

AEM106

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Chapter 1

AEM106

1.1 Amiga Entertainment Monthly, Vol. 1, No. 6 - December 1, 1994

Amiga Entertainment Monthly

The MONTHLY information
source for the Amiga gamer!

Vol. 1, Issue 6 - December 1, 1994

Table of Contents:

The Front Page

New Game Reviews

Amiga News/Stuff

The Back Page

This issue: The Ishar Trilogy (Amiga), Robinson's
Requiem (Amiga) and Top Gear 2 (CD\$^3\$^2\$)

The Incredible Mixed Up Story of Paranoia

This is the end, my only friend, the end...

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1.2 Welcome!

The Front Page

Editorial Column

- TTFN

The Serial Port

- Mail from the Readers!

The Bulletin Board

- Corrections/Comments

How to Reach Us

- How to contact us

1.3 Editorial Page

This is the last issue of Amiga Entertainment Monthly. (Oh, take ←
it like

a man...<g>) No, I haven't decided to abandon the Amiga. No, I'm not leaving the scene. I have decided to join up with some strong allies in the fight to keep Amiga gamers the best informed they can possibly be.

Jason Compton, editor of Amiga Report, has offered me the position of Games Editor. Also, I have signed on to write reviews for Amiga Game Zone, America's only Amiga games magazine. (I've already had one review published in Amiga Game Zone, in the third issue. It was basically a re-worded version of my CD\$^3\$\$^2\$View review of Surf Ninjas. I'd like to devote more time to it rather than simply having things reworded.)

I promised to keep this publication going as long as I could, but I believe my reviews will have a much higher visibility in these publications. I just don't have the resources to set up a distribution network anything like Amiga Report's and Amiga Game Zone is a great way to reach those people that don't have modems.

I am planning one last special edition of the magazine that will feature all of the reviews I've done over the last ten months in AEM and it's original incarnation, CD\$^3\$\$^2\$View. It should be released sometime in December.

I appreciate all of the support and all of the help of my distribution network in getting the magazine out to the public. (Especially Mike Moon and Stace Cunningham) I'd also like to thank all the readers for your suggestions and comments. Reading some of the mail (E-mail and otherwise) has really made me feel good about writing this newsletter. I'm glad I started it and I'm glad you liked reading it.

I'll still be available at my normal electronic addresses if there's anyone out there that wants to contact me for anything. (Remember, I'll still be writing game reviews, so let me know what you want to see

reviewed!)

It's been a great ten months. Keep the dream alive! I'll see you all in Amiga Report and Amiga Game Zone!

Sean Caszatt, editor & founder of Amiga Entertainment Monthly
Click here for
electronic addresses.

1.4 The Serial Port - Mail from our readers!

The serial port is closed...thanks for all the support!

1.5 How to Contact Us

Although the newsletter is no longer being published, I can still be contacted via the following means:

FIDONet Netmail: 1:2601/512 (Sean Caszatt)

BBS Number: (412) 962-1590

Internet: Sean.Caszatt@f512.n2601.z1.fidonet.org (preferred address)
CASZATT@DELPHI.COM

(Please note the change of the preferred address to the FIDONET.ORG address. This gets your message directly to me and I can respond faster.)

Compuserve: 72143,521

Or good old Snail Mail: 2978 Ford Avenue
Sharpsville, PA 16150

1.6 The Bulletin Board

The Bulletin Board

Reader Survey Results
- The results are in!

Whoops!!!
- The board of corrections.

Credits
- Informational stuff

1.7 Reader Survey Results!

Well, the reader survey didn't get much of a response. (At least not the type I was expecting.) One reader pointed out that the survey form was "buried" inside AEM and was too hard to get out. I don't know how many responses I lost because of that, but I am glad that I received some responses nonetheless.

Most of the readers appear to be from the US, but a majority of the users obtain the newsletter from the Internet's FTP sites. This came as quite a surprise to me. That's basically, because I live in an area that doesn't have easy access to the Internet.) There were scattered responses from places like Greece, Germany and South Australia. It's nice to see something I write while sitting in Pennsylvania reaching so many places.

Most of the readers do not purchase a game solely because of good review in AEM. I'm glad to hear that actually. It means you don't believe everything you read. That's a good quality to have these days. (Cynical mode off <g>)

The readership is pretty much unanimous about NOT buying another computer type because of the Commodore situation. It's good to see such strong support for the Amiga, even now.

Due to the small amount of responses we received, there was no clear winner in the "favorite" game category. HIRED GUNS received the most votes, but beat out the others by only a few votes. Second place was pretty much a tie between PINBALL FANTASIES and CANNON FODDER.

The winner of the free game is: Brian Serl, who'll be receiving Arcade Pool for the CD32. Congrats, Brian!

1.8 Whoops! We goofed.

No major errors last month! Wow!

1.9 Credits

Amiga Entertainment Monthly Staff

Founder & Editor: Sean Caszatt

This issues's contributors:

Ken Pierce
James Perry

This newsletter is created and written on an Amiga 3000T/030/25 MHz with two CD-ROM drives, a US Robotics Sportster 14.4K Fax Modem, and an Archive Viper tape drive.

Software used:

MEMacs, the editor supplied with every Amiga. It's SIMPLY the best. I've tried others, but only MEMacs works for me. Hey, at least I don't use ED!

