



Sustaining Repositories

newsletter of the APSR Project

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■ Showcasing clever collections

Clever Collections: a national showcase of technical innovations for digital collections will highlight the world-class innovative development of collections (and the systems that support them) being undertaken in Australia. This event, to be held at the University of Melbourne on 28 and 29 November, will provide a cornucopia of technical innovation relating to repositories, data centres and other research collections as they are found in universities and major research organisations.

This is your opportunity to show others in the Australian repository arena what you are doing.

APSR and ARROW are calling for submissions from those interested in presenting at this exciting event, with a preference for concise 20 - 30 minute presentations. The event will deliberately juxtapose innovations from all manner of online collections, for example: science datasets, online dictionaries and encyclopaedias, cross-disciplinary information grids, digital libraries, institutional repositories, research data archives and cultural and heritage collections.



The audience will be a mixture of eResearch technologists and technical support staff, researchers engaged or interested in innovative ways of enhancing research through technology, repository developers and curators of databases of research materials.

The guest speakers at the event include: Professor Noshir Contractor, Director, Science of Networks in Communities (SONIC), National Center for Supercomputing Applications at the University of Illinois (pictured); Jock Phillips, General Editor of Te Ara: the Online Encyclopedia of New Zealand; and Dr Elizabeth Webster, Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research, University of Melbourne.

If you are interested in submitting an expression of interest, make your application online and send it in before August 31: <http://www.apsr.edu.au/clevercollections/>

■ Staff news – sad farewell

Few people associated with APSR will have not had first-hand experience of Chris Blackall's wit and wisdom. We are sad to have said goodbye to Chris Blackall from the position of Development Portfolio Coordinator. He has taken a position with the National Gallery of Australia as their Chief Information Officer.

Chris has been an essential ingredient to the success of APSR and we wish him the best for the future. At his farewell on July 20, he was thanked most sincerely for his helping to transform APSR into a nationally and internationally relevant initiative.



■ Good news for open source repositories

There have been two announcements in recent weeks of initiatives which will support the ongoing development of Fedora and DSpace, two large and widely used digital repository softwares.

The first announcement concerned creation of the DSpace Foundation, formed in July by Hewlett-Packard and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology Libraries as a non-profit organisation that will provide support to the growing community of organisations that use DSpace.

More than 200 projects worldwide, including a number in Australia, are using the software to digitally capture, preserve and share their artefacts, documents, collections and research data. The Foundation will assume responsibility for providing leadership and support to the growing DSpace community and promote even wider distribution and use. Michele Kimpton, formerly of the Internet Archive (<http://www.archive.org>), will serve as Executive Director of the DSpace Foundation.

DSpace is a community-based open source platform capable of permanently storing data in a non-proprietary format, so researchers can access its contents for decades to come. Because the archive is Internet-based, DSpace can be accessed from anywhere in the world via an Internet connection and federated with other archives.

More information about the DSpace Foundation is available at:

http://www.dspace.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=201

A second announcement concerns the awarding of a four year, \$4.9M grant from the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation to develop the organisational and technical frameworks necessary to effect change in how scientists, scholars, museums, libraries, and educators produce, share, and preserve their digital intellectual creations.

Fedora Commons is a new non-profit organization that will continue the mission of the Fedora Project, the successful open-source software collaboration between Cornell University and the University of Virginia.

The Fedora software has been adopted worldwide to support an array of applications including open-access publishing, scholarly communication, digital libraries, e-science, archives, and education.

With its roots in the Fedora open-source repository system, developed since 2001 with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the new software will continue to focus on the integrity and longevity of the intellectual products that underlie this new form of knowledge work.

More information about Fedora can be found at <http://www.fedora-commons.org>.

■ Fez taken up

Fez+Fedora, the locally developed repository of the University of Queensland, is being implemented by another overseas repository. As we mentioned in the February newsletter, the Colorado Alliance of Research Libraries (<http://www.coalliance.org/>) is working towards a December production release of the Alliance Digital Repository (ADR). The group has been actively communicating with Fez developer Christaan Kortekaas, and the Fez list to work through some of the development and implementation tasks with Fez.



Fez Digital Repository

The Alliance's involvement highlights the positive relationship members of open source communities share. Because the group is now running up against its own deliverables deadlines - as

dictated by their consortial members – they have a great deal of interest in getting an accurate and realistic picture of Fez release schedules and components of those releases.

This brings to seven the number of working Fez+Fedora production installations known to the University of Queensland, with many more currently under evaluation around the world.

■ Long live the collection!

