



Five Years Young

by Peter Burnhill and Alison Bayley

LIFE MAY SEEM too busy, but we all need to pause and celebrate once in a while. And celebrate we shall, riotously (perhaps!) on Burns Night, the 25th January (the date we chose to launch in 1996), then quietly for the rest of 2001.

EDINA came into being following the designation of the Data Library as a National 'Datasets' Centre by JISC in July 1995. Edinburgh University Data Library has a longer history, from about 1983 when, to complement the Program Library Unit, it undertook project-support work and provided online access to research data for staff and students at the universities in Scotland's central belt.

Five years is a long time in the digital information world, where age may be measured as in dog-years. We have also moved from an early adolescence of staff numbers (with 13 in 1995/96) through to thirty-something, achieving a critical mass, if not a critical age. Of course, the number of acronyms over the period has risen at an even more alarming rate!

When EDINA was launched, we were directed to provide Telnet access to three new 'bibliographic' services on the assumption that most users accessed the services from library-based terminals. Now we offer about 20 services, including Digimap, and although the client/server model is still evolving, the assumption is that users should have Web access to everything, from desktop

machines with considerable capability, and increasingly, that everything to which they have access is 'joined up'.

Inevitably we have looked to see what the 'other' datacentres, BIDS and MIDAS, have done. Both have changed their role, in very different ways: the re-named MIMAS plays a greater role in bibliographic services, and the commercial launch of ingenta coincided with the end of BIDS-ISI. All along, the signs were that EDINA had to respond to a new, more distributed and diverse world, with a prevalence of distributed services, the proliferation of 'retail' offerings from publishers and other data providers, and now the emergence of hubs, gateways and portals.

Drawing on its successful mix of service orientation and project capability, EDINA has actively sought to work in partnerships that recognise the specialist strengths of others. This has included work with subject centres. Our 'faculty' approach fits well with the 'faculty hubs' co-ordinated as the Resource Discovery Network, and early contact with Computers in Teaching Initiatives has helped orientation with the Learning & Teaching subject centres. We also team up with specialist data services, with complementary support roles for the Arts and Humanities Data Service, and the Data Archive. It is also important that we form partnerships with commercial providers for the

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advantage of the academic world. Most of all, as a university-based national datacentre, we seek successful partnership with support staff in colleges and universities, in order to ensure that their staff and students are well served.

There are many challenges ahead: the wider remit associated with online learning resources and aids for teaching, and with the agenda for 'post-16' education and training. It is also essential that we understand what the Distributed National Electronic Resource as 'a managed environment for accessing quality assured information resources on the Internet' should be, contribute to its success, and recognise how this relates to the wider objectives of government in order to command the resources necessary. For these we must understand what might be expected of EDINA in the emerging virtual library for UK Higher Education, and now Further Education, and then realise those expectations. In order to continue to be a centre of excellence in what we do, we need to stay young at heart and full of fresh ideas.

Launch of Online Access to The Statistical Accounts of Scotland

by Barbara Morris

BRINGING HISTORY TO LIFE, online access to the Statistical Accounts of Scotland will be launched at the National Trust for Scotland in Charlotte Square, Edinburgh on 25 January 2001. Professor Christopher Smout, the Historiographer Royal in Scotland, will be among the special guests.

The Statistical Accounts of Scotland are two of the best reports of life written at the time of the agricultural and industrial revolutions in Europe, during the 1790s and the 1830s: a critical period in the development of Scotland and Britain. Described by a contemporary as a 'Domesday Book for Scotland', they will be an invaluable historical source, accessible to anyone with access to the World Wide Web.

What the Accounts contain

The 21 volumes of the first Account were the result of a survey of 166 questions put to the minister of each parish kirk. The exercise was repeated again in the 1830s, with the (second) New Statistical Account published about 15 years later in 15 volumes.

The Accounts cover a wide variety of topics: wealth, class and poverty; climate, agriculture, fishing and wildlife; population, schools, and 'moral health'.

