A Personal History of the Newton

Adam Tow
World Wide Newton Conference
September 4, 2004

Apple Expo.
Porte de Versailles. 31 Août-4 Sept.

Who Would Have Thought?

The more
things change...

PowerBook 180

MessagePad 100

PowerBook G4 12-inch

MessagePad 2100
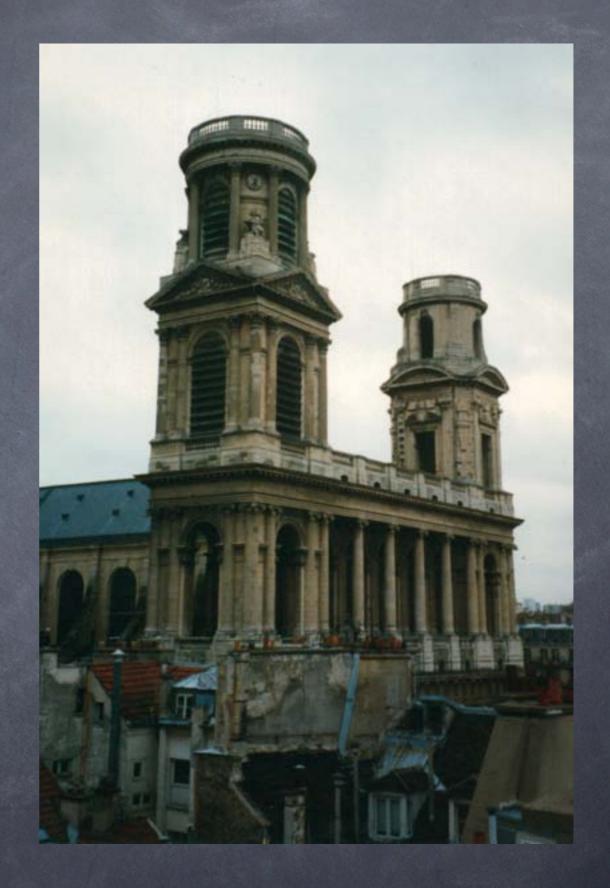
The more they
stay the same...

... except now I take better photos!
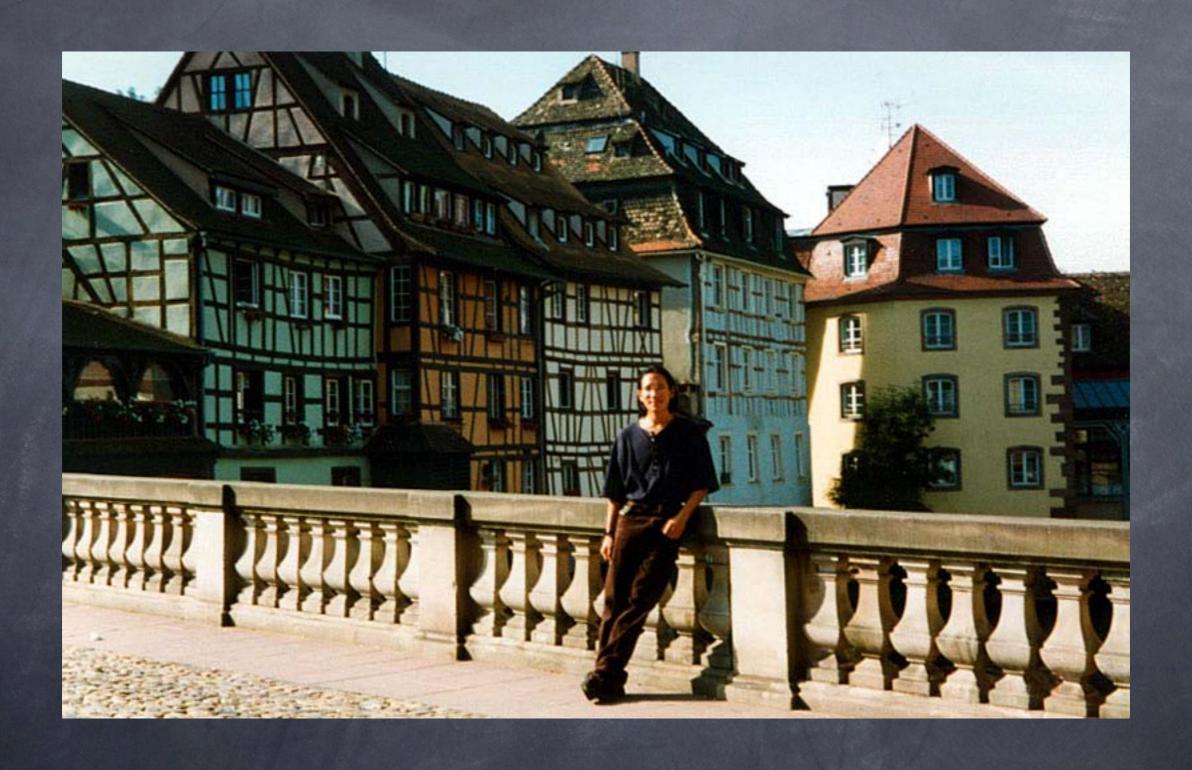
Labor Strikes in 1995

