LEARNING COMMON OPENS

Students at Murdoch University can now make use of a unique learning facility that will give them access to a dedicated educational support service, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The new Murdoch University Learning Common is especially aimed at helping first year students make a successful transition to university life, including access to additional educational, technical and personal support services.

The facility was opened on July 6 by the Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Julie Bishop MP. See also pages 4 to 5.

Open Day in the Library

The Library held a number of activities within its Learning Common on Murdoch University’s Open Day, Sunday 12 August.

Open Day provided an opportunity for the library to showcase the new Learning Common, and visitors were impressed with the facilities and learning spaces. Many enthusiastically explored the new spaces in an attempt to win an iPod, as part of the Discover the Learning Common quiz.

Donna Pargin from Rockingham was the lucky winner of the iPod. She was visiting the Open Day with her daughter who will be studying at Murdoch in 2008.

Potential students and visitors to the Campus could also test drive an avatar in Second Life. Library staff member Kathryn Greenhill helped participants run, fly and teleport their way around in the Library’s online virtual world Library Plot.

See also Second Life on page 3.
Associate Professor Malcolm Tull of the Murdoch Business School recently donated a 4 volume set of the Oxford Encyclopedia of Maritime History (2007) to the Library.

The Encyclopedia is a globally comprehensive and refereed work of reference covering the entire history of seafaring and shows how seafaring has both reflected and influenced the major economic, cultural, military, and political developments in world history.

The Editor-in-chief of the Encyclopedia is Professor John B Hattendorf. Publishing the Encyclopedia was a huge international collaboration, with Professor Tull’s involvement as a Senior Editor starting in 2002. His role included determining topics for inclusion, writing over 160 scope notes for authors, appointing authors and reviewing manuscripts as well as writing 2 entries himself.

In future the Encyclopedia may be accessed electronically via Oxford Reference Online, one of the databases that we currently subscribe to.

The Encyclopedia, which was published at the beginning of this year, has already received positive reviews. For example: “A magisterial work ... as encyclopedic as you could possibly hope for. The eclectic subject matter is admirable ... pick any page here and there is something to grab the attention once you start delving it is devilishly difficult to stop. For the true nautical buff ... This is an indispensable reference work.” – Navy News

Business Liaison Librarian Soun Wong with Professor Malcolm Tull

INSTITUTIONAL DIGITAL REPOSITORIES: AN UPDATE ON THE RUBRIC PROJECT

As reported in the March 2006 issue of Library News, Murdoch is part of the DEST/SII sponsored RUBRIC project. RUBRIC (Regional Universities Building Research Infrastructure Collaboratively) aims to build repository infrastructure and expertise across a range of Australian Universities to increase access to research output at those institutions. The Library is working on the project with staff from RUBRIC partner institutions, including the University of Southern Queensland (USQ), University of Newcastle, Flinders University and Macquarie University.

Using a pilot repository located at the project's lead institution USQ, Murdoch Library staff have trialled processes involved in loading files in various formats plus creation of metadata. Hardware and software installation to establish our own institutional repository will soon be completed at Murdoch.

Murdoch’s institutional repository, as yet unnamed, has two broad aims. The first is to collect and preserve Murdoch's research output. The second is to collect selected research outputs which will form part of Murdoch University's evidence portfolios and provide access to this data for the various DEST assessment panels in 2008, as required for the Federal Government's Research Quality Framework for assessment of Australian research.

An additional benefit is the increased exposure of Murdoch authors' research that a repository can provide. Recent studies indicate that greater exposure of research output can lead to higher citation rates for these resources. It can also raise an institution's profile for attracting both students and grant applications, and so helps in marketing the institution.
Library workshops between May and July saw students and staff bouncing on trampolines, bumping into walls, flying and teleporting. It was all part of exploring the online virtual world, Second Life.

In multi-user virtual environments, or MUVEs, users create a 3D cartoon like figure called an avatar and, after downloading and installing the software, can interact with other avatars and objects in a game-like online world. Within MUVEs such as Second Life, Activision and Metaverse, academics can meet distance students, attend conferences with video streamed into the online world, showcase media productions and create class materials.

Murdoch University Library has a plot of land in the Second Life Information Archipelago. Kathryn Greenhill is the librarian responsible for building on the land, setting up the Second Life PC lab in the library and conducting workshops in "Creating your avatar" and "Doing more with your avatar". She says that the library is providing skills and a destination for members of the community who want to assess whether a MUVE is useful for Murdoch University activities.

