

# What's new ...

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## What's on:

### Sherpa Workshop

1 September 2010

<http://www.rsp.ac.uk/events/index?page=RoMEOAPI2010>

The workshop will begin with a brief introduction to the RoMEO database and the API, followed by three talks from users about their experiences in exploiting the API in their applications. You will also hear how RoMEO is being re-engineered and how this may affect the API. There will then be breakout sessions in which you will be encouraged to let the RoMEO team know how you want to use the API, and what you would like the next major upgrade API to look like.

### Repository Fringe 2010

2-3 September 2010

<http://www.repositoryfringe.org/>

Enjoying two successful years, Repository Fringe is back for the third time... and this year we have moved to the end of the Edinburgh Festival, and to the National eScience Centre. Always innovative, and always looking forward, this year we are looking at the OPEN: Open Data; Open Access; Open Learning; Open Knowledge; Open Content; etc...The programme for the event is, as ever, created by the participants, however there will be a focus on group discussion rather than long talks.

### UK e-Science All Hands Meeting (AHM 2010)

13-16 September 2010

<http://www.allhands.org.uk/>

The meeting provides a forum in which information on e-Science projects from all disciplines can be communicated and where the capabilities being developed within projects can be demonstrated.

### Linked Data: The Future of Knowledge Organization on the Web

14 September 2010

[http://www.iskouk.org/events/linked\\_data\\_sep2010.htm](http://www.iskouk.org/events/linked_data_sep2010.htm)

Since Tim Berners-Lee first wrote in detail about it in July 2006, Linked Data has remained something of a shadowy mystery for many. Yet, the principle is simple: you can add value to your information by linking it to that of others. ISKO UK believes that a day examining the basic technology, together with a closer look at the emerging, real-world examples of Linked Data in practice, will be of immense benefit to all information workers. Linked Data is the 'public face' of the Semantic Web; it is here, now, and is growing. Catch up with Linked Data at this conference.

### Preservation of Digital Objects (IPRES 2010)

19-24 September 2010

<http://www.ifs.tuwien.ac.at/dp/ipres2010>

The Austrian National Library and the Vienna University of Technology are pleased to host the International Conference on Preservation of Digital Objects (iPRES2010) in Vienna in September 2010. iPRES2010 will be the seventh in the series of annual international conferences that bring together researchers and practitioners from around the world to explore the latest trends, innovations, and practices in preserving our digital heritage.

### **Spanning the Boundaries of Digital Curation Education, iPRES 2010 Workshop**

22-23 September 2010

<http://www.ifs.tuwien.ac.at/dp/ipres2010/program.html>

The primary goal of this workshop is to facilitate the sharing of information and ideas across the boundaries of professional education (national, institutional and educational level). While the number of digital curation educational offerings across the globe has increased significantly in recent years, there are still relatively scarce human resources for developing and implementing educational content. The workshop will explore potential areas of collaboration and will include short summary talks about current educational activities by workshop participants.

### **3rd KRDB school on Trends in the Web of Data (KRDBs-2010)**

17-18 September 2010

<http://www.inf.unibz.it/kfdb/school/2010/>

The 2010 edition of the KRDB school will be focussed on methods, technologies, and formalisms to publish, share, access, and integrate heterogeneous and autonomous data on the Web.

### **JHOVE2 Tutorial, iPRES 2010 Workshop**

19 September, 2010

<http://ihove2.org>

This tutorial will follow the production release of JHOVE2 and will incorporate new material arising from the second year of project work. The targeted audience for the tutorial includes digital curation, preservation, and repository managers, analysts, tool users and developers, and other practitioners and technologists whose work is dependent on an understanding of the format and pertinent characteristics of digital assets.

### **PREMIS Events, iPRES 2010 Workshop**

19-22 September 2010

<http://www.ifs.tuwien.ac.at/dp/ipres2010/program.html>

A PREMIS Tutorial will be held on Sunday September 19, 2010. This full-day educational event will provide an introduction and walk-through of the PREMIS Data Dictionary for Preservation Metadata. A PREMIS Implementation Fair will also take place on September 22, 2010 to promote discussion and share experiences involving implementing PREMIS.

### **DPC, NCDD, NDIIPP and nestor Joint Workshop - Greater than the sums of our parts? Collaboration, cooperation and grand challenges in digital preservation**

23 September 2010

<http://www.langzeitarchivierung.de/schwerpunkte/ipres.htm>

We and most of the digital preservation community share the conviction that cooperation and collaboration are needed to meet the challenge of digital preservation. But which types of cooperation and collaboration currently exist? How realistic is collaboration in the short term and how effective is it in the long term? How do we measure success when the efforts are widely dispersed and the benefits accrue remotely? The workshop is intended for anyone, who is involved in similar collaborative efforts or is interested in national coalition building. We invite you to share your experiences and to discuss the pro's and con's of collaboration.

