

# QOwnNotes: Lifeboat and Speedboat

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This presentation was created with QOwnNotes and Pandoc

No Warranty: Use at your own risk

# This Slide Deck Was Made With QOwnNotes

```
#!/bin/sh
rm temp.pdf
cp -p aaa_golug_qownnotes.md temp.md
pandoc -V indent=true -V colorlinks=true \
    -t beamer -o temp.pdf temp.md
```

- ▶ Easy, quick.
- ▶ Not as configurable as I'd like, but I needed it quick.
- ▶ Much easier and quicker than LaTeX/Beamer, and much less error prone than LibreOffice.
- ▶ Could probably be greatly improved with a better knowledge of Pandoc.

# Lifeboat

- ▶ The Lifeboat part of the presentation gives QOwnNotes essentials.

# What is QOwnNotes?

- ▶ QOwnNotes is a GUI authoring tool optimized for authoring speed.
  - ▶ Optimized for keyboard use.
- ▶ QOwnNotes understands and works with Markdown.
- ▶ QOwnNotes stores modified notes to file every 10 seconds.
  - ▶ Overwrites the file each time.
  - ▶ Onto disk as Markdown files.
  - ▶ You can back them up from there.
- ▶ QOwnNotes has a semi-WYSIWYG window and an almost completely WYSIWYG window.

## QOwnNotes Properties

- ▶ Trivially easy to start using productively within 1/2 hour or less.
- ▶ No File->Save, but auto-saves every 10 seconds.
  - ▶ Can cause problems as discussed later.
- ▶ CAUTION: I don't know all the settings and features!!!

# What is Markdown?

- ▶ Markdown is a lightweight markup language.
  - ▶ Optimized for quick and dirty HTML authoring.
  - ▶ Often used in Wikis
  - ▶ Ultra fast authoring for the touch-typist.
- ▶ Optimized to produce quick and dirty HTML web pages.
- ▶ But can author books, articles, presentations, etc.
  - ▶ If you're willing to live with some restrictions on styles=>formatting.
  - ▶ I created this presentation in  
QOwnNotes->Markdown->Pandoc->Beamer.
- ▶ Hopefully soon, QOwnNotes can author moderately complex books.
  - ▶ With a software stack I'll create.

## QOwnNotes Gotchas

- ▶ No working folder tree on many versions.
- ▶ Extremely featureful with sometimes inobvious settings.
- ▶ Undo/backup problems: Discussed next slide.

## QOwnNotes Backup Problems

- ▶ All backups for a note go to the same on-disk Markdown file.
  - ▶ So within 10 seconds the “backup” is the same as the note.
- ▶ No obvious Undo facility.
- ▶ Easy to delete a note (Document) with no QOwnNote-provided safety net, unless you're interfacing to OwnCloud or NextCloud.
- ▶ The preceding 2 Gotchas can be overcome by a little custom programming outside of QOwnNotes.



## Adding a Backup Facility

- ▶ **This continuous backup program** is a step in the right direction.
  - ▶ Better if it diffed before copy
  - ▶ Could be made a daemon that backs up everything in  
~/qownNotes
- ▶ Be careful: If this is running while a note is unencrypted, that note is backup-saved unencrypted.

## QOwnNotes Tips

- ▶ Enable embedded HTML.
- ▶ Enable having different filename than title.
  - ▶ For a nice life, put no space or punctuation other than underscore in the filename.
- ▶ Refer often to the Preview.
  - ▶ Set up a hotkey for it (I use Ctrl+semicolon).
  - ▶ Make the preview wide.
- ▶ Spend a couple hours going through the entire menu hierarchy.
- ▶ Spend an hour going over the Markdown Cheatsheet that ships with QOwnNotes, and refer to it often.

# Speedboat

Some fancy stuff you can do with QOwnNotes.

