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bfi Video and Film News

THIS AUTUMN SEES THE LAUNCH of the *bfi*'s new DVD series – British Artists' Films – featuring film and video work by contemporary British artists.

Produced in partnership with major arts documentary producers and Arts Council England, the first production is of five films by William Raban, emphasising his interest in the City of London and British landscape. Written, produced, photographed and edited by Raban, the DVD includes Thames Barrier, Fergus Walking, A13, MM and Thames Film; the latter filmed from a drifting boat and narrated by John Hurt. The

DVD is accompanied by an illustrated booklet covering Raban's work, and a bibliography. Extra features include:

- theFrame: William Raban talks about what inspired his work, and some of his techniques, and contains clips from some of his films.
- Sleeve notes on Thames Film by Peter

Ackroyd.

The release date was the 25th October, and the price is £19.99.

SILENT SHAKESPEARE is a remarkable collection of seven films originating in the UK, Italy and the USA. Based on the now unique nitrate prints preserved by the *bfi*'s National Film and Television Archive (see following pages), the DVD includes "beautiful examples of hand stencilling and tinted films." The version of A Midsummer Night's Dream contains superb special effects, there is a five-minute long film of The Tempest, and King John, which first appeared in 1899, was the first Shakespeare film ever made. Invention and conviction are evident throughout the collection, which contains

- King John
- The Tempest
- A Midsummer Night's Dream
- King Lear
- Twelfth Night
- The Merchant of Venice
- Richard III

There is a score by Laura Rossi, who has been accompanying showings in selected cinemas since late October, with the Fourth Dimension String Quartet. For more details, go to **www.bfi.org.uk/news**

The release date was the 25th October.

UN CHIEN ANDALOU and L'Âge D'or – two landmark films by Buñuel and Dali – were also released at the end of October. The first is silent, with the original music soundtrack, while the latter is in French with English subtitles. Un Chien Andalou created a scandal when first shown, and L'Âge D'or is considered to be one of the "greatest collaborations of cinema history – a surrealist masterpiece."

RECENT NEW RELEASES also included Playtime, the first of four newly restored Jacques Tati films to be released on DVD by *bfi* this year. The film is a surreal, comic version of mankind's battle against the overwhelming depersonalisation of modern life. Tati stars as the hapless Hulot, ambling through the massive metropolis specially constructed for the film. Playtime was his most ambitions work and is regarded by many as his masterpiece.

On a vast, futuristic set spread over six acres on the outskirts of Paris, Tati took three years to make a film poking fun at modern architecture, package tourism, and the self-defeating rituals of impersonal bureaucracy. He shows fascination with people's choreographed movements as he negotiated the modernist labyrinth, revealing unlooked-for lyricism within the most sterile of surroundings.

In the latter scenes, a pretentious, newly-

opened restaurant gradually disintegrates, and a small, informal bistro magically creates itself out of the shattered elements.

Playtime was a radical film, almost without plot lines, and with no invitation to identify with the characters. With copious visual and aural gags, jokes unfolding simultaneously in various parts of the frame, the cacophony of footsteps, gibberish and lounge music on the soundtrack adds to the absurdity.

Priced at £19.99, extra features include a commentary by film historian Peter Kemp, a short (six minutes) documentary, a short film about Tati (21 minutes) and a biography. There are also trailers for Mon Oncle, Les Vacances de M. Hulot and Jour de Fête, to be released in November of this year. The film is in colour, with some English subtitles, and further details, both for this and the other *bfi* releases on these pages, can be obtained from Jill Reading, at **jill.reading@bfi.org**

In addition, details of all the *bfi* Video releases are at **www.bfi.org.uk/video**

THE LEOPARD, released at the end of September, has been labelled "one of the most sumptuously beautiful epics ever made." The *bfi* Video DVD is the first-ever UK release of an uncut and complete version of the film. It is also available on video.

Starring Burt Lancaster, Claudia Cardinale and Alain Delon, the film is set in the Italy of 1860-62, and tells the story of an old, aristocratic Sicilian family beset by the political upheavals of Italian unification. Lancaster played the aging Prince of Salina, whose nephew Tancredi (Delon) fought with Garibaldi and fell in love with Angelica (Cardinale), the beautiful merchant's daughter.

Stunning photography and a rousing score, superb set pieces contribute to the evocation of the era.

The DVD version includes a number of additional features:

● An interview with Claudia Cardinale
● The original trailer
● Director Luchino Visconti's biography
● Subtitles for the hearing impaired

The Leopard is priced at £19.99 for the DVD and £12.99 for the video, and was released by *bfi* Video on the 27th September this year. When the British Film Institute re-released it theatrically last spring, it achieved the most successful opening weekend of any *bfi* release, and entered the UK Box Office Top 10 on just five prints.

COCTEAU'S ORPHÉE WAS RELEASED at the end of the summer. A contemporary account of the Greek myth, set in post-war Paris, Orphée is a work of "haunting beauty that follows the poetic logic of a dream." Occupied Paris is made to look like Hades, messages from the afterlife are broadcast on car radios, and Death drives a vintage Rolls Royce, accompanied by bikers.

The story is that of a poet's love affair with Death, a mysterious princess, as he follows her through a mirror into the underworld in search of inspiration. Strikingly visual and darkly enigmatic, Orphée features memorable performances from Cocteau's companion Jean Marais, and Maria Casarès.

Orphée is famed for its optical effects and breathtaking cinematic illusions such as the dissolving mirror through which characters pass into the next world. It won the Prix International de la Critique at the Venice Film Festival in 1950, and in 1951 took the first prize at the Cannes Film Festival.

The film was re-released on a new print by the British Film Institute at the National Film Theatre and also at selected cinemas nationwide in spring 2004.

Priced at £19.99 for the DVD version, it is in French with English subtitles, and runs for 91 minutes. There are also a number of extra features:

● Feature commentary by Dr Roland-Francois Lack, lecturer in the Department of French at University College London
● Documentary – Jean Cocteau: Lies and Truth (60 minutes)
● Original poster
● Sleeve notes by Philip Kemp

JEAN-PIERRE MELVILLE'S Les Enfants Terribles, from the novel by Jean Cocteau, is a tale of an incestuous obsession between a teenage brother and sister who create an intense and private world in their untidy shared single room. When outsiders intrude into their intensely private realm, tragedy ensues.

This is an atmospheric film of Cocteau's 1929 claustrophobic novel, for which the author wrote the screeplay and provided the voice-over. It is dominated by Nicole Stéphane's intense and scheming heroine, Elisabeth. The film's impassioned score is from Bach and Vivaldi.

During the making of the film, there were many disagreements over casting, scoring and other elements. From the clash of their mercurial temperaments, there came a unique film true to both their respective visions.

The film also influenced Bertolucci's The Dreamers in 2003, and Gilbert Adair, who wrote the screenplay for the latter, provides the commentary for this DVD release,

LES DAMES DU BOIS DE BOULONGE, a film by Robert Bresson, one of the most revered figures in French Cinema, is the last DVD release featured in this issue. This was Robert Bresson's second film, scripted by the seemingly ubiquitous Jean Cocteau, and is a renowned masterpiece of "cinematic storytelling and psychological insight."

The film established Bresson's unique, highly personal vision. It also marked his departure from "conventional film making . . . [when he] began to forge his own path in cinema history."

Set in the last days of the Occupation, Les Dames du Bois de Boulogne is a reworking of an 18th Century story by Denys Diderot.

At the heart of it is a dangerous love triangle. It is a study of erotic obsession and the redeeming power of true love, combined with the superficial glamour of Parisian high society and the seething passions and jealousies that cause a spurned femme fatale, Hélène, to seek her lover's humiliation.

Maria Casarès (right) gives a superb performance as a woman driven to destroy the object of her desire. Co-star Élina Labourdette is also powerful as Agnès, the woman for whom Hélène's lover has fallen.

The visual style – rainy streets, belted French coats, cars looming out of the darkness – has much in common with the iconography of film noir, and adds another rich layer of meaning to this engrossing film.

Cocteau's dialogue is highly literary, and contributes much to the film's intensity.

The DVD is in black and white, and has English subtitles. Extra features include:

● Biography of Robert Bresson
● Biography of Jean Cocteau
● Original film poster
● Sleeve notes by French Cinema specialist Keith Reader

The film has been variously described as "Bresson's finest film . . . spellbinding" and "a masterpiece". It lasts for 82 minutes and is available for £19.99

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bfi's Ten Year Plan

THE LAST ISSUE OF MMIT referred to the implications for this journal of proposed changes at the *bfi*. The current issue of Archive Zones, the official journal of Focal International, which can be viewed at **www.focalint.org**, gives some space to the response of senior staff of the *bfi* who took

> Problems of Preservation
>
> Need for Improved Access
>
> Justification of Funding
>
> Processing Backlog
>
> Staffing Implications
>
> Library Alliance With Other Institutions
>
> Reduction in Sites

the opportunity of replying to criticism of the proposed cuts in staffing and resources, made on the Custodes Lucis website. As there are much wider implications than the one reported in our last issue, MmIT summarises here the position set out by both sides in Archive Zones.

In a question-and-answer session with Ann Hummel and Michael Archer, *bfi* Senior Preservation Manager Andrea Kalas, Rod Molinaire (Head of Sales) and Press Officer Lucy Skipper offered their views on the changes.

The interview was held shortly after the National Audit Office (NAO) published a

review of the *bfi*, which called for improved access and a stronger commercial basis, and pinpointed the need to justify its public funding.

In the interview, Kalas referred to both the problems of preservation in a situation where some of the collections have an estimated life of 14 years, and the processing backlog. Under the circumstances, the improvement of the vaults was "absolutely a significant priority – probably one of the biggest." At the moment, the *bfi* might not have enough funding in place to do this.

In response to a question about one of the specific requirements of the NAO, Kahn replied that an assessment had established which collections were included in the processing backlog, and pointed to the differing documentation needs for each collection, and the resulting staffing implications.

It was also made clear that the funding from the Film Council was almost wholly swallowed up by salaries, and the result was a decision which was "extremely painful and nobody really wanted to do it." It was further stated that the bulk of the redundancies at the *bfi* were voluntary.

A new collections policy is to be implemented by a new Curatorial Group. It is planned that this new group, comprising cataloguers, keepers and others with experience of collection management, will fill a more proactive role in the exploitation of the material.

As to the future of the library collection, which will be of particular interest to readers of this journal, Andrea Kalas referred to a "fledgling initiative for both the archive and the library to have a closer alliance with either a single academic institution or a consortium of academic institutions."

The implications of this approach for users are not yet clear. The *bfi* has identified the need for stronger links with the academic community, and particularly the use of the collection for research. It is felt that there are a number of areas which would benefit from the improvement of the links with academia, but the process of developing these links is seen to be expansion, and is viewed in a positive light. There is also potential for increasing funding.

The actual closure of Stephen Street itself was raised, and it was conceded that there has been an internal discussion on the organisation's property portfolio, which clearly represents a considerable source of extra resources.

While the *bfi* is committed to the effec-

> New Collections Policy
>
> Review of Property Portfolio
>
> Single Site Within Five Years?
>
> Redirection of Funding
>
> No Sale of J P Getty Centre
>
> Upgrading of Vaults
>
> Support for Research
>
> Increase in Archive Budget

tive use of all the resources provided by public funds, no decisions have yet been taken. However, Molinare stated that the current operation on three sites could be reduced to two, with a consequent injection

of badly-needed capital.

He expanded on this view, indicating his hope that over five years the *bfi* could coalesce on a single site. There was an absolute rejection of the suggestion that the JP Getty Conservation Centre would be sold.

Questioned on an apparent decline in the budget, from £4.5m in 1996 to £2m today, the response was that the voluntary redundancies were making a difference, and that over the next five years the archive budget would increase.

It was also felt that the NAO comments provided a welcome stimulus and prompted the new proposals concerning the archive.

On a positive note, the interview also reflected an intention to create more transparency.

The foregoing report is a summary of the comments made in Archive Zones which, in turn, were prompted by the content of the unattributable website known as Custodes Lucis.

This website questioned the changes being considered by the *bfi,* and raised a number of concerns. The remainder of the interview dealt with the reactions of the interviewees to the reported activities of Custodes Lucis. In brief, the main claims of Custodes Lucis, which was set up in May of this year, are:

● The greatest film collection in the world is now threatened with irreversible damage
● The annual operating budget of the NFTVA will drop to £2m
● The National Film and Television Archive (NFTVA) will become a subsidiary department in the *bfi*
● The NFTVA will be treated as any other asset of the *bfi*, not as part of the national heritage
● New conservation facilities – refrigerated storage – are being proposed without proper planning
● The Archive Unit has been reduced in size already
● The basis of new selection and discarding procedures is unwise
● New levels of access are more restrictive, they do not cater specifically for researchers, and the loss of the cataloguing department will be deleterious to this
● A new level of curatorial officers "with the defined primary responsibilities of creating 'cultural products' and of ensuring that 'collections feed into the BFI's cultural plan and set priorities for 'conservation'" (Custodes Lucis) will be restrictive and prescriptive
● The conservation standards of the International Federation of Film and Video Archives (FIAF) will be jettisoned to prioritise *bfi* needs, as opposed to conservation and preservation
● The proposal to transfer the print library, and maybe the NFTVA, to an academic institution will jeopardise the national film heritage

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Custodes Lucis

Irreversible Threat to Collection

Cut in Budget

No Proper Planning for Conservation

Decline in Standards

Questionable Selection Procedures

Film Heritage Jeopardised

New Structure Restrictive

Reduction in Archive Unit

New Releases in BBC Shakespeare Project

MOVIEMAIL FILM FIRST catalogue for August/September lists the reissue of four plays from the BBC series of the 1980s. Hamlet, King Lear, Macbeth and A Midsummer Night's Dream are now available on DVD at £12.99 each from MovieMail at PO Box 220 Hereford HR4 0WW, or telephone **08702569000**. Their fax number is **01432262913** and there is a website at **www.moviemail-online.co.uk**

In his comments, Daniel Rosenthal notes that the originals were produced by Cedric Messina and were acclaimed for their simplicity and minimalism. Budget constraints meant that the series was largely studio-based, which emphasised the "language and performances." Derek Jacobi played Hamlet, and Nicol Williamson and Jane Lapotaire played in Macbeth. Michael Hordern was an "exceptionally vigorous Lear, raging against the dying of the light" in what is said to be his finest performance.

