

Two Discussions:

- 1) Mac Questions Answered - A Discussion
- 2) Mac History - A Return to the Future

Westminster-Canterbury - Tuesday July 13, - 7:15 PM

Amherst - NO MEETING in JULY - Vacation

Lynchburg College - Thursday, July 15, 2004 - 7:00 PM
Room 14, Hopwood Hall

Next Month's Meeting

Westminster-Canterbury - Tuesday, August 17, - 7:15 PM

Amherst, 123 N. Main St. - Wednesday, August 18, - 7:15 PM

Lynchburg College, Hopwood Hall - Thursday, August 19 - 7:00 PM

General Meeting At Lynchburg College

Our first Apple Core meeting at Lynchburg College was in Hopwood Hall Room 14 and went well without any major problems. But it was a different experience because of the classroom setting as opposed to a computer lab. We expect to have a wireless internet connection available for laptop users at the upcoming July 15th meeting. Our projector works well but we will have to improve its setup to make the display larger.

One concern expressed was that the student arm chairs were not really well suited for use with laptops, and we agree. But it should be something we can live with until we can arrange better. We will be working on that. Those chairs sure aren't as comfortable as the chairs in the Mac Lab at CVCC but there is plenty of room to accommodate everyone.

Lee Greever tells me the latest word from CVCC is that the Mac Lab will be closed or moved to a temporary location for the duration of the Fall Semester while Campbell Hall undergoes renovation of the fire sprinkler system. The eMacs are all disconnected and wrapped up in plastic. We'll keep you posted.

June 2004 Apple Core Survey Results

We have tabulated the responses from the mini-survey taken during the June meeting and found that 79% of the 33 people surveyed are running a version of OS X, and only 3 people are running computers not OS X capable. This will help guide us to maintain our programs to try to include topics with interest for both OS 9 and OS X but we will not shirk new items which run only in OS X.

Mac OS X Version 10.4 "Tiger" Previewed at WWDC

Steve Jobs, in his keynote address at Apple's World Wide Developer's Conference, gave a preview of the next general update of OS X, "Tiger" Version 10.4. It is expected to debut in the first half of 2005. Its new technology "SpotLight," a file and content search engine is expected to be a year in advance of Microsoft's "Longhorn" operating system upgrade.

Enter the Contest to Win a New Mac Book!

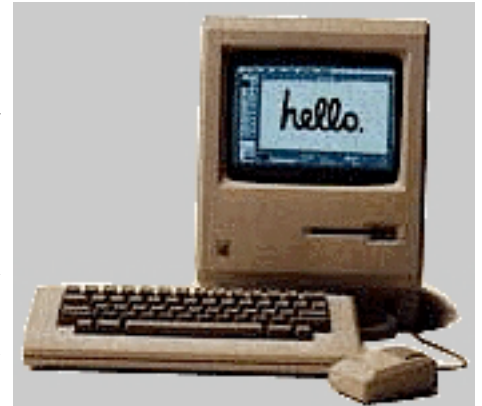
Visit the new Apple Core web site at <http://lynchburgmug.org> and then e-mail your comments, suggestions and appreciation to Frank Land at fland36@verizon.net. Sending your message to Frank will enter your name for a chance to win a new Mac book such as *Mac OS X Killer Tips* by Scott Kelby.

Deadline is Wednesday July 15th

Mac History - A Return to the Future

This year is the twentieth anniversary of the Macintosh. The original model of our favorite computer was announced on January 24th, 1984 during the SuperBowl, with a one-minute long award-winning commercial that was shown only once to a national audience, and never repeated again over the air. But it has been seen tens of thousands of times since by Mac fans and their friends. And the rest is history.

The first Mac shipped to the general public in mid to late February and probably appeared in Lynchburg about March 1st. I bought mine March 15th. A good number of the members of the Apple Core have never seen an original Macintosh, or “Mac 128” as most old-timers refer to it now. It had only 128k of memory (one-eighth of a megabyte) and it ran at 7.83 MHz, now commonly reported as 8 MHz. It had a 9-Inch (diagonal) black and white screen with a resolution of 512 x 342. It had a single 400k built-in floppy drive, a 58-key keyboard, and a “block-of-soap” mouse. It sold for \$2495, and the original ImageWriter printer to go with it was \$495. Compare those specs and costs to any of today’s Macs!



It was the first computer available to the general public with a graphical user interface, a “GUI” with icons and menus to choose from. With “regular” computers, you had to type arcane commands on a “command line” to make things happen. Apple had preceded the Mac 128 with the Lisa in 1983, which also had a GUI, but cost \$10,000. Not a computer for the average user!

One of the reasons for such prices was that in 1983, the average cost of RAM was about \$4.00 a KILOBYTE, or roughly \$4000.00 a megabyte. Ten years later in 1993, memory was about \$40.00 per megabyte. Today, memory is below \$0.40 per megabyte. So when your are advised to install more memory, be glad this is not 1984!

The original 3.5-inch 400K floppy disks were first developed developed by Sony, but Apple saw its potential. It held more than twice as much data as the common single-sided 5-1/4 inch floppies of the earlier computers, and was still larger than the new 360k double-sided floppies.

By January 1986, Apple introduced the Macintosh Plus with a whole megabyte of memory, expandable to 4 MB, and it used double-sided floppies capable of holding nearly 800K of programs and data. The 3-1/2 inch floppy was adopted by IBM in 1987 with the introduction of the PS/2 Series of IBM computers, 3 years after the Macintosh.

The Mac Plus had a SCSI port to which a user could connect an external hard drive of 10 or 20 MB to store programs and data. These drives cost upwards of \$500 or more. But they could easily be moved from one computer to another to transfer files, and could be daisy-chained to add more storage. They grew in capacity as technology progressed.

So What Do We Expect for the Future?

The path that has been followed to achieve today’s technology is the best we have to try to foresee the future.

SCSI connections have been replaced by FireWire, and the original FireWire is now designated FireWire 400. At a transfer rate of 400 Mbits/second, it has been surpassed by USB 2.0 which transfers data at 480 Mb/s. But the newer FireWire 800 has upped the ante again. While FireWire is not dramatically faster than SCSI, its simplicity in everyday application and its lower costs have trumped SCSI almost all around.

Laptop computers have been under development for many years and now their capabilities have increased to the point where they are replacing desktop computers in many situations. Their drawbacks are mainly their higher cost for comparable performance and their limits to expansion due to physical constraints. But for many applications and situations, the laptop is the future. Some think the tablet computer is the future of the laptop, but this approach is not catching on to any great extent. Apple was there very early with the Newton but has abandoned the concept.

Wi-Fi is a term heard more and more these days. It means wireless connectivity for computers, mainly laptops. But it also can mean wireless communication for Blueberry PDAs and wide-area wireless communication over the cell phone networks. Look for this application to develop further. As a side note, I have had a wireless network in my home for about four and a half years, so I chuckle when PC people are so excited by this “new” technology. To me and many Mac users, it’s old stuff.

Another wireless technology that’s under development is “Bluetooth,” a short-range medium suitable for communication between enabled devices such as printers, cell phones and computers. It is designed to eliminate the clutter of wires and connectors in short-range situations. With Bluetooth integrated in OS X “Panther”, you can connect wirelessly to your computer with your PDA, mobile phone and other peripherals, within a 30-foot range.

Display technology has advanced so that LCD flat panels are the norm rather than the exception. Apple has announced a new 30-inch LCD display that is or soon will be on the wish list of every designer

Our discussions at the June meeting should be most interesting.

- *Gordon Mattox*