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vS staff, Fri 06 Jul 2018

About Saxonia

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by Rumrunner/Void

The Past

There once was a diskmag called *Saxonia* released on Amiga. This is a bit of background and some information about it.

It all started because of two things I wanted to do. I wanted to code something. Secondly, I had some things I wanted to say.

The mag engine started simple and stayed simple, but certain features found their way. At least latter versions had clipart support and could use a couple of colours for text.

The interface was about the only graphics I could get my hands on. That and the big multicolour font used for the status line. I think the interface graphics originally before me joining Void had been intended for a pack rather than a mag. It might also be where the name originally was intended to be used.

Articles soon became a problem. While I initially had things I wanted to say, I soon found out that it didn't take many words to say them. Making big pieces out of something that could be expressed shortly and directly didn't suit me. So it didn't make for much volume of content.



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I had hoped that people would write some articles and that it would be possible for me to work with the engine and do some writing and editing, then release when volume was enough. While there was some support, thanks to those who wrote, draw clipart and supplied music in the latter issues, it was not enough to release because volume had accumulated. I had to use bad imagination to fill out and it made for a mag with too little to read for the effort it needed to put together.

As other interests started taking more time and I was tired of not coming up with something to write, a new release just didn't happen. I never made a decision about it. It just took more and more time until the next release. It still continues to take more and more time until it happens. And I'm still unwilling to make a decision.

The Future

Many years after the latest release. I did for a while start to use the Amiga for some spare time projects again. That included writing some articles and updating the Saxonia code among writing other Amiga code.

In Saxonia's case, rewriting the engine would probably describe it better than just updating. It was not much left of the old parts. Most parts were significantly simplified and changed. It became apparent that even though unfortunately I've since been stuck with other shit languages on other shit computers, understanding, thinking and reasoning had improved for MC680x0 assembly aswell.

Limitations of the old versions, like which colours of the palette could be used for what, went away. I think I added more replayer routines aswell.

I started to want to make this into something again, as well as other smaller projects. The constant lack of support like music, graphics, logos and fonts I had experienced in the past didn't bother me as much this time. I was first and foremost doing it because I wanted to and cared less about parts I couldn't or didn't have time to make myself.

I never said much about it to anybody, because this time I wanted to make certain that it didn't start to feel like I was doing a chore even before anything was finished. But I was close enough that I was starting to sort articles and still perhaps thinking about asking for some music.

One reboot later and the results make sure that nothing came out of it, atleast not yet. The machine stayed with the screen blank. I've since checked it a bit and the machine boots without the drive, so possibly that's the culprit. And, since that's where the latest projects were, that's the part I did care about.

I've been considering that perhaps the disk would be readable in another machine. I've seen enough strange behaviour that I'm certain that either Amiga needs equipment holding up to a spec more than other machines, or perhaps it's the other way, that Amiga doesn't hold up to the specs.



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I still have kept the previous disk as a backup, but never even tried it, because what I cared about was that latter work, the work that actually would be interesting at this point. It would not help much in getting to the possibly broken disk either, because I had at that point unfortunately gone to Workbench 3.9 to get support for upto eight gigabytes of disk. For all I know, it could even be in there somewhere that the problem lies. 3.9 wasn't much to like in any way, the only thing I found (apart from the bigger disk support) was the execute window executing in the directory of whatever directory was in the active window on workbench when executing it. Thankfully, atleast from glancing towards aminet, it now seems that people have stopped requiring newer and newer versions.

Time will show if I get back into looking at fixing the machine. If the chances were good of something that could work and be used without more irritation because of breakage it could happen. Rewrite from scratch is unlikely because if I don't get to what gave me joy in the past on the Amiga, I see no real point. Although I still have the older backup. And that is atleast some.

The most promising thing these days is that Void is now much more active than it ever was when I was trying to do stuff. That alone is a nice inspiration. With a balance between enjoyment and feel of obligation I do not entirely dismiss the possibility of seeing at one point if I can make something happen again.