



We are most grateful to the artist, Lionel Playford, for permission to use his portrait of Ian Mowat

Ian Mowat, who died in Glencoe last month, was a keen advocate of the use of C&IT in the University from the moment he came here as Librarian in 1997. He not only drove things forward behind the scenes, but was mindful of the importance of explaining his vision, and the ongoing work to achieve it, which he did regularly in the pages of *BITs*. One of his first acts as University Librarian was to organise a Library Web Day, in January 1998, and for that and in February this year he and his Library colleagues were able to fill extended issues of *BITs* with news of the many ways in which they were exploiting C&IT to enrich the academic life of the University. This vision and enthusiasm continued right up to the last minute: a long article he wrote this summer is spread over this and the following two issues.

Ian's death leaves an enormous gap in the affairs of the University. All in Computing Services who knew and admired Ian send our condolences and best wishes to our friends and colleagues in the Library, and especially to Ian's family in their tragic loss.

The University *Bulletin* will carry an obituary by Richard Field, and there are links to the obituaries which appeared in the general media in *Library Online*, at http://www.lib.ed.ac.uk/news/ian_mowat.shtml

Brian Gilmore (EUCS)

A word from the new Principal

I was shocked and saddened by Ian Mowat's untimely death. I had already developed a very positive view of his professional skill and his engaging personality, and had been looking forward to working closely with him.

Tim O'Shea

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New Horizons

When the Principal-elect launched a series of new information services on 8th July, he and his guests saw how the University Library, supported by Computing Services, is taking a lead in developing technological solutions to provide access to research collections. Here is another of the projects demonstrated on that day.

Finding the Right Clinical Notes

Award: £92,264.

Leader: Dr Mike Barfoot.

This project addresses the problem of providing access to Personal Health Records across Scotland from 1600 to 1994. The records relate to the physical or mental health of an identifiable individual which have been made by or on the advice of a health professional in connection with the care and treatment of that person. They are important for research in a variety of disciplines in the humanities, social sciences and medicine.

The Project has, at its core, the astonishingly rich resource of Personal Health Records housed in the Lothian Health Services Archive—the largest collection of its kind in the UK. Records from a further 20 repositories figure in the Web-based finding aid, including those of the original Project partners: Edinburgh University Library, University of Glasgow & Greater Glasgow Health Board Archive, University of Dundee & Tayside Health Board Archive, The National Archives of Scotland, and the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh. The original database and Web front end were built by EUCS and offer seamless searching for Personal Health Records across the major known Scottish collections.

The project Web site is at <http://www.clinicalnotes.ac.uk/>

Ian Mowat

The Library's Book Bag

There is a new facility in *Library Online* to enable readers to collect the bibliographic details of books in which they're interested, rather like using a shopping trolley to collect groceries. The complete list can be edited, then printed, saved, or emailed to yourself or to someone else. The contents of your bookbag remain available for the next time you log in.

We hope to provide more personalised facilities to our online catalogue through further development. To try out the BookBag for yourself, go to <http://catalogue.lib.ed.ac.uk/help/bookbag.htm>

Steve Scott (EUL)

DEVILish Library/Learning Technology partnership

The Library, in conjunction with MALTS and the Learning Technology Service of the College of Medicine and Veterinary Medicine, has been awarded funding for Project DEVIL—'Dynamically Enhancing VLE Information from the Library'. The project has been funded under JISC's Programme 7/02 'Linking Digital Libraries with Virtual Learning Environments'. The Edinburgh team will work in partnership with colleagues in the Open University.

Project DEVIL will explore the organisational and management systems required to support dynamic data integration between resource management systems and a number of different VLE systems used for teaching in the University of Edinburgh and the Open University. The project will build on existing initiatives within the universities and will work with a number of courses on curriculum-focused pilots.