In a Midsummer Night's Dream, Brian Glover was a well-cast Bottom and Helen Mirren played Titania.

Other new releases listed include Three Men in a Boat and the Marx Brothers Collection 1935-46. Both are available on DVD at £12.99 and £59.99.

New Multimedia Drug Information Encyclopedia

DRUGSCOPE HAS ANNOUNCED the publication of D-ROM, which is a new multimedia drug information encyclopedia for young people.

The CD contains all the information young people will need to make their own decisions about drugs. Leading drugs information charity Drugscope has set out to ensure that decisions on drugs are based on the facts about drug use. The CD also spells out the legal and health implications.

Developed specifically with the needs and interests of young people in mind, the production also includes an interactive computer game which challenges players to test their drug awareness. Young people from eleven upwards (KS3) should find this material easy to use, and the disc contains supporting material for teachers. Contents include

● General drug information
● FAQs
● Project ideas
● DfES guidance
● Access to extra teacher and student resources

Go to **www.drugscope.org.uk**

Maureen Brown compiles our list of

Film and Video From the BNFVC

Attention Difficulties; Practical Strategies for the Primary Classroom
Uniview Worldwide, PO Box 20, Hoylake, Wirral, CH48 7HY. Tel 0151 625 3453; Fax 0151 625 3707; email: **sales@uniview.co.uk**. Purchase only £25, ref 800. VHS, 20 mins. Shot in a primary school, discusses attention deficiency and behaviour management in children suffering from forms of attention difficulty and how they can be supported within mainstream classes. Notes. Audience: primary teachers, headteachers and educationalists.

CBT for Anxiety in Adolescents
Nick Jordan, Video Producer, School of Psychiatry & Behavioural Sciences, 2nd Floor, Education & Research Centre, Wythenshawe Hospital, Manchester M23 9LT. Tel 0161 291 5926; Fax 0161 291 5882; email: **nick.Jordan@man.ac.uk** or Uniview Worldwide, as above, ref: 822. Purchase only £70 + VAT. VHS or DVD, 169 mins. A two-part training video showing a cognitive behavioural approach for treating anxiety in children and adolescents. Demonstrates the main techniques described in the manual; highlights issues which arise in therapy. Brief introduction followed by two vignettes, showing therapy scenes. Audience: clinical professionals and psychology students.

The Doctress: Mary Seacole of Jamaica [Jamaica]
Mary Seacole Foundation, c/o Hilary Nicholson, 89 Rusthall Avenue, London, W4 1BN. Tel 020 8995 0629 or 020 7607 9661. Purchase only £15 inc p&p. Produced by Video for Change, Jamaica on behalf of the Mary Seacole Foundation, Jamaica. VHS, 45 mins. A Docu-drama about the Victorian Jamaican/Scottish nurse Mary Seacole who financed her own mercy mission to the Crimea, after being rejected by the British Army because of her colour.

Farm Animals and Us 2; Feeding the World without Cruelty to Animals
Compassion in World Farming Trust, Charles House, 5A Charles Street, Petersfield, GU32 3EH. Tel 01730 268070; Fax 01730 260791; email: **ciwftrust@ciwf.co.uk**. Purchase only £5 for video and £5 for teacher's pack. VHS, 21 mins. Compares intensive systems such as the sow stall, farrowing crate and battery cage with free-range alternatives, considering how well these systems meet the behavioural needs animals inherited from wild ancestors. Examines the sentiency of farm animals – their intelligence, emotional lives and capacity for happiness and suffering. Finally, it explores the economics of free-range versus intensive production and also considers the practicalities of trying to provide food for the world. Audience: ages 16+

Gender and Schooling; A Study of Sexual Divisions in the Classroom
The Classic Collection series. Halovine, 28 Ailsa Road, St Margaret's, Twickenham, TW1 1QW. Tel 020 8892 2445; Fax 020 8744 9929; email: **mail@halovine.com**. Purchase only. £18.79 inc VAT. VHS, 25 mins. One of a series of videos in which authors of some of sociology's most important works talk to Dr Steve Taylor, LSE, about their books, about the impact they had on sociology, and also about their continued impact today. In this video, Michelle Stanworth talks about her book: Gender and Schooling; a Study of Sexual Divisions in the Classroom. This was first published in 1983 by Hutchinson and Co. (Publishers) Ltd. Audience: Ranging from A Level and undergraduate psychology students and teachers.

How to Choose and Use Fire Extinguishers – Training in a Box series
Right Action Ltd, Unit 5, Drawing Court, Gilbey Road, Grimsby, DN31 2TN. Tel 01472 358222; Fax 01472 358666; email: **mail@rightaction.co**. Purchase only. VHS, approx 11 mins. A basic guide on how to select the appropriate fire extinguisher, how to use it on a specific fire, and means of prohibiting the start of fires. Accompanied by teaching notes, fact sheets, certificates, and pocket handouts.

I am Here! ; Teaching about Refugees, Identity, Inclusion and the Media. A Citizenship Resource Pack for 11-14-year-olds. NBN International, Plymbridge House, Estover Road, Plymouth, PL6 7PY. Tel 01752 202300; Fax 01752 202333; email: **enquiries@nbninternational.com**. Purchase only £15, ISBN: 1841870870. VHS, 45 mins. Developed from Diversity – a joint project involving schools and youth groups in the north East of England, on the theme of refugees. This resource pack aims to promote young people's understanding of refugee issues and provides opportunities to explore issues of identity, inclusion and belonging. It is specifically linked to the Citizenship and PSHE curriculum. The video consists of four young people's accounts of their experiences and information about the Diversity project in schools on which the pack is based.

The Last Kill: Changing Occupations – a Trilogy of Films
Crinkle Cut Motion Pictures, 16 Windsor Avenue, South Gosforth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE3 1PS. Tel 0191 284 4073; Fax 0870 126 5802; email: **mantic@imag99.freeserve.co.uk**. Hire or purchase. Directed by Adrin Neatrour. VHS, 42 mins. The films are "illuminated by 'music from another era' and successfully capture the story of the last days of an old Scottish itinerant slaughterer, Davy Kelly, before he goes blind. It also records the passing of an age of innocence, the end of an ancient and natural right of small holders to rear and kill their own animals." (Adrin Neatrour).

Los Alamos
Banana Link, 38-40 Exchange Street, Norwich, NR2 1AX. Tel 01603 765670; email: **info@bananalink.org.uk**. Free loan or purchase. Produced by Banana Link and Jan Nimmo. Available in VHS or DVD, 11 mins. Documentary about a strike on an Ecuadorian banana plantation where workers are violently attacked for claiming basic labour rights. Call for solidarity from Mark Thomas. Audience: trade unions.

Made in Sheffield; The Birth of Electronic Pop

Sheffield Vision, 82 Cruise Road, Sheffield, S11 7EF. Email: info@sheffield-vision.com or Slackjaw, 60 Wath Road, Nether Edge, Sheffield, S7 1EH. Tel/fax 0114 201 4261;
email: **info@slackjaw.co.uk**. Purchase only. VHS, 52 mins. Documentary on the rise and fall of Sheffield's music scene 1977-1982, from its simple beginnings to the international successes of The Human League, Cabaret Voltaire, Heaven 17 and ABC, and the subsequent birth of electronic pop. Includes rare archive footage and interviews with the likes of Phil Oakey of The Human League, Jarvis Cocker of Pulp, Martyn Ware and Ian Marsh of Heaven 17, Stephen Singleton of ABC, Chris Watson of Cabaret Voltaire and John Peel.

Metzger: Pioneers in Art and Science

Pinnacle Vision, Electron House, Cray Avenue, St Mary Cray, Orpington, BR5 3RJ. Tel 01689 899016; Fax 01689 836906;
email: **info@pinnacle-vision.co.uk**. Purchase only £14.99. Director Ken McMullen. Commissioned by the Arts Council of England Interdisciplinary Arts Department. Film length (DVD), 139.5 mins. Documentary on the life and work of Gustav Metzger, the founder of auto-destructive art. Includes 111 mins of additional material.

A Million Bricks: Hometown series

Northern Visions, 23 Donegal Street, Belfast, BT1 2FF. Tel 028 9024 5495; Fax 028 9032 6608;
email: **info@northernvisions.org**. Purchase only £20 inc p&p UK and Ireland only. VHS, 90 mins. The story of Springfield Park, a mixed street (Catholic and Protestant) in West Belfast which succumbed to the violence of the Troubles. The last families moved out in 1971.

Papier-Mâché Techniques: Making Stuff series

27A Access Artspace, 27A Belvoir Street, Leicester, LE1 6SL. Tel 0116 222 9030; Fax 0116 299 2777;
email: **27access@totalise.co.uk**. Purchase only. VHS, 17 mins. Presented by people with learning disabilities, demonstrates how, with the simple technique of papier-mâché, people can make masks, bowls, sculptures and other decorative objects.

The Pesticide Trail – A Student Investigation

Team Video, Canalot, 222 Kensal Road, London, W10 5BN. Tel 020 8960 5536; Fax 020 8960 9784;
email: **admin@team-video.co.uk**. Purchase only £38 exc VAT + £4.50 p&p. VHS, 100 mins. Eight individual teaching units, each of which focuses on a particular area of concern about pesticide use. The units take the form of investigations in which students interview key people (farmers, regulators, pesticides exposure sufferers, anti-pesticide campaigners, supermarkets, pesticide manufacturers) and uncovering problems. The eight units cover: food; water; health; cotton; chocolate; global environment; local environment; our toxic history. Accompanied by a 60-page workbook. Audience: Secondary schools.

Playing our Part after 50

PRIAE Policy Research Institute on Ageing and Ethnicity, 31-32 Park Row, Leeds, LS1 5JD. Tel 0113 285 5990; Fax 0113 285 5999; email: **mark.aldridge@priae.org**. Hire £10 or purchase £30. VHS, 28 mins. Video about citizenship, which explores the contribution made by older people from black and minority ethnic communities in different walks of life, highlighting the importance of volunteering. Features five individuals who remain firmly rooted in their community, but are also determined to play their part in society. Mrs Induben Seth from Kenya leads a group of women who raise money for charity among other things; Emanuelle Adebiyi from Nigeria works for racial equality and young people in Bristol; Shu Pao Lim, from Burma, does yoga and helps cancer patients; Betty Campbell was the first black head teacher in Wales, and is now an independent councillor, and Mr S.S. Kohli founded a multi-faith centre for elders in Glasgow. He says, "If you want to be happy in retirement, keep yourself active and busy."

Rocket Site Story

Concord Video & Film Council, Rosehill Centre, 22 Hines Road, Ipswich, IP3 9BG. Tel 01473 726012; Fax 01473 274531; email: **sales@concordvideo.co.uk**. Hire £8 or purchase £20 (NB: a 16mm print is also available for hire at £8). VHS, 20 mins. black & white, part silent. Amateur newsreel of the first non-violent civil disobedience action at a rocket base in Britain. The nuclear disarmament demonstration took place at the Swaffham missile base, Norfolk, in December 1958.

Thinking Together; Using Philosophy for Children to Promote Whole-School Emotional Literacy

Smallwood Publishing, The Old Bakery, Charlton House, Dour Street, Dover, CT16 1ED. Tel 01304 226900; email: **orders@smallwood.co.uk**. Purchase only £19.95 inc VAT, ref: EDV5550. Produced by Halovine for Antidote. VHS, 22 mins. A teacher uses a piece of text, a picture or an idea from popular culture to stimulate thinking and imagination. Children are encouraged to express their thoughts and emotions, challenge what is being said and ask questions. The video tells how a group of primary teachers at school in east London came to use this approach, right across the curriculum for children from years 1 to 6, to accelerate emotional and social development, along with verbal reasoning and critical thinking. Audience: primary school teachers, headteachers and educationists.

The True Story of Hogmanay

Panamint Cinema, Abercorn Schoolhouse, Whitequarries, Broxburn, EH52 6PZ. Tel 01506 834936; Fax 01506 834550; email: **cinema@panamint.co.uk**. Purchase only £15.99, ref: PDC1022. VHS, approx 34 mins., plus extra 26 mins. Jimmy Reid delves into the origins of the traditions of Hogmanay as it is celebrated throughout Scotland. The first foot, the clootie dumpling, the fireballs of Stonehaven, the torches of Comrie, and the bonfire at Biggar are all seen, as is Up-Helly-Aa, Shetland's traditional welcome to their New Year. Then, with the help of fellow revellers – Robin Hall, Jack House, Archie Roy and the Whistlebinkies – the mysteries of Hogmanay are unravelled and explained. The tape contains a bonus film: A Line for all Seasons, which features a seasonal trip on the West Highland Railway from Glasgow to Mallaig in the snows of winter.

