

Online

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Please send your submissions for the next edition to jrc@aber.ac.uk

E-book lending

Ed Vaizey, minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries, has launched a review of e-books in public libraries in September. The scope is intended to assess benefits, barriers and future needs as well as considering the consequences for public libraries. In October Amazon launched its Kindle Owners Lending Library in the UK, with 200,000 titles available to Amazon Prime members, who can borrow an e-book a month with no return date. New service models in the pipeline include a new start-up called Oyster which is described as an iPhone app charging a monthly fee to read as many books as you like, and booxl from Skylnk Studios which is due in beta by February with a similar subscription model for portable devices (from an article in *Digital Book World*).

E-Learning resource: The Victorians

The National Archives and the V&A have created an e-learning resource aimed at primary school children. With the strapline “Learn to work like a

historian”, *The Victorians* introduces the period with activities including, “examining and evaluating artefacts such as census returns, newspaper articles, illustrations and photographs”. Documents used have been sourced from the National Archives and objects from the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Med-Mem

A new freely-available collection of audio-visual documents has become available online through a project funded by the European Union via the [Euromed Heritage 4](#) programme and 20 partners, including broadcasting companies, libraries and universities. [Med-Mem](#) has launched with 4000 items, which can be explored through themes such as “Historical heritages” and “Society and way of life”, and by the individual collections contributed by the partners. Content includes video footage, research articles, an interactive map and timeline.

Open Access

In the wake of the “academic spring” the [Finch report](#) was delivered in July, approving Open

Access (OA) for academic research publishing and concluding in favour of the “gold” model where the author shoulders the cost of APCs (Article Processing Charges), that is, peer-review, editing and freely-available online publication. The report estimated that implementation would cost “an additional £50-60m a year in expenditure from the HE sector” (p11), and announced that block payments would be available from Research Councils UK (RCUK) to help pay APCs. David Willetts, the universities and science minister, agreed with the recommendations of the report and in September [£10 million of additional funding](#) was made available to the 30 most research-intensive higher education institutions. The response from [Russell Group](#) reflected their concerns about a lack of consultation, disappointment that the “green” model for OA where articles can be made freely-available online once they have been accepted by a journal was not given more consideration, and concern that whilst finding the money to pay for the “gold” model, overseas institutions would have free access to UK research whilst UK universities were having to pay for theirs. The Times Higher [reported](#) in November that £100 million of RCUK block payments would be divided proportionally according to, “how much universities have charged the [research] councils for direct labour costs over the last three years”.

PoMS

[People of Medieval Scotland 1093-1314](#)

In September the National Library of Scotland went live with People of Medieval Scotland 1093-1314 (PoMS), a rich database of the all the known people in Scotland at that time, as gleaned from over 8,600 contemporary documents and “de-

signed to reflect the interactions and relationships between people as this is represented in the documents”. PoMS includes a historical introduction with timeline, digitised documents, a variety of search and browsing methods, family trees, a glossary, a tutorial and a Labs area where you can try new features including the “Connections Cloud”. This important research resource is the outcome of two projects: The [Paradox of Medieval Scotland](#) (2007-2010) and the AHRC-funded [Breaking of Britain](#) (2010-2013).

Public Catalogue Foundation

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The Public Catalogue Foundation (PCF), a charity with partners including the BBC and staff at Glasgow and Oxford universities, is planning an online catalogue of UK sculpture focussing on indoor works and beginning around the medieval period. Images will include shots from different angles, and with the background blocked out. A Heritage Lottery Fund application is to be submitted and the idea has been endorsed by the director of Tate Britain, Penelope Curtis (from [an article in the Art Newspaper](#)). The PCF are best known for [Your Paintings](#), the fantastic catalogue of 210,000 publicly-owned paintings in the UK.

Publishers extending access

When university libraries renew their subscriptions to any online SAGE collection in 2013, their license will allow them to authorise their alumni to access the content. SAGE International president Stephen Barr is quoted in their [press release](#): “Librarians remain at the heart of the

dissemination of research support within their institutions, and this firmly supports their role in enabling life-long learning.” JSTOR have also [announced](#) that following a three-year pilot, they will launch Alumni Access in January 2013 with the cost being 10% of an HE institution's annual subscription. Alumni Access is already available with the fee waived until the New Year.

In another interesting move, JSTOR have also extended access to 100 of the most active editors on Wikipedia. Stephen Walling, associate product manager at the Wikimedia Foundation, [blogs](#): “We hope that this pilot will show that amazing things can happen when you provide dedicated volunteers with access to great source material”.