

Becky's

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Chapter 1

Becky's

1.1 Becky's WB_Screens Guide

14.03.1999

Becky's WB Screens Guide

Me - Rebecca Fryer

Contents

My Amiga 1200
PC Polemics
WB Screens
My Icons
Commodities & Tools
My first AmigaGuide
And finally...

1.2 My System set_up

My Amiga 1200

For those who wish to know (for whatever reasons they may be) what my system set-up is
here is a run-down for your perusal.

Amiga 1200
Apollo '030/40 Mk3 accelerator 40mhz FPU & 40mhz MMU
2mb Chip Ram & 4mb Fast Ram (soon to be replaced by 16mb sim)
CDPlus 24x speed CDROM
Philips CN8833-II colour monitor

4 way buffered IDE interface & fully registered IDE Fix '97
60mb Harddrive
Second floppy drive (extrenal)
Canon BJC-210 colour ink-jet printer
B/W Power hand scanner

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1.3 What I think about the PC Boneheads

Introduction

I'm always shocked by the attitude of the 'middle-men' (or women as the case maybe
) of the
computer industry who insist that the computer world begins and ends with PC &
Microsoft,
when the much underrated Amiga can be in many ways a much better machine
altogether.

The heart of the Amiga is kept pumping by dedicated users and equally dedicated
software/hardware producers; such as Eyetech for instance, but it is always let
down by
short-sighted 'middlemen' who care little about our needs, but instead look to
their own
greed and fail to stock Amiga associated products, and if they do stock them they
are usually
under-stocked and/or over-priced.

In my home town of Sheffield there isn't a single stockist of Amiga software
anywhere in the
town centre, and even Meadowhall [the shoppers' metropolis of the North] has a
limited
range of our software. Instead we have to fall back upon mail-order which means
extra cost
that the poorer Amiga users [I know for I am one] can little afford. As for
hardware,
you can forget it - there is nowhere in Sheffield that stocks CDROMs, Harddrives,
etc.

However, if the PC world thinks it's got us beat then it has not learned a
salutary lesson and
that is that while the "all bells 'n' whistles" PCs may be cheap, they are nothing
more than a
corporate utility without an ounce of spirit... But an Amiga is a machine born
out of love and
dedication (a computer-user's computer). When you create your own personal
backdrops
and icons on an Amiga you have made that machine yours and the sense of
achievement is
great, not because it was hard work but because you did it! Can any of those
with their PCs and ready-made themes and backdrops say the same - I THINK NOT !!!

Yours Faithfully,
Rebecca Fryer

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1.4 All about my WB_backdrops

WB Screens

Battle-Cruiser / Star-Ship - WB Screens

I only recently purchased my CDPlus 24xspeed CDROM but one of the first things I used it for was to check out useful images on the AFCD37 to use for backdrops and I came across some great looking sci-fi pics in the web-sites drawer and decided to 'borrow' them for my WB back-drop. Battle-Cruiser and Star-Ship are not the original names of these pics, but I thought they sounded better. I quite like sci-fi being a big fan of Babylon 5 (my interest increased when I discovered they used Amigas for the effects). I'm also a big fan of gore/slasher/horror pics and if and when I can afford to get hooked up to the internet I will be looking out for "Driller Killer" & "Texas Chainsaw Massacre" stills to make a gruesome WB backdrop (umm, lovely!).

However, back to the back-drops. The images where not initially suitable as backdrops, being 16 million colours and bigger than the high-res limits, so I loaded them into PPaint after locking the palette at 256 colours and resizing the image to be displayed in High-Res. Then using the less colours function I reduced the palette to 200 colours - enough to keep a reasonable image quality and at the same time allowing room for the workbench default pens. I then saved the work into System/Prefs/Patterns (the drawer I use for my backdrop images) and saved the screen-mode settings to 256 colours - yes it eats up a big chunk of chip memory but I think it's worth it.

Battle-Cruiser
Star-Ship

Sky - WB Screen

The clouds where rendered using PPaint with a gradient of white colours. I started out by filling in the blue sky with a gradient of light to dark blue, then I selected the whitest white and roughly outlined cloud shapes, then using progressively darker shades built up upon the

image to give a 3D effect. This in itself did not create a realistic cloud effect ←
so using the
image processing function I merged the colours together using blur-low and blur- ←
high
functions - this took several goes including adding more darker whites to bring ←
out the
shaded areas and lighter whites to pick out the highlights. I believe the result ←
is pleasing if
still not entirely realistic. Short of 'borrowing' a scanned photo of the real ←
thing this is a
good compromise as it uses a lot less memory.