Guide2Doc, by Bernd Koesling, is used to produce the ASCII/ANSI version of the newsletter. Thanks Koessi!

BadLinks, by Roger Nedel, is used to test the links in the Amigaguide version of the newsletter. Thanks, Roger!

1.10 GAME REVIEWS

GAME REVIEWS

The Ishar Series

- A reader looks at the whole series!

Quick Capsule Reviews

- Games at a glance

Previously Reviewed...

- Previous Reviews

Ratings Explanation

- How we rate the games.

1.11 The Ishar RPG Games: An Overview by James Perry

THE ISHAR TRILOGY. If you're like me, you missed the D&D dice-throwing games of the 80s and got your first taste of role playing on your Amiga with Bard's Tale or the ground-breaking Dungeon Master and Chaos Strikes Back. The makers of DM handed you a sword and armour and gave you a world where "things" come AT YOU, sneak up behind you, and make noises in the distance. Even with Eye Of The Beholder and Black Crypt I don't think DM's eery atmospheric gameplay has been bettered. However, several recent Amiga releases have come awful close.

First, there's *Hired Guns*, a super duper blast fest in the same vein as IBM's *DOOM*; although without the textured scrolling. Next, the ISHAR series which has just become a trilogy with the release of *ISHAR III: The Seven Gates Of Infinity*. All three have standard and AGA versions with the only difference being cosmetic. All, however, share the same strengths and weaknesses.

The biggest strength is the large view window and the striking graphics emanating from it. In *Eye Of The Beholder II* the forests looked like walls with trees painted on them. *ISHAR*, however, has forests that look like forests. Trees and under-brush of all types pass by in perspective. In *ISHAR I* you can actually tell

where you are on the island by the types of trees nearby. In ISHAR III, the first city is designed with the slum areas on the outside, circling "rich town" in the middle. In my opinion the ISHAR TRILOGY are the best looking adventure games on the Amiga (although you could make a case for SIMON THE SORCERER). ISHAR II introduced a lot of variety in the different areas to explore - the mountains look great!

The sound effects on all three are OK; although the tune that plays in ISHAR II is a stand out. The character graphics are good in all three with ISHAR III being the standout because some are digitized people in costumes (one lady, however, wears a pant suit and red shirt that look right out of the JC Penney catalog).

The animation is simple but this has become a standard in RPGs in the interest of speed. Perhaps this will be the area to improve on when the next generation Amigas show up.

The puzzles in ISHAR I are difficult to solve because it's hard to know just what to do next. It's easier in ISHAR II and ISHAR III starts you off with a guy standing several squares ahead ready to direct you to your first encounter.

Combat is surprisingly uneventful. You'd think a more interesting combat system would have been developed since DM. Perhaps the worst problem is that your opponent is able to stand between you and a wall. This makes it difficult to fight in a hit-and-move manner. You end up fighting "toe-to-toe" and the strongest almost always wins. At least in DM you could block them in and they could block you in. It was fun to attempt brushing off the baddies. Also, you had a variety of blows to choose from (slash, pary, bash, etc.).

All three games are plagued with programming problems and will lock up at the drop of a hat. Some advance preparation will usually combat the problem. The island with the tree platforms in ISHAR II AGA is especially prone to lockups. ISHAR III AGA has a peculiar problem when you try to enter or leave "rich town". If the proper disk is not in the drive then it will lock up. I make sure that DISK C is in one drive and DISK D is in the other. This seems to work even though all three seem to have a problem with dual-drive systems. Possibly a hard drive could be the answer to this problem (I don't have one yet some I'm not sure. Anybody?). I wish SIILMARILS would update the game system and give them proper playtesting - indeed, SIILMARILS could be another PSYGNOSIS. I haven't bought their latest release ROBINSON'S REQUEIUM yet. I'd be interested in an opinion besides the EURO-MAGS. They tend to be overly critical.

Problems aside, the ISHAR TRILOGY is a worthy addition to the adventurer's library. However, patience is a must or you'll run off cursing.

ISHAR I 80% (GREAT, AT LEAST FOR A WHILE)

ISHAR II 90% (WORKS GOOD FOR A WHILE)

ISHAR III XX% (HAVEN'T PLAYED ENOUGH FOR AN HONEST
 OPINION, BUT IT LOOKS BETTER THAN "II")

Prices paid: I - \$15, II - \$40, III - \$50

JAMES PERRY =====> Amigoid

I can be reached on Project Aurora BBS or AMIGAMAN After Dark. I live in Vidalia (yes the Onion City), GA. I own an A1200 and CD\$^3\$\$^2\$. My niece and nephew have an A500.

[Editor's note: James can be reached via the Internet at:
 james.perry@f512.n2601.z1.fidonet.org]

1.12 Quick Capsule Reviews

Here are some reviews of games I didn't get a chance to do a complete review of:

ROBINSON'S REQUIEM - (Amiga)

Ugh! Blocky graphics and odd gameplay hamper what seemed like a possible classic game. A lot of detail went into some areas of the game...but some major areas were ignored. I know this game is out for other systems. Maybe those games got the attention that was not given to this version.

