

# Notes from UI History SIG

CHI'2008

April 10, 2008

Organized by

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# UIST History

- Wendy Mackay's 20-year history of UIST (from UIST'2007)
  - Videos with founders of UIST
  - Poster board with attendee's contributions entered online
  - List of which technology that influenced each attendee the most
  - About 150
- <http://www.uist.org/archive>

# Brian Silverman

- Founder of Logo company in Montreal
- Gathering source code of early programs and emulates on a PC
- Has code for original space war
- Doesn't have Sketchpad
- At University of Cambridge, Alan Blackwell has students reproduce it each year

# “Interaction Museum”

- Wendy Mackay & Gillian Crampton Smith & others have done a lot of work already on this
- Convivio is a European network (now dead) that created “Interaction Museum”
- Wiki format for video, storyboard, code, description, literature pointers
- Exhibits
- Has about 100 interaction techniques
- Nothing on-line yet
- Needs a good web implementer to make it work
- **People don't know about all the variety that used to be around**
- Goal: avoid reinventing the wheel

# Open Video Project

- University of Maryland
- Has all CHI & UIST videos
- Has HCIL videos too
- <http://www.open-video.org/>

# Going around the group...

- Simon Tschachtel – graphic designer
  - Switzerland
  - Worked at HP with some early inventors
- Didn't know that the inventors are still around
- Bay area museums that show the artifacts
- Wants to learn more about it

- Ron Baecker
  - “Knowledge Media Design” for 40 years
- History started with his book from 1987
  - Did the history chapter
- Recent Interactions article:
  - 6 keys ideas, literature that was relevant
    - One of the themes was social context, methodology
    - One with usability
    - One was with Design
  - More questions than answers
  - Interview senior people before they are gone
    - People who passed away, like Brian Shackel
- Grudin has series called time-lines in each issue
  - Some history in each issue
- Stuff that was done 30 years ago still not generally available
  - E.g., Rand tablets for sketching at Lincoln Labs in 1960s
- Museum of technology here
  - Lots of early telescopes
  - But doesn't really explain how it worked or how stuff developed from it

- Gitte Skou Petersen
  - Danish hearing aid company
  - Very technology-driven
  - Wants some psychology
- Needs to understand history to make progress
  - Needs more theoretical basis
- Book on psychology of hearing
  - But not much psychology in it
- Mobile applications – how relates to existing technologies
- Be sure that the history includes psychology

- Chris Scaffidi
  - Student at CMU
- Not interested in old stuff or biographies of researchers
- Interested in what have we learned by making the old stuff
- What can we learn from experiences of the founders
- Want more than just nostalgic list of what was done

- Jeff Stylos – CMU
- Programming environment UI history
  - Lisp environment
  - No-one has actually looked at this
- Examples
  - Teitelman's DWIM (BBN or his thesis or PARC?)
  - Lisp machine
  - Boxer - deSessa

- Steve Feiner – Columbia University
- Teach and do research in UI Design
  - Wants students to know what happened before they were born
  - Should be informed about where things came from
  - Even practitioners need to know alternatives
  - Some researchers at CHI don't know about Sketchpad (e.g., gravity)
- None of HCI textbooks have anything about history
  - E.g., Foley & vanDam's graphics book does have a little about history
- Lots of old stuff is available, but so much stuff

- Luke Church
- Programming style history
- Formal systems
- Official standards have the social history erased from them
- Need to have design rationale for the choices made

- Gerd Waloszek (SAP)
- Doing SAP history
- Physics, Cognitive Psychology, HCI, graphic programming systems in 1990s
- Trends and progress making in the field

- Gillian Compton Smith – (prof. @ Univ. Italy)
- Key lead of Interaction Museum
- Wants students to look at stuff
- Lots of stuff on line and in videotapes
- What is important

- DigiBarn
- Bruce Damer's collection of old computers and artifacts
- Lots of stuff on-line
- Started to get collections of pioneers together to talk about what they did
- Silicon Valley oriented

# Future

- Need a lot of money to fund an initiative
  - Ron says from rich person
- Wendy's museum needs funding
- Could get a history graduate to do it under a board of senior people
- Need a lot of PhD's in history of science
- And a person to organize and manage them

# Other Group

- Jonathan invited people to write articles for his column in Interactions
- Word press blog changed into a wiki
- None of the students get history of computing or interactions in the
- Dynamics needed, so need videos
- Why some things fail and succeed
  - Role of context
  - Documenting early experiences
  - Learning from mistakes of the past
- Interaction techniques from videogames
  - Special issue of IEEE Annals on history of videogames

# ACM History Committee

- History of Programming Languages conference – every 10 years or so
- Working with Turing awardees
- History of S/W eng. stuff
- Special sections in CACM, but limited budget

- Wendy volunteered to work on a history thing for CHI'2009

- Computer History Museum in Palo Alto
  - <http://www.computerhistory.org/>