

BorayLetter

Anders Persson

COLLABORATORS

	<i>TITLE :</i> BorayLetter		
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WRITTEN BY	Anders Persson	August 7, 2022	

REVISION HISTORY

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Chapter 1

BorayLetter

1.1 BorayLetter

BorayLetter 6.0
Anders Persson.

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Introduction~~~~~

Requirements

Music and External Files~ ~

File Type Explanation ~

The BLC Program~~~ ~

Configuration, Shell Usage etc.

Contacts and Credits

News / Version History

Distribution

BorayLetter is NOT freeware! It is unrestricted shareware. ↔

Please do not

force me to include any limitations in BL by using it without paying!

You MUST pay if you use BL! But you can decide yourself how much to pay. I think that a fair price would be about 200 SEK or more. But if you can't pay that much, that's fine with me. Just pay what you think it's worth!

Any currency is accepted! Send the money (or cheque) to:

Anders Persson
Mellangårdsvägen 9
S-417 29 Göteborg
SWEDEN

or use the Swedish postgiro account: 492 57 49-6

Also include your mail address and your email address!

If you have any questions you can contact me at boray@alfa.telenordia.se!

1.2 Requirements

Requirements:

- * AmigaDos2.1+
- * Lha
- * About one megabyte of free memory.

The following is not required, but very much preferred:

- * Hippoplayer (For playing music and sounds)
- * YAM 2.0+ (For sending boray letters via email)
(You can also use
other mailers
)
- * Narrator.device & translator.library (For speech)
- * Multiview (For displaying all sorts of things)
(You can also use another
multi display
program)

1.3 Introduction to Boray Letter

Introduction:

Welcome to Boray Letter, the "king of letter programs". Maybe you don't know what a letter program is. Well, it was something that started on the C64. You could use the keyboard to write a message to your friend, and when he looked at it, it was displayed in the same way it was written.... BorayLetter is that, and much more. You can for example draw lines, wait for a key to be pressed before continuing or even make your own little cartoons and play music!!!

When you for example draw a line in your letter, only the coordinates for the line are saved to the file. All graphics work in this way. This results in an extremely efficient file format. For example, the demo letter "Cecdic" contains four and a half minutes of cartoons, and it's only 24K in size.

1.4 Configuration of Boray Letter

Configuration

The main configuration can be easily done using Bl's install tool

MIME / How to make other programs to display BLs:

```
Ibrowse
AWeb
```

Others:

```
MIME:          application/x-bl
Extension:     bl
Viewer:       bl
Arguments:    "%f"   (or "%s")
```

NOTE! Viewer and arguments in many programs are on the same line:

```
View_Command:  bl "%s"
```

Other Mailers:

BL uses by default the YAM mailer. If you are using another mailer, you can use an env variable called "BLMAIL". You can set this to your mail command, but you may need to do a bit of scriptwriting. This is what happens when you send a bl from BL's main menu: This shell command is executed:

```
$BLMAIL filename.bl application/x-bl
```

or if sending to a new user (BL included):

```
$BLMAIL filename.lha application/x-lha
```

As an example, I have written a script for YAM (as I don't have any other mailer to test on:

The script:

```
.key name,mime
.bra {
.ket }
rx "address YAM show"
rx "address YAM screentofront"
rx "address YAM mailwrite"
rx "address YAM writeattach '{name}' 'BorayLetter' b64 '{mime}'"
```

Save this script to S:attach, and set the env variable blmail with the "setenv" command:

```
setenv BLMAIL execute S:attach
```

Then restart BL, and try it out! (with your own script of course)

To make this configuration the default one, copy the env variable to envarc, like this:

```
copy env:blmail envarc:
```

Please note that if you write your own mailing script for YAM (if you for some reason are not satisfied with mine :-), then please note that there is a bug in YAM if you attach very small files and are using b64 encoding. (This bug seems only to appear when attaching from arexx). Then use uuencoding instead. It works.

Other ENV variables:

Besides from BLMAIL, there is two other env variables:

BLHIP: The full path of the hippoplayer program. This can be set with Bl's install tool.