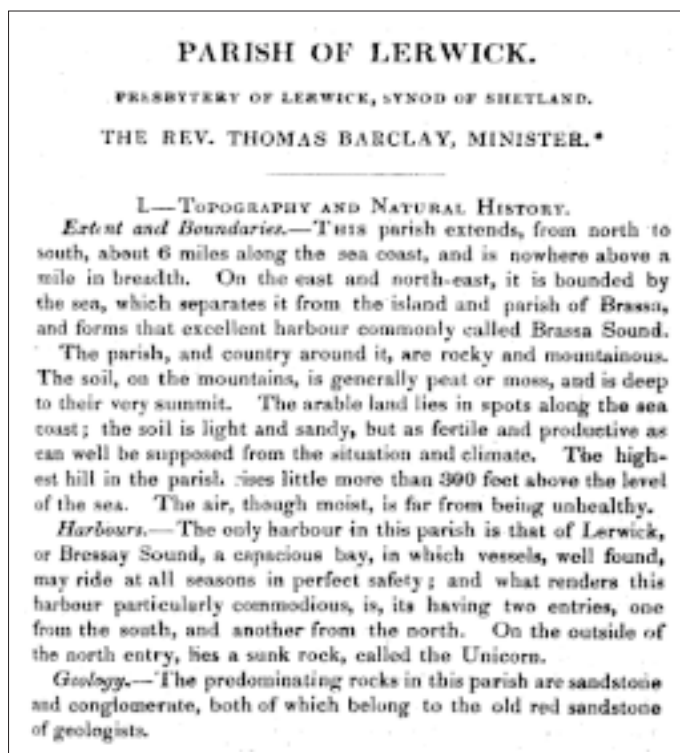
Two versions

Eventually, two versions of the service will be available. The free version, which will be launched initially, will allow the Accounts to be searched by subject index, keyword or parish name, and page images to be displayed and printed.

The subscription-based version, to be made available through UK universities and colleges, Scotland's schools, public libraries and archives, the National Library and the National Archives of Scotland, will provide a text version of the two Accounts. A range of research tools for scholars is also in development, to provide better access via a geographical user interface and an index to the statistical tables, maps, and diagrams.

For access, check the EDINA website <<http://edina.ac.uk/>> after the 25th of January.

STATISTICS ALONE ... are too arid to convey the sense of wonder and excitement with which contemporaries viewed the changes in the world about them. For this one must turn to the pages of the Statistical Accounts ... By making the Statistical Accounts available to everyone with a computer at home or at school, a huge resource [will be] there for everyone with an interest in the Scottish past at the touch of a finger ... You could call it a World Heritage Site. (*Historiographer Royal in Scotland, T C Smout*)



Top: Image of first page of the 1845 Account of the Parish of Lerwick
Bottom: Detail of map of Shetland, showing the Parish of Lerwick



Funding for the Statistical Accounts service came from the JISC, the Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries, the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland, the National Archives of Scotland, the Gannochy Trust, Friends of Glasgow University Library, the Scottish Archives Network, and the Scottish Library and Information Council.

Joining Up the DNER

by Moira Massey and Margarete Tubby Hille

IN THE PREVIOUS issue of Newline we reported on a number of exciting new projects for which EDINA has secured funding under the JISC 5/99 call for proposals. Two of those projects, **Xgrain** (pronounced 'cross grain') and **ZBSA** ('z'balsa'), have been grouped with **DOCUSEND** (led by King's College, London, in partnership with the Lamda electronic document delivery service) and **ZETOC** (led by the British Library, in partnership with MIMAS) to form **JOIN-UP**, a 'cluster' in the Development Programme of the Distributed National Electronic Resource (DNER).

JOIN-UP aims to realise the full potential of bibliographic services within the DNER by enabling users not only to discover an item of interest, but also to get access to it through third party providers. For example, users discover references, are provided with information to locate services on the material, and are also provided with the means to connect automatically, where appropriate, to request and delivery mechanisms for the full-text material (typically journal articles), in printed or electronic form.