The Project will use 'middle-ware' components currently being built by the JISC-funded Project ANGEL—in particular the ANGEL 'Resource Manager' and 'User Manager'. Edinburgh is already represented in ANGEL: John MacColl is one of its Co-Directors, and EDINA is a partner.

Testing in a variety of subjects, delivery modes and study levels will enable the Project to develop generic guidelines for educational institutions. Evaluation is important: the Project will explore some of the pedagogical, cultural and organisational issues generated by attempts to integrate resource provision in this way.

The Project runs from 1st October to 31st July 2003. For more information, contact John MacColl (email john.maccoll@ed.ac.uk).

John MacColl (EUL)

BCS season opens

9th Oct: Using GIS to manage foot-and-mouth in Scotland (Martin Johnston, Scottish Executive); wine and soft drinks will be served from 6.15PM.

30th Oct: Linux: managing large installations (Jim Jarvie, Central Scotland Police).

Both talks are open to the general public and take place at 6.30PM at the Royal Pharmaceutical Society, 36 York Place, EH1 3HU. Full details are provided on the local BCS Web site, at <http://www.cce.hw.ac.uk/~bcsed/02-03/>

David Muxworthy (EUCS)



Virtual International Community wins award

The Virtual International Community, **VIC**, was launched by the International Office in October 2001, to be a Web community for international students. It was created to offer support and to welcome the increased number of international students that the University's new international strategy has been achieving.

VIC, which was built on WebCT software by International Office and MALTS staff, has now been recognised by HEERA—the Higher Education External Relations Association—in their Awards for Excellence.

As well as being an information resource, VIC has various interactive functions (chat-rooms, homepages and a message-board) which were designed to make it easier for international students to find out about events, contact one another and feel part of a community.

HEERA recognised VIC in the PR/Communications track of their annual awards with a 'Highly Commended Certificate' in a year where a record number of entries were submitted from institutions throughout the UK.

VIC can be accessed at <http://www.ed.ac.uk/internet/>

For enquiries or feedback about VIC please email Kirsty.Gillies@ed.ac.uk.

Kirsty Gillies (International Office)



The certificates were presented by sports personality Geoff Capes, seen here with Kirsty Gillies who represented the VIC team at a ceremony at the University of Nottingham in September.

University starts e-tendering pilot for HE sector

The University of Edinburgh is participating in a project coordinated by the Higher Education e-procurement best practice group (EPG), through which it will pilot an EC-compliant electronic tendering service. This will be based on the Delta Suite from Business Information Publications Ltd (BiP), which includes Project, Select and Vault Modules. These enable suppliers to submit electronic expressions of interest to the University, and submit and retrieve Invitation to Tender (ITT) document(s) in a secure time-locked Internet system—BiP's Vault Service.

The pilot is led by the University's Procurement Office. It will provide feedback on the merits and lessons of electronic tendering, as well as contributing to the development of the University's own e-Procurement strategy in general and electronic tendering policy specifically. Reports will be made to JCACP (the Joint Consultative and Advisory Committee on Purchasing), the consortium of Scottish and Northern Irish Universities, and the EPG.

The project is managed on a day-to-day basis by George Sked of the University of Edinburgh, and Andrew Poodle, e-Tendering pilot manager for BiP, and runs until the end of December this year.

The University's Procurement Office volunteered for this pilot to help it develop its e-Procurement strategy over the next three years, and to help it bring efficiency benefits to academic colleagues in sourcing as well as in the trans-actional order-pay area. George Sked had previously introduced PROJECT, to send electronic notices to the Official Journal of the EU, so it was a logical step for the University to move on to this next phase in managing its annual spending of around £100m across a wide range of commodities.

The University was the first to appoint a Director of Procurement in 1993. Business Information Publications was established in 1984 to facilitate business between the public and private sectors; it has since developed a comprehensive total procurement solution, and is thought to be Europe's leading provider of public sector contract information, offering suppliers and buyers access to possibly the world's largest database of current open-contract opportunities.