The Upward Spiral

Jumpcut, 6 Hawkesworth Street, Ilkley, L29 9DU. Tel 01943 816414; Fax 01943 817170; email: **jumpcut.steve@virgin.net** or Prospects Sales & Marketing, Trinity Enterprise Centre, Furness Business Park, Barrow-in-Furness, LA14 2PN. Tel 01229 828000; Fax 01229 828099; email: info@prospects-sales.co.uk. Purchase only £45.83 inc VAT. Produced by Jumpcut. VHS, 25 mins. A video on job seeking, designed for use with people who have been unemployed for an extended period of time. It is aimed at young people who have been unemployed since they left school, women wishing to return to work after a career break, older people who are long-term redundant and people stuck in dead-end jobs who need to change their career direction. The video contains interviews with real people who have, for whatever reason, experienced a downward spiral in their lives: into financial difficulty, lack of confidence and self esteem, loneliness, apathy, family/domestic problems, depression and even substance abuse, but who have now begun to overcome their problems. They are people who have secured places on training and support programmes (some with a nationwide training provider and some at a community college in the North East). Shows how, when structure and purpose return to their lives, confidence improves and valuable job seeking skills are acquired.

A Lesson in Feisty Scanners – The Canoscan 9900F

Ken Cheetham
Learning Resources Advisor UWIC

BUYING A SCANNER REQUIRES at least reasonable knowledge of what it might have to be used for – what it will have to scan, what size will be needed, and the final destination of what is scanned. It is important to have this knowledge, because scanners can range in price from £50 to £15,000 and more. A scanned image aimed at a full colour, full page A4, high-gloss book production will need the high resolution of top-end, pre-press equipment. On the other hand, the average archivist might well only need a desk top model which performs well at a professional level, without costing the earth. It should, however, be somewhat more feisty than the lightweight models available at the bottom end of the price range.

Unless there is a need to scan large volumes of film, it is not really worthwhile acquiring a dedicated film scanner as well as a flatbed scanner for reflective copy. The CanoScan 9900F is a mid-priced, professional, A4 flatbed which will deliver fast, detailed scans from print or medium format film for a whole range of purposes including web publication. At its higher performance settings, it will also work for photo quality printing, as long as enlargements are not too optimistic. But this comes at the cost of much reduced speed. It is supplied with film holders for four strips of six 35mm frames, eight mounted 35mm slides, a two-frame strip of 6x6cm and one 5x4in film sheet. The maximum document size is

Canoscan 9900F

Feisty

Fast

Professional

Mid-priced

From print/medium format film

Photoquality at higher settings

Versatile

Excellent results

A4, but film not held in the supplied frames will not be recognised in film scan mode.

To produce good quality scans, the scanner will need to offer a fairly high, true optical resolution (ignore higher claims of digital enhancement), and a dynamic range capable of rendering detail in all the tones from highlights through shadows. These requirements are about the same as the pre-press scanners, but the latter are much faster and have much the better optics and build quality – both of these supporting sharper, more finely focused scans. Pre-press also comes with superior software, enabling a balanced scan to be delivered directly into the photo-editing application, for example, without any further tweaking.

A MID-PRICE SCANNER will not deliver high-end results for glossy magazines, no matter what the manufacturer claims. This Canon is no exception. It does, however, produce excellent and printable results from flat art work and photographic prints.

The 9900F can deliver scans at 3200x6400 at a 48-bit colour depth. That means that the Red, Green and Blue channels are recorded at 16 bits each, which is a much greater range of colours than ever before, and many more than the eye can determine. What is the point? Well, there is more information available to choose from, so there is a better chance of producing the desired image. This works with digital cameras as well, and is of course not limited exclusively to Canon products.

The 9900F is a CCD desktop scanner of substantial build and performance. Its body shell is an elegantly dark, silvery grey, with charcoal trim, and it occupies a fairly small space of 52.5x29cm, with a maximum height of 127mm. At 5.2kg, it is easily moved around when necessary (remember to set the lock, which is at the rear of the platen), yet heavy enough to prevent sliding each time the lid is raised.

The scanner/computer interface is either high speed USB 2.0 or IEEE 1394 FireWire, with the latteronly available with Macintosh. Recent reports indicate that USB 2.0 is faster than FireWire on PCs, so this will not matter. The lamp is a cold cathode fluorescent, and gives a very even illumination. The operation is on the whole extremely quiet and a preview scan, from within PhotoShop, of a 12.5x19cm photographic print took about 4 seconds. Scanning the same image at the same size, at an output resolution of 400dpi, took 25 seconds. Scanning to give an output print of approximately 20x30cm at 300dpi for an inkjet printer took 85 seconds. After scanning from a wide range of materials, including photographs, mechanical prints, leaves and slices of bread, I have to say that I was very impressed by the shadow and highlight detail, as well as the colour gradation produced by the hardware. This all means that any photographic enlargements from an original print can exhibit full detail and exceptional quality.
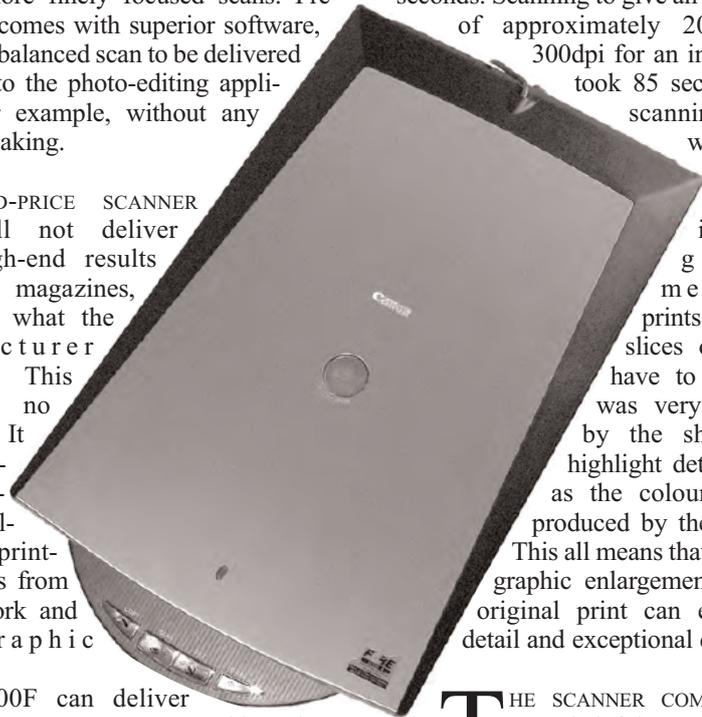
THE SCANNER COMES WITH a very helpful set of software applications, and these include PhotoShop Elements, as well as ArcSoft PhotoStudio and PhotoBase and ScanSoft OmniPage SE for optical character recognition – always a really useful tool. Unfortunately, its scanning software, which is ScanGear CS, lets it down dramatically when it comes to scanning film. This is not necessarily a criticism of the 9900F: if that was the intended purpose, it is worth remembering that any quality film scan required would best be produced by a professional pre-press house.

LET US SEE WHAT HAPPENS, when scanning using 2 x 35mm film strips of 4 negatives each. The strips are easily loaded into their holding frames and held secure. The white, clip-on cover inside the lid (needed for making reflection scans from opaque materials) is removed and the lid lowered. If scanning from within PhotoShop, when ScanGear opens, Colour Negative is selected as the source, the mode as Colour and the film size as 35mm strip. The output resolution appears in the box as 800dpi by default. From the moment the preview button is clicked to the appearance

of the eight previews on screen is exactly 125 seconds, but remember that on a first scan some time is spent adjusting the lamp. Selecting just one frame and ScanGear shows that its size is 3.6x2.4cm. The next step is to deselect the default, frame 1.

To make a print of about 15x10 cm, this measurement is set in the Print Size box. The scale is automatically adjusted to 442%. The output resolution is set at 300dpi for an inkjet printer. On the settings tab, Unsharp Mask and Auto Exposure should be selected, and all other settings left as defaults. Clicking Scan delivers the scanned image into PhotoShop in 90 seconds: it looks really sharp on screen, although the colours were not as I expected.

There were also white marks left by dust, so this was a chance to see how Canon's Fare Level 2 technology worked (FARE is Film Automatic Retouching and Enhancement, and it will only work in film mode). It is designed to remove marks left by dust and scratches, to reconstruct colour and to manage and equalize grain.

To carry out this operation, select Remove Dust and Scratches – Normal, and then Grain Correction – Normal, on the settings tabs. In addition, select High Quality and Calibrate at Every Scan. It takes six minutes to deliver this image to PhotoShop. Viewed at 200% magnification it could be seen that FARE had done a good job – all the dust had gone.

A further scan without Unsharp Mask turned on showed much blurring, which is a common problem with all kinds of scanning. However, there was no way of controlling the degree of mask in the software and it does seem excessive, the first scan being the sharpest.

A fourth scan with Unsharp Mask on and

Grain Correction off showed a much better result, but although Remove Dust and Scratches, Fading Correction and Grain Correction can be applied independently as Soft, Normal or Hard, they cannot be effected in any measured way which can be clearly previewed, as the thumbnails are too small. This also makes it impossible to set density points with any degree of accuracy and the very low resolution of the previews makes a scan necessary to judge any of these properties effectively, so this will lead to some time being wasted.

Other problems with Scan Gear abound. When choosing colour negative or positive, there is no possibility of specifying the film type beyond that minimum. Clicking on the previews in turn shows that they are not all the same size; the eight used ranged from 3.39 to 3.64 cm wide, a 7% variation. Some of the completed scans showed a black edge, seemingly not present in the negative, and differing in size from scan to scan.

The first scan, without any effects, actually delivered a very good print with excellent colour balance, but of course showed all the dust marks. All the other scans delivered much darker prints with less detail and a strong blue cast. This led me to assume that the Auto Exposure setting was giving underexposure.

The print size also has to be set for each scan, as it defaults to the selected area size each time. All of these issues imply it is necessary to try to recover the faults from within PhotoShop, and not all users – even at a professional level – will have access to that, or the necessary skills to use it effectively.

So, what is required here is a good quality, professional scanning software package. That would give this scanner a chance to match the opposition and eliminate some unnecessary labour. Commonly supplied with some other scanners, the professional standard software package SilverFast from LaserSoft would be a great solution.

This is supplied with the nearest rival to the 9900F, the Epson Perfection 4870 Photo, and it makes a big difference to that scanner, currently recognised as the leading model at this price level.

It comes at £264 +VAT (£310) while the Canon is £230 +VAT (£270) and the latter's price makes it a bargain – save for that awful scanning software.

THERE ARE JUST A FEW final points. The Canon includes some one-touch buttons – Copy, Scan, File and E-mail – which are intended to make simple versions of these tasks readily available to the unaccustomed user, provided of course that relevant software is installed on the PC. Using this method to insert an A4 text document into an email message in Outlook Express took 90 seconds – unbeatable by

any other method where an electronic copy of the document does not already exist and a copy is also saved as a file.

The last test was to scan an inkjet print of a Word file into OmniPage Pro, apply optical character recognition to the scan and save it as a new Word document.

The scan picked up all the anomalies, indicating a very high level of accuracy. This helps the OCR software to do its job without creating additional work for the user.

THE CONCLUSION, THEREFORE, IS that this scanner is an excellent piece of hardware which is capable of producing very accurate and detailed scans at a very reasonable price. The supplied scanning software does, however, let it down badly when scanning film, giving uncertain and irregular results which need a lot more work to put right, if indeed that can always be done.

In spite of these drawbacks, I have confirmed that SilverFast is available for this scanner and I intend to purchase it, and to acquire the software which will make the machine a complete package.

The Verdict

The CanoScan 9900F comes with the required AC adaptor and USB 2.0 lead, but for use with a Macintosh a FireWire lead will have to be obtained as an extra.

Product Reviews to come in Volume 31 2005 will include the Fotostation Pro digitgal asset software reported in this issue's technology column. This is now being demonstrated and tested at the University of Wales Institute Cardiff.

AIRS: ICT and Information for the Visually Impaired

Karen Hannah Social Inclusion Manager Cultural Development Gateshead Central Library

Karen Hannah describes the use of media and ICT in an award-winning initiative to develop services for visually and hearing-impaired library users in the North-East of England, at Gateshead Central Library

AIRS (Access to Information and Reading Services) is provided by Gateshead Council's library service. Its aim is to provide access to all kinds

access to information for sensory-impaired users who use ICT as a medium to convert printed information into Braille and other formats

of information for people who find it hard to read print, and who currently use ICT as a medium to convert printed information into Braille and other accessible formats for sensory impaired people, rather than as a delivery medium in itself.

AIRS began in 1987 as an externally funded talking newspaper project and was moved to mainline council funding in 1994. It has expanded considerably since those early days, and now offers a full professional transcription service into Braille, large print, audio and British Sign Language on video.

THE TALKING NEWSPAPER Service is still delivered on traditional audio cassette – perhaps surprisingly in these days of CDs and web audio and video files. Many elderly and predominantly visually impaired listeners like being able to stop, start and rewind the tapes as they wish, which they would not always be able to do with a CD. It is also an advantage that they are generally familiar with the technology of a basic cassette player. There is also a lending service for cassette players with large buttons, which is in demand by users without a player, or those who struggle with the small buttons on standard players.