OVERALL RATING: 50% Video Mode: PAL

TOP GEAR 2 - (CD\$^3\$\$^2\$)

Supposedly, this game is a hit on the SNES system. I honestly hope that the SNES version is better than the CD\$^3\$\$^2\$ version. I would wonder about the state of gaming in general if it isn't. The CD\$^3\$\$^2\$ version, to be quite blunt, is a real stinker. This is 1994 isn't it? TOP GEAR 2 is outclassed by LOTUS TRILOGY on the CD\$^3\$\$^2\$ and that game is merely a 1992 16-bit game that was ported to the CD\$^3\$\$^2\$. Very disappointing.

OVERALL RATING: 45% Video Mode: NTSC

1.13 Previously Reviewed Titles

Here are the games we've taken a look at so far:

Title	System	Rating	Date
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ALFRED CHICKEN		CD\$^3\$\$^2\$	65% 6/1/94
AMIGA CD FOOTBALL		CD\$^3\$\$^2\$	79% 4/1/94
APIDYA	Amiga		91% 9/1/94
ARABIAN NIGHTS		CD\$^3\$\$^2\$	60% 3/1/94
ARCADE POOL		CD\$^3\$\$^2\$	87% 11/1/94
BATTLE CHESS		CD\$^3\$\$^2\$	80% 8/1/94
BATTLETOADS		Amiga	25% 7/1/94
BENEATH A STEEL SKY		Amiga	96% 7/1/94

BLUE AND THE GRAY	Amiga		80%	7/1/94
BRUTAL FOOTBALL	CD\$^3\$^2\$	87.5%	5/1/94	
BUBBLE & SQUEAK	Amiga	45%	11/1/94	
CASTLES II	CD\$^3\$^2\$	50%	3/1/94	
CHAOS ENGINE	CD\$^3\$^2\$	90%	5/1/94	
CHAOS ENGINE AGA	Amiga	50%	9/1/94	
CLOCKWISER	Amiga	85%	11/1/94	
D/GENERATION	CD\$^3\$^2\$	65%	3/1/94	
DANGEROUS STREETS	CD\$^3\$^2\$	17.5%	5/1/94	
DEEP CORE	CD\$^3\$^2\$	80%	3/1/94	
DEFENDER OF THE CROWN II	CD\$^3\$^2\$		71%	6/1/94
DELUXE GALAGA	Amiga	87%	10/10/94	
DIGGERS	CD\$^3\$^2\$		45%	6/1/94
ELFMANIA	Amiga	90%	8/1/94	
FRONTIER: ELITE II	CD\$^3\$^2\$	45%	5/1/94	
GUARDIAN	CD\$^3\$^2\$	71%	11/1/94	
GUNSHIP 2000	CD\$^3\$^2\$		82.5%	6/1/94
HEIMDALL 2	CD\$^3\$^2\$	75%	9/1/94	
IMPOSSIBLE MISSION 2025	Amiga	82%	8/1/94	
IMPOSSIBLE MISSION 2025	CD\$^3\$^2\$		82%	8/1/94
INSIGHT: TECHNOLOGY	CD\$^3\$^2\$	80%	5/1/94	
INTERNATIONAL KARATE +	CD\$^3\$^2\$	45%	4/1/94	
JOHN BARNES EUROPEAN FOOTBALL	CD\$^3\$^2\$	46%	4/1/94	
KING'S QUEST VI	Amiga	83%	11/1/94	
LABYRINTH OF TIME	CD\$^3\$^2\$	79%	3/1/94	
LIBERATION	CD\$^3\$^2\$	90%	3/1/94	
LOST VIKINGS	CD\$^3\$^2\$	75%	8/1/94	
MEAN ARENAS	CD\$^3\$^2\$	75%	3/1/94	
MICROCOSM	CD\$^3\$^2\$	91%	4/1/94	
NICK FALDO CHAMPIONSHIP GOLF	CD\$^3\$^2\$		75%	7/1/94
NIGEL MANSEL CHAMPIONSHIP RACING	CD\$^3\$^2\$	85%	3/1/94	
OSCAR	CD\$^3\$^2\$	80%	3/1/94	
OVERKILL/LUNAR C	CD\$^3\$^2\$	65%	10/10/94	
PINBALL FANTASIES	CD\$^3\$^2\$	90%	3/1/94	
PIRATES! GOLD	CD\$^3\$^2\$	87.5%	3/1/94	
ROBOCOD: JAMES POND 2	CD\$^3\$^2\$	80%	3/1/94	
THE SETTLERS	Amiga	80%	9/1/94	
SIMON THE SORCEROR	CD\$^3\$^2\$	85%	10/10/94	
SLEEPWALKER	CD\$^3\$^2\$	20%	3/1/94	
SUMMER OLYMPIX	CD\$^3\$^2\$	54%	5/1/94	
SUPER PUTTY	CD\$^3\$^2\$	84%	8/1/94	
SURF NINJAS	CD\$^3\$^2\$		10%	7/1/94
TOTAL CARNAGE	CD\$^3\$^2\$	53%	9/1/94	
TROLLS	CD\$^3\$^2\$	75%	3/1/94	
UFO: ENEMY UNKNOWN	CD\$^3\$^2\$	91%	10/10/94	
ULTIMATE BODY BLOWS	CD\$^3\$^2\$		84%	7/1/94
VALHALLA	Amiga	79%	9/1/94	
WHALE'S VOYAGE	CD\$^3\$^2\$	3%	3/1/94	
WILD CUP SOCCER	Amiga	70%	10/10/94	
ZOOL	CD\$^3\$^2\$	80%	3/1/94	

1.14 The Ratings - Explained

We judge the games we review in four different categories:

Graphics

This is pretty self explanatory. The higher the percentile, the better the graphics are.

