once the download has finished, we need to create a bootable disk. One possibility is to use Ashampoo as we did for DBAN (in Part 1 of this article), although in this case we will be writing a DVD rather than a CD. The other thing

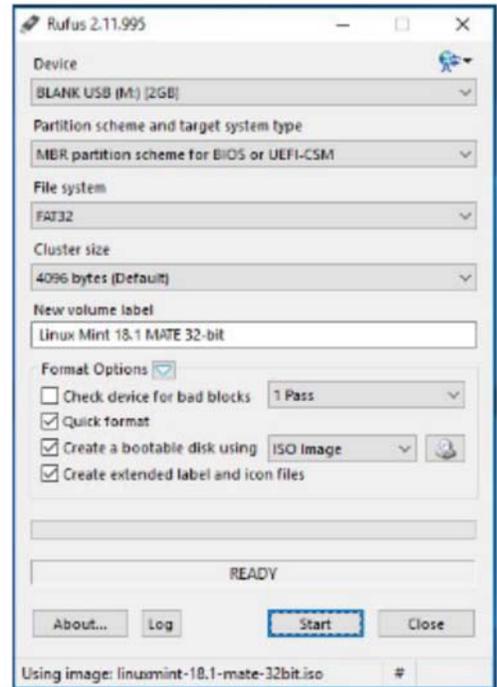


Figure 1 Creating a bootable USB drive

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Next Meeting: WEDNESDAY, April 12th, 2017

April Raffle

Thanks to the generosity of ON1, we have a copy of **ON1 Photo 2017** for the April raffle.

This powerhouse photo editor wowed the audience at the March meeting, when Chris Taylor demoed three of ON1 Photo's extensive capabilities; replacing a drab sky with a bright blue sky and cumulous clouds; making localized changes to a photo to remove haze and give an illusion of a short depth of field; and using the content-aware eraser to quickly and easily remove distracting objects from your photos.

ON1 describes ON1 Photo 2017 as "Your all-in-one photo organizer, editor, raw processor, and effects app".

As well, ON1 is including four extensive training courses from expert **Matt Kloskowski**.

The ON1 Photo 2017 license is valued at US\$120 and allows installation on up to 5 Windows or Mac computers. Both stand-alone applications as well as plug-ins for Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom are included.

Details at <https://www.on1.com/products/photo-raw/>

Tickets are, as always, a good deal at \$1 for one, a great deal at \$2 for three, or the unbelievable bargain of \$5 for ten!



March Prize Winners

Serge-Erik Therriault won the evenings raffle price of a 128GB Lexar S75 USB 3.0 JumpDrive.

Our door prize winners were **Keith Martinsen** (T-shirt), and **John Cocklin** and **Bob Walker** (Special Edition "Goup" Mugs).

Coming Up...

→ Wednesday, April 12th, 2017

Speaker: Terry Billingsley, CEO AppYourWay

Topic: With the evolution of Apps, is the web dead?

Terry Billingsley, AppYourWay CEO, will examine this intriguing question which is amongst one of the most relevant to businesses and developers alike. And while US and European businesses were quick to embrace the value of apps, Terry offers some interesting insights into accessing the Canadian marketplace. What then, is the potential impact to Canadians?

Terry will also discuss his own evolution towards app development, examine some global app development statistics and place them in context of his own experience both in Canada and the world. He will expand on his iResident project, and the non-technical obstacles faced in helping those that otherwise cannot access these technologies.

Terry Billingsley has been an entrepreneur and innovator with more than 35 years experience.

Wednesday, May 10th, 2017

Speaker: Malcolm Townsend, Information Technology Research Analyst, Technology Analysis Branch, Office of the Privacy Commissioner

Topic: Privacy in a Digital World, in a world of big data, meta-data and social media

Wednesday, June 14th, 2017

5:30 - 7pm: **eWaste Event** (*see article next page*)

6 - 7pm: **Annual Pizza Night** [free for members and their guest(s)]

7 pm: **Presentation**

Speaker: Dr. Beth Robertson, Institute of Interdisciplinary Studies, Carleton University

Topic: Omeka: An Open-source web publishing platform

For meeting updates and additional details, visit <http://opcug.ca> and click on the **MEETINGS** button in the left frame.