The bulk of the work for the talking newspaper is in the preparation and record-ing, rather than the copying and dispatch. News items, in particular, require careful re-scripting into spoken English, rather than written English, without changing the meaning, because the text has to be suitable to be listened to, rather than read. A team of full-time readers/researchers write and record the news, features, quizzes, talking book reviews, interviews and other content which makes up the talking newspaper tapes. Regular contributors from the local community are also welcomed, and this includes a TV sports reporter, local writers, poets, musicians, ministers and even the local bishops, who come in to record a Christmas message. This feature not only contributes to content diversity, but it also gives listeners the necessary variety in the voices they hear on the tape. In-house theme music and "stabs" (short snatches of music used as audio punctuation) are used to separate items and replace written punctuation. The stabs of music are inserted in real time from CD, by the engineers working to marked text in one of three audio studios. The whole operation is usually completed in one recording, with any necessary re-recording carried out at the time. The final version is transferred to a digital master for retention and to audio cassette for duplication and dispatch.

Using traditional audio tape also means that recycling is easy. Sending four cassettes each week to around 300 people each time makes this process a necessity from a resource point of view.

ACCORDING TO THE Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB), businesses spend £20 billion each year on communicating with their customers. Two million people with sight problems in the UK cannot read anything in standard print, which is still the predominant medium. It is also true that putting information on a website will not automatically make it accessible. Some visually impaired people do, indeed, use access technology to read Internet pages successfully, but sites

sites have to be designed with accessibility for visually impaired people in mind . . . many also lack access to a PC, or cannot visit their local library

first have to be designed with accessibility for visually impaired people in mind. But many visually impaired people do not have access to a PC, or are unlikely or unable to visit their local library to use the facilities there. It is vital for these people that information providers offer their information in larger print, Braille, or on tape, as these are formats which visually impaired people can easily use.

AIRS transcribes all kinds of information, using ICT as a medium for making traditional print available to people in Braille, large print or audio cassette. The material transcribed can range from individual items such as letters, statements and meeting minutes, through to large mailings of leaflets and newsletters. Clients include local authorities, health services, financial

Information Assistant (Braille) Ann Ruddick with Becky

local authorities, health services, financial institutions, utilities companies and voluntary organisations throughout the UK. Now that Part III of the Disability Discrimination Act is in force, it is hoped that more organisations will start making their information available in alternative formats.

AIRS has been nationally recognised for this work – as recipients of the RNIB's Simply the Best 2004 Accessible Information Provider award earlier this year, and is always happy to offer help and advice about making information accessible.

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The material to be transcribed is generally supplied in both an electronic and hard copy version of the information. AIRS works mainly from Word or PDF files to re-format the document and create a master copy in large print (the standard is 20 pt) or a version suitable for conversion to Braille. Large print documents are simply printed off and bound as required. However, master documents for Braille need to be run through a professional Braille-making package on a PC attached to an embosser. This is similar to a large printer but with pins rather than a print head. The embosser then produces the document on Braille

paper. As a page of standard A4 print converts to around two and a half pages of Braille, the Braille documents are double-sided to keep the size down. The programme ensures that the dots on the second side do not coincide with the dots on the first side.

A manual form of Braille document can also be produced on a Perkins Brailler, which is a little like a typewriter but with only six keys. AIRS's Braille assistant is blind, and uses this method to produce birthday, Christmas and business cards for clients, and also to produce Braille on thick self-adhesive clear plastic. This can can then be overlaid on to things like hotel door signs and menus to create versions for sight-impaired users.

AUDIO CASSETTE INFORMATION has a wider potential audience than visually impaired people. It is also a suitable medium for people with learning disabilities, or people with mobility problems which make it impossible for them to hold newspapers or documents. The process used to meet these requirements is similar to the talking newspaper service, but with some added complications. For example, re-scripting for reading aloud is no mean feat when it it is necessary to convey cross-references in text, or tables of figures, or diagrams which need to be explained.

Confidential information, such as bank statements or other personal details, presents another problem. In these cases, the information is read direct to tape, and that output is sent direct to the recipient without any intermediate copying.

WHERE BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE (BSL) has to be output, translating information from written English into this form of communication is yet more complex. There are not only two

different media, but two completely different languages. BSL has its own grammar and structure, and does not mirror English. A phrase which might be considered wordy in English can often be translated into an expressive gesture in BSL. AIRS uses video to overcome this.

To make a video, the BSL assistant first takes the necessary step of rescripting the material into a form suitable for filming. This is then filmed in the normal way, with subtitles and a voice-over added where necessary, to provide what the customer has asked for.

AIRS employs a Deaf Information Assistant (British Sign Language) who is now beginning to use ICT as a medium to make services more accessible to local deaf people. Internet training in BSL is offered on a one-to-one basis, and this has recently started to cover e-mail and Word training. The Deaf Information Assistant is also working with the e-Power Project Officer to develop a website for the Deaf Women's Health Group that meets in the Gateshead Central Library.

The What's On section of the AIRS website regularly updates its content so that deaf people know about events in the region. This content includes the activities and meetings of clubs for the deaf and subtitled films or theatre performances, and the website maintains a large e-mail circulation list to communicate items of interest.

There is also another barrier to overcome, in that many deaf BSL users are wary of going into libraries. English is not their first language, and traditionally, libraries have always contained large collections of books. After consultation with local deaf people and organisations, the Deaf Resources Collection was set up to overcome this. It is the largest public library collection of deaf-related books, magazines, videos and CD-ROMs in the North East. This is complemented by a unique archive of Tyne Tees's signed Newsweek programme on video and CD-ROM, which dates back to 1993.

Unlike the traditional library layout, dif-

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Unlike the traditional library layout, different kinds of media held within the collection are also displayed in one place, rather than separating fiction, non-fiction and videos. It is important that deaf people can use their own services alongside hearing people borrowing books or videos about sign language.

PLAIN ENGLISH can make a significant contribution to the accessibility of information long before technology is applied to the problem. A more concisely worded document is easier to understand for people whose first language is not English. This group can include deaf BSL users, people with learning disabilities and asylum seekers. Applying Plain English usually means that a shorter document is produced in Braille and large print. This makes handling by the client easier, and also keeps the cost of transcription down. It also means a more concise web page.

FRONT LINE LIBRARY SERVICES also play their part. Traditional audio cassette Talking Books are used in AIRS's two visually impaired readers groups. Across the two groups, there are currently three people who read Braille, two people who read large print, and 15 people who listen to tapes. From the beginning, difficul-

> Plain English can make a significant contribution to the accessibility of information long before technology is applied to the problem . . . deaf British Sign Language users, people with learning disabilities, asylum seekers all benefit from Plain English

ties were encountered in obtaining the same title in the three different formats required. Collaboration with other library authorities has ameliorated the problem as far as talking books are concerned, and the RNIB will supply members with books in Braille. More recently, AIRS has used Calibre Cassette Library, who now offer multiple sets of titles to library authorities.

Screen reading and magnification software (Dolphin's Supernova) is now installed on all the library's PCs, and the cooperation of the local visual impairment society, Gateshead and South Tyneside Sight Service, ensures this service is effec-

Blaydon Visually Impaired User Group

tive and properly promoted.

One of the issues that immediately became apparent was the need for trained support, on a one-to-one basis, to enable visually impaired people to use the computers effectively. Supernova is currently being evaluated for use with an Access database by a visually impaired volunteer, who will be on placement from Sight Service's People PLUS project. This project aims to teach visually impaired people skills, including ICT, in order to enter the workplace for the first time, or re-enter the workplace after losing their sight. If successful, it is hoped that this volunteer will go on to encourage other visually impaired computer users in the library, so that they also may become confident in using Supernova to access standard programs lincluding Word, Access, Excel, the Internet and e-mail.

AIRS ALSO WORKS TO ENCOURAGE wider activities on the part of visually impaired readers. Some were recently able to make contributions to the People's War website. Since the participants were aged between 82 and 93, visually impaired, and with limited manual dexterity, sighted staff typed their oral reminiscences into Word. The transcripts were then read back and signed as a correct record. Making their memories available on the Internet was an exciting prospect for this group of users, and the 93 year-old in particular was keen to pass on the details to her family elsewhere in the country and abroad so that her wartime memories of their own forebears would not be lost.

AIRS hopes to further develop ICT as a primary medium to make information more accessible to sensory impaired people. Plans for the future include publishing daily audio extracts from the talking newspaper, and BSL video clips, on the website.

If you would like to obtain any more information about AIRS' range of services, please contact Karen Hannah, the Social Inclusion Manager at Gateshead Council's library service on:
tel. 0191 433 8451
or e-mail
karenhannah@gateshead.gov.uk

What AIRS Does:

Talking Newspapers

Professional Braille Transcription

BSL Videos

Integrated Collections

Large Print Material

Internet Training

Website

AIRS Clients:

Local Authorities

Health Trusts

Utilities

Financial Institutions

Voluntary Organisations

Individuals

INTRODUCTIONS AND DRINKS ALL ROUND

REVIEWS edited by Lyndon Pugh

TWO VOLUMES FOR REVIEW in this issue (**Allan, B. Project Management: Tools and Techniques for Today's Information Professional. Facet Publishing, 2004. isbn 1856045048** and **Roberts, S., and Rowley, J. Managing Information Services. Facet Publishing 2004. isbn 1856045153**) both claim to be introductions to their respective topics. All three authors are to be congratulated on achieving their immediate objectives, and on producing two books which in some ways overlap, but complement each other as well. They are also refreshingly different from some of the professional literature currently published on contemporary professional issues in that they are people-centred:

> [project managers] need to motivate and influence others through their leadership and management styles rather than through formal performance management processes. As a result, the "soft" or human side of project management is considered an essential factor for success
> (Allan)

Although Roberts and Rowley have a different target in mind, and necessarily spend more time on "formal performance management processes", they also emphasise the "importance that managers must place on working with people" and explore this aspect thoughtfully.

There are other similarities. Both titles are happy combinations of theory and practice, reflecting the ability to interpret management theory and apply it to the information sector, and both are well written and logically planned, although Allan perhaps deploys a lighter touch to good effect.

BARBARA ALLAN'S BOOK, although labelled an introduction to project management, is worthy of a wider airing, and can, in some ways, be treated as a work on general management for information services. It is packed with information, and being a faithful account of what it is like in the real world, it is also full of practical good sense. From wide experience, she makes use of examples drawn from a number of different contexts, and effortlessly covers a wide canvas. The models she takes from other sectors are often interesting, and this reviewer was naturally impressed by her references to Everest

expeditions and Boeing development teams as project examples. There is generally too little interest in looking at what the more extreme practitioners of management are actually doing outside the profession.

The structure of the book is logical, with three parts covering: Introduction; The project life cycle, systems and processes; Projects and people.

The overview, which comes at the beginning of the introductory chapter, places traditional project management theory within the military and industrial spheres, but from there, the author gradually works out an alternative process which makes the best use of "tried and tested methods and techniques" as well as innovative technology-based approaches where they are relevant. So Kipling's "Six Honest Serving Men" have a number of walk-on parts in various guises, but on the other hand ICT, virtual communications and project management software are well covered in chapter 7. There is useful material on the financial aspects of projects, including obtaining funding.

While the practical issues dealt with in the first two sections were well covered and valuable, for me, the most important section of the book was Part 3: Projects and people. Out of these chapters I would single out the passages on virtual teams, cross-boundary working, cross-cultural working, and partnerships as important contributions.

This book covers a large area, and inevitably there were places where I felt that the exploration could be taken further. Team work and team roles, and conflict management were two examples, but within the brief, Project Management works extremely well. It is well-written and informative, and is a valuable contribution not only to the literature of information services management but for anyone else who needs an eminently practical and effective guide to project management in general. 4/5

★★★★

ROBERTS AND ROWLEY WROTE with the aim of introducing "students of library and information management to the practice, experience and theoretical principles of information services management." Specifically, the authors command the attention of students, and, with a focus on professionals moving into management for the first time, also aimed

to provide "an on-the-job training guide." For both audiences, they succeeded.

The approach is similar to that of Allan, in that Managing Information Services draws on established concepts in management theory and makes links with actual practice. The style is perhaps a little heavier and denser than Allan's, but still readable.

For both the audiences identified above, the writers provide an informative opening chapter on the context, role and nature of information services. This is well handled, as are the key chapters on people in information services, which follow. The approach is developed through the customer focus in subsequent chapters, and the space devoted to marketing is well-used and realistic. The chapters on planning and financial management are clear and succinct.

Each chapter follows the same basic pattern of exposition supported by what are called Reflections, by review questions and by the copious use of case studies; although not all of the latter were actually case studies, and most could have been more sharply focused on the practical situations they were designed to explore. I also felt that some of the review questions and reflections might be a little demanding for an audience of students and neophyte managers, and might indeed have taxed the skills and knowledge of quite a few more experienced managers. Learning objectives for each chapter were relevant and clearly set out, and very good use was made of clear and relevant figures.

Once again, there were areas where I felt that a more in-depth or expansive treatment would have helped. For example, the issue of the personality of the manager in relation to roles, leadership, managerial styles, communication and organisational structures is vital. There is also the related question of effecting behavioural change on the part of managers, or professionals moving into management for the first time. A deeper examination of the managerial implications of hybridity would also have helped.

The view of organisational culture was good, but expectancy theory deserves far more weight, in terms of its significance for goal-setting, motivation, general behaviour in organisations, actually forging the culture, and other issues like empowerment and responsibility. This would also have provided a link with chapter 4, where it could have coloured the discussion of how to deal with the uneven performer through

capability procedures and other tactics. Nevertheless, the book is good on HRM in general.

