

Silicon Dreams

Sven Harvey reports on the event held in Leicestershire on the weekend of 6th and 7th July

Following the success of the Vintage Computer Festival GB at Bletchley Park in 2010, a second one was organised in conjunction with the Silicon Dreams event (www.silicondreams.org.uk), and for the final time Mikey C of Amiga North Thames organised an Amiga presence that included AmigaKit and A-Eon Technologies.

The event was held at the well camouflaged Snibston Discovery Museum, which is hidden behind a housing estate with highly inappropriate road links, so it was no surprise to me that the car park was empty (complete with locked entrance gates forcing you to drive in through the exit one). This was at approximately 11:30am on Sunday 7th July.

Once inside, I did a quick recon to discover the Amiga guys who, frankly, proved to be one of the more interesting displays.

Catching my eye was an array of 'next gen' Amigas, with not only a fully functional AmigaOne XE-G4, but one mark II (prototype) micro-A1, one final version micro-A1c, an

Acube Sam400ep-based Amiga OS 4.1 machine, while a CDTV joined Swisso's XE, a x86 laptop provided a WinUAE display and one last display table had an older PowerMac and a Macbook running MorphOS.

In what must be a first and perhaps a world record: five AmigaOnes (including on X1000, hosting) were running *Decent Freespace: The Great War* in a LAN with all five players working together, which was rather fun to regard.

AmigaKit had a table full of smaller stock items, including audio CDs of Amiga game soundtracks such as Paula Agnus Denise, which got 8/10 in issue 1261. I picked up *Immortal 4* from them, so expect a review in the not too distant future. Alongside the CDs were the new Amiga mousemats, AmigaOne keyboards, AmigaOne mice, and various internal upgrades such as Catweseal Mk 2 Anniversary editions with the AmigaOne X-1000 adapter kit, and compact flash adaptors to use the cards in place of hard drives inside A1200s and A600s.

Of course, the major draw at an event the Amiga is at is A-Eon technologies and more specifically any chance to get hands on with the wonderful AmigaOne X1000 machine. However, alongside two demonstration X1000s – one in black and one in white, was a mysterious display case with two hugely intriguing motherboards within.

Two prototype boards for future AmigaOne machines were on display. The Cyrus and its first revision, the Cyrus 2.0 /Cyrus +, are evolutions of the Nemo board from the AmigaOne X1000. More information is forthcoming so we'll look at this new development in more detail in a later column. One thing to bear in mind is that AmigaOS 4.1/4.2 onwards is not the only OS being considered, and although the Cyrus+ started as a revision of the first Cyrus, serious thought is being put into developing both board sizes to final product, both of which can use Freescales 5020 dual-core 64-bit PPC processor and its 5040 quad-core bigger brother, among other CPUs.

I did take a good look around the event, which housed an array of computers with rarities such as an Aquarius, Commodore MAXs and even early Sega home computers on display, as well as a celebration of things Acorn, ARM and the Raspberry Pi.

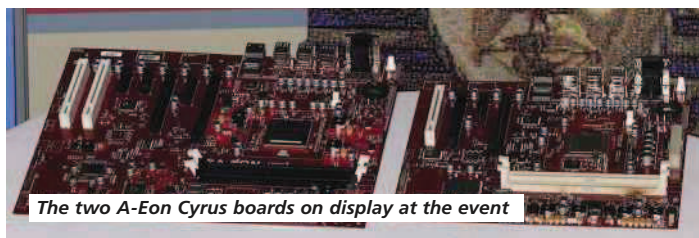
The event was apparently much busier on the Sunday than the Saturday but the number of visitors seemed very low during the day, with those working the stands out numbering the visitors, which was a massive shame.

The location didn't help it at all, and although the venue seemed like a good idea on the surface, the spreading out of the Silicon Dreams/VCF tables around the museum seemed to stifle the community feel it perhaps should have had.



Sven Harvey has been our Amiga specialist for over 12 years, drawing on his vast computing knowledge which is itself the result of 21 years of retailing computer and video games

Amiga



The two A-Eon Cyrus boards on display at the event



Three of the older AmigaOnes on display running Decent Freespace