Sky

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1.5 All about my icons

My Icons

As you can see I have NewIcons installed this is because I like the look of them ←
and you don't
get the horrible border/icon tile you get other icon systems. All of my icons ←
where drawn in
PPaint, and then using NewIcons InjectBrush command with the FORCE option ←
activated I
merged the selected and unselected images together to create my own NewIcons.

Icon list

PPaint7
PPaint7 (selected)
WordWorth5
WordWorth5 (selected)
AddressBook
AddressBook (selected)
PaperSales
PaperSales (selected)
DeluxePaintIII
DeluxePaintIII (selected)
DopusV4.12/Sys/Work
DopusV4.12/Sys/Work (selected)
RESET
RESET (selected)

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1.6 The commodities I use

Commodities & Tools

The only two commodities or tools that I'm currently running are VClock and TinyMeters both are excellent. Due to my lack of harddrive space (60mb) and memory restrictions I choose not to use many of the good commodities/tools that can be found on the AFCD's instead I rely upon the tried and tested ones - the two name above.

VClock particularly is well implemented and it's great to hear it announce the time every half hour (just to remind me that I've already spent far too much time on the computer already) - great stuff full marks to the developer.

TinyMeters is also well implemented but with some annoying flaws. Firstly when I change the screen mode in WordWorth TinyMeters always drags me back to the WorkBench screen where I'm forced to double click on the WordWorth desposit icon to re-enter WordWorth. Secondly although it is suppose to be transparent when no background for it has been selected it does not update itself when opening back onto WorkBench and this make it look messy with the previous screen data in it's background (Yuk!). And finally when set to backdrop the entire thing will disappear as soon as you open to another screen - never to be seen again ! But apart from that it works well and I now find it invaluable - good marks to the developer but please work on the bugs.

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1.7 My first attempt at an AmigaGuide

My First AmigaGuide

Well folks what do you think for my first ever AmigaGuide... Was it good for you too? To say I had no idea how to even begin programming a guide I'm pretty pleased with the end results and it was all done with a easy to learn trick! Intrested?

Well as I had no previous experience at creating a guide and I had no useful source of information at hand I simply 'borrowed' [note the recurring theme here!] an already established AmigaGuide - any one will do - then paying attention to control characters and command words that were already employed simply changed the text to suit my needs using WordWorth5 and then saved the guide as an ASCII document. All that was needed to finish

off was to call up the guide's icon information and set the Default Tool to
AFCDView (you
could use Multiview, Amigaguide or any other display tool that supports AmigaGuide
).

And that's how this miracle of programming was brought to you. Hoped that you
enjoyed it
- it's been ground breaking for me too!

See Ya!

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1.8 Taking issue over the Amiga Logo

And finally...

I would like to take issue with Tony Hogan at AF (Vital Hogan) over the Amiga
Boing Ball
logo (AF121). Firstly I believe it to me a much better logo than the non-descript
Rainbow Tick
and it certainly isn't rubbish quality. Whereas there is no real history to the
Rainbow Tick,
no meaningful reason for it's existence, at least the red & white checkered Boing
Ball came
into this world in a blaze of glory.

Back in the 80's when Amstrad CPC464's were all the rage [I know for I owned one
] the Boing
Ball became a symbol of computer power and capability and was demonstrated on
machines
to show their hardware and processor capabilities - and we watched on with a glint
of green
eyed jealousy as our poor machines were only 64K mere mortals and a red & white
checkered
spinning ball that bounced around the screen was more than we could even dream of
(sad
isn't it ?).

However, it did happen on the Amstrad - some clever programmer decided that the
best way
to get around the hardware limitations was to make the screen bounce around the
ball! And
it worked!! The graphic screen was made bigger than the window parameters and the
window was bounced around a stationary, colour flicking (to simulate rotation)
Boing Ball -
the effect was to create the same effect that more powerful machine had to
dedicate all their
processing power to.

The moral of this story is there is more to the Boing Ball than initially meets
the graphic
designer's eye, it has come to represent (to me anyway) perseverance in the face
of seemingly

insurmountable conundrums. That 'rubish old logo' has at least inspired one ↔
dedicated
programmer to find a new solution around an old problem, and in this age of memory
hungry, processor greedy machines it would do well for us all to take a step back ↔
and find a
fresh perspective on how to achieve the most out of our machines - before we rush ↔
out to buy
that next must-have processor.

Viva la Boing Ball!!

Main
