

Information Services

Edinburgh Bits



Main Library Redevelopment: **the next big step**



The redeveloped First Floor of the Main Library opened on 28th January, having been transformed just as dramatically as the widely admired Ground Floor.

The old staff offices have been moved off this floor and even more space has been created through the construction of a mezzanine floor over the entrance with glorious views into George Square Gardens. Other highlights of the new floor are:

- 60 quiet study desks (with power available for laptop computers)
- 60 quiet computing lab spaces (PCs will be equipped with silent keyboards)
- Over 200 'conversational' study spaces, including:
 - 12 more of the group study pods that have proved so popular on the Ground Floor
 - 15 study rooms for disabled students
- A suite of centrally bookable meeting rooms and training rooms
- A video conference studio
- A new multimedia resource centre – uCreate

uCreate is the Learning and Resource Centre from the Second Floor – reborn. In its attractive new location it provides specialist IT resources for scanning, large format printing, and video and audio production. All these may be booked in advance.

Eleven of the 15 study rooms are allocated by the Disability Office for use by disabled students, some for individuals for a semester, the rest bookable by the students in the group. The other four rooms provide assistive technology such as speech-recognition, screen magnification, literacy support software, a Braille embosser, CCTVs, and ergonomic keyboards and mice. Any Library user can take advantage of the assistive technology housed in this area.

The large area of study space replicates the popular quiet study space on the Fifth Floor. The Current Journals area will move in alongside this study space in the Summer, and beyond this the new Mezzanine floor will provide a perfect place to relax, read and contemplate.

On the south side of the floor, the variety of meeting, teaching and video conferencing rooms in the new Meeting Suite will be bookable through the central room-booking system. The rooms are fronted by a smart Reception desk, and have digital signage to guide people.

The redevelopment project has now moved up to the Second Floor, from where the Music collection has gone to the Third Floor, Current Journals and Maps to the Lower Ground Floor, and the rest to the Library Research Annexe. There are regular news updates on the MLRP website, at <http://www.is.ed.ac.uk/mlrp/>

Sheila Cannell (IS)

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We remember the University's Telephones Manager who died in December



Box of Broadcasts service available

This service enables you to record broadcast media off-air, create playlists and share them with other BoB users.

'Box of Broadcasts' is an off-air recording and archive service for broadcast media, and it is now available to all University staff and students when located in the UK.

The service allows individual users to record programmes scheduled to be broadcast over the next seven days and to retrieve programmes buffered from the previous seven days of recorded channels. Each user has an online space, 'MyBoB', in which to store links to programme clips and to recorded, archived and scheduled broadcasts. Personal playlists of programmes and clips can be created in MyBoB and shared with other users.

National digital terrestrial Freeview television and radio channels are available for recording, and all recorded items become available in an archive searchable by every BoB National user.

To get started with Box of Broadcasts please visit <http://www.elearn.malts.ed.ac.uk/services/bob/>

Lesley Pearson (IS)

Service continuity in the vacation

For the second year, Information Services ITI and Applications Divisions arranged additional cover over the Winter holiday break. This focused on a number of key services such as Staffmail, WebCT and the University Website.

Over the period 24th December to 4th January, four separate issues arose that affected services. With the cover provided these were dealt with quickly, and normal service was resumed with minimal impact to the user community.

Our thanks to all those people who provided cover to ensure services were maintained, and for their prompt responses in dealing with the problems that occurred.

