

University appoints its Chief Information Officer

Jeff Haywood has been appointed to take charge of Information Services, as the Vice Principal of Knowledge Management, Chief Information Officer, and Librarian to the University. Jeff was deputy to Helen Hayes, and has been acting Vice Principal since Helen left the University in March.



Instituted by last year's Kenway Review of IT-based services, the CIO's role encompasses the whole of computing and information services in the University. This includes understanding the University's entire IT spending (which is the goal of the Phase 2 Review currently being undertaken), having overall responsibility for all major computing projects in the University, and minimising wasteful duplication of services by promoting common, University-wide solutions such as EUCLID.

Areas high on Professor Haywood's agenda are:

- IT security, privacy and identity management;
- e-learning, in particular the Next Generation VLE;
- offering a wider range of services and study spaces in our library sites;
- ensuring that our Collections keep pace with evolving needs.
- research computing with expanded data storage and services;

Information Services is still settling down after its extensive restructuring, only recently having merged with MIS, creating the Applications Division and extending IT User Services.

This restructuring leaves IS more agile, and better able to respond to the University's needs and priorities; Colleges will be consulted very early in the planning round to exploit this new adaptability. IS is implementing an Annual Developmental Review for all its staff, to achieve the skills and competencies to support the University's aspirations. The revitalisation of Information Services will be guided by a five-year strategy, and will be charted through new IS Annual Reports.

Nick Stroud (IS)

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How might IT change the future? How *will* IT change the future?? The 2007 IT conference

This year's University of Edinburgh IT conference will be held on **Friday 23rd November** at Pollock Halls. Everyone interested in the future impact of technology on the University should put this date in their diaries!

Further details will be published in *BITs* and on the ITfutures website at <http://www.itfutures.ed.ac.uk/>

Jessie Paterson (Divinity)



SelectLaptop



Following on from the success of the *SelectPC* procurement in both reducing the support burden for IT services and making substantial financial savings, the University now wishes to implement a similar scheme for portable computers.

The plan is that a sub-group of the *SelectPC* Advisory Group will undertake an exercise to identify two models of laptop that will meet the needs of the majority of people buying laptops – one ‘ultra portable’ model, and one more fully featured model. These may, but need not necessarily be, from a single supplier.

The exercise will be undertaken as a sub-tender of the National Notebook Agreement (NNA) to which the University already subscribes. The current NNA suppliers, from which we will choose, are: Dell, Ergo, RM, Samsung (supplied by RM or Stone) and Toshiba (supplied by Getech or XMA).

We aim to complete the tender process before the start of the next academic session (2007–2008), as a substantial amount of new equipment tends to be purchased at the start of the session. Our timetable is therefore quite tight.

If you would like to comment on this proposal, for example to highlight particular requirements, please contact your representative on the group by 12th July at the latest:

- Alan Gilchrist (CMVM, email A.Gilchrist@ed.ac.uk)
- Alan Wilson (CHSS, email alan.wilson@ed.ac.uk)
- Justin MacNeil (CSE, email jmacneil@ed.ac.uk)
- Sally McNaught (CSG, email Sally.McNaught@ed.ac.uk)
- Gareth Phillips (IS, email Gareth.Phillips@ed.ac.uk)

The current proposed base specifications are for:

- **Ultra Portable:** Weight below 1.5Kg, 12.5" or smaller screen (1024x768 or better), dual core CPU, 1GB RAM, 60GB or larger hard drive, DVD/RW drive (may be external), 2.5h minimum battery life, minimum of two USB ports.
- **Standard Laptop:** Weight below 2.8Kg, 14" or larger screen (1280x800 or better), 1.8GHz or faster dual core CPU, 1GB dual-channel RAM, 80GB or larger hard drive, dual layer DVD/RW drive, 3.5h minimum battery life, minimum of three USB ports.
- **For both:** a/b/g WiFi module, Gigabit ethernet, 56K modem, external VGA or DVI-I port, three years on-site warranty, a suitable laptop bag.

Justin MacNeil (GeoSciences)

DataShare: From Open Access to Open Data

The Data Library is leading a new project that aims to explore new pathways to assist academics who wish to share their data over the Internet. With four institutions taking part – Edinburgh, LSE, Oxford and Southampton – a range of exemplars will emerge from the establishment of ‘institutional data repositories’ and related services.