### **International Internet Preservation Consortium / International Web Archiving Workshop**

22-23 September 2010

<http://iwaw.europarchive.org/10/>

An overview of activities and projects concerned with web preservation. Run in association with IPRES, Vienna.

### **RIN events: Research Information in Transition <http://www.rin.ac.uk/news/events/research-information-transition-series-evening-events-2010>**

Autumn 2010

The Research Information Network will be running a programme of events over the course of autumn to explore the huge changes that are taking place in the way that research information and data are created, managed, used and disseminated; and to consider the implications for all those, in the academic realm and beyond, with an interest in the good health of the UK research base. All three events are free and open to all involved and interested in these issues.

### **NGS Innovation Forum '10**

23– 24 November 2010

<http://www.ngs.ac.uk/events/ngs-IF10>

The two day event will showcase the impact that the NGS has had on research in the UK, allow delegates to find out more about using the NGS in applied research, enable IT staff to find out how their institution can benefit from the NGS, and how you can contribute to and influence the future development of the NGS.

### **BBSRC/AHRC Workshop: Challenges of Visualising Biological Data**

16-17 November 2010

<http://www.bbsrc.ac.uk/media/events/101116-visualising-biological-data.aspx>

The volume, complexity and diversity of biological data is increasing.

There is, therefore, a growing need for improving ways for scientists to interact with their data in order to obtain the most value from it. Visualisation techniques, developed for the physical and environmental sciences, and drawing on expertise from the creative arts, design and the computational sciences, are one way in which biologists will be able to mine their data effectively and intuitively. This multi-disciplinary workshop will be held on 16-17 November 2010 and we are encouraging the participation of researchers with a wide variety of backgrounds and expertises.

## **What's New:**

### **IDCC 2010 –Call for Papers Extended**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.dcc.ac.uk/events/conferences/6th-international-digital-curation-conference/papers>

We are pleased to announce that the Paper Submission date for IDCC10 has been extended by 2 weeks. The Call will now close at 1700 BST on Monday 9 August 2010.

### **Climate change data to be opened up**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.jisc.ac.uk/news/stories/2010/07/data.aspx>

Climate scientists at the University of East Anglia (UEA) will soon be demonstrating new methods of providing open access to research data thanks to a major new investment from JISC to improve the way UK university researchers manage their data

### **International Journal of Digital Curation, Issue 1, Volume 5**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.dcc.ac.uk/news/international-journal-digital-curation-issue-1-volume-5>

The International Journal of Digital Curation Issue 1, Volume 5 is now available. It contains of 11 peer-reviewed papers drawn from 3 different events; the 5th International Digital Curation Conference, iPRES 08 and iPREs 09 (International Conference on Preservation of Digital Objects). There are also 4 general articles.

### **JISC Podcast: Digital Economy Act advice for universities and colleges**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.jisc.ac.uk/news/stories/2010/07/podcast109digitaleconomyact.aspx>

The controversial Digital Economy Act 2010 has generated much public debate, and the implications for colleges and universities remain unclear. The Act aims to tackle online copyright infringement by giving Ofcom, the communication industry regulator, new powers to deal with it. JISC is advising all institutions to consult the Ofcom codes by 31 July 2010 and to start preparing now to understand the implications of the law. Nicola Yeeles from JISC spoke to Kirsty McLaughlin, legal information specialist at JISC Legal, to find out what the new Act could mean for those who work and learn in universities and colleges.

### **Times Higher Education discusses implications for data release, after a ruling by the Information Commissioner's Office on tree-ring data, and the Russell Report on the "Climategate" emails affair**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?sectioncode=26&storycode=412475&c=2>

The THE article interviews Michael Baillie the emeritus professor of palaeoecology at Queen's University Belfast, recently forced to release his career-spanning dataset in response to a FOI request, following the

Information Commissioner's ruling that the Environmental Information Regulations applied to the case and the data could not be exempted.

#### **Incremental project report released**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.lib.cam.ac.uk/preservation/incremental/IncrementalProjectReportJune2010.pdf>

The JISC-funded Incremental project has released its scoping study into researchers' data management needs at the Universities of Cambridge and Glasgow.

#### **What will the new Public Data Transparency Principles mean for researchers and HEIs?**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.dcc.ac.uk/news/what-will-new-public-data-transparency-principles-mean-researchers-and-heis-0>

The DCC's Angus Whyte explores what the new Government's Public Sector Transparency Board's draft set of Public Data Principles mean for research data and HEI's.

#### **CLOCKSS adds its 11th archive node worldwide**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.clockss.org>

CLOCKSS is very pleased to announce that it has added an eleventh archive node to its network of worldwide, redundant, and distributed archive nodes. The new node is hosted at the Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, in Milan, Italy.

