

Online legislation – the news



Kerry Webb

AustLII has announced that Western Australian legislation is now available on AustLII at http://www.austlii.edu.au/au/legis/wa/consol_act/ and will shortly be searchable. Queensland and Tasmania have chosen not to go along with AustLII. The Queensland legislation is online at <http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au> with an explanation about why they haven't used the AustLII system, but it's not a convincing argument. There are clear benefits in having legislation from various states accessible together and also in a common format. Still, it's better than nothing. Meanwhile you can access Tasmanian legislation (in yet another format) at <http://www.thelaw.tas.gov.au/>.

Notes on searching

Greg Notess is a reference librarian at the Montana State University-Bozeman, and writes for the journals *Online* and *Database*. He has compiled a site at <http://imt.net/~notess/search/index.html> which summarises, reviews, and compares the search features and database scope of Internet search engines and finding aids. He lists the features of each service in some detail, with hotlinks in the summary table pointing to the text of the review, so that you can see exactly what he says about, for example, proximity searching in HotBot.

Jolly good, Jeeves

One of the references at Greg's site is to a service called Ask Jeeves (<http://www.askjeeves.com/>) which attempts to simulate a reference interview. I tried the question 'When was Bob Hawke born' and though the initial results were a little disappointing (providing links for information about an Ethan Hawke), a further set of suggested resources included several pertaining to Bob Hawke. Other queries about notable Australians provided similar results. Quite impressive.

LJ online

LJDigital is an electronic variant of *Library Journal* and provides a summary of the print version in a very timely manner at <http://www.bookwire.com/ljdigital/>. It features all of the major sections of LJ — news, views, infotech, digital libraries, multimedia — as well as a site search and archive facility.

Salon 21st

I learned of *Salon* magazine, and especially its 21st section ('The culture of technology: the technology of culture') through a reference to a story on password spamming. This practice occurs when one online company acquires assets of another, such assets including passwords used by their clients. It wasn't an earth-shattering topic, but the article was interesting and well written. The coverage of 21st ranges over all sorts of online issues and it is definitely

worth reading. You can go to the current issue's feature directly at <http://www.salonmagazine.com/21st/feature/> or subscribe for a weekly alert at <http://www.salonmagazine.com/newsletter/>.

... and back here in Oz

Australian Cybermalls News specialises in news concerning the world online scene, with an Australian emphasis. It also publishes an Australian Internet Growth Index with estimates of the 'number of sites' in each state. See it at <http://ausmall.com.au/acnews.htm>.

Arts Education Forum

The Department of Communications and the Arts has set up an Arts Education Forum to facilitate discussion about cultural training in Australia and the issues involved. Unfortunately, it's taken some time to get started. A month after it was announced, there was little sign of activity on the site but the promised software needed to run discussion groups was eventually installed. It's meant to be used mainly by teachers and students but input from everyone is welcome. Check it out at <http://www.artsinfo.net.au/forum/>.

Cites for Library Automation literature

The KU Leuven Central Library publishes a weekly list of references to journal articles about the application of new technologies in libraries. Although some of the articles are online, most are from print journals so you'll need to access them in the traditional way. See the archive at <http://www.ua.ac.be/WGLIB/ATTEND/index.html>.

Image databases

The Clearinghouse of Image Databases is an online directory of image databases housed on a gopher server at the University of Arizona Library. It was originally intended as a resource for librarians and archivists who were either planning or developing databases containing digitised images from their collections. It now gathers technical and descriptive information about imaging projects as information resources. One recent entry in the directory points to 'The life of King Edward the Confessor', with sixty-six images from a medieval manuscript at Cambridge University Library. See it and marvel at <http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/MSS/Ee.3.59/>.

NYPL digital library collections

The New York Public Library has launched its Digital Library Collections website, with material from its research libraries at <http://digital.nypl.org>. The initial collection includes images and text from African American history and culture, with future projects covering stereoscopic views of Small Town America, their Performing Arts Millennium Project and Urban

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Landscape photography. The site also features a number of online exhibitions, including some great photographs of the construction of the Empire State Building.