The project follows on from the advent of ‘open access repositories’ which – like the Edinburgh Research Archive (ERA) – enable e-prints such as working papers, published journal articles and theses to be discovered and downloaded freely over the Internet.

Since the recent notion of ‘open data’ for publicly-funded research has emerged, researchers increasingly need assistance to comply with data sharing requirements from funders. Some publishers are now also insisting that data be made available along with the research article which discusses it. ‘Data publishing’ takes on different meanings in different disciplines, and best practice is not always clear, particularly with regard to standards and long-term preservation.

The Edinburgh DataShare project will explore a range of solutions, from taking deposit of cleaned and documented datasets in a variety of formats within a DSpace repository linked with ERA, to helping keen researchers post their data on Web 2.0 sites like swivel.com, to programming data ‘mash-ups’ which can combine two or more data sources to help the visualisation of data online (as with google maps).

The project is funded as part of the JISC Repositories and Preservation Programme for the next two years, and builds on Edinburgh’s pioneering experience in repository development. The outcomes will be embedded in IS services beyond the life of the project, and fit with the Knowledge Management Strategy. Expect to hear more as the project develops, but ‘early adopters’ are definitely being sought; please contact the Data Library (email datalib@ed.ac.uk) for information and to participate.

Robin Rice (IS)

e-Science and the Humanities

Two meetings at the e-Science Institute in South College Street in July will be of interest to anyone seeking to apply new technology answers to old humanities challenges:

Grid Enabling Humanities Datasets

14:00-16:00, Monday 2nd July 2007

Refreshments served at 16:00

- Mark Hedges, Arts and Humanities Data Service
- Melissa Terras, University College London
- Shirley Crompton, CCLRC
- Neil Chue Hong, University of Edinburgh

The volume of digital data generated in humanities is growing rapidly, and additional issues relate to the nature of the data, which tends to be highly complex and multi-format, context-dependent, incomplete and “fuzzy”, subjective and open to interpretation, and moreover highly distributed and fragmented. In recent years, work has begun on addressing these issues. The speakers will discuss the work of the AHDS and will then focus on data grid projects.

This lecture will be available via web cast. For further details see

<http://www.nesc.ac.uk/esi/events/786/>

Digital Representations of Performing Arts

Wednesday 18th July 2007 – Friday 20th July 2007

Organiser: Daisy Abbott

Performance, being ephemeral, raises record-keeping challenges that directly affect future scholarship in, and interpretation of, Performing Arts. E-Science technology has the capability to provide innovative new solutions to address issues related to the creation and use of Performing Arts records. This three-day workshop will consider how representations of the Performing Arts are/can be created and used in the Information Society, and how e-Science can support their creation, access and use in meaningful and innovative ways. Major themes include:

- the opportunities offered to Performing Arts scholarship by e-Science;
- representations of (various) performing arts, digital representations, and their limitations/uses;
- future directions in the access and use of digital Performing Arts collections.

Full details are provided at

<http://www.nesc.ac.uk/esi/events/784/>

Alison McCall (NeSC)

Website Development Project update

This month’s headlines: Editorial training for web publishers is available to the University community from now. The University Contacts Directory is approaching completion, and support is needed from the University’s administrative community. Recent user research has indicated that graphic design development is on the right track.

Writing for the web: training available

The Project is delivering a new training session for web publishers and writers of online content. The session has been successfully piloted with Phase 1 web publishers, and the Project now plans to make the session available to the wider University web publishing community, with the support of IS training services.

The course covers good practice in writing and structuring information for the web. It also includes guidance on data protection, freedom of information issues and improving performance in search engine results. The session lasts approximately 90 minutes and takes the form of a presentation with a series of short activities and discussions.

It’s deliberately non-technical, and will be of use to anyone who creates content for a University website – whether they publish it directly or pass to colleagues to put online. While the session has been developed to help with the rollout of the University’s new site, it is not tied to any particular web publishing technology.

Dates of forthcoming sessions are provided on the Website Development Project website, at <http://tinyurl.com/286hxx>

University Contact Directory

Rose Dewar, the Project’s Application Development Manager, is currently engaging with administrators around the University to ensure that all staff are included in the initial setup of the University Contacts Directory (UCD).

For a contact to appear in the University Contacts Directory, the person must be listed in one of:

- HR – for staff on the University payroll;
- DACS – for postgraduate researchers;
- VRS – for staff who don’t fall into the above categories, such as emeritus professors, honorary, visiting or NHS Trust staff.