Labor Strikes in 2004

Adam in Strasbourg in 1995

Adam at Apple Expo Paris 2004

Newton Beginnings
1993

Newton Beginnings

- MacWeek, MacWorld, and MacUser articles

- MacWorld Boston

  - Saw It, Tried It, Want It

- September 1993

  - Bought an Original MessagePad shortly before starting first year at Stanford

The utility of having computing power with you at all times

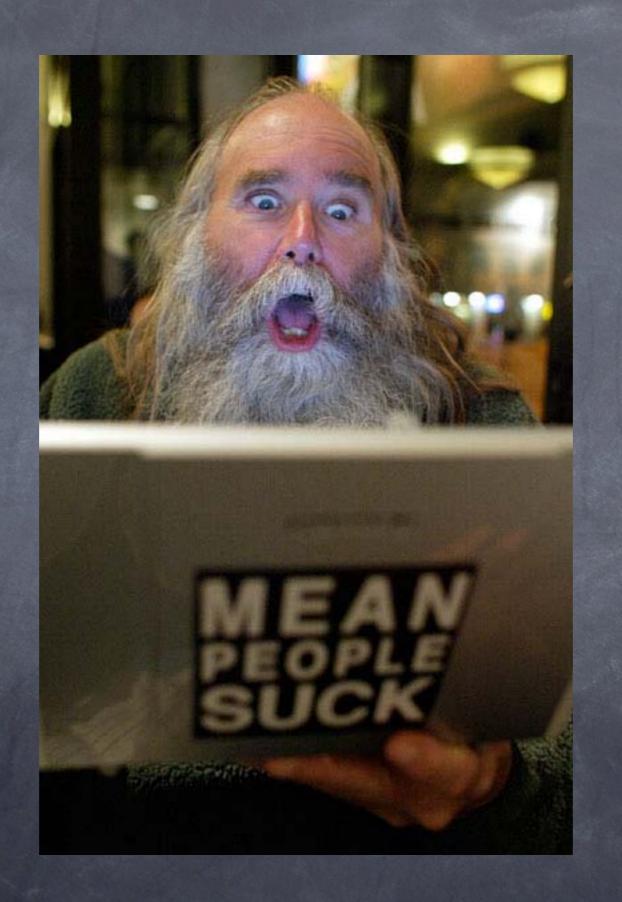Newton prototype at La Défense, Paris

Started using the Newton for taking notes in class, organizing my calendar and keeping track of contacts

Of course, I never synced my data to my desktop

this was before the days of non-volatile Flash memory

Went to my first
Stanford Newton User
Group meeting in 1994

Only to meet people like...

Knowing nothing of programming and facial hair...

I fled back to the comfortable confines of Stanford University...

and learned how to program for the Newton

First off the assembly line was Stanford Map

Stanford Map

An interactive map of Stanford University. Users can click on a building to see its name and use Find to search for a particular building.

Foundation Systems
1994

Born out of a passion to write software for myself and others...

… and also from rejection!

Stanford Viennese Ball
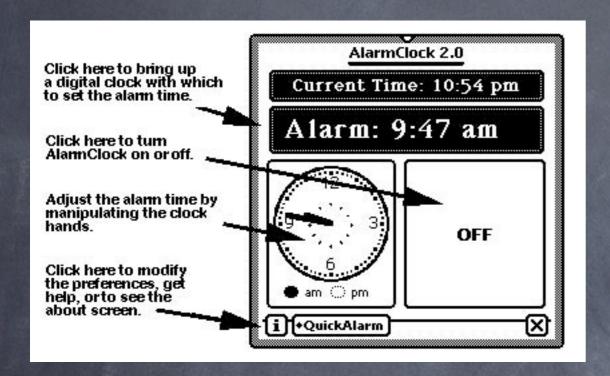
http://www.stanford.edu/group/viennese/

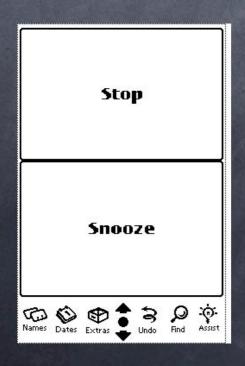"Sorry, I'm going to be working in the machine shop that night."

Source: http://www.slac.stanford.edu/grp/mfd/images/staff.jpg

As for me, instead of attending the Ball, I sat in my dorm room and wrote the bulk of...

AlarmClock

The loudest alarm clock for the Newton. It will even wake the living dead!