2017 CALENDAR

Meetings	Date	Time and Venue
OPCUG General Meeting	Wednesday, April 12 th	7:30 p.m. Bush Theatre of the Canada Aviation and Space Museum , 11 Aviation Parkway. http://casmuseum.techno-science.ca/en/index.php
Q&A Session	Wednesday, April 12 th	Immediately following the OPCUG General Meeting.
Beer BOF (Wing SIG East)	Wednesday, April 12 th	10:00 p.m. (after the Q&A) at Liam Maguire's, St. Laurent Blvd. at Innes Rd.

CLUB LIFE

APRIL WORKSHOP

Understanding E-mail 2017

This spring, we will repeat last year's very successful *Understanding E-mail* workshop. If you, your friends, or relatives, need to know some of the basics about how E-mail systems work, or wish to make your system more efficient, this half-day workshop will provide all the answers.

Topics for discussion will include webmail and mail clients, POP and IMAP, E-mail security, folders and filters, transferring address books and messages, and portable E-mail addresses. All this in a concentrated half-day session with a registration fee of only \$10 !

The workshop will be held on Saturday, April 29, 2017 (12:30 pm to 4:30 pm) at the Carlingwood Branch of the Ottawa Public Library. Full details are posted on the club's web site at http://www.opcug.ca/public/workshops/email_2017.

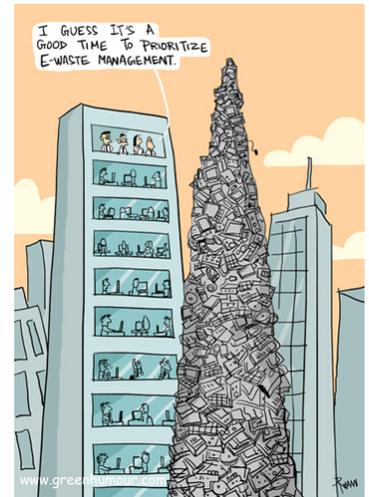


Image courtesy of <https://clipartfest.com/>



eWaste Event 2017

Once again, the OPCUG will have its annual eWaste collection in June. If you have electronic items that you no longer need, please bring them to the tent in front of the museum; they be taken to a processing plant and properly disposed of safely and responsibly with respect to OES guidelines. The eWaste event will be from 5:30pm to 7pm near the tent beside the Canada Aviation and Space Museum, 11 Aviation Parkway. For more information about our meeting please visit <http://opcug.ca> and check our MEETINGS and CALENDAR web pages.



Did you know?

OPCUG has an active on-line messaging base where members can post questions on any computer-related issue and (usually) obtain solutions provided by other members. So, login to The PUB with your personal username and password and ask your question! Go to <http://www.opcug.ca> and click on "PUB Login".



OPCUG website undergoes Spring Cleaning!

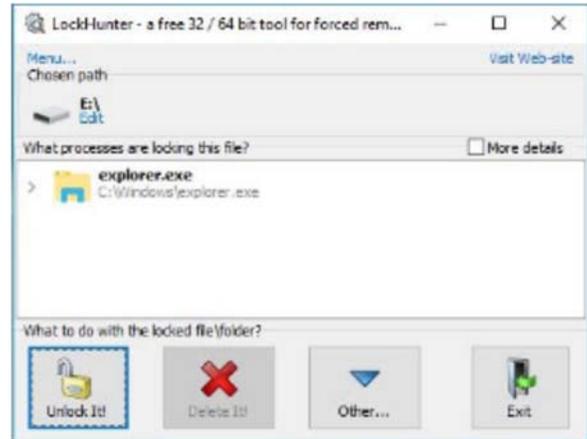
Occasionally, the OPCUG website needs a good update and cleanup. Recently, a PayPal payment option and Membership button were added to make it even easier to join or renew a membership, content was added describing what the OPCUG has to offer, the Speakers' page was updated, obsolete text was deleted, and much more. Started by Mike Pereira, he and Gail Eagen did a thorough review of all the pages and then sent corrections and updates to several people; Brigitte Lord added links and buttons and revised many web pages (more in progress), Jocelyn Doire did the History pages, Alan German provided the code for PayPal, Jeff Dubois created an App to view the OPCUG website on Android devices (see article on page 5), Chris Taylor set up mailing lists, and more. If you haven't visited the website recently, you will certainly find some new items. Visit <http://opcug.ca> and explore!