If you are aware of any colleagues who are responsible for managing staff contact data but haven’t heard from Rose, please encourage them to register for UCD email updates. There is more information at <http://tinyurl.com/2bnpg5>

More information

For more information and latest news on the Website Development Project, see <http://www.ed.ac.uk/websiteproject/>

Let us know if you’d like to receive regular updates via email.

Contact

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

Neil Allison (CAM)

MyEd: what's new?

The new **Card PIN Channel** is now available in MyEd!

This channel lets you look up your University Card PIN for door access and see important card and security information, as well as enabling you to change your PIN. You will find it on your 'myStuff' tab, and it will also be on the 'New' tab for up to three months.

The Card PIN facility was requested by EUSA Academic Affairs Committee. Students are issued a PIN number with their card when they join the University but often don't need to use it until later years of study, by when they have most likely forgotten it or how to find it. The new channel allows students to view and reset their PIN whenever they wish, including outside core support hours. Such a facility is also of obvious use to staff and visitors to the University.

The new channel was developed with the help of the Card Services and Telephones & Security teams.

Liza Zamboglou (IS)

MSc in E-learning student success

Two students on the School of Education's MSc in E-learning have won a prize in a prestigious digital design competition. Jim Wolff and Andrew Sides were successful in the first International Digital Earth Grand Challenge 3D Visualization Contest, with their alternate reality game "Tomorrow Calling".

The game has an environmental theme. It is entered through a website which reveals a message purportedly from a relative living towards the end of the 21st century. This message provides the first clue on a trail that leads the player to learn about some of the ecological threats currently facing the planet.

The winning submission was worked up from a

collaborative project carried out for one of the assignments in the 'Introduction to digital game-based learning' course in the MSc programme. Their success has won them a trip to the 5th International Symposium on Digital Earth at UC Berkeley in San Francisco, where they will have the chance to talk about their work with representatives from Google, NASA and ESRI.

The work is an impressive mix of imagination and technical creativity, and demonstrates that the MSc in E-learning is attracting high calibre students. The MSc's website is at <http://www.education.ed.ac.uk/e-learning/>

There is information about the contest at <http://www.isde5.org/grandchallenge.htm>

Sian Bayne, Hamish Macleod (Education)



The game is of the form commonly described as an Alternate Reality Game, and uses a mixture of existing and specially-created resources accessed online. Here the intrepid traveller is finding out what has happened to the Himalayas.

IT courses in July and August

The following IT courses are free to most staff and postgraduates at Edinburgh University. Course synopses and later dates are on our website, where you can also book online: <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/cts/courses/>

Date	Course	Venue*	
July	Tue 3	Excel Advanced	GS
	Tue 3	Outlook 2003 for Windows	GS
	Wed 4	EndNote	GS
	Wed 4	Dreamweaver	GS
	Thu 5	Word Introduction	GS
	Mon 9	Access Introduction	KB
	Mon 9	Access Application Development 2	GS
	Tue 10	Unix 1: Introduction	GS
	Tue 10	PhotoShop	GS
	Wed 11	Reference Manager	GS
	Thu 12	Scanning Tutorial	KB
	Tue 17	Database Design	GS
	Tue 17	Word Intermediate	GS
	Wed 18	Excel Introduction Part 1	GS
	Thu 19	Unix 2	GS
	Thu 19	Introduction to InDesign	GS
	Mon 23	Unix 3: Shell Programming	GS
	Tue 24	Excel Introduction Part 2	GS
	Tue 24	Introduction to Mac OS X Part 1	GS
	Tue 24	Thunderbird	GS
	Wed 25	Access Intermediate	GS
	Wed 25	Creating Accessible Websites	GS
	Thu 26	SQL	GS
	Thu 26	Word Mail Merge	GS
	Thu 26	Introduction to Mac OS X Part 2	GS
	Tue 31	Video Editing	GS
	Tue 31	Editing Web Pages with Contribute	GS
Aug	Wed 1	Access Advanced	GS
	Wed 1	Producing a Thesis	KB
	Thu 2	HTML and Web Authoring	GS
	Thu 2	FileMaker	GS
	Tue 7	EndNote	GS
	Tue 7	Access Application Development 3	GS
	Wed 8	Introduction to Computing	GS
	Thu 9	PowerPoint	KB
	Thu 9	Dreamweaver	GS
	Tue 14	Access Introduction	GS
	Tue 14	WebCT Vista Fundamentals	GS
	Wed 15	WebCT Vista Fundamentals	GS
	Thu 16	Reference Manager	GS
	Thu 16	PhotoShop	GS
	Tue 21	Excel Advanced	GS
	Wed 22	Unix 1: Introduction	KB
	Wed 22	WebCT Vista Fundamentals	GS
	Thu 23	Excel Introduction	GS
	Thu 23	WebCT Vista Fundamentals	GS