There are further details of the pilot project on the Procurement Web site: click on the link 'eTendering pilot' at <http://www.procure.ed.ac.uk/home/news.htm>

The Business Information Publications Web site is at <http://www.bipcontracts.com/>

Karen Bowman (Procurement)

EUCS support for students

The University is committed to developing the IT skills of all students while they study here, and while many will now have a high level of IT skills on arrival, some students will probably need some help, and anyone can get stuck with computers. EUCS provides the following support services for students:

1) Introduction to IT sessions

These take place during Freshers Week and week 1 of term, in the Appleton Tower level 4 computer lab

Freshers Week, Wednesday to Friday, 1PM to 4PM

Week 1, Monday to Friday, 1PM to 4PM

Then on Wednesday afternoons until the end of the Autumn term, 1PM to 4PM

2) IT Literacy documents

A wide range of introductory and more advanced documentation is available in the open-access computing labs. The key document is *How Libraries and Computers can help your Studies*. There is a copy of this document for every Fresher, distributed in Freshers Week or available in libraries and the open-access labs.

3) Computing Tutorials

Aimed at helping students make better use of the labs, these will start later in the year and continue throughout the Spring term. Full details are provided in the open-access labs and at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/ungrad/>

4) Lab supervisors

The open-access computing labs are staffed by people able to help students with a wide range of computing problems; details are provided in *How Libraries and Computers can help your Studies*.

5) Student Computing Helpdesks

There are two student helpdesks where more complex or lengthy questions can be tackled:

Learning and Resource Centre, Main Library, level 2: open weekdays 10AM to 7PM (4:45pm on Fridays).

KB Centre, level 3, The King's Buildings: open term-time afternoons, 1PM to 4PM

Email: Student.Support@ed.ac.uk.

6) Students with disabilities

A variety of hardware and software aids can help people overcome disabilities and the team can help identify what solutions would be most appropriate, advise about how to obtain them, and help to set them up. Please contact

Robert.Gormley@ed.ac.uk for more information.

The EUCS Undergraduate Support Team would be pleased to hear from academic staff with comments on these services or suggestions for their development (please send email to N.Millar@ed.ac.uk).



Noel Millar, Manager,
Undergraduate Support Team

Noel Millar (EUCS)

Web search tips: “Find Similar”

The University's search service—www.catalogue.ed.ac.uk—produces a link “Find Similar” for each document found in a search. The idea is that, if what has been found is not quite what you want, you can select one of these links to see if a ‘similar’ document is more to your purpose.

You can use the same mechanism to find a document which is like a particular Web page. To do this, first bring up that page as a search result by searching for its URL (for example, to find the *BITS* home page you would enter in the search box `+url:http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/bits/`). You can then locate the page of interest in the results and select its “Find Similar” link.

Graham Rule (EUCS)

Unix programming expertise available

The Computing Services Commercial Projects Team (formerly the Commercial Division) has a long and successful history of raising external revenue, the profit from which helps to support the work of the rest of EUCS for the University. Recent projects have involved supplying programming services to companies in Silicon Valley.

However, the global economic slowdown is seriously affecting the team's ability to find profitable commercial projects. This means that there is an opportunity for the team's skills and experience to benefit the University more directly. There are undoubtedly many current or proposed software development projects, of all sizes, in Schools and Colleges, to which the Commercial Projects Team might contribute. The extent of our contribution could range from a few days spent developing a component or tool, to a longer commitment measured in months.

The team has extensive experience in Windows and Unix software development. Our Windows experts are currently fully committed, but Unix programming experts are available immediately, their expertise including the kernel, multi-tasking and hardware interfacing.

If you feel that we could be of help with a programming task you have in mind, please review the skills on offer at <http://www.enterprise.ucs.ed.ac.uk>

You can then contact me (email C.J.Adie@ed.ac.uk) to discuss your requirements in greater detail. Finally, please bear in mind that our services don't come free—we need to recover at least the cost of the staff time used.

