


The meeting on Monday 13th  
April 2015 will be at  
**Tiger Tiger**  
29 Haymarket, London SW1Y 4SP.



 n Monday 13th April 2015

The Annual General Meeting, postponed from last month will take place this evening after Newsbyte, before the evenings events. There will be reports on Membership, financial report and the chairman's and secretary's reports. This is your chance to have a say and influence LMUG for the year ahead.

Newsbyte

AGM

Q & A and Announcements

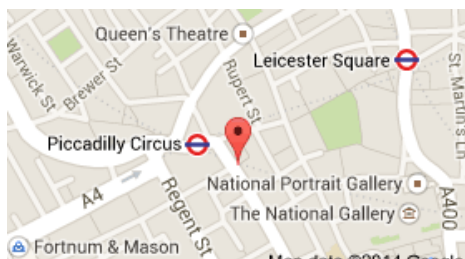
Main Topic


Raffle Prize Bluetooth headphones

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 n the March 9th LMUG hosted coverage of the latest Apple keynote. This meeting displayed live from San Francisco all the news on new products and services as it was announced from Cupertino.

Around 60 people came to watch the event with us as it started at 1700 hours. Some people made it for the atmosphere, some for the latest news but I am sure most people came to see the new LMUG T-shirts that were unveiled at the event.



*The team who put together the 9th March evening*

During the event Apple announced health kit for developed to increase the amount of medical information that the iPhone can gather. One of the audience informed us that this was great news for him personally as he suffered from an illness and he saw this as a real way to collect information and date easier.

The new MacBook was unveiled next. This is the thinnest notebook ever. It virtually caused debate in the audience with just one port and a full size keyboard. This retina laptop certainly got the audience talking.

The Apple watch completed the line up with further details of the launch and price tag. A lot of the media made mention of the £17,000 top end price, but I think the same technology being available at £299 is a great option. I guess your view on this is related to the question 'what is the price for fashion—£17,000?'

We gave away as the raffle an Apple watch (the £299 model—not the £17,000) which was won by the ever popular Martin Meadow Evans.

We had some great reviews of the event, and not all of the comments were from my mum.  
Steve Naybour

## Fantastical 2 Aims to Replace Apple's Calendar

**B**undled apps — such as Apple's OS X Calendar — tread an uneasy path. It is of course a good thing that every Mac user has access to a generally capable calendaring app for free — that's necessary to ensure that OS X remains competitive with other operating systems. However, bundled software has a chilling effect on competition, and thus on innovation. It's hard to make a business case for the time and effort necessary to create a new app when you have to convince every customer to switch from a free alternative that's already installed.

It's always refreshing to see a Mac developer step up to take a swing at the incumbent, and that's just what Flexibits is doing with Fantastical 2. The initial version of Fantastical was a focused menu bar utility that extended Calendar by showing your schedule with a click and making it easy to enter new events with natural language processing. Flexibits has now expanded Fantastical beyond the menu bar, making it into a standalone app with a full calendar window with standard day, week, month, and year views.

Notably, Fantastical boasts a left-hand sidebar that shows a mini month view and a highly useful list of both upcoming events and dated reminders (a quick click on a checkmark button switches the list to show only reminders). In this respect, it's extremely similar to the company's well-regarded versions of Fantastical for the iPhone and iPad, and if you already like one or both of them more than iOS 8's Calendar app (as I do), you'll be at home in the Mac version.

Rather than just tie into Calendar's data, Flexibits wrote their own native CalDAV engine for Fantastical, which gives it direct access to iCloud, Google Calendar, and Yahoo Calendar. It also brings in and displays to-do items from iCloud (the things you'd usually access in Apple's Reminders app), and can show birthdays and anniversaries based on date information stored in Apple's Contacts app.

That can add up to a lot of calendars, and perhaps the most welcome innovation in Fantastical is its concept of calendar sets. It's not hard to turn individual calendars on and off in Apple's Calendar, but it gets tedious fast, so most people don't bother. With Fantastical, you can easily separate sets of calendars, so, for instance, I can hide personal calendars for the school

district and various clubs I'm in while pondering Take Control release schedule weeks. You switch between calendar sets using a pop-up menu at the bottom of the left-hand sidebar, but Fantastical can even change them automatically based on your Mac's location. This is welcome — there's far too little locational awareness among Mac and iOS apps.

When you want a new event, just double-click the appropriate day or click the plus button at the top of the sidebar. Either opens a new event popover into which you can type event details like "Snowshoeing at Hammond Hill at 6:30." Fantastical turns such text into an event titled "Snowshoeing" with a location of "Hammond Hill" and a start time of 6:30 PM. You can define alerts to be applied automatically. My only minor annoyance with the natural language processing is that I sometimes want the location to be in the title of the event so I don't have to double-click the event to see the location in a popover. The workaround for this turns out to be to enclose your desired title in quotes; Fantastical doesn't try to parse quoted text.

With reminders, you can even add a geofence that transfers properly to Reminders or the iPhone version of Fantastical so you'll be alerted when you leave or arrive at the specified location.

The left-hand sidebar is a key aspect of Fantastical usage, and that's another small problem I have at the moment, since I like to put my calendar full-screen on my left-hand monitor (a 27-inch Thunderbolt Display, paired with a 27-inch iMac with Retina display), meaning that sidebar is so far away that I can barely read it. Flexibits tells me an update will let you swap the sidebar to the right side, where search results show up now.

