



**Bill Harvey** tests the latest variation of electronic magnifier from Bierley

# In the frame

**A** number of years ago I bought my mother (now a sprightly 78 years) an electronic photo frame for Christmas. It was duly stored away in a drawer to gather dust until I asked of its whereabouts months later. She was not only embarrassed about not having used it but admitted to being quite 'wary of these things'. After spending a while selecting her favourite family photos and putting different sets on different memory pens, I showed her how to select a particular set, display them on rotation, use the remote control to still any image and change to a new memory pen. It took a couple of hours but she now uses it all the time and wonders why she ever had any concerns in the first place.

I am sure this tale is familiar to all, and I was reminded of it again recently when I tried out the new MPD unit from Bierley (Figure 1).

## MPD-12

The MPD-12 series is essentially a MonoMouse or ColorMouse attached to an electronic photo frame. There is the MPD-12-mono with a grey scale output from the mouse, the MPD-12-color (which I had to try with a colour output) and the MPD-12-MD, which allows a reverse contrast display of any magnified text.

The MPD-12-color is comprised of a 12-inch colour screen photo frame, attached colour LED mouse magnifier, a memory pen for image transfer and a remote control. Once set up the magnifier is moved over the image or text to be viewed and a magnified image (at 14 times magnification) appears on the screen (Figure 2). A lower seven times magnification is available as an optional extra if a larger field is wanted (simply a second mouse that can be swapped into the frame input).

The frame may be set on its upright stand on the table or attached to a wall near a point of interest, for example a counter top in the kitchen. The memory pen is preloaded with some Bierley-specific information and images, but these are easy to delete and load with any images the patient may want, whether it be instructions for a recipe or images of a family member. Once this is inserted in the USB input, the remote control allows



the user to scroll between the image bank, the magnified 'live' image and a third option of an enlarged clock (Figures 3 and 4).

## Ease of use

As hinted at earlier, and as I have found with previous electronic magnifiers, the key to successful use is the setting up. I tried the MPD on two patients and both had initial reservations but both were happy with the outcome after I had set it up and carefully been through how to use it.

Mrs AA is a 77-year-old with mobility problems, cataract and early maculopathy (R 0.8, L <1.3, near N18 with a +4.00 addition). She is happy with current magnifiers for reading but liked the idea of something to help her look at old photos and colour magazines. A double approach was tried. I scanned in some of her photos for the memory pen and then showed her how to use the 14X mouse at a desk for the magazines. She took a while to become proficient swapping between the pen images and the mouse input but eventually got the

hang of it. The mouse input was most useful, but as long as someone else loads the images onto the pens she also found this useful.

Mrs EW (82 years with age-related macular degeneration, R and L 0.7) wanted specific help in the kitchen. Mounting the frame on the wall above her counter top was easy and she left it with the clock display on when not in use. She could then read recipes at eye level when training the mouse over the recipe on the counter, and also was able to use the mouse on labels of tins to display on screen. She had less use for the memory images but felt in future she might consider 'pre-loading' some recipes.

Overall this is a nice unison of existing technology, simple to operate, but requiring an initial training to build confidence in the more technophobic. As many low vision practitioners will agree, the key to success is flexibility and the MPD-12 offers yet another option. ●

● For more details call Bierley on 0800 0430 282 or visit [www.bierley.com/uk](http://www.bierley.com/uk)