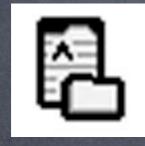AlarmClock was the first of many software packages that I wrote for the Newton

Other Software

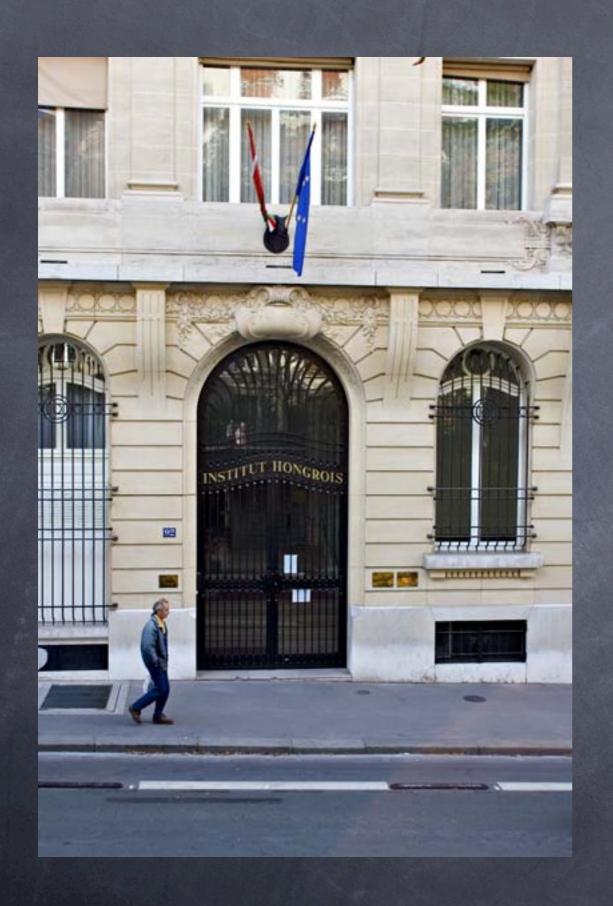Learned human interface design by designing software

Not by sitting in a class!

Of course, my programming skills are no match for those of Paul, Simon, Larry, and others!

Stanford in France
1995

Stanford in France

- Studied in Paris during Fall Quarter 95-96

- Brought my PowerBook 180 and Newton MessagePad 100 (upgraded OMP)
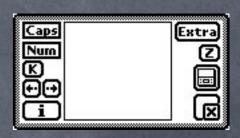
- Lived in the 6e arrondissement

Institut Hongrois

I used to pass this building several times a week!

Stanford in France

- Took my notes in class using my MP and Graffiti 1.0

    - Graffiti handled accented characters

- Newton OS 2.0 was released during this time

    - Internet was so slow in 1995, I didn't learn about it until I had returned!

Newton Development 1996-1998

- Attended the Newton Technology Conference in 1996

    - Think Fast!

- Graduated in 1997 with an eye towards running Foundation Systems full-time

    - Business doing well up until 1998

Newton's Cancellation
1998

Newton, Inc. was going to be spun-off as a wholly-owned subsidiary in 1997

Business cards were printed, badges were made, and production line for the MP2100 changed to use the Newton, Inc. logo

MessagePad 2100

Instead of the Apple Logo

Then Gil Amelio was pushed out as CEO and the prodigal son

Steve Jobs returned

Newton, Inc. rolled back into Apple in late 1997

Letter to Steve Jobs

Homma's Brown Rice Sushi, a popular restaurant in Palo Alto

"Adam,

The Emate has a bright future - and it is for this reason that I am pulling it back into Apple -which has the resouces to market and sell it much more broadly. You can imagine that a small spin-off company would not have such a large sales force or marketing budget. With the appropriate investments in sales and marketing, we hope that the Emate can become a great success.

We are a little more confused about the MessagePad. Since it costs more ($1K or more vs $700-799 for the Emate) and has no keyboard, its market seems more limited than the Emate. However, sales of the current MessagePad are brisk, so who knows... What do you think?

Don't worry - we are pulling this group back into Apple so that we can invest even more sales and marketing resources into these products, rather than dumping the products into a small spin-off which lacks such resources.

Best,
Steve"

We knew something was going to happen on February 27, 1998, but we didn't know what

Would they sell Newton to another company?

Would they discontinue Newton?

I went for a three-hour bike ride!

... and, when I returned home after cycling...

"Apple Computer, Inc. today announced it will discontinue further development of the Newton operating system and Newton OS-based products"

The Newton Protest
March 6, 1998

- Held at Apple campus in Cupertino

- 70-100 protesters

- Coverage in CNet, San Jose Mercury News, San Francisco Chronicle, and Minnesota Public Radio

- Peaceful protest

- Organized with Ed Martin of MarWare

Apple faces crunch time

It's making headway but sales are lagging

∎ APPLE

from Page 1E

the mood is still cautionary, especially since recent cancellation of the Newton hand-held device. And a significant amount of Apple talent is fleeing the Mac platform to do something they never thought possible: embrace the world of Windows.

"It is make-or-break time," said Daniel Kunstler, senior equity analyst with J.P. Morgan Securities. "An eroding tech business is an oxymoron. It doesn't stay in business long. They're close to that bedrock, and their revenues have to bounce off that bedrock and start to rise again."

