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## ABOUT FREE PINT

FreePint is an online network of information searchers. Members receive this free newsletter twice a month: it is packed with tips on finding quality and reliable business information on the Internet.

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Please circulate this newsletter which is best read when printed out. To receive a fully formatted version as an attachment or a brief notification when it's online, visit <<http://web.freepint.com/>>.



With Europe in shock over the appalling Madrid bombings, countries all across the world are tightening security at rail stations and border posts. Last week Tony Blair called international terrorism "the new menace of our time". He said "we will not defeat it by hoping it will leave us alone, or by hiding away".

As with the aftermath of 9/11, all the news outlets are naturally demanding answers by seeking context and analysis of events. We must never stop questioning; and journalism has been famously called the first draft of history. History, and properly conducted investigative current affairs, put events in context. The tagline for the History News Network <<http://hnn.us>> is "Because the Past is the Present, and the Future too." History News Network is a site recommended in Andrew Humphries' article today, and its raison d'etre is: "All those who profess utter indifference to history are beholden to it. History is inescapable. Who we are, and how we react to events depends, to a great extent, on our past". We live in dangerous times, and Simon Schama in his BBC4 history lecture <<http://digbig.com/3xqg>> talks of "the premise that in a time of danger, history needs to capture memory (before the bad guys hold it hostage)".

In "Curious about Clio? History and Historians on the Web", Andrew Humphries gives a wealth of excellent sites for the serious history researcher. Possibly more than any other subject, history demonstrates the importance of teaching people to use a range of printed sources alongside online ones. After all, the WWW has only been in existence since the 1980s. Importantly, Andrew points out Web starting points to bibliographic sources as well as direct online sources.

We also publish today an insightful piece on child welfare by David Renfree: "Information Sources for Childcare on the Web". It is packed with valuable sources including links to government, charities and international agency resources.

FreePint continues to be read and respected by some of the biggest players in the information content industry, and we are often viewed as important advocates and asked to be involved in industry events. Recently I led an interactive discussion for a Factiva expert series seminar "Assessing, Maximising and Demonstrating the value of your Information" <<http://digbig.com/3xte>>. Look out for some observations on transferable skills from this event in the next issue.

Interest in FreePint's sister publication VIP among vendors is also growing, and I am pleased to announce that VIP has been given its first exclusive - access to new versions of Dialog Profound and Dialog Newsroom - launched just three days ago. VIP will publish the first product review of these in Europe in the next issue. See <<http://digbig.com/3xqh>> for details.

All the best

Annabel Colley Editor  
FreePint <[annabel.colley@freepint.com](mailto:annabel.colley@freepint.com)>

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The FreePint Jobs Update is being circulated widely every two weeks. This free newsletter now has 1,100 direct subscribers and is posted at the Bar and in the Bar Digest (circulation 11,000).

To see the Jobs Update No.69 visit <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b28017>> and to subscribe, modify your account at <<http://web.freepint.com>>.

Here are some of the latest featured jobs:

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<<http://www.freepint.com/go/j3069>>  
Examine current systems and procedures, lead the transfer of paper records to electronic format and review archive facilities. Recruiter: Syngenta

**Stand-Alone Information Specialist (Corp. Finance)**

<<http://www.freepint.com/go/j3076>>  
Newly created vacancy to establish and develop in-depth research and analysis service for niche Corporate Finance Advisory business. Recruiter: Glen Recruitment

**Information Scientist**

<<http://www.freepint.com/go/j3080>>  
3 months pharma information scientist role in Surrey, doing research & CAS, salary neg.  
Recruiter: Sue Hill Recruitment

**Knowledge Manager**

<<http://www.freepint.com/go/j3081>>  
Manage the development of our corporate website, intranet and electronic records.  
Recruiter: Suffolk County Council

NB: There are 27 other jobs in the current edition of the Jobs Update  
<<http://www.freepint.com/go/b28017>>.

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## MY FAVOURITE TIPPLES by Vasyl Pawlowsky



Vasyl (Bill) Pawlowsky spent eight years as a Senior Information Specialist in Montreal, Canada before departing for Ukraine in 1999. After spending two years as a consultant on democracy development issues and a year-and-a-half as a journalist/editor of a Kyiv-based business weekly, he returned to back into his profession as Head of Information Services at the Kyiv-based Law Firm Magister & Partners in January 2003. In addition to his day job he is Advisor on International Cooperation for the Democratic Initiatives Foundation, a Kyiv-based NGO specializing in public opinion polling and sociological research.

Submit your top five favourite Web sites. See the guidelines at <http://www.freepint.com/author.htm>.

