Amiga Users Group Inc.

Workbench

March 1999 *Number 143*

Amiga Announces New President

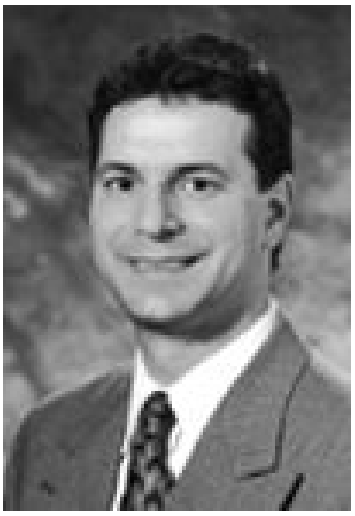
Amiga Announces New President & Fast-track Development Plans

SAN DIEGO, Calif. – February 26, 1999 – In a series of meetings in San Diego, representatives of Amiga Inc. and Amiga International met to hammer out the details of technical, strategic and marketing plans which will see the launch of a range of new Amiga-based computers for the next millennium. The company has relocated its headquarters to San Diego and Jim Collas will be serving as the new president of Amiga.

Amiga is an amazing opportunity that we must act on now or it will be lost forever," said Collas. "The Amiga™ platform is ideal for Internet-ready, consumer-oriented digital appliances of the future. The Amiga name is associated the world over with user-friendly, low cost, powerful computing. We will take this philosophy into the next generation, enabling products from hand held Internet appliances to high-end graphics computers that help the user rather than frustrate them."

Collas, formerly a senior Vice President for Amiga's parent company, Gateway, will be running Amiga as a wholly independent subsidiary operation and will integrate Amiga Inc. and Amiga International under the new Amiga corporate structure. His leadership will allow the company to step up a fast - track development program that is currently underway.

Amiga is planning to launch next generation products worldwide before the New Year. They will be announcing detailed product plans and introducing several of their strategic partners over the summer. Products currently targeted for the initial launch are a development system, an Internet appliance, and a low cost home computer in the tradition of the Amiga A500 that dominated home computing in the late eighties and early nineties. The developers system will be available with a software development suite for low cost development on the new platform.



Jim Collas, the new president of Amiga

Jeff Schindler, in charge of product strategy for Amiga, is planning the new Amiga product line. "The Amiga community has been doing incredible things on a platform which hasn't had an official update in eight years," said Schindler. "They deserve a system which lets them show off their talents."

Amiga's administrative center in San Diego will shortly be complemented by a software development center under the leadership of Dr. Allan Havemose, Vice President of Engineering for Amiga, in San Jose, California. The Silicon Valley team will be rapidly expanded over the coming months to develop revolutionary Amiga multimedia layers over the real-time Neutrino OS core from QNX Software Systems Ltd.

Petro Tyschtschenko will continue on as managing director of Amiga International and will also play a critical role in guiding the current Amiga community through the transition to the new Amiga architecture. "The new Amiga plans are a rebirth for Amiga and an exciting journey into the future," said Tyschtschenko.

For further information on Amiga and Amiga products, please refer to

www.amiga.com
and
www.amiga.de

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Contributions can be soft copy (on 3½" disk) or hard copy. It will be returned if requested and accompanied with a self-addressed envelope.
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Deadlines
Workbench is published each month. The deadline for each issue is the 2nd Sunday of the month of publication.

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Newsletter produced by
Doggone Productions

Editorial

Firstly, I would like to thank James Gardiner for stepping into my shoes last month and producing the Workbench. As stated previously I no longer have that much spare time to produce the newsletter so if other club members wish to become involved with its production please let either myself or James know.

This month's newsletter is dedicated to Petro Tyschtschenko. The head of Amiga International Inc. came to Australia in late January and many members of the Australia Amiga community managed to get along and see him speak of the future of the Amiga. The web is full of stories of these meetings as well as pictures of Petro and club members (many of them featured in this issue)!

I hope you enjoy this issue. The April issue will again be produced by James with the following May edition being my work. See you at the next meeting.

Tony Heeren

Amiga Users Group Inc. News

Meeting – 21st March

At this month's meeting Tony Mulvihill will demonstrate DOpus Magellan II and the AmiNet utility FBlit which increases the graphic capability of any Amiga without a graphics card.

Forthcoming Meetings

If you can help with ideas for our monthy meetings please contact a committee member.

April 18: Next club meeting.

May 16: No plans as yet!