The speaker list for the upcoming *Long-lived Collections: The future of Australia's research data* has been finalised and it is an impressive line-up! The speakers will address the dual questions: How can we develop a policy framework for research data management? And: Who has the administrative responsibility for research data?

With Dr Warwick Cathro from the National Library of Australia, Professor Ian Chubb from the Australian National University and Dr Evan Arthur from DEST making up the morning session, the day will start with some heavy hitters in the world of data management.

Real examples will be given from the ANU's Centre for Mental Health Research and from research in the humanities. After lunch, Professor Elim Papadakis from the Australian Research Council will join Steve Matheson from the Australian Bureau of Statistics to discuss how these different organisations are addressing the problem of research data.

Professor Warwick Anderson from the National Health and Medical Research Council will be among those providing extra support for the day's discussions. Make sure you have a representative from the policy area at your institution at this event to hear a jam-packed line-up of respected and eminent speakers and to join in the concluding discussion.

Long-lived Collections will be held at the National Library on September 11, 2007. Register before 31 August at http://www.apsr.edu.au/long_lived_collections/



Image credit:
Robin Smith Photography,
New South Wales

■ eResearch report

An unseasonable chilliness in Brisbane at the end of June failed to diminish the excitement generated by over 300 people attending *eResearch Australasia 2007*. Over two days of challenging speakers, an animated conference dinner, and a third day of diverse workshops, there was a real buzz in the air.

eResearch Australasia 2007 brought together researchers from many disciplines, data managers, research policy makers, librarians, computer scientists and others to examine and discuss the hows, whys and wherefores of eResearch. Everyone there had their own view of eResearch, where it is going and what is needed to help it along.

The outstanding plenary speakers help to fuel the discussion. Professor Alex Szalay from Johns Hopkins University discussed the challenges posed by the limitations of computers in a world of too much data. Professor David De Roure from the University of Southampton reminded us that eResearch is about the people doing it as much as the tools and techniques underpinning it. Professor Philip Bourne of the University of California gave a fascinating talk on electronic publishing, open access and the place of data in the scholarly communication chain. Dr Paul Arthur from Curtin University spoke of the place of the humanities in this changing electronic world. Rudolph Dimper talked of the activities of the European Synchrotron Radiation Facility. And Dr Mike Sargent, Dr Rhys Francis and Anne-Marie Lansdowne all addressed Australian policy issues and developments to an audience fully engaged with thoughts of what might be in it for them. The feedback APSR received was overwhelmingly positive including:



"Really good conference. The overseas speakers were excellent. The perspectives on DEST and NCRIS were extremely valuable."

"Was a great conference - excellent having the workshops at the end - everybody was in a similar 'place' and they provided a great chance to de-brief from something that was initially quite overwhelming - a bit scary really. Empowering Research Australasia - well done!"

"We need to do this again next year!"

eResearch Australasia 2007 was organized by MAPS, DEST and APSR. Its enthusiastic reception suggests that next year will see *eResearch Australasia 2008*.

■ Live demo

The APSR funded Fieldwork Data Sustainability (FIDAS) project had its first live demonstration of the FieldHelper software at Brisbane at the eResearch conference (<http://www.ereseach.edu.au>) at the end of June. Fieldhelper allows researchers to easily enrich fieldwork data with customisable contextual information and upload the resultant complex data and metadata package to a repository.

The demonstration showed a full run-through of the application, and an explanation behind the design. Tom Honeyman demonstrated loading and rapidly annotating files and then finally submitting files to a repository direct from the application. The application generated some interest, mostly from researchers interested in the flexibility of the application and the fact that it hid much of the detail of the underlying xml formats, allowing them to get on with describing their objects.

Tom writes: “eResearch Australasia 2007 was a terrific event. It was great to see so many interesting projects, gathered together in the one spot, with a broad range of disciplines and interests represented. The field appears to be evolving at an amazing pace and so events like this are critical for staying on top of it all. I attended all three days and particularly enjoyed the final day workshops, which were a good forum to discuss some real issues facing the field of eResearch generally, especially in the light of the previous two days. As a staff member at a small and specialised archive, it was particularly interesting to see developments at both large and small archives and repositories alike.”

■ Report from the field - Paris

Linda Barwick attended the *Fifth International Conference on New Directions in the Humanities* (<http://h07.cgpublisher.com/welcome.html>) at the American University of Paris in July. Linda reports on her experience.