#### **Collections Trust Response to Government**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

[http://www.mla.gov.uk/news\\_and\\_views/press\\_releases/2010/mla\\_gov\\_announcement](http://www.mla.gov.uk/news_and_views/press_releases/2010/mla_gov_announcement)

The Collections Trust has prepared a response to the Government announcement that the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) will cease operation by April 2012.

#### **ULCC wins Developer Challenge at Open Repositories 2010**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://dablog.ulcc.ac.uk/2010/07/09/open-repositories-2010-in-madrid/>

ULCC's e-repository experts Richard Davis & Rory McNicholl have won the Developer Challenge at Open Repositories 2010. The full details have been nicely summarised by Richard Davies, in his blog post over at ULCC's Digital Archives blog ([dablog](#)) and there is also a video of their presentation in Madrid.

#### **Digital Preservation and Electronic Records Management for CPD**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.dundee.ac.uk/cais/cpd/>

There are still some places left on the following accredited distance learning courses offered by the Centre for Archive and Information Studies (CAIS) at the University of Dundee. The courses are tutored by experts and delivered online via an interactive, fully-supported, virtual learning environment. Further details of the courses are listed below. Please note that the closing date for applications is the 13th August with courses beginning on the 20th September.

#### **Library of Congress Digital Preservation Newsletter**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.digitalpreservation.gov/news/newsletter/201007.pdf>

The July 2010 issue of the Library of Congress Digital Preservation Newsletter is now available.

#### **I2S2 Requirements Report available**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.ukoln.ac.uk/projects/I2S2/>

The Requirements Report for the I2S2 project, together with the final Lifecycle Model and a supplementary report are now available from the project website.

#### **UKRDS Report available**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.ukrds.ac.uk>

The UK Research Data Service project has completed its proposal and management summary which can now be found in the reports section under the documents tab at the UKRDS website. Our recommendations focus on two key needs: The first is embedding skills and capability within HEIs and we have included a modelling tool to help institutions with planning and costing the establishment of capability. In our judgement this approach is the best option to provide a scalable, sustainable and efficient organisational infrastructure to allow researchers to exploit a range of storage and curation services to manage their data effectively and to gain access to other data of good provenance. The second need is for national co-ordination to maintain coherence of approach and to foster the development of common tools, standards etc. within the international context.

#### **PARSE.Insight reports now available**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.parse-insight.eu/publications.php>

After two years of research, the European project PARSE.Insight held its final symposium on 25 June 2010. [Ten major insights in research](#) were presented, amongst these major gaps between European countries in how to deal with research data and researchers' reluctance to share their data while they certainly want others' data. These findings were enforced by the outcomes of three case studies in High-Energy Physics, Earth Observation and Social Sciences and Humanities.

#### **The NISO I2 Working Group has released a midterm report**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.niso.org/workrooms/i2/midtermreport/>

The NISO I2 WG is soliciting feedback on the report and guidance for the next steps in developing this standard from individuals and groups involved in the digital information transactions. Stakeholders include publishers/distributors, libraries, archives, museums, licensing agencies, standards bodies, and service providers, such as library workflow management system vendors and copyright clearance agencies. Anyone involved at any level in the distribution, licensing, sharing or management of information is invited to participate. Please read the information below and participate in the evaluation of our midterm work by reading the midterm release document and answering a few questions about each development area. You are the stakeholders for this information standard. We must work to ensure that it meets your needs, so your input is very valuable and important to us.

#### **Ranking Web of Repositories: July 2010 Edition**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://repositories.webometrics.info/>

The second edition of 2010 Ranking Web of Repositories has been published the same day OR2010 started here in Madrid. The main novelty is the substantial increase in the number of repositories analyzed (close to 1000). The Top 800 are ranked according to their web presence and visibility. As usual thematic repositories (CiteSeer, RePEc, Arxiv) leads the Ranking, but the French research institutes (CNRS, INRIA, SHS) using HAL are very close. Two issues have changed from previous editions from a methodological point of view: the use of Bing's engine data has been discarded due to irregularities in the figures obtained and MS Excel files has been excluded again.

#### **SWORD v2.0: Deposit Lifecycle - white paper**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://sword2depositlifecycle.jiscpress.org>

The aim of the paper is to stimulate discussion around introducing more complete treatment of "deposit lifecycle" management of objects in digital repositories, and to propose the next small steps in this direction. There will be a sword workshop during OR10, and we'd like to get some discussion going there about this topic, so if you would like to join us and bring your thoughts that would be fantastic. If you are not going to be at OR10 (or even if you are), please do feel free to share any comments on this list or on the jiscpress instance (where the paper can be downloaded):

#### **Emerging findings from Researchers of Tomorrow study**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.jisc.ac.uk/news/stories/2010/07/generationY.aspx>

Emerging findings from the first annual report of a major three-year study into the information seeking behaviour of Generation Y doctoral students show that there are striking similarities between students born between 1982 and 1994 and older age groups. Researchers of Tomorrow was commissioned by JISC and the British Library to establish a benchmark for research behaviour, against which future generations can be measured – and also to provide guidance for librarians, information specialists and policy makers on how best to meet the research needs of Generation Y scholars.