Free E-Mail For All Memebers

The AUG is now offering members a web-based BBS, which gives you access to e-mail (user@members.aug.org.au), Amiga forums available just for members, access to all the Amiga Internet newsgroups, a new AUG helpdesk and links collection. Access to the site is free to all current AUG members, all you need is an ISP. You can either fill out the form that came with this newsletter or fill in your details at the new website,

http://members.aug.org.au/

from the 18th of Januay, if you have any queries about this service, e-mail the webmaster -

webmaster@members.aug.org.au

First OS3.5 Demonstration

Thanks to Haage & Partner and their partner companies, a first demonstration of OS3.5 was shown on March 5, 1999 at AMIGA International, Inc.'s office in Langen, Germany. Thomas Raukamp of "AMIGA OS" magazine was attending the demonstration. The magazine will have a report on that first demonstration in its April issue.

In This Issue

Amiga Annouces New President 1
Editorial & Club News 2
Amiga Tech Talk 3
Petro Comes Down Under 4
Amiga In The News 5
Amiga Directory 6
Open Letter To The Amiga Community 6
Reader Classifieds 7
About the Group 8

The MV1200 Scan-Doubler/Flicker-Fixer

The MV1200 scan-doubler doubles the normal 15khz video output of the Amiga to the 31khz VGA standard, thus enabling you to use a VGA monitor with your Amiga and still have all Amiga video modes available. This particular unit also comes with a flicker-fixer option to enable a flicker free display of interlaced pal and ntsc screens. The unit uses a PLL circuit for pixel clock generation, therefore making it compatible with all Amiga (OCS, ECS & AGA) chipsets and both PAL & NTSC video modes.

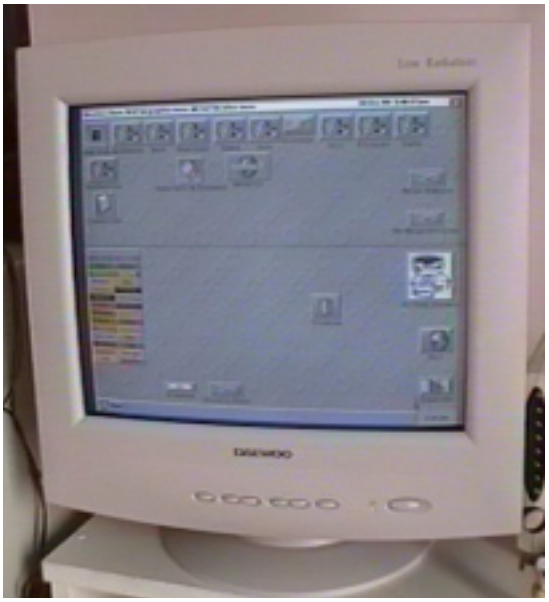
The MV1200 Scan-doubler unit

The MV1200 comes in a small unmarked white box containing the MV1200 itself and a single A4 sheet of specs and instructions. The device itself is 100mm long, 55mm width, 20mm in height and has built in indicator lights. A green light indicates it's in flicker-fixer mode, a red light indicates the Amiga is outputing 31khz video and the unit is bypassing and no lights on means the unit is in scandoubler mode. The instructions are very well written covering the technical side of the unit, how to fit and adjust, internal and external jumpers and jumper configuration, how to set your Amiga to enable VGA modes, even how to upgrade a scan-doubler MV1200 to a flicker-fixer version. If the words configuration, jumper settings and adjustment fills you with feelings of dread, don't worry, the unit simply plugs in between your VGA monitor and your Amiga's RGB port. The instructions explain how to adjust it to get the best picture which is simply a matter of letting it warm up and using the adjusting screw. For me it worked straight out of the box although I did fine tune it once I was satisfied that all was working well.

So how useful is it ? For me it hits the spot. I've had enough of flicker but owning a 1200 means no GFX card (without quite expensive additional purchases). A VGA monitor by itself severely limits your display ability and the only other option would have been a second hand monitor capable of syncing down to 15khz. Now I have a new 15" Daewoo flatscreen digital monitor with screen modes that fill the entire monitor from edge to edge and with all my Amiga screen modes displayable on it.