Chris Adie (EUCS)

Software opportunities

Canvas graphics software

Deneba is offering the University a site licence for Canvas 8, their graphics package for Windows and Mac. Information about Canvas can be found at <http://www.deneba.com/>, where you can also download an evaluation copy.

If you are already using this package and would be interested in buying more copies, or if you are thinking about using it, please contact Charlotte Moon (email C.Moon@ed.ac.uk, tel 503347), to help us to work out whether the site licence would be better value than buying single copies.

NUD*IST & NVivo: CHEST deals

CHEST has negotiated a site licence deal for NUD*IST 6 and NVivo. NUD*IST 6 (N6) stores and manages unstructured non-numerical data for qualitative analysis. NVivo handles rich text records, allowing qualitative linking, shaping and modelling. Product details are at <http://www.qsr.com.au/home/home.asp>

If interested in a site licence deal for either or both, please contact Charlotte Moon (email C.Moon@ed.ac.uk, tel 503347).

Charlotte Moon (EUCS)

EUCS Charges 2002-03

EUCS used to publish a supplement in *BITs* at this time of year to show the charges for its services for the coming year. The latest issue (with no significant changes from last year) has just been published on the Web, at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/EUCS/charges.shtml>

Paper copies will no longer be distributed via *BITs*, but will be available on request to EUCS reception (tel 503344, email EUCS.Reception@ed.ac.uk).

David Muxworthy (EUCS)

2001 Census

The Census Registration Service based at the UK Data Archive was launched on 1st August 2002 and is now registering users to access census data. The service provides a one-stop shop for users within UK Higher and Further Education to register to use resources from the 1971, 1981, 1991 and, when ready, 2001 decennial censuses including UKBORDERS and Casweb.

Current users of any of the services will need an Athens username and will have to re-register with the new Census Registration Service. For further information visit <http://census.data-archive.ac.uk/>

The first report to Parliament of the early results of the 2001 Census were published on 30th September 2002. The Scottish census report is available via the General Register Office for Scotland (GROS), the Northern Ireland report via the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA), and the England & Wales report via the Office for National Statistics (ONS). The reports provide a headcount of the population on Census Day (29th April 2001) by gender and age for each region and local authority of England & Wales, local government districts for Northern Ireland, and for Scottish council areas. The figures are adjusted to compensate for underenumeration in the Census.

Publication and release of further reports, including Key Statistics, will be announced by the respective reporting agencies. Census Area Statistics for the UK territories will become available in Spring 2003.

2001 Census workshops to be hosted at Edinburgh University Data Library will be announced later in the year.

Stuart Macdonald (EUCS)

Desktop networking: Novell or Microsoft?

Your views sought on switching to Microsoft Active Directory

Computing Services has been working over the past several months, in consultation with the Communications and Information Technology Committee (C&ITC), on the question of the networking environment to be used for desktop computers in the University. For many years desktop communication has been provided by Novell Netware, but various issues have arisen to suggest that the time may have come for a change:

- C&ITC approved a request from Management Information Services (MIS) that EUCS should provide infrastructure support for the Microsoft Exchange e-Diarying product required by Administrative users;
- the relevant C&ITC working party asked that EUCS provide support for a skeleton Active Directory (AD) environment necessary to support any Exchange service, and that a test environment be set up to allow University departments to explore AD;
- technical announcements from suppliers warned of the 'end of life' of critical components of the current environment, specifically NT4 and NetWare 4.1.

While accepting the C&ITC requests, EUCS does not have the resources to support two Network Operating Systems, let alone to merge them into a seamless environment. It is also increasingly apparent that a decision cannot be put off until next Summer, as originally intended.