“The conference, held in Paris's 6th arrondissement (on the Left Bank of the Seine), brought together humanities practitioners from a wide range of disciplines, with presentations being grouped into streams: mine was part of the Science, Environment, Technology and the Humanities stream. My talk ('Digital workflows for ethnographic field research: APSR's FIDAS project') reported on the FIDAS (Fieldwork Data Sustainability) project, and included an overall description of the project, information on and a brief demonstration of the Fieldhelper tool, and a report on our December 2006 conference on 'Sustainable data from digital fieldwork'.

“Discussion after the paper highlighted commonalities in the issues confronting other ethnographically-oriented research projects, such as an environmental health project in a Canadian First Nations community, and in particular the need to provide sustainable local access to the results of community-based research. There were a number of other papers on ethnographic themes (some of the best from Australian researchers, some of whom are shown in the photograph relaxing after their session), and a good representation of researchers from Asia, Africa and North America. I took the opportunity to visit the new Quai Branly Museum, an ethnographic museum near the foot of the Eiffel Tower, which includes some wonderful North Australian bark paintings. I was also invited to an evening soiree to meet numerous French researchers working on Australian cultural projects.”



Australian delegates relaxing. L to R:
Joe Gumbula & Allan Marett (Uni of Syd),
Lindy Allen (Museum of Vic),
Aaron Corn (Uni of Syd)

■ Staff news – happy welcome

The position of Development Coordinator, left vacant by the departure of Chris Blackall, was advertised at ANU and we are happy to announce that Scott Yeadon has accepted this position. Scott is working for the APSR Central Office. It is fortunate indeed that we have found someone with an existing understanding of the APSR development portfolio and someone who enjoys the highest respect among his colleagues. We are confident that Scott will be able to work very closely with the project managers and technical leaders to bring the portfolio to a successful completion over the next few months.

APSR is grateful to the Division of Information at ANU for releasing Scott on secondment.



■ APSR a 'neat' idea

Sten Christensen reports from the glorious warmth of a Canadian summer and against the beautiful backdrop of Vancouver where he was fortunate enough to present a paper at the *First International PKP Scholarly Publishing Conference* in July.

"For those not familiar with the PKP (Public Knowledge Project), it is a partnership between a number of Canadian institutions including the Simon Fraser University Library, Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia and the Canadian Centre for Studies in Publishing at Simon Fraser University. The PKP is actively involved in improving the value of scholarly research outputs using 'new' technology. Many may be aware of this partnership through the open source publishing software it has developed – Open Journal Systems (OJS) and Open Conference Systems (OCS).



"The conference brought together users of PKP software and those involved in open access publishing to discuss and share ideas. Virtually all areas of the globe were covered, including a healthy contingent from Australia.

"The paper that I presented, co-authored with Ross Coleman, Director of Sydney eScholarship, explored the possibilities of integrating open access publishing tools with an open access archiving tool as a model for sustainable management of content generated in the new era of scholarly communication. We also looked at the role of libraries in supporting and developing emerging or alternate forms of scholarly communication. To conclude, we demonstrated the work that Scott Yeadon from ANU has been working on for APSR. Scott's work is for the Repository Interoperability Framework (RIFF) project – and focuses on integrating the OJS and OCS2 publication systems with open repository platforms such as DSpace to provide archiving, OAI compliant access, and online journal/proceeding (or print hybrid) outputs.

"All aspects of the paper generated interest and were within the overall themes of the conference. There was particular interest in the work being done by the APSR, which one delegate noted was a 'neat idea'. As well as this, the PKP developer community was very excited by the prospect of being able to integrate with repository services and is anxiously awaiting the completion of the RIFF project that ANU and Sydney eScholarship are involved in. See <http://www.apsr.edu.au/ejournals/index.htm> and <http://www.apsr.edu.au/econference/index.htm>)

"This will probably be the first of many PKP conferences, as there seems to be great interest in the work that the PKP are doing and by institutions using their tools (in the first month of the release of OCS2 the PKP had 600 downloads of the code, of which Sydney eScholarship was one). It would seem the work done in Australia is on a par, if not above, that happening elsewhere in the world. It was refreshing to realise that the focus of the projects being undertaken by the APSR and its partners are of great interest to other institutions and organisations and we should stop once in while to reflect upon this."

■ Report from the field – Vienna

I was in Vienna from 13th to 15th June for ELPUB2007, the 11th International Conference on Electronic Publishing, subtitled "Openness in Digital Publishing: Awareness, Discovery and Access". I presented a paper entitled "The Digital Scholar's Workbench" including a live demonstration of software developed as part of my APSR word processing workflows research. This paper was well received, with several conference participants expressing interest, and the organisers asking if there was any chance that I would return to give further progress reports in future ELPUB conferences.