#### **Business intelligence for research data curation?**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.dcc.ac.uk/news/business-intelligence-research-data-curation>

The DCC's Angus Whyte attended the JISC workshop 'Gaining business intelligence from user activity data' and provided some thoughts on the topic.

#### **Portico Introduces New E-Book Preservation Service for Libraries**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.portico.org>

Portico is pleased to announce that John Wiley & Sons has entered into an archive license agreement to preserve its collection of more than 8,000 online scholarly monographs. With this agreement, Wiley expands its relationship with Portico, which began in 2006 with Wiley's commitment to deposit their entire list of e-journals to the Portico archive. Wiley joins De Gruyter, Duke University Press, Elsevier, Palgrave Macmillan, SPIE, and Springer in participating in Portico's e-book preservation service, which was introduced to scholarly publishers in mid-2008. The addition of Wiley's 8,000 titles brings the total number of e-books committed to the Portico archive to more than 43,000.

#### **Research Data Management Forum – Draft programme now available**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.dcc.ac.uk/events/research-data-management-forum/rdmf5-economics-applying-and-sustaining-digital-curation>

The draft programme for the fifth DCC-RIN Research Data Management Forum - theme: "The Economics of Applying and Sustaining Digital Curation" - is now available via the event webpage.

#### **Jorum Unified Search Tool**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.jorum.ac.uk/searchOptions.html>

The Jorum Team is pleased to announce the release of a new unified search tool - created to allow you to search the JorumOpen and JorumUK collections simultaneously. This means that searching for resources is now even easier, providing instant results gleaned from both collections at once.

#### **If you build it will they come?**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.rin.ac.uk/our-work/communicating-and-disseminating-research/use-and-relevance-web-20-researchers>

This project looks at the extent of adoption of different web 2.0 tools in different subject fields and disciplines, and the different types of researchers who are using them.

#### **BibApp 1.0 released**

Retrieved 1 August 2010 from:

<http://www.bibapp.org/>

BibApp is a campus research gateway and expert finder. It matches researchers on your campus or research centre with their publication data and mines that data to see collaborations, create visualizations of areas of research, and find experts in research areas.

## Editorial:

### Editorial: Preservation Planning on a Spin Cycle (William Kilbride, DPC)

How will we know that our digital preservation actions have succeeded? Here's an experiment you can try at home.

Take a small metal memory stick in the shape of a key – the one sponsored by Microsoft that they were giving away at the DCC Conference in London in December 2009 – and put it in the breast pocket of a machine-washable Mark's and Spencer's suit. Leave it there for a few weeks. Then put the suit (and memory stick) onto a 40 degree wash with biological detergent. Spin. Hang to dry. You should find that stick, data and jacket survive the experience in pretty good shape. I can't vouch for other sticks, data or couturier: but I've done this twice and it's worked both times.

The problem with digital preservation is that it's not repeatable. This is what the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Sustainable Economics for a Digital Planet were getting at when they described it as temporally dynamic and path dependent, and they noted laconically that this 'complicates all other attributes' of preservation (BRTF 2010, 28). We may balance the demand side; we may eliminate free riders with an ongoing flow of value: but we need to make smart decisions now that will work in the future. It's easy to tell when it's going wrong but it's harder to be sure when it's going right.

If our work is not repeatable then our plans and the reasoning behind them matter an awful lot. Preservation planning is one of the functional areas of the Open Archival Information System (OAIS) which imposes a mandatory responsibility to 'follow documented policies and procedures which ensure that information is preserved against all reasonable contingencies...' (CCSDS 2002, 3-1). We're good at collaborating and we collaborate on more challenging topics all the time so it ought to be relatively simple to share these planning processes. Testing and validating our plans will be a useful way to pass time as we wait for the future to happen.

So it's surprising that there are not more preservation plans in the literature. It's hard to find and interpret the very many digital preservation plans that must have been written in the last decade. This is the space most recently occupied by the Planets project – specifically the PLATO planning tool and test bed (<http://www.ifs.tuwien.ac.at/dp/plato/intro.html>). I will be honest and say that for a while I was quite mystified by Plato. It seemed like a worthy cause but at first inspection the tools seemed so complicated that, rather than putting preservation within reach, they would have the contrary result of making it more difficult. Only now it's finished has the penny has finally dropped.

Let's get two unequal criticisms out of the way. Firstly the PLATO planning tool depends on those maddening mind mapping tools. I try so hard to be on the side of the angels but mind maps provoke a sort of visceral rage whose suppression takes more energy than is decent. I spent years learning to read so as not to be patronised or bamboozled by funky little diagrams. I'm not alone in my primitive abhorrence and a small user rebellion will surface before the sales pitch is over. But I'm still humble enough to know that the European Union doesn't fund projects around my own eccentricities and the smart, well intentioned people behind the project are not doing this to annoy me.