Tony Weir, David Smyth (IS)

Improving Help Services

Most of the requests for help which come to Information Services are recorded in the University's Call Management System (CMS), making it easy to monitor performance in various ways. For example, our resolution rate has improved in the past year, reflecting the benefits of the user services reorganisation:

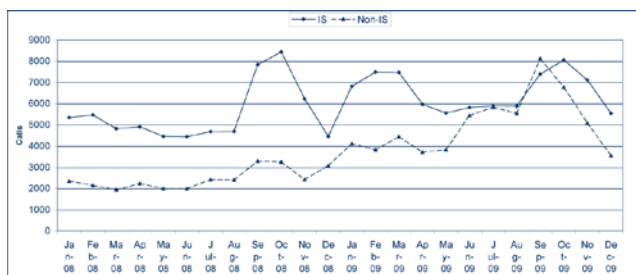
Call resolution rate	2008	2009
Within 24 hours	58%	61%
Within 7 days	78%	83%
Total number of calls	65,722	79,989

Other parts of the University are choosing to use the same CMS-based approach, and non-IS use has increased by over 100% from 2008 to 2009.

Demand for support varies across the year, with an annual peak at the start of the new session. There is also a peak in February/March as new student applicants gain access to our services.

Service demand is predominantly 9-5, Monday-Friday, and 67% of calls come in via email.

Angi Lamb (IS)



A great idea!

IDEA Lab is an initiative to develop a community of researchers who are devoted to open innovation based on the application or development of new informatic techniques in a wide variety of areas.

IDEA Lab provides funding in the College of Science and Engineering for 'Proof of Principle Prototyping Projects' that can demonstrate the value of a new idea, to help take it towards finding more substantial external support. There are 13 projects currently being developed, with new ideas continually welcomed. You can find out more in the Forum pages at <http://idea.ed.ac.uk/>

IDEA Lab will be holding its first Showcase event at lunchtime on 23rd February, in the Informatics Forum; you can register for free attendance at <http://idealab.eventbrite.com/>

John Lee (Informatics)

PebblePAD selected by e-portfolio procurement

PebblePAD has been selected as the University's e-portfolio system. We are very grateful to everyone who helped with the evaluation and procurement process.

PebblePAD enables people to create and store online records about their learning, achievements and goals. Scaffolding, forms and tools (blogs, action plans, etc.) are all built in and easy to use. Users can also include files and rich multimedia, then arrange, annotate and submit or present these online as they desire. There is more information along with demonstrations at <http://www.pebblelearning.co.uk/>

A leaflet describing some of the ways in which PebblePad is currently being used with courses in the University will be published shortly.

PebblePAD can also be used to support the Personal Development Planning of staff members.

Staff and students can request a free PebblePAD account or ask for a demonstration session by emailing ellearnhelp@ed.ac.uk.

Robert Chmielewski (IS)

USB stick helps **Data Protection**

There have been several high-profile cases where sensitive data has been lost, mostly through the loss of a memory stick or laptop computer. The Information Commissioner has taken a strong line in these cases, and organisations such as Cambridge University Hospitals NHS Trust, Leasowes Community College and Marks & Spencer have had to invest heavily in rigorous new procedures involving institution-wide encryption and staff training.

It would be significantly disrupting if the University of Edinburgh had to implement such procedures, on top of which the penalties for losing personal data are about to increase dramatically – all in addition to the distress and the damage to an organisation's reputation that such losses cause.

The vital message is: **don't lose data!**

The University must take every precaution to protect the data it holds and processes, so its Information Security Working Group (ISWG) has been examining the issues involved, and developing robust new policies and procedures.

The ISWG has identified several categories of high-risk and medium-risk data and working practices, and is working on targeted solutions for all of these. Ideally, sensitive data should never leave the University, so people who need to work with such data from home should be able to access it on University servers, rather than copying it on to a laptop or home computer; IS is developing services and documentation to make this as simple as possible. Sensitive data should never be sent by email, and IS is investigating ways of removing that necessity.

The use of USB memory sticks is a particular concern; they are a simple and convenient way to transfer data, but they are small and easily lost (IS staff collect around 20 abandoned USB sticks every month in the open-access computing labs). The ISWG has therefore been working to find a secure way to use these memory sticks. There are literally thousands of them on the market, amongst which the Group sought one which would automatically encrypt its data, and be robust, easy to use, require no setup or training, give a high level of protection, all at an affordable cost.