Sound

Another no-brainer. The higher the percentile, the better the sound. Although, this also relates to it's coordination with the gameplay. If the sound seems inappropriate for the type of game it is, the game will score lower in the Sound category even if the sounds are technically well done.

Gameplay

The gameplay refers to the addictive quality of the game as well as the way the game plays. If you find your self sitting and watching rather than interacting with the game, the game will score lower than one that actually involves you.

Control

This refers to how easy the game is to control given the control method specified by the manufacturer. A game requiring a special controller that is not specified or not included will be penalized. A game that comes with a special controller or one that recommends that, say, an Amiga mouse might work better than the standard CD³² controller will not be penalized. A game that is programmed to use a mouse when a joystick would be much more appropriate would also be penalized. Of course, a game that's just plain hard to control with any control method will also feel the sting of the rating.

1.15 Lame Game of the Month

This is an award presented to one game per month for being the worst of that month's issue. It's mainly to warn you, the consumer, about a game that's REALLY bad.

If we have an issue with no really bad games...there'll be no award given. A game that wins this award DESERVES to win!

1.16 Amiga/CD³² News & Stuff

Amiga & CD³² News

Rumors/Rumors/Rumors

- What's buzzing around.

Paranoia: The True Story

- Here's the scoop!

- AEM Reader Survey
- The Results!

Columns

- Hardware Corner
- The Zappo CD-ROM Drive!

- GameTips/Tricks
- Game Tips & Tricks. Duh!

1.17 Rumors/Rumors/Rumors

Rumors...oh, those nasty rumors:

- AmigaWorld 1-800 #
- Information hotline!

Please remember that all information found in this section is based on information from sources that may or may not know what's really going on.

Rumors make for interesting conversation. Rumors make for active imaginations. Don't base purchasing decisions on anything other than something you've seen or know is true.

1.18 Paranoia: The True Story

Those of us that cruise around on the nets have been hearing about a game called PARANOIA for the past several months. Many rumors had always been associated with the game: It's look, it's feel and it's origins.

Now, in a completely unsolicited story, one of the people involved with PARANOIA from the start comes clean with his side of the story.

This story was received via E-Mail from Ken Pierce, one of the designers and authors of PARANOIA. It's contents and viewpoints are entirely Ken's.

Any comments can be sent to Ken via this E-mail address:
Ken Pierce kpierce@age.cuc.ab.ca

The Paranoia Story
Ken Pierce - AGE Entertainment Software

Because of the large amounts of personal email I've been receiving asking what is going on with the game Paranoia, AGE Entertainment Software, DEM Software and myself, I have decided to go public with the

complete story of Paranoia from day one.

In May of 1993, Jim Georgeadis (the Paranoia head programmer) and myself were working together at a computer store (Ace-Tech Computers in Calgary, Alberta) and had been for some time. We had bantered back and forth the idea of doing a game together for a while, and we were sort of playing with a beat-em-up concept as a PD release. This game was to be released at AmiJam'93 in Calgary, and was a TRUE example of the troubles we would face in the future.

The game was delayed and delayed, until AmiJam was upon us, and Jim was quite literally working on the game in the Ace-Tech booth. I had done some cheezy Ren & Stimpy graphics, and we had added R&S sound effects to the game as well. The engine, though, was far from complete (although the game was fun to play). Eric Schwartz was one of the guest speakers at that show, and re-did the graphics for the game (his were much nicer than mine, I must say) but alas the game was never finished, and thus never released into the public domain as we intended (although we did show it AmiJam and it did get quite a response).

Still, at least Jim and I knew we could work together on a project, and we started talking about sitting down and doing something /serious/. We discussed the different possibilities, and Jim seemed to have a burning desire to do a serious beat-em up. I didn't think there was much of a market for it, though, so we scrapped it. From there we had to decide where to go. Jim also had a desire to a 3-D RPG of some kind, and I thought there may be a market for *good* RPG since there had been so few lately. Thus began work on "the game", and tests to see if it was possible.

After about a month, Jim had a working copy of the engine up and running, and we could see this thing had some potential. It had crap graphics, no name, no plot, no theme, no sounds, but it did have some line drawn walls (filled with a really grotesque shade of orange) and a stick man with a big red head that chased you around (Mr. Stickman, who may still be in Paranoia to this day). The game worked in a step-mode way (like Dungeon Master), and we thought we could get away with that if we just made sure the game reeked of suspense and atmosphere.

Work continued on the engine, and we started talking about possible plots. We thought of the standby D&D style plots, but scrapped those because it had been done to death, and eventually stuck on a game which would be like "playing" the movie Aliens. We wanted to have the player feel helpless and distraught while running through a maze, not knowing what's around the next corner and being chased by vicious critters all the way through.

At this time, a demo came out called "DWAGA". It was an AGA based dungeon walking demo, which had smooth scrolling walls. We looked at the way the programmer of that game had done his engine (which we had mentioned, but written off because we thought it would be too slow) and decided that maybe smooth scrolling walls were the way to go.

Jim began work on the next revision of the game engine.