Lockhunter by Alan German

What do you do when you can't safely remove an external USB drive because Windows indicates that some process has it locked? The problem usually occurs when there are no applications running so it is less than obvious which program is the culprit. Wouldn't it be nice if someone had produced a utility that would (a) tell you about the problem, and (b) fix it for you? Enter Lockhunter – a free software tool designed specifically to resolve issues with locked files and folders.

When Lockhunter is installed, it integrates into the context menu for File Explorer. You can then load File Explorer and simply right-click on the name of the file that is locked. Select “What is locking this file?” Lockhunter will show the errant process and give you the option to unlock the file, delete it, or choose from a number of other options. Click on the “Unlock It!” icon. Problem solved!



LOCKHUNTER
by Crystal Rich Ltd

Bottom Line

Lockhunter (Freeware)
Version 3.1
Crystal Rich Ltd
<http://lockhunter.com/>

CMD Shell's death greatly exaggerated

by Chris Taylor

Funny how someone will misreport something and the lemmings will run with it.

In early December, Steven J Vaughan-Nichols, a self-proclaimed “Top business & technology journalist”, reported that Microsoft was doing away with the CMD shell starting with Windows 10 Redstone 2 (code name for the Creators Update due in the spring of 2018), in an article titled *Say Goodbye to the MS-DOS Prompt*.

Let's ignore that we said goodbye to the last vestiges of MS-DOS many years ago, and that the CMD shell was never part of MS-DOS. Vaughan-Nichols was misinterpreting a statement from Microsoft that PowerShell was becoming the defacto command shell in Windows. Microsoft never said that CMD was going away. And even though you can continue to run CMD in many ways, they even provided a way to keep CMD on the Win-X menu;

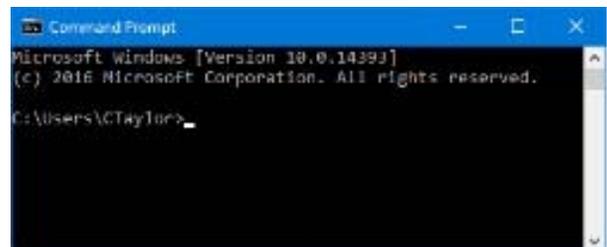
- Settings | Personalisation | Taskbar
- Turn off *Replace Command Prompt with Windows PowerShell in the menu when I right-click the start button or press Windows logo key + X*

And then the lemmings ran with the story. Many other tech blogging sites reported the same wrong information.

It took a few weeks, but Microsoft finally explained the simple truth on the MSDN blog; PowerShell is *much* more capable but the CMD shell is *not* going away.

<http://tinyurl.com/h9kz7yv>

Even after being called out, Vaughan-Nichols, in the correction to his article, continued to get it wrong, saying there are “pieces of MS-DOS hidden within Windows 10”. Sheesh.



MORE CLUB LIFE

OPCUG Android App *by Jeff Dubois*



Looking for one-touch access to the Ottawa PC Users' Group website from your Android device? Why not download the OPCUG Android App? It's not fancy, it's not pretty and it's certainly not feature packed: everything you've come to expect from free software and more! [Ed. *That was subtle geek-humour.*]

With the OPCUG Android App you will not be able to login to The Pub, access your on-line email, or download any of the fine newsletters. In fact, the app was cranked out so fast, the only thing you'll actually be able to do is navigate the various pages on the site and read posted content. (It was created solely to provide ultra-fast access to upcoming OPCUG meeting details and information on upcoming Ottawa Public Library presentations. So, in this regard, it works precisely as designed. The OPCUG Android App comes in two flavours: portrait and landscape. Download the version which best meets your needs.

Finally, it should probably be noted that no special talent is required to create Android APK files that merely call up specific websites or pages. The OPCUG Android App was generated by the **Web2APK** online tool which can be found at <http://web2apk.com>. It's free to use, although the developer does accept donations. And, with modest experimentation, you too can generate Android apps that are sure to impress your friends (and your colleagues who have websites or Linux blogs!) [Ed. *Even more subtle geek-humour!*]

Download the OPCUG **Portrait** App from http://opcug.ca/public/OPCUG_app_Portrait.apk or the OPCUG **Landscape** App from http://opcug.ca/public/OPCUG_app_Landscape.apk.