Apple executives last week declined to discuss the company's fortunes. But a spokeswoman hinted the cone of silence might soon be lifted. Three upcoming events — an

Adam Tow, president of the Newton's Developers Association talks to Newton fans protesting Apple's decision to quit offering the hand-held device. In the critically important community of people who develop software for the Mac, the mood is still cautionary.
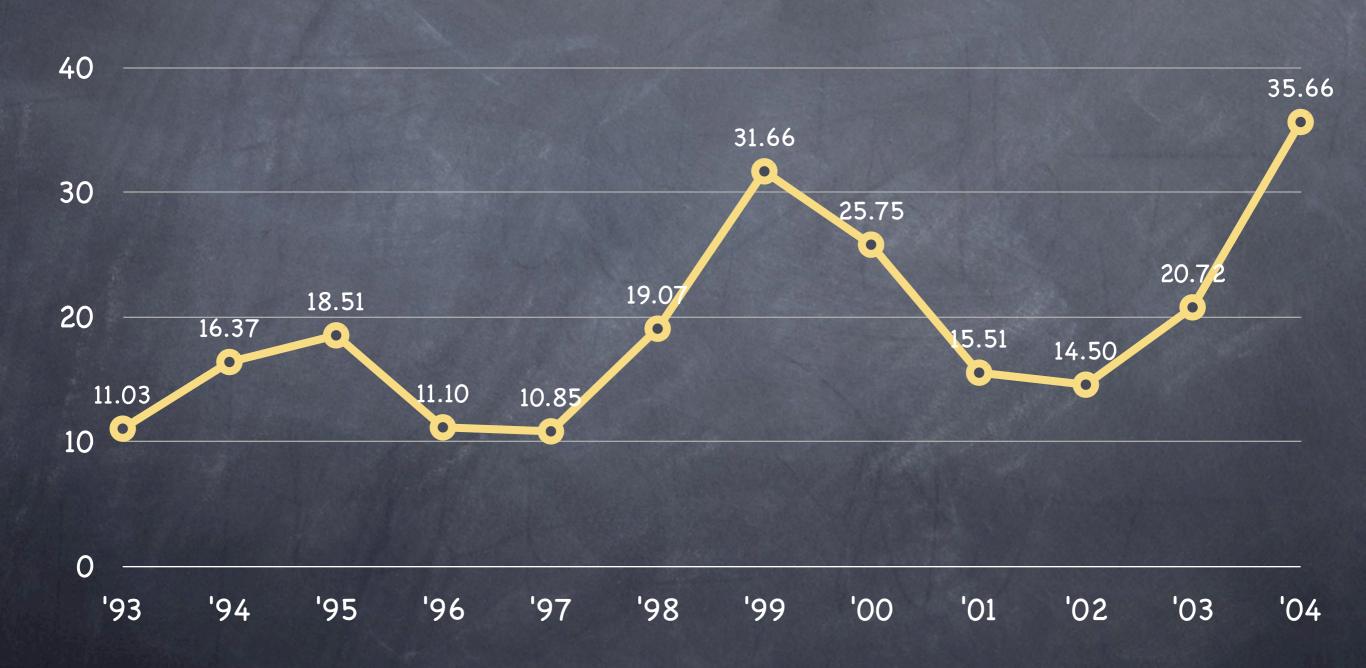
MERCURY NEWS FILE PHOTOGRAPH

What Did Steve Do?

Let Them Eat Milk and Cookies!

Looking back...

Apple had to do drastic things to survive at the time

Would you rather have Mac OS X or Newton today?

AAPL 9/93–9/04

What if they sold the assets to another company?

Nearly everyone who knew how things worked were gone

Many were at Palm,
General Magic,
OmniSky, Microsoft, etc.

No one remained to move the product forward had it stayed at or left Apple

Today, bits and pieces of Newton technology are making appearances in OS X

- Inkwell

- Sharing of data across different applications

  - Notes, Dates, Names, Email, & Calls

  - Address Book, iCal, iTunes, iPhoto, iMovie, & Mail

- Resolution-independent screens

Moving On
1998-2001

1998-2001 were lean years for the Newton community

But now, we are back!

The Competitive Landscape

- Arguably

  - Handwriting recognition is still the best

  - Mobile computing interface most elegant and simple

  - One of the most connected and expandable, hardware devices

Newton Renaissance
2001-2004

Many of the advances in Newton have come from people who were not early Newton users/developers

Developers

- Paul Guyot

- Eckhart Köppen

- Hiroshi Noguchi

- Daniel Padilla

Old Timers

- Simon Bell

- Steve Weyer

- Sean Luke

- Adam Tow

Hardware Guys

- Frank Gründel

- David Humphreys

Evangelists

- Robert Benschop

- Grant Hutchinson

- Woo Lee

- Victor Rehorst

Technologies that became mainstream following Newton's demise

- Internet

- Communications

  - Wireless

- Personal Web Sites

- Music Players

- Digital Photography

Newton was designed from the beginning to communicate

Fax

Print

Beam

Sync

Email

Wireless

If Newton weren't designed so well to begin with, none of this would have been possible

Internet

- NPDS, Newton Personal Data Sharing

    - Newton = Webserver

    - http://npds.free.fr/

- Raissa

- nBlog

Communications

- 802.11b Wireless Driver
  - http://www.ff.iij4u.or.jp/~ngc/eng/newtwave.htm
  - Remember Ricochet?
- Blunt Bluetooth Driver
- Nitro IrDA Stack
  - http://www.40hz.org/
- Simple Mail and Mail V
  - http://dspace.dial.pipex.com/town/road/aah66/