The 'Integral Crypto Drive' satisfies the criteria, and is therefore highly recommended for anyone who has to transfer sensitive data away from the University. It is available from Insight at £16 for 2Gb or £34 for 8Gb. At present it is only available for Windows, but a Mac version is promised soon. For Linux users TrueCrypt offers similar functionality (without the 'always-on' capability) but requires a bit of effort in initial setup and operation.

Other advice and procedures are being developed, and will be published in due course. One key point is that only data essential to the task at hand should be transferred. Encryption can protect data from prying eyes if a good enough password is used, but if the password is forgotten the data are lost for ever – which may not matter on a memory stick but could be a problem on a laptop computer. Care is also required in the disposal of old computers.

The ISWG paper about USB sticks is at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/security/usbsticks.pdf>

Policy for using data outwith the University:

<http://www.recordsmanagement.ed.ac.uk/InfoStaff/DPstaff/EncryptionPolicy.htm>

Details of Integral devices:

http://www.integralmemory.com/product_group.aspx?group_id=16

Information on TrueCrypt: <http://www.truecrypt.org/>

Jack McAulay (IS)



EXSEED reaches final stages

The Exseed project completed the final migrations of users from Staffmail over two weekends in January, as detailed at <https://www.wiki.ed.ac.uk/display/ITS016/EXSEED+Launch+Information>

The remaining key tasks to complete before the project closes are:

- to set up a central DavMail gateway service during February, following a pilot service delivered by Science & Engineering colleagues. This will enable a standards-based diary service for those who have understandably struggled with the 'lite' version of Outlook Web Access.
- to reconfigure mail routing to enable preferred alias addresses to be used, and for people not using Exchange to have mail forwarded to any alternative mail service, rather than Staffmail only.
- to enable IDM auto-provisioning of new or closed accounts into, or from, the Exchange service, during February.
- to remove access for staff and 'staff-like' users to the OCS eDiary service during February.
- to review and improve documentation up to project closure.

The new service remained stable over the Winter vacation without incident. There will be a series of clinic-style training sessions over the coming months, bookable through MyEd, to help people get the most from the system.

Mark Wetton (IS)

Tread softly, because you tread on my **dreams**

Edinburgh's annual City of Literature reading campaign focuses on poetry this year, with a range of events and initiatives throughout February – introduced at <http://carryapoem.com/>

Nick Stroud (IS)

Edinburgh University **saving the planet**

The University is starting to win national recognition for its assertive efforts to tackle the threats of climate change.

A notable difference is being made by Transition Edinburgh University (TEU), a staff-student initiative that is carrying out practical projects which will dramatically reduce our carbon emissions. The group is funded out of the Scottish Government's £27m Climate Challenge Fund, and brings together a wide variety of interested individuals, groups, societies, departments and Schools in the University community.

TEU is currently conducting a four-month feasibility study and audit to establish the University's baseline carbon footprint, and planning a number of practical pilot projects to reduce our collective emissions.

The UK's third national week of action on climate change for schools, colleges and universities starts on 8th February, and TEU will be putting on a host of events with the University's Sustainability Office.

'10:10' is a mass movement to involve people from all walks of life in efforts to reduce the UK's carbon footprint. The JISC Regional Support Centre's introduction to 10:10 – which carries a photograph of the University's Main

Library and includes a link to the Guardian article which praises the University's initiatives – is at <http://scottish-rscs.org.uk/newsfeed/?p=6861>

Another JISC article summarises the main points from the SustelT report on sustainable computing in Higher Education:

1. Enable PC powerdown for devices not in use.
2. Investigate thin-client devices.
3. Extend the life of equipment.
4. Consolidate and virtualise servers, out of departments and offices and into properly designed data centres.
5. Implement hot/cold aisle separation and containment; look at the possibility of direct cooling of racks.
6. Install more efficient power supply and uninterruptible systems.
7. Consolidate printers and enable duplex and monochrome printing by default.
8. Reduce travel by maximising remote conferencing and flexible and home working.
9. De-duplicate and rationalise data storage.
10. Rationalise and simplify IT systems.