The book concludes with two chapters on finance and resources, and strategy and planning. These are valuable introductions to two of the areas where new managers are likely to feel most inadequate. They are also refreshingly candid and realistic about some aspects of both areas, and the processes covered are set out in a logical and intelligible manner. 3/5

★★★

Lyndon Pugh

Bishop, A.P., Van House, N.A. and Buttenfield, B.P. (eds.). Digital Library Use: Social Practice in Design and Evaluation. MIT Press, 2003. isbn 0-262-02544-2.

THE DIGITAL LIBRARY HAS GROWN vigorously over the last two decades. There is no doubt that it is a way of organising and accessing information that will be with human society for the long term. Information professionals should

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therefore be knowledgeable about the potential and pitfalls of the digital environment.

The editorial team of Bishop, Van House, and Buttenfield have drawn together a wide and interdisciplinary body of authors representing disciplines as diverse as computer science, history, anthropology, sociology, and information science. Collectively the contributors offer an interesting mosaic within which to understand digital libraries.

The book is divided into 12 chapters, and 3 parts, with a foreword by Bruce Schaltz, and introduction by the editors. The work follows the sociotechnical perspective and includes material of relevance to content, transparency, work practice, access, scale, boundaries, place, change, and the relationship between digital libraries and traditional libraries.

The editors consider the first part of the book to be a challenge to basic assumptions "about libraries, digital, and traditional, and the documents and collections of which they are comprised". Within this first part the focus on documents of collections is of note, as for example in Chapter 2 Levy con-

siders documents, in Chapter 3 Marshall asks what the reality of the "library without walls" is, and most particularly the concept of barriers within the digital library. Chapter 4 is a description of a perspective for thinking about digital libraries. The central concept is that of the information ecology, and it appears here as a concept with much to offer. Each chapter in this part refreshes the reader's concepts or understanding in a gentle exploration of the concept of a digital library. Individually the chapters raise questions, but the overall picture created is greater than the sum of the parts.

The emphasis, and central theme, of the second part is on the design and evaluation of digital libraries. The chapters tackle questions of usability, needs assessment, evaluation, audience, and control. It was good to see contributions from Borgman, and Marchionini, and Lynch in this important section of the book. Borgman's contribution (Chapter 5) is particularly interesting here in highlighting the value of information behaviour in understanding digital libraries. This will particularly strike a chord with researchers from the information behaviour field who are increasingly urged to apply their behavioural research to the practicalities of system design.

The final section of the book looks at knowledge creation, and the various insights and observations that the study of different user communities and contexts can bring to our understanding of digital libraries. Particularly interesting in this section is Chapter 10 by Star, Bowker, and Neuman. Here, readers are offered some thought provoking ideas – interdisciplinary in their scope – on the convergence between Information Artifacts and Communities of Practice. Finally, Spasser (Chapter 12) reports on a project making use of Social Realist Theory and offers an interesting account from which I would anticipate much could be learned.

Taking the book as a whole, I was particularly drawn to the diverse methodologies reported in the chapters, pointing to the strength of methodological pluralism. It is noteworthy that several chapters acknowledge the value of naturalistic methods to explore and learn about the social aspects of digital libraries by using an open and exploratory approach. Attention to this aspect is to be applauded as books of this type frequently allow methodology to be displaced by meaningless rhetoric and generalisation. Underlying this inclusion of methodology is the aspiration to learn about digital libraries, to raise questions about digital library design and social role, and to debate how digital libraries can be evaluated.

The book is aimed very broadly at designers, librarians, trend spotters, and even more generally at "people concerned

with broader issues of information, knowledge, work, and social practice". It is a valuable contribution to the literature, refreshing our view of the digital library, and placing it at the centre of a network of research, practice, design, and methodological structures.

I would recommend the book as a very worthwhile contribution, which will be of value to the readership envisaged by the editorial team, and beyond that to library school students seeking a first exploration of the complexity of digital libraries. 3.5/5

★★★↓

Dr. Allen Foster
DIS UW Aberystwyth

Lee, Stuart D., and Boyle, Frances. Building an Electronic Resources Collection: a Practical Guide. 2nd ed. Facet Publishing, 2004.

I WAS RATHER PLEASED WHEN the second edition of Building an Electronic Resources Collection landed on my desk for review, as it has already earned its place on my undergraduate reading list. This new edition comes less than three years after the publication of the original in 2002. It is a timely revision; the area of electronic resources is ever changing, and this new edition brings the reader as up-to-date as possible.

The aim remains the same: to remove some of the uncertainty from the process of developing an electronic collection. The authors present the process in a clear and accessible manner, without ignoring the

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challenges that the ever-changing landscape of e-resources poses, making it very useful for anyone concerned with getting to grips with both the concepts and practice of e-collection development. As such, the book is ideal for collection managers new to the field, and their needs are addressed throughout. It is also highly suitable for students as well as established professionals. In this fast-moving and complex field, the authors do not neglect straightforward definitions and explanations, and I find it a useful resource when introducing students to the concept of e-resources and related issues, directing them towards Chapters 2 and 3 in particular.

Thus, the book can be dipped in and ou t

of as a useful reference work, but it also forms a cohesive whole, taking one through the process of researching, choosing, implementing and evaluating electronic resources in the library and information environment. Chapter 1 provides an overview of preliminary issues and a background to the area in general. Chapters 2 and 3 focus on particular electronic resources, looking at some of the issues related to them as well as the practical range of products and services available. The examples provided throughout as specific illustrations of more general points, are particularly helpful here.

In Chapter 3, the focus is on the key areas of e-books and e-journals, likely to be central to many electronic collection develop-

> present the process in a clear manner, without ignoring the challenges of the changing landscape, making it useful for getting to grips with concepts

ment policies. The final two chapters take the reader step by step through the process of acquisition, budget considerations, purchase decisions and resource delivery, discussing how the new e-resource may fit in the existing collection. They consider availability to end-users, cataloguing and interface design issues.

The authors do not overlook the users' perspective, for example noting the risk of information overload by the sheer range of electronic resources available and offering advice on how to avoid the disillusionment that can result.

There is a new, topical section on the burgeoning subject of Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs) including advice on ways of integrating other electronic resources with them as seamlessly and conveniently as possible. This section includes useful references on current endeavours in this area, and indeed, the book itself functions as a valuable resource in this way throughout, providing references to current research and more detailed treatments than are possible in a practice-orientated work (although, for a slim volume it is surprisingly comprehensive); a helpful Glossary and Select Bibliography supports this too. The final step by step summary of the e-collection development process is a positive conclusion to the book. Overall, this is a practical and reassuringly accessible handbook, likely to be invaluable to both students and professionals. 4/5

★★★★   Anoush Simon DIS
                                        UW Aberystwyth

GRASPING AT CHANGE: MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Knell, Simon J. (ed). Museums and the Future of Collecting. 2nd edition. Ashgate Publishing, 2004.

THIS IS THE SECOND EDITION OF THE SAME TITLE published in 1999, both editions of which are based on ideas generated during an international conference organised by the Department of Museum Studies at the University of Leicester, entitled Carry on Collecting? from which emerged a series of topical essays ranging from the contexts in which museum collecting takes place, definitions of a "collection" and what constitutes a museum, to the issues surrounding what to collect and how to present collections, and possible strategies for collecting in the future.

Of relevance, not only to museums, but to libraries and archives, there is a particular emphasis within the discourse on the need for overt collecting policies to direct new acquisitions versus historic national or elitist mandates, and the re-appraisal of existing collections. Another key thread running through the essays concerns the relationship of an organisation's mission and core audience to its collecting directives, for example in relation to a paying public, donors, potential sponsors and other stakeholders.

Essays are drawn from leading museum practitioners and curators from Africa, Australia, Sweden, Canada, Spain, Britain and Croatia, among others, which together provide an intellectual framework for evaluating a future collecting strategy.

The second edition is further distinguished by reformatting, an index and selective updates. with an additional paper by Martin Wikham on ranking collections. Most notably the editor, Simon J. Knell, provides a thoughtful and substantive essay to re-introduce the issues and concepts raised in the essays, and to re-evaluate them within the current landscape. This includes the digital heritage revolution with its implications on collecting, and the continued engagement of the real being of perceived and authentic "value". There is also the highlighting of museums taking on board more commercial services, and the community-building roles of museums and how this has an impact on collecting.

As a collective summary of the book's content, one might wish to reflect on the words of one of the authors, Tomislav Sola: "the meaning of museums is not a study of the past but how we relate to it". This is, perhaps, also true of our other memory organisations such as libraries and archives, which are founded on collections and which might take note to ensure their own relevance amidst the challenges of collecting and the intellectual functions of what they do in a world of change.

★★★★

Preziosi, D., and Farago, C., eds. Grasping the World: the Idea of the Museum. Ashgate Publishing, 2004.

THIS IS A RICH ANTHOLOGY of previously published essays and articles gathered from books and journals mainly in museum studies and art history, with a selection of specially commissioned works and a key introduction by the editors. The texts, written by respected academics and professionals in the field, represent a critical examination of the historical, philosophical, ethical and social identity of museums and galleries. The critiques largely draw on a Western perspective, and focus on the modern European notion of the museum over the last 50 years, with pervasive scholarly references to collecting practices and curatorship spanning the medieval to post world war II periods.

Similar to Museums and the Future of Collecting (Knell, ed.), there is a notable strand of investigation of the complex relationships of the intellectual function of the museum to its practitioners, such as curators, and to its stakeholders such as sponsors and funders – and, significantly, the evolving nature of this positioning over the ages.

However, the emphasis on Western thought constrains the wider understanding of the socio-economic and cultural position of museums and related institutions beyond Europe and North America. This tends to isolate further the texts within a certain dialectic. Notwithstanding, the essays are "classic" in the sense that many are well-known and regularly listed as recommended reading for material culture and art historical studies. It is most useful to have these seminal works collected in one volume, and with an accompanying commentary by the editors. Not so useful is the absence of an index which would have greatly aided the identification of more discrete themes going across the essays, as well as referencing historical/temporal periods and movements.

★★★   Dr Ann Borda Research Fellow, Institute of Computing South Bank

The Film Industry Survives and Bradley Thrives

Nickel, Anne. European Film Industries. (International Screen Industries). BFI Publishing, 2003. ISBN 0851709486 pbk. 0851709478 hbk.

THIS, THE FIRST IN A NEW BFI SERIES, provides a guide to the nature and state of health of the European film industries. There are two dimensions, national (the individual countries) and European, the national predominating. Concentration is upon "the industrial conditions influencing the produc-

> Useful overview
>
> Aspects of production
>
> Consideration of film
>
> beyond aesthetic studies
>
> Impressively researched
>
> Succinctly presented
>
> Case studies
>
> and statistics

tion, distribution and exhibition of the feature film", with only passing reference to TV and video. Later studies in this series will not have this restriction but will cover the television industries.

The first chapter provides a useful and concise historical overview, preparation for the main study which concentrates on conditions "since the early 1990s." Discussion of the dominance of the USA and Hollywood, a recurring topic, is introduced here.

Chapter Two opens with more detailed consideration of a wide range of aspects of production. This is continued in the chapters that follow, the whole being a much needed extension of consideration of film beyond the familiar aesthetic studies. While artistic aspects mostly concern many of us, the survival and development of cinema depends upon the matters considered in this book.

This is a useful, impressively researched survey, written by a research fellow at the University of the West of England, Bristol. The essential information is here, succinctly presented. There are useful case studies, tables and statistics., and there are stills to prettify the severe-looking text.

★★★
John Spink, former Lecturer, DIS
UW Aberystwyth

Bradley, P. The Advanced Internet Searcher's Handbook; 3rd ed. Facet, 2004. Pbk. isbn 1856045234 (£24.99 – £5 cheaper than the second edition)

THIS HANDBOOK HAS NOW REACHED ITS third edition in five years, considerably revised and updated in this fast-moving field. It is written in clear, jargon-free style, explaining technical terms simply, often with examples. Any reader following it through to the end could indeed become an advanced searcher. Chapters may be read individually, depending on particular interests, and small Hints & Tips and Did You Know? side-bars break up the text, with some screenshots to illustrate points. Chapter summaries precede lists of the urls referred to, making a set of useful mini-webliographies. It is also refreshing to read something that is written primarily for a British audience, with British examples where available, although American readers are encouraged by references to websites on their side. However, it is suitable for a global audience. As a practising information consultant, the author has tested all the sites he recommends, so, with the usual caveats about dynamism, they work quite well. The book is divided, rather Gallicly, into Three Parts: Mining the Internet for information, which is a general introduction followed by a guide to various types of search engine - after all "there's more to the Internet than Google", how to get to the

> Considerably revised and
> updated
>
> Suitable for a global
> audience
>
> Extrapolation of trends
>
> Fifty hints and tips
>
> How to write a web page
>
> A five-star guide to
> searching

"hidden" web; how to find people; how to find images, sound and multimedia. Becoming an expert searcher covers various resources, including weblogs, online databases, virtual libraries and gateways, newsgroups and mailing-lists, including the

newly introduced top-level domains (.biz, .info, .mil, .net), how to find out the currency of a web page if not explicitly stated, and who owns a given site; finally The Future, a notoriously difficult area, but mainly extrapolating current trends. This includes search strategy tips, and compares the reality with predictions in the second edition (2002). The fifty hints and tips for better and quicker searching are what I always find most fascinating and useful, and one or two have helped already. This is followed by a list of useful utilities, also very practical, for example bookmark utilities, spyware killers, firewalls, deskbars, short URL makers, automatic page update notifiers – all are excellent. Two appendices include basic HTML to write a web page – probably best downloaded from the author's website – and a list of the two-letter country codes to help identify the geographical sources of sites, all rounded off with a comprehensive index. In a desperate attempt to find something to criticise, I could finally only see two spell-check errors, but otherwise, this is a five-star guide to better and more effective Internet searching. My copy is already dog-eared through excessive use.