# Encrypt a Note

- ▶ Edit=>Encryption=>Encrypt note
  - ▶ To encrypt the screen representation and the backing Markdown
  - ▶ Enter your encryption password twice
- ▶ Edit=>Encryption=>Edit encrypted note
  - ▶ To edit it unencrypted, even though the underlying Markdown file remains encrypted.
- ▶ Edit=>Encryption=>Decrypt Note
  - ▶ Decrypt both on screen and on the backing Markdown
  - ▶ Password required unless already editing encrypted note
  - ▶ Be careful with this: Periodic backup or sync can store the unencrypted file.

## QOwnNote to Presentation Slide Deck

- ▶ Each slide is a 1st level, meaning preceded by "# "
- ▶ Each bullet point is an unordered list item preceded by "\* "
- ▶ Bullet lists can be multilevel.
- ▶ Command to convert QOwnNote stevelitt.md to stevelitt.pdf slideshow is:

```
#!/bin/sh
rm temp.md
rm temp.pdf
cp -p aaa_golug_qownnotes.md temp.md
pandoc -V colorlinks=true \
    -t beamer -o stevelitt.pdf stevelitt.md
```

- ▶ Use ~~~ above and below code to make it unindented.
- ▶ Highlight whole code block and use Tab and Shift+Tab to customize indentation.

# Make Simple HTML Page Direct From QOwnNotes

- ▶ Superior to Pandoc's HTML generation, in my opinion
- ▶ Note=>Export=>Export as HTML.
- ▶ Choose location and name to put the HTML file.
- ▶ This accepts all of QOwnNotes' CSS assumptions.
- ▶ The resulting HTML page is well formed XML.
  - ▶ For ease of further handling.
- ▶ Be sure to backslash-quote all single and double quote marks.

## Make Simple HTML Page Via Pandoc

```
#!/bin/sh
rm junk.pdf
cp -p stevelitt.md temp.md
pandoc -V indent=true -V colorlinks=true -t html \
  -o stevelitt.html temp.md
```

=====

- ▶ Produces only the body code.
  - ▶ Therefore easy to tweak with automated line editing.
- ▶ Becomes well formed XML once `<html></html>`, `<head></head>` and `<body></body>` are added.

# The Power of XML

- ▶ QOwnNotes converts to well formed XML.
- ▶ Pandoc converts Markdown to something easily made into well formed XML.
- ▶ Any old XML parser can therefore be used make pretty much any modification.
- ▶ Any old XML parser can be used to convert to different formats.
- ▶ I like Python's XML parsers.



# Future Power

- ▶ Software stacks
- ▶ Markdown with arbitrary styles
- ▶ Write once, read in HTML, ePub and PDF

# Software Stacks

- ▶ A software stack is several programs working in cooperation.
- ▶ The stack works with QOwnNotes exactly as QOwnNotes operates.
  - ▶ No programming changes to QOwnNotes required.
- ▶ Such stacks can add markdown language capabilities.
  - ▶ Easy to type sequence at the beginning of a paragraph: Paragraph style.
  - ▶ Different easy to type sequence surrounding a phrase: Character style.
- ▶ Such stacks can convert between formats.
  - ▶ xHTML to CSS template.
  - ▶ xHTML to ePub.
  - ▶ xHTML plus CSS to LaTeX to PDF

## Markdown With Arbitrary Styles

- ▶ Allow a specifically formatted text string, at the very start of a code like  
or , etc, to identify id and class.
- ▶ Write XML parser based software to read those strings and modify the DOM object's ID or Class accordingly.
- ▶ Choose one of these:
  - ▶ Convert to PDF with Pandoc converting XML (xHTML) to LaTeX, using a custom CSS file written by you.
  - ▶ Write your own XML to LaTeX converter, using a custom LaTeX Layout file written by you.
- ▶ Remember to have the conversion process make a CSS template file with preliminary definitions for each arbitrary style introduced.

# Wrapup

- ▶ QOwnNotes is an extremely productive interface for writing:
  - ▶ Notes
  - ▶ Books
  - ▶ Web pages
- ▶ QOwnNotes enables you to write markdown easily.
- ▶ QOwnNotes translates your Markdown to well formed XML (xHTML)
  - ▶ Once it's XML, you can use an XML parser to have your way with it.
- ▶ QOwnNotes is trivially easy to start using, and productive within the first half hour.