An aerial, high-angle photograph of a small village with several buildings and a dirt road, surrounded by a dense forest. The image is rendered in a monochromatic, olive-green color palette. The buildings have dark roofs and light-colored walls. A dirt road winds through the village. The background is a vast, hazy forest. The overall style is that of a vintage or artistic photograph.

# Adonthell

Waste's Edge

User Manual

Kai Sterker

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Welcome to Waste's  
Edge, traveller!



# 1 System Requirements

General hardware requirements for Waste's Edge are really low. A Pentium 3 or PowerPC G3 equivalent CPU with 800MHz, a GPU with 32MB VRAM, 256MB system memory and 30MB available disk space suffice. Virtually any PC or Mac sold since 2004 will easily meet those specs. For additional, OS specific requirements consult the table below.

Linux*	macOS	Windows
64bit OS	A PPC/32bit Intel Mac with	Windows XP or later
X11 or Wayland display server	OSX 10.4.11 or later	DirectX9c compatible graphics
Glibc version 2.19 or later	A 64bit Intel Mac with OSX	card recommended
OpenGL 2.0 compatible	10.6.8 or later	
graphics card recommended		

\* Requirements for the prebuild AppImage only

# 2 Installation

## 2.1 Compiling from Source

Installing Waste's Edge from source code is outside the scope of this document. Please refer to the INSTALL and NEWBIE files included in the source distribution for general instructions and the OS specific READMEs for additional information.

## 2.2 Linux

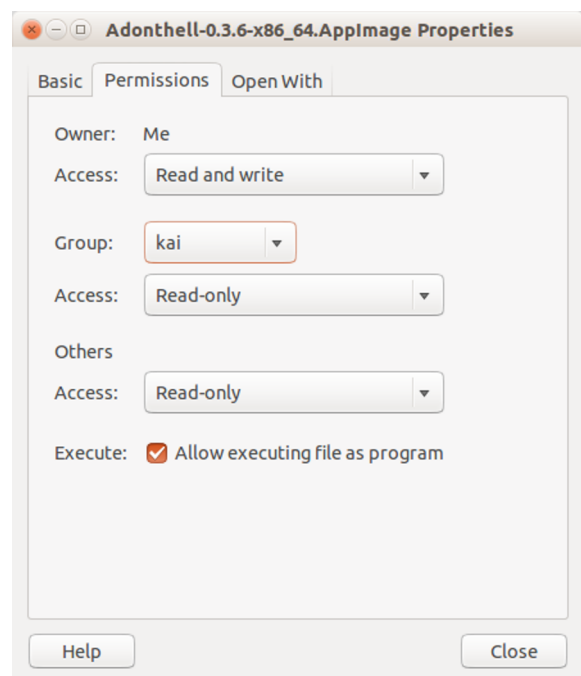
Universal Linux binaries are distributed as a self-contained AppImage that runs on a wide variety of distributions, provided the above requirements are met. After downloading, make sure the AppImage is executable. On most desktops, you can right-click the file, choose **Properties**, select the **Permissions** tab and check **Allow executing file as program**.

As an alternative, open a Terminal, change to the directory where the AppImage is located and type

```
chmod 755 Adonthell*.AppImage
```

Now start it via double click or directly from the command line.

And what about \*BSD!?



## 2.3 macOS

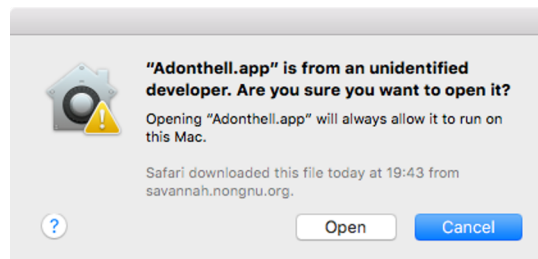
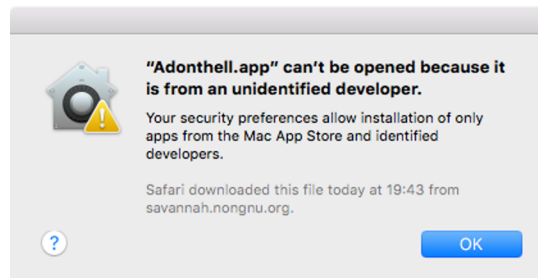
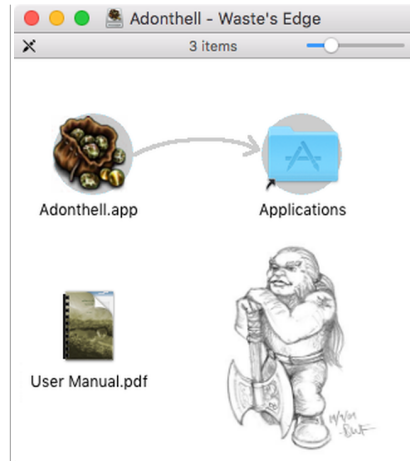
Waste's Edge for MacOS X is distributed as a disk image (.dmg) that should open automatically after downloading. If not, double click it in Finder to open.

Afterwards, drag and drop Adonthell.app onto the Applications folder, as indicated by the arrow, to install Waste's Edge on your hard drive. Note that on first launch, Gatekeeper, the built-in MacOS X security mechanism, may prevent execution.

In this case, a warning message will pop up, indicating that the program was created by a developer unknown to Apple. Confirm with **OK**.

To allow Waste's Edge to run, hold **Left CTRL** and click on Adonthell.app again. In the context menu, select **Open**.

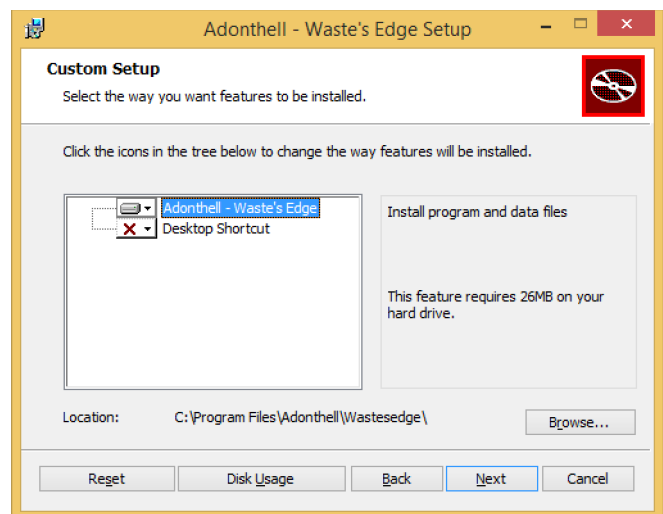
Another message will appear, which can be confirmed with **Open**, thus adding Adonthell to the list of trusted applications. From now on, you can launch Waste's Edge simply by double clicking Adonthell.app.



## 2.4 Windows

Waste's Edge for Windows is distributed as a Microsoft Installer (.msi) package. Double click the installer and follow the instructions.

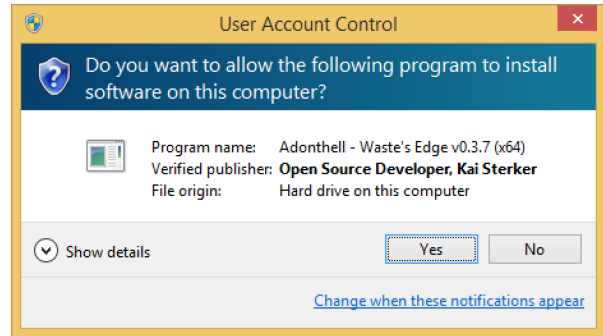
During installation, it is possible to choose a non-standard installation directory via the **Browse** button and to create an optional **Desktop Shortcut**. Make your selection and press **Next** to begin with the actual installation.



## Waste's Edge

Depending on your security settings, a Windows User Account Control (UAC) notification may appear. Press **Yes** to authorize the installation of Adonthell – Waste's Edge.

Once the installation is complete, Waste's Edge can be launched from its Start Menu entry or the optional Desktop icon.



### 3 Main Menu

After launching Waste's Edge, the title screen with the main menu is shown. While in the game, the main menu can also be brought up by pressing **ESC**.

Use the **↓** and **↑** keys to navigate the menu and press **ENTER** to select an option



#### 3.1 New Game

This option is only available from the title screen. Use it whenever you want to start your adventure from the very beginning. To continue where you left off before, use **Load Game** instead.

Character creation is limited to assigning a name to your alter ego. Press **BACKSPACE** to delete the default, then type in your own. Press **ENTER** to confirm your choice and proceed to the game's intro. To get a sense of what is going on, we encourage you to watch it at least the first time you play. It can be skipped any time by pressing **ESC**.







#### 3.2 Continue






This option is only available when bringing up the main menu later in the game. Selecting it will close the menu and allow you to continue with your quest. As an alternative, press **ESC**.

### 3.3 Load / Save


These options let you save your current progress or resume from an earlier save at any time (except when in conversations with NPCs). The **Save** option is only available when opening the main menu from within the game itself.



To **Load** an earlier game, select one of the available entries with  or  and confirm with  / .



To **Save** your game, either select one of the previous saves or the **Empty Slot** entry at the bottom of the list with  or  and confirm with  / . Type in a description and confirm with . Saving over an existing entry will replace that entry.

**Saving is for wimps. Trust your instincts and deal with the consequences!**

To cancel loading or saving at any time and return to the main menu, press .

From within the game, you can also directly use the  or  keys to open the **Load** or **Save** screen respectively.






### 3.4 Achievements

Waste's Edge includes a number of honorary titles you may earn through persistence and cleverness. A hint as to what might be required to bear each trophy and whether it has been acquired already is shown in this list. Once granted, a title will remain yours to keep, even when starting a new game with a different character.

**Do not fall for imaginary rewards! Only hard currency is worthy of pursuit.**



Use the  and  keys to browse the list, or press  to return to the main menu.

### 3.5 Options

This menu item brings up a window to change the most important settings of the game. Some advanced settings can only be changed by directly editing the configuration file.

#### 3.5.1 Basic Settings

Use the **↓** and **↑** keys to navigate the settings and the **←** and **→** keys to change each settings value. All changes take effect immediately, but only when selecting **Save** and confirming with the **ENTER** key will they be persisted for the next time you play Waste's Edge. Press **ESC** to leave the option screen without saving your changes.

The available settings are:

##### Screen Mode

Customize the appearance of Waste's Edge.

- In **Window** mode, a window just small enough to fit your desktop is created.
- In **Letterbox** mode, the game runs fullscreen at your desktop resolution, but preserves its original 4:3 aspect ratio. So on 16:9 or even wider screens common today, you will see a black border along the edges of the screen, but the image quality will be good.
- In **Fullscreen** mode, your display resolution will be switched to 640x480 and (depending on your display), no border will be present. Due to scaling and stretching of the graphics to fit your display, the image you get may appear somewhat blurry.



On a multi-monitor setup, you may move Waste's Edge to a display of your choosing while in window mode, then switch to either of the other modes to go fullscreen on the desired display.

In the unlikely event that switching screen mode leaves you with garbled output, press **ESC** twice to exit Waste's Edge, which should restore your desktop.

##### Music Volume

Customize the loudness of the background music. A value of 0 will completely turn off audio.

##### Language

Customize the language to play Waste's Edge in. The **Default** setting will try to use the language setting of your operating system, whereas any other setting will switch all of Waste's Edge's text to the selected language.

If your preferred language is not available, or incomplete, you are highly encouraged to help with the translation of Waste's Edge, thus making it accessible to a larger audience. Please have a look at The Translation Project for further details: <http://translationproject.org/domain/wastesedge.html>.

### 3.5.2 Advanced Settings

Any other settings can only be changed by manually editing the configuration file in a text editor of your choice. This file is created the first time you run Adonthell, and can usually be found in one of the following locations, depending on your operating system:

**Linux:**           \$HOME/.config/adonthell/adonthellrc

**MacOS X:**       \$HOME/Library/Application Support/Adonthell/adonthellrc

**Windows:**       %APPDATA%\Adonthell\adonthell.ini

**Keep your nose out of what doesn't need concern you!**

All lines in the file starting with # are comments and will be ignored. The valid settings and their possible values are listed below.



#### Screen-mode

Whether Adonthell should run fullscreen or in windowed mode

0 = Windowed mode, 1 = Letterbox mode, 2 = Fullscreen mode

#### Screen

Which display to use in fullscreen mode in case you are using multiple monitors

0 = Primary display, 1 = 2nd display, 2 = 3rd display, and so on

#### Language [locale]

Specifies which language to use. Of course, the translation you choose here has to be available, otherwise you'll get the default (i.e. English) text.

Languages present in Waste's Edge and their respective locales are:

Locale	Language	Locale	Language
pt_BR	Brasilian Portuguese	it_IT	Italian
da_DA	Danish	es_ES	Spanish
nl_NL	Dutch	sv_SE	Swedish
C	English	tr_TR	Turkish
fr_FR	French		

#### Font [font.ttf]

Chose a true type font to use for displaying text.

If the default font doesn't suit you, or if it does not contain the glyphs required by the language you selected, you can specify a different font here. Either enter an absolute path to a font file in true type format or enter the font name and copy the font into <gamedatadir>/gfx/window/font/.

#### Quick-load

Whether the last saved game should be automatically continued at startup. Only works if at least one saved game exists.

0 = disable, 1 = enable



## Waste's Edge

### Audio-volume

The mixer setting, 0 - 100 %

### Audio-channels

Whether sound should be mono or stereo

0 = Mono, 1 = Stereo

### Audio-resolution

Whether audio output should be 8 or 16 bit

0 = 8 bit, 1 = 16 bit

### Audio-sample-rate

0 = 11025 Hz, 1 = 22050 Hz, 2 = 44100 Hz

## 3.6 Quit

Select this item to exit Waste's Edge and return to the operating system. Make sure you have saved your progress before doing so.

## 4 Controls

Waste's Edge can be played entirely with the keyboard or a supported game controller. The following keys are recognized

When can I have  
gamepad support?



Key	Button	Action
↓ / ↑ / ← / →	D-Pad	Choosing options in the game menus Moving you character around the map Choosing responses during dialogues
SPACE / ENTER	A	Selecting an option in the various game menus Talking to NPCs (when you are facing them) Selecting a response during dialogues Examining items in and around the inn
PAGE UP / PAGE DOWN	LB / RB	Scrolling up/down in dialogues/windows
ESC	B	Skipping cut-scenes (like the intro) Bringing up the game menu Closing windows (except conversations)
S	-	Directly open the save dialog
L	-	Directly open the load dialog

## 5 Of Waste's Edge

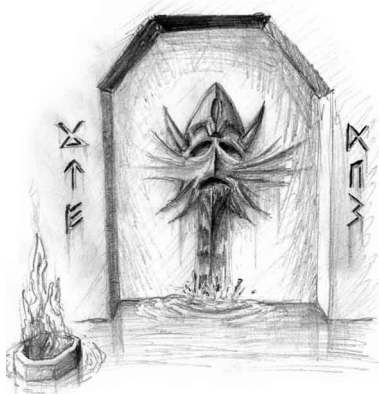
*Being a short treatise on the geography and history of the trading post of same name.*

Waste's Edge is situated on the high plain of Belerinath, at the headwaters of the Elenstroem. The land south of the river rises gently towards a range of low hills, that stretches all the way from Cirdanth in the west to the nearby mountains. Jagged cliffs on the hills' far side form the southern coast of the continent and prevent the landing of any ocean going vessel.

Not far to the east lie the Oreth-Arinyae, the Mountains of Dawn, home to many Dwarves.

Their closest settlement, Uzdun'kal, is located at the spring of the Elenstroem, which makes its way over numerous falls and rapids down to the plain of Belerinath.

On the remaining sides, Waste's Edge is surrounded by dense, primeval forest, dotted with a few small villages and towns inhabited by Half-Elves and Men. The nearest cities are Elgilad, the High City of Elves to the north, and Cirdanth, the elven Haven at the south-western tip of the mainland.



For many centuries, a limited amount of trade between Elves and Dwarfs has taken place along the Elenstroem. The Elves desired precious ores and gems for their workings of magic and in exchange the Dwarves received all kinds of rare food, herbs and spices that could not be cultivated in the harsh mountain climate. Most of the trade was conducted by Half-Elves, loyal and obedient servants to the elven Lords and Ladies, who did not mind the long journey through mostly uninhabited wilderness, as it is that same wilderness where they feel most at home.

With the arrival of Men from the north in higher numbers, this situation eventually changed. Their hunger for all sorts of ore as well as for the renowned dwarfish armour and weapons surpassed any elven trade by far. Soon big caravans were making their way through the wilderness, an easy prey for brigands and chieftains of the rivalling forest realms, one often enough not distinguishable from the other. The voyage by boat up the Elenstroem proved to be faster and safer, but near the Oreth-Arinyae rapids made the river unnavigable. The boats had to stay behind, while the crews were carrying the goods into the mountains. As the landing saw more and more traffic, crude docks were erected, improved and rebuilt over the years.

Not long and it occurred to the merchants that boats moored on the plain of Belerinath, waiting for

## Waste's Edge

the return of their crews were not earning any revenues. In a combined effort, they had storehouses built at the docks, so that both caravans from the mountains and boats coming up the Elenstroem could pick up new freight without much delay.

Any place seeing that much traffic attracts more people, seeking refuge from oppression or new opportunities, and a small community of free-thinking individuals formed around the small harbour. Several shops, a smithy, two farms and the Redwyne Inn soon cared for the needs of travellers and locals alike. To provide protection against bandits, the Inn was surrounded by a wall and manned by a number of guards from the Erinsford garrison.

Free-thinking? A bunch of ne'er-do-wells and criminals, the lot of them!

Waste's Edge thus fell under the protection and jurisdiction of the Duchy of Wyvernesse, at least in principle, but lying that remote from the capital town, and too far in elven territory, it never grew into anything different than the small trading post it has been for many generations.



## 6 Adonthell – a Retrospective

*Being a longer treatise on the feats and failures of said open source project*

Where to start? The Adonthell project in its current form came to be in 1999, but the initial spark that eventually lead to its inception can possibly be traced back to one pivotal day in 1988 or '89 (memory is hazy), where a young teenage boy was entrusted to the care of a stranger, so his parents could spend an undisturbed afternoon with their friends. The stranger, one of the friends' brother, chose to entertain the boy by first laying siege to medieval castles before eventually descending into the maze of an underground dungeon, where, besides many terrible monsters, a dragon lurked, much like the Smaug of the boys' childhood readings, yet so much more life-like and impressive.



*Dungeon Master*

On the way home, the parents probably cursed their choice of custody, for the whole conversation revolved around the fabled computer, on which those marvels had unfolded. To their credit, while in no uncertain way denying the request for such an expensive toy when it was first brought forth,

```
INVENTAR
<L> GOLD : 284
<W> WAFFE : Dolch
<S> SCHILD : Kleiner Lederschild
<R> RÜSTUNG: Lederwams
LIST
REM ***** KAMPF *****
Monster:
GOSUB Verben
COLOR 2,0
LOCATE 2,2:PRINT "<A> ANGREIFE"
LOCATE 5,2:PRINT "<B> BETRACHTE"
LOCATE 6,2:PRINT "<F> FLÜCHTE"
IF ort=0 THEN GOSUB dorfn
IF ort=5 THEN GOSUB hoehln
WINDOW OUTPUT 4:CLS:COLOR 1,0
PRINT
PRINT "Plötzlich hörst Du rasche Schrit
PRINT " hinter dir. Du drehst dich um un
PRINT " siehst einen 'nms' mit
PRINT " einen 'wms' in der Hand"
PRINT " auf dich zukommen!"
Mahl2:
WINDOW OUTPUT 4
ZS=INKEYS
IF ZS="A" THEN GOTO flucht
VERTEIDIGUNG: 3
ANGRIFF : 2
LEVEL : 1
ARUNG : 0
T : 31
LLIGENZ: 3
K : 26
LIEFER:
SCHIEß
Amigabasic LiesMich HDInstTools Mülltonne
```

*Adventures in Amiga BASIC*

come Christmas, two large boxes wrapped in fan-fold paper left little doubt as to their contents. And so the boy not only took to the magical worlds of the aforementioned *Defender of the Crown* or *Dungeon Master*, and many others of their ilk, but also to the equally magical task of making the machine do his bidding, first through arcane listings, painstakingly transcribed from magazines, which would soon be modified with fragments gleaned from the equally obscure AMIGA Basic manual and finally be supplanted by original creations of his own.

## Adonthell

Truth, Love and Courage:  
what more could a Dwarf  
strive for?



Fast forward to early 1997, when a programming course at University introduced the young man to both C/C++ and GNU/Linux. While the time between must have held many memorable moments, those relevant to Adonthell could be counted on 3 fingers: *Ambermoon*, *Ultima VII* and (the much lesser loved) *Ultima VIII* and then nothing else in the way of story driven cRPGs that came to be his most favourite pastime (the RPG renaissance fuelled by games like *Baldur's Gate* and *Planescape: Torment* being yet some years away). So what better use for one's time, newly acquired skills and the brand-new Pentium 200 computer, than to pursue what had been difficult to fully realize before, and currently wasn't obtainable elsewhere?

Taking more interest in the story and interaction with the various inhabitants of virtual worlds than in dungeon-crawling and monster-slaying, most of the early labour went into replicating the style of conversations present in *Ultima VIII* and into creating a tool that would simplify the authoring of extensive and complex dialogue trees. Thought also went into a story loosely inspired by the brief visit of ancient Sosaria in the *Silver Seed* add-on to *Ultima VII Part Two* and James Oliver



*Ultima VII - The Black Gate*

Rigney Junior's epic tale of an "Age yet to come, an Age long past". Born from a general fascination of mythical times and their surviving relics, Adonthell's plot had at its heart the unearthing of events long forgotten, which threatened to cause much distress and upheaval in the present, culminating in actually visiting the past to save the future. This time travelling interlude would have the benefit of expanding the size of the game, while allowing to reuse much of the prospective game world, meaning less work for the yet to be enlisted artists and level designers.



*The Island of Adonthell*

Finally, in early 1999, this solitary writing of little code and plenty of design documents finally reached the point where it was deemed ready to share with the world at large, hoping to attract the attention and help of like-minded cRPG aficionados, much like Linus Torvalds' announcement of "a (free) operating system (just a hobby, won't be big and professional like gnu)

for 386(486) AT clones" 8 years earlier had snowballed into the huge success that GNU/Linux had become by the end of the '90s. To further that goal, a website was created and put online on February 21<sup>st</sup>. It didn't take long before this simple static site was deemed insufficient, however, as certainly a message board and other dynamic bells and whistles would both signal competence and ease collaboration. So a hosting provider that allowed CGI scripts was required, and, being but a poor student, it had to be free of charge. From the handful likely candidates, (the now sadly discontinued) Linuxgames.com seemed the perfect fit, and therefore the first contacted.

## Waste's Edge

As it turned out, not only was it the perfect fit, but had, only a short while earlier, garnered the interest of a duo that pursued the same pastime and was equally looking for a homely place to share their creation, Genesroll, with the rest of the world, or at least with the few geeks that did play games on Linux in 1999. Al Koskelin, one of the Linuxgames.com editors naturally suggested that the two fledgling projects combine their efforts, and so emails went back and forth and a meeting on IRC was arranged. It did not take long to become apparent that the two projects would complement each other perfectly: Genesroll was inspired by Final Fantasy, and what Alex and James had to show was a tile based map the player could roam freely, with a layer of clouds moving across the pixelated landscape, while Adonthell had a graph-based dialogue system with a graphical editor and a big chunk of backstory to go with. It did not take long for the decision to merge JRPG-aesthetics with western-style gameplay under the, perhaps, snappier, if unpronounceable moniker of Adonthell: a match made in heaven.



*Genesroll*

When asked later, James came forth with his part of the story behind Genesroll

```
From: "<<< cirrus >>>" <cirrus@...>  
Subject: Re: Sourceforge success stories contest  
Date: Thu, 11 May 2000 20:02:57 +0100  
X-Mailer: Mozilla 4.61 [en] (X11; I; Linux 2.2.12-20 i586)
```

During my summer holidays back in '98 I spent a few days in Arras, France. Being a Mac fan a small computer shop caught my eye (Mediaburo, I think its name was) as it was advertising the (then) new iMac. So in I went and enquired about the Macs they had. The shop assistant's English wasn't too good and my French is pretty poor so Alex, who was working there, was called in. We got talking and I mentioned that I despised Microsoft upon which he asked me if I knew about Linux. I had heard of it at the time, but never seen it so he offered to show it to me as he had it on PC there. He showed me what I now know to be the Enlightenment WM which, me being a sucker for nice gfx, blew me away and convinced me to finally get Linux and try it out. Alex also showed me a little game he was working on at the time :). He told me it was going to be an RPG but it didn't have a name yet and it was still at a very early stage. There was a beach level and you could walk your character around. I offered to help out with the graphics and we exchanged emails.

Back in England I stayed in touch with Alex via email. He helped me get started with Linux and eventually sent me a copy of the game, which had been named Genesroll in the meantime. (There was no story yet, it just seemed to be a good name!). I got to work on some graphics - the forest house was my first job.

Alex had started on a website for the game and my friends and I offered to host it on our site, twiddles.com. Alex had found Linuxgames though, who offered a much better deal than we ever could. Although they agreed to host us we didn't go online yet

## Adonthell

because the site wasn't finished. Meanwhile it was summer 1999 and I was on holiday in Europe again, so I stopped by Arras for 2 days to meet Alex. He told me that our contact at Linuxgames (AlKini, I think) had seen another, similar project called Adonthell and suggested to him to get in touch with the founder of that project. That was, of course, Kai. Alex showed me the Adonthell site and we decided to merge Genescroll with Adonthell (keeping Adonthell's name since it already had a decent story - in fact that's more or less all it was at the time). Since Kai already had a good site we moved in at linuxgames soon after. The rest is history!

Collaboration in these early days mostly involved sending ideas and code back and forth via email, culminating in the first public release on November 3rd, 1999, starring James' vibrant artwork and Alex' multi-layered map engine. This was promptly followed by the opening of a mailing-list at ONElist, and thanks to the prominent display on Linuxgames.com's front page, the first contributor showed up on the following day:

```
From: Raphael Alla <raphi-linux@...>  
Subject: A new member  
Date: Mon, 8 Nov 1999 08:07:42 +0000
```

Salut, Guten Tag, Hi,

I'd like to introduce myself: my name is Raphael, I live in Sydney, in Australia, and I am French. I really like your project and would like to contribute to this game. I like computer RPG quite a lot, and I truly enjoyed Might and Magic, Daggerfall, Ultima and some other nintendo games such as Zelda, Chrono Trigger, Final Fantasy (I like Japanese Manga-style games).



*Adonthell v0.1*

By the start of the new millennium, the Adonthell team already comprised of at least a dozen like-minded souls, covering most aspects vital for the task ahead -- design, programming, graphics, writing and music, who conversed on a daily basis via the aforementioned mailing list and, in a more immediate fashion, during a monthly IRC chat, the first of which was held on January 8<sup>th</sup>.


While each of those individuals had a part in the rapidly growing project, however small or large their contribution, looking back, some clearly played a more essential role in shaping the direction of development, while others greatly impacted the reception of Adonthell by its audience. Of the former, honourable mention goes first and foremost to Andrew Henderson. Having been to a hacking event held by Loki Entertainment Software (the company that pioneered porting commercial games to the Linux platform), where participants had the chance to sift through and modify the source code of Civilization Call To Power, he successfully scored a job interview and started working at Loki in February<sup>1</sup>. Thanks to him, the second version of Adonthell, released on

---

<sup>1</sup> Amongst others, he worked on porting Sid Meier's Alpha Centauri, with its *"TENS of THOUSANDS of lines of inlined assembly"*

## Waste's Edge

February 19<sup>th</sup>, was completely rewritten in C++ on top of SDL, the same low level graphics and I/O library in use by Loki back then (being written by their lead programmer, Sam Lantinga), and by many more open source and commercial games and game engines since then. It was also Andrew who suggested to take a look at Sourceforge.net, a platform that had gone online just over a month ago, which provided free hosting and a plethora of tools for open source projects, such as mailing-lists, issue trackers and a version control system. Adonthell registered on January 2<sup>nd</sup>, as project number 1051.

With the aid of the tools provided by Sourceforge and the much enlarged team, this second release (v0.2) was not a simple remake of the initial version, but already contained the beautiful music composed by Joseph Toscano<sup>2</sup>, a nice, parallax-scrolling intro drawn by James  and the beginnings of a user interface courtesy of Joel Vennin. All the while, Mike Nieforth, aka Nezumi, went headlong into fleshing out the original Adonthell plot, coming up with backgrounds and personalities for the eight possible main characters (Human, Dwarf, Half-Elf and Elf in both male and female form), eventually turning each origin story into an introductory chapter for that character that also doubled as a gameplay tutorial. One really wonders if somebody at Bioware was inspired by our design documents.



*The races of Adonthell: Elves, Half-Elves, Humans and Dwarves*

With version 0.2 released and reaching position 95 in Sourceforge's weekly download charts, work on the next iteration of the Adonthell engine began. The feature list was compiled quickly: a fullscreen view of the game world, higher resolution for more detailed characters and scenery and, at long last, inclusion of the dialogue system to interact with NPCs. But above all, the next release should also provide actual gameplay. However, neither the plot of Adonthell itself, nor any of the character intros were really suitable, as latter could not be realized in a satisfactory manner without more systems in place, and former would contain too many spoilers for the final game. The idea to do something self-contained, that took part in the world of Adonthell, but completely unrelated to the events of the main story came during the IRC meeting held on the first weekend of June. While the actual chat is too long to replicate here in full, a brief summary was sent out to the mailing list the next day:

---

<sup>2</sup> Visit <http://bandcamp.zhaytee.net/> for more of Joe's oeuvre

## Adonthell

From: Kai Sterker <ksterker@...>  
To: adonthell-plot@lists.sourceforge.net  
Subject: Preview Plot  
X-Mailer: XMail 1.1 - with PGP support, PGP engine version 0.5 (Linux)  
Date: Mon Jun 5 11:37:55 2000

Hi everybody!

Since the next version of Adonthell will have support for dialogues and maybe a few items if Jay and Mark get their work done, we'll need a preview that makes most of this.

My idea: a "locked room mystery of a sort": few people in a tavern/inn, something gets stolen, player got to find out by talking to people/using the few available items (if any).

This very rough idea was quickly detailed into what eventually became known as Waste's Edge by the ever prolific Nezumi. By end of June, the location, characters and plot were in near final state and writing of the first few dialogues began. It quickly became apparent, however, that in order to

**They should have chosen Uzdun'kal instead, and shown the splendor of its deep halls!**

truly separate the game engine, the part that provided the underlying framework for building any number of RPGs, from the game specific logic itself, the engine needed to provide a scripting language to implement said logic with. There had already been humble beginnings of one in the dialogue system, mostly meant to



keep track of decisions made during a conversation, so that future conversations could react to and reflect those decisions. While preparations were made to turn this into a more general, widely usable scripting solution, the experience of another relatively new addition to the motley crew of Adonthell developers came to the rescue. Mark Howson had been the maintainer of KAngband, one of many variants of the tolkienesque rogue-like RPG Angband (formerly known as Moria), which made heavy use of Python, an interpreted, object oriented programming language that interfaced fairly well with code written in C++. It took him some convincing, but eventually it was decided to drop this custom scripting solution in favour of something that was readily available, well tested and more powerful to boot. It was therefore only natural that a book on Python programming was chosen as the prize, when Nezumi's entry in a contest held by Sourceforge, intended to highlight the features of their platform to prospective developers, came out amongst the winners:

From: nezumi <nezumi@...>  
To: adonthell-general@lists.sourceforge.net  
Subject: Fw: SourceForge Success Stories Contest  
Date: Wed, 09 Aug 2000 22:58:36 ADT  
X-Mailer: Spruce 0.6.5 for X11 w/smtpio 0.7.9

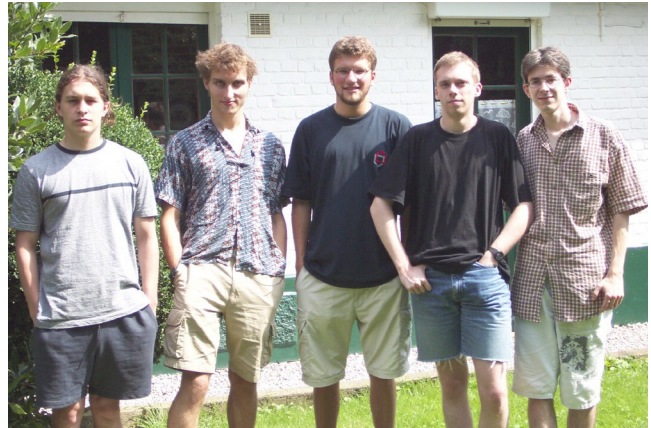
I just got this when I logged on this morning. It doesn't really say what place we ranked (other than the incorrect "first place" comment), but suffice to say we did well. Thanks are in order to all who helped, either with comments or good thoughts.



## Waste's Edge

```
On Tue, 08 Aug 2000, Dan Bressler wrote:
> Congratulations!
>
> Your entry has been selected as a first prize winner in the
> SourceForge Success Stories Contest.
>
> Please select an O'Reilly book from the catalog available at:
>
> http://www.oreilly.com/catalog/
>
> Email your choice (and confirm your mailing address) to:
> dbressler@valinux.com, and we shall endeavor to get you your
> prize as soon as possible.
```

A plan was made to mail the book from one developer to the next, so that each could share in the spoils of Nezumi's grand laudation of Sourceforge's manifold benefits and learn how to aid in the scripting of Waste's Edge, but in the end it only circulated in North America. Luckily, this did not impact progress at all, as Python was simple enough to pick up and the European faction had already made preparations for a different kind of knowledge transfer: a meeting in person to be held, over the weekend of August 11<sup>th</sup>, in Karlsruhe, Germany, to talk about the design and implementation of Waste's Edge and, above all, to have a jolly good time. Thus began a "tradition" of yearly Adonthell meetings that, although only lasting for three years, would be both highly anticipated social event and provide big leaps to Adonthell's development, due to the intense and fruitful design and coding sessions held on those occasions.



*Joel, James, Benjamin, Alex and Kai,  
Bavinchove, France*

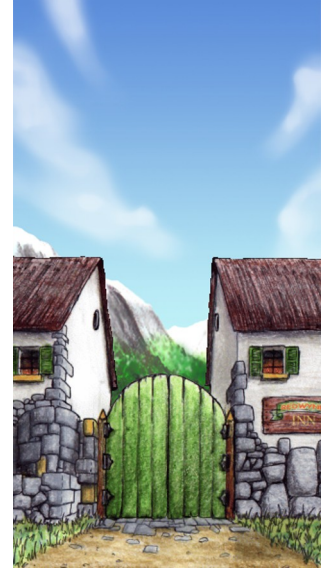
Still, the road to v0.3 proved to be a rocky one. Scheduled to be released later that same year, even the second European Adonthell meeting from August 19<sup>th</sup> to 22<sup>nd</sup> 2001 in France did not see the completion of Waste's Edge. Which did not prevent the developers in attendance to already make plans for an eventual v0.4 release, all the while enjoying the generous hospitality and fabulous cuisine of Alex' parents. Originally envisioned as a short adventure of 30 minutes, Waste's Edge had turned into a greater ambition; its cast of 14 NPCs and a final word count of over 20,000 kept artists and writers busy even after most of the code was in place. Yet, there also remained a lot of additional scripting to be done, to truly bring the Redwyne Inn to life. Thanks to Benjamin Walther-Franks, who drew the detailed character sprites (no mean feat, considering the limited canvas of 20x30 pixels he had available for each) and amazingly expressive portraits, and Josh Glover, who joined in the writing effort, Waste's Edge was finally released to the public on January 28<sup>th</sup> 2002. Together with the release, a newly designed website, also courtesy of Benjamin, went live and remains Adonthell's face to the wider world to this present day.

**The culinary delights  
of France are a  
worthy treat for Lord  
and Lady alike!**



## Adonthell

With the v0.3 milestone finally in the hand of Linux RPG fans, one might assume that work on the next iteration would start immediately. But, having dedicated so much time and energy to Waste's Edge, it was only natural that it should be introduced to an audience as large as possible. Which meant to actively advertise it instead of just relying on the exposure provided by Linuxgames.com, and also porting to additional operating systems. Towards former end, Alex secured an interview with Georg Greve, founder of the Free Software Foundation Europe, who featured Waste's Edge in issue 37 of his *Brave GNU World* article series<sup>3</sup>, or blog, as it would likely be called nowadays. This coup not only brought the project more publicity on the web, but also meant it would appear in Linux Magazine, which printed Georg's column (see issue #20 in the U.S., April 2002 issue in Germany, likely other regional offshoots). After all the hard work, what could be more rewarding than seeing a high-profile publication dedicate nearly a full page of text and screenshots to one's creation?




*The Redwyne Inn*

Adding support for other operating systems went more slowly, and for the most part relied on volunteers with the hard-, software and knowledge to compile the code and address platform-specific issues. But a year after its release, Waste's Edge ran on BeOS, BSD, Mac OS X, Solaris and Windows on architectures as varied as Alpha, Sparc, PPC and, of course, x86). It had also been included in a number of Linux distributions, most prominently Debian, but also Mandrake and, first and foremost, Source Mage.

With Waste's Edge providing some gameplay, but still being a far cry from a proper role playing game, consensus was that v0.4 and the accompanying demo should at long last add all the missing game elements, in addition to the inevitable technical improvements. Those were Alex' domain, who devised a much refined, modular engine design and the next round of features: a higher resolution, pixel by pixel movement and an overhaul of the input system to support any combination of gamepad, mouse and keyboard control. Thus began another major rewrite of the code. Meanwhile, Benjamin, not only being a gifted character artist, but also an avid pen and paper player, came up with the rules and maths behind combat and levelling. His system would grant each of the four major races unique talents: true magic would be reserved to the scholarly, star-gazing Elves, whereas Half-Elves, being people of nature, would exert control over latter and even assume the attributes of plant and beast for a short while. Dwarves, the masters of metals and crafting,

**None but the noble  
Yeti shall invigorate  
our hands and senses.**

would have the gift to enhance weapons and armour way beyond their original quality by the means of inscribing powerful runes, which, to the same effect, they would also tattoo on living flesh. Humans finally, jacks of all trades and masters of none, would have

 their own means to counter the inherent talents of the other races, namely alchemy and mechanics, by which they would brew versatile concoctions and cobble together ingenious machinery.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.gnu.org/brave-gnu-world/issue-37.html>

## Waste's Edge



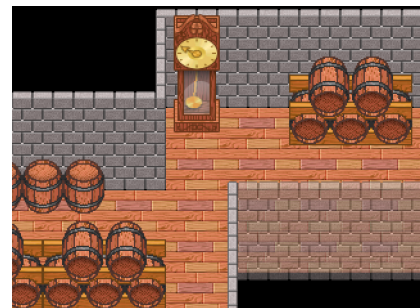
*v0.4 Plot takes shape at the 3rd meeting in Bonn, Germany*

So at the time of the third and final European meeting, from 30<sup>th</sup> of July to August the 4<sup>th</sup> 2002, the future of Adonthell looked bright. While the number of active contributors had somewhat dwindled over time, a core team of programmers, artists and writers remained, and expectations were that Waste's Edge would help draw in new talent to fill the ranks. One such

addition was Andrew Phillips, a resourceful writer, who immediately took to producing a vast amount of background lore regarding the different peoples and places of Adonthell, and, after the first ideas for the v0.4 demo game, Dun Barethsol, had surfaced during the meeting, was instrumental in fleshing out NPCs, locations and quests. Much of his writing has been made available in the “Library” section of the website (which later moved to the Adonthell Wiki), but some of his longer, novella-sized pieces were only shared privately amongst fellow writers. If, and in what form, they will be made available to the public is for Andrew to decide.

While the design and groundwork for Dun Barethsol were pretty much complete, programming only progressed slowly over the next two years. With a much higher attention to code quality, a higher level of abstraction and an ever growing codebase, contributing to the project was not becoming any easier. To make it more simple for newcomers to circumnavigate these obstacles, the Development Wiki<sup>4</sup> was launched in May 2005, intended to be a growing almanac of all things Adonthell. In its first year, 230 articles had been added already and it proved a viable tool to preserve decisions reached in lengthy discussions on the mailing lists, while also being a living document that could be updated quickly and easily whenever the need arose. Since the Wiki alone also did not speed up development – populating all the content rather slowed it down some more – a series of alpha releases of the new game engine were made available from 2007 through 2009, without gameplay, but at least demonstrating the newly available features. None of it helped, however. The interest that the very first release of Alex' relabelled Genescroll project had sparked ten years earlier, causing progress to move along by leaps and bounds, could not be rekindled.

That is not to say that there weren't any new contributors at all. Tyler Nielsen took over work on low level graphics and rendering from Alex, Rian Shelley added a new and improved widget set for the user interface and Frederico Cerveira implemented path finding for a game world that was no longer limited by two dimensions. On the graphics side, Ingo Ruhnke, perhaps one of the most active developers in the open source gaming scene, drew portraits for all 47 major NPCs of Dun Barethsol and James made a comeback for some in-game graphics as well.



*v0.4 graphics demo*

---

<sup>4</sup> Currently located at <http://adonthell.sourceforge.net/doc/>

# Adonthell

By mid-2010, the code and accompanying tools had finally reached the point where all features present in v0.3 (and many more) were ready to use, and work on Dun Barethsol could start in earnest. It was decided to aim for a recreation of Waste's Edge with the new engine first, then expand from there, since the Redwyne Inn and its surrounding settlement was part of the larger area featured in the new demo game. However, lack of artists to create character animations and graphics for the higher resolution, and the unwillingness to use placeholders in their stead, finally lead to a complete stagnation of the project. After a few more years in hibernation, it was finally declared dead on January 24<sup>th</sup> 2016. Since then, focus has been on preserving the fruits of many years of

**Worry not, there is yet hope for Dun Barethsol!**

hard work, first and foremost the v0.3 demo game. After all, time is not kind to software that lies dormant for too long: compilers validate code more strictly, dependencies grow incompatible or, worse, are discontinued and even ready-made binaries eventually will fall victim to bit-rot. But fear



not, since, as you are reading this, Waste's Edge has been dusted off, carefully brushed up and put back on strong and modern foundations, so it will last through the next decade, thus concluding this account on a happier note. And if you have read so far, and spent a few fun hours with the game, then all the effort has been well worth it.

## 7 Contact and Support

Adonthell would not have been around for so long without the constant stream of feedback and encouragement, as well as justified criticism, directed at the team over all those years. And even with development on hold, we are still interested in your thoughts and opinion, and perhaps one day, with your help, an opportunity will present itself to tell the tale of Dun Barethsol in one way or another. So don't hesitate to get in touch via

**The Adonthell web site:** <http://adonthell.nongnu.org>.

Visit for news and further information about the Adonthell project.

**Mailing list:** <https://lists.nongnu.org/mailman/listinfo/adonthell-general>

A general-purpose list to reach out to the developers and provide feedback, which is very welcome indeed.

**Support Manager:** <http://savannah.nongnu.org/support/?group=adonthell>

We hope you'll never have to use this tool, but if you run into a problem, we would like to hear about it. First check if a solution to your issue might already be available, otherwise select **Support / Submit new** from the menu and provide as many details regarding the issue as possible.

**I'd rather keep to myself.**



## 8 Credits

### Original Idea and Design

Alexandré Courbot  
Kai Sterker

### Programming

Alexandré Courbot  
Andrew Henderson  
Joel Vennin  
Kai Sterker

### Additional Programming

Chris Harris  
Frederico Cerveira  
Jayson Baird  
Josh Glover  
Mark Howson  
Micah Cowan  
Michał Kaliński  
Michael Avery  
Rian Shelley  
Tyler Nielson

### Graphics and Cutscenes

James Nash

### Character Art and Animations

Benjamin Walther-Franks

### Additional Artwork

Adrian Neill  
Caroline Lassalle  
Ingo Ruhnke  
Isabel  
Mr Pomme

### Plot and Writing

Andrew Phillips  
Mike Nieforth  
Josh Glover  
Kai Sterker

### Music and Sfx

Joseph Toscano

### Localization

Anders Jonsson  
Benno Schulenberg  
Clément Plantier  
Erwin Poeze

I cannot approve of these folks, putting the Lady through such hardship!



Fernando Carmona Varo

Julie Vermeersch

Joe Hansen

Mesutcan Kurt

Paolo Gatti

Rafael Fontenelle

### Special Thanks to

Al Koskelin

Andrew Henderson

Chris Harris

Mark Howson

Dave Peticolas

Ryan O'Neil

Meandus

Deniz Oezsen

The people behind SDL, Ogg Vorbis, Python, SWIG and all the other Free Software developers whose work made Adonthell possible in the first place. We're truly standing on the shoulders of giants.

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Version 2, June 1991

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## Waste's Edge

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Franklin Street, Fifth Floor, Boston, MA 02110-1301, USA.
```

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If the program is interactive, make it output a short notice like this when it starts in an interactive mode:

```
Gnomovision version 69, Copyright (C) year name of author  
Gnomovision comes with ABSOLUTELY NO WARRANTY; for details  
type `show w'. This is free software, and you are welcome  
to redistribute it under certain conditions; type `show c'  
for details.
```

## Waste's Edge

The hypothetical commands ``show w'` and ``show c'` should show the appropriate parts of the General Public License. Of course, the commands you use may be called something other than ``show w'` and ``show c'`; they could even be mouse-clicks or menu items--whatever suits your program.

You should also get your employer (if you work as a programmer) or your school, if any, to sign a "copyright disclaimer" for the program, if necessary. Here is a sample; alter the names:

```
Yoyodyne, Inc., hereby disclaims all copyright interest in the program
`Gnomovision' (which makes passes at compilers) written by James Hacker.
```

```
signature of Ty Coon, 1 April 1989
Ty Coon, President of Vice
```

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Version 2.0, January 2004

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