



# MCCC News



Fort Worth

February 2019

Dallas

## Trevor Dickinson Speaks

Trevor Dickinson, the boss of A-EON Technology, posted on December 22, 2018 a post on his personal blog . Here is a summary of the interesting information he tells:

### AmiWest

- He took part in the AmiWest show in October 2018. And, like two years ago, his rental car was robbed , the ruffians having broken the rear window ( photo ). Car burglaries are an epidemic in the San Francisco area.
- Daniel Müssener, the developer at Cherry Darling, lost all his belongings in this robbery. He had to buy new clothes and a computer to recreate his presentation and speech for the AmiWest ( photo ).

### Tabor and Cyrus +

- In November 2018, Adam Barnes, the former technical director of Ultra Varisys, and several of his colleagues visited the AmigaKit offices in Cardiff ( photo ). They helped Matthew Leaman and his team prepare the production and support of the Tabor and Cyrus + motherboards .
- In anticipation of this work visit, Ultra Varisys shipped six pallets containing a mix of Cyrus + motherboards and Cyrus + and Tabor prototypes.
- The meeting lasted five days and was entirely dedicated to AmigaOne hardware, including production issues and other technical issues : motherboard diagnos-

tics, test bench setup, fault finding procedures, overview of prepared internal documentation by Ultra Varisys, advice and assistance on production issues.

- To facilitate this transfer of technology between the two companies, AmigaKit suspended its commercial activities in order to focus on work on the Tabor and Cyrus + cards. To make up for lost time, the AmigaKit team worked nightly from 6:00 pm to 11:00 pm to serve and support its regular Amiga clientele.

### Software updates

- In early December 2018, Andy Broad and Kevin Sherratt traveled to Cardiff to meet Matthew Leaman during a long development weekend. They worked on the next version (1.5) of Enhancer Software .
- Andy Broad has modified Multiviewer to use Warp3D (so the power of the graphics card) instead of Picasso96 to display the images.
- MultiEdit has also been updated and now has a restore option to retrieve a document in case of power failure or system failure when editing a document. Upon power up or restart, the software provides the user with the ability to retrieve the document.
- AMIStore , which was migrated to a new server by Matthew Leaman in the summer of 2018, also received several updates.
- Casey Cullen, a Linux specialist, has released Fienix , a new Linux distribution based on Debian Sid, which he created for PowerPC machines. Fienix works on the AmigaOne X1000 and X5000.

- The beta version of Libre Office 5 for AmigaOS 4 is about to be completed ( photo ).
- A specific mechanism in version 4 of Libre Office could not be fully implemented in AmigaOS 4. This resulted in instability and blockages that could not be bypassed.
- Version 5 of Libre Office, which runs on Android, has a different mechanism and is much more portable , which allowed it to be implemented in AmigaOS 4.
- The Frieden brothers take care of porting Libre Office on Amiga a week at a time, at best.

### Anecdote Commodore

- Trevor Dickinson spoke about a chapter written by Colin Proudfoot, former Deputy Director General of Commodore UK, in David Pleasance's book "Commodore: The Inside Story". Anecdote is about their partnership contract with the Chelsea FC team. In 1987, Commodore UK was one of the first companies to sponsor a major English football team by paying the Commodore logo on the Chelsea FC jersey ( photo ).
- The sponsorship agreement continued until Commodore's bankruptcy in 1994, although in 1993 the Commodore logo was replaced by the Amiga logo. According to Colin Proudfoot, "football sponsorship was an effective way to gain name recognition and brand awareness, the cost per minute, according to the media, was well worth it ."
- As part of the sponsorship deal, Commodore had to pay bonuses based on Chelsea's success each

season. But to mitigate Chelsea's "risk" of success, Commodore UK took out insurance with Lloyds of London. And as Chelsea FC went into the quarter-finals of the League Cup, a bonus was paid by Commodore UK, the latter being covered by their insurance policy at Lloyds of London.