Synchronization

- NewtSync

- Desktop Connection Library (DCL)

- Packager

- Ronnie Simon on Windows

Music on the Newton

- MAD Max

- iTunes plug-in

- MP3 Decoder

- ATA Support

  - Gigabytes of music using PC Card slots and memory cards
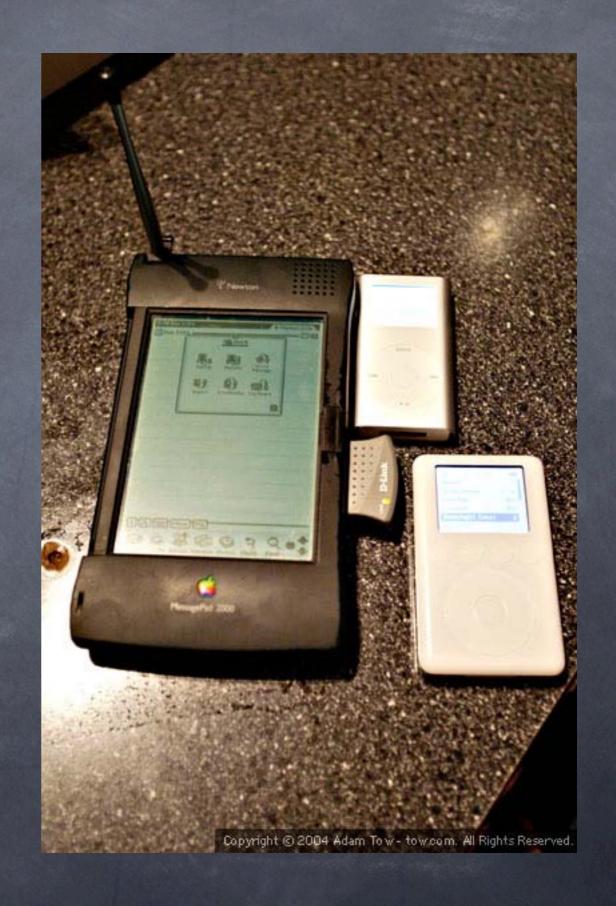
Storage Expansion

ATA Support

- Enables the use of ATA storage cards on the Newton

- Use of Compact Flash, Secure Digital, Smart Media, MMC, and Memory Stick memory cards via PC Card adapter
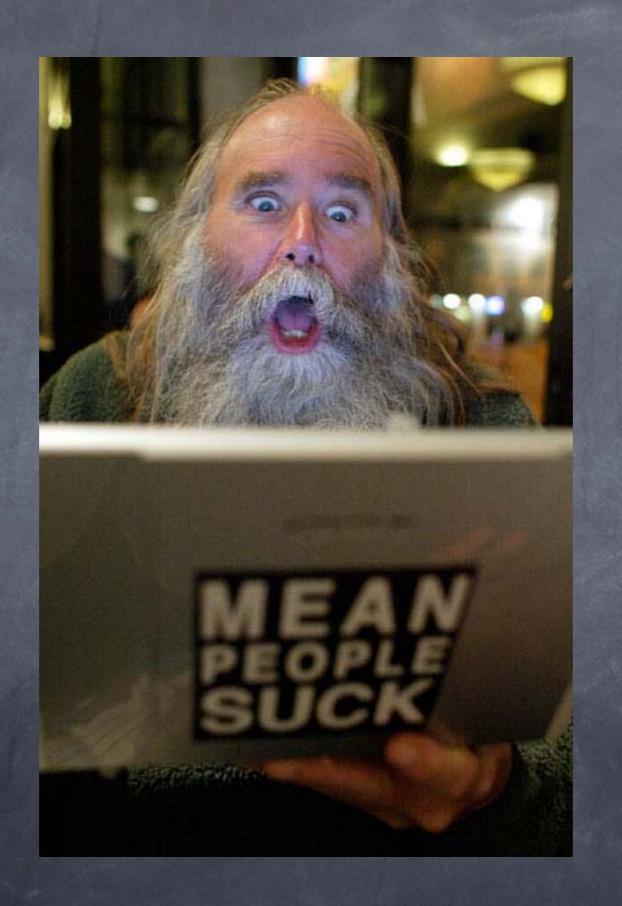
- http://www.kallisys.com/newton/ata/

The Wireless "NewtPod"

- 4GB Hitachi MicroDrive in PC Card Adapter
  - ATA Support
- D-Link 802.11b Wireless Card
  - 802.11b WaveLAN

Communities
1993-2004

Stanford Newton User Group

Now, I'm just like him!

