

Social and collaborative technologies: changing the University

It is 15 years since the “web” went “world wide”, and started a new information revolution. That revolution is now about to overtake itself.

For most of its history, the Web has been a place in which people can publish information, and other people look at it – a one-way process akin to broadcasting and newspaper publishing.

The remarkable advances in computing are changing this old static model. People are now defining their own worlds within the Web, taking what they want from the global information pool and arranging their space as they might furnish a house. Also, anyone can add to the global collection – shattering the old model of large centralised publishers feeding passive consumers.

This will affect the University at every level, and with many of our students already at home in this new world it is none too soon for us to consider how we should be making the most of the new opportunities.

The University’s IT Committee is therefore organising a conference at Pollock Halls on **Friday 24th November**, to present visions of the future and to explore how we can best move forward in a changing world.

You can find out more about the new technologies in the Web 2.0 articles on pages 2 and 3. If you’re interested in the conference, please note the date in your diary and look out for details in October’s *BITs*.

Helen Hayes (Information Services)

(This year’s 50 coolest websites chosen by Time Magazine include “shining examples of Web 2.0; see <http://www.time.com/time/2006/50coolest/> Ed.)



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Introducing SEARCHER

SEARCHER is the University of Edinburgh configuration of the federated search engine WebFeat (www.webfeat.org). It enables searches across most of our subscription-based resources, including full-text journals, image banks, literature databases, the Library Catalogue, and free high-quality resources.

Judging from experience elsewhere, SEARCHER’s simple, intuitive interface will save time by eliminating the need to duplicate searches in each individual resource. SEARCHER is a springboard for discovery of the most relevant resources for a particular topic, for both novice and expert researcher.

From SEARCHER you can link directly to individual resources to exploit their greater functionality, for example search-refining features and thesauri.

WebFeat was selected after a tendering exercise and trials of several other federated search tools. We are delighted with its power and functionality.

SEARCHER will continue to develop in partnership with the company and the University community. We are interested in your views on how it can be best configured and promoted. To make a comment or suggestion, and for further information, please visit <http://searcher.lib.ed.ac.uk/comment.shtml>

To try out SEARCHER, use your EASE login at <http://searcher.lib.ed.ac.uk/>

John MacColl (Information Services)



IDMS
Four letters that will change everything on 9th October!
(see page 3)

Collaborative tools, Web 2.0

Collaborative software tools such as Wikis and blogs are a feature of a new wave of technologies collectively known as 'Web 2.0'. They are turning the web from a one-way, publisher-to-reader medium to a bidirectional environment where user-contributed content and user-user interaction are key. Students are already heavily engaged in Web 2.0 technologies through social networking websites such as MySpace and Facebook.

A **Wiki** is a type of website where users can add, edit or remove the content, quickly and easily, in some cases without being registered. A **blog** (short for 'weblog') is a web-based journal consisting primarily of periodic articles written by an individual, with facilities for readers to discuss each article online. Other important Web 2.0 technologies include **podcasting** and **RSS** ('Really Simple Syndication').

These technologies could change how the University conducts many aspects of its business, in ways which support its strategic goals. Projects already under way exploit one or more of these tools, but there is no concerted central initiative to embrace and promote them.

An Information Services Working Group (with representation from MIS and elsewhere) has produced a report which summarises current activity and outlines a planned initiative to address this area. There will be two major themes:

- Establishing a technical infrastructure to facilitate greater use of these tools.
- Promoting their adoption through fostering grassroots takeup and leading by example.

Details are in the report, at http://www.is.ed.ac.uk/projects/Web_2.0_Initiative

Comments are very welcome – either by email to me (C.J.Adie@ed.ac.uk), or on the Wiki page at http://www.socialsoft.wiki.mis.ed.ac.uk/index.php?title=Working_Group_Report

The report will be discussed at the Information Technology Committee this month.

Chris Adie (Information Services)

Graphics & Multimedia Resource Centre – GMRC

The GMRC is open to all staff and students of the University, free of charge, for do-it-yourself use of specialised facilities – scanning (up to 90cm wide), DVD recording, video and audio editing, graphic and document design, image editing, photo-quality printing, and so forth. We support use of the networked A0 poster printers, and offer basic training, advice and consultancy on most multimedia technologies.