A group who had participated in the library workshops subsequently formed the Second Life Interest Group. Out of this has risen a semester long project by six students enrolled in the unit ICT333 Information Technology Project, who are creating within Second Life a replica of the "Choose Murdoch" van, a job interview simulation and tools for theatrical set design.

This YouTube clip provides more information about what the library is doing in Second Life: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KiH7dkOVaLc

To join the Murdoch Second Life Interest group, go to: http://lists.murdoch.edu.au/mailman/listinfo/slig

Did you miss out on a Library tour at the start of semester? Or perhaps you just need an update on where everything moved to with the Learning Common changes?

Now you can take a virtual tour using one of the Library’s podcasts. Download a podcast to your ipod or mp3 player and listen to the audio put together by library staff as you walk around the library. Tours are available for the entire library, or you can select just one floor.

For those who don't have an mp3 player, you can borrow one from the Enquiries and Loans Desk with the podcasts already loaded.

The Podcasts can be downloaded from the Library's website at http://wwwlib.murdoch.edu.au/about/podcasts/

The inaugural Roberta Cowan Prize for Information Literacy was presented recently at the Division of Health Sciences prize night. Rosita Chan, Subject Librarian for Psychology, presented the prize to successful honours student Aaron Greenfield.

The annual prize is awarded to a student who demonstrates ability to effectively use the full resources of the Library.
The new Murdoch University Learning Common is especially aimed at helping first year students make a successful transition to university life, including access to additional educational, technical and personal support services.

New offices have been built within the Learning Common to locate a dedicated first year experience coordinator, student learning staff, an information literacy specialist, printing and copying services and an IT helpdesk.

The Hon Julie Bishop MP said it was paramount that we help first year students overcome initial hurdles at university through initiatives like the Learning Common.

"The availability and design of learning spaces, as well as the provision of support services, has a significant impact on students," Minister Bishop said.

"We know that spaces for experiencing, reflecting and thinking are integral to the engagement and learning of students in higher education."

Murdoch University Vice Chancellor Professor John Yovich said research has shown that students who are welcomed and connected to their university will flourish and develop academically and socially.

"The Learning Common will facilitate student engagement by providing them with connectedness to each other, staff and the university."

Professor John Yovich said the Learning Common project was the result of Murdoch’s success in the Federal Government’s Teaching and Learning Performance Fund, which rewards universities that excel in delivering high quality learning outcomes for students.

The Learning Common’s features include colourful and modern furnishings, collaborative study spaces, more personal computers, wireless connection for laptops, a café, two computer laboratories and tutorial rooms.
24/7 ACCESS TO THE LEARNING COMMON

The Learning Common is now open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Students and staff can use the facilities on Link Level 2, including computer and study areas, study booths, and food and drink vending machines. IT Service Counter staff are also in attendance during all opening hours to help with any IT problems.

After hours entry to the Learning Common is available from the ECL Courtyard, using your University Card.

CAFÉ IN THE LIBRARY

Check out the café in the library foyer, just to the left of the entrance. This is a great place to indulge in a hot coffee and something to eat while overlooking Bush Court. The café is open whenever the Library is open.

KEEPING UP WITH EVENTS

Keep an eye on the plasma screens in the Learning Common for all sorts of announcements and news updates – find out about events in the Learning Common, the Library and the University.

The screens will also display available free space on computers throughout the Learning Common.
DOUBLE AWARD TO LIBRARY STAFF

Congratulations to the Library’s Information Literacy Working Group (Merrilee Albatis, Pam Mathews, Margaret Solosy and Soun Wong) who were successful recipients of both the 2007 Vice Chancellor’s Citations for Excellence in Enhancing Learning, and the National Carrick Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning.

The Vice Chancellor’s Citations for Excellence in Enhancing Learning recognises the many and diverse contributions that combine to create effective learning environments, while the Carrick Citations are granted to people who have made a significant contribution to the quality of student learning in a specific area of responsibility over a sustained period.

Both citations were awarded to the group for the “development and delivery of a flexible program to enhance student information literacy, embedded within the first year degree structure”.

The group was thrilled to receive the awards and the recognition it gives to the role of the Library and the LITE program in enhancing student learning.