Working at a Kyiv-based law firm I find the following five sites useful and at times entertaining:

- The Visual Thesaurus <http://www.visualthesaurus.com/online/index.html> - One of my favourite sites when trying to explain relationships between words to many of the non-native English speakers I work with.
- The concept of clustering technologies together with meta-searching assists me on regular basis, and a new arrival on the Internet employing both technologies, that I use regularly is <http://www.killerinfo.com>.
- Since its first appearance on the Internet over eight years ago, I have used the Universal Currency Converter at <http://www.xe.com/ucc/full.shtml> for conversions of everything from the Turkish Lira to Ukrainian Hyrvnia.
- Ever want to know what a website looked like before it became a 404 web server response? <http://www.waybackmachine.org> helps one travel back to a point in Internet history, just like Jay Ward's cartoon character Mr. Peabody and his pet boy Sherman did in Peabody's "Wayback Machine."
- Without access to the standard legal fee-based services, there have been countless situations when I have made use of the World Legal Information Institute's site at <http://www.worldlii.org/>.

## EVENTS

### United Kingdom:

- "Guidelines for Developing a Corporate Infrastructure for the Management of e-Records" 30th March - 29th June <http://www.freepint.com/go/e300>
- "Title Benchmarking your Intranet" 20th - 21st April <http://www.freepint.com/go/e303>
- "PDA Wireless Conference" 23rd April <http://www.freepint.com/go/e290>
- "Gartner Outsourcing & IT Services Summit 2004" 26th - 27th April <http://www.freepint.com/go/e272>
- "Developing and extracting the value of Unstructured Information" 26th - 27th April <http://www.freepint.com/go/e295>
- "Developing the Legal E-Library: looking beyond the law" 30th April <http://www.freepint.com/go/e310>

### Australia:

- "Knowledge and Value Network Strategies" 1st - 2nd April <http://www.freepint.com/go/e298>
- "Power Searching With the Pros" 1st - 2nd April <http://www.freepint.com/go/e304>

### United States:

- "OSS 04 Global Information Forum" 13th - 16th April <http://www.freepint.com/go/e265>

### New Zealand:

- "Web Search Pacific" 23rd - 30th March <http://www.freepint.com/go/e305>

## FREE PINT BAR

### In Association with Factiva a Dow Jones & Reuters Company

It's nice for us to use this Bar Summary to look back and review the Bar's usage. Information professionals have been the heaviest users over the last couple of weeks, with questions about a wide range of topics, including paid-for services, pricing, copyright and Web governance.

The big database vendors are always being scrutinised, with one poster wanting to compare Dialog and Factiva to their alternatives <http://www.freepint.com/go/b28010>. VIP will be the first to review Dialog's new platform this month <http://www.freepint.com/go/b28003> and VIP Eye was the first to announce the launch of the developments at Dialog <http://www.vivaVIP.com>. Regarding pricing, a FreePinter is trying to compare the cost of viewing an article in pay-as-you-go vs. subscription plans using LexisNexis or Factiva. Are you willing to hint at what you pay? <http://www.freepint.com/go/b27941>. Are you in a public library and willing to chat about your agreement with Mintel? <http://www.freepint.com/go/b27982>.

A long and interesting thread has centred around building a library catalogue using Microsoft Access <http://www.freepint.com/go/b27882>. A member in New Zealand needs to catalogue a small music library on a similarly cost-conscious basis <http://www.freepint.com/go/b27911>. Can you help someone setting up a documentation centre in a developing country using untrained staff? <http://www.freepint.com/go/b27879>.

Copyright is, of course, always one of the hottest topics at the Bar. We have completed the recording of FreePint's Virtual Exchange on the new copyright law, and this will be available soon <http://www.freepint.com/exchange/cp110304.htm>. In the meantime, find out if there are restrictions on lifting information from public-company annual reports <http://www.freepint.com/go/b27918> and whether digital certificates using PKI (Public Key Infrastructure) are suitable for agreements from speakers at a conference <http://www.freepint.com/go/b27893>.

There are Webmasters looking for recent articles on Web governance <http://www.freepint.com/go/b28026> and an interim solution for an intranet search engine <http://www.freepint.com/go/b27861>. There's been useful links to guidelines for school Websites <http://www.freepint.com/go/b27881> but no help yet for someone looking to research Access Auditors, specifically to the regulations of the Disability Discrimination Act here in the UK <http://www.freepint.com/go/b27912>.

Of course, FreePint is primarily about people, so can you point to resources for someone keen to enter the rapidly growing world of records management? <http://www.freepint.com/go/b28033>. What about help on filling in those analytical/open questions in job applications? <http://www.freepint.com/go/b27947>. There's a call to network from an information professional working in the private equity / venture capital field <http://www.freepint.com/go/b27972>.

