Rumo(u)rs from Paddington

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Rumo(u)rs from Paddington

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Its official. Its cold. I’m hoping that by the time you read this the Spring flowers will have arrived and the temperature improved! Our flurry of snow last week is, of course, not a patch on what you suffer in some parts for many months a year. But the difference is that we just can’t cope with it. One downfall of snow and the railways and roads descend into chaos!!

The marathon training is going well. When I say “well” I mean that I have not pulled an obscure muscle or got terrible blisters to prevent me from running. But the problem is that I just haven’t run far enough. So I’ve entered myself for a half Marathon in March to really put my legs through their paces. I am running the Leeds Marathon on April 18th for Cystic Fibrosis http://www.cftrust.org.uk/ and will let you know when my sponsorship form is up at http://www.justgiving.com/home_uk.asp.

So what been happening on this side of the pond? The Women’s Library http://www.thewomenslibrary.ac.uk/exhib_home.html is running an exhibition entitled: Office Politics: Women and the Workplace: 1860-2004. The entrance is free. Netskills http://www.netskills.ac.uk/workshops/forthcoming.html are running a full range of workshops over the forthcoming months.


We are all excited to see that Ricky Gervais of “The Office” fame http://www.bbc.co.uk/comedy/theoffice/is going to be the special guest speaker at The Booksellers Association Conference http://www.booksellers.org.uk/index.htm.


The Open Access agenda continues with a boost of £150,000 of seed money being offered to publishers by JISC http://www.jisc.ac.uk/to make journals freely available online using the open access model. This new funding follows an agreement with open access pioneers Biodiversity Central http://www.biodiversitycentral.com/.

Furthermore, a Commons committee in the UK is to conduct an inquiry on access to STM journals focusing on “price and availability!” The Chair of the committee, Ian Gibson, has said: “[We] will have some very tough questions for publishers, libraries and government.” http://www.parliament.uk/parliamentary_committees/science_and_technology_committee.cfm.

The National Library of Scotland (NLS) http://nls.uk has made a request for views on its draft strategy. One of the key themes of the strategy is to widen access beyond traditional scholars using the NLS as a last resort. A groundbreaking study commissioned by the British Library http://www.bl.uk has found that it generates 363m of value for the UK — more than £4 for every £1 of public funding it receives. 125 titles have been nominated for the Impac Dublin Literary Award. This is the largest and most international book prize of its kind http://www.impactdblinaward.ie/.

Its good to hear that the National Electronic Library for Health’s library for cardiovascular disease specialists has been launched. Though aimed primarily at NHS staff, it is also available to patients and the public: http://www.neth.nhs.uk/cardiovascular.

World Book Day is on March 4th this year. Libraries and schools will run a host of events and the people’s network will be central to delivering the all day Online Festival. The Reading Agency will lay on a mix of films and live Webcasts. It will be launched by JK Rowling on Webcast. http://www.worldbookday.com/

Apparently Forty-two European national libraries (including the British Library) have endorsed a plan to create a new pan-European library service. The European Library (TEL) will offer “integrated access” to European national collections. The scheme is due to start at the end of 2004. (I’m told that it’s already been three years in planning!) http://www.europeanlibrary.org.

It’s good to read that Karen Stanton has been appointed Director of Sheffield Hallam University’s Learning Centre and at Calderdale, Gary Burrows has been appointed Head of Libraries, Museums and Arts. We wish them both luck!

That’s all from me for now. Until next time. Daryl

Rumors
from page 10

<digby@uctlib.uct.ac.za>. He says he’s now settled into his new apartment. He has had a busy but rewarding year running Acquisitions and Collection Development (a permanent job change for him). He is supervising 13 staff members including the Electronic Resources Librarian. His son Donald is working at a pizza restaurant, getting ready for his driving test, and plans to study history and drama at UCT next year. No word on Andre. Have to check on him!

RFID was a word I heard on the exhibit floor at ALA Midwinter. I didn’t know what it was, ignorant me, so, of course, I asked one of my knowledgeable colleagues. RFID is radio frequency identification. It’s like an electronic barcode but better (or worse) depending on your orientation. This small bit of computer expertise can contain much information about you and/or an item for your consideration. The latest Bibliotech Review has a technical briefing on RFID and you will be glad if you read it: http://www.bibliotech.com/html/rfid.html

Anyway, related, I was reading on BusinessWire (Feb. 2, 2004) and picked up this press release.-2 Technologies, Inc. (OTC:TWOD), a provider of end-to-end supply chain management solutions, has announced a new radio frequency identification (RFID) partnership program designed to enable companies to use RFID technology to enable real time closed loop supply chain management. 2 is initiating the partner program to include target solutions, industries and partners such as GlobeRanger, IBM, Informatica, Sun Microsystems, and webMethods. For further information contact, 12 Corporate Communications Melanie Ofenloch, 469-357-3027 <melanie_ofenloch@2.com> RFID is something about which we will no doubt be hearing more.


Also under discussion at ALA Midwinter was Elsevier’s pricing of ScienceDirect. The insistence by Elsevier on “humbled” pricing of their journals, many of which are not used or are used very little, has caused several prestigious libraries (Cornell, Harvard, Germany’s University of Oldenburg) to rebel. See: “Reed Elsevier: Feels Resistance to Web Pricing,” by Charles Goldsmith The Wall Street Journal Online, January 19, 2004. http://online.wsj.com/article

More on this — Duke University, North Carolina State University and the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill are ending a joint agreement by which their libraries gained electronic access to approximately 1,300 journals continued on page 14

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