

Book Review: Revolution in the Valley

by David L. Davis

Ever since I started using a Macintosh in the early 90s, I have often wondered about its origins. Oh sure, I've read about Xerox Park and the way that Steve Jobs became enamored of the mouse and Graphical User Interface (GUI) and how he saw this as the next logical step in development for his exciting new Apple Computer company...

And over the years, I found articles, and even a TV movie (Pirates of Silicon Valley) that helped embellish the story.

Mac "Folklore" online

Today, there are a bunch of websites that contain all sorts of Macintosh information and memorabilia... And one that I recently discovered <http://www.folklore.org> has a compendium of anecdotal stories by Andy Hertzfeld and other members of the original Macintosh development team.



The site originated in mid 2003, because Andy wanted to share a continuing historical collection of fact and commentary based on his and his fellow Mac team members' personal involvement with the Mac.

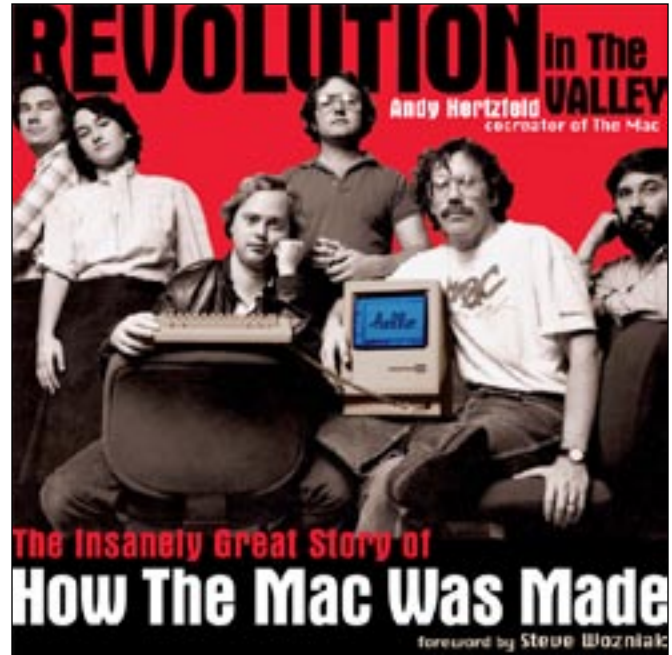
Being one of this incredible group of characters had to have been a truly amazing thing. As a solo studio artist, I know what it is like to come upon a unique idea that stands out from all the others... Trying to imagine what it was like in the late 70s and early 80s when this computer evolution was to become a Revolution, well that must have been "sumptin' else!"

Stories to go

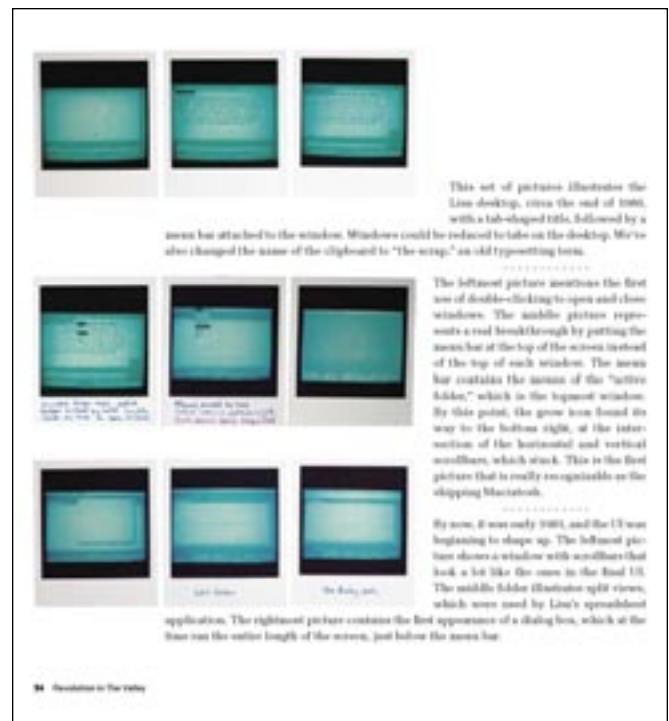
You can go the site to check out the spirit and style of the stories, but Andy and the folks at O'Reilly Media have done you a favor and collected 90 of these stories along with photos and documents and published it in hardback form as the book "Revolution in the Valley."