Finally, we received excellent feedback about last issue's article "Librarians and The War On Terror", and links to further resources and discussion have been posted at the Bar <http://www.freepint.com/go/b27902>. If you have feedback about today's issue, then make sure you visit <http://www.freepint.com/bar>.

William Hann [william.hann@freepint.com](mailto:william.hann@freepint.com)  
Managing Editor, FreePint

## TIPS ARTICLE

### "Information Sources For Childcare On The Web"

By David Renfree

#### Introduction

The childcare sector in the UK has undergone radical change in recent years, with a reorganisation of children's services impacting on child welfare and education. One of the effects of this change has been an increasing demand for qualified professionals to work within children's services, and a rise in the number of institutions offering qualifications in childcare. This article highlights some of the quality information sources available to professionals working in childcare, and also examines international websites that provide an insight into child welfare around the world.

#### Government information

The government is currently committed to integrating children's services within a single organisational focus. While this process is ongoing, a summary of each of the various child-related government projects is available from the Department for Education & Skills <<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies>>, together with links to the separate websites.

The SureStart programme <<http://www.surestart.gov.uk>> is central to the reorganisation of children's services, and its website provides information about various childcare and education policies that are currently being implemented. One of the offshoots of the SureStart website is ChildcareLink <<http://www.childcarelink.gov.uk>>, which allows users to search for childminders, creches, day nurseries, kids' clubs and pre-school playgroups in their local area, and contains advice on how to choose and pay for childcare. For individuals with an interest in working with children, SureStart's National Recruitment Campaign has a separate website <<http://www.childcarecareers.gov.uk>> which provides information on the different types of work available, and suggestions on how to begin a career in childcare.

Discussion of further reform to children's services has been led by the publication in September 2003 of the green paper 'Every Child Matters' <<http://www.dfes.gov.uk/everychildmatters>>, which can be downloaded in full, summary, or young people's versions. During the writing of this article, a follow-up paper entitled 'Every Child Matters - The Next Step' has also been placed on this site. One of the key recommendations of the green paper was the setting up of children's trusts to integrate the strategies of different social services, and detailed information about these can be found from the Department of Health <<http://www.children.doh.gov.uk/childrenstrusts/>>.

#### Charities & voluntary organisation

There are a wealth of charities and voluntary organisations that provide support services and carry out research in the area of child welfare,

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as well as providing simple information for parents and practitioners alike. One of the most prominent of these bodies is the National Children's Bureau <<http://www.nbc.org.uk>>, whose website contains a mixture of news, research, resources and links to subsidiary groups. The site is sometimes a little tricky to navigate, but the content is excellent.

Perhaps the most recognised of all childcare organisations is the NSPCC <<http://www.nspcc.org.uk>>. The site is largely concerned with the work of the charity, but does provide some useful downloads for parents and carers. Similarly, Barnardos' <<http://www.barnardos.org.uk>> website is mostly devoted to promoting the charity's efforts with vulnerable children, although summaries and sometimes the full-text of research projects into children's issues are available from the 'Resources' section of the site.

Other childcare organisations include The Daycare Trust <<http://www.daycaretrust.org.uk>>, which aims to promote affordable childcare for all; the Child Poverty Action Group <<http://www.cpag.org.uk>>; 4Children <<http://www.4children.org.uk>>, a new charity dedicated to "creating opportunities for children", and the National Childminding Association <<http://www.ncma.org.uk/>> which promotes registered childminding in England and Wales. All of these charities have websites that provide information and resources relating to their work for parents and professionals alike.

Two further organisations are worth mentioning here. The Joseph Rowntree Foundation <<http://www.jrf.org.uk>> carries out independent social research and, although it does not deal solely with children's services, many of the news and reports available from its website are of interest to the childcare researcher. For people considering taking a qualification in childcare, the CACHE website <<http://www.cache.org.uk/>> will provide information on which courses are available, as well as general careers advice.

#### International resources

The UNICEF website <<http://www.unicef.org>> is a goldmine of information on child welfare around the globe. All of UNICEF's major publications are free to download from the site <<http://www.unicef.org/publications/>>, including the annual 'State of the World's Children' report. The 'Information by Country' <<http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/>> pages offer statistics and often a general overview of children's services for every country in the world. Detailed research carried out by the



David Renfree is the subject librarian for the School of Childhood & Education at the Birmingham College Of Food, Tourism & Creative Studies.