There are a couple of idiosyncrasies with the MV1200, one being a slight "ghost" effect when objects are moved on a flicker-fixed screen. However, this is common to all flicker-fixers. Another is only every second pixel is displayed on super highres screens. I am unaware if other manufactures units have the same super highres limitations. The MV1200 itself hangs out the back of the Amiga a fair distance, about 150mm with the VGA plug screwed in, also the Amiga RGB end just pushes into the Amiga RGB port there being no way to attach it with screws. Having said that it does fit quite snug and hasn't come loose but I think I will look into having a short lead made up to make it secure from accidental removal. Lastly, it does get quite hot but again this seems to be common amongst all flicker-fixer/scandoublers. My unit has been in use for quite a few weeks now (all day at times) with no probs surfacing.

The MV1200 is available from Amiga dealers for a RRP of $325.00.



Standard 15" VGA Daewoo monitor used with an Amiga via the MV1200 unit.

Amiga Tech Talk

Petro Comes Down Under

IN JANUARY, Petro Tyschtschenko visited Australia to attend several Usergroup meetings as well as a Dealer and Distributor conference. He also had interviews with *APC Magazine*, *PC World*, *The Australian* and *The Age*.

Australian Usergroups in co-operation with AMIGA-Distributors Jeffrey Rose, Vince Morton and Wayne Osborne are planning an AMIGA-Convention in Australia for August 1999.

Perth, January 8–10

Petro held a speech at the University of Technology. As the Patron of the AMIGA Users Group of WA, he received a certificate.

Melbourne, January 11

On January 11, Petro held a speech in Melbourne. Around 80 guests attended the event.

Sydney, January 12–19

On January 15, a dealer and distributors conference was held at the University of Technology, Sydney

The Crown Casino – A potentially large customer for Amiga technology. The current on-site gaming machines use Amiga architecture.

Right: Petro addresses the audience at the Melbourne meeting. After a serious speech the fun began with Amiga merchandise being distributed to audience members.

Amiga user group members attend Petro's speech in Melbourne.

Petro Tyschtschenko, the chairman of the AMIGA Users Group of WA (right) and guess who on the left?

An old pioneer on way back from obscurity

By Nick Miller

The Commodore Amiga home computer could become the John Travolta of the computer world, thanks to PC selling giant Gateway 2000 Inc. The company has taken the Amiga under its wing, hoping to revive the career of the former household name PC.

Gateway subsidiary Amiga International is marketing the old technology world-wide with renewed vigour, and another Gateway subsidiary, Amiga Inc. is working on a new cutting edge Amiga machine for the home market. After the heady days of the late 80s and early 90s, when Steven Spielberg used the machines to mock up scenes in Jurassic Park, the Amiga has itself become a dinosaur No new Amiga has been developed for almost eight years, and most users have abandoned the platform for PCs and Apple Macs. But a turnaround is on the horizon, according to Amiga International chief Petro Tyschtschenko, who was in Perth last week to talk to the local Amiga users club. Mr Tyschtschenko was with Commodore when the first Amiga was produced. He stuck with the Amiga through the bankruptcy of Commodore in 1994, then in 1995 the bankruptcy of Escom, which bought the Amiga trademarks and intellectual property. He helped negotiate purchase of the Amiga technology by Gateway in March 1997 in a deal, which included a commitment from Gateway to invest strongly in the Amiga. Since then Amiga International has consistently achieved a small profit for Gateway, selling Amiga chips and machines world-wide. Last year, the company had revenue of $10million, selling mainly in Europe and the US, and finding business in India and Australia. Does the Amiga really have a future? Mr Tyschtschenko said its traditional strengthshad been in areas now grouped together and called multimedia. Although the Amiga was a stand-out machine in its day; the PC and Apple Macintosh had caught up.

But the big pool of Amiga users who reluctantly left the machine would come back once the technology was updated, he said. “This time we have lots of competitors, everyone wants to go in the same direction” he said.

“Our system is very good, but a little bit dusty on some things. It was necessary to make a cut and start on a new generation.” Mr Tyschtschenko said it was difficult to sell the current Amiga A1200 machines to resellers. When they heard that it had only2MB of RAM, no CD-ROM and only a 14MHz processor, they concluded no one would want to buy one.

The new generation Amiga machine would use the latest processor, probably a Power PC chip. It would not be compatible with the old Amiga technology but would use the QNX real time operating system. It would feature fully protected pre-emptive multi-tasking (also promised in the coming Mac OSx), true 32-bit performance, high performance OpenGL 3-D graphics and full Java support. The architecture is expected to be finished in March 2000, with a launch after that. Although there would be a workstation version, the machine would be pitched as a so-called *appliance computer* for the home which combined DVD entertainment, Internet and Pay-TV applications. The new Amiga would sell for$US500

“It might be difficult to attract software developers back to the platform, especially game developers who have lost lots of money in the dying years of the old Amiga. But if they saw the platform had potential, they would start work on the Amiga again”, he said.

