

# P.M.U.G News Letter

## Portable Dreams

There I was in the middle of P.C World and all you could hear was someone screaming, crying and kicking up quite a fuss and it carried on like this until my wife finally gave in and let me buy an iBook and I have been in Seventh Heaven since that time. It goes everywhere with me and does it turn some heads- this is partly due to the fact that I had to settle for the tangerine coloured one as no body can get hold of the bondi blue ones for love nor money. The other reason that it gets so much attention is thanks to MacOS 9 and the sheer speed of the machine: I sit it next to the Windows machines at work and with only 32mb of RAM and virtual memory turned on it still outstrips them on basic computer work such as word processing and data base work and I keep telling them that once I get another 128mb of RAM in to it I will really show them what it can do, but all is not perfect in the iBook world: I find the keyboard a bit flat but this is probably due to the fact that I have always worked on

desktop Macs in the past and I think the 32 mb of RAM that comes as standard a bit mean on Apples part, considering MacOS 9 needs at least 26 mb to run. There's no microphone built in so no speech recognition or speech controlled security for an iBook owner and as for the screen it's sharp clear and wonderful to view with no eye strain. Yet but going by the dimensions of the lid they could have made the screen 14.1 inches instead of 12.1. But even with these I wouldn't say they were faults but rather personal niggles- I think the iBook is a really good product because the build quality is everything you would expect from Apple and as for the design what can I say- it's a very touchy feely thing, everyone who sees it for the first time always has to come over and run their hands over the casing. All of its connection ports are so easily accessible positioned all down the left side in little recesses, no door flaps to brake off and the sound output for a laptop is really quite surprising. My advice on buying one is you must

really consider what you want to

do with your machine: if it's just letter writing or running a club that puts out a newsletter then I think the iBook is a perfect machine for you because of its small size and of course its portability, but if you are looking for a graphics or a games machine then you should look at either the iMac or G4 range of desktop machines but for everything else I think you can't go far wrong with an iBook . For those of you who would like to try a portable out but can't warrant the expense involved you could always buy a second hand older machine: to this end our web master Nick Dormor has written a very good article on just this subject and after reading both articles I hope we have been able to give you the confidence to go portable if you are toying with the idea.

Paul Mason

## Getting Back To Your Roots

Its very easy these days to get caught in the upgrade trap, every few months Apple bring out a newer, faster and more desirable machine that you must have. Or newer versions of software and games are released that need faster machines and the latest OS to run

them.

But do you really need the latest and greatest? I myself, love gadgets! I've got a Performa 5400/G3 240, a Powerbook G3, a Mac Plus, a Powerbook duo 230 and accessories, 2 scanners and a Palm V. I'd love a G4 and Apple studio display, but do I need one? The answer of course is no. My wife uses the Performa for college work and the internet, I use my G3 Powerbook for web design, photography, internet and finance - tasks that both machines are more than capable of whilst running OS 8.6.

So instead of looking forward why not look back? The Mac has a very rich and interesting history that is very well supported on the net. There are literally hundreds of web sites out there dedicated to using older machines and systems. A good place to start if you're interested

is [www.lowendmac.com](http://www.lowendmac.com), despite its name it covers all machines old and new and has several links to other useful web sites.

But the thing that got me into old Macs happened whilst I was looking at a monitor for a friend. His study was like a shrine to Macintosh, models from all eras looking for good homes! We pulled a dusty Mac Plus of the shelf and fired it up - with a floppy disk! It was amazing, sitting there

quite happily, silently running system 6.0.8, I was hooked. It had an almost zen like appearance which echoed Apples design philosophy at the time of less is more.

A Mac Plus isn't really powerful enough for most peoples needs. With no hard disk, an 800k floppy drive and 1 MB of ram, its only really of any use for word processing and perhaps home accounts and you really need an apple printer as the drivers are built in to the OS. But an SE/30, now there's a machine to be reckoned with.. 68030 processor, FPU and the ability to take 128MB of ram, ADB, SCSI and internal expansion slot, its quite impressive. I bought one with 8MB of ram and a 40 MB Hard Disk!

They don't take up much desk space and despite the 9 inch screen, are very usable. I had mine for a couple of months and in that time I ran system 7.1, Quark Express 3.11, Word 5.1, Claris Works 3, Eudora light and Netscape Navigator 2, plus loads of games that I downloaded of the net. All ran fine and I was able to print to my Epson Stylus 700 no problem at all. If you're short of cash and need a machine that doesn't take up much space and can live with a black and white screen, the SE/30 will happily

satisfy your needs.

But being a Gadget man, it just wasn't cool enough! I love powerbooks, its so satisfying being able to use your Mac anywhere you like. Shut the lid and it goes to sleep, next time you want to use it just hit a key and you're up and running - in seconds, exactly where you left off! So when I saw an advert on the mac newsgroups for a Powerbook Duo 230 - SE/30 swap, I didn't hesitate. A week later I was in proud possession of an immaculate Duo 230 complete with mini dock and floppy drive! The duo is so small and perfectly crafted it makes my G3 Powerbook look like a monolith. Its about the same size as an A4 jotter pad and weighs virtually nothing. Its a credit to the build quality of Apple machines that even after 6 years, it feels like new. The screen is still tight, the keys positive and even the battery lasts over an hour on a 2 hour charge.

Its an absolute joy to use, I can slip it in my rucksack and forget about it, try that with my G3 and you feel like you've been down the gym! Installed is system 7.5.5 and Open Transport/PPP, I've used Netscape Navigator 2 and Eudora light to connect to the internet and send email. Claris works takes care of the business

applications, PGA tour takes care of entertainment. All I need to do now is install quicken and I've got myself a very useful machine that I can literally take anywhere!

Just to prove how useful this little machine is, I've written this article on it using Claris Works and I will email it to Paul using my Pace pocket modem. All done whilst sitting in my conservatory (I'd of liked to have been sitting in the garden but its a bit cold this time of year!).

In conclusion - while its nice to have the latest and fastest machine/software that money can buy, its not absolutely necessary. You can quite easily enjoy Macs on a budget using a low cost, older machine and run earlier versions of software - a lot of which are now FREE!

Buy a copy of Free Ads or look on the newsgroups, you'll be surprised at the bargains that are out there!

Nick Dormor, Webmaster

(next month - web design for beginners!)

## Feedback

We have had quite a few new members in the last few months and a few of them commented that they would like to have a feedback section in the newsletters. Personally I am all for this - we welcome all feedback on any subject or any article you have read in our newsletters or any other Mac magazine. We would also like to remind our members that this is their club and if they feel like voicing there feelings they are most welcome to in the pages of this newsletter, also if you ever feel the urge to write a column for our newsletter your contributions would be most welcome, and don't forget the feedback page on the web site!

Paul Mason, Editor

# P.M.U.G

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