Rumo(u)rs from Paddington

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As I write this most of you are probably “en famille” enjoying roast turkey and pumpkin pie. Sadly in Paddington there is no such “thanksgiving” and we are all at our desks looking forward to a weekend most likely to be filled with Christmas preparations.

Unfortunately this year I didn’t make it personally to the Charleston Conference, but I hope that many of you got the chance to meet Carole Myles <carole.myles@xref.com> and Adam Hodgkin <adam.hodgkin@xref.com> both “xrefers” and involved in various presentations and discussions. I heard from them that the meeting was a great success. Next year it will be my turn to visit and escape from London’s grey autumn skies.

Over the past couple of months we have had a steady stream of visitors to our offices in Paddington Station and it is always good to see you passing through. It was wonderful to welcome Rick Lugg and Ruth Fischer <rick@2consulting.org> and their children in early November en route to Madame Tussauds http://www.madame-tussauds.com/(waxworks of famous people). The whole family looked in extraordinarily good shape considering they had just got off a transatlantic flight. I must apologise to them for the weather though. I think it rained for the whole of their two week trip. Lorraine Estelle, the new Collections Team Manager at the JISC <lorraine.estelle@kcl.ac.uk> visited and told us all about her ambitious plans back at the JISC offices in Kings College, London. We wish you luck, Lorraine.

Steve O’Connor CEO of CAVAL Collaboration Solutions <steveo@caval.edu.au> also managed a quick trip to the xref offices having just arrived from Australia. We have been seeing publishers and reference editors from Penguin, Cassell, Harcourt, Longman, Cambridge Scientific Abstracts, Blackwell and Wiley. The Bloomsbury editor wanted to know why our office was on Platform One of Paddington Station and not on Platform 9 in Kings Cross.


The complete and fully updated UK Marc manual is now freely available online on The British Library Website: http://www.bl.uk/servic es/bibliographic/marc/marcm.html. The British Library have also launched their Magic Pencil: Children’s Book Illustration of Today Exhibition http://portico.bl.uk/whatsontypical/exhibitions/magicpencil/home.html. It runs until March 31st 2003. If you can’t make the exhibition I recommend that you browse their fabulous collection of e-postcards http://portico.bl.uk/ekards/indexencrypt pencil.html.

The Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew has launched its internet based “shop window” for plant information, giving botanists, conservationists and researchers worldwide access to the information held in its databases http://www.rbgkew.org.uk/epic/.

Love letters from Henry VIII to Anne Boleyn and manuscripts of Emperor Justinian are just some of the hundreds of thousands of historical manuscripts being added to the Website of the Vatican Apostolic Library http://www.vatican.va. The library was apparently founded by Pope Nicholas V (1447-1455) and has 1.6 million volumes!!

The big event in London in December is the Online Information Show http://www.online- information.co.uk. It is always a meeting of the great and good in the digital information world and the line-up for this year looks as though it is to be no exception. It is good to see that Peter Scott of the University of Saskatchewan Library <peter@lights.com> will be moderating the first session on content strategy, management and creation. I notice, also, that Sheila Webber at the Department of Information Studies, University of Sheffield <s.webber@sheffield.ac.uk> will be providing her usual enlightening insights during the session on educating end users. Charles Oppenheim, <c.oppenheim@bororo.ac.uk> Professor of Information Science at Loughborough University will be providing half of the “double keynote” (in partnership with Dr. Donald Marchand from the International Institute for Management Development) on the subject of “Managing Information as an Asset.” And no Online meeting would be complete without Gary Price, <gprice@gwu.edu> Librarian Research and Internet Consulting and Greg Notess, <gnotess@notess.com> Associate Professor Montana State University, Bozeman giving us the benefit of their up-to-date Web searching expertise.

I can report that Karen Stanfield is the new Director of the newly formed Information Services department at the University of Nottingham. Stephen Pinker who was formerly Academic Services Librarian is now the Assistant Director of Information Services at the University of Nottingham. Alison McNab has been appointed to the post of Academic Learning Resources Division of IS, Alison was previously Collections Manager for Journals and Discovery tools at JISC. We wish them all luck.

By the time you read this it will be 2003, so all that is left for me to do, is wish you all a Happy, Healthy and Inspiring New Year.

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