The full SustelT report is available through <http://scottish-rscs.org.uk/newsfeed/?p=6942>

TEU's website is at <http://www.transitionedinburghuni.org.uk/>

GoGreenWeek is on the web at <http://peopleandplanet.org/gogreenweek>

The deadline for applying for one of this year's 'Green Gown Awards' is 19th February; details at http://www.eauc.org.uk/green_gown_awards_2010

Nick Stroud (IS)

A EUCLID New Year

The EUCLID project published its end-of-year report in December; you can see it at <http://www.euclid.ed.ac.uk/Programme/NewsUpdates/>

This was not an easy report to write, because it is difficult to assess and describe effectively and clearly something as yet unfinished and untested. Uncertainty, like a vacuum, is abhorred by Nature, and the tendency is to invent scenarios rather than live with their absence, so we tried to write a blend of what we have done, and what is still to be done, to set out a timetable for future events and to place the importance of the system in context. You might want to read it because EUCLID is still probably the most important IT development in the University, and its outcome will affect every member of the University community.

We can report that EUCLID is delivering on its deadlines, that the infrastructure is being tested, and that we are becoming increasingly clear about how, and to whom, we deliver information from our student record. We have identified the necessity of having a safe student record, and the long term benefits that this will bring. Our report was not, however, a document in which we could appreciate the clear dedication of staff to the project, or the enormous amount of time and effort being expended in Schools, Colleges and Support Areas to make it work – so I'll do that here...

Having been involved with EUCLID for almost a year, I reflect that one of the most valuable lessons we have learned from this project is that we have to work together towards such a large, ambitious and common goal. This is not as easy to do as to say, but I think we are doing it now, and that we will be able to carry this capacity into future projects. We will also carry a clarity about how hard it is, and how time-consuming and how scary it is too. Perhaps this is no bad thing.

So – Happy New Year, and a Big Thank You, from

Sue Rigby (Assistant Principal, Taught Postgraduate Programmes)

Edinburgh University is a **Recycling Star**

The University recycled an impressive 63% of its general waste last year, and we are sending 40% less to landfill than we did in 2001. In recognition of our great work in this area, the University has been awarded a letsrecycle.com Recycling Star in a national competition.

We aim to increase recycling and cut our landfill yet further, and will continue to do our bit centrally by keeping University infrastructure and services as effective and efficient as possible – and there are many ways in which you can help:

Reduce

Waste prevention is a key priority for the University, and you can help by:

- Careful purchasing – only buy what you need, and choose products with minimal packaging or where you can send packaging back to the supplier.
- Print only what you need to, and use both sides of the paper (“duplex printing”).

- Use the Equipment Exchange webpages (on the Waste & Recycling website) instead of buying new equipment.

Reuse or Repair

- Cascade unwanted computers to staff or other departments (and ensure they are properly recycled at the end of their life).
- Always use internal envelopes for post in the University – these can be reused over and over again.

Recycle

You can recycle most things very easily at the University these days. Here are just some ways to ensure that as much as possible of your office waste is recycled or recovered:

- Use a dedicated bin for paper. These are triangular orange and grey containers, available in most

offices, meeting rooms and libraries. They take all types of paper, including magazines, envelopes and newspapers; cleaning staff empty them into a dedicated central container from where the paper is taken off-site for bulking and reprocessing.

- Flatten all cardboard and leave it by your paper bins, for removal by cleaning staff.
- All other recyclable materials can be put directly into your normal office bin, from where it is taken off-site and sorted for us by our Recycling & Waste Management contractor. To make it easier to process this stream, containers should be as clean as possible (e.g. rinsed of food and empty of liquids).
- Do not throw away large amounts of waste food. If you have a kitchen regularly producing large amounts of tea bags, coffee grounds, fruit and vegetable peelings etc, please get in touch (email Waste@ed.ac.uk); we will assess whether a food waste collection or local composting bin is viable for your building.