Recent acquisitions include:

- A **book scanner** that handles bound volumes up to about A4 size without the distortion produced by normal flatbed scanners.
- **Camtasia Studio** for capturing sessions of computer use and converting them into movies that can be replayed with annotations, commentary and interactive control.
- **Apple Final Cut Pro** running on a new G5 Macintosh for video editing, complementing Adobe Premiere on one of our new PCs.
- a quick new **colour laser printer**, offering two-sided printing.

For loan (against a letter of guarantee from a School) we have:

- a digital camera;
- a miniDV camcorder;
- a colour calibrator for monitors, printers and scanners;
- a graphics tablet;
- microphones, mixer and audio recording equipment.

Last year we introduced scanners with Adobe Photoshop into some open-access labs, and aim to expand this in 2006–2007.

The GMRC is in room 3901 of the James Clerk Maxwell Building at The King's Buildings. It is open from 9:30am to 5:30pm on weekdays, with a one-hour lunch break most days. You can drop in or phone 504965 to make a booking or ask a question. Our email address is graphics_support@ed.ac.uk. For more information, see <http://graphics.ed.ac.uk/gmrc/>

John Wexler (Information Services)

Main Library redevelopment: clearing the decks

Parts of the Main Library are now being cleared so that redevelopment work can begin. Stores on the Lower Ground floor have been emptied to a temporary store in Craigmillar, and the contents of the 5th and 6th floors are being moved to these and to our new Library Research Annexe in South Gyle. This is a huge amount of work: the Main Library building covers a full acre of ground, and if for example the David Hume Tower had the same floor area it would be 90 storeys high. Even this simple-sounding operation will take three months to complete.

Simultaneously, work on the George Square Infrastructure Project continues in the basement area, and the roof on the North side of the 5th floor is being replaced.

We have done everything we can to ensure that this work will have a minimal impact on Library services, but work on this scale cannot be entirely invisible or inaudible, so we apologise for any inconvenience it causes you. We are confident, though, that the end results will make the temporary sacrifices well worth while!

Sheila Cannell (Information Services)

IDMS – the Identity Management System

For six years, Computing Services staff have been developing systems to identify and facilitate the processing of user IT requirements, to control access to the University's computers. A major effort culminates on 9th October when a new all-purpose system goes into service. IDMS Release 1 currently accommodates nearly all users and some 30 IT-related services in the University, and will be of potential benefit to anyone who manages user accounts, or plans or manages services. To find out more, join the IDMS mailing list by sending the message `subscribe idms-announce` to `majordomo@lists.ed.ac.uk`.

David Lowrie (Information Services)

Say it with numbers, do it with style

If you struggle with Microsoft Word's numbers, you are not alone! Problems with numbered headings and outline numbering can drive even the most even-tempered of us to distraction.

To ease the pain, Communication and Training Services (CTS) has produced a Note to help you create trouble-free chapter and section numbering, bulleted and numbered lists that look the way you want them to. The Note takes you through the process of setting up a reliable numbering scheme, and provides tips on preventing problems.

As for doing things with style – you can control the appearance of your document with just a few keystrokes. All you need to do is use Word's 'styles' to format your document. You can set up section and chapter headings with the type, colour and size of font you want, change the appearance of tables, create numbering and bulleted lists, all at the click of a button.

The use of styles also simplifies the translation of Word documents into other formats such as Web pages and page layout programs.

Creating trouble-free numbering in Word and Making your document look good: using Word the easy way are in the 'text' section of the IS documentation portfolio at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/cts/docs/>

Shona Matchett (Information Services)

McEwan Hall has a new audio system

Over the Summer MALTS staff have upgraded the audio-visual facilities in the McEwan Hall.

The Hall has always had poor acoustics due to its shape and the materials used in its construction. The building's listed status ruled out any changes to its fabric, so a new solution had to be found, using advanced digital technology.

