Kerry Webb

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Wescombe wins web award

Christabel Wescombe from the University of Sydney has won the Argus/Clearinghouse Digital Librarian's Award for October 1997, with her *Education Internet guide: sources for theory, practice, teaching and research.* You can see it at http://www.library.usyd.edu.au/Guides/Education.

From the award citation: '...this marvellous guide aimed at education professionals. It has a global scope with an emphasis on Australian and UK resources. The links are extensive, but selective, with substantive annotations. You might think that covering such a broad topic is a bit too ambitious, but this guide proves itself equal to the task'.

Conference proceedings
The proceedings of the 7th Specials, Health & Law Librarians Conference held in Perth 12–16 October are available on the web for one year at http://www.trimagic.com.au/edge.htm. If you want the printed proceedings, a few copies are still available from Motive Conventions. Contact them at motive@vianet.net.au.

A welcome visitor
Only rarely do we get a chance to meet the personalities of the Net, even though we're familiar with their thoughts, opinions and good deeds. Steven Clift, a tireless worker for 'online democracy' toured the country in November following appearances at the Interact events in Melbourne. Steven burst onto the scene in 1994 with the Minnesota North Star project, and has continued this with Democracies Online (http://www.e-democracy.org/do/). I heard him speak twice in Canberra and he was worth listening to. If you'd like to get some ideas on how to involve the people of your community in electronic civic action, check out his web site.

New from AgriWeb
AgriWeb (http://www.ruralnet.com.au/AgriWeb/) now has a direct link to the AgriSurf! search engine (http://www.agrisurf.com), a huge agricultural web index. I found both the AgriWeb and AgriSurf sites too colourful and cluttered, but there's plenty of information to be found there.

Display of electronic text
A recent article in the IBM Systems Journal describes a project at MIT which is working on 'e-ink' and other technologies that 'reinvent' the display of electronic text. The article provides a clear summary of the technologies involved and discusses the concept of a 'self-assembled' book which draws together linked concepts to bring into being an entity that previously did not exist. See it at http://www.almaden.ibm.com/journal/sj/363/jacobson.html .

Electronic records documents
The International Council on Archives (ICA) has announced the publication of three products prepared by the ICA Committee on Electronic Records. They are: the *Guide for managing electronic records from an archival perspective, Electronic records: A literature review,* and *Electronic records programs: Report on the 1994/95 Survey.*

The purpose of the guide is to help archival institutions address the management of electronic records, with respect to technological, organisational and legal matters, and it describes tactics that can be used in this management. The literature review is the result of an exhaustive survey of the international literature on electronic records, which the ICA hopes will provide an important tool for use in education and training programs. The survey resulted in the compilation of a directory of those archival institutions that have established or are planning to establish a program to manage electronic records.

All three products are available in both electronic (WordPerfect 6.1) and hard copy form, and you can read the Guide online at http://www.archives.ca/ica/p-er/english.html.

You can always count on calculators
It all started with a request to list-members for a formula to calculate the distance between two points on the globe when you are given their latitude and longitude. It finished with an exploration of one of the most remarkable sites on the Web — Martindale's Calculators on-line. Imagine conversion charts for clothing sizes in different countries, or a facility to convert text to Morse Code, or a calculator for atmospheric moisture (very useful for conservators). There are more than 5000 at http://www-sci.lib.uci.edu/HSG/RefCalculators1.html

For those with stars in their eyes
Jeanette Regan from the ANU Astronomy Library is interested in setting up a forum to discuss the provision of information in the subject areas of physics, astronomy and mathematics. Similar groups operate elsewhere, such as the Physics-Astronomy-Mathematics (PAM) Division of the Special Libraries Association, Astrolib (established in 1988 and with members on all continents), and the European Group of Astronomy Libraries (EGAL). If you are interested in further information or would be willing to help establish a regional forum, please contact Jeanette at jeanette.regan@library.anu.edu.au.