★★★★★
Chris Leftley
Librarian Wycliffe Hall, Oxford
and author of
Best of Web: Geography. K G Saur, 2004.

TECHNOLOGY
Jane Rowlands

PROJECTA, A WORLD LEADER IN DEVELOPMENT AND MANUFACTURE of professional projection screens and presentation equipment, is introducing a new range of stands, specifically designed to accommodate plasma screens.

The new stands offer better security and position the plasma screens at perfect viewing height. In addition, using such high-quality peripherals adds to the impression a speaker makes on the audience. Projecta's Solidstand (above), is on of several new stands recently introduced by the company. Elegantly designed, and equipped with a universal mounting plate, it allows quick and easy positioning or removal of screens. It is built around a stable, wheeled frame, and can accommodate plasma screens measuring up to 42" (107 cm) diagonally. The centre of the plasma screen is located at 150 cm height, and the screen can be tilted some ten degrees. It features a hidden cable running through the stand, and a socket – accessible from the back of the frame – which can be folded and neatly stored. SolidStand comes at around £550 ex. VAT.

The ClassicStand is a durable, freely height-adjustable Plasma Screen stand with universal mounting plate. Viewing height can be adjusted to a maximum of 160 cm, and the screen can again be tilted up to ten degrees. This model also features a front or rear height-adjustable platform for presentation equipment. ClassicStand costs approximately £460 ex. VAT. Both stands are provided with a securing device, which prevents unauthorised removal of the Plasma Screens. SolidStand and ClassicStand are available with adjustable feet as an optional extra.

Plasma Wallbracket is an elegant and more permanent solution: an inclinable, universal mounting bracket, which allows users to attach a plasma screen to a wall. The bracket accommodates screens of up to 50" (127 cm) across, and features a removable, universal mounting plate for easy screen hanging and removal. The plasma screen can be moved sideways up to ten cm, and tilted by ten degrees, for perfect positioning. A small space between wall and screen (22 mm) offers good accessibility to cables. Plasma Wallbracket costs around £195 ex. VAT.

Projecta is a leading international developer and manufacturer of projection screens, with its headquarters in Weert, the Netherlands. The company's success is partly the result of close relations with its distributors and end-users, allowing the company to keep breaking new ground in satisfying the needs of various markets. For more information please visit **www.projecta.nl**

Support From the Prop-Forward

ACTIVENET HAS INTRODUCED the ideal piece of equipment for reducing back pain and eye strain in users of badly positioned vdus.

Created over a year ago by designers at ActiveNet, Prop-Forward (see the image on the contents page), is a compact and robust unit which will help computer users achieve the optimum working condition. The equipment also recognises that many people now prefer to look at a laptop screen as opposed to a CRT monitor.

Working with Pro-Run Precision and Hydro Aluminium Extrusion (HAE), the result was the Prop Forward.

With over half of the UK's army of PC users complaining of health problems caused by the extended use of computers, ActiveNet's solution eases eye strain and back pain through its ergonomic design. With the screen at the correct height, these problems are greatly reduced.

Simplicity is the great virtue of the Prop-Forward. The stand is made from only one extrusion, and is sturdy and reliable without being too heavy.

Possessing greater stability than a plastic stand, it is also recyclable and many users would find its black finish aesthetically pleasing.

Prop-Forward Lites are an equally satisfactory solution for the mobile user. A two piece extrusion with an aluminium finish, this version can be stored in a drawer or briefcase. For further information, email **info@prop-forward.com** or visit **www.prop-forward.com**

Toshiba's Straight-to-Video Laptops and Digital Projectors

TOSHIBA HAS RELEASED a laptop that allows users to view TV pictures and DVD movies without having to boot into Windows.

The new Qosmio could also offer a longer battery life by not having to power up the entire system, for example, to display a video presentation. Users will still need Windows for other media functions, such as recording video feeds to hard disk. Prices are likely to be around £1,300 to £1,500.

Toshiba has also introduced a new range of digital projectors aimed at educational users and mobile professionals. The T91 has a detachable document camera. The TW90 has 802.11b WLAN capability and supports peer-to-peer access. Each supports a resolution of 1,024x768 and a brightness of 2,000 ANSI Lumens. Both models cost £1,640 + VAT.

For further details of these products, visit the Toshiba web site at **http://www.toshiba.co.uk**

The Primera Bravo II

BANNERBRIDGE has introduced the Primera Bravo II desktop disc duplicating system, offering fully automated duplicating and printing of up to 50 CD/DVDs at the same time. It will also print directly onto the disc in full colour at up to 4800 dpi, and is claimed to give a highly professional finish.

The system is compatible with Windows PCs and Macs, and is easy to use.

There are two models: the Bravo II CD Publisher has a high speed 52x CD-R recorder, which burns a full 700MB disc in under three minutes. The Bravo II DVD Publisher will produce CD-Rs and DVD±Rs in the same drive. Prices start at £1490 +VAT, and more information is available at **www.bannerbridge.co.uk**

More Multimedia in Less Space

ELONEX HAS RELEASED WHAT IT CLAIMS to be the first multimedia PC completely housed in a 17" LCD monitor. The eXentia Gold features the MediaCenter version of Microsoft's Windows XP operating system. Music and video content can be accessed from a secondary interface via a remote control. The PC also features an integrated TV tuner with digital video recording facilities, a 3 GHz Intel Pentium 4 processor, 512 MB RAM and a 200GB hard disk. It comes with a wireless keyboard and mouse.

For further details visit the Elonex web site at **http://www.elonex.co.uk**

Slimline iMAC

APPLE HAS ANNOUNCED a radical redesign of its iMac desktop computer, featuring a slim design and the PowerPC G5 chip. The new design integrates the entire computer into a flat panel display mounted on a slender aluminium stand. The new iMAC comes in three models. The lower-end model, priced at £783 + VAT, is based on a 17" LCD screen and 1.6GH PowerPC G5 chip. The middle range model, priced at £893 + VAT, has a 1.6 GHz processor. The top of the range model, priced at £1,149 + VAT, has a 20" LCD screen. It runs on an identical processor to the middle range model, but it also has a larger 160 GB hard drive. For further details visit the Apple UK web site at **http://www.apple.com/uk**

New Vaio Laptops

SONY UK HAS INTRODUCED several new Vaio laptops. All use Intel's Pentium M mobile processors and have built in wireless LAN (WLAN) support.

The Vaio T1 series is a lightweight system for professionals, and can run for up to seven hours from a single battery charge. It weighs 1.38kg, has a 10.6" widescreen dis-play, and is based upon a 1.1GHz ultra low voltage chip with 512 MB RAM. It is priced at £1,699.

The B1 series has both a 1.7 GHz model (cost £1,173) and a 1.6 GHz model (cost £939). Both have 512MB RAM, a 14" display, and weigh 2.3kg.

The S2 series supports high-end graphics and up to 1GB RAM. The top of the range model has a 2GHz Pentium M chip (cost £1,999). The middle range model has a 1.8 GHz chip (cost £1,799) and the low range model a 1.6 GHz Pentium M chip (cost £1,499). All three have a 13.3" widescreen, dual-format DVD writer and weigh 1.89kg.

For further details visit the Sony UK web site at **http://www.sony.co.uk**

PDA With Extra Screen Power

FUJITSU SIEMENS have released a Pocket PC, the Pocket Loox 720, with a VGA display which allows it to run many applications previously requiring a laptop. The Pocket Loox 720 is based upon a 520 MHz Intel Xscale PXA272 processor with 128MB memory, and runs Microsoft's Windows Mobile 2003 for PocketPC Second Edition. It features a built-in camera and costs £325 + VAT. For further details visit the Fujitsu web site at **http://uk.fujitsu.com**

Synchronising Apples and Blackberries

INFORMATION APPLIANCE ASSOCIATION (IAA) has developed software to enable Apple Macs running on OS X (10.3 or higher) to synchronise their data with BlackBerry mobile phone handsets. Pocketmac BlackBerry Edition can upload and download data and is compatible with Microsoft Entourage, the Mac OS X address book, Now Contact, iCal and Now Up-To-Date. It works with Blackberrys connected either by USB or serial connectors – in the latter case with an additional serial to USB cable. For further information visit the pocketmac web site at **http://pocketmac.net**

High Speed USB Pen Drive

TUTOR2U HAS INTRODUCED the new tutor2u-branded USB Pen Drives. Claimed to be the "cool, new way to store, transport and swap information between computers . . . stylish and portable", and marketed as a worry-free way for students and teachers to move data around without problems with file sizes and security. The devices will provide the equivalent storage of up to 88 floppy discs, and yet fit on a key ring.

Based on Samsung and Toshiba technology, the 128MB USB2.0 Recess Drives have one of the highest specifications available for pen drives. The price is £17.50 + VAT, and more details are available at **http://www.tutor2u.net/acatalog/USB_Pen_Drives.html**

Networked Small Printer from HP

HP HAVE ANNOUNCED THE LAUNCH of a net-workable printer with breakthrough print speeds for the home and small business user. Developed to meet the productivity demands of households containing multiple computers for both business and personal use, the HP Deskjet 6840 offers users a simple solution for quality printing without wires. Connection to the computer network is straightforward, with minimal configuration ensuring that set-up and use are simplified for all users. Up to five users can share the printer, either within a wired environment through the built-in Ethernet port or the embedded wireless1 (802.11g) technology.

The HP Deskjet 6840 delivers 30 ppm printing in laser quality black and 20 ppm in colour. Additionally, a 150 sheet capacity printer tray for fewer paper changes saves time and money. The option to add a second tray increases capacity to 400 sheets. Two-sided printing enhances productivity further still, while a paper sensor automatically adjusts settings to best suit the paper loaded.

As well as sharp laser-quality black text, the versatile Deskjet 6840 provides all the qualities of a dedicated photo printer. With up to 4800-optimised dpi colour printing, even the finest photo details can be captured. Even higher image quality can be provided by an optional photo cartridgedelivering 6-ink printing with HP Photosmart IV precision technology. HP Image Zone software makes editing, enhancing, fixing flaws and organising pictures easy. This model also benefits from borderless printing up to 2 x A4 (21.5 x 61 cm) for panoramic photos.

The HP Deskjet 6840 features an advanced control panel showing the wireless and networking status of the printer, and an ink level indicator. Direct digital camera connection using PictBridge technology is direct to the dedicated PictBridge front port, and photographs can be selected and printed from the camera controls, without connecting to a PC. Innovative smart features enhance the HP Deskjet 6840's range of functions. The ink backup mode permits users to complete a print job, even if one cartridge runs out. The automatic alignment function calibrates new print cartridges without any complication or user involvement. A further smart printing feature, available exclusively when using HP inkjet print cartridges and HP printers, includes proactive alerts to notify users

when ink levels are running low.

The HP Deskjet 6840 is priced at 199 GBP (actual prices may vary) and will be available from November 2004.

And Now for the Supplies

To achieve the best possible finish HP recommends using HP inks, inkjet print cartridges and print media which have been specially formulated to work with the HP Deskjet 6840. The HP Deskjet 6840 is compatible with HP's next generation of inkjet print cartridges, offering increased print speed without compromising on the quality or fade resistance of the finished job. This new range of inkjet print cartridges features new ink formulations and when used in conjunction with HP Premium Plus Photo Paper, allows users to print true borderless photos.

The HP Deskjet 6840 comes complete with the HP No. 339 black inkjet print cartridge for laser-quality sharp black text and

> compatible with the next generation cartridges and photo paper

professional results. The HP No. 344 tri-colour inkjet print cartridge, also supplied with the machine, produce vivid colours for vibrant colour documents, charts and presentations. Both these print cartridges come in different sizes for greater choice.

For ultimate creative control, customers can also purchase other print cartridges from the range and swap them to use the right set of inks for a specific job. Inkjet print cartridges not in use can be stored in a print cartridge protector (supplied) to ensure the inks will not dry out. When printing photographs, users can combine the HP No. 343 / 344 tri-colour inkjet print cartridge with the HP No. 348 photo inkjet print cartridge for a true-to-life result – accurate skin tones and a wide range of colours. To print black and white photographs the HP No. 100 grey photo inkjet print cartridge is the appropriate choice. This contains light grey, dark grey and photo black inks.

The HP service does not stop with ink cartridges. HP's Premium Plus Photo Paper offers outstanding image quality, a professional weight of 280 g/m2, and a choice of high-gloss or satin-matt finish for the look and feel of a traditional photograph. Used with HP's next generation inks, photo prints offer exceptional fade resistance. This even surpasses the performance achieved by HP's previous generation of inkjet print cartridges2.

For further details on these and other HP products, go to **www.hp.com/uk**

Manage Your Digital Assets With Fotostation Pro

FOTOWARE is Europe's leading supplier of digital asset management software. For any professional working with images and other digital media, it offers the essential powerful archive and retrieval system.

FotoStation Pro has been designed specifically for people who work professionally with digital assets. It offers total control for media professionals, whether they work alone, or are part of a large organisation.

Whatever the size of the archive, FotoStation Pro offers a fast, powerful means of organising a collection of material. FotoStation Pro also provides the neccessary tools for group collaboration, and can adapt well to even the most complex workflow requirements.