Duran Audio BV, manufacturers of AXYS Intellivox DSP speaker systems, visited the Hall and modelled it in a computer. Their results matched our predictions, so we installed their system during May and June, ready to be used for the Degree ceremonies. There was a major improvement in audio quality.

We have also installed a 32 channel audio desk, four radio microphones, new lectern microphones and stage boxes, a Compact Flash audio recorder and a CD player. A new high-brightness data projector and a five metre powered screen are being installed for video and data projection.

Permanent AFILS induction loops have been installed for hearing impaired users.

This upgrade means that the McEwan Hall is now suitable for a wider range of activities, and this lovely venue should see greater use throughout the year.

Guy Tittley (Information Services)

Web 2.0 changing the library

If you missed Lorcan Dempsey's recent presentation 'The changing digital library landscape: trends in the world of Web 2.0', you can now catch up with the archived webcast.



The Vice President and Chief Strategist of OCLC explores the significant challenges faced by libraries in shaping and delivering services in response to shifts in the network environment and research and learning behaviours.

Dempsey offers very real examples of ways in which web and network developments are changing user behaviour and expectations, and suggests that neither commercial nor non-commercial services can expect to be the sole focus of user attention. As audiences increasingly plug in to multiple channels for discovery and fulfilment, he suggests that libraries must be willing to maximise the opportunities offered by Web 2.0, to mesh creatively, mix services and mobilise resources and user contributions to meet new needs. He warns that it will require significant organisational evolution at all levels for library services to remain visible and relevant.

The archived webcast is available through <http://edina.ac.uk/events/edina10th/>

Lorcan Dempsey's weblog is at <http://orweblog.oclc.org/>

Elize Rowan (Information Services)

Website Development Project

User research update

The Project is completing its initial phase of research. During a busy and fruitful couple of months we have conducted a range of activities to inform our work:

- The **content audit** gives us an insight into the size and complexity of the current website. It's providing a wealth of data for our upcoming liaison activities.
- **Accompanied surfing** (see June issue of *BITS*) highlights trends in user behaviour and usability problems. We're using the performance statistics to establish baseline metrics – a yardstick by which to measure the performance of the new site.
- **Card sorting** sessions have given us an indication of how key audiences group and label information. The trends identified in the analysis of these sessions are feeding into our information architecture planning.

Recruitment

The most challenging aspect of this research phase has been the recruitment of participants representing the range of audiences our website attracts. We've had a great deal of help from staff around the University and been able to get access to prospective students at events such as the Undergraduate Open Day and the Postgraduate Careers Fair, as well as through activities such as LEAPS and International Summer Schools.

Can you help?

We'll be continuing with a range of testing programmes throughout the coming academic year, and we need regular access to members of our target audiences – particularly prospective students. We aim to make the research as convenient as possible for everyone involved – activities are short and there is a financial incentive for participants.

If you have visitors to your School or Research Group who may be suitable, please get in touch with Neil Allison (tel 509513, email neil.allison@ed.ac.uk).

For a comprehensive list of who we need to test with, see <http://www.ed.ac.uk/websiteproject/documentation/externalaudiences.pdf>

More information

For more information and latest news on the Website Development Project, see

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/websiteproject/>

Contact

If you'd like to discuss any issues regarding the development of the University website, or contribute views, please contact Dawn Ellis (tel 506379, email dawn.ellis@ed.ac.uk).

Neil Allison (CAM)

WebCT Vista: progress

The screenshot shows the WebCT Vista interface for user Wilma Alexander on 14 August 2006. The interface is divided into several sections:

