

HHC 2004 — Last weekend of September

HP has just about completed the refurbishing of their product line due to the HP foundry no longer making the Saturn microprocessor. Only the HP 19BII+ remains, and perhaps this is part of the next true new generation of machines. Some members of the HP User Community, HPUC, expected the new generation two years ago; after all, we have seen the present lineup for many years. If your primary component, common to the majority of your models, just disappears, what should you do? It was much easier to refurbish the existing line using an industry standard microprocessor in place of the HP custom microprocessor than to attempt to design a new line. Besides, do you stop shipping product while you design a new set of machines? Obviously not. All was not lost as we gained a standard memory card and a faster computer interface in the process.

Last year HP shared their vision at HHC 2003. It was a dramatic departure from all previous conferences in the way this was done. Now we are three quarters of a year later and looking to what has happened and what is going to happen for the 2004 year. The designers at HP are now thinking about how the next generation of HP calculators can contribute to increasing handheld computation accuracy, depth, and efficiency.

Every conference has addressed the future, what is needed, what is desired, and what is possible. In 2003 we were shown some of the unique math concepts of the unreleased Xpander everyone has heard rumors about. Being able to move between the algebraic domain and the geometric domain on the same screen was very dramatic to see work as the creator of this technology, Saltire, demonstrated and explained it. We discussed some of our "blue sky" ideas/dreams and HP provided their business plan outlining what is reasonable and doable. We haven't seen any spectacular new models this year and we weren't expecting them. Some very specific ideas, such as Joseph Horn's more accurate decimal to fraction algorithm, were discussed and HP was very impressed. Several "projects" were talked about involving third parties as well as the HPUC.

While there may be a few new HP goodies to talk about at 2004, we see the next year as the true beginning of the new HP - from our high-end machine perspective. In view of the "recovery" HP has made and reported at HHC 2002 and 2003 it seems that the theme for HHC 2004 should be, more than ever, looking to the future of HP Handhelds. HP will again be participating and those who attended last year will remember the unusual amount of time given and the highest-level decision-making HP people that attended and participated.

The HPUC, as an organized group of HP users, started 30 years ago this month (June 1974 to June 2004) rallying around the most powerful personal computer of its day, the HP-65A. It was programmable, it had off line storage, and it was personal (always with your person). It was a little later that the definition of the computer started to change as the so-called "PC" industry was born. We talked about multiple programs in memory long before TSR's made the scene. We talked about a lot of things that even now, the rest of the world (of a new and young generation) are talking about. When HP introduced the palmtop (HP-95, 100, & 200) it was the product of five gigantic high tech companies including HP - Intel, Microsoft, etc. The current, and largest "PC" club was founded by members of the HPUC local chapter of PPC in Dayton Ohio.

All of this was recently brought to mind by a recent Newsweek article titled *Your Next Computer*. It started out "There are 1.5 billion mobile phones in the world today." and it talked about ideas we published decades ago. Jeff Hawkins (*PalmOne*) predicts. "The computer won't go away, he says, but it might fade to the background, since people prefer portability and devices that turn on instantly instead of having to boot up." This is a step closer to the true PC as we have always envisioned it. We thought that the Palmtop might point the way, or perhaps the PDA, but now it looks like the



cell phone might give the concept the next nudge to realization. While the Newsweek article is non-technical it points out the single biggest problem with making the true PC a reality. There are many self imposed limitations and business restrictions on companies that are producing products that are a small part of the true, always with you, PC. The Newsweek article mentioned a one-month, four man, project to blue sky such a product as envisioned by the 34-year-old Silicone Valley firm called Frog Design. It is dubbed the Petfrog. See their concept at the right.



Even the youth driven cell phone industry has its limitations and restrictions and this further illustrates the point we are making. See the June 7th Newsweek article. Also see the Petfrog at:

http://www.frogdesign.com/company/news_press/in_the_news/2004/05_petfrog.html



Of course we all know that the new technology growth process for the large companies that build themselves into a restrictive box is often to buy technology created by startups. Is this the way the true PC will come about? A member of the HPUC who started a company in Australia called hydrix is perusing one such effort. Their project is called Qonos. See the concept of this machine at the left. Its HP calculator roots are obvious. This machine is being called a Scientific PDA and you may read its specifications at their web page at:

<http://www.hydrix.com/welcome.do;jsessionid=EF8C45B1D0F184FFA965015611583FA5>

If you are a serious HP user/fan and you want to meet with, learn from, and contribute to the people active in the HPUC you may want to come to San Jose California the last weekend in September and attend HHC 2004.

The concepts of the Xpander, Qonos, and your ideas for the next generation machine are but one topic example (perhaps the most enticing?) for HHC 2004. Because we are at the crossroads of a new generation of HP machines it is especially meaningful for **looking to the future of HP Handhelds** to be our theme for the HHC 2004 Committee to receive ideas and inputs for this year's conference. As usual we will have a wide range of presentations and demonstrations covering all aspects of HP Handhelds, especially calculators.

The HHC 2004 Committee is composed of the following.

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