SNUG

- Meets every fourth Tuesday of the month

- Printer's, Inc. Café on South California Avenue in Palo Alto

- 8:00–10:30 pm

We're a group of
friends today

Glen
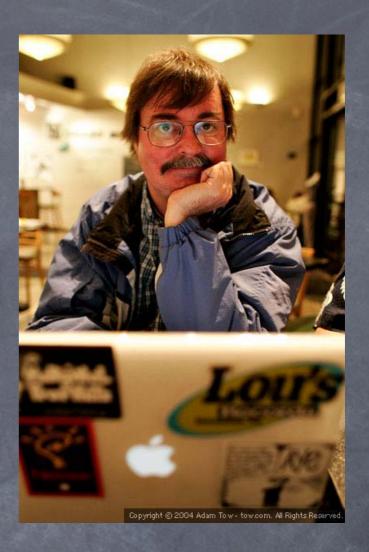
Flash

Lunatic
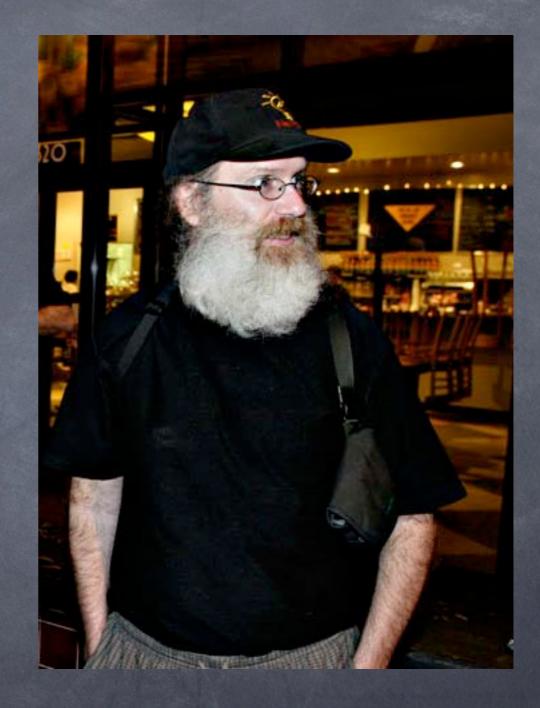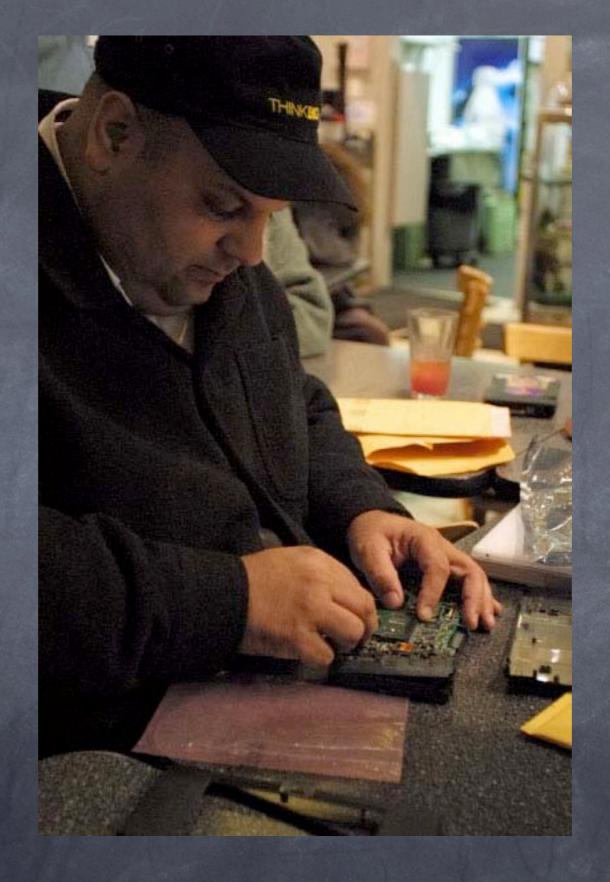
Kevin

Dave

Devin
(we are always looking
for new members)

Peter

Randeep

Robert

Greg

Sir Izaac

Wayne

SNUG Anniversaries

SNUG Anniversaries

- Guests of Honor have included:

    - David Fedor, Maurice Sharp of DTS

    - Walter Smith, father of NewtonScript

    - Brian Parker, creator of Napalm and NewtChat

SNUG 9th Anniversary Meeting 2003
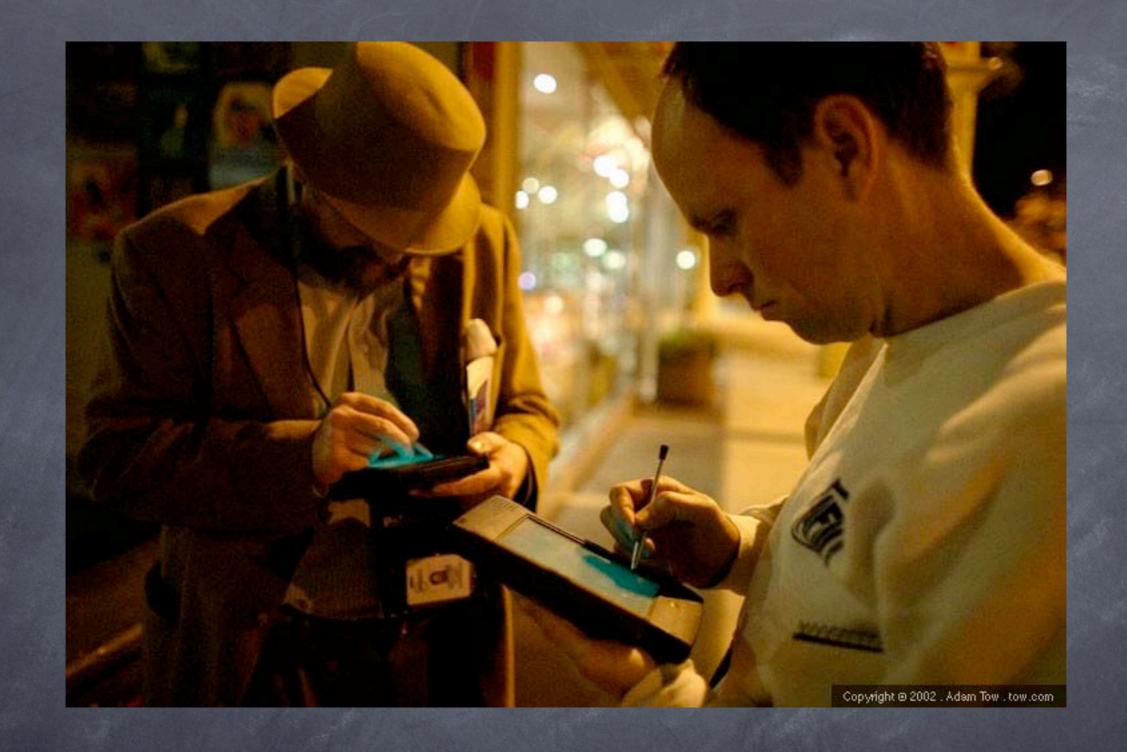
SNUG 10th Anniversary Meeting 2004

10 years going strong!

SNUG 10th Anniversary Meeting 2004

The Greater Newton Community

http://www.newtontalk.net
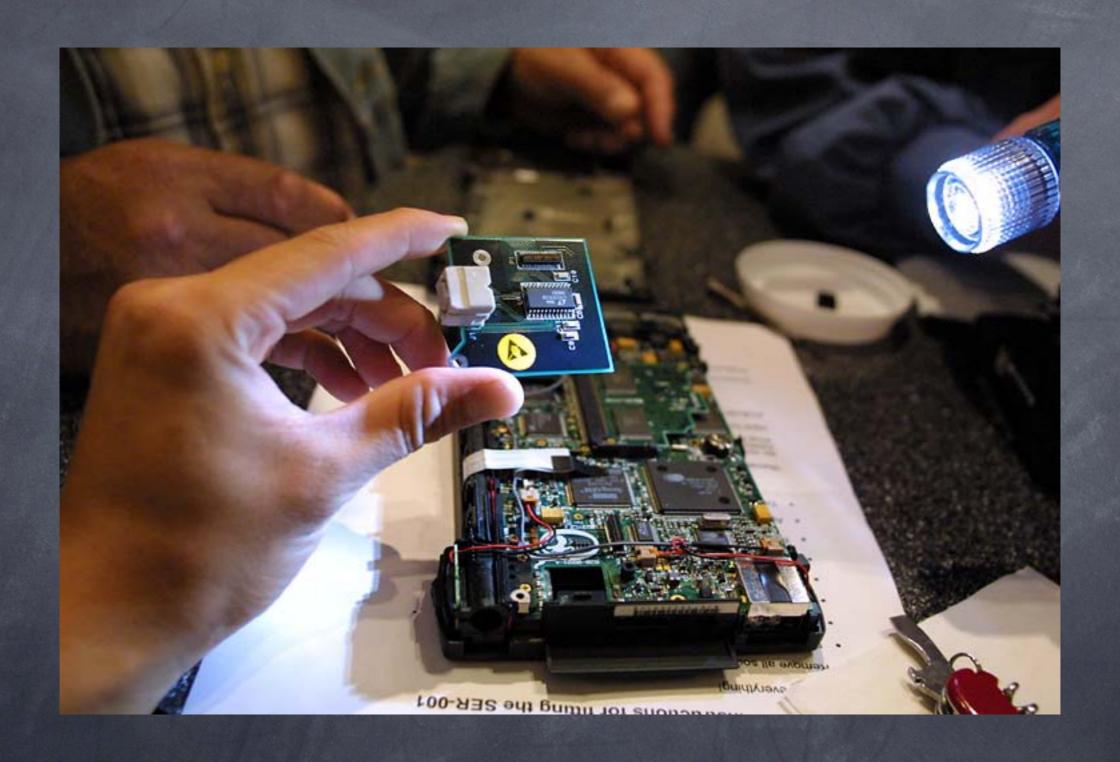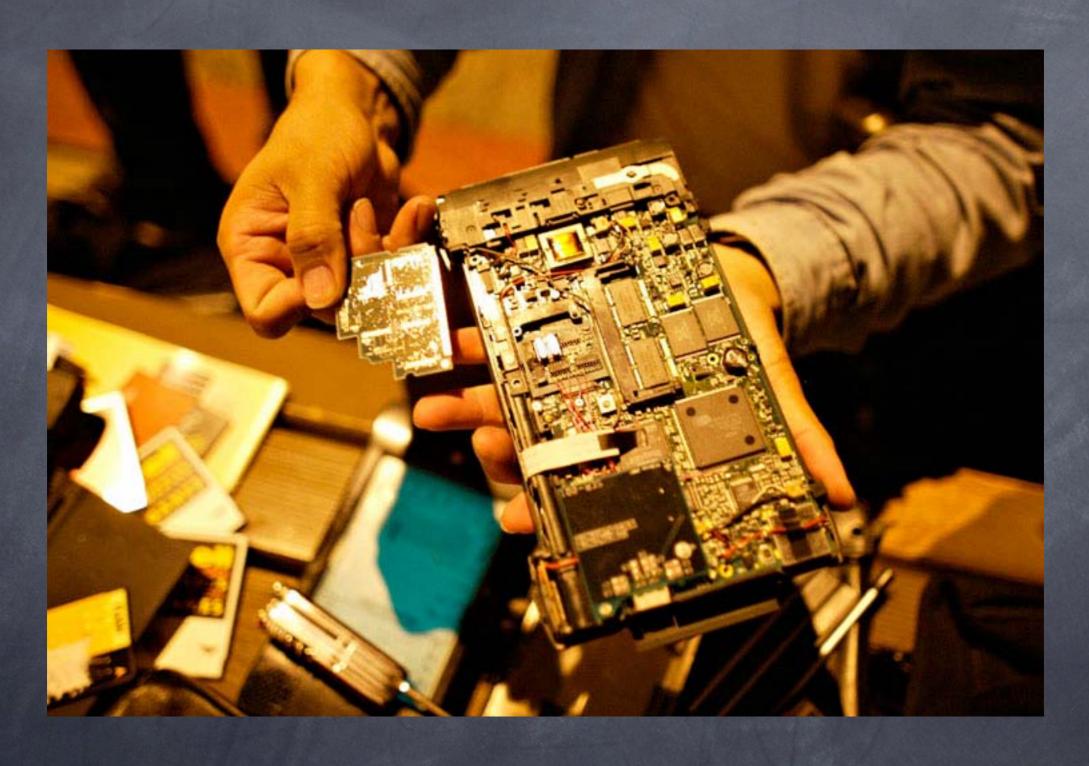
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The community provides