* Venues: GS, George Square area; KB, King's Buildings

Jenni Reeves (IS)

Tasters: gain without pain

Information Services is running several of its popular one-hour 'taster' sessions for staff and postgraduates in July, focusing on specific aspects of the software we use in order to help increase our productivity.

Forthcoming topics include:

- 5th July Signing up: creating a tutorial sign-up sheet in WebCT
- 17th July Using wikis and blogs in education
- 23rd July Where did I put that file: filenames, folders and drives
- 31st July Getting it together with Word, PowerPoint and Excel

All sessions take place from 1pm to 2pm in the Wolfson Teaching Room in the Main Library, George Square. Sessions are in demonstration format; no booking required.

For more information about the taster sessions, and the content covered by each, see <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/cts/courses/coursesanddates.html>

Shona Matchett (IS)

SUNCAT developments

'SUNCAT' is the Serials Union Catalogue for the UK research community, a free tool to help researchers and librarians locate serials held in the UK. The catalogue contains information about both print and electronic serials, including journals, periodicals, newspapers, newsletters, magazines, proceedings, annual reports and other publications of a continuing nature.

The SUNCAT team, based in EDINA, is now involved in a project between the British Library and Higher Education libraries to assist with the preservation and access of low-use print journals which individual libraries might wish to dispose of. SUNCAT is well placed to help the UK Research Reserve (UKRR) in this work, as it currently contains the journal holdings of all but one of the UKRR Phase one libraries, and the remaining library – St Andrews – should be loaded into SUNCAT this month.

The project is described at <http://www.curl.ac.uk/projects/CollaborativeStorage/Home.htm>

Zena Mulligan (IS)

All life is there: EMAS on YouTube

If the word 'EMAS' means something to you – in connection with the University of Edinburgh – then you might like to take a trip around the Edinburgh Regional Computing Centre machine hall in 1982, at

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DMLkTpCxDto>

Nick Stroud (IS)

From NewsFeed

New Intute Internet tutorials for science and engineering

Three new, free, Internet tutorials for Physics and Engineering have been released in the Intute Virtual Training Suite. The tutorials are designed to help students develop Internet research skills, and can be used by lecturers or librarians to support courses in research methods, information literacy and study skills.

- INTERNET PHYSICIST, by Chris Gibson and John Blunden-Ellis, The John Rylands University Library, University of Manchester.
<http://www.vts.intute.ac.uk/he/tutorial/physics>
- INTERNET CIVIL ENGINEER, by Ruth Harrison, Liaison Librarian: Civil Engineering and Earth Science & Engineering, Imperial College London.
<http://www.vts.intute.ac.uk/he/tutorial/civil>
- INTERNET FOR PETROLEUM AND OFFSHORE ENGINEERING, by Nicola Harrison of Intute, at Heriot-Watt.
<http://www.vts.intute.ac.uk/he/tutorial/petroleum>

This is the second stage of a major programme of change to update and revise all the tutorials in the Virtual Training Suite in time for the new academic year. New editions of each tutorial will be released incrementally over the coming months. For details watch the website of the Intute Virtual Training Suite, at <http://www.vts.intute.ac.uk/>

BBC British History Timeline

The BBC's new interactive timeline of British History lets us explore all of British history, from the Neolithic to the present day. The easy-to-use timeline is at http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/british/launch_tl_british.shtml

Sorley Maclean online

Sorley MacLean (1911–1996) is regarded by many as the greatest Gaelic poet of his generation and one of the finest poets of the twentieth century in any language. A new website provides a comprehensive range of information for the study of his work and to introduce it to new audiences across the world. See <http://www.thesorleymacleantrust.org.uk/english/>

Learning which does not advance each day will daily decrease (Chinese proverb)

Fiona Hyslop, Scotland's Cabinet Secretary for Education and Lifelong Learning, has announced plans for a Scottish Skills Strategy, recommended by a consultation on lifelong learning. The new strategy on lifelong learning is designed to:

- highlight the skills valued and required by employers and individuals;
- demonstrate how all education sectors can contribute to the skills agenda;
- outline the responsibilities of those involved in skills development.