While the four projects were conceived independently and will remain separate parts of the DNER, they will each contribute complementary and inter-operable modules to the Discover/Locate/Request/Access activities. The four projects address different aspects of these four user activities:

Xgrain is concerned with the Discover activity. It aims to develop a Z39.50 compliant broker for use by subject portals and local institution-level portals, to support cross-searching of specialist abstract and indexing (A&I) databases hosted at the JISC National Datacentres; a portal to allow end-users to conduct easy searching across the A&I databases, on a subset of fields and with a single Athens log-on; and special attention to enhancements for learning and teaching use.

ZBSA addresses the Locate activity by providing links to services for which there are no pre-existing rights of access. It will deliver a pilot version of an independent broker that will locate information on these services (including holdings and electronic full-text services) relating to serials. The principal clients of ZBSA will be the A&I database services run at the JISC Datacentres, and the RDN subject portals.

DOCUSEND complements ZBSA, addressing the Request activity by linking to services for which there are no pre-existing rights of access and providing Inter-Library Loan (ILL) and related payment services. DOCUSEND's goal is an integrated document delivery service, if possible supplying an electronic version of the requested article, or else forwarding the request to a conventional ILL supplier of the requester's choice.

The **ZETOC** enhancement project will develop an alerting service, notifying users of new material of specific interest to them, based on the recently launched Z39.50 version of the British Library ETOC database. It will also provide document ordering and delivery options.

JOIN-UP will provide a seamless view of Z39.50 compatible bibliographic services for end-users. However, there will be no vertically integrated one-stop-shop called JOIN-UP. Rather, between them, the individual components will facilitate progression along the Discover/Locate/Request/Access activity chain from any number of access points. Alternatively, users may have fast-track access to one or more of the individual parts. The architecture developed under JOIN-UP has the potential to be extensible and hospitable to other related services, thereby providing a key contribution to the developing DNER.

Xgrain and ZBSA provide a useful forum for EDINA's strategic development work. We are delighted to do this work in the context of JOIN-UP. The individual strengths of the four constituent projects offer exciting opportunities to the tertiary education sector in the UK.

More information can be found at:

<http://edina.ac.uk/projects/joinup/>

News in Brief

Digimap for FE

The JISC has agreed in principle to provide funding for a pilot study to evaluate the usefulness of the Digimap service to FE. EDINA will be selecting six FE colleges to participate in the study, details of which are still being agreed with the JISC. Further information will be provided through the EDINA website. If any FE college would like to be notified when this information is available, please send your request, with contact details, to the EDINA helpdesk, at <edina@ed.ac.uk>.

Subject Centre Awareness Day

EDINA recently held an Awareness Day for Learning and Teaching Support Network (LTSN) Subject Centres, with the purpose of informing them about relevant services for their subject areas and developing partnership. John Slater, Head of the LTSN Technologies Centre, gave a presentation, and we were also delighted to welcome representatives from 11 Subject Centres. The presentations delivered, and materials provided on the day, are now available at:

<http://edina.ac.uk/docs/events.html>

If you use any EDINA services in learning and teaching, Moira Massey, the L&T Support Officer, would be very pleased to hear from you. Please contact her at <moira.massey@ed.ac.uk>.

Filters for Bibliographic Services

EDINA now provides a number of filters for importing bibliographic references into several popular reference management applications (e.g. EndNote, ProCite and Reference Manager). There should be filters for all EDINA bibliographic services in place early in 2001, and are accessible from the main EDINA page for any particular service. For more info, or request for specific filters, email <edina@ed.ac.uk>.

Geo-Services Developments and Staff

by *Hugh Buchanan*

One of EDINA's main growth areas over the last year has been in geo-services, which, whilst driven by the launch and ongoing development of the Digimap service, include a range of activities, in collaboration with various organisations and institutions.

Three other major JISC funded geo-projects are active at the moment: the Geo-Browser and Geo-Crosswalk (both in collaboration with History Data Service), and e-MapScholar.

The **Geo-browser** is a feasibility study into setting up a distributed data discovery service for geographic datasets for the Higher Education community.