Having reviewed the current situation, and after six months experience of a pilot Active Directory (AD) structure, EUCS has concluded that AD is the strategic

direction which the University should follow, and that it must concentrate its limited support and development effort in the AD direction. There are several reasons for this and of course many implications for the University, but it is EUCS's view that these have to be faced and tackled positively to provide the University with a stable PC networking environment.

The background to this proposal is provided in EUCSinfo, at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/futures/>

EUCS welcomes comments on the proposal: please send email to S.Currie@ed.ac.uk, no later than **Friday 4th October** (we apologise for the short notice).

Scott Currie, Andrew McKendrick (EUCS)

Wireless and VPN access to EdLAN

September's *BITs* announced pilot projects for Wireless access and VPN access to EdLAN. If you wish to be involved in either of these please contact Bill Byers (tel 504951, email b.byers@ed.ac.uk). For background details visit

• <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/nsd/access/wireless.html>

• <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/nsd/access/vpnservice.html>

These pages are frequently updated to include information gathered from the pilot projects.

It is C&ITC policy that all wireless networks within the University are to be registered. Therefore if you have a wireless network on University premises, please register it with Bill Byers of EUCS (contact details above)—even if is only used in a standalone manner. This would enable EUCS to share your experience of Access Point configuration with other network users.

Bill Byers (EUCS)

Are you a high flyer or a road-racer on the Information Superhighway?

The latest news bulletin from UKERNA, the United Kingdom Education and Research Networking Association which runs the country's academic communication networks, contains a reminder about the need to behave responsibly when using the Internet.

Alan Cormack, UKERNA's chief security advisor, draws a parallel with transport in the 'real' world. Someone who travels by car has great freedom, but is entirely responsible for every aspect of the journey, and might do any amount of damage en route. By contrast, someone who travels by air has to go when and where the airline dictates, the reward being that someone else is responsible for the successful outcome of the journey.

Computer networks, like roads and airlines, are shared resources, and one user's recklessness can disrupt the lives of others. For example, if you choose an easily-guessed password, or click on the wrong email attachment, or fail to understand a piece of software before running it, you may allow an intruder to break in to your computer and use it to attack other computers and organisations.

The computing equivalent of air travel, with strict central control, would be particularly unfortunate in an academic environment, yet we are reminded that millions of pounds have been lost, and companies put out of business, as a result of individual users failing to act responsibly on the Internet.

You can read this thought-provoking article at http://www.ja.net/documents/UKERNA_News/2002/september/UKERNA_News20.html#5

Nick Stroud (EUCS)

Graphics & Multimedia Resource Centre – GMRC

Summer upgrades in the GMRC:

- new facilities including a miniDV camcorder, and software for 3D landscape construction (Bryce) and video compositing (Combustion);
- upgrades: two new PCs and new digital camera, film recorder, high-resolution scanner, and several software packages;
- colour calibration: we now have the facilities to produce colour management (ICM) profiles for colour monitors, scanners and printers. If you would like to have your own equipment calibrated, please contact us (email graphics.support@ed.ac.uk, tel 504965).

The Graphics & Multimedia group provides advice, support, training and consultancy at The King's Buildings, in JCMB room 3901. The extensive hardware and software resources are free for staff and students with the exception of printing and other consumables, which are charged at cost. For further information see <http://www.graphics.ed.ac.uk/gmrc/>

John Wexler (EUCS)

Poster printing

High-quality posters attract attention and add impact to presentations at conferences and exhibitions.

Computing Services operates two high-quality A0 colour printers, complemented by a laminating service provided by Printing Services, all at prices far below the commercial norm.

New Notes (3277 and 3318) are available from documentation points, giving details of the facilities and explaining how to use them effectively.