Reprinted from
The West Australian
12 January 1999

Petro Tyschtschenko
“Our users are our best asset”

Victoria

Amiga Technology Australia
17 Thompson Circuit, Mill Park, 3082 Phone: (03) 9436 5555

Byte One Computers
24 Silverton Drive, Ferntree Gully, 3156 Phone: (03) 9752 3991 or 015 316 147

Computa Magic Pty. Ltd.
44 Pascoe Vale Road, Moonee Ponds, 3039 Phone: (03) 9326 0133

Megatron
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Software Buyers Service
Arnie Robbins
PO Box 290, Bannockburn, 3331 E-mail: arnie@ne.com.au

South Australia

Amiga 'n PC Centre Pty. Ltd.
644 South Road, Glandore, Adelaide, 5037 Phone: (08) 8293 8752

G-Soft Computers Pty. Ltd.
Shop 4/2 Anderson Wlk, Smithfield, 5114 Phone: (08) 8284-1266

New South Wales & Canberra

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Computer Affair
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Exclusive Computer Systems
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MotherBoard Computers
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SigmaCom
Suite 17 20-24 Gibbs Street, Miranda, 2228 Phone: (02) 9524 9848

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Vince Schubert Computers
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Commodore Amiga Centre
96 Bentinck St, Bathurst, Phone: (063) 322 611

Western Australia

Amiga Innovations
111 Cambridge Street, West Leederville, 6007 Phone: (08) 9388 1665

Computer Man
611 Beaufort Street, Mt. Lawley, 6050 Phone: (08) 9328 9062

Queensland

Don Quixote Software
PO BOX 786, Toowoomba, 4350 Phone: (076) 391 578

Image Domain
92 Bridge St, Fortitude Valley, 4006 Phone: (07) 3216-1240

Synapse Computers
190 Riding Road, Hawthorne, 4171 Phone: (07) 389 9098

OpenLetter to the Amiga Community

February 8, 1999 – a historical day.

This day reminded me of the spirit of 1985, when Amiga was presented to the world public in New York.

This time a new vision is born: Making computers a natural part of everyday life.

It is almost 2 years ago, since the take over by Gateway. Many people know me as an impatient man and you may anticipate how difficult the period from March 97 to February 8, 1999 was. A time of low communication with the Amiga community, low public relations and low information about visions, missions and goals.

But my dear Amigans, I can reassure you the ray of hope will become a bright sun within the next 6 month. The Amiga will be lead to the future under the technical experienced management of an absolute professional. Jim Collas, Senior Vice President Product Development & Management of Gateway, Inc. has decided to modify his position and to work for Amiga only. To reach all our goals, I will work on his side and support him with all my energy.

Our mission is:

To create a revolutionary and compelling system architecture and operating environment for multimedia computers and digital information appliances which can easily be imbedded into consumer computing devices and enables innovative Internet services.

Without a lot of big talk, I can tell you that in the middle of November 99 we will launch the new Amiga systems architecture and operation environment.

For this purpose we will organise press conferences to inform the public about our goals and directions. Besides the new and revolutionary Amiga Operating System we are working on our existing platform to present the upgrade 3.5 as soon as possible

First detailed information will be presented in St. Louis, USA (March 12–4). We hope to be in the position to sell the first Operating System upgrades 3.5 in summer 99. The German company Haage & Partner and myself will take care about this project.

AMIGA International, Inc. and Amiga, Inc. will conquer as one team the computer world; under the management of Jim Collas–and you my dear Amigans, will be a part of it also.

Help us achieve our goals.

Jim Collas will inform you within the next days about the organization, plans and goals of our company.

A very exciting time is coming and it is for me and my staff a honor to be a part of a new computer generation as pioneer and to pave the way for the future just like it was at Commodore.

Long live our beloved Amiga and our community.

