Colin Watson

Residence	Wilburton, Ely, United Kingdom
E-mail	cjwatson@chiark.greenend.org.uk
Nationality	Irish, British

I am a self-starting free software developer who has been a core member of the Debian and Ubuntu development teams for many years. I like delivering software to end users and maintaining it afterwards for the long haul. Experience working at the scale of large software distributions has taught me how to navigate and absorb unfamiliar codebases very quickly, particularly build systems. I have worked remotely for the majority of my professional life, have a strong sense of personal responsibility, and do not need close supervision to stay productive.

Employment

Jan 2024 – present day:
Freelance consultant for Columbiform (my own company).

Jan 2015 – Dec 2023:
Software Engineer on Canonical's Launchpad team (Staff Engineer with architect responsibility from about 2019 on). Projects included: adding Git hosting support; rewriting much of launchpad-buildd for improved testability; building snap and charm recipes; adding GitHub bug linking; several Twisted improvements to support newer SSH protocol features; revamping build system; a number of upstream contributions to Zope; implementing a code-signing service; mentoring several new engineers; many database performance optimizations; porting the main >700KLoC codebase to Python 3; rewrote deployment machinery; and generally working through years of technical debt.

Oct 2008 – Dec 2014:
Technical Lead for the Ubuntu Foundations team. Projects included: significant contributions to GRUB 2; flicker-free boot; a large part of Ubuntu's implementation of UEFI Secure Boot; cross-building packages at scale; improved the quality of daily builds, including starting a rotating maintenance squad and shifting uploads to a staged model; service on the Technical Board; porting various packages to Python 3; and a great deal of maintenance work.

Dec 2006 – Oct 2008:
Ubuntu Development Manager for Canonical, responsible for the Ubuntu Foundations team.

May 2004 – Dec 2006:
Joined Canonical Ltd. as one of its initial group of developers of the Ubuntu distribution of GNU/Linux. Projects included: initiating and leading the installer team; building CD images; a stint as release manager; development and maintenance of various archive-related software; and the creation of a new graphical installer.

May 2003 – May 2004:

Software Engineer for nCipher Corporation, Cambridge. Worked on improving ASN.1 support, bug tracking system infrastructure, and the beginnings of a TPM-related project.

August 2000 – April 2003:
Software Engineer for Zeus Technology, Cambridge, specialising initially in performance and later in web server development. Experience in Unix performance tuning, C++, and Perl (both scripting and XS). Primary author of the Perl extensions to the Zeus Web Server.

June–September 1999:
Summer job in C development (configuration management for embedded communications software) at Data Connection, London.

Other Experience

Debian Developer (`https://www.debian.org/`) since February 2001. I've maintained a number of important packages over the years, including man-db, groff, base-passwd, openssh, and grub2, and wrote some packages such as binfmt-support and libpipeline from scratch. I maintained the bug tracking system from about 2002 to 2008, including adding the version tracking feature that forms an important part of Debian's release management. I was a release manager for the 3.1 ("sarge") release, a member of the installer team for many years, and I served on the Technical Committee from August 2011 to March 2015.

Self-taught C, Perl, Python, and various other less useful languages. I took part in several maths/programming competitions as a student, and was twice a member of Ireland's International Olympiad in Informatics team.

Unix development (both out of personal interest and professionally), and competency in Linux administration (Debian, Ubuntu).

I am married with four children. I have held a full UK driving licence since 1996, free from endorsements. I have a classical music background, with training in piano and cello, and I enjoy choral singing.

Education

12 GCSEs (9 A*s, 3 As); 4 A-levels (4 As); 1 AS (A); 2 STEPs (S, 1).

MA (Cantab) reading Computer Science at Trinity College, Cambridge; classed as I/I/II.2.

Other formats: `https://www.chiark.greenend.org.uk/~cjwatson/cv/`

Last modified: `$Date: 2023-12-28 17:19:01 +0000 $`