As he did that, I began to think of plot possibilities, keeping the Aliens theme in mind. That was when the basic plot of the game was worked out. You were on this ship, and it had been attacked by aliens. The aliens had boarded the ship, and you had to find a way off the thing. It was simple, but effective, and offered the opportunity for lots of puzzles.

Now, Jim had the next revision of the engine done, and it looked ugly, but effective. At this point, we needed some real graphics. I contacted Bryan Ewert, who is a 3-D animator in the Calgary area. He was on a hiatus from work, and agreed to work on the project with us. He did a few test renders for us so we could see how his work was, and we liked it,

so work began on the interiors.

At this point, I figured one thing that could add atmosphere to the game would be several exterior animations at key plot points in the game. These would have a typical sci-fi flavour to them, and would help to keep the different segments of the game attached. They would also help to explain some key elements of the plot (like how the aliens got on board in the first place). I explained my concept for these animations to Jim and Bryan, and both were quite excited by the possibilities offered. Bryan, though, didn't want the task of designing an alien and terran fleet of ships, so I told him I'd come up with a rough idea of what I thought things should look like. In the meantime, he continued work on the interiors which were coming along very nicely and Jim continued working on the game engine, which still needed a lot of tweaking.

This was around the same time that I was beginning to think we may have something very special here, and it may be something that could really leave its mark on the Amiga community. This is when I began posting messages into Fido AmigaGames describing the game, and when I started receiving mail asking me for more information.

Slowly, the walls were being finished and Jim was implementing them into the game. At this point, though, we started to realize how limiting Chip RAM can be when working with these types of graphics. We made some design changes to the engine, and work continued again. The new engine wasn't as smooth as the old one, but it took a lot less RAM (it would've barely worked in 2MB of Chip RAM the old way). I wasn't happy about the trade-off in performance, though, and asked Jim to try to find a way around it. With the new engine, though, Jim told me that the game could be done in "4-6 weeks", assuming of course, that Bryan could keep up his current pace with the graphics.

I finished up my drawings (in DPaint) of what I thought the alien and terran crafts should look like, except the freighter (which will come later), and Bryan had a look at them and, for the most part, liked them. I also wrote up technical documents explaining how the ships "worked", and this is the point where I began to think a bible may be necessary to keep us from screwing up continuity in the game. Besides, it could be quite a help in writing the manual later on.

It was also around this time that I approached my girlfriend, Lisa Priebe, to do the music for the game. She received some quick training in OctaMED, and began work.

Somewhere in this time frame, we showed the early demo (called AlphaTeaser) to the Amiga Users of Calgary at a meeting. It went over well, and I still get asked about the game from local people because of that meeting.

Eventually we were coming into December of 1993, and the public was getting kind of impatient while waiting for the game. Still, I kept adamant in my posts, saying that it wouldn't be released "until it was done". I was still disappointed that we had missed our September and October deadlines, though.

In December, I lost my job at Ace-Tech (which is an even longer story than this one), but wasn't too concerned about it. I figured I would be able to hold out long enough for the game to be ready, and then with any luck we'd be on our way to success and stardom in the Amiga games market. Then came January.

In January of 1994, Lisa and I broke up. This stalled the music (which, quite frankly, hadn't gotten far), and stalled me. I went into a deep, dark depression, and at that point development (except for some tweaking on Jim's part) pretty much stopped. There was little, if any, communication between Bryan, Jim and myself, and Paranoia was at an

effective standstill.

In the beginning of February, I came out of my depression, and work began on Paranoia again. Still, Bryan had started doing some very serious, and very time consuming work on an animation with JW Lees Developments, and eventually had to drop out of Paranoia.

Still, though, even with Bryan gone, the game progressed at an amazing rate. Jim had managed to pull off some astronomical achievements in the game engine, and things were looking good. At this point, we started to discuss sequels to the game more seriously, and worked out a plotline which would cover three games.

In the first game, the player would simply escape from the ship. At the end of the game, he would be seen landing on a nearby planet. In the second game, the player would be on a colony on the planet, and everyone would be dead. The player would have to figure out the mystery of what happened on the colony while trying to find all the parts to repair a damaged communications array and send a distress signal to someone so he could be rescued. At the end of the second game, he would be rescued, and taken back to Earth. In the third game, he'd have to go to the alien homeworld where he'd be part of an attack squad which would be out to destroy the alien civilization. This last game contained lots of moral dilemmas for the character to go through.

After discussing these sequel possibilities with Jim, I sent out another message on the nets discussing Paranoia, and its future sequels (assuming, of course, that Paranoia was a success). This was when things on the net *really* began to buzz.

There was still a lot of stuff to do on the Paranoia engine, though, so we figured we'd finish what was on the plate, and then deal with the other problems later.

This was around the same time that Don Kittle came into the picture. Initially, Don and I were just friends. Don had broken up with his girlfriend around the same time I'd broken up with mine, and the two of us hanging around together had helped us each to work our way out of our depressions. I knew Don was into rendering, so I asked him to pick up where Bryan had left off in the graphics department. At this time, just about all that was left to do were the exterior animations, and I already had diagrams for what they were all supposed to look like done.