Geo-Crosswalk examines the feasibility of a multi-purpose gazetteer which can be used by existing information services such as MIMAS's CASWEB or the RDN. For services that have not traditionally provided geographic searching, we will look at how to include such a facility simply. For those services that already provide geographic searching, we will see how to enhance them by specifying geographic constraints for a search using ways not natively supported by the services: a service could use the gazetteer to translate a user's query from one spatial reference system, e.g. a place name, onto the spatial reference system native to the service, e.g. Ordnance Survey (OS) national grid coordinates.

e-MapScholar is a 5/99 DNER Learning and Teaching project that examines how to enhance the usefulness of geo-data, e.g. OS data, in Learning and Teaching. This is a large collaborative project involving 12 groups from seven different institutions. Funding is available in the project for case study authors. Please see the project web pages for further details.

For more information on these projects contact the EDINA helpdesk or the following web sites:

Geo-Browser: <http://datalib.ed.ac.uk/projects/geo/geobrowser.html>

Geo-Crosswalk: <http://datalib.ed.ac.uk/projects/geo/crosswalk.html>

e-MapScholar: <http://edina.ac.uk/projects/mapscholar/index.shtml>

Edinburgh Data & Information Access

<http://edina.ac.uk>

EDINA, based at Edinburgh University Data Library, is a JISC-funded national datacentre. It offers the UK tertiary education and research community networked access to a library of data, information and research resources. All EDINA services are free of charge at the point of use. For information on institutional subscription fees, visit the EDINA web site, or contact us by email (details below).

EDINA services are:

- AGDEX
- Art Abstracts
- Art Index Retrospective
- BIOSIS
- CAB Abstracts
- Digimap®
- EconLit
- Ei Compendex®
- ESPMD
- INSPEC
- Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts
- MLA International Bibliography
- PAIS International
- Palmer's Index to The Times
- SALSER
- Social Services Abstracts
- Sociological Abstracts
- The Statistical Accounts of Scotland
- UKBORDERS
- Ulrich's™ Periodicals Directory

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New Geo-Services staff:

Duncan Elder recently graduated in GIS with a previous degree in Geography. He has been employed in IT, market research and web development.

Chris Higgins is a GIS software engineer with degrees in IT, GIS and Ecology. Other employers include Scottish Natural Heritage, Laser-Scan and Forth Valley GIS.

John Macdonald is a software engineer with degrees in Software Technology and Electrical Engineering. Previous employers include Marconi, Harper Collins, Memex and Stirling University. John is a keen hill walker and climber.

Anup Pradhan is a systems analyst with a PhD and MSc in GIS from the Department of Geography, University of Edinburgh. He is currently working on the Geo-Browser project.

Forthcoming Events

EDINA will have stands at the following, free exhibitions:

Arts and Humanities Online seminars, Bristol 25 January; Edinburgh 22 February; Manchester 22 March.
<<http://www.humbul.ac.uk/events>>

Ordnance Survey, University Conference, 7 February, Coventry University Techno Centre, contact Matthew Smith <msmith@ordsvy.gov.uk> to book a place.

UKSG (UK Serials Group) conference, 2-4 April, Heriot-Watt University. <<http://www.uksg.org/conferences/2001>>

Geo-Data Forum with MIMAS, 4 April, Newcastle University. Contact <edina@ed.ac.uk> to book a place at this discussion day for support staff.

CADE (Computers in Art & Design Education) conference, 9-12 April, Glasgow School of Art. <<http://www.gsa.ac.uk/cade>>

GISRUK 2001 (GIS Research UK), 18-20 April, Glamorgan Business Centre
<<http://www.comp.glam.ac.uk/gisruk/gisruk.html>>

For the latest events information, including dates of workshops, see <http://edina.ed.ac.uk/docs/events.html>

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EDINA subscription and registration

Most EDINA services require the completion of a licence agreement before those services can be made available to users. Free 30-day trials are available for most of these services. Please see the EDINA web site for details of the requirements of individual services.

For UKBORDERS, there is no fee for academic institutions within the UK, but a licence agreement must be signed (email <edina@ed.ac.uk>), and individual users must sign an End User Licence.

SALSER is a completely free service, with no subscription fee. No licence or prior registration is required.

Newsline is published four times a year by the Edinburgh University Data Library. Suggestions and comments on *Newsline* may be sent to <edina@ed.ac.uk>

The next issue of *Newsline* will appear in Spring 2001.

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