Bigger obstacles are the extents to which thoroughness and flexibility are virtues. Ask yourself this: as it possible to be too thorough, too flexible? People-who-work-in-digital-preservation ([we're still looking for](#)



[suggestions to replace this word](#)) are used to thinking of everything so thoroughness is mostly a virtue. We're not necessarily so good at repeating out loud what the gentle voices in our heads tell us. The planning tool forces explicit statements out of you. It questions everything and it makes things into numbers - things that were never numbers before. It makes you step through a formal process of defining requirements, examining alternatives, analysing results, and making recommendations. It asks about objects, technology, users and policies. It asks about repository operations and picks up any number of tools along the way. Along the way it reveals the classes you skipped and the topics you've given up worrying about. Few have answers to all the questions and many will be exhausted before those irksome diagrams have given up their dance.

**'The real prize is the back file of plans that others have written or about to write. That should have everyone's attention.'**

This is the darkness before dawn. Let me put on record that – up to the point that I fished the memory stick out of the washing machine for the second time – that I had missed the point of Plato. It's great. I love it. Here's why: you might never actually have to use it.

The tools that help you write a preservation plan are great but they're not the prize. Anyone interested in ensuring our digital memory is accessible tomorrow ought to sit down and try writing and executing one: failure to do so is evidence of an inexcusable lack of curiosity. But the real prize is the back file of plans that others have written, or are about to write. That should have everyone's attention. Robust and thorough planning is good for all time zones. It's good for agencies large and small and it's not a competition. Digital preservation is dynamic and distributed so it makes sense that we work together. If we all have to write preservation plans, wouldn't it be good if we could share them with each other? That would lower the barriers for small agencies and mean that communities of interest can form around specialist themes. And if we share our plans won't it be great if we can follow a broadly similar pattern using broadly comparable variables and based on explicit statements about what we think is important? That way we can adopt existing plans, adapt them or review our own plans in the light of what others have done. It means we can update our plans based on trends others have identified in the interim. And wouldn't it be useful if the plans were open to scrutiny, and if the empirical evidence on which our decisions are based could be viewed, aggregated and challenged? It would move us from fragmented, ad hoc and secretive plans to integrated, evidence-based, transparent, and dynamic plans.

Let's be clear: preservation planning is arduous and the PLATO tools don't relieve us of that burden. But they mean we can do it better, more quickly, in a way that others will understand and in a way that will keep them current.

**'Robust and thorough planning is good for all time zones. It's good for agencies small and large and it's not a competition.'**

What's my point? The Plato planning tool will help you write effective preservation plans. Sharing them with others is to your advantage and everyone else's too. So, with new confidence, we can set about implementing our plans to the benefit of our real jobs – saving lives, teaching children, being brainy, making profits, cutting carbon, bailing banks, fighting crime, checking pockets for memory sticks: whatever. Success at these tasks will be the lasting measure of our unrepeatable experiment.

Blue Ribbon Task Force on Sustainable Economics for a Digital Planet (2010) *'Sustainable Economics for a Digital Planet: Ensuring Long Term Access to Digital Information'*, online at: <http://brtf.sdsc.edu/>, last visited 26/07/2010

Consultative Committee for Space Data Systems (2002) Reference Model for an Open Archival Information System (OAIS) CCSDS Blue Book 650.0-B-1 online at: <http://public.ccsds.org/publications/archive/650x0b1.pdf> last visited 26/07/2010



## Who's who:

*In this section we invite a DPC member working on digital preservation to introduce themselves and their work. It will help us build connections between staff working on similar issues, will help promote the work of members, and will help identify priorities for the development of shared tools or services This time we hear from ...*

### **Sharon McMeekin**

#### **Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS)**

##### **Where do you work and what's your job title?**

I work in the Collections section of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland (RCAHMS) as Digital Archivist.



##### **Tell us a bit about your organisation**

RCAHMS collects, records and interprets information on the architectural, industrial, archaeological and maritime heritage of Scotland. We curate a national collection that has been generated by this work and provide access to it online through our database Canmore (<http://canmore.rcahms.gov.uk/>) and in person at our search room facilities in Edinburgh.

We carry-out active programmes of education and outreach to encourage the public to engage with Scotland's built heritage as well as exhibiting the collections around the country and publishing both popular and academic books. We are also the home of the National Collection of Aerial Photography (NCAP: <http://aerial.rcahms.gov.uk/>) and the online image library and learning resource SCRAN (<http://www.scran.ac.uk/>).

The Collections section is responsible for the curation of some 5 million items held by RCAHMS and digital objects increasingly form a large percentage of the collections. Digital design and recording methods have been in use for several years now by both RCAHMS and the organisations and individuals that deposit material with us and we look to preserve the wide variety of outputs from their work. RCAHMS has recently established a new digital preservation programme to redevelop our systems and procedures with the aim of creating a 'Trusted Digital Repository'.