Technical Support
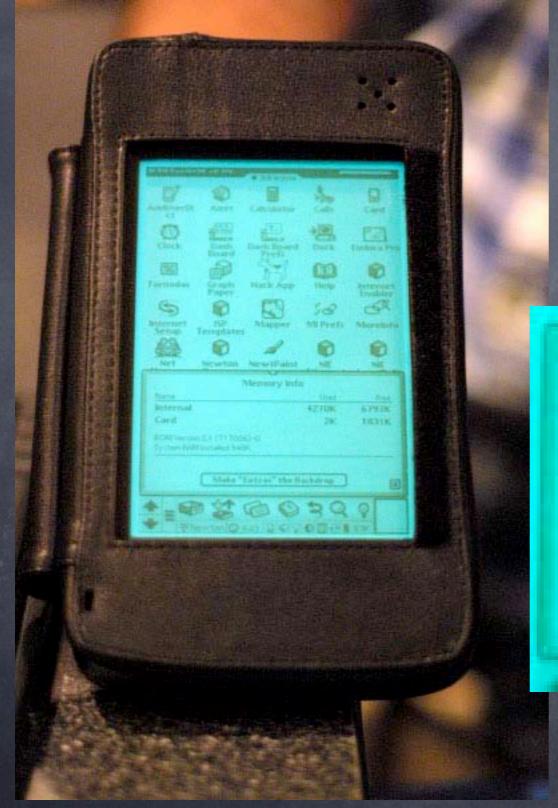
Hardware Upgrades
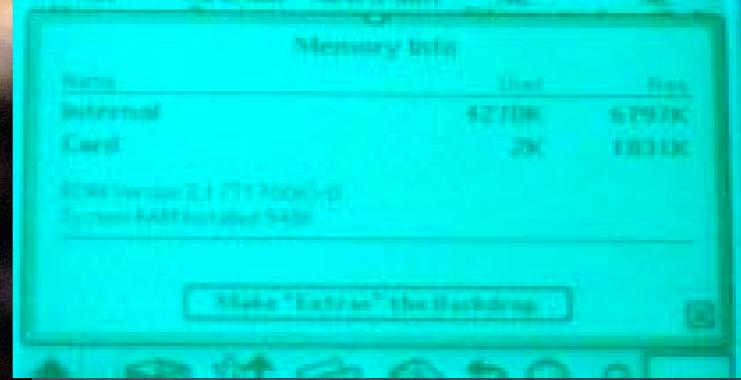
SER-001 Serial Port Card

Accelerator Boards

Internal Memory Expansion

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Replacement Backlights

Conclusions

Newton never dies,

it just gets new batteries!

for now, at least

Thank You!