Don began working on some stuff that night, and by the next day, I had the first render of a Hoarder Infestation Pod sitting on my hard drive. I was happy with the results, and he seemed happy with the project, so he was officially "on the team". We still didn't have any music, but Brad Lazaruk (another friend) had heard us mumbling about sound effects on the Paranoia mailing list. He sampled some gunshots and sent them to us, and they made it into the game in no time. There were also some other sound effects from sources all over the place which were being put into the game. They were inconsistent, and at times, simply poor, but it was better than nothing. And besides, they were just for testing. We'd resample all the sounds we needed later on.

Also at this point, Lorne Laliberte paid a visit to Calgary from Manitoba. Him and I had sent mass volumes of email back and forth about Paranoia, and knowing that he was a writer, I wanted him involved. I decided that Lorne was the person who would write the background story and manual for Paranoia. As soon as I let him know that I wanted him to do it, he started work, and the email REALLY started to flow.

By this time, though, money had started to run a little low (I had been out of steady work for some months...I had managed to get a few temp jobs in there, but nothing steady), and I had to give up my apartment. I had the option of moving back to British Columbia, which would have

really hampered Paranoia development, but reduced my living costs substantially, or finding a place to stay for less money in Calgary (actually, no money). I asked Don if I could crash at his place, and he said yes. I didn't realize at the time what a strain this would put on both our personal and professional relationships.

There were still a few weeks before I was set to move out of my apartment, though, and so development on Paranoia continued at a breakneck pace. The final control panel (or next to final control panel in the end) was in place, buttons were working properly, and the game engine was still running at a good speed on a stock 1200 by the time I was making the move.

I moved into Don's place, and for the first few days, things were fine. Work was getting done on Paranoia, and I had managed to re-establish my email feeds and had caught up on my mail. Work on the bible continued, including technologies, and the Paranoia universe was coming together nicely. Lorne's work on the story was coming together well, too.

Shortly after moving into Don's place, though, something changed. Don wasn't around for long periods of time, and quite frankly, I saw him less when I was living with him than before I moved in. It didn't take a genius to figure out that he was uncomfortable with the situation.

Also, he had been going to meet with Jim regularly to work on the game. That, to me, was fine, though because at least something was getting done on Paranoia.

Around here was when the teaser demo was (finally) finished, and sent out. That teaser demo refused to work on 68000 based machines.

Some weeks passed, and eventually the tension got so bad that I started spending nights at my girlfriend's house, and only went back to Don's place during the days to do the work I needed to do. Still, after about a week of this, I decided to spend another night at Don's in the hopes of being able to accomplish more (four or five hours a day isn't a lot of time) the day after that.

Jen dropped me off in front of Don's building, and I went in. I unlocked the door, but when I tried to enter the deadbolt was locked. I didn't have a key to the deadbolt, so I tried ringing the doorbell and banging on the window. There was no response. Eventually I gave up, and started the long (and cold, since I didn't have a jacket with me) walk over to Brad's place, where I spent that night fighting off my allergic reaction to his cat. The next day, I went into Don's place and did the work I needed to do. I left before he came home that day.

For the next while after that, I spent the nights at Jen's and the days at Don's, which was inconvenient, but helped alleviate the stress. One day, I wasn't gone when Don got home from work. After that day, he started locking the deadbolt during the day. That meant that my clothes, computer, close to every possession I own, was locked away from me.

I went in one night when Don and Jim were there, and grabbed my clothes and took them to Jen's. I didn't say a word to him in the time I was there, and he didn't say a word to me. That was when things got really bad.

I also saw the work they had been doing on the game at that point, and had some problems with some of the stuff that had been done. I let them know the problems I had with the things they had done, and got into an argument with Jim. He said something to the effect of "well, why didn't you say something earlier", to which I responded that I needed to know what was going on before I could tell them what I thought of it. Afterwards, Jen showed up, and I left with her. The argument was never resolved.

I couldn't call Don, because I couldn't bear to talk to him with everything that was going on, but I had to, because he had all my possessions at his place. I called Jim one day, and talked to him, and Jim told me that there was no doubt that I was going to have to move out of Don's. I wasn't surprised at that. That was the same day that another mutual friend told me how Don was telling him that I was using his place as a "garbage dump".

I called Don at work, and told him that I had to talk to him. I met him at his place that night.

We talked for a while about the various goings-on with the deadbolt and everything else, and then we talked about the game. He told me that him and Jim had decided that I wasn't fulfilling their needs as a "publisher" for the game, and that they had decided to form their own company to produce the game. He said they had already sent out press releases and made an announcement on the nets to the effect that I was out and they were in. They had already formed the company (called DEM), and had already contacted the european press about the game. He said they didn't "slam" AGE, but when he showed me the press release they had sent, I didn't see how he could say that.

Still, at that point, the friendship was more important to me than the game, and I told Don that. He explained to me that it was "never their intention to screw me over", and that I would be receiving a royalty from the game. The amount was never (and has never been) discussed.

I moved my essentials (especially the computer) out of Don's place and into Jen's. I was still confused about what was going on, in terms of Paranoia and Don's and my friendship. I still haven't heard anything from Jim to this day, aside from little bits of chit chat here and there when we've run into each other.

At this point I had to leave town for my brother's wedding, but my suit was locked in Don's apartment. I stopped at the airport (where Don works) and asked him if I could get a key to the deadbolt at his place so I could get in to get my suit. He told me that he didn't feel he could "trust me", and that his computer was sitting there with Paranoia. He told me he didn't want me there without him being there. This not only hurt me, but insulted me, because I had thought I'd made my position pretty clear to him during our face to face conversation a few weeks prior.

