Interview Ian Chapman

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Q: Hello Ian! Please can you introduce yourself for our readers?

<I>A: Hi, well my name is Ian Chapman and I live in Darlington, England. When I'm not sat in front of a computer, I enjoy angling, travelling and the odd beer or five. 😊 I'm employed as a UNIX SysAdmin at a university here in the UK.

Q: You're maintainer of "The Book of Amiga-Hardware", a huge website about anything ever built for Amiga computers. Since how long are you doing this job?

<I>A: The Big Book of Amiga Hardware has been going for more than 6 years now. It was started in January 1999 with only a handful of text files and notes in a 10MB hosting account with room to spare. It probably should have been called the Tiny Book of Amiga Hardware back then 😂. Since 1999, the site has grown to include nearly 1,700 items, 4,000 images and is currently using 1GB of storage. Mario Misic also maintains the German mirror and is constantly working on the English to German translation. None of this would have been possible without the help of the Amiga Community and in particular the 500 individuals who have made contributions.

Q: Perhaps some of us don't know, but there are many "undocumented" Hardware pieces available for the Amiga. Many of them have been built only in a very very small amount. From where do you get all this informations?

<I>A: One of the surprising things about running the site is the sheer amount of hardware made for the Amiga, some of which is very novel. A lot of the information on the very rare items, secret projects and unreleased items tends to come from ex-employees and engineers of past Amiga companies, who often wish to remain anonymous.

Q: Do you get many emails with informations, documents and pictures of "new" Hardware?

<I>A: I do get quite a lot of E-Mail with information, pictures and questions about the site averaging, around 100 per month. Many of which contain previously unlisted hardware. Perhaps fewer E-Mails than in the past, either as a result of the site becoming more complete (hopefully!) or as people slowly drift away from the Amiga scene.

Q: How many hours a day do you spend on BBoAH ?

<I>A: It's hard to say how many hours I spend per day working on the site, but I'm certain it's a lot. 😊 In addition to the updates, a lot of tweaking, fixing and maintenance goes on behind the scenes, as with any website. It probably represents between 2000 and 3000 hours of work since it opened in 1999.

Q: Is it worth every minute? 😊

<I>A: Like everything, it has its good sides and its bad. There's no pleasure without pain 😊. It is rewarding though when somebody takes the time to send you an E-Mail saying how much they like the site or that they've got that item they bought from Ebay 3 years ago to work, because they finally found the jumper settings.

Q: What is the most exiting piece of Hardware you've got listed on BBoAH ?

<I>A: I'm not sure I could pin it down to any specific item, but perhaps hardware such as the Boxer or Nyx from a sentimental point of view, because they represent what could have been. The AA3000/3000+ because of its rarity and the Insideout because of its novelty.

Q: If anyone around the world want's to know more information of a hardware piece he got, he surely visits your homepage. What do you think about it? Are you proud of BoAH? 😊

<I>A: Sure, I'm very proud of the BBoAH. It's testimony to what the Amiga could and can do in a world dominated by PCs. A machine ahead of it's time that didn't quite get the break it deserved. It's enlightened me, I hope it has others.

Q: Which computer equipment do you have got?
A: I've owned many Amiga models at some point in time, from the A500 to the A4000T. My current setup is a towered A4000, Cyberstorm PPC, 154MB RAM, CV3D/64 & Scandoubler, GVP SCSI, Buddha, Hypercom 3+ and Ariadne II. I also make use of several PCs (primarily Linux), a Sun UltraSparc 1 & 10 (Solaris) and a Silicon Graphics O2 (IRIX)... Yes I need more room! 😊

Q: Thank you Ian for this Interview!