##### **How did you end up in digital preservation?**

After finishing an undergrad in Film and Television Studies and History of Art I embarked on a Masters in Information Technology in 2002 with ideas of a dynamic career in IT. Instead the bottom fell out of the IT job market and a position as a library assistant at the University of Glasgow awaited me. When I heard that the HATII department at the university had started offering an archives and records management course I decided that a career change was in order and applied to study part-time, starting in 2005.

I decided from the start of the course that my focus would be digital preservation. This was for a number of reasons including: the challenges of working in a new and dynamic field; so that my time spent studying IT would not have been wasted; and because, let's be honest, I'm more than a bit of a geek. I was lucky enough to secure a job with RCAHMS as Digital Archives Curator after my first year and my new employers generously supported me during the completion of my studies.

##### **What projects are you working on at the moment?**

It's a busy time in the Collections section of RCAHMS at the moment and my time is split between digital preservation work and helping with two other key projects. The two non-digital projects I'm involved in are a

major move of our holdings between storage facilities and the redevelopment of our cataloguing and collections management information systems. The second of these projects, known as the 'Collections Enhancement' project, will see our cataloguing database restructured in line with ISAD(G) and will bring in new functionality for the management of location, copyright and conservation information. Although this work is not part of the digital preservation programme the creation of a robust cataloguing system will ultimately help with the curation of the digital objects we hold.

It is still early days in the redevelopment of our digital preservation systems and procedures at RCAHMS and most of the work so far has focused on a gap analysis comparing the current set-up with international standards. Our next step is to carry-out a full data audit, which will be based on the DCC's Data Asset Framework, and then we plan to start writing the policy documents we will require and clearly defining our requirements for the new systems.

**What are the challenges of digital preservation for data services such as yours?**

Of the numerous challenges we face I think two stand head and shoulders above the rest. The first challenge is the ever present issue in the heritage sector of a lack of available resources. We're hoping that by being smart at the development stage we can save ourselves time further down the line. Automation is the key word for us and we have a talented in-house development team that will hopefully be able to bring our systems wish list into reality. We will also be relying heavily on most of our depositors providing metadata in processable formats but we have a high level of confidence that this will be achievable. We've invested a considerable amount of time in recent years on building good relationships with organisations who regularly donate to our collections and they are, for the most part, committed in their support of the archival process.

Our other big issue is the variety of digital data that we will need to curate. At the moment around 90% of our digital collections are image files but we have identified that this will soon be changing as we bring in new types of collection and new survey and recording methods gain more of a foothold. We have yet to ingest a major architectural collection and the thorny issue of CAD will come to the fore when we do. We are also currently trying to get our heads around the complexities of marine data and the information produced by laser scanning projects.

**What projects would you like to work on in the future?**

I'm looking forward to properly getting my teeth into our redevelopment programme. The opportunity to guide a repository from the beginning to a (hopefully!) fully working system that will allow us to manage the fascinating collections we hold is a challenge I'm looking forward to.

**What sort of partnerships would you like to develop?**

I would like to see us establishing partnerships with organisations curating similar material so that we might be able to share the burden of preservation. In particular I think the potential for preservation actions to happen outside an organisation's repository (and the material being subsequently re-ingested) opens the way for collaborative efforts in dealing with these tasks.

**If just one tool or standard could be brought into existence that would make your job easier, what would it be?**

Just one? After the DPC's 'Designed to Last' event I think I would have to say a standard for CAD that includes an open format for preservation.

**If you could save for perpetuity just one digital file, what would it be?**

I'm going to have to forsake architecture and archaeology I think and turn to my greatest love, film (or should we be using 'movies' in the era of digital capture?) But what film to pick? I think I would have to go with something from the kings of computer animation Pixar, and from their back catalogue I would probably pick

'Up'. Their animation systems are such a secret that I have no idea if they ever assemble everything into one file, but let's just pretend that they do!

#### **Finally, where can we contact you or find out about your work?**

Emails are always welcome ([sharon.mcmeekin@rcahms.gov.uk](mailto:sharon.mcmeekin@rcahms.gov.uk)) or you can follow my sporadic ramblings on twitter (@SharonMcMeekin). To find out more about RCAHMS and the work we do take a look at our website: <http://www.rcahms.gov.uk>.

### **One World:**

*In this section we invite a partner or colleague to update us about major work on their home country that will interest readers. In this issue we hear from ...*

#### **Tim Keefe, Head of Digital Resources and Imaging Services, Trinity College Dublin**

Ireland has been experiencing a great deal of digitization activity in the past few years. These activities have largely been centered around the institutions of higher learning but there is also growing activity within the government and other public sector institutions such as the National Library, the Oireachtas Governmental Library, and the Digital Humanities Observatory.