That night, I went to Don's, and got the suit. He asked me when I'd be getting the rest of my stuff out of his place, and I told him I'd do it as soon as possible. Then I went to my brother's wedding. I was gone for a week.

The rest of my belongings were still at Don's place through this time.

When I got back, I saw Don briefly when Jen and I stopped by his place to drop off an invitation to a Halloween party at Jen's place. I was friendly, Jen was friendly, and Samantha, another friend who was with us was friendly. Don took the invitation, thanked us, and never showed up for the party.

Don not showing at the party wasn't a shock, but the email I received a few days later was. I'll quote it here:

DK> Hey;

DK>

DK> I think it's kinda shitty the way you've basically

DK> assumed me to be a warehouse for your stuff. Please

DK> remove it all by Thursday, November 3, 1994 or I'll

DK> have to dump it in the yard...

At this point, I finally snapped and sent back a long reply telling him how I felt about everything that had happened. Jen borrowed her father's truck, and we went there on the evening of Wednesday, November 2nd. He turned us away, giving us a feeble excuse that he was about to go to bed, so we came back the next day. Another friend of his was there that day, and I never set foot in his apartment. He put it in the hallway, and my friends and myself loaded it into the vehicles and left. I haven't seen, spoken to, or emailed Don since. From what I understand, Jim has been out of town, although I haven't heard anything from him in quite some time, either.

Another friend was telling me about how Don had said I, "never contributed anything" to the game. Quite frankly, I don't know if Don believes that or not, because Don wasn't around in the early stages where I did most of my work. I will admit, that I wasn't as involved in those later stages, but full blame for that can't lie on me. I was never told what was happening at any point in late development even when I directly asked. I'd receive runaround answers which didn't solve anything. That was when I made the decision to go public. Royalties or no royalties (and I *can* use the money), I was tired of being slammed both publically and privately by these guys when they had no right at all to do that. Don tried explaining to me how I legally don't have a leg to stand on because copyright law in Canada is so vague, but what I don't think Don or Jim realize is that if I did decide to go to the courts with it, Paranoia would probably die there because the work (and copyrights) would be split into chunks. I have friends in the legal profession as well, and they're very well versed in Canadian copyrights.

I don't plan on going to the courts with this story unless I absolutely have to, because quite frankly I can't afford it, and neither can they. I'm not a vindictive person, and I am moving on with new AGE developments. I do feel I've spent a year and a half of my life devoted to Paranoia, though, and that I do deserve compensation for that time.

This game has been the destruction of two of my best friendships (or what I *thought* were my best friendships), and I'm not writing this article simply out of spite. I'm writing it, because my name has been attached to all the hype and anticipation which Paranoia has received. Quite frankly, Paranoia, as it sits right now is incomplete. It's probably around 70% done, and I don't want people to get the idea that I "approved" this product as being done in its current state.

I was told by Don and Jim that they wanted to get the game out to market by Christmas, at all costs (including the release version being buggy...and never having been playtested by anyone outside the development team), and I don't want to be the one blamed for its shoddy construction. I've also been told by both Don and Jim consider the Amiga to be a dead platform, and that Paranoia will be their only game on the machine. They like the machine, but they don't want to support it because there isn't enough money in it. They also scrapped the ideas for the two sequels for the game, they said they had no interest in tying the game together with a big plot (or taking a chunk out of their profits with a big storybook) and they had no interest in doing a CD32 or AGA version of Paranoia. These are all things which were put a little more politely in their press release (which I would've included had I still had it), but which are all in there if you read it (it was posted to Fido AmigaGames sometime ago, perhaps some reader has a copy of it in their archives?).

I just wanted to set the record straight, and give my side of the story. I welcome an equivalent diary of events from Jim and/or Don.

I'm sure that I've probably forgotten a lot of things in this story, but I think everything major is in here. A lot of things can be done in

a year and a half, but apparently Paranoia wasn't one of them.

AGE is going to stay in the Amiga market, and there will be future AGE products. The next one is already in early development, and I hope to go public with some details as to what it'll be in the near future.

I'll keep this promise to the Amiga public, always. A game will not be released through AGE Entertainment Software unless it is something that I as a game player would play. The last time I saw Paranoia, it was not something I would play. It was something I would fiddle with, but not something that would absorb me the way a good game should.

Stay tuned, folks, because this one isn't over yet. Thanks for your support, and keep listening on the nets because I'll be back with a new announcement soon.

=====

Contributed by Ken Pierce

1.19 AmigaWorld's 1-800

This is not a rumor...this is true. AmigaWorld and TechMedia had to disconnect the 1-800 information line that they had provided to keep everyone informed of the situation regarding Commodore. It was swamped with calls and it cost them a LOT of money. So, the number will now be direct dial only 1-603-924-2195.

1.20 Hardware Corner

The Zappo/Overdrive CD-ROM
- The Zappo Revisited!

1.21 Zappo/Overdrive CD-ROM Drive Review

Due to a defective unit, last month's review of the Zappo CD-ROM drive was not as complete as it could have been. Namely, we didn't get to test MICROCOSM and several other games.

Unfortunately, the replacement for the defective unit is still A.W.O.L. and we have not been able to test MICROCOSM or anything else. Since this is the last issue of AEM, we will not be able to update last month's review. However, if I do receive it in time to update the review in the "special edition" of AEM that's due out soon, I will do so.