A Modified Policy on Mailing Hard-Copy Newsletters



OPCUG's Board of Directors at their March meeting implemented a new policy on the distribution of hard-copy newsletters to members. Effective immediately no new entries to the hard-copy mailing list will be permitted. New members will be able to obtain copies of the electronic newsletter by subscribing to the NewsletterPDF listserv. Newsletters will then be delivered, as PDF files, by electronic mail.

The reason for this policy is partly a declining need for postal service, and partly the cost burden associated with printing and mailing hard copies of the newsletter. As indicated at the club's AGM, printing and distribution costs for the newsletter are our single biggest outlay, accounting for almost one third of the club's total annual expenses.

In addition, there is considerable irony in the fact that a computer group's newsletter is created in the form of an electronic file but we print and mail hard copies to a group of computer enthusiasts. And, the fact is that the PDF newsletter is in many ways far superior to its black and white cousin.

As noted in a previous article (*Top Ten reasons for subscribing to the electronic newsletter; November 2005*), "...the electronic newsletter arrives faster, is in full colour, provides hot links, helps save the planet, keeps your membership dues low, and provides absolute justification for that new computer, monitor, or high-speed Internet connection."

Current members who already receive hard-copy newsletters in their mailbox need not be concerned. Your monthly "fix" will continue to arrive as usual. That is – unless – you decide to switch. So, why not join the majority of your fellow club members and subscribe to the PDF version of the newsletter? The instructions are on the back page of most newsletters. Send an E-mail message to listserv@opcug.ca and type **subscribe newsletterpdf** in the body of the message. Finally, and most importantly, send an E-mail message to the Membership Secretary (mark.cayer@opcug.ca) and tell Mark that you no longer wish to receive a copy of the newsletter by regular mail.

Note also that, for now at least, because we will continue to print newsletters for our "grandfathered" subscribers, hard copies of the current newsletter, and a variety of back issues, will be available for pick up at our monthly meetings.

...Old Computer *(Continued from page 1)*

we might be able to use is a bootable USBkey, providing that booting from a USB drive is supported by the old laptop computer.

In my case, the latter was a viable option so I created a bootable USB drive using Rufus (<https://rufus.akeo.ie/>). Running Rufus brings up a window in which we need to specify the blank USB drive as the “Device” (see Figure 1). Next, for the menu entry named “Create a bootable disk using”, we click on the drop-down arrow in the box initially labelled “FreeDOS” and select “ISO image”. Now, we click on the disk icon immediately to the right and browse for the Linux Mate ISO file that we just downloaded. Selecting this file will result in the “New volume label” menu entry automatically changing to “Linux Mint 18.1 MATE 32-bit”.

Pressing the “Start” button will almost certainly produce a dialogue box indicating that: “...two additional files (‘ldlinux.sys’ and ‘ldlinux.bss’) must be downloaded...” Press “Yes” to allow these files to be obtained. A second dialogue box recommends to “Write in ISO Image mode”. Press “OK” to continue. Now, we get a warning that all of the data on our USB drive will be destroyed. Since we wish to install the Linux distro on the (blank!) USB drive, we can press “OK” to allow the installation to proceed.

Setting up the USB drive and copying the relevant files takes several minutes. A progress bar shows the path to completion but, rest assured, you have time for a coffee! Eventually, “READY” appears in the lower portion of the Rufus window. Click on the “Close” button and you are indeed ready to boot into Linux.

Now we can insert the shiny new USBkey into the laptop computer and press the power switch. The subsequent boot sequence is different for different machines. In my case, as the laptop powers on, a message indicates that I should press F9 to change the boot sequence. On the resulting menu, I can select the USBkey as the boot device and press Enter. The laptop now boots into Linux Mint.

A whole host of command lines streams down the display, but the boot

process is completely automatic and we can ignore all of these. We let it run until the desktop (the Mate GUI) is displayed, with a task bar (called a “panel” in Linux) across the bottom of the screen, three icons in the top-left corner, and the Linux Mint logo in the lower-right portion of the screen. The icon labelled “Computer” provides access to a list of available disk drives on the computer (more or less equivalent to My Computer in Windows), while “mint’s Home” provides access to the current user’s Home directory. The boot process has automatically logged in a user named mint and “mint’s Home” links to the area of the file system where this user’s default files and folders are located.