BLVIEW: The full path of Multiview. If you like another "multi-displayer" better, you can set this variable to it.

Starting BL from Shell:

There is a number of arguments you can use from shell. Type "BL ?" to display them.

```
BL                ;Normal start, go to main menu
BL <filename>    ;Read the file
BL make          ;Start in make mode
BL make <filename> ;Start in make mode and save file
BL make YAM      ;Start in make mode and send via YAM
BL install       ;Start in install mode
```

Note that if you start with "BL make file.bl", BL exits right after saving. This is not the case with "BL make YAM" as YAM needs the temporary file to still exist when sending the email. If you use "BL make YAM" when using another mailer (\$BLMAIL), the argument is still the same (make YAM), but your own mailer is used.

Screen Modes

There are nine different screen sizes in BL, ranging from 312x200 to 632x256. Every time a screen of a size you haven't opened before is about to open, a screenmode requester pops up, asking you which display mode to use for this screen size. If you have both PAL and NTSC video drivers installed, then you just have to press OK, as in that case the right display mode is marked by default.

If you don't have PAL or NTSC or just want to use another display mode, you should choose a mode that displays all of the screen and preserves the right aspect of the picture. If for example the requester says: "Choose 632x256 display" then the aspect ratio should be as if this 632x256 size was displayed all over the screen. You can change the display mode again from both read and make modes in BL as well as from the main menu. If you want to start all over again, just delete S:BLscreenmodes.config

1.5 The History of Boray Letter

History/News:

Version 6.0 (January-February 1999)

- * New file format (.bl) which is a lha archive containing all external files used. This makes the format totally portable and easy to use.
 - * YAM integration. You can start BL in make mode from YAM's script menu. When you have finished making a letter, it can be automatically prepared for sending via YAM as an email attachment. You can read bl files just by doubleclicking on a .bl attachment in YAM.
 - * Other mailers are also supported through the BLMAIL env variable and BL's new shell arguments.
 - * Music and sound support using HippoPlayer
 - * Display any kind of file using Multiview
 - * Speak! (using narrator.device)
 - * Possible to extract the text out of a letter and save as a text file.
 - * Integrated install/configuration tool that does all the configuration you need (if using YAM)
 - * "Memorize/Restore memorized letter" - a safety feature that complements the undo function.
 - * New filename extensions
 - * Workdir and autostarting file removed (No longer needed)
 - * AmigaDos 1.3 no longer supported
 - * Removed "Exit BL" from interactive menu
 - * Added "save colorfile", "load color file" and "change the number of colors" in the color menu.
-

- * BLC integration.
- * Added "Insert same delay" in misc menu.
- * Displays the current speed in misc menu.
- * Added "save/load animation file list" in the brush menu.
- * New menu: "External" to handle Hippoplayer, Multiview and speech.
- * The Swedish version was rested (no registered Swedish users)
- * Added support for the mouse in letters. (On MouseClick run letter). When making, you mark an area with the mouse where the reader should click to run the letter. It's now also possible to press left mouse button when it says:
"press any key"
- * Possible to open URLs
- * Added "Wait for key/mouse with a timeout" so that letters can continue to run if the reader is sleeping :-)
- * Added new screen sizes: PAL+ and NTSC+
- * Added screenmode requester. Now you can run BL on graphics cards! If you have a multisync monitor, you can view NTSC letters in real NTSC, and PAL letters in real PAL!
- * All screens are auto centered.
- * Possible to search and replace text strings.
- * Still completely backwards compatible!

* * *

Version 5.3 (January 1998)

- * Bugfix: The error handling was disabled in the last version.
 - * The disk cache was highly optimized. (It's much faster now)
 - * The program was translated to Swedish.
-

(Aminet: comm/misc/BorayLetter53SV.lha)

* * *

Version 5.2 (November 1997)

- * BorayLetter can now run under AmigaDos 1.3!!! So, now you can write letters to people with old Amiga 500's (Like my brother's children :-). If you are using AmigaDos1.3, the ARP filerequester will be used instead of the ASL filerequester. arp.library is included in this archive. But the program "BLC" still needs AmigaDos2.0+
- * New internal disk cache for the graphics brushes/copies. This speeds up the animations. Especially animations that use brushes on floppy disks. So, this is great for systems without a hard drive! To reset the cache, just go to the main menu.
- * Big bug fixed: animations weren't recorded if you didn't move the brushes in between putting copies.
- * More graphics copies in the letters/g directory.