Yours
Petro Tyschtschenko
2.March 1999

Reader Classifieds

FOR SALE

200 Meg 2.5" IDE Hard Drive
$50.00
16Meg Simm
$40.00
Banksia MyModem 14.4K with serial cable & power supply
$20.00
Contact James Gardiner
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9888 3918
Paulshome@bigpond.com

Amiga 4000

Cyberstorm II 060/50MHz with Cyber SCSI
Cybervision 64/3D with Scan Doubler
4X CD-ROM (IDE)
52 Mb RAM
HD Floppy
1.2GB HDD
Emplant Deluxe Card with E586DX/Fusion 3.1 (Mac OS 8 installed)
Golden Gate Bridge Board with 486/60MHz, 16Mb RAM, 1.4Mb FDD, 230Mb HDD, Windows 3.1 and VGA Card.
Comes with Commodore 1942 monitor, monitor switcher and OS 3.1

MUST SELL
$3000 ONO for the lot

Ring
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or E-mail:
rallen@holodoc.org

More Amiga!

In Store Now!

NetConnect2	$ 199	BlizzPPC 160MHz/060/SCSI	$ Call
ST-Fax Professional	$ 125	BlizzPPC 200MHz/060/SCSI	$ Call
AmigaWriter	$ 175	BlizzPPC 240MHz/060/SCSI	$ Call
Developer Survival Kit	$ Call	CyberStormPPC 233/060/UW	$ Call
CyberVisionPPC	$ 549	BVisionPPC	$ 499
Apollo A1240 040/25 + SCSI	$ 525	Apollo A1240 040/40 + SCSI	$ 659
Buddha EIDE Controller	$ 149	Catweasel MkII A1200/A4000	$ 149
Kywalda Boot Adapter	$ 49.95	Catweasel Zorro II	$ 225

Arriving Soon!

Ariadne II
Black Amiga Mice
Picasso IV
More Amiga Software
Make CD
IOBlix
3.1 Roms

Dealer Enquires Welcome E&EO

MVB Computers
incorporating Byte One Computers
506 Dorset Road
Croydon Victoria 3136
Phone (03) 9725 6255
Fax (03) 9725 6766

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Amiga Users Group

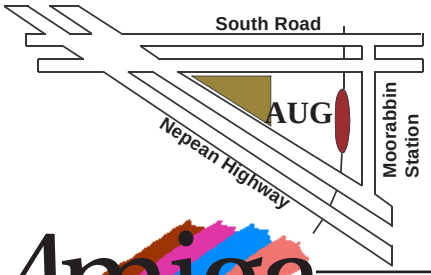
The Amiga Users Group Inc. is a non-profit association of people interested in the Amiga family of computers and related topics. We do not support or condone software piracy. To contact us call our Secretary; or visit our home page at:

http://www.aug.org.au

Membership

The AUG Inc. membership year runs from September to August. If you are joining in:

August–September.....$25
October–November $21
December–January $17
February–March $13
April–May.....$9 or $33
June–July .....$5 or $29



Disk and Book Library

AUG has a collection of Amiga books and magazines. Members can borrow for a period of one month. The library is available at most meetings. Programs from the public domain library are available at many meetings.

World Wide Web Access

Chris Quonoey can provide a very competitive Internet connection to all AUG members at reduced rates from BlazeNet. Connection costs are as low as $0.95/hr. There are no joining or monthly fees and your access time is paid for in advance. For details contact Chris (0418 377 975).

The Dead Letter Department

The AUG's new BBS run by Craig Hutchison has access to all the latest AmiNet files as well as other goodies. Registration is free to all members. Phone: (03) 9571 7194

Meetings

The Amiga Users Group meets at the Moorabbin Arts Centre Complex, 979 Nepean Hwy, Moorabbin (see map) on the 3rd Sunday of each month at 2:00pm. There is ample parking at the rear of the complex off South Road. Meetings are held in the "Sun Room" or on the 2nd floor (up the stairs then turn left). Ask at reception if you get lost. Cost: $2.00 members; $4.00 non-members. This is to cover some of the rental costs of the venue.

Amiga Users Group Inc.

Membership Form

First Name: ..... Surname: .....

Address: .....

Post Code: ..... E-mail: .....

Phone (AH): Phone (BH): Fax:

I have enclosed a cheque or money order as outlined in the table above. Once admitted as a member of the Amiga Users Group (Vic.) Inc. I agree to abide by the rules of the association for as long as I continue to be a member.

Signed: Date: / /1999

If joining by mail please allow 2-3 weeks for your membership to be processed.

(The following is optional)

Year of Birth: Amiga model(s): Occupation:

Interests:

Where did you hear about AUG?:

What services would you like AUG to provide?: