White pages on the net

Whide they're not offering an internet e-mail directory (yet), Telstra does have a very impressive telephone *White pages* service at http://www.whitepages.com.au/

You get a clickable map to select the state or territory for your search, and are then prompted for a family name, business name or government agency name. The search will return the entries which most closely match your search. Future enhancements will include e-mail addresses, locality maps and multilingual translations.

There is also a link to the *Telstra yellow pages*, which works pretty well, except that when I did a search for companies in Canberra who provided internet services, I was given a long list of tiling and plastering contractors. The link isn't immediately obvious.

National Library of Singapore

You'll find the National Library of Singapore at http://www.livewire.ncb.gov.sg/library/main.html where you can get a list of new acquisitions and search the online catalogue, as well as finding out about the National Library's other services. The catalogue allows keyword searching in the title, but not abbreviated call numbers, so there's no virtual shelf browsing. Apart from that, it's a useful service.

NT university library on the web

Christine Ruzic at NTU reports that they've followed the launch of the University Library's world wide web home page at http://www.ntu.edu.au/library/ with a public access terminal for internet searching using netscape. The library workstation is being provided solely to support educational use of the internet — no e-mail, games or MUDs are encouraged or possible given the limited availability of the service. Work is already in progress to increase the scope of the web pages and redirect all OPAC terminals onto the information superhighway

Library job network

The library jobs network is a new world wide web site launched by the information recruitment agency, Library Locums at http://www.libjobs.com/libjobs/ The site has information on current job vacancies from the Library Locums' offices in Sydney, Canberra, Brisbane and Melbourne. Employers can also register their jobs online by completing the site's job form. There is another page called *Who's looking for work* which is a selection of the best candidates available in Sydney, Canberra, Brisbane and Melbourne. You can also see a comprehensive salary survey, with information on salaries paid in different countries and indications of what qualifications the best candidates can offer.

Free medicine newsletter

Medicine on the net, a new monthly newsletter from COR Healthcare Resources covers medical resources on the internet and how health care professionals and organizations are using the net in patient care. For a free sample issue, send an e-mail message with your name and snail mail address to motn@corhealth.com You can send editorial comments/suggestions to engstrom@a.crl.com

Australian Government publications

Oz-govpubs-L is a discussion group for anyone interested in government documents in Australian libraries. Commonwealth, state and overseas government publications are to be covered and from all aspects of librarianship. It is an unmoderated list open to all. It is administered by Susan Little at Monash University.

To subscribe to the list send a mail message to Mailserv@vaxc.cc.monash.edu.au containing the following message (remember to leave the subject line blank) Subscribe oz-govpubs-L your name To post a message to the list, send it to Oz-govpubs-L@vaxc.cc.monash.edu.au

Metadata, and why it's important

Terry Kuny, who runs the IFLA list, has compiled a number of documents about metadata for an IFLA page. It has a number of internet RFCs (request for comments) and internet Drafts on the current group of Universal Resource Identifiers metadata proposals, documents on CNRI handles, WHOIS ++, IAFA templates, the OCLC metadata workshop, and so on.

You can find it at http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/ifla/services/metadata.htm and it will be updated from time to time.

And what are these UR things anyway?

Stu Weibel from OCLC has provided the following summary of a the current players in the Universal Resource field:

A URL (Uniform Resource Locator) is a location pointer — think of it as the spine label — it tells you (the client software, actually) where to get the object. URLs are pretty much in place and stable (they're baked), though the standard will undergo adjustments for various protocols from time to time.

URNs (Uniform Resource Names) are not an agreed upon technology at this point in time (they're half baked), the community is approaching something resembling consensus, and I believe the next three to six months will witness serious pilot projects for the assignment, maintenance, and resolution of URNs. The goal of URNs is to provide a globally unique, location-independent, persistent name for a resource that will be less prone to the failures now encountered with URLs as resources are reorganised or moved. The current correlate in the paper world might be an ISBN or LCCN. There will probably be more than one URN schemes, at least at first.

URCs (Uniform Resource Characteristic) refer to any descriptive data one might store about resources. No one even agrees what the ingredients should be, though from the library perspective, URCs can be thought of as cataloguing records. In fact, this notion will need to be expanded to include description that is normally not found in cataloguing records today (terms and conditions of use is one possible example).

Collectively, URLs, URNs, and URCs are referred to as Uniform Resource Identifiers.

Also from OCLC ...

OCLC is running an experimental database of internet resources until the end of March 1996 through the internet resources cataloguing project. The project involves librarians bringing their expertise to the creation of a database created in accordance with AACR2R, with the information in MARC tagged field 856, so that the records can be included in local, regional and national bibliographic systems.

Information about the project, including how you may participate can be found at http://www.oclc.org/oclc/man/catproj/catcall.htm

Asia-Pacific WWW conference

This was held in Sydney from 19–21 September, in conjunction with the annual conference of the Australian Unix users group, and featured a number of speakers who have been in at the start of the big developments, like Geoff Huston (formerly of AARnet), Tim O'Reilly of O'Reilly and Associates, Robert Cailliau of CERN (where the web was invented)

Traversing the trelliswork of the Internet

and Joseph Hardin of NCSA at the University of Illinois where Mosaic was developed. It's impossible to summarise the whole conference, but one theme which was obvious was the concern that many speakers had about the changing nature of web developments, particularly with netscape implementing extensions to the HTML standard.

This is a real problem as many sites are creating their pages with the latest versions of netscape in mind, ignoring that a large number of users don't have these versions of the browser, and many in fact are still using character-based interfaces such as Lynx.

The papers from the conference can be read at http://www.csu.edu.au/special/conference/apwww95

A collection of library resources

Bob Bocher of the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction has put together a collection of around 150 resources of interest to library people, in the areas of general reference resources, electronic documents and periodical resources, government resources, search engines and so on. The URL is http://www.state.wi.us/agencies/dpi/www/lib_res.html

Good Elf to WGLSI!

The National Library's working group on library systems interconnection (WGLSI) has been meeting since 1986 and providing a forum to discuss matters to do with library automation. The meetings have been held roughly twice a year, usually around ALIA, Online and VALA conferences. Information about the past activities of WGLSI (including the work of Standards Australia committee IT/19 which was established through WGLSI) can be found at http://www.nla.gov.au/lis/stndrds/grps/wglsi/wglintro.html

At its last meeting in September, the Group decided to change the name to the Electronic Libraries Forum (ELF). This recognises that the previous name is somewhat dated as interconnection is now a fact of life, and matters concerning all aspects of electronic libraries have been the main concern of the group for some time. The future activities of the Forum will be chronicled at http://www.nla.gov.au/lis/stndrds/grps/elf/

Commonwealth financial transactions

This set of information monitors the progress of the Budget through the year and reports on outlays, revenue and deficit/surplus aggregates. It appears monthly and can be found at http://www.nla.gov.au/finance/pubs/cft/ It's in Adobe Acrobat format, but you can get the reader software free from http://www.adobe.com/Software.html

Byron Shire Council elections on the internet

The Byron Shire's community world wide web magazine, *Planet Byron WebZine* provided comprehensive support for the local government elections in September.

There was a full report on the new 'above the line' voting system and an interactive ballot form which allowed users to have a practice vote. This showed the preferences flow as defined by the groups and candidates. The special 'Election edition' featured the candidates' views on a range of issues including the future of new media technologies, such as the internet, in the Byron Shire and the region. It also contained an in-depth coverage of the candidates public forum held on 26 August at the Byron Bay Beach Hotel. An instant feedback facility via electronic mail was available so users could express their views and participate to the democratic process.

Planet Byron WebZine is located at http://www.om.com.au/planet_byron

LISWA online

Early in September the new public interface for the Library and Information Service of Western Australia (LISWA) was launched. It's the public face of their new computer system, which they've been planning and implementing over the last two years. The web interface has a detailed guide to LISWA's services and facilities and a web-based front end to LISWA's catalogue. A feature of the implementation was the extensive useability testing that they undertook, and it shows! Apart from very helpful information about the services that they offer, there are pages which explain how the mouse works and how you can move around the screen. You'll find the web interface at http://www.liswa.wa.gov.au Telnet access to the catalogue only is available at innopac.liswa.wa.gov.au
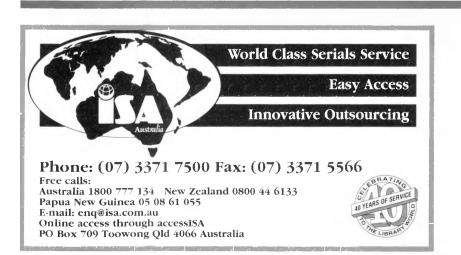
Dream on

The optimism prize this month goes to Simon Vandore, writing in the 4 October issue of *PC week*. He says:

'The web is now fully indexed and searchable from many locations, meaning the internet no longer deserves its reputation as a tangled mass of hard-to-find information.'

Not quite yet, but we're working on it. ∎