Peoples Archive: an online collection of autobiographical footage

In May UKOLUG was invited along to the London champagne breakfast launch of the Peoples Archive, a resource that uses Internet technologies to create a large-scale multimedia oral history experience and online video service.

Peoples Archive is a company dedicated to capturing for posterity the memories, recollections and stories of the great thinkers and creators of our time. Biologists, filmmakers, chemists, physicists and craftsmen are included in the portfolio. Edward Teller, who helped create the first atomic bomb, recalls his childhood and memories of his father; animator Jules Engel, famous for his contribution to Disney's "Fantasia" talks about the first animated film he ever saw.

A member of the team noted: "What you see here is more than just stories, it is the people who are telling them. The project began with the idea of how wonderful it would be to be to see Isaac Newton talking. Not just because only he could describe the processes of his work as he experienced them, but because it would be so wonderful to see him and get a sense of who he was. We can't bring you Newton, but we can bring many others, leaders of their fields, and give you the chance to see them not as figures from history but alive, as alive as their work. Each contributor is invited to tell us the story of their life and work, in their own words. There is no time limit, allowing them to speak at a level of detail appropriate to the complexity and importance of their work. These videotaped sessions are separated into their constituent stories, transcribed, titled and placed on our site."

When using Peoples Archive you can:

- Watch the stories, listen to them as audio tracks or read their transcripts;

- Conduct detailed searches on any subject;

- Bookmark any stories you find particularly interesting;

- Link to all stories on similar subjects within the archive;

- Find regularly updated links to relevant books, websites, lectures, screenings etc.

The archive is constantly developing. In time it will not only be adding new people but new fields. It is dedicated to creating a perpetually growing archive of not only the individuals who have influenced our world with their work, but of the intellectual and creative history of our times.

If you'd like to recommend subjects for inclusion please do so. Perhaps the information science profession should be represented in some form? Recommendations on a postcard please. Institutional and personal subscriptions are available. For more information e-mail: info@peoplesarchive.com

Gary Horrocks

JIBS – What's It All About?

The JIBS (JIsc (assisted) Bibliographic dataserviceS) User Group is one of the major independent forums for end-user feedback of the UK's networked resources. Its raison d'être is to bring matters of concern to the attention of the data suppliers and the data service providers and to act as act as a two way communication channel amongst all parties in the networked resources landscape; a different slant from that of UKOLUG.

As with all things virtual the Group's remit and areas of interest are dynamic - we are not only concerned with the electronic resources per se but how these are embedded and repurposed within the academic environment. Our strong topical workshop programme mirrors this aim with recent and forthcoming sessions on OpenURL Resolvers and resource listing tools. We aim to be able to advise, raise issues, garner feedback and engender interest amongst our membership in all aspects of the JISC's (The Joint Information Systems Committee) Information Environment programme. Our membership and representation covers Higher and Further education, the Research Councils and the NHS.

We aim to have JIBS representation on as many of the JISC working groups as possible. We see this as a vital communication strand direct to the JISC. As representatives of the community we are then in a strong position to lobby, negotiate and advise the major database and service providers on the real issues that tax so many of us. We have regular meetings with the service providers and advise how they might best work with the community whether this is the timing of database releases, the setting of enhancement user groups, licensing or customer support issues etc.