* * *

Version 5.1 (August 1997)

The only thing that is new since 5.0, is that BorayLetter no longer needs a 68020 to run. First I only made a 68000 version of 5.0. But when I discovered that this version was in fact a little bit faster than the 020 version on my 030, I changed my mind... And released the 000 version as 5.1 (But the program is not really tested on a 68000, but I think it will work. If it won't: Send me an email!)

* * *

Version 5.0: (June-July 1997)

This is the greatest update ever!!! (No wonder, I had to catch up with 5 years of no development at all :)

Well, For this version I have added:

- * Intuition Menus
 - * Undo
 - * Insert
 - * Mouse operated menus on the Main Screen
 - * MedRes screenmode
 - * ASL Filerequester
-

- * Mouse operated Y/N requesters
- * New Palette requester
- * New memory management
- * Now possible to draw with brushes and lines
- * The graphics functions interface
(You can now see what you are doing)
- * New space saving file format
(Takes only about 30% of the space the old format required!!!)
- * Can load and convert old letters
- * The program is much faster!!!
- * New speed requester
- * Now possible to insert a delay of X vblanks without changing the playback speed.
This way, you can use speed 0 for turbo drawing, and then insert some delays where you want - Useful for animations.
- * Security aspects are taken care of:
A letter can now only write temporary files to the ram disk. Before, someone could for example make a letter that destroyed your system files... But not any longer!!!
- * Temporary files are removed when the letter that created them has ended.
- * The program is more system friendly and multitasking friendly!!!
- * The program has in other words become more usable!!!!

* * *

Version 4.06 (921228)

* * *

Version 3.0 (920223)

* * *

Version 2.x (???????)

* * *

Version 1.1 (910312)

New stuff in...

Main menu: continue making, kill files

Making Letter: save graphics copy, load graphics copy, wait for any key, circle, palette, reset colors, auto foreground/background-colors

Reading Letter: save graphics copy, set speed, print screen

* * *

Version 1.0 (910223)

First version.

Main menu: make, read, save, load, quit, change memory storage,
read directory, change directory

Make letter features: change color, get graphics copy, put
graphics copy, line, lines, box, filled box, fill, clear screen.

Read letter features: pause. The speed is prompted before reading.

* * *

1.6 Contacts and Credits

Contacts and Credits

Anders Persson <boray@alfa.telenordia.se>

Author, programming, ideas, holder of copyright,
documentation, demo letters, testing etc.
<http://www.ida.his.se/ida/~di3andpe/>

Dave Hamilton <dhamilton@odyssey.on.ca>

Original Yam idea and configuration, other ideas and testing.

Official Online BorayLetter Support.

<http://www.odyssey.on.ca/~dhamilton/borayletter.html>
email:borayletter@odyssey.on.ca

Roy Krister Ellingsen <deathroy@c2i.net>

Icons, ideas & testing.
<http://home.c2i.net/deathroy>

Matthew Bray <matt@pinex.freeseerve.co.uk>

Ideas & testing, official spelling checker.

1.7 Distribution

Distribution

BorayLetter is
Copyright
1991-1999 by Anders Persson.

The BL program and all related files are freely distributable as long as nothing is changed! The files can be distributed separately if you wish!

You can include the BL program in any production to display your own letters.

1.8 Explanation of New File Types

BorayLetter File Types and Extensions

.bl Boray Letter

A letter. This is in fact a lha archive containing the letter data and all external files used.

.blc Boray Letter (graphics) Copy

A graphics brush. This is a special graphics format. Use the

BLC

program to convert IFF brushes to .blc!

You can load and save .blc files from the "brush" menu in BL make mode. Only 2,4,8,16 and 32 colors are supported.