John Wexler (EUCS)

EUCS documentation and training courses

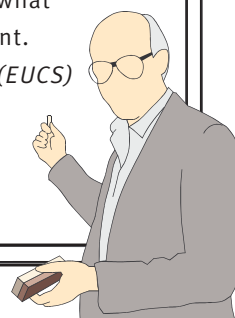
EUCS produces and sells computer documents, many specifically tailored for computing at Edinburgh and for EUCS training courses. Our catalogue *Computing Publications* is available free from our reception points, at George Square, King's Buildings and Moray House. Most documents are also available online at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/iss/docs/>

Throughout the academic year EUCS runs courses for staff and postgraduate students, mainly in Appleton Tower, but from the start of this session also at The King's Buildings. In most cases these are provided at no charge. For details, consult the EUCS publication *Courses in Computing (Autumn–Winter 2002/03)* or the *Staff Development Opportunities Handbook (August 2002–February 2003)*, or go to <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/iss/courses/>

If you haven't looked at our schedule of courses lately, please take a moment to browse through them. We seek to keep the courses offered, and their content, up-to-date and relevant to the needs of the University.

Please let us know if you would like us to run courses on topics not currently in our schedule. It usually takes time for us to organise a new course, and we may not have the resources, but it is valuable for our forward planning to know what our colleagues want.

John Murison (EUCS)



Software distributed by EUCS

There is usually a supplement in the October issue of *BITS* describing the software distributed by Computing Services. Regrettably, pressure of space has meant that this has been held over until next month.

Nick Stroud (EUCS)

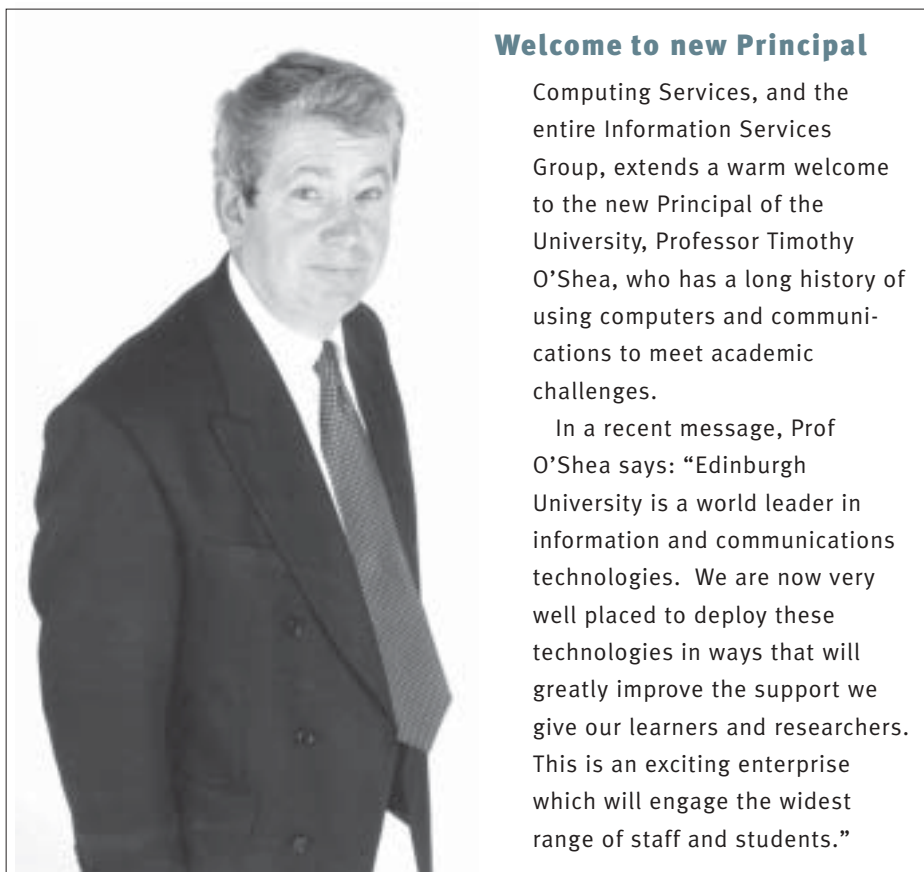
Learning Technology Supplement no 9

The ninth issue of the *Learning Technology Supplement* produced by MALTS is distributed with this month's *BITS*, and as usual features many ways in which C&IT can enhance the learning process to the benefit of both students and lecturers. There is also a major article on adapting PDF files to make them more readily accessible to people with disabilities. The supplement will in due course be available online as well, at <http://www.malts.ed.ac.uk/resources/bits.html>