- To Do List:** 1 - Demo to deliver, 3 - Training course.
- Personal Bookmarks:** Useit: Jakob Nielsen, TechDis: Accessibility, JISC Legal.
- My Grades:** You currently have no new grades.
- Calendar Day:** 09:00 - 11:00 Bits Deadline.
- Course List:**
 - General playgrounds - Dave's playground (Section Instructor: Dave McKain)
 - General playgrounds - Default template (Section Instructor: Stephen Vickers)
 - General playgrounds - Wilma's playground (Section Instructor: Wilma Alexander)
 - General playgrounds - Wilma 2 (Section Instructor: Wilma Alexander)
 - Physics 1A: Foundations - 2006-2007 (Section Instructor: Dave McKainCO, Dave McKainCS)
- Campus Announcements:** You currently have no announcements.
- External Courses:** WebCT courses 05/06 or earlier.
- Calendar Week:** 14 August 2006, 09:00 - 11:00 Bits Deadline.
- Who's Online:** General playgrounds - Wilma's playground (1), Physics 1A: Foundations - 2006-2007 (1), General playgrounds - Dave's playground (1), General playgrounds - Default template (1), General playgrounds - Wilma 2 (1).
- Campus Bookmarks:** You currently have no campus bookmarks.

The e-learning team continues to make good progress in upgrading WebCT CE to WebCT Vista. From 28th August access to the myWebCT Vista page has been directly from the MyEd channel. Anyone requiring access to last year's courses can find them by using the special link under 'External Courses' at the foot of the myWebCT page: WebCT Courses 2005–2006 or earlier.

General information and details of training events are provided at <http://www.elearn.malts.ed.ac.uk/webct/>

If you have a specific question about WebCT Vista which isn't answered on the website, please email elearnhelp@ed.ac.uk.

Wilma Alexander (Information Services)

eLearning seminar

Computer-assisted assessment is sometimes taken as a synonym for multiple choice testing online. This seminar aims to dispel that view by focusing on how computers can be used to support the assessment of free-text responses. Three different systems will be presented:

- Intelligent Assessment Technologies use Natural Language Processing to provide robust computerised marking of short-answer free-text questions;
- Extegrity markets a system widely used in US law schools to administer and collect typed essay responses in an exam context;
- the ABC system is used at the University of Manchester to assist with marking and providing feedback to students, and also by Paul McLaughlin of the School of Biological Sciences to assist with the marking of lab reports.

'Using computers to support the assessment of text' will take place on 4th September, from 2pm to 5pm, in room 1.26 Paterson's Land. All staff are welcome to attend. Please contact Nora.Mogey@ed.ac.uk for any queries.

Nora Mogey (Information Services)

SUNCAT: making life easier

On 1st August, the Serials UNion CATalogue – SUNCAT – became the latest EDINA service to be offered to the UK research community. SUNCAT is a free tool to help researchers and librarians locate serials held in the UK. SUNCAT has been in use for some time, and the move to a full service brings formal support to ensure quality of service.

SUNCAT uses a comprehensive set of search keys, including journal title and keywords, to provide information to researchers and librarians on which journal titles (in all formats including print and electronic) are held or licensed by particular institutions or groups of institutions, and details of the holdings of specific issues. This service is particularly important as individual institutions can only subscribe to a proportion of the available publications, and it is invaluable to be able to use a single search to find locations of journals in institutions throughout the country.

SUNCAT is freely available to everyone, staff, students and the public. Libraries which have contributed data to SUNCAT will shortly be able to upgrade records in their local OPACs by downloading quality bibliographic records.

Work will continue to evolve SUNCAT by adding the holdings of more research libraries and to develop features commensurate with SUNCAT's role as a key element in the scholarly communication environment. Particularly important will be building links with existing services such as open-access journals, tables of contents, full-text services and inter-library lending, to provide you with access to the information you need for your work.

You can access SUNCAT at <http://www.suncat.ac.uk/>

Fred Guy (Information Services)

Repository news

The IRIScotland project has now completed two of its principal groups of deliverables:

- a pilot repository hosting service to make it possible for Scottish institutions that may not wish to set up their own repositories to increase the visibility of their research output;
- a harvester-based pilot cross-repository search and browse service to enhance exposure of Scottish research output as a whole.

The project has also completed a successful nationwide survey of awareness of, and attitudes to, institutional repositories in Scottish HE institutions (March and April 2006). The results of this survey will be published in a special issue of *OCLC Systems and Services* (Spring 2007), and preliminary findings will be available later in the year from the project website at <http://www.iriscotland.lib.ed.ac.uk/>

This project was originally proposed by the Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries (SCURL), the National Library of Scotland and others, and was conceived as a means to provide the organisational and technological framework for a Scotland-wide institutional repository infrastructure for research.