I recently acquired a copy and sat for hours one night devouring all the details and commentaries in one sitting! As a person who has always been interested in the creative process, I was particularly thrilled by the scans of notebook pages that show the list of needs and thinking that led from one stage to another.

continued on page 4



Revolution in the Valley, by Andy Hertzfeld, O'Reilly Media, Inc. \$24.95



A page from the "Busy Being Born" chapter showing some screenshots of the user interface development

Book Review: Revolution in the Valley

by David L. Davis

continued from page 3

The book's layout is bright and contemporary and filled with tons of photos and sketches that were specially procured from Apple archives, making it a rich visual treat.

Catching a glimpse of the processes that these dedicated developers used, just adds to the appreciation of the elegance and ease that is the Macintosh experience.

You can certainly read most of the stories contained in the book on the website, but something, both comforting and personal, happens when you just sit back and hold a beautifully designed book containing gorgeous photos and illustrations. Gazing at a computer screen just does not come anywhere close to it!

A quantum leap...

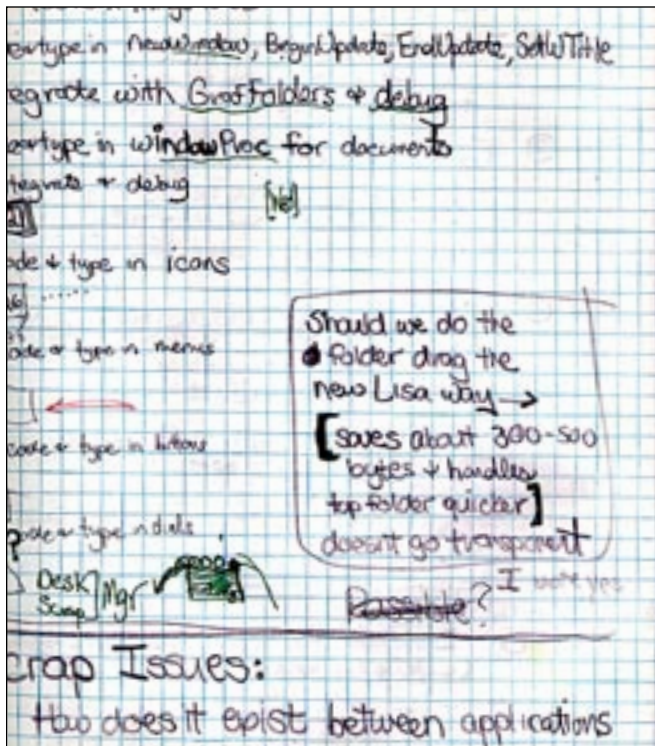
As Andy writes from the "Macintosh Spirit" essay: "We were excited because we thought we had a chance to do something extraordinary. Most technology development is incremental, but every once in a while

there's an opportunity to make a quantum leap to a whole new level.

Hertzfeld continues, "A few years earlier, the Apple II and other pioneering systems made computing affordable to individuals, but they were still much too hard for most people to use. We felt that the Mac's graphical user interface had the potential to make computing enjoyable to non-technical users for the very first time, potentially improving the lives of millions of users.

"Enthusiasm is contagious, and a product that is fun to create is much more likely to be fun to use. The urgency, ambition, passion for excellence, artistic pride and irreverent humor of the original Macintosh team infused the product and energized a generation of developers and customers with the Macintosh spirit, which continues to inspire more than twenty years later".

Curl up with a copy of "Revolution in the Valley" tonight; I bet you won't be able to put it down either!



The book is filled with early developer notes and sketches that were specially procured from Apple archives.