Another slight confusion comes when you click a day in month view; the sidebar list scrolls to show that day's events and events on subsequent days. That's sensible, but since Fantastical doesn't indicate in month view what day you've clicked, it can be hard to orient yourself in the list (the mini month view calendar at the top of the sidebar does always indicate the selected day). Since scrolling in the sidebar list also changes the selected day quickly, it's easy to end up at an unexpected date. Plus, month view shows six weeks, which continually throws me,

**To read the whole story, go to:**  
[TidBITS#1265/30-Mar-2015](#)

## New MacBooks: Which is the best choice for the photographic road warrior?

**T**he new MacBook is a superb little computer but does it give the speed and convenience needed by on-the-road photographers?

I am in the market for a lightweight travel computer and it has to be a Mac. At base I am well served by the wonderful new iMac but my existing MacBook Air is three years old and showing its age in terms of speed. It has been a good companion and the only real gripe I have is the lack of an SD card slot.

Last week's announcement of the ultra-light, wafer-thin 12in MacBook with retina screen gets the juices flowing. It is beautiful and highly desirable, but does it pass muster as a road companion for photographers?

### *Compelling*

If it were not for my need to handle large numbers of RAW files I would have been tempted to go for the new MacBook. It ticks all the portability boxes and, despite the above comment about the missing SD port on my current Air, there is something compelling about the single USB-C interface of the new model. It handles power, USB, video, SD reader and almost anything else you care to throw at it (albeit via a positive festoon of dongles). Above all, the idea of a computer weighing under a kilo, with a magnificent retina screen, is a severe temptation. The early adopter will love it.

On the downside, this is likely to be one slow little computer. The Core M processor, as seen on a slew of netbooks, is certainly a power miser but is never going to break any records. It is likely to be much slower even than the 2GHz i7 processor of my old MacBook Air. And there is no option to add more RAM to supplement the native 8GB, something that most photographers would be looking for. Perhaps it is time to look for a more practical solution?

Spec out the 13in MacBook Pro retina and you have the perfect road warrior tool. It costs more but offers much more. However, it is a computer that is due for replacement soon

### *Faster*

The existing MacBook Pro with retina

screen is the most likely alternative. It is heavier (1.68kg compared with the 0.92kg of the MacBook) but is also much faster, more customisable and has a full set of ports, including that important SD slot.

The main factor working against the MacBook Pro is that it has just had its mid-life refresh and I suspect there is a new model on the stocks. Could it be out of date within six months?

The Pro even wins on price. The fastest new MacBook with its 1.2GHz Core M processor (turbo boosted to 2.6GHz), with 8GB of RAM and a 512GB solid-state storage weighs in at £1,299. But the base 13in MacBook Pro with retina screen is £300 cheaper and is much faster even without any tweaks.

### **Speccing out**

Spec out the Pro, which is an irresistible temptation, and you could spend upwards of £700 more. But you do get a great deal of power and performance for the extra money.

For £1,729 you get the much faster and more capable, if more power hungry, dual-core i7 processor with its 3.1GHz boosted to 3.4GHz. A 512GB disk is adequate for a road warrior in my opinion, but the memory is doubled to 16GB. This alone offers a tremendous boost in real-world performance, especially when it comes to processing RAW files.

Of course you do not have the novelty of the new USB-C port. But you do get a good complement of traditional interfaces, including two Thunderbolt ports, two USB3 and that useful SD slot.

I have no doubt the new MacBook will be a major success for Apple. Eventually, with a few performance tweaks, it will supplant both the MacBook Airs. What's the point in both an 11in and 13in Air when the 12in MacBook will eventually offer a bit of everything and in a smaller package. For the moment, though, the MacBook isn't for the performance user, especially not for the keen photographer with a stack of RAW files to process in a hurry. It reminds me very much of the original MacBook Air with its 64GB solid-state disk: Intensely desirable but with all the disadvantages of a first-generation model.

All this makes for a difficult choice. Both these computers are good road warriors and, if all you want to do is a bit of web browsing and email the MacBook could be perfectly adequate. While the heart definitely tells me to go for the all-new, minimalist MacBook, the head insists that the MacBook Pro is the more sensible choice.

All the articles on this page come from Michael Evans [www.macfilos.com](http://www.macfilos.com). These and many others are well worth reading.

**SoundByte is the newsletter of the London Mac User Group.  
It is produced solely by, and for, LMUG members.  
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Rodney Walshaw former Chairman and SB standard setter that still influences the layout and design of SB today



Elizabeth Shaw and Michael Corgan



Robert Cox



Three former chairmen—Martin Kelly, Rodney Walshaw and Tim Simmons



Chas checking his camera



*Some of the LMUG 'oldies' met together for an informal lunch at Elizabeth Shaw's flat where we used to have most of our committee meetings years ago, but the chat this time covered many things, mostly outside LMUG. Chas Wilshire was there with his massive Canon camera and I took a few photos, as you see, with my iPhone. I doubt, at this size, you will be able to tell which photos were taken with which camera, except of course for the one of me! There are also no prizes for spotting the Photoshopped merged images picture.*

*Maurice Baker*