The project has as partners all major Scottish universities, and is part of a drive to initiate cultural and organisational changes through the development of institutional policies, procedures and workflows conducive to open-access publishing and self-archiving, with a view to encouraging the rapid population of institutional repositories.

Philip Hunter (Information Services)

Engineering e-books

Knovel Library: trial online access

Knovel Library gives online access to over 800 full-text engineering and scientific reference works from major Sci-tech publishers including John Wiley & Sons, McGraw-Hill, Elsevier, Springer, Industrial Press, *etc.* The data is enhanced with analytical tools to sort, filter and export data, resolve equations, plot graphs, capture values from existing graphs, and perform 'what if' experiments. The University has trial access to this service throughout September at <http://www.knovel.com/>

Referex Engineering e-books

The University now has access to the full Referex Engineering collection, having recently purchased the 'Mechanical and Materials' and 'Electronics and Electrical' collections. Access is via the Engineering Village 2 platform at <http://www.engineeringvillage.com/>
Jenny Lauder (Information Services)

Intute: the Best of the Web

Intute was launched in July at the Wellcome Trust, London. It is the new face of the Resource Discovery Network (RDN), a free national service enabling lecturers, researchers and students to discover quality Internet resources. **Intute** exists to advance education and research by promoting the most intelligent use of the Internet.

Intute is hosted by MIMAS, and is a collaboration of many partners and contributors grouped around a consortium of seven universities to bring together a wealth of expertise. **Intute** is funded by JISC, with support from the Arts and Humanities and the Economic and Social Research Councils, and is freely available at <http://www.intute.ac.uk/>

*Stuart Macdonald
(Information Services)*

Software news

SPSS for Macintosh

SPSS has announced that it will not support the use of any existing versions of SPSS for Mac OS X on the new Intel-based Mac hardware. Please be warned that SPSS 11 and SPSS 13 will not run properly on these Macs, and calculations can be unreliable.

SPSS is working on SPSS 15 for Macintosh which should resolve this problem, but this is only due to be released in Summer 2007.

All new Macs have this hardware now. More details on the alert can be found at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/stats/spssfaq.html#spssmacintel>

For older Macintoshes, SPSS 13 for OS X should be available for distribution from Software Services in October 2006.

Frances Provan (Information Services)

AVS/Express

Our current Chest AVS/Express site licence expires next Summer. It will not be economical to renew the licence unless we get substantially more interest in the Chest agreement than the single School which uses it at present. If you are at all interested in taking advantage of the site licence, please contact eucs.software.services@ed.ac.uk by the end of November 2006.

Frances Provan (Information Services)

Alternatives to AVS/Express?

Details of AVS/Express capabilities can be found at <http://www.avs.com/software/>

If you would like to discuss the technical capabilities of AVS/Express and possible alternative visualisation packages, please email J.Blair-Fish@ed.ac.uk.

*John Blair-Fish
(Information Services)*

MyEd Event Booking: new features

The current Training and Development Booking channel in MyEd will be updated for the new academic year and relaunched as Event Booking.

The system will accommodate broader usage than for training event booking alone, and will permit for example online conference booking. 'Open' events can now be publicised through the system where no booking is required at all. This will allow units to advertise all their events from one place.

Events can now be displayed via MyEd more specifically, so that individual units and groups, such as Colleges or Postgraduates, can be targeted.

The system now comes with the capability to run a range of WEBIntelligence reports against the Event Booking database so that event organisers can manage their offerings based on trends and event popularity.

For more information, or if you are interested in advertising events through MyEd, please contact misusers@ed.ac.uk.

Mark Wetton (MIS)

MIS seminar

The next MIS lunchtime seminar will be held at Old College on 7th September and repeated at The King's Buildings on 11th September. The theme is 'Business Intelligence – Strategy, Tactics and Pragmatism.' The two speakers are Simon Marsden (Director, MIS) and Alex Hyde-Parker (Head of Systems Operations, Registry).