There were several papers relevant to digital repositories in the conference. One theme that attracted my attention was discussion of file formats, particularly in the context of accessibility. Neil McKenzie from the European Accessible Information Network (EUAIN) described a set of guidelines and course materials for accessible electronic publication, with an emphasis on the print-impaired.

Australian digital repositories would do well to adopt some of these guidelines and techniques to ensure that our precious archives are accessible to those without 20-20 vision. Carl Rauch and others from Graz in Austria gave a paper describing a way to assess the long-term stability of file formats. Some of this seemed close to the AONS work being done here. For those who are interested, the entire conference proceedings are online at www.elpub.net, both the full papers submitted by authors and the slides from their talks. For those at ANU, there is a fat printed volume on my desk that you may borrow to save printing.

The conference was held at the Vienna University of Technology (TUWien), in the main building which is a beautiful old palace. Like many European cities, there are no high-rise buildings allowed, at least in the centre, which makes everything much more human in scale (compared with Sydney for example, where I gave the same talk again on 1st August for the Open Publish conference's one-day symposium on office document standards).

Vienna in June was beautiful. It was hot, but not too hot. The countryside around the city is full of huge wind turbines. European smog/haze means that you can never see a proper horizon. The old city of Vienna is circled by wide boulevards with lots of trees and trams and roller-bladers and hot-dog stands (selling wieners of course).

There are several enormous palaces, most of them now turned into art galleries, and lots of parks with sunbathers, beer gardens, outdoor restaurants and music. The narrow pedestrian streets in the city centre are full of people until late at night. The conference dinner was in a wine garden in a vineyard on a hillside a bit out of the city, which was idyllic.

■ Hidden heroes – David Berriman

People who attend any APSR function are asked to register online and afterwards asked to complete an online survey about the event. The man behind the machine is David Berriman, who was involved in the development of the software called Apollo that drives these services. Apollo is widely used around campus by students and staff for functions as varied as international research surveys and administrative online forms. David is the Web Applications Developer at APSR and has been working on various applications in support of partner initiatives, such as the SUGAR framework (Sustainability Guidelines for Australian Repositories) and more recently the COSI framework (Collections Services and Infrastructures) that ties together the various APSR partner projects currently underway.



Despite claiming that he 'gave up all his hobbies to work for APSR', David is a keen exerciser, playing tennis at lunchtime and going to the gym regularly. He is also involved in a local dog club as a senior obedience and agility instructor.

David is often seen around the office in dark glasses, the result of leaving his prescription spectacles in the car.

■ New resources available

It seems that APSR has started a trend with these newsletters, with JISC (in the UK) now publishing a *Repositories Research Team Newsletter* a newsletter about digital repositories research. The purpose of this newsletter is to provide specialised information to all those interested in digital repositories research. The June issue is available online: <http://www.ukoln.ac.uk/repositories/newsletter/june2007.htm>

The RRT has also set up a mailing list for people to discuss issues relating to Digital Repositories. By registering you can join almost 900 members (and counting!) from all over the world and from varied organisations. This active mailing list has already seen some lively and thought-provoking debate. To join this JISC-REPOSITORIES e-mail list, please visit: <http://www.jiscmail.ac.uk/lists/JISC-REPOSITORIES.html>

Another resource is the English version of issue no. 11 of the NESTOR (Network of Expertise in Long-Term Storage of Digital Resources) newsletter which is now available. A selection of topics in the issue includes 10 principles for trusted digital repositories and a conference report from "The Challenge: Long-term Preservation". To download the newsletter go to the website: <http://nestor.sub.uni-goettingen.de/newsletter/index.php?lang=en>

■ APSR featured

APSR has loomed large in a feature article in the *ANU Reporter's* winter edition. "Fading Away: The problem of Digital Sustainability" explores the problems facing individuals and organisations alike when it comes to long term digital preservation.

You can see the article at: http://info.anu.edu.au/mac/Newsletters_and_Journals/ANU_Reporter/index.asp

Safety report



Below is a reply by Scott Yeadon to the 'For Sale' offer of Chris's former office (before he realised he was going to move into it).

"Pest Inspection Report: Major infestation of technobabbler; attracted to blinking lights and electronic equipment; audible (and disturbingly large number of) acronyms causing distraction and difficulty tackling this particular infestation; as a result of climate change likely a similar outbreak is expected in and around National Gallery.

Building Inspection Report: Shaky foundations (expect will be condemned by years' end); appears to have very little power; lights often left on but no-one's actually home; poor insulation resulting in a great deal of hot air emanating from the office; some days quite cool.