FotoStation Pro Features and Benefits:

- A powerful but easy to use DAM workstation
- Fully integrated Colour Management
- Intuitive, workflow-orientated interface
- A configurable process for automation of time-consuming operations
- Advanced printer output with configurable templates.
- Compatibility with major publishing software (QuarkXPress™, Adobe PageMaker®, Adobe InDesign®, MicroSoft®Office)

FotoStation Pro is typically used as the front end of a FotoWare system, but can also function as a stand-alone archive application. Like a light table, FotoStation Pro displays all multimedia files in an archive and may be fully integrated with the Index Manager server. Fotostation Pro can be used to acquire images from scanners and digital cameras, flash memory cards and CD-ROMs. It can also be used to create archives from offline files, and browse and search low-resolution copies of files on external media.

FotoStation Pro makes it possible to create input folders which point to a folder on a disk or to a mounted network disc. As files are retrieved, FotoStation Pro will update the folder contents automatically. Output folders can also be created, for instance to utilise the file transfer capabilities of other components in the FotoWare product range.

If there is a need to publish files on the web, FotoStation Pro may be fully integrated with the FotoWeb internet archive solution which also supports basic HTTP server upload. FotoStation Pro can also be used to create web pages. This is done by using multimedia files which can be uploaded to a web server.

FotoStation also includes high-resolution image editing tools and may be integrated with Photoshop when more advanced features are required.

FotoWare is available at a RRP of £450 excluding VAT.

About FotoWare:

Fotoware is no newcomer to the digital imaging business. Established in 1994 in Oslo, Norway, Fotoware has specialised in supplying digital asset management software for professionals. The market and its needs have changed dramatically since 1994, however, when the internet was still in its infancy. The internet and new types of digital media have changed the way that we look at archiving. Fotoware has embraced this change and developed in tune with the times. Always one step ahead of the market needs, FotoWare has developed and improved its products and actively utilises the latest internet technology.

Multimedia Information and Technology is currently evaluating the operational quality of FotoStation Pro, and Ken Cheetham will be reporting on the tests in the February issue of the journal.

For further details of Fotoshop Pro and other Fotoware software, go to **www.fotoware.co.uk**

Canon's Digital IXUS Cameras

CANON, LEADER IN PHOTOGRAPHIC and imaging technology, have announced the launch of two new super stylish brother-sister cameras: the Digital IXUS 40 and Digital IXUS 30. A breakthrough in lens material science has paved the way for the smallest ever cameras from Canon to feature a 3x optical zoom. These are also the first in the IXUS range to incorporate Canon's DIGIC II processor.

With beautifully rounded curves and polished, all-metal bodies, Canon takes the IXUS design philosophy to new levels. Both cameras feature two-inch LCD displays and DIGIC II performance processing power for responsive shooting, image quality and instant playback. DIGIC II also means that the length of video footage these cameras can shoot is limited only by the capacity of the SD card.

Images taken with the 4.0 Megapixel Digital IXUS 40 and 3.2 Megapixel Digital IXUS 30 can be used for detailed prints up to A3 and A4 size respectively. They are the first ever cameras to incorporate two UA (Ultra-high Refractive Index Glass Moulded (GMo) Aspherical lens) elements developed by Canon's lens material scientists. These achieve high-resolution and good contrast characteristics for the 3x optical zoom, which has a focal length of 35-105mm (35mm film equivalent). The cameras also incorporate 9-point Artificial Intelligence Auto Focus (AiAF) for fast, sharp and accurate focus, even with off-centre subjects.

For excellent image quality at high speed, all primary camera functions are handled by Canon's dedicated second generation DIGIC II processor. DIGIC II is the same technology which drives the EOS-1D Mark II pro-series SLR's 69 Megapixel per second performance, but this is the first time it has been incorporated into a Digital IXUS. DIGIC II handles all the complex algorithms required for accurate colour rendering and enhanced image quality, precision white balance and metering. In addition, it ensures quick camera control, fast auto-focus, extended high quality movies, rapid start-up times and approx. 2.4 fps continuous, uninterrupted shooting. Playback is fast; users will never again experience the frustration of staring at the camera LCD screen waiting for images to appear.

Both cameras feature iSAPS technology. This is really an in-built photographer's assistant which uses camera settings and environmental data to predict the most likely scene, in order to optimise white balance, focus and exposure settings accordingly. In addition to the Auto, Manual, Stitch Assist and Movie modes, six scene modes are provided to assist with selecting the best focus, exposure, ISO, white balance, shutter speed and photo effect settings to match the shooting environment. An Underwater scene mode is included for use with the optional 3m depth All Weather Case AW-DC30.

The cameras are an extremely thin 20.7 mm (Digital IXUS 40) and 21.1mm (Digital IXUS 30), and weigh just 115 and 130g respectively. The diminutive sizes are made possible by a string of technology advances, including the new UA lens, slimmer LCD, improved circuit assembly techniques and a smaller, more efficient battery.

The new-look cameras are capable of taking extended movies (with sound, full playback and in-camera editing), of up to 1GB in size. When using high speed SD cards movie length is limited only by the card's capacity. These are the first digital still cameras in the world to feature up to one minute of 60 fps QVGA quality, which allows for in-camera slow motion replay at various user-selectable speeds. Different frame rates and resolutions can be selected to best suit end applications such as TV playback or email attachment.

A Print/Share button simplifies direct printing via USB cable to any PictBridge compatible photo printer, and the cameras are also perfectly matched to Canon's new SELPHY range of personal photo printers. As well as a postcard date imprint mode, the cameras feature ID Photo mode to create photo-booth style ID prints for passport and other ID purposes, and Movie Print mode, which prints an entire action sequence of up to 63 evenly spaced frames from any movie clip. The Print/Share button will also facilitate automatic and simple uploads to any Windows PC.

Viewing images and searching through thumbnail images is easier with the 2.0" hi-resolution 118,000 pixel LCD screen which covers most of the camera back. An Intelligent Orientation Sensor takes into account the likely position of the sky and foreground before setting focus, exposure and white balance. It then rotates images to the correct orientation for easy, enjoyable playback. An advanced magnified image playback function maintains the area and ratio of magnification when moving from image to image during playback – particularly useful when viewing a continuous sequence of the same scene. The IXUS 40 costs £319 RRP inc. VAT and the IXUS 30 is £249 RRP inc. VAT. For more information go to **www.canon.co.uk**

Toshiba's New Burner

TOSHIBA HAVE ANNOUNCED the first Toshiba Samsung Storage Technologies (TSST) double-layer (DL) DVD writer capable of writing 5x on DVD+R media – the fastest write speed on the market. The new high-end SD-R5372 can store up to 8.5GB on one disc and can write up to 12x on DVD-R, 16x on DVD+R, up to 4x on DVD-/+R/RW and 48x on CD-R.

With twice the storage capability of a current DVD and 12 times the capacity of a CD disc, the SD-R5372 offers consumers the ability to create media rich DVDs and CDs combining videos, music, images and data on one disc. Key features are:

- Automatic optimisation of the drive's speed according to the quality of the disc
- Tilting of the lens to overcome twisted discs
- Strengthening the writing performance by calibrating the laser power not only on the inner side but also the outer side of the disc

For further details go to
www.toshiba-europe.com/storage

screenonline.org.uk: Making the National Film and Television Archive Accessible

Richard Paterson *bfi*

IT IS PROBABLY TRUE TO SAY that film and television archives have been one of the great hidden treasures in most countries – inaccessible and a mystery to the public, entered only by the cognoscenti and protected by a phalanx of professional archivists whose every move has been governed by a desire to preserve for posterity. And keeping hidden was probably the sensible approach when there was little money to look after this neglected heritage, held on unstable chemical film stock and changing electronic technologies.

In this age of secrecy the *bfi* led the world in arguing the case for film preservation. Through the benefit of private sponsorship, it built its Conservation Centre to realise this objective. One of its major recent initiatives has been the opening up of the riches of the archive to a wider audience.

SCREENONLINE PROVIDES A DEFINITIVE reference resource for British film and television. UK schools, colleges and libraries are able to register for free access to more than two thousand clips, and some full length television programmes. screenonline is written both for users in education from 14 upwards, and for the elusive lifelong learner. Its headline menu covers film, television, people and education. Within each section there are further subdivisions: in film and television breaking down to genres and themes, industry and audience, place, decade and timeline. In the people section there is an A-Z listing.

Each genre and theme is placed in a broad context. For every film and television programme there is a synopsis, a review and full filmographic data together with extracts and other related material. This may include stills or designs, press and publicity dossiers, and relevant comments from the *bfi*'s growing audio collection.

In addition, there are links to related parts of screenonline: for example, films by the same director, and other appearances by actors. The people section already includes more than 600 biographies with related filmographic information, and it is growing all the time.

The education section is underdeveloped at present, with just four student guides and three tours. However, the intention is to enhance this area significantly in the near future, resources permitting. It is hoped to supply useful resources for film and media studies courses, as well as, eventually, for both the history and developing citizenship curricula.

OVER A PERIOD OF TIME in the mid-to late- 1990s, several smaller scale projects enabled the *bfi* to develop both its technical expertise and its understanding of what potential viewers wanted. Then a *bfi*-led consortium including Lux, Cinenova, and for some time British Pathe, was awarded a grant under the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) digitisation programme. screenonline was the end result of nearly two years of intensive work which began in October 2001. By the autumn of 2003 over 100 hours of digitised film and television material had been published in Windows Media, Real and QuickTime. This incorporated specially-written contextual information and filmographic data drawn from the *bfi*'s databases. By September 2004 this had increased to more than 200 hours, and the contextual writing had reached more than a million words.

BEHIND THE SEAMLESS USER INTERFACE and fast loading of the web pages lies a story of complexity, negotiation and immense effort by the screenonline team to provide a world leading platform dedicated to one country's film and television heritage.

The heart of the site is the content, almost all of which was sourced from the National

Don't Look Now (1973)

"A magnificently eerie, intense and vividly coloured chiller."

Film and Television Archive. Much of it was held as film viewing prints which required a significant expenditure on telecine work to create a digital video master, which in turn could be encoded. The encoding work was undertaken by the University of London Computing Centre, using an ingestion system provided by Arkemedia Technologies. They were also the supplier of the media asset management system.

Metadata was added at different points of the operation so that, for instance, the credits information (drawn from the *bfi*'s filmographic database) and the context were only added on publication of the work.

A veritable army of expert writers was commissioned by the Content Editor to provide the context. Of nearly 200 writers used on screenonline, more than a third were *bfi* staff.

COPYRIGHT IS A CRITICAL ISSUE for the *bfi* in all its operations, but on the basis of the trust that has been built up over a large number of years, rights to most of the material the *bfi* wished to include in *screenonline* were acquired. However, rights in film and television are territorial, and have been secured for UK educational use only. There are just a few companies who have not been persuaded to allow the *bfi* to use extracts from their material for the educational purposes at the centre of the project.

THE TECHNICAL ISSUES involved in the project were, and continue to be, an inevitable source of problems. Encoded material needs to be managed in a way which makes it accessible to a remote user. The purchase of the media asset management system was one of the most critical parts of the whole process, and the risk analysis documentation for this was peppered with comments. One problem was that all the available systems were for internal broadcast use. This meant that the outward-facing public user interface, with a need for user-friendly design, could not be bought off the shelf.

Arkemedia Technologies was chosen as the supplier, and the University of London Computing Centre acted as host for the site, providing 100Mb of bandwidth.

The site at last went live, though unpublicised, in August 2003. The New Opportunities Fund had very strict technical guidelines concerning usability, and proscribed the use of some proprietary software. Although thorough usability testing was done on the user interface designs, within a couple of months of launching the home page was redesigned to allow attention to be drawn to different parts of the site each month.

ONE OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES was striking a balance between ease of user access to the streamed moving image material, and guaranteeing sufficient security to reassure the rights holders. After much deliberation, it was decided to adopt digital certificates to authenticate the rights-protected elements of the site, while still allowing the users to benefit from the rich contextual resource.

This has provided a solution, but is has also created a number of problems:

- It is a very time-consuming to load a digital certificate on to computers in use in libraries and schools.
- Early internet browsers cannot load 128 bit digital certificates.
- Detailed instructions have had to be written to cover all the web browsers, as the procedure for loading varies.
- Sometimes libraries use software which effectively wipes the certificates on the machine after each user.
- Sometimes institutions have had problems with their local area network, and it has not always been possible to find solutions for the problems which have arisen.

USAGE OF THE SITE has shown a steady rise since launching in November 2003, and eventually reached 400,000 page impressions in August. Feedback has been very positive and there is also anecdotal evidence of use in film studies courses.

A planned free-to-view area outside the copyright protected material will also enable access to some public domain or BFI-owned materials. Meanwhile, the task is to incrementally enhance the coverage of the site.

The *bfi* is firmly entrenched in the digital world, and there is widespread acceptance of the priority of making the archives accessible.

The progress achieved with the NOF grant cannot be sustained without that level of funding, but it is expected that gradual improvements to the site will be made in the months and years ahead.