Details and online booking are provided at <http://www.mis.ed.ac.uk/services/seminars/MIS-LTS-Sept2006-agenda.shtml>

Liam McDowell (MIS)

Meetings

Spaces, Places and Future Learning

Futurelab's Autumn conference is on 'Using innovative technology and practice to re-imagine learning spaces', on 1–2 November at Rich Mix, London. The meeting will provide an opportunity to challenge preconceptions of the environments in which we learn; to imagine learning taking place anywhere; and to reflect on the possibilities for transforming those learning spaces with innovative tools such as computer games and mobile, tangible and embedded technology. For more information and booking see http://www.futurelab.org.uk/events/learning_spaces/

ideas. cyberspace. education 3: 'digital difference'

The keynote speaker at this meeting on 21–23 March 2007 is Professor Gunter Kress, Institute of Education, University of London.

This is the third ICE symposium – the last of the series – and will address the question of 'digital difference'. Held over three days at Ross Priory, Loch Lomond, the symposium will give lecturers, developers, researchers and theorists an opportunity to discuss the culture, theory and politics of learning and teaching in digital spaces.

Details of the symposium and its themes are available at <http://www.education.ed.ac.uk/ice3/>

The deadline for extended abstracts of up to a thousand words is the end of November 2006.

ICE3 is jointly organised by the University of Strathclyde and the University of Edinburgh.

*Wilma Alexander
(Information Services)*

EPCC brings more students to High End Computing

EPCC is moving into its second year as one of two EPSRC-sponsored High End Computing (HEC) Training Centres, the other being at the Centre for Scientific Computing at the University of Warwick.

The HEC Centre builds on EPCC's well-established MSc in High Performance Computing to provide postgraduate HPC training at Masters level to complement PhDs in all areas of computational science and engineering. Students will undertake a PhD at their own UK academic institution, but extend it to a four-year programme to accommodate a number of courses at EPCC, followed by a research dissertation. Successful students will receive an MSc in High Performance Computing from Edinburgh as well as a PhD from their home institution.

The HEC Centre offers scholarships to cover MSc fees and reasonable travel and accommodation costs. University of Edinburgh PhD students are also eligible, but since they are based locally, the HEC centre will only pay MSc fees.

An important change, which PIs should note, comes into effect from now: the HEC Centre's scholarships – previously only available to students funded under four-year EPSRC HEC studentships – are now available to students funded from a UK Research Council Doctoral Training Account (DTA). The only condition is that the PI provides the fourth year of living stipend from the usual DTA. This provides a way for PIs to give their students a solid and focused grounding in all aspects of High End Computing without detracting from the time available to concentrate on the science of the PhD project itself. PIs are encouraged to apply now for students starting their PhD in 2006.

New application mechanism: contact EPCC now!

In order to include an HEC training component at EPCC in a four-year EPSRC HEC studentship you should first contact us to discuss your requirements. As part of this process we will supply a proforma, which can be used to support the HEC component of the normal responsive mode application to EPSRC.

If you are interested in adding the HEC training to a DTA-funded PhD, you should also contact EPCC.

For more information contact adam@epcc.ed.ac.uk or visit <http://www.epcc.ed.ac.uk/~msc/hec.htm>

Adam Carter (EPCC)

EaStMAN inspiration retires

George Howat took a job at the University for a breathing space while he decided on his next career move. That was almost 30 years ago, and the next step has turned out to be retirement.

During that time George found his niche in the Computing Services Networks Division, fostering many advances, and in particular setting up and promoting the use of EaStMAN, the Edinburgh and Stirling Metropolitan Area Network which led the way into a new era of academic communication. George has done an outstanding job for the universities and colleges in south-east Scotland. We have a network environment that is both advanced and highly reliable, and viewed with envy from south of the Border.

We wish George a long and happy retirement, during which he will be pursuing his interests in adult education.

Brian Gilmore (Information Services)



European consultation: online content

The European Commission has launched a consultation on ways to stimulate the growth of an EU single market for online digital content, such as films, music and games.