1.22 The Humor File

1.23 GameTips/Tricks

More Game Tips/Cheats for some older Amiga games:

STREET FIGHTER (not STREET FIGHTER II)

Type STREET CHEAT on the title screen and then press help to access a cheat mode.

N.A.R.C.

Go right until you find the first trashcan. Shoot it until it turns blue and you'll get infinite lives.

1.24 The Back Page

AEM's
The Back Page

Amiga/CD³² Dealers

What's coming next month?

AEM Distribution Sites

1.25 Amiga/CD³² Dealer Directory

AEM's Dealer Directory

Dealer Listing

1.26 AEM's Amiga/CD³² Dealer Listing

Amiga Entertainment Monthly Dealer Listing:

Amiga Crossing
176 Gray Road, Unit 5
Cumberland, ME 04021
Phone: (207) 829-3959
Fax: (207) 829-3522

Antik
Slovenskej jednoty 10
040 01 Kosice, Slovakia

Phone: +42 95 35511
Fax: +42 95 426815

Applied Computer Systems
6108 Watt Avenue
North Highlands, CA 95660
Phone: (916) 338-2000
Fax: (916) 338-2004
BBS: (916) 338-2543

Computer Advantage
7370 Hickman Road
Des Moines, IA 50322
Phone: (515) 252-6167

Computer Basics, Inc./Amiga Warehouse
1490 N. Hermitage Road
Hermitage, PA 16148
Phone: (412) 962-0533
Fax: (412) 962-0279
BBS: (412) 962-0961

The Event Horizon
351 N. Air Depot Rd
Midwest City, OK 73110
Phone: (405) 733-3232

Moebius Computer Concepts
Suite #101-306 Burnside Road West
Victoria, BC V8Z 1M1 CANADA
Phone: (604) 386-2667
Fax: (604) 380-3032

Video Computer Resources
1200 N. Battlefield Blvd, Suite 110
Chesapeake, VA 23320
Phone: (804) 436-9508
Fax: (804) 436-9508

Note: AEM does not endorse the dealers listed here. They are listed for the convenience of our readers. No compensation is required to be listed.

1.27 How to get listed in the AEM Dealer Listing

If you're an Amiga dealer or CD-ROM dealer, big or small, please send us your business' name, address, telephone number and fax number to be listed here. We'd like to provide our readership with a list of places where accessories and software can be found.

Readers are also encouraged to submit dealer information. With the Amiga community in danger of losing dealers, we need to know where to find one when we need one. Support your local Amiga dealer! (The prices may not always be as low as mail order, but the service is face-to-face and they'll really appreciate it!)

We can be reached via the Internet, FIDONet Netmail or US Mail.

Internet: Sean.Caszatt@f512.n2601.z1.fidonet.org (preferred address)
CASZATT@DELPHI.COM

(Please note the change of the preferred address to the FIDONET.ORG address. This will get your message directly to me and I can respond more quickly.)

Compuserve: 72143,521

FIDONet Netmail: Sean Caszatt at 1:2601/512.0

US Mail: Sean Caszatt
2978 Ford Avenue
Sharpsville, PA 16150

1.28 What's coming next issue?

Well, guess what? There isn't going to be a next issue. Well, not a regular one anyway. Be on the lookout for the AEM Special Edition, that will be a complete recap of all the reviews we've ever published in the last 10 months. (CD\$^3\$^2\$View and Amiga Entertainment Monthly)

If you liked the reviews in this newsletter, please look for my reviews in Amiga Report and Amiga Game Zone.

1.29 AEM Distribution Sites

Amiga Entertainment Monthly Distribution Sites

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the following systems and their users for their support. I've enjoyed putting the newsletter together every month. I hope you'll all stay in touch!

United States Distribution Sites:

Project Aurora	Harbour Lights
Sharpsville, PA	Kennebunkport, ME
(412) 962-1590	(207) 967-3719
FIDONet 1:2601/512	FIDONet 1:326/209
Sysop: Sean Caszatt	Sysop: Rick Lembree

Mike's Video House	Applied Computer Systems
Glendale, CA	North Highlands, CA
(818) 240-1593	(916) 338-2543
FIDONet 1:102/852	FIDONet 1:203/227
Sysop: Mike Moon	Sysop: Jeff Hayer

The Gateway BBS Pioneers BBS
Biloxi, MS Edmonds, WA
(601)374-2697 (206)775-7983
FIDONet 1:3604/60 FIDONet 1:343/54
Sysop: Stace Cunningham Sysops: Mike & Marthe Arends

Glenn's World Amiga Haven
Salem, OR Ellerbe, NC
(503)581-6524 (910)562-2367
FIDONet 1:3406/32 FIDONet 1:3634/40
Sysop: Glenn Schworak Sysop: Tom Clayton

AmiTrek BBS Fileworks BBS
Kissimmee, FL Fairport, NY
(407)348-3365 (716)377-0719
FIDONet 1:3633/1701 FIDONet 1:2613/278
Sysop: Ken Rumsey Sysop: Tom Waterstraat

International Distribution Sites:

The Hell BBS
The Hague, Netherlands
+31-(0)70-3468783
FIDONet 2:281/418
Sysop: Robin Vermaat