At this point, the Linux system is live and running from the bootable drive. We can try the installed applications, check that these work correctly with the machine’s hardware, and that they function as we would wish. The main menu is accessed by clicking on the icon in the bottom-left corner of the screen. Click on “All applications” to transform the list of suggested applications into a categorized list of all of the available software. Clicking on any individual category produces a sub-menu from which specific programs can be selected. For example, “Graphics” includes the Gimp image editor, “Internet” has both the Firefox web browser and Thunderbird E-mail client, and “Office” provides access to LibreOffice’s Writer and Calc (similar to MS Word and Excel respectively).

Note that to use web-based applications such as Firefox will require establishing a network connection. Identify the networking icon on the right side of the panel (task bar). This looks like two ends of cables that are not yet connected. Selecting this icon displays a list of available networks. Click on the listing for your network (e.g. your router’s Wi-Fi) and enter the password for the encrypted connection. A dialogue box will indicate that the network connection has been activated. You are now ready to surf the Internet!

If Linux and its applications are all working to your satisfaction, you will probably want to install Linux to the computer’s hard drive. This will make the system perform faster than when running from a CD or USB drive, and will provide ready access to the hard

disk for file storage. For this purpose, we use the third icon that is visible on the screen – “Install Linux Mint”.

Double-clicking on the “Install Linux Mint” icon brings up a wizard which makes the installation process extremely easy. One merely has to navigate through a series of screens and answer a few simple questions.

The “Welcome” screen will have English selected as the default language for the installation process. If you haven’t already established a network connection (see above), pressing “Continue” will bring up the “Wireless” options. Click on the radio button marked “Connect to the network” and then select your Wi-Fi network from the list displayed. Enter the password for your encrypted network and press “Connect”. A pop-up notification will indicate that the network connection has been established. Press “Continue”.

On the next screen, check the box marked “Install third-party software for graphics and Wi-Fi hardware, Flash, MP3 and other media”. This will allow some proprietary software (i.e. packages not subject to the General Public Licence) to be installed. Press “Continue”.

If you are installing from a bootable USBkey, you may now be asked if you wish to unmount the partitions on this disk. The safe answer (to prevent any possibility of the USBkey being modified) is to click on “Yes”.

The next screen specifies the installation type, i.e. how the hard disk should be partitioned. Since we have wiped the hard drive of the laptop the choice of options is easy. We can use “Erase disk and install Linux Mint” which will be selected by default. If the disk has been wiped (as discussed in Part 1 of this article), the warning that this will delete all the files on the disk is moot since the hard disk is completely blank! Pressing “Continue” brings up a confirmation screen showing that “The entire disk will be used”. We can simply press “Install Now”.

Even now, the installer wants us to be sure of the changes that are to be made to the hard drive. Although the information is full of Linux jargon, the bottom line is that a Linux ext4 partition

(Continued on page 8)

OPCUG Free Software Guide—Part 71

Compiled by Alan German
and Jeff Dubois

This guide features an annotated list of free computer programs. The software mentioned has not been reviewed (except where noted) nor have any tests necessarily been conducted. Consequently, no guarantees are provided that the individual programs will perform as described. Rather the list of available software is provided for the information of our members who may find one or more of the programs useful.

Quick Media Converter

Easily convert video files from/to a variety of different formats. Download videos from more than 100 web sites, such as YouTube. Take videos from your webcam and publish them on the Internet.

Current Release: Version 4.8.0.5

Web Site: <http://www.cocoonsoftware.com/en/>



Simplenote

The simplest way to keep notes. Light, clean, and free. Simplenote is now available for Windows 7+, Linux, Android Mac and iOS. Your notes stay updated across all your devices.

Current Release: Version 1.0.7

Web Site: <https://simplenote.com/>

XnView

An efficient multi-media viewer, browser, and converter that is really simple to use. Supports more than 500 image formats.

Current Release: Version 2.39

Previously Reviewed - XnView – A Digital Photo Manager; Alan German; <http://opcug.ca/public/Reviews/XnView.htm>

Web Site: <http://www.xnview.com/en/>

Chrome Browser

Google's fast, powerful – and free – web browser. Use the same browser for your computer, smartphone and tablet. Search and navigate from the same data entry box, auto-fill on-line forms, synchronize your open tabs, bookmarks and recent searches. Customize Chrome with a variety of themes, apps and extensions.