## Talos II

- Trevor Dickinson has purchased a Talos II Secure Workstation from Raptop Computing Systems ( pictured ). He is even the first acquirer in the world. This machine is based on two PowerPC POWER9 processors (18 cores each, or 144 threads), has 96 GB of DDR4 memory, PCIe 4.0 ports and a Radeon Pro WX7100 graphics card.
- The price of this workstation is eight to nine times higher than a complete AmigaOne X5000. This machine is very heavy, extremely noisy but seems to be extremely well designed.

...<http://obligement.free.fr/articles/actuenbref11122018.php>

## Updates

Welcome to a whole new year, Amiga fans! Is it any better than the last one? Looking at the world at large, perhaps not so far, and for some I know it has been a near-literal kick in the teeth, but for me personally, aside from some snow, it's going OK for the moment. It's been somewhat interesting, at least.

I had a little bit of extra cash sitting in my PayPal account, so I ended up purchasing some new Amiga hardware on Ebay. I picked up the 'Terriblefire' TF328 expansion for the Amiga CD-32 game console, sold by Canadian Ebay user "alenppc" (who sells them periodically on Ebay, and has one up now as of this writing.) Based on an open-source hardware project, the Terriblefire expands the CD-32 with 8 megs of RAM and an

IDE interface for hard drive or CF card, along with more, in the same vein as the SX-1 or SX-32 expansions, but easier and less expensive to obtain today. The version sold by Alenppc included 8 megs RAM, an IDE to CF adapter, an 8 gig CF card with OS and lots and lots of Amiga games included (the exact legality of which I will not examine at this particular time), and a riser circuit board to connect to the CD-32 main board with interfaces of its own, created by my frequent grump-target of my Vampire accelerator stories, Kipper2K.

Initial tests and impressions have been good, and with a bit more testing I hope to bring the 'Terriblefire-up' system to the meeting for demo and general playing around. Compared to other expansions I've experienced that expand the CD-32 from 'game console' to 'Amiga computer,' it's largely the same, though the 8 MB RAM is on-board rather than on a separate memory stick, and the only ports in back are for RGB video and a PS2 keyboard, where older commercial expansions offered most to all of the ports found on the back of any Amiga computer. It's possible a version of the TF riser card with more ports might be available—I don't know, but here the lack of an external floppy drive port is the big detriment, meaning that the only apparent way to get new files on the system is to burn them to CD-ROMs, or possibly pulling the CF card and plugging it into another system that can read it. Still, as an option to inexpensively expand the CD-32 console, it's an attractive option (only costing me approximately \$120 shipped with all the stuff I mentioned above). It's far less pricey than trying to acquire a vintage SX expansion today. In fact, if Ebay listings are to be believed, I could conceivably make a lot of money selling off the CD-32 extras I already own, like the SX-1 expansion, the Full Motion Video cartridge, and about three Competition Pro joystick controllers. They're more valuable than Beanie Babies!

With the new year, I have been changing and updating my own stuff here and there. I am now on Twitter, just like a president. I haven't tried it out yet, but there is even an unofficial Twitter client for Amiga systems, so I could use it pretty much anywhere besides a phone.

In other things I haven't tried yet, I downloaded the latest "Amibian" distribution for my Raspberry Pi, which is an Amiga emulation setup. I may demonstrate it at a future meeting, though this month's is unlikely. This is another step in an ongoing quest of mine. I have my veteran Amiga 4000/060 tower, which has served me for well over a decade now. Knowing that the life of any computer system is finite in one sense or another, I have been looking to find a newer replacement. The problem I run into, however, is that while the options I have tried have done well in their own way, surpassing the classic system in some ways, I keep finding things, whether software or hardware-related demands, which bring me back to the 4000.