Schools, colleges and libraries in the UK can register by logging on at **http://www.screenonline.org.uk/register**

TEN MINUTES OF FUN AT DIGITAL STONEHENGE

Nick Case Managing Editor Oxford ArchDigital
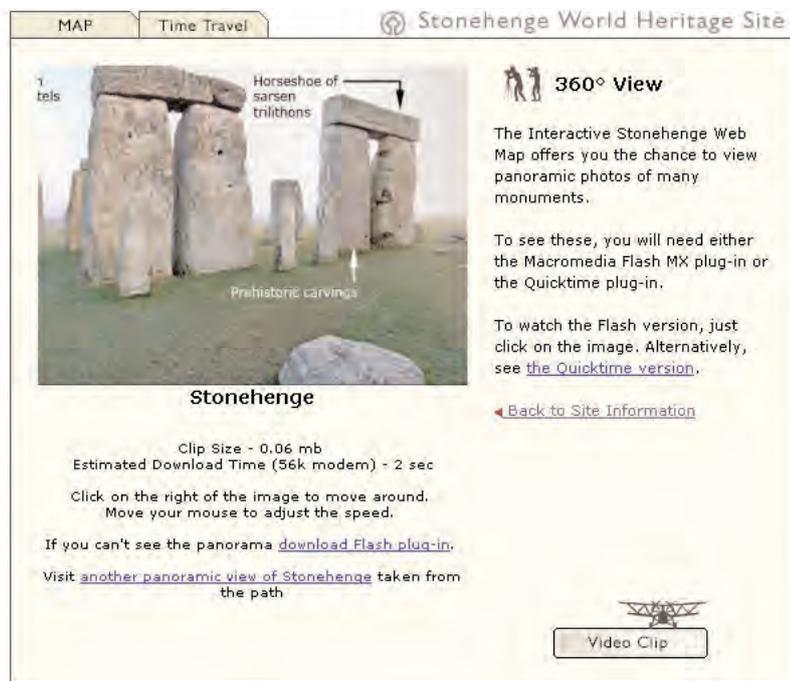
THE IMPOSING SILHOUETTE of the Stonehenge stone circle is probably the most recognisable monument of its kind. What is often forgotten, however, is that the monument has an intricate time depth and life history. Its present form is simply the outcome of the final phase of the development, which has lasted for thousands of years.

The first human activity on the site probably pre-dates the building of the earliest monument, a Neolithic earthwork enclosure comprising a bank and ditch ring built somewhere around 3000 BC. Throughout the third and second millennia BC the site was continually elaborated, with the basic ring shape being retained whilst first wood and then stone structures were added. The final recognisable form was only attained during the Bronze Age, just before 1600 BC.

The fact that the monument has not been radically altered after this point does not mean that its importance has decreased. On the contrary, the endurance of the impressive stones means that it has always been an integral part of both the social and physical landscape in Roman times, in medieval times, and even today when we continue to engage with it.

This continued interest, even after the active alteration of the monument had ceased, implies an often forgotten aspect of the monument: the stone circle was never isolated, standing alone in empty surroundings. Throughout all the stages of its evolution, Stonehenge has been an integral part of a dense network of contemporaneous and past monuments in the area.

Moreover, it is often forgotten that the surroundings of Stonehenge, at least those contained within the World Heritage Site (WHS), have one of the highest densities of ancient monuments in Europe. Although many, especially those post-dating the main Stonehenge building phase, were built with clear reference to the impressive monument itself, the reverse is also true. Through all its phases, Stonehenge had continually related to other archaeological monuments in the area, whether the Neolithic long barrows, the Cursus or the contemporaneous round barrows and ceremonial Stonehenge Avenue.

If it is viewed in isolation from its surroundings, Stonehenge could not be understood properly. Its true significance can only be revealed through the study of the changing use of the landscape in which the monument is set.

BECAUSE OF THIS, Wiltshire County Council and English Heritage decided to cast Stonehenge in a different light, and contracted Oxford ArchDigital to create a web site, or micro-site, to present the changing face of the landscape around Stonehenge over the years. English Heritage (EH) had already been presenting a small number of their prime sites, of archaeological and historical significance, via their main website. This was not just to offer visitor information and academic reports of the investigation, but also to produce accessible and digested interpretations and original information relating to these sites. This expertise, together with experience gained by Wiltshire County Council in their development of Window on Wiltshire's Heritage (WOW), was backed by the Heritage Lottery Fund, and Oxford Archdigital was selected to create a small website accessible from WOW and the existing English Heritage website. Oxford Archdigital's brief was to produce a micro-site containing no more than "ten minutes of fun" during which aspects of the changing landscape of the WHS since prehistoric times could be emphasised and made accessible to the widest audience possible.

TO ENSURE ACCESSIBILITY, strict standards in website construction were enforced. In particular, the site was required to meet the following criteria:

- Conform to HTML W3C standards
- Exclude any proprietary technologies
- Include adequate safeguards for text-only and disability browsers

In terms of content, the website was to be presented primarily as an interactive map. This would clearly show the spatial distribution of the monuments, and would facilitate further exploration of the more detailed, site specific pages. These in turn
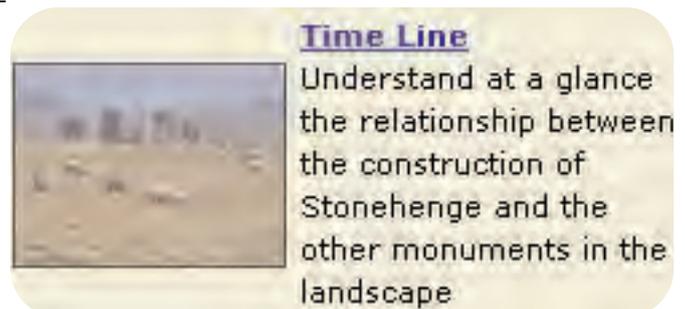
were to present primarily visual information acting in support.

ACCESSIBILITY – of content and in terms of delivery – determined the approach of Oxford ArchDigital, who were already familiar with the rigorous procedures required to meet EH and HLF guidelines on larger hypertext projects such as Past Perfect (**www.pastperfect.info**). These procedures are based on the use of pure HTML in website design. The website was hand-coded, without the use of HTML WYSIWIG editors, to ensure a lean and W3C-compliant website which can be rendered swiftly in a variety of compliant browsers without the need for downloading any additional plug-ins or proprietary technologies. The need for a fast internet connection was also eliminated.

An additional benefit of this approach is in the portability of the project. If the site is made up of a series of static and compliant HTML files, they can be very easily ported to CD, replicated relatively cheaply, and disseminated to an audience which has limited, or no, access to the internet.

In addition to the question of accessibility, the content delivered through the site had to be guided by the need to put across the clear message that Stonehenge was not a static monument, unchanged through time and divorced from other monuments and natural features in its surroundings. At the same time, the content created by OAD was to be integrated into an existing web presence within the EH and WOW websites.

For all those reasons it was decided to place the content into a relatively small 600 x 600 pixel pop-up box. This enables com-

fortable viewing, even in the older, 800x600 generation of monitors. It also allows a

variety of external sites to be linked to the micro-site.

The primary content interface, and the starting point in the navigation of the site, is an interactive map. This displays the extent of the WHS, roads, rights of way, and rivers and settlements in the area as well as archaeological sites. Most of the latter were to be shown on the map, with ten of the most important sites in the region represented by a clear rollover link button.

Linking to each of these buttons from the map would take the user to a series of site specific web pages, of between three and eight pages per monument. These would contain the relevant information on the site type and its landscape status, as well as the most important finds. Most of these pages include a short body of brief text with supporting images (320 x 240 px) selected from the rich EH and Wiltshire CC photographic archives. In addition to this static content, many of the site's pages have addi-

tional dynamic material in the form of video clips showing aerial fly-overs or interactive 360° panoramas.

THIS CONTENT BROUGHT another set of challenges. Although integration of the video clips and 360° panoramas into the HTML site template was relatively straightforward, problems with accessibility compliance for the multimedia content proved more diifficult. 360° panoramas can be delivered in several formats with relatively popular, widespread, and most importantly, free plugins. To provide more choice for potential users, two versions of these are provided – in *.swf and *.mov formats. The former was based around Flash technology, now widely used, and which can be downloaded from a link

provided on the micro-site. The alternative *.mov format was associated with Quicktime technology, and although it also requires the installation of Quicktime plug-in, this is freely available for many OS platforms (Windows, Macintosh, Linux).

When it came to delivery of the video clips, there were other issues of accessibility compliance. In the world of rapidly changing video player software, it is hard to choose a format which will please all potential users. In this instance, the clients wished to use the *.wmv (windows media video) format, and the files were delivered in an encoded format compatible only with the relatively recent Windows Media Player version 9. Although this restricts the number of users able to see the aerial flyover video clips, and is not in strict accordance with the original accessibility guidelines in the project specifications, the format was chosen on the grounds that the benefit of enabled streaming made up for the signifi-

cant decrease in accessibility.

APART FROM THESE TECHNICAL ISSUES, the site contents were assembled relatively quickly and without any major problems. This enabled us to develop some additional features such as an expanded glossary, a time map and a time line. The expanded glossary contains several additional pages providing the background information on the long barrows and round barrows, which are the dominant prehistoric monuments in the area.

The time map is another map-based view of the area, designed to show not only the spatial, but also the temporal distribution of the archaeological monuments within the WHS. The aim of this simple interactive map was to demonstrate how the Stonehenge landscape has developed from prehistoric times. This was achieved by creating an interactive map in which the user starts with an empty study area. By clicking on one of the three major prehistoric periods

(Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age) the distribution of the monuments of a given period can be seen, alongside the distribution of monuments from earlier periods.

In this way, regardless of the order through which periods are browsed, visitors can follow the development of the main monuments and see that the landscape around Stonehenge is the result of a long sequence of continuous human activity in the area.

THE ATTEMPT TO LOCATE the Stonehenge within a wider chronological setting was also the driving force behind the idea of the time line map. Even to a trained archaeologist, many chronological terms used throughout the site quickly become just abstract labels. More confusingly, different terminology is used in different parts of the UK and the rest of the world. This means that it becomes extremely difficult to compare chronologies, and to appreciate the vast time span of the Stonehenge landscape. In order to get around this, we have added to the time line illustrations, and provided comparisons with other important prehistoric monuments, such as the Pyramids, Stone Temples at Malta, or megalithic monuments in Brittany.

With this combination of a clickable map of the monuments, a series of static web pages designated for each monument, and additional glossary and chronological information, the project met the initial requirement – the "ten minutes of fun" to illustrate the richness and temporal depth of the immediate Stonehenge surroundings.

The micro-site was integrated into the EH and WOW websites in June 2004 and can now be accessed from a variety of locations within the hosting websites.

NUMEROUS LESSONS WERE LEARNED from the project. The Stonehenge micro-site has been up and running for about four months, and in the absence of website visitor statistics and external review procedures it is hard to provide firm estimates of the site success.

Nevertheless, the internal appraisals by the clients indicate that this interactive, map-based website has been successful in conveying an understanding of Stonehenge in its spatial and temporal context. Moreover, the site fits well within the overall strategy of the web presentation of Stonehenge and other monuments in the care of English Heritage and Wiltshire County Council. The fact that it is displayed in an independent pop-up container will also allow the overall web presence to evolve around the micro-site.

Even at this early stage, it is possible to draw some conclusions and implications for the evolving application of the internet technologies in the Heritage organisations:

● The potential success of this project rests on the extremely clear and well thought out technical specification

● The agenda behind the project is crucial. The clear instructions helped the project designer, in this case OAD, to develop a precise and unambiguous idea of how to frame the site, and enabled us to work with the client on developing additional features, such as the time map and time line, which further highlight the overall theme of the site – thus showing Stonehenge in another perspective.

● The project benefited from the insistence on accessibility. Adhering to simple but clear customer guidelines helped create a resource which will be available to users using different browsers and operating systems – something which is rarely achieved in this context.

● We hope to have demonstrated that strict accessibility guidelines do not preclude interesting and interactive web content. Standard HTML code, rudimentary Javascript, and a variety of now open multimedia formats mean that adherence to web standards does not mean boring, static sites. We hope that this will demonstrate to the heritage community that the insistence on the web standards is not there to placate the funding bodies, but acts as a set of tools and guidelines which need to be used to produce interesting and meaningful sites accessible to the widest audience possible.

OXFORD ARCHDIGITAL (OAD) is a software development house established in 2001 as a spin-out company from the University of Oxford. It works with leading organisations which share a common vision of the need for intuitive access to high-volume information management systems. Since many customers want web based solutions, we have particular expertise in systems which can be edited remotely. Our other core strengths are in the handling of images and spatial data.

For customers requiring solutions involving quick access to regularly formatted data we would normally recommend a database-driven solution. However, when a lot of interpretative information and reconstructions such as images and 3D models are to be presented, we usually recommend a static solution using a series of carefully designed hypertext pages. One such site is for the Past Perfect project, involving an interactive website and CD presenting seven sites from different periods for the counties of Northumberland and Durham.

With our focus on web based solutions, we are acutely aware of the need for users to be able to share information between remote locations and disparate sources. The importance of this interoperability is increasingly recognised across a number of sectors. We have recently created a toolkit for the Heritage sector to help facilitate this

process for managers of Historic Environment Records.

OAD has developed a range of Solutions using an open architecture which means that systems can grow with client needs. Our solutions are platform independent and so can operate with a range of operating systems and underlying databases, including those based on open source platforms. Our software integrates content manage-

ment, GIS and image functionality into a single, web-based application layer.

Customer data is commonly multi-lingual and of international significance. Most clients require their data management and business logic processes to be securely integrated with the public presentation of at least part of that information. OAD solutions allow this to be achieved using a single dual access system on a single server, automatically doing away with the risk of incorrect or outdated information being displayed on any public facing website.

Solutions designed by OAD are based around the ToadHMS software library. This modular content management system allows the storing of images, sound clips, video clips and spatial data alongside text. Solutions based on this software drive systems that currently

● Manage over 70,000 records, including more than 35,000 images
● Handle images of up to 220Mb
● Hold data from land holdings in excess of 240,000 hectares.

Oxford ArchDigital also provides consultancy on the technologies that lie at the heart of our skill base, within the range of services we offer.

Go to **www.wowheritage.org.uk** or **www.englishheritage.org.uk/stonehenge**