Do please check the University's Waste & Recycling web pages (<http://www.ed.ac.uk/recycling>) for up-to-date information, and get in touch (Waste@ed.ac.uk) if you need more paper recycling bins, or would like to help with the campaign or become a Waste Coordinator for your School.

Fleur Ruckley (Estates and Buildings)



Prominent recycling facilities in the redeveloped Main Library save work and reduce landfill

Multifunction Devices and Photocopiers

The University and Information Services are currently working on specifying a total solution to address copier/multifunction and printer needs in the University.

As part of this longer term strategic development we are analysing the support of existing Multifunction Devices, to ensure that they are supportable, and to minimise the need for new devices during this ‘stabilisation period’.

Many devices are old and need replaced, some are no longer suitable for changed needs, whilst most can remain in service. Our current suppliers, Canon and Océ, are in the process of producing a complete document with recommendations to be considered by IS and Schools in the coming weeks, with a view to swapping out some and retaining others for a given period until our complete requirement is assessed.

Devices retained will receive a 10% discount on rental.

Proposed replacement devices will be agreed based on supportability, volumes, age, requirement and continued suitability for purpose.

Details will be provided and communicated from IS to Heads of School during February into March, with a view to stabilising devices by the end of April.

Stuart McLean (Printing & Procurement)

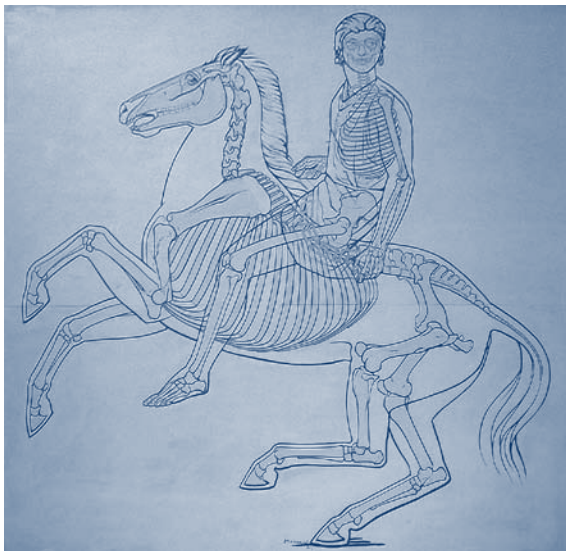
Drawing for Instruction: the art of explanation

Researchers, teachers and students have, over three centuries, created dynamic and intriguing images to explore ideas and impart knowledge. For this new exhibition at the Talbot-Rice Gallery – the first of its kind in the UK – Gallery staff have discovered educational items that offer beauty in form and detail. These include insights into the natural world, visual realisations of scientific experiments, and imagined new cities. Exhibits come from diverse collections in the Lothian Health Services Archive, Edinburgh College of Art, The University Musical Instrument Museums and Special Collections, The Royal (Dick) School of Veterinary Surgeons and the Schools of Chemistry, Architecture and Medical Illustration.

The earliest drawing is from the late 19th century, while the most recent images were generated by computer in the 21st century, for viewing through 3D glasses.

The exhibition is open in the Talbot-Rice Gallery, Old College from 2nd February to 6th March, Tuesday to Saturday, 10am to 5pm; admission is free.

For further details please visit the Gallery's website at <http://www.trg.ed.ac.uk/>



Courtesy of The Royal (Dick) Veterinary School

Pat Fisher (IS)

Collections Calendar

The 2010 Collections Calendar, featuring wonderful images of treasures from the University's Special Collections, is now on Half Price Sale!

The calendar measures 30 x 30cm, has a drilled hole for hanging, and is individually shrink-wrapped. It now costs just £5.