As a self-paced online information literacy program LITE is accessible to all Murdoch students with internet access. It is designed to introduce new students to the Library and to valuable research skills, which will enhance a student’s university learning and be applicable long after they leave Murdoch.

Further information about LITE is available at http://wwwlib.murdoch.edu.au/lite/
NEW AND UPDATED RESOURCES

SAGE JOURNALS NOW ONLINE

Murdoch staff and students now have online access to more than 450 peer-reviewed journals in humanities, social sciences, business, and science, technology and medicine published by Sage Publications.

The Library subscribed to the Sage Premier database, one of the largest online journal collections in the humanities and social sciences. A significant number of these titles are ranked in Thomson Scientific’s 2006 Journal Citation Reports, with many of these in the top 10 in their subject category.

The full-text is available for all titles from 1999 onwards (or the first issue if published later than 1999). In addition, complete online access is available for titles we already subscribe to. The Sage Journals Online collection is available via the Library’s web pages.

MEDLINE CHANGES

Murdoch users now have access to the Medline database on the Ovid platform. Coverage starts at 1950 and includes new records before they have been indexed with MeSH headings. Users may check for full text availability using the SFX FindIt button displaying with each citation.

Medline is a citation and abstract database published by the United States National Library of Medicine. Subject coverage includes veterinary medicine, nursing, allied health, and pre-clinical sciences.

EXPANDED ACADEMIC BECOMES ACADEMIC ONEFILE

Murdoch users now have access to Academic OneFile on the Thomson Gale platform. OneFile replaces and expands the full text content in the popular Expanded Academic ASAP database. Subject areas covered include the physical sciences, technology, medicine, social sciences, the arts, theology and literature. Much of the content is from peer-reviewed journals. The Library’s subscription to OneFile also includes access to other resources including LegalTrac, Computer Database, General Business File ASAP, General Reference Center Gold, and Health Reference Center Academic.

WORLDCAT OPEN TO ALL

The National Library of Australia has negotiated an agreement on behalf of Australian libraries to provide access to WorldCat, the world’s largest bibliographic database.

The WorldCat database contains more than 47 million records contributed by over 11,000 libraries around the world. Coverage includes material dating from 1000 A.D. Books, serials, articles/chapters, musical scores, websites, computer programs, manuscripts, sound recordings, films, slides, maps and videotapes are indexed.

As part of the agreement the holdings of over 800 Australian libraries will also be visible to people everywhere on the Internet through WorldCat.org and Open WorldCat. This will provide better exposure for Australian authors whose published works are listed in Australian library catalogues.

Until now Murdoch has been able to provide WorldCat access to only a very limited number of library users. Now all Murdoch users may access this valuable resource via the Library’s web pages.
Emeritus Professor Geoffrey Bolton now has an office in the Library. It is a most appropriate location for someone who has devoted much of his life to scholarly research, who has been publishing works on Australian history since 1952, and who has had such a long association with Murdoch University, including periods as Chancellor from 2002-2006, and as Foundation Professor of History from 1973-89.

In an interview with Liaison Librarian Pam Mathews, Professor Bolton commented that his office location “couldn’t be better”. It enables him to focus on his research free of distraction, whilst still being able to stay in touch with people and events on campus. The close proximity of the Library’s history collection is, of course, an added bonus. Professor Bolton has just put the finishing touches on *A Short History of Western Australia*, soon to be published by UWA Press, and is currently working on a biography of Sir Paul Hasluck.

When asked about recent changes in the Library which have seen conventional spaces transformed into vibrant learning areas, Professor Bolton said that the walk through the Learning Common to his office now provides “an active invitation to browse” which he very much likes.

Over the years the Library has benefited enormously from Professor Bolton’s generosity in the form of book donations. We are now very pleased to welcome him in person to his office in the Library.

The Library has formed a key partnership with the Library of the Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia (DAFWA). The two libraries now use a single library management system to manage their respective library information resources, as well as acquisitions, cataloguing, circulation and financial reporting activities. A library catalogue interface is being customised to meet the needs of DAFWA clients.

Implementation of the single shared system involved loading and configuring over 101,000 bibliographic records (165,000 volumes), 1300 DAFWA patron records and 4500 subject authority records.

Similar key partnerships were established between Murdoch University Library and the Challenger TAFE and City of Rockingham Libraries (1998), and with Challenger TAFE and Mandurah Education Campus Libraries (2004).