There is further news at <http://www.fenews.co.uk/newsview.asp?n=2444>

A mashup as a thing of beauty

This beautiful example of the new web trend which bears the ugly name 'Mashup' depicts the evolution of portraits of women over the past five hundred years of Western art. This little film – in which images 'morph' from one to the next to the soundtrack of a Bach cello suite – is at

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nUDIoN-_Hxs

Shift happens

<http://www.esnips.com/doc/9e8843ef-30f6-46de-8977-dc698cc9bba7/didyouknow>

Hugh Dailly, Caroline Porteous (JISC Regional Support Centres)

Main Library collections on the move

Some major moves of stock in the Main Library have become essential. The Library of Congress (LC) collection, on the 4th floor of the Main Library, is now expanding more rapidly – by up to 8,000 volumes every month – due to the Reclassification Project (<http://www.lib.ed.ac.uk/projects/reclassification.html>).

The basic plan is to move the 4th floor journal collection to an area of space created by compression of stock on the 3rd floor. The LC collection will then be expanded across the 4th floor. Any study seating lost on the 3rd floor will be relocated elsewhere on the 3rd or 4th floors.

An external contractor, Crown Relocations, has been appointed for this project, which began in May and is progressing to plan. There has not been too much disruption in June, but during July more stock movement will be noticeable. The work should be completed by the beginning of August.

The moves will help to maintain the 4th floor as a pleasant and open environment for library users, during the changes on the other floors and before the 4th floor is cleared in 2010 as part of the Main Library Redevelopment Project (<http://www.is.ed.ac.uk/MLRP/>).

Margaret Dowling (IS)

Main Library photocopying

At the end of July, several photocopiers in the Main Library will be replaced, and others relocated, to improve the service to users by offering better facilities on more floors. As a consequence of these changes, the Photocopying and Library Shop will close.

Barry Croucher (IS)

Transforming our libraries

Over the coming years the University's libraries are set for a transformation, not only when new ones are built or existing ones physically redeveloped, but also in the transformation of the facilities and services they offer, as teaching and research needs continue to evolve through the 21st century.

It's a time of great change. At the University of Edinburgh, in addition to the plans being made for the King's Buildings Learning Resource Centre and the Veterinary Library at Easter Bush, The Main Library Redevelopment Project is progressing at some speed.



Main Library fifth floor: eerily empty

Main Library Progress

The meeting of the Strategic Project Group for the Main Library Redevelopment heard on 25th June that everything is going well, with decant, design, construction and financial issues all under control. The contractors are working to schedule and in a professional manner.

The plans for the Ground Floor have been submitted for planning and building warrant approval, and can be viewed on the MLRP website at <http://www.is.ed.ac.uk/MLRP/>

Scaffolding is going up all around the Main Library building, to enable the outer fabric to be checked and repaired. That process should be completed over the Summer, after which only the west side of the building will retain its scaffolding, along with the hoist for fifth and sixth floor access.

Happily, the erection of the scaffolding has been less disruptive than we expected, giving us reason to be optimistic that the actual repairs will not be too off-putting for the people who work in the building.

Test drilling has been carried out to see how noise travels around the building, and the plasma screen at the Library entrance will let people know when particular areas are likely to be noisy.



Main Library sixth floor: being gutted for a completely fresh start

Plans on show

You will have a chance to find out more and ask any questions you may have at a lunchtime event on **Thursday 6th September** in the Main Library. All members of University staff are warmly welcome at this event. We hope there will be a good level of interest in this project, since it is central to the future of study and research at the University of Edinburgh.

