OCLC and examines some of the trends of the near future, as well as outlining some OCLC's research initiatives in these areas.

The final part consists of four chapters covering preservation metadata, spatial data, international metadata initiatives and the development of metadata initiatives in China. The role and importance of metadata in ensuring the long-term preservation of information as digital objects is discussed first.

The paper on spatial data explores the history and nature of digital geo-spatial data, GIS and metadata, and describes current best practices, as well as looking at the emerging use of metadata in this area. The third paper gives an update on activities within selected metadata initiatives in the last few years, and finds some common trends.

The final paper in this volume reviews and highlights the main Chinese efforts on the research and implementation of metadata standards, specifications and applications, by the institutions of national science and technology, education and culture, as well as the private sector.

This brief summary of the papers contained within this volume will demonstrate that the range of areas covered is broad, with issues being presented in great depth. Many of the papers contain URLs within them enabling the reader to find out more about a particular initiative or standard. Although these can be hard to relocate once you've read on a little further. It would certainly have assisted this reader if there had been a separate glossary of acronyms, with a brief explanation, or definition, or URL to an appropriate website for each one. This density of acronyms in some papers can make them quite difficult on the eye, considerably reducing their readability, particularly if you're trying to read the volume whilst on the daily commute.

The references given for each paper will enable further study of particular themes.

This is a scholarly, refereed publication which assumes a fairly high level of pre-existing knowledge of, or at least awareness of, underlying supporting concepts/ideas such as HTML or XML, DTDs, Dublin Core, EAD and so on. This assumption manifests itself most clearly in the extensive use of acronyms and concepts throughout the papers, many of which are either not explained, nor are links provided to background resources within each paper's References. For example, the Semantic Web is mentioned in several papers, but no reference is made to any of Tim Berners-Lee's papers in which he first put forward the idea of the Semantic Web. The index, however, does a good

job with pulling together acronyms from different papers. This volume will undoubtedly find a place with those who have a scholarly interest in metadata and emerging concepts and issues.

Susan Miles

Libraries without walls 5: the distributed delivery of library and information services.
Brophy, P, Fisher, S & Craven, J (eds). Facet Publishing. London. 2004 ISBN 1-85604-511-0 275pp. £44.95

When this conference series, organised by CERLIM at Manchester Metropolitan University, began, the intention was to deal with services for distance learners, but, as Brophy traces in his keynote, with the last couple the emphasis has moved towards the creation and management of electronic resources and delivery methods, especially through virtual learning environments. These are services for all remote users, whether they are some distance from the parent organisation or merely nearby, but outside the library.

This collection of over 20 papers from the September 2003 conference are from the US, Nigeria and various European countries, as well as from the UK, and cover VLE integration, user needs and skills, usability, designing the information environment and creating digital resources. Predominantly they have a higher education context. Some deal with specific research, others are case studies of practice in particular libraries. I'll mention just a few that seem particularly relevant to UKOLUG interests.

Gill Needham considers information literacy in the context of the Open University's 12 week MOSAIC course, which aims to familiarise students with sources and tools, to evaluate information, and so on. Surveys of students from two cohorts showed how beneficial they felt the course had been. It is recognised that the demographic range and study environments of OU students may not typical and a shorter version of MOSAIC is being tested in other universities.

Neil King and colleagues from City University describe a framework for assessing usability and accessibility in digital libraries based on extensive research with JISC funded services. The basic assumption was that the main characteristics of a usable digital library are that it will support task-based information seeking behaviour and will have highly organised content. The framework includes requirement gathering, user and expert evaluations, analytic techniques and is iterative.

The Library of Texas is a virtual library providing statewide resource discovery, commercial databases, government documents and training. The resource discovery service has the features of a library portal, in having a large number of databases offering cross searching; including means to select appropriate resources; offering a variety of levels of searching; providing personalisation, and more. The paper discusses some of the usability issues involved.

Research for the UK Research Support Libraries Group during 2001 and 2002 into the information needs of academic researchers covered information resources, access to libraries, locating research collections, use of electronic resources, including training and future developments. Among the conclusions were that researchers lacked awareness of resources outside HE; Web use tended to be with generic tools rather than sources like subject gateways being developed for academic uses (as shown in a number of other studies); and the need for better training and guidance from academic libraries.

The European collaborative COINE project deals with cultural objects - so isn't just for libraries - and is developing software to allow people to create and publish their own stories and store and present objects and narrative. The paper was written at the early stages of the project so can only outline plans and is perhaps a little tentative for a permanent volume like this.

The paper on the DAEDALUS project at Glasgow University to archive locally research outputs, such as articles, preprints, theses and reports, doesn't say a great deal about the project, but does have a wider impact since it discusses the trends in scholarly communication that are prompting open archive and institutional repository activity. On the other hand developments in the last year, particularly the recent Select Committee report on scientific publishing, make this part a little dated.

Of wide interest is the paper from Andrew Cox and Anne Morris at Loughborough University on communities of practice, defined as groups of people with a shared interest in a subject who develop solutions, ideas, etc and share knowledge. (Perhaps similar to what were once called invisible colleges). A case study is presented of an unidentified UK IT support discussion list where textual analysis, questionnaires and interviews were used to analyse the working of the list. There is an emphasis on the theories of communities of practice. Reference to other studies of discussion groups and forums would have added to the value of the paper.

I could go on, but merely want to give a flavour of the content. There's probably something for everyone here, but the book lacks a coherence or any real overview for me. Maybe the LWW conferences have lost their distinctiveness as the focus has changed and many of the topics are familiar from other conferences and publications on electronic resources. The price is on the high side – for many people it may be enough to view the slides of (most of) the papers at http://www.cerlim.ac.uk/conf/lww5/details.php.

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Project management: tools and techniques for today's ILS professional
Barbara Allen. Facet Publishing. London. 2004
ISBN 1-85604-504-8 192pp. £29.95

This book is designed for information professionals involved in any kind of project work. It explores tried and tested methods and techniques for managing projects and considers their use within the information and library field. The book is divided into three main sections: a broad introduction; project life cycle, systems and processes; and projects and people.

Although there is a great deal of information about project management available, this book has a number of strengths.

First, there are many examples taken from actual projects run in libraries. These include physical projects such as moving a library or merging two libraries; IT / web projects like creating a new intranet site or digitising a collection or developing a web-based information skills course; and service delivery projects for example developing a new marketing campaign or restructuring an information service or introducing an information literacy course. There is also the recognition that projects range in size from large complex projects to those involving only one or two staff. The techniques are illustrated by giving specific examples of how they are used in a library context. For example the need to keep close to a project and to double check that deliverables are actually delivered is illustrated by the case of a lab being reported as commissioned when in fact the computers had been delivered but not actually installed. "Chaos theory", whereby a relatively small change in one part of a project can result in unexpected and unwelcome changes elsewhere, is demonstrated by the case where timetable changes introduced elsewhere suddenly beset their information literacy programme. A quick