Information on digital media
In the Co-operative Research Centre on Advanced Computational Systems, there's a group

working on digital media, with special emphasis on video and audio, and they've set up a site providing information on the technology being used in digital media libraries. It features links to relevant software and hardware products, and to 'facts and figures' pages on networking, storage and general technology issues. It's at http://www.cmis.csiro.au/dmis/videotalk.htm/.

But do digital libraries need systems engineers?

There's a very good article called 'Do digital libraries need librarians? An experiential dialog' by Lisa Dallape Matson and David J Bonski at http://www.onlineinc.com/onlinemag/NovOL97/matson11.html which is the on-line version of *Online* magazine. It starts with a conversation between Lisa (a librarian) and David (a systems engineer) and looks at their experiences in working towards a common goal at the US National Drug Intelligence Center. Highly-recommended.

US archives online

The US National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) has started its program of putting its most significant items on the Web. As part of its Electronic Access Project, 5300 documents comprise the first batch of approximately 120 000 items that will be digitised and available electronically over the next year. Highlights of the newly digitised materials include Civil War photographs by Mathew Brady, Alexander Gardner and George N Barnard, Environmental Protection Agency photographs of environmental issues of the 1970s, and USIA reports on US involvement in the war in Vietnam. You can find them through the NARA Archival Information Locator at http://www.nara.gov/nara/nail.html.

All the news (well, most of it)

News Index provides a searchable index to current material from a wide range of newspapers including many in Australia. The home page displays a listing of current stories (mostly US-based) and a selection of continuing stories on US and foreign topics. The search facility is fast and efficient, but it does cover only current news — it is not an archive. See it at http://www.newsindex.com/.

Search engines supercharged

Here are some new facilities in the search engines to get you better results:

HotBot (http://www.hotbot.com) has a SuperSearch link by which you can narrow the search with additional words or date restrictions. Alta Vista (http://www.altavista.yellowpages.com.au) gives you the Refine button to eliminate unwanted hits. After you've re-

ceived the results of your search, you can set aside topics that don't meet your needs, and then resubmit the search. Northern Light (http://www.northernlight.com) clusters your search results into a set of custom search folders, which you can then select to see only those results.

Content regulation

In July 1997, the federal minister for communications and the arts and the attorney-general announced the principles for the national framework for on-line content regulation, and called for submissions on these principles. Approximately sixty submissions (including those from ALIA) can now be seen on-line at http://www.dca.GOV.AU/policy/subs/subs.htm.

International technology law developments

The International Computer Law Observer is a free e-mail service providing monthly coverage of international law developments relating to computers, technology and the Internet. A current listing of the editors can be found at http://www.lawcircle.com/ICLO.html. To subscribe to the International Computer Law Observer, send an e-mail message to listserv@maelstrom.stjohns.edu with the words subscribe lawobserver in the message. After subscribing, you will receive a message requesting that you confirm your subscription.

Metadata site

The Instructional Management Systems Project is a Network Learning Infrastructure Initiative (NLII) from Educom, and provides a site describing IMS metadata for both the general and technical user. The IMS metadata specification, which is a draft for review by December 1997, contains 'a dictionary of terms, a description of learning resource types, and a system for managing the specification.' The final specification will be released early in 1998. The draft can be found at http://www.imsproject.org/metadata/.

Submissions wanted

Issues in Science and Technology Librarianship (ISTL) is an electronic publication of the Science and Technology Section of the Association of College and Research Libraries. It's on the Web at http://www.library.ucsb.edu/istl/. Submissions are invited for a issue on Web-based resources (journals and databases) in sci-tech libraries. Articles should be substantive and may address any aspect of this topic, such as selection of resources, licensing issues, promoting the use of electronic resources, and creating and maintaining the digital library. Completed articles for this issue will be due by 15 January 1998. Abstracts or outlines should be sent to duda@library.ucsb.edu for consideration by the editorial board. ∎