Kerry Webb

The museums have adopted the concept of the distributed national collection, and there are plans to add museum/ gallery material from libraries into the database...

All-new AMOL site

The new site for Australian Museums and Galleries On-Line was launched at the CIDOC Conference in Melbourne in October. The site has been developed by the AMOL Co-ordination Unit at the Powerhouse Museum and builds on the excellent reputation achieved by the National Museum of Australia, the previous AMOL host. The site has three main content categories — information for people working in museums and galleries, information about Australian museums of all shapes and sizes, and a searchable database of material in the various collections.

The museums have adopted the concept of the distributed national collection, and there are plans to add museum/gallery material from libraries into the database. The site is at http:// www.amol.org.au

Enhanced mail

In an online discussion about the AMOL site, the issue of HTML in e-mail messages arose. This happened because one reader's organisation uses Novell Netware-based e-mail, and the embedded HTML in the message was presented as an attached file, which this user couldn't read. We agreed that it doesn't make sense to work hard on website useability to cater for the wide range of browsers and platforms in use, but then announce it with unintelligible e-mail.

Meanwhile, the National Office for the Information Economy (NOIE) has its Accessability Online Resource at http:// accessability.noie.gov.au/ This site aims to raise awareness of the accessibility issues faced by people with disabilities in using online services. It has detailed information on a wide range of issues, products and services associated with access to online services for people with disabilities.

Dublin Core standardisation *A description of the Dublin Core Metadata Element Set* has now been published as an Informational RFC (Request For Comments) by the Internet Engineering Task Force, the main standards body for the internet. This means that the Dublin Core has attained significantly more status as a recognised and stable standard for creating simple descriptions of networked resources, and should help to encourage its more widespread adoption. Informational RFC 2413 'Dublin Core Metadata for Resource Discovery' is available at itp://ftp.isi.edu/in-notes/ rfc2413.txl This is the specification of the 15-element Dublin Core metadata set, and the first in a series of planned Informational RFCs on DC.

...and closer to home

The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) has released a report titled 'Data Management in the APS', which recommends that government agencies adopt the following strategies for best practice in making their data resources available: increase the visibility of data by creating metadata to promote the existence of resources, use common methods to access and share the data, and disseminate resources in line with agencies' security, privacy and statistical requirements. The use of the Australian Government Locator Service metadata standard is recommended to assist in the achievement of these aims. The application of AGLS closely maps to the information listed by the ANAO as necessary for increased data availability. The report is at http://www.anao. gov.au/rptsfull_98/audrpt48/rpt48.pdf

Spambusters unite!

Despite our best endeavours, spam (unsolicited e-mail) continues to flourish. One reason is that it is so easy to get easy and cheap e-mail access from many services. At http:// www.suburbia.com.au/spam/ there is a good site with information about spam and what to do with it (most importantly, do not reply to it). There's a particularly good tutorial on 'How to complain to providers about spam'. I have found this to be useful and to produce good results, as even the free e-mail suppliers have strict conditions of use.

Have you ever Metaspy?

If you have ever wondered what people are searching for on the Net (and some organisations are very interested in such matters), have a look at http://www.metaspy.com/. Metaspy provides a snapshot of the search terms input to the Metacrawler search engine, updated every fifteen seconds. But there's more — you can see either the censored or uncensored versions (complete with a warning about offensive material). While I was looking, I saw 'dog friendly beaches' + 'Sydney'. Fascinating stuff!

The Clinton affair

Whatever you think of the politics and morals exposed in the Starr investigation of president Clinton, the publication of his findings made a big impact on the internet, from endless discussion in newsgroups and lists, to reading the text of the report itself (CNN was getting 400 000 hits a minute), and to what AltaVista claims as a world first — the ability to search on a term from the transcript of the president's testimony and from the search results play the relevant part of the video across the internet.

Legal hints for web workers

Are you ever in doubt about what you can and can not do as a web manager? Try Legal FAQs for *Webmasters: who owns what* at http:// www.webreview.com/wr/pub/98/01/02/ webmaster/ It's brief and readable, and although written for an American audience is generally applicable in most countries.