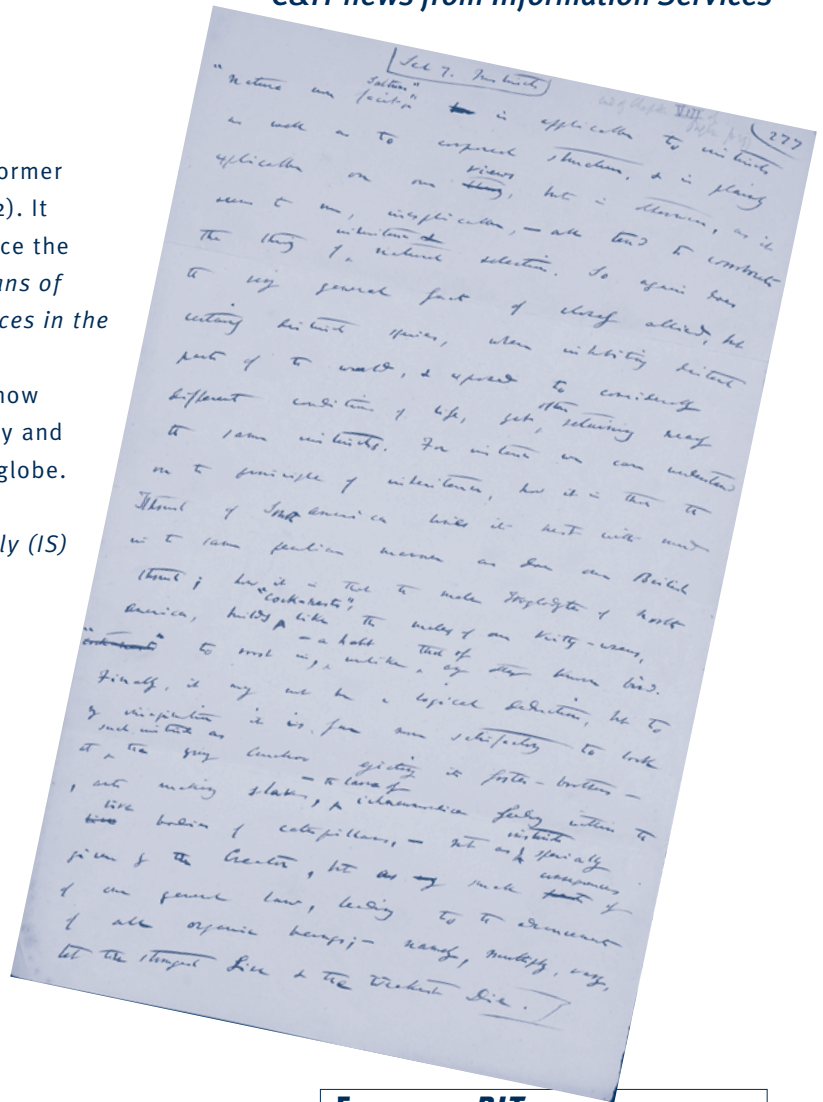
Sheila Cannell (IS)

On the Origin of a Darwinian year

The year 2009 brings twin anniversaries involving a former student of the University – Charles Darwin (1809-1882). It will be the bicentenary of his birth, and 150 years since the publication of his *On the origin of the species by means of natural selection, or, The preservation of favoured races in the struggle for life* (London: John Murray, 1859).

A number of activities are being planned between now and 2009, many of them using Information Technology and drawing on Darwin digital resources from across the globe. There will be more details in future issues of *BITS*.

John Scally (IS)



Single leaf from the final draft of *Origin of Species*, in the hand of Charles Darwin, from Library Special Collections. MS E.2001.12

Bill Ramsay takes a gap year



Bill turns in the keys to the safe to Helen Foster

Bill Ramsay retired in June after working for the University for 27 years.

Bill was responsible for the Library's accounts, making sure all the bills were paid in good time so that the Library's enormous range of services could progress unimpeded. Following IS restructuring, Bill has been devoting his considerable skill and experience to the challenge of merging Library, Computing and MALTS accounts.

Bill will be sorely missed, both for his knowledge and for his endless good humour and patience in coping with a very demanding job.

Helen Foster (IS)

EDINBURGH BITS

Editor:

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Published by:

Information Services
The University of Edinburgh

Contributions:

Email: BITS@ed.ac.uk
Telephone: 0131 650 3345

Distribution queries:

BITS is distributed through School offices; secretaries please notify changes in requirements to Carla Zaccardelli:
Email: C.Zaccardelli@ed.ac.uk
Telephone: 0131 650 4999

Printed by:

University of Edinburgh Printing Services
<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 August *BITS*:

Friday 20th July