Below is a round-up of just some of the projects worthy of a special note here.

#### **Trinity College Dublin (TCD)**

- **Digital Collections Repository, Trinity College Library Dublin:** In the Autumn of 2010 The Trinity College Library will launch an online digital collections repository supporting web based access to select portions of our extensive Manuscripts, Early Printed Books, and other Special Collections.
- **Europeana Travel:** The Trinity College library Dublin is currently participating in a 2-year European Union funded digitization Project. This project will digitize and provide access to over a million travel and tourism related resources, from 13 nations, and will provide open access to these materials through the Europeana Digital Library Portal
- **1641 Depositions Project:** This 3 year international project aims to transcribe and digitise the Depositions comprising 3,500+ depositions, examinations and associated materials, located in the Library of Trinity College Dublin, in which Protestant men and women of all classes told of their experiences following the outbreak of the rebellion by the Catholic Irish in October, 1641.
- **Irish Film & TV Research Online:** Irish Film & TV Research Online is designed to bring together the wide diversity of research material relating to Irish-made cinema and television as well as Irish-themed audio-visual representations produced outside of Ireland. Comprising almost 40,000 film and television entries, it also includes bibliographical and biographical databases.

#### **Dublin City University (DCU)**

- **Placenames Database of Ireland (logainm.ie):** Logainm.ie provides the official Irish-language names of almost 100,000 Irish places, as well as supplementary material such as sound files, background information notes, and educational resources. It is being developed by Fiontar, Dublin City University, in collaboration with the Placenames Branch of the Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.

#### **Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies (DIAS)**

- **Irish Script on Screen:** Digitisation and web delivery of manuscripts in the Irish language, from early to modern times. Source materials provided from a variety of Irish and Australian institutions and libraries

#### **Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT)**

- **Directory of Sources for the History of Women in Ireland:** The Directory of Sources for the History of Women in Ireland contains information on collections relating to the history of women in Ireland from the earliest times to the present, gathered from public and private repositories in the Republic of Ireland and in Northern Ireland.

#### **National College of Art and Design (NCAD)**

- **Art College Student Registers:** The Art College Student Registers comprise 150 ledgers spanning the period 1877-1986. Each page of the ledgers has been digitally scanned and the individual names of students, and the academic year of enrollment have been indexed and are available as a searchable database. Approximately 20,000 named individuals have been recorded, providing a unique record of Irish artists and designers.
- **Earley and Company Archives:** This is the archive of one of the largest and most prestigious ecclesiastical decorators in Ireland and the UK which operated out of Dublin offices from 1852-1974. The collection of designs and supporting documentation was donated by the Earley family to the National Irish Visual Arts Library (NIVAL) at NCAD between 2002 and 2005. A project to index and digitise the drawings was completed in 2004.
- **National Irish Visual Arts Library Visual Research and Digital Archiving Project:** The National Irish Visual Arts Library (NIVAL) was formally established in 1997 to document all aspects of visual art and design in Ireland. The current project aims to improve access to the material by providing cross-searchable finding aids to the special collections online using EAD, and by digitising selected material. NIVAL is jointly funded by NCAD and the Arts Council.

#### **National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG)**

- **Ars Apodemica Online:** Creating a searchable bibliographic and content description database of early modern "travel advice" (ars apodemica) literature, and digitize in searchable full text format documents belonging to this group.
- **Ireland Illustrated:** Creation of a bibliographical database of Illustrated travel accounts on Ireland up to 1850. The database will focus on the images contained in the travel books.
- **Thomas Moore Hypermedia Archive:** The aim of this project is to collect the complete poetical, musical and prose works of Thomas Moore (1779-1852) in the form of an hypermedia archive, publishable in pilot form on the Web. Like a scholarly printed edition the archive will establish reliable texts and annotation based on principles of scholarly editing, but it will also provide a rich network of interconnected electronic materials.
- **TEXTE Project:** Create four model digital editions: a weekly periodical, the Dublin Penny Journal (1832-36); the correspondence of the painter James Barry; a unique collection of songbooks and popular literature from a farmhouse in County Down; a manuscript medieval statute book from Göttingen.

#### **National University of Ireland, Maynooth (NUIM)**

- **A Digital Edition of Táin Bó Flíodhaise:** A digital edition of the Ulster Cycle tale entitled Táin Bó Flíodhaise is being produced, consisting of a critical edition divided into segments, with corresponding diplomatic readings of the three manuscripts, a translation, notes, and indexes. Digital manuscript images also correspond to each segment. XML is being used to encode the manuscripts and to produce the 'stacked' edition.
- **Irish INC: Images from periodicals of the nineteenth century:** The project's aim is to create an online database research tool that will provide enhanced user access to a large corpus of visual images from unknown or lesser-known Irish illustrated periodicals published in the nineteenth century. The source material for this project was chosen from selected collections housed in the Russell Library, Maynooth.