And if you want to know more

A new book has been published containing a series of papers on digital copyright and IP issues in Australian law. It's called *Going digital: Legal issues for electronic commerce, multime-*

dia and the internet, and is based on a series of seminars given by some of Australia's leading legal experts. You can find more details are at the publisher's Web site at http://www. prospectmedia.com.au

More copyright matters

In September, the Copyright Law Review Committee, released its report on simplification of the *Copyright Act 1968*. The first part of the report, which will be of most interest to libraries, addresses the exceptions to the exclusive rights of copyright owners. The Committee says that an open-ended and more flexible approach to fair dealing would enable it to be more easily applied to new technologies. The report also includes recommendations in relation to copying by libraries and archives, copying for educational purposes and copying for people with disabilities. You can find Part 1 of the report at http://www.agps.gov.au/clrc

The Copyright Agency Limited quickly produced a response to the report and various members of the library community will be doing something similar. I will keep you posted.

And the *Atlantic Monthly* magazine in September and October conducted a forum on copyright issues involving a number of noted writers on the subject. The forum is at http:// www.theatlantic.com/unbound/forum/copyright/intro.htm

LibrarySpot

Many people have tried to build the one-stop spot where you can find just about everything. This may not quite be it, but it is a pretty good starting point. The site, LibrarySpot, at http:// www.libraryspot.com/ provides 'the best of libraries, newspapers, encyclopedias and maps'. There's also a 'Librarians' shelf' with links to tools for the profession. It is worth book-marking.

And now for something...

Another form of library spot is featured in the Modified Librarian at http://www.bme.freeq. com/world/tattoo/gailcat/index.html This is a forum and a collection of images of librarians with tattoos or body piercing who are working in their own way to change the public's perceptions of our profession. To me, it shows that a librarian with a tattoo looks pretty much like any other modified person, but maybe that's their point.

Caught in the net

NewsTrawler at http://www.newstrawler.com is a parallel search engine that retrieves the summaries of articles from the archives of on-line information sources around the world like newspapers, journals and magazines. The search service itself is free and there's no charge for summaries from the the information sources. In some cases a small payment for the full article may be charged directly by the information source. The results are impressive

and are listed by source, but it doesn't have the seamless interface that they claim. Nevertheless it's a useful resource.

I found it (just in time)

Gerry McKiernan of Iowa State University has been working for some time on his CyberStacks collection of internet resources. The newest addition is a listing of Electronic Article Delivery Services called 'Just-in-Time'. It includes projects, research, products and services which are investigating or provide desktop access to a range of materials. He is interested in finding other electronic delivery (non-Fax) services. See CyberStacks at http://www.public.iastate. edu/~CYBERSTACKS/Just.htm

Information industry resources

The Faxon Institute, an independent research arm of the Faxon Company, has announced a new industry resources webpage, featuring links and information on a number of topics of immediate interest to the library, vendor, publishing and research communities. It covers topics such as library and publisher collections, electronic publishing, industry issues and trends, standards and intellectual property/ copyright management. It's at http://www.faxon .com/html/fi_ir.html

Filtering again

There's a recent legal paper on filtering which will be of interest to public librarians. As usual, it's written for the American market, but the issues that it explores are relevant in this country. See it at http://www.si.umich.edu/~prie/ tprc/abstracts98/nadel.pdf

And it looks like the United Kingdom government is getting into the act. Their report 'Converging technologies: Consequences for the new knowledge-driven economy', online at http://www.dti.gov.uk/future-unit/htm/proj.htm (but on a very slow connection) proposes (in part) a government-led effort to develop easy-to-use content filters.

American libraries to be connected

The US Cable TV industry has announced plans to give American libraries free internet connections using cable modems. These modems will provide high speed access for all of the 15 000 libraries throughout the country. Although no specific time frame has been revealed yet, it's a bold move and the Australian cable players should take note.

Biomedical resource discovery

In the September issue of *D-Lib Magazine*, there is a paper on biomedical resource discovery in context by John Kirriemuir and Sue Welch. It does not compare different resources (although it does have a pointer to a site with such a comparison) but looks rather at broad concepts, which the authors admit would be relevant to other disciplines. Browse it all at http://www.dlib.org/dlib/september98/ 09kirriemuir.html ∎

The report also includes recommendations in relation to copying by libraries and archives, copying for educational purposes and copying for people with disabilities...