**Related FreePint links:**

- 'Employment/Recruitment/HR' articles and resources in the FreePint Portal <<http://www.freepint.com/go/p43>>
- Post a message to the author, David Renfree, or suggest further resources at the FreePint Bar <<http://www.freepint.com/bar>>
- Read this article online, with activated hyperlinks <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/180304.htm#feature>>
- Access the entire archive of FreePint content <http://www.freepint.com/portal/content/>

Innocenti Research Centre <<http://www.unicef-icdc.org>> is also available online.

The UNICEF site also contains the homepage of the UN Convention On The Rights Of The Child <<http://www.unicef.org/crc/crc.htm>>. The Convention has been ratified by 192 countries, making it the most universally accepted human rights instrument in history. Supplementary information about the Convention, as well as its full text, can be found within this site. The Children's Rights Information Network <<http://www.crin.org>> is a further detailed source for information in this area.

Further information relating to child welfare around the world can be obtained from the Save The Children website <<http://www.savethechildren.net>>. The organisation carries out child protection work in over 100 countries, and its website is a rich source of free reports and downloads. Children's interests within the EU are campaigned for by The European Children's Network (EURONET) <<http://www.europeanchildrensnetwork.org>>, which is comprised of a coalition of organisations from across the continent; their multilingual website contains news, reports, legal information and more.

**Special needs**

Many childcare jobs involve working with children who have special needs, which requires the practitioner to have a detailed knowledge of the nature of a disability. A full examination of the websites that supply information on various conditions really requires an article in itself, but it is possible to list some of the most useful ones here.

The ADHD Information Library <<http://www.btinternet.com/~black.ice/addnet/ibmain.html>> suffers from poor site design, but its content is well researched and broad in scope. The Down Syndrome Information Network <<http://www.down-syndrome.info/>> is home to an online library of Down syndrome resources, as well as providing news and links to other sites. For information about children with speech and language difficulties, the I CAN website <<http://www.ican.org.uk>> is a good starting point.

Detailed information about children with dyslexia can be found on two sister websites, Dyslexia Teaching Today <<http://www.dyslexia-teacher.co.uk>> and the Dyslexia Parents Resource <<http://www.dyslexia-parent.com>>; each of the sites provides content which is tailored towards their respective intended audiences. Similarly, there are separate indexes for young people, parents and professionals on the Young Minds website <<http://www.youngminds.org.uk>>, which contains information relating to children's mental health.

**Other useful resources**

An article of this length can only offer a glimpse at the huge range of information relating to childcare which is available on the internet. For a list of hyperlinks to useful websites in this area, the SOSIG children's gateway <<http://www.sosig.ac.uk/roads/subject-listing/World-cat/child.html>> is updated regularly, and covers both domestic and

international information. Among the resources on offer are links to databases, government publications, mailing lists, and full text reports, articles and papers.

The Child Health and Paediatrics Specialist Library <<http://rms.nelh.nhs.uk/childhealth/>> has been recently launched as part of the National Electronic Library for Health. The site is "primarily aimed at professionals involved in the care of children", but may also be of use to other users looking for information on child health. Currently there are over 1,000 resources indexed by type, but the site is likely to become increasingly useful as this number continues to grow.

Finally, it seems appropriate to end this article with a few suggestions for websites that are suitable for use by children themselves. Yahoo!igans <<http://www.yahooigans.com>> is a child-safe web directory compiled by Yahoo; the site also offers interactive features such as games, cartoons and music videos. Ask Jeeves for Kids <<http://www.ajkids.com>> and Kidsclick! <<http://www.kidsclick.org/>> are two alternative search resources which have been designed specifically for children. For parents who are concerned about their children using the internet, the Childnet International website <<http://www.childnet-int.org>> contains details of projects designed to ensure the safety of children whilst they are online.

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Olivia Freeman works on a freelance basis, as a trainer, researcher and information management specialist. She was Head of Business Information at HSBC Bank, where she started the service, which provides a global service to both bankers and customers. Olivia runs training courses on strategic planning, selecting e-resources and legal issues. Workshops can be tailored to individual requirements. She is a very experienced researcher and has undertaken major projects on a range of topics. Her expertise is in product development and competitor monitoring in financial services.

Olivia has always been active in the information profession. She regularly publishes articles and speaks at meetings.

#### Related links:

- Read customer comments and buy this book at Amazon.co.uk <<http://www.amazon.co.uk/exec/obidos/ASIN/1856044912/freepint0c>> or Amazon.com <<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/1856044912/freepint00>>
- "Your Essential Guide to Career Success" ISBN 1856044912, published by Facet Publishing.

## FREE PINT BOOKSHELF

<<http