There was so much to say in this issue that the details of some forthcoming meetings were squeezed out; they are:

- Using XML for content management (ALT workshop), 25th October 2002, at the University of Strathclyde (see <http://www.alt.ac.uk/>).
- eTutoring visually-impaired students: issues and practice, 1st November, Royal National College for the Blind, Hertford (see <http://www.alt.ac.uk/>).
- Implementing the DDA part 4 (SENDA) legislation in practice, 7th November, RNIB, 25 Ravelston Terrace, Edinburgh.
- EdMedia, the world conference on educational multimedia, hypermedia and telecommunications, 23–26 June 2003, Hawaii (see <http://www.aace.org.conf/media/call.htm>).

Nora Moge (MALTS)



Welcome to new Principal

Computing Services, and the entire Information Services Group, extends a warm welcome to the new Principal of the University, Professor Timothy O'Shea, who has a long history of using computers and communications to meet academic challenges.

In a recent message, Prof O'Shea says: "Edinburgh University is a world leader in information and communications technologies. We are now very well placed to deploy these technologies in ways that will greatly improve the support we give our learners and researchers. This is an exciting enterprise which will engage the widest range of staff and students."

The Internet: good or bad?

A recent article in CNET News.com points out that the 18 year olds arriving at university for the new session were born in the same year as the PC, and don't know what the world was like without this now-ubiquitous device. The article also reports the results of American surveys which show that 86% of students are connected to the Internet, with around 75% checking their email every day and using the Web to find information. A majority of students apparently believe that email improves their relationships with fellow students and allows them to express ideas more easily than in tutorials and seminars. The Internet has thus become indispensable to a vast number of students. (The original article is at <http://news.com.com/2100-1023-957874.html>)

Another recent article, in the *Washington Post*, called attention to the less beneficial effects of the

Internet, highlighting the way students are using it to find information quickly and easily, to cut down on the length of time they spend writing an essay—and bypassing the need to think for themselves. In the worst case, it was reported that a student doctor at Johns Hopkins University in the USA performed a test of lung function on a healthy 24 year old woman, giving a large dose of a particular drug after checking for its effects on the Internet—and the woman died of lung and kidney failure. It is pointed out that only about 15% of our major information resources are available on the Internet, and much of what is there is provided at the whim of enthus-iastic individuals who are not motivated primarily by objective scholarship. (This article is at <http://www.washingtonpost.com/ac2/wp-dyn?pagename=article&node=&contentId=A9729-2002Jul15>)

Nick Stroud (EUCS)

Web Service Upgrade

The computer providing the EUCS Virtual Web hosting service is in the process of being replaced by a bigger and faster system. Web users and publishers should not see any difference except a better service.

The University Search Service is being moved to a new machine as part of this upgrade. The official host name for the service is **www.catalogue.ed.ac.uk**. Would Web publishers who have produced customised search pages please check that they are using this, and *not* **morse.ucs.ed.ac.uk** for searching.

As usual, information and friendly help are available from the Web Team (tel 506656, email **w3hd@ed.ac.uk**, on the Web at <http://webhelp.ucs.ed.ac.uk/>).

Graham Rule (EUCS)

Edinburgh BITS

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NB: if you fail to access a URL mentioned in *BITS*, for whatever reason, please email BITS@ed.ac.uk to find out if the information can be made available.

Contributions to *BITS* are welcomed from all readers.

Copy deadline for November BITS:

Tuesday 15th October