Web Site: <https://www.google.com/chrome/>

GoToMeeting Free

Collaborate with up to three friends, relatives or colleagues anywhere around the world using your Chrome browser. You can have an unlimited number of meetings, all with screen sharing and high-quality VOIP audio.

Web Site: <https://free.gotomeeting.com/>



Taskbar Items Pinner

Normally, the Pin to Taskbar option in Windows 7 only works with EXE files, but this freeware tool, by Kishan Bagaria at door2windows.com, allows you to pin files, folders and even web pages to your taskbar.

Web Site: <http://tinyurl.com/33am2nu>

Bitdefender Antivirus Free Edition

This powerful anti-virus solution uses on-demand and on-access scanning to ensure detection and removal of viruses. The use of advanced technologies such as machine learning protects you from phishing attacks and other types of fraudulent content.

Web Site: <http://www.bitdefender.com/solutions/free.html>



Sdelete

This command line utility allows you to securely delete one or more files and/or directories, or to cleanse the free space on a logical disk. The technique makes the deleted file(s) irrecoverable – hence S(ecure)delete!

Current Release: Version 1.61

Web Site: <http://tinyurl.com/hb5ryy7>

Dota 2

Dota is a competitive game of action and strategy, played both professionally and casually by millions of passionate fans worldwide. Players pick from a pool of over a hundred heroes, forming two teams of five players.

Web Site: <http://store.steampowered.com/app/570/>



OTTAWA PC NEWS

Ottawa PC News is the newsletter of the Ottawa PC Users' Group (OPCUG), and is published monthly except in July and August. The opinions expressed in this newsletter may not necessarily represent the views of the club or its members.

Member participation is encouraged. If you would like to contribute an article to Ottawa PC News, please submit it to the newsletter editor (contact info below). Deadline for submissions is three Sundays before the next General Meeting.

Group Meetings

OPCUG meets on the second Wednesday in the month, except July and August, in the **Bush Theatre** of the **Canada Aviation and Space Museum**, 11 Aviation Parkway, Ottawa.
<http://casmuseum.techno-science.ca/en/index.php>

Meetings are 7:30–9:00 p.m. followed by a Q&A Session until 10 p.m.

Parking is available at the museum for a flat fee of \$3 after 5pm.

Details at <http://opcug.ca/public/regmtg.htm>

OPCUG Membership Fees: \$25 per year
Mailing Address: 3 Thatcher St., Nepean, Ontario, K2G 1S6
Web address: <http://opcug.ca>
Bulletin board—The PUB (BBS) <http://opcug.ca/default.htm>
Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/opcug>
Follow us on Twitter: <https://www.twitter.com/opcug>

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...Old Computer *(Continued from page 6)*

and a swap partition will be created. (ext4 is the type of filesystem used by Linux and is equivalent to NTFS used by Windows; the Linux swap partition is equivalent to the Windows' swap file.) These are the normal disk partitions used by Linux so we can press "Continue".

The installer now displays a map of the world and asks "Where are you?" This is really looking for a time zone and the simplest response is to click the mouse in the vicinity of Lake Ontario. This will most likely result in "Toronto" being displayed in the text box – which effectively means that we have specified EST. Press "Continue".

The next window has "English (US)" as the default keyboard layout and, unless you require something else, you can leave this selection in place and press "Continue".

The final set of queries is entitled "Who are you?". Enter "Your name" (first and/or last names) in the first text box. This will be used together with the model of the computer to suggest the entry for the next text box. Edit this entry for a computer name that makes sense to you. You can use any text in the "Pick a username" text box (but, it must begin with a lower-case letter). This will be your user ID for logging on to the Linux system once it has been installed. In future, you will only use this to select the user to be logged on. And, if you are going to be the only user, this username will be selected by default, and you will only have to enter the associated password to log on. Enter your preferred password in the text box marked "Choose a password" and repeat this password in the next box marked "Confirm your password". A check mark will indicate that the two entries match. Leave the box named "Require my password to login" checked. Press "Continue".

The installation process will now continue automatically, with a slide show being displayed indicating some of the features of the Linux Mint operating system, and of the associated applications that are installed by default or which are available as optional add-ons.

A dialogue box will indicate when the installation has finished. You should reboot the computer by pressing the "Restart Now" button so as to be able to use your shiny new Linux box!