CSU's Centre for Information Studies

The Centre for Information Studies at Charles Sturt University has revamped their webpages with information about their research and publications in library and information science. The catalogue lists a number new and existing publications of interest to librarians. See the Centre at <http://www.csu.edu.au/faculty/sis/CIS/cis.html>.

The new Alexandria

Alexandria Digital Literature at <http://www.alexlit.com/> could become a useful resource. It is built around a 'rating' system which suggests what you might like to read, based on your responses to a number of suggested books. So, if you have told the system (through a series of questions) that you like hard science fiction but not Shakespeare then it comes up with a list that may appeal to you. It's intriguing, but clearly will get better as a larger database of books and recommendations is developed. As it stands, the list is weighted strongly towards science fiction with little else available. It also has a collection of out-of-print or hard-to-find short stories and novels, which you can download by using your credit card. These can be displayed by author, title or recommended order.

NLA science site, and more

The National Library of Australia has been developing a series of Australian Internet guides. One of the best is Australian Science and Technology on the Internet, at <http://www.nla.gov.au/oz/sciencew.html>. It is aimed at both scientists and general users and comprises a subject listing of about thirty categories from agriculture to (you guessed it) zoology. The whole range of their subject guides can be found at <http://www.nla.gov.au/internet.html>. If you look further around the NLA site, you will find their Electronic Australiana collection at <http://www.nla.gov.au/oz/> with such gems as the Australia Society in Belgium and the Black Stump Aussie Page. Not to mention online exhibitions in Australian libraries at <http://enzo.nla.gov.au/products/alg/ex.html>.

...and more on science

The Spring 1998 issue of *Issues in Science and Technology Librarianship* is now available at <http://www.library.ucsb.edu/istl/> with the theme 'Using the world wide web in science and technology libraries'. Notable features are a study of precision among Internet search engines (an earth sciences case study) and a survey of 'net resources in marine fisheries. As with most online journals, you can ask to be

notified by e-mail when each issue comes out.

No, not the Top End

LIBNT-L is a new list with the purpose of promoting discussion and the dissemination of information about the implementation and administration of Windows NT in libraries. List members are encouraged to explore in detail all aspects of this subject, from highly technical configuration and troubleshooting issues to matters of managerial policy. To subscribe send an e-mail to listserv@utkvm1.utk.edu with sub LIBNT-L FirstName LastName in the body of the message.

The Cedars Project

The UK Consortium of University Research Libraries (CURL) has announced the Cedars Project which will address strategic, methodological and practical issues and will provide guidance for libraries in best practice for digital preservation. Cedars will be based across three lead sites (Oxford, Leeds and Cambridge) and will involve the library community through focus groups, workshops and discussion lists. Watch the project grow at <http://www.curl.ac.uk/cedarsinfo.shtml>.

eLib publications

Cedars is one of many projects funded by the Electronic Libraries (eLib) Programme. The Programme required a number of supporting studies, and these are listed at <http://www.ukoln.ac.uk/services/elib/papers/supporting/> with many of the reports available online.

Furthering the aims of Z39.50

The new Australian Libraries Gateway (<http://www.nla.gov.au/libraries>) has as one of its services a Directory of Australian Z39.50 Targets. In making this information widely available, the National Library of Australia wants to help set up testbed environments so that libraries and systems vendors can identify the issues in developing widespread Z39.50 interoperability between systems. If you have a Z39.50-enabled catalogue or database that you would like to make accessible to external Z39.50 clients, you can register your service through this directory. You can get to the directory at <http://www.nla.gov.au/libraries/z3950> or via the For Libraries page of the Gateway.

Caught by the Hunter

As an admirer of the well-turned pun, I should have been prepared for Information Hunter at <http://www.infohunt.nsw.gov.au> When I saw the URL, I thought it would be an way of getting to all sorts of information about the NSW government. Not quite. It is actually organised by the Hunter Region Organisation of Councils and contains tourist, community and business information for each locality, not to mention material about the library in each town. It is well done. ■

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The ALIA home pages and the ALIA web service, ALIANet, can be found at the following URL:
<http://www.alia.org.au/>

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URLS!**

This column (with associated hyperlinks) is on ALIANet, and has the URL of <http://www.alia.org.au/incite/www/>

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