The Commission wants to encourage new business and to promote cross-border delivery of online content services. It is also keen to find out how Europe can succeed in creative online content markets. The consultation will help shape a Commission Communication on Content Online, to be adopted at the end of the year.

The consultation is a response to the rapid convergence of audiovisual media, broadband networks and electronic devices. Broadband gives access to a wider range of digital content than could have been imagined ten years ago, and enables European companies to offer new content and services and to create additional markets.

The deadline for the questionnaire is 13th October. The full background is at http://ec.europa.eu/comm/avpolicy/other_actions/content_online/index_en.htm

Contributors to the debate can use a wiki, at http://www.openrightsgroup.org/orgwiki/index.php/Public_Consultation_on_Content_Online_in_the_Single_Market

Nick Stroud (Information Services)

Sir Walter Scott's Home on the Web

The Walter Scott Digital Archive is a *Library Online* resource created in the Special Collections Division. It is designed around our extensive Corson Collection of Walter Scott material, which includes not only books and manuscripts but a wide variety of artworks inspired by Scott, illustrations to his novels and poems, and memorabilia.

Much of the visual material can now be viewed on the Digital Archive site via an Image Collection delivered within Luna Imaging's Insight system. The website includes pages on all of Scott's major works, giving bibliographical information on first editions, a brief compositional history, a synopsis, and details of original reception. There are Biography pages too, dealing with every aspect of Scott's career, and containing information on family, business, and literary connections.

The 'Recent Publications' pages list all new editions, critical monographs, and translations published since 2000, and are currently being expanded to include articles and book-chapters. A 'Forthcoming Events' page advertises conferences and lectures of interest to Scott scholars. In addition, the site provides a comprehensive 'webliography' of Scott e-texts and links to nearly 150 Scott-related websites or pages.

Currently in progress are pages devoted to portraits of Scott, to Scott's correspondents, and to his illustrators.

The Walter Scott Digital Archive has now established itself as the main online source of information on Scott's life and works. It is the first item returned by a Google search on 'Walter Scott', is regularly listed as the main link for Scott stories on the BBC website, and was recently featured in an article in *Scotland on Sunday*. Drop in and visit us any time, at <http://www.walterscott.lib.ed.ac.uk/>



Jeanie Deans

Paul Barnaby (Information Services)

Girlpower & Boyhood at the Talbot Rice

The University art gallery's Festival exhibition is 'Girlpower & Boyhood', an international exhibition exploring the themes of fantasy and magic in contemporary painting. The show is a collaboration with the Kunsthallen Brandts in Odense, Denmark, and features 21 exciting artists who share a preoccupation with fairy tales, romantic illusions, dreams and gender, with undercurrents of bizarre fantasy worlds that haunt the imagination.

The exhibition is in the Talbot Rice Gallery until the end of September; further details at <http://www.trg.ed.ac.uk/home.htm>

Martin Minton (Information Services)

Digital map of Britain

An ESRC-funded team of researchers at University College London has assigned a 'digital literacy index' to every postcode in Britain. The use of a range of definitions from 'e-expert' to 'e-unengaged' gives a more detailed picture than the traditional "do" or "don't", and is said to show that the whole population is now engaged with digital technology to some extent. You can find out more, and disagree with your own postcode's classification if you want to, at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/5256552.stm>

Nick Stroud (Information Services)

Autumn Holiday

This year's Autumn Holiday is on Monday 18th September. The Main Library will be open and staffed from 9am to 5pm, and most other site libraries closed. The open-access labs in the Main Library will be supervised, but other services such as the support teams will be closed on that day.

Pam Clouston (Information Services)

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Nick Stroud, Computing Services.

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<http://www.pps.ed.ac.uk/about/printing/>

BITS on the Web:

<http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/bits/>

BITS RSS feed:

<http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/bits/bits.rss>

Some acronyms explained:

<http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/ucsinfo/acronyms.html>

NB: if you fail to access a URL shown in *BITS*, please email BITS@ed.ac.uk.

Contributions to *BITS* are welcomed.

Copy deadline for October *BITS*:

Friday 15th September