Copies may be purchased from the Main Library (IS Helpdesk and Special Collections), the University Giftshop, Bristo Square, or by mail order from <http://www.giftshop.ed.ac.uk/>

Andy Grout (IS)



EDINA celebrates anniversaries

EDINA, the JISC datacentre based at the University, shares its birthday with Robert Burns, and was 14 on 25th January.

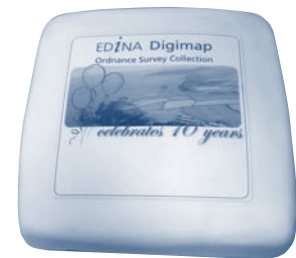
Digimap is one of EDINA's most popular services, providing a versatile range of maps for academic use – historical, marine and geological as well as conventional. EDINA celebrated Digimap's tenth anniversary with a day-long mini-conference – and a birthday cake.

Slides and videos of the presentations will be published at

<http://edina.ac.uk/events/digimap10/>

The December 2009 edition of *Newsline*, EDINA's quarterly newsletter, has been published at <http://edina.ac.uk/news/newsline.html>

Robin Rice (IS)



University Website continues to grow

These are the latest additions to the University's new Website:

- <http://www.ed.ac.uk/biomedical-sciences>
- <http://www.ed.ac.uk/economics>
- <http://www.ed.ac.uk/literatures-languages-cultures/graduate-school>

Dawn Ellis (University Website Project)

BCS meeting: Cloud Computing

Duncan Johnston Watt of Cloudsoft Corporation will give a presentation on Cloud Computing at 6.30pm on Wednesday 10th February, at the Informatics Forum, 10 Crichton Street, Edinburgh, EH8 9AB. All welcome. An abstract will appear in due course at <http://www.edinburgh.bcs.org/events/>

David Muxworthy (IS)

e-Quality: the access and inclusion newsletter

The latest edition of the RSC Access and Inclusion newsletter *e-Quality* features a variety of articles on subjects from communicating with symbols to creating accessible PowerPoint slides. There are some great contributions from CALL Scotland, JISC TechDis, Edinburgh College of Art, Dundee University and more.

The newsletter is at

http://www.rsc-ne-scotland.ac.uk/publications.php#e_quality_newsletter_winter_2009

It is available in a range of formats, including a tagged accessible PDF with a structured reading order. It is also available in Word, licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Non-Commercial 2.0 UK Licence (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/2.0/uk/>). This means that you are free to use the content/articles for your own purposes as long as you give credit to the original writers.

If you would like a printed copy of the newsletter contact Craig Mill (email cmill@rsc-ne-scotland.ac.uk).

Wilma Alexander (IS)

Something rich and strange

The Association for Learning Technology's 2010 conference is 'Into something rich and strange' – making sense of the sea-change. ALT-C 2010 is in Nottingham on 7–9 September.

Proposals for inclusion in the conference programme will be accepted until 15th February. Bookings will open in early May. Full details are provided at <http://www.alt.ac.uk/altc2010/>

Hayley Willis (ALT)

IS skills development in February

The IS Skills Development team runs courses and short sessions for staff and students to help them use IT effectively in their work and studies.

Dates of half- and full-day taught courses and one-hour taster sessions, primarily for staff and postgraduates, are listed below. Please see our web pages for further details and bookings, at <http://www.ucs.ed.ac.uk/usd/cts/courses/>

The new programme of iSkills seminars for undergraduate and postgraduate students is under way. Each seminar consists of a 45 minute presentation, followed by up to one hour of self-paced practical work. See the MyEd event booking channel for details, at <http://www.myed.ed.ac.uk/>

There are no taught courses scheduled for March, while the Computing Skills Centre moves from 19 Buccleuch Place to the new training suite on the First Floor of the Main Library, and the course administration moves to MyEd. Subsequent courses will be advertised on our website and in BITS.