EER: 0 => energy hungry/power sapping.

I'm afraid there are some things that just won't sell even in a booming market..."

PARADISEC opens its doors

In June PARADISEC (<http://www.paradisec.org.au/>) held an Open Day for staff and students of the University of Sydney. Approximately 30 people attended a series of sessions. Dr Linda Barwick, Director of PARADISEC, led several guided tours of PARADISEC's facilities located on Level 2 of the Transient Building, including a look at the Quadriga (<http://www.cubetec.com/quadriga/>) archiving hardware for audio digitisation. A few participants were given a closer demonstration of the digitisation process by Aidan Wilson, Audio Preservation Officer, from preparing tapes for ingestion to an introduction to fixing audio glitches. Both Linda Barwick and Tom Honeyman, Project Coordinator, ran training sessions in field recording as well as discussing the importance of preserving metadata for cataloguing and archiving.



The response was extremely positive and enthusiastic with participants coming from various parts of the university, including the Faculty of Arts, the Faculty of Education, Sydney Conservatorium of Music, Fisher Library, the Multimedia & Educational Technologies in Arts (META) Centre, and Information and Communications Technology (ICT). Sarah Bedford, a PhD candidate from the Faculty of Education and Social Work said: "The Open Day was an eye-opener not only to what's going on at PARADISEC but also to what's available and what can be done. It was inspiring, so informative and useful – I'm already using what I learned about [FieldHelper including] how to record and manage fieldwork data." FieldHelper was developed with funding provided by APSR.

Caption competition winners



The winner of the caption competition was Leo Monus of the ANU Demetrius team with

"The only famous movie star who was willing to pose for a photo with Adrian"

Congratulations Leo – an APSR mug will be winging its way to you shortly.

Special mention must go to the following suggestions that came in from around the country:

- "Adrian Burton driving home the fact that without APSR, a national approach to sustainable repositories would be cactus"
- "APSR - helping you stop your collections turning to cactus"
- "Rare sighting - a prickly pair in Arizona"
- "Adrian Burton visiting the future site of the RQF when Labor wins office"

Please note: These quotes represent the opinions of the contributors and do not in any way reflect the attitudes, political opinions or hopes of the APSR staff or any of its partners.

■ **Around the Traps....** Send your suggestions to contact@apsr.edu.au

Conferences and events

2007 8-11 October, Integrated Education Infrastructure: *Innovation and use of technology in education, IDEA2007, Brisbane, Australia*
<http://www.linkaffiliates.net.au/idea2007/>

2007 15-16 November, Appraisal in a Digital World, Rome, Italy
http://www.dpc.delos.info/rethinking_appraisal/

2007 5-7 December, ACRL/ARL Regional Institute on Scholarly Communication, Illinois, USA (applications close 14 September, 2007)
<http://www.carli.illinois.edu/institute07.html>

2007 12-13 December, Curating our Digital Scientific Heritage: a *Global Collaborative Challenge*, Washington DC, USA
<http://www.dcc.ac.uk/events/dcc-2007/>

2008 5-7 February, VALA2008: *Libraries/Changing Spaces, Virtual Places*, Melbourne, Australia
<http://www.vala.org.au/conf2008.htm>

2008 21-23 April, Fourth Nordic Conference on Scholarly Communication, NCSC 2008, Lund, Sweden
<http://www.lub.lu.se/en/ncsc.html>

Publications (reading)

■ Linda Barwick, Tom Honeyman and Steven Hayes, University of Sydney, May 2007, *Report of the Fieldwork Data Sustainability Project (FIDAS)*
Report downloadable as pdf: http://www.apsr.edu.au/fidas/fidas_report.pdf

■ Kevin Bradley, Junran Lei, Chris Blackall, UNESCO: Memory of the World, June 2007, *Towards an Open Source Repository and Preservation System*
Available from: <http://www.apsr.edu.au/publications/projects.htm>

■ Rowan Brownlee, University of Sydney and David Berriman, APSR, June 2007, *Report of the Sustainability Guidelines for Australian Repositories Project (SUGAR)*
Available from: <http://www.apsr.edu.au/sugar/index.htm>

Next issue?

Be the first to know ... join the APSR Announcements email service at:
http://mailman.anu.edu.au/mailman/listinfo/apsr_announcements

Contributors to this newsletter were Danny Kingsley, Margaret Henty, Scott Yeadon, Tom Honeyman, Linda Barwick and Sten Christensen.

The APSR partners



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