To give examples, while my G5 Mac running MorphOS wipes the floor with my Amiga for speed, storage, memory and modern OS conventions, it only runs its own software and 'well-behaved' Amiga software, which means some of the software I'd like to work with ranges from 'quirky' to 'unusable', and metal-banging software such as old games are out of the question. My Vampire-carded Amiga 600 performs well, if not as heavy on the horsepower as the G5, but I'm waiting on core revisions to improve convenience, add the AGA chipset emulation, and still some software I want doesn't work properly. So that sends me to the emulation option. Perhaps emulating an Amiga using a full-fledged PC would be a better option than a Raspberry Pi, but considering I can purchase a complete Pi system for about fifty bucks give or take, the economics are on its side.

Many turn to emulation in order to play classic games more than running productivity software, but I'm looking to explore the top end, and how it can surpass the real hardware the way a Vampire or PPC Amiga might. There are a number of factors I'm looking to explore through the various hardware and software solutions I've accumulated. One is the aforementioned economic factor. Classic Amiga hardware of all kinds are getting pricier as the retro community grows and working examples get scarcer. Another is obviously speed, storage, and other specifications. Even modest computers and phones far exceed the wildest dreams of an Amiga user from 1994. While I don't need an Amiga stacking terabytes upon gigahertz, it's nice to meet and hopefully exceed the power of a 50 Mhz 68060-based system. While compatibility with old-as-dirt software and those games and other programs that address hardware directly is not a deal-breaker, it would be quite helpful to me where possible, and a distinct reason I hold on to older systems. Finally, it would be good to make use of the newer standards, or at least not be left behind. It would be nice to connect to a flat-screen monitor via HDMI, use USB devices and storage, and make use of the internet at least a bit from the Amiga side of things. Each of my options can do some but not all of these things, so I keep them all around to do whatever aspect I want at the moment. When I figure things out enough that one solution becomes

the solution to all (or nearly all) of the problems, I shall become invincible, at least from an Amiga standpoint.

...by Eric Schwartz  
From the Amitech Gazette, January 2019

## Amiga Forever

In early December, Cloanto has updated Amiga Forever, its suite for Amiga emulation on Windows. This includes Amiga Forever 7 R2, RP9 Preview 7.2.17.0 and WinUAE 4.1.0. Version 7 R2 of Amiga Forever offers some novelties like:

- New playlists with customizable content.
- The ability to start your PC directly under an emulation configuration.
- Titles can be launched from Windows File Explorer without opening the Amiga Forever player.
- Improvements for PowerPC emulation.
- The customization of the controller for a particular game or in general.
- Additional options for the joysticks (management left-handed joysticks, automatic shooting ...).
- Improved High-DPI and multi-screen management.
- Management of shared floppy drives and deployable image disks.
- Update checks are performed via HTTPS (TLS) with digital signature for better integrity and security.

- Other improvements for audio, performance, WHDLoad, AROS...

On December 31, Cloanto then released versions 8 of Amiga Forever and C64 Forever. These emulation suites include features such as virtual mouse and virtual keyboard, the ability to move the cursor 8-bit computers via the mouse, adding a menu when you go to full screen or the availability of the Windows clipboard for the emulated environment.

Amiga Forever 8 is available in three editions:

- Value Edition (9.95 euros, installer download).
- Plus Edition (29.95 euros, installer download and possibility to create a DVD ISO file).
- Premium Edition (49.95 euros, Plus Edition with boxed software and additional videos on three DVDs).

C64 Forever 8 is available in three editions:

- Free Express Edition (free, limited features).
- Plus Edition (14.95 euros, installer download and possibility to create a CD ISO file).
- Boxed Plus Edition (19.95 euros, Plus Edition with software in box).

...<http://obligement.free.fr/articles/actuenbref11122018.php>

## February Calendar

February 9 — MCCC Meeting  
2:00 PM — Burleson Public Library  
248 SW Johnson Ave., Burleson

February 9 — Board of Director's Meeting  
Approximately 4:00 PM — Location TBD

March 1 — Newsletter Deadline — 8:00 AM

MCCC 2507 Tamaron Cove Cedar Hill, Texas 75104  
<http://www.amigamccc.org>