#### **Royal Irish Academy (RIA)**

- **St Patrick's Confessio Hypertext Stack Project:** The Latin writings of St Patrick are of crucial importance for Irish history and ecclesiastical culture. The Royal Irish Academy's Dictionary of Medieval Latin from Celtic Sources project has been granted funding under PRTL, Cycle 4 to construct, on line, a hypertext stack that will present different aspects of St Patrick's work at various levels, closely interlinked passage by passage.
- **Documents on Irish Foreign Policy Online:** Documents on Irish Foreign Policy (DIFP) is a project of the Royal Irish Academy, the Department of Foreign Affairs and the National Archives of Ireland and was established in 1997. The project publishes essential source material for anyone interested in the

development of Irish foreign policy since 1919. Documents are now freely available and searchable online.

#### University College Cork - National University of Ireland, Cork (UCC)

- **Celtic Digital Initiative:** The aim of the CELTIC DIGITAL INITIATIVE (CDI) is to make scarce resources in the field of Celtic Studies available in an electronic format to students and scholars, both nationally and internationally.
- **Corpus of Electronic Texts:** CELT brings the wealth of Irish literary and historical culture to the Internet. By March 2010, it has a searchable online textbase of 13.3 million words, in Irish, English, Latin and other languages, encoded in TEI-conformant XML, in over 1100 contemporary and historical documents from many areas, including literature and the other arts.

#### University College Dublin - National University of Ireland, Dublin (UCD)

- **Irish Virtual Research Library and Archive:** The Irish Virtual Research Library & Archive (IVRLA) is a major humanities digitisation and digital object management project launched in UCD in January 2005. The project was conceived as a means to preserve elements of UCD's repositories and to increase access to this material through the adoption of digitisation technologies.
- **Hiberno-English Archive:** This site provides an introduction to the history and grammar of Hiberno-English. It also provides a small number of Hiberno-English related links, and relevant details of Hiberno-English related events, such as public lectures, radio broadcasts and so forth.

#### Collaborative Irish Projects

- **Doegen Records Web Project:** This project will publish the Doegen sound archive of native Irish speakers from the early 20th century on the web. The archive consists of over 200 records made during the period 1928-31 and includes speakers from each of the four provinces. Items recorded include stories, songs and prayers.
  - National University of Ireland, Maynooth (NUIM)
  - Royal Irish Academy (RIA)
  - University College Cork - National University of Ireland, Cork (UCC)
- **Amharc Éireann News Reel Project:** This project - a collaboration between An Foras Feasa, the Irish Film Archive, Gael Linn's Amharc Éireann collection and Boston College – builds a wiki-based collaborative learning environment around the Amharc Éireann collection (1955-1964). The Amharc Éireann news reels provide a vivid window into the development of modern Ireland.
  - An Foras Feasa
  - Irish Film Archive
  - Gael Linn
  - Boston College
  - National University of Ireland, Maynooth (NUIM)
- **Metamorphosis: The Irish Metamusic Project:** IMP seeks to make the considerable archive of musical scores and audio material held by the Contemporary Music Centre(CMC) digitally available for music research, add scholarly value to the collection, furthering knowledge and understanding of music in 20th and 21st century Ireland and work towards a platform for the digital publication of research on music in Ireland. Partners - SPCD, DKIT, NUIM
  - Dundalk Institute of Technology
  - National University of Ireland, Maynooth (NUIM)
  - St. Patrick's College Drumcondra (SPCD)
- **Rian, Ireland's National Portal for Open Access to Research:** Rian is a national showcase for Irish research, focusing on research publications and related material. The data in Rian is harvested from the open access institutional repositories in all seven Irish universities and DIT.
  - National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG)
  - University College Dublin - National University of Ireland, Dublin (UCD)
  - University College Cork - National University of Ireland, Cork (UCC)
  - Dublin City University (DCU)
  - National University of Ireland, Maynooth (NUIM)
  - University Of Limerick (UL)
  - The University of Dublin (Trinity College Dublin) (TCD)
  - Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT)

#### National Level Initiatives

- **Digital Humanities Observatory (Part of the Royal Irish Academy):** *The Digital Humanities Observatory (DHO) is an all-island digital humanities collaboratory working with Humanities Serving Irish Society (HSIS), national, European, and international partners to further e-scholarship. The DHO is a knowledge resource providing outreach and education on a broad range of digital humanities topics. It provides data management, curation, and discovery services supporting the long-term access to, and greater exploitation of, digital resources in the creation of new models, methodologies and paradigms for 21st century scholarship.*

For further information on any of these projects please visit the Digital Humanities observatory web site at: <http://dho.ie/>

## Credits

What's New is a joint publication of DPC and DCC and is compiled by Kirsten Riley. Thanks to contributors. If you would like to feature in What's New or have a contribution to the news or events, then please contact us.

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