.col Color File

Contains a color palette (and some additional info about screenmode etc.). This file is generated by the BLC program (no color info is contained in .blc files). You can load and save .col files from the "color" menu in make mode, or from "Load & Read" in the main menu.

.blam Boray Letter AniM file list

This is a plain text file containing the paths of all brushes (.blc) used in an animation. You can save and load .blam files from the "brush" menu. You can also write one in an ordinary text editor.

Just be sure to write the whole path to the files.

.bld Boray Letter Data

This file contains the actual letter data. Inside a .bl file there is (at least) one .bld file: "LetterData.bld". You can save .bld files from the main menu using "Save Letter Data Only".

THIS IS FOR ADVANCED USE ONLY!

Be careful and save only to the directory that the requester displays. If you save outside of this directory, then any external files used may not be found when this .bld file is loaded. (If you use full path filenames, they will be found.) Note: This is the old BL5.x file format.

When making advanced letters with a lot of letters calling each other, (like the "amazing frog adventure"), then this file format is preferred when making the letter. And then when it's ready, save a ".bl" and all the used .bld files will be included. But for this to work, you have to work in a certain way:

Start from shell! First make a dir for your letter...

```
makedir work:advanced_letter1
```

Then cd (change directory) to this dir:

```
cd work:advanced_Letter1
```

Then start BL:

```
bl
```

Now, when you work, you must follow these rules:

- * Only save in this workdir!
- * Only save .bld files (Letter Data Only). If you save a .bl, then the internal workdir is changed.
- * Only load .bld files. If you load .bl then the workdir is changed.

When your work is ready, and you want to share this advanced letter with others, first load the start .bld file and then save a .bl. Then all used files will be included in the .bl file.

Note: It IS possible to change the internal "workdir" back after saving or loading a .bl. Just load a .bld file and the workdir will be changed to the dir where this .bld file is! So if you have an advanced letter ready (or half ready), you don't have to cd to your workdir and start BL from shell. Just load one of the .bld's and the dir is changed automatically.

What happens when you load or save a .bl is that the workdir is changed to a temporary dir in RAM: and the "LetterData.bld" file

is loaded from this directory. So if you like, you can load the LetterData.bld from this temporary directory in RAM: from BL's main menu . Then you can continue to make an advanced letter with more .bld files in this dir. Or you can just extract the files from a .bl file (lha) into a dir on your hard disk and then load the LetterData.bld in this directory.

Just remember that the workdir is changed every time you load and save a .bl to a temporary dir in RAM: and when you load a .bld file, the dir is changed to the directory containing this file. If you remember this, you will have no problems.

1.9 Using BLC to convert IFF brushes

BLC

The BLC program converts a standard IFF brush to a

.bld
file

and a

.col
file.

Load the generated .col file using the color menu in BL make mode, and the .bld using the brush menu.

If you start BL from Workbench or from shell with no parameters, a file requester will ask you what file to convert.

If you type in the shell:

```
bld picture.iff
```

Then picture.iff is converted to "picture.bld" and "picture.col"

If you type:

```
bld ram:#?.bsh
```

Then all files ending with ".bsh" in ram: will be converted. PLEASE NOTE that you must have BLC in C: for this to work!

If you have BLC in C:, then you can use it from BL's brush menu: "Load IFF Brush as Copy". This is the easiest way to load IFFs!

1.10 Using External Files

Using music and external files

If you use music, external files or brushes (.blc) in a letter that you intend to send via email, then you must consider the size of the files. If you don't use any external files, then there is no need to worry - .bl is a very efficient graphics format. But the moment you add a mod, the size increases (with the size of the mod packed with lha). And most people don't like to receive big 300K emails without confirmation. But there is a solution! SIDs! This music format is really tiny! It is C64 music and can be played using Hippoplayer! And who wouldn't like to hear some game music from their youth while reading a letter?

Take a look at:

http://users.dhp.com/~shark/c64music/hv_sids/

Here you can download almost every piece of C64 game music ever written!

Talking about music.... You have probably heard some of mine: Aminet - mods/boray

And about graphics brushes

(.blc)

. Here is a little rule for

you:

The fewer the number of colors, the smaller the file!