Jenni Reeves (IS)

Date	Course	Location
Feb 1	Creating Leaflets and Posters with InDesign	BP
2	Writing for the Web	DHT
3	Intermediate Unix	JCMB
3	Word Intermediate: Document Layout and Customisation	BP
4	Programming in Perl	BP
10	Introduction to Access Database Management	BP
11	Unix Shell Programming	BP
11	Excel Introduction: Creating Basic Spreadsheets and Charts (Part 1)	BP
16	Producing a Thesis using Word	BP
17	Intermediate Access Database Management	BP
18	Managing Bibliographies with EndNote	BP
18	Excel Introduction: Creating Basic Spreadsheets and Charts (Part 2)	BP
22	Excel Advanced: Manipulating and Managing Data	BP
24	Creating Web Pages with HTML	DHT

Venues:

BP – 19 Buccleuch Place

DHT – David Hume Tower

JCMB – JCMB Room 2009a
The King's Buildings

Murray Clayton (1950–2009)



Murray Clayton was the Telephones Manager for the University for almost 20 years. He oversaw the installation and subsequent smooth running of the new digital system, and most recently was managing the increasing use of Internet telephony, VoIP. He died of cancer on 31st December.

When Murray left school he worked first for the Scotsman newspaper, in classified advertising, then spent 20 years in a variety of increasingly responsible roles in the airline servicing industry, culminating in a year as Station Manager at Lanzarote. He returned to education in 1987, first to gain Scotvec qualifications from Telford College, and then – having got a job with the University as a clerical assistant – to study computing through the Open University.

He spent a couple of years working in the Main Library, then left to join the family firm – the Bed Shop at the foot of Leith Walk – where he gained valuable experience in dealing with the public and managing finance and administration. These skills were highly useful to him when he returned to the University in 1990 to join the Telephones Project. This was in the throes of moving from central administration to Computing Services, as the University looked to replace its old electro-mechanical exchange with a modern digital system. Murray spent a few months working in a variety of user support roles and as an interface amongst the different people and agencies who were delivering this major change. In January 1991 the University created the new post of Telephones Manager. Murray was appointed – to a temporary position on the lowest administrative grade! – and went on to make it his own.

The initial installation was a major exercise, as the decision had been taken to link many of the University's buildings with their own dedicated wiring; the less convenient 'tie lines' were then only needed for outlying areas such as Pollock Halls and the NHS network. The installation grew dramatically over the years, from around 4,000 handsets at the outset to over 10,000 now. The project took over responsibility for security systems in 1992, managing all the University's swipe-access doors, and provided new telephony services such as conference calling facilities and voice mail for all staff on the main network. Murray supervised all this development, and was responsible for the telephones budget before Information Services restructuring, at which point one of his great achievements was to bring stability by distributing financial control and responsibility to individual departments and Schools.

To achieve all this Murray built up a happy, tight-knit team of technical and switchboard staff. He was a caring manager who looked after his staff, with a fund of knowledge, experience and good stories from his past. He was completely dedicated to providing a top-quality service, and anyone in the team could contact him at any time, wherever he was, if something needed to be fixed. He always did his utmost to get problems resolved quickly, while protecting his team from undue pressures, and would turn out day or night as necessary. Outside work he was keenly interested in amateur dramatics, acting with local companies, doing voiceovers on TV commercials, and appearing several times at the Edinburgh Military Tattoo, his proudest moment there being his solo appearance reading a proclamation to the Queen.

We mourn the loss of a wise and thoughtful colleague, and extend our deepest sympathies to Irene, Murray's widow.

Brian Gilmore (IS)

If you require this document in an alternative format (e.g. large print, Braille) please contact Nick Stroud, Information Services, University of Edinburgh, Main Library, George Square, Edinburgh EH8 9LJ, or by email to BITS@ed.ac.uk.

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Contributions to BITS are welcomed.

Copy deadline for March BITS:

Monday 15th February