THE HIDDEN CIRCLE GAZETTE

AN INDEPENDENT 3DXCHAT NEWS PUBLICATION.

2026-11-21 ARTICLE CLIPPING — THEHIDDENCIRCLE.COM

VIBE

Three Years On

BY CURT ROSEWOOD — 2026-11-21



An anniversary nobody planned for

In October 2023, something appeared on the internet that would eventually become *The Hidden Circle Gazette*. At the time, however, there was no Gazette, no editorial ambition and certainly no grand plan to document the peculiar little universe that is 3DX. There was just a blog attached to a club called *The Hidden Circle*.

The club itself was not exactly a roaring success. Despite my best efforts, attracting a decent crowd proved to be considerably more difficult than I had imagined. It requires a particular combination of enthusiasm, persistence, social skills and probably a healthy tolerance for standing around in an empty room wondering where everybody is. Whatever that combination was, I clearly hadn't quite mastered it.

Eventually, I closed the club. Under normal circumstances, that would have been the end of The Hidden Circle, another name quietly disappearing from the ever-changing landscape of 3DX.

From Pictures to Stories

Looking back at those early blog posts is a rather nostalgic experience. One of the first, published on 8 October 2023,

featured Squeeky's remarkable reconstruction[1] of ancient Rome. Like most of the early blog entries, it consisted mainly of photographs accompanied by a little text explaining what the reader was looking at. The intention was simple: to showcase the extraordinary things people were building in 3DX and give their creations a little exposure.

There was certainly no shortage of material. One of the most remarkable aspects of 3DX has always been the creativity of its community. Many of these projects represent hundreds of hours of work, sometimes considerably more. Yet in a virtual world where rooms open and close at the click of a button, even the most extraordinary creation can disappear from public view almost overnight. Unless someone takes the trouble to document it, all that effort risks becoming little more than a memory shared by those who happened to be there.

That was what appealed to me about those early showcases. I enjoyed visiting the rooms, taking photographs and finding out what had inspired their creators. The articles weren't particularly ambitious, but they gave me an excuse to explore a side of 3DX that I found fascinating. When the club closed, I realised there was no reason to stop doing that.

Turning the blog into a Gazette was a gradual process rather than a dramatic relaunch. I began looking beyond buildings and inviting other people to contribute their own articles. That opened the door to subjects I would probably never have considered myself, and to perspectives quite different from my own. The Gazette slowly became less about what I happened to find interesting and more about what the community itself had to share.

A Little Bit of Everything

Over the following years, the range of subjects expanded considerably. Building showcases remained part of the Gazette, but they were joined by interviews, music features, event reports, personal experiences, opinion pieces, fiction and the occasional investigation into the stranger things happening in our virtual world.

Some stories have been lighthearted, others more serious. We've celebrated anniversaries, explored the work of artists and musicians, spoken with people about their experiences and occasionally taken a closer look at things that weren't quite what they seemed.

Not every article has been about 3DX itself, either. Our contributors have brought their own interests, knowledge and imagination to the publication, introducing subjects ranging from music and cultural history to creative writing and personal reflections. I rather like that. A community is made up of people with lives and interests that extend well beyond their avatars, and there's no reason why the Gazette shouldn't reflect that.

Looking through the archive today, I'm occasionally surprised by just how much ground we've covered. There are articles I remember vividly, others I'd almost forgotten writing, and a few that make me wonder what on earth possessed me to think they were a good idea in the first place. But together they form something I hadn't really anticipated when I started: a small historical record of a community that is constantly changing.

Clubs come and go, friendships form and fade, familiar names disappear and new ones take their place. Rooms that once attracted enormous crowds can vanish without a trace, while creations that nobody expected much from become enduring favourites. The Gazette captures little fragments of that history. It may not be a particularly systematic archive, but it preserves stories that might otherwise have been lost.

The Trouble with Having to Write Something

Of course, enjoying writing articles and keeping a publication going for three years are two rather different things.

When the Gazette was still a little blog, I could write something whenever I felt like it. If I came across an interesting room, I'd take some pictures and put together a short article. If nothing caught my attention for a while, that wasn't a problem. Nobody was expecting the next edition.

Once the Gazette began publishing regularly, things changed. I found myself trying to maintain something resembling a weekly rhythm, which sounds perfectly manageable until you actually have to do it. Coming up with one interesting idea isn't particularly difficult. Coming up with another one next week, and the week after that, and then continuing for months and years, is a different proposition altogether.

---

[1] https://thehiddencircle.com/rome/

There's also the question of motivation. Writing, editing, finding suitable pictures, formatting everything for publication and maintaining the website all take time. It's time I willingly spend because I enjoy doing it, but that doesn't mean there aren't moments when I wonder whether the effort is worthwhile.

One of the peculiarities of publishing on the internet is how difficult it can be to judge whether people actually appreciate what you're doing. Website statistics will tell you how many people visited an article, but they won't tell you whether those people enjoyed reading it, found it interesting or abandoned it halfway through to go and make a cup of coffee.

Most readers are silent, and that's perfectly understandable. I read plenty of things myself without ever contacting the author to tell them I enjoyed it. The people who dislike something are often rather more inclined to make their feelings known. That can easily create a slightly distorted impression of how your work is being received.

The Elephant in the Newsroom

There is another aspect of writing the Gazette that has changed dramatically over the past three years, and it would be rather dishonest to pretend otherwise. Artificial intelligence has become part of the process, and I have mixed feelings about it.

On the one hand, AI has probably saved the Gazette. There have been plenty of occasions when I had an idea for an article but struggled to turn it into something readable, or when the information was there but finding the right structure and words seemed like more work than I had the time or energy for. Having a tool that can help organise thoughts, suggest approaches and turn a collection of notes into a workable article has made an enormous difference. Without it, quite a few stories would probably never have made it onto the website.

On the other hand, there is an uncomfortable side to that convenience. When a machine helps you write something, how much of it can you honestly call your own? I sometimes find myself feeling a little like a cheat, particularly when someone compliments an article that received considerable assistance from AI. It's a peculiar feeling, because the idea was still mine, the subject was something I wanted to explore, and the decision about what eventually appeared in the Gazette was mine as well. Yet there's no denying that the process is different from sitting down and writing every word yourself.

Perhaps I'll eventually become more comfortable with the arrangement. For now, I suspect that slight feeling of unease is actually rather healthy. It reminds me that these tools are supposed to help me write the Gazette, not decide what the Gazette should be.

Still Here, Three Years Later

For all the difficulties, I still enjoy doing the Gazette enormously. There is something genuinely satisfying about discovering a beautiful room someone has spent months building, hearing the story behind a musical performance, or meeting someone whose creativity and dedication deserve a little more attention than they might otherwise receive. 3DX is full of talented people doing remarkable things, often without much recognition beyond their immediate circle of friends. Being able to put some of that work into the spotlight is probably the most rewarding part of running the Gazette.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without the many people who have helped along the way. The Gazette may have started as a personal project, but it has long since grown beyond anything I could produce entirely on my own. To everyone who has contributed an article, agreed to an interview, shared photographs, provided information, suggested a story or simply taken the time to read what we publish, thank you. Your generosity, creativity and willingness to share are what make the Gazette possible.

And if you've ever thought about writing something yourself, we'd love to hear from you. You don't need to be an experienced writer, and you certainly don't need to have a grand story to tell. Perhaps you've built something you're particularly proud of, have an interesting experience to share, or simply have an idea for an article you think others might enjoy. Get in touch with us[2]. The Gazette has always been about giving people a place to share their creativity, and there's always room for another voice.

Three years ago, I closed a club because I couldn't attract enough people to fill it. Somehow, I ended up with a Gazette that depends on people having something to say.

[2] https://discord.gg/PyWnUjVNx2

I think I prefer it this way.

With special thanks to all our contributing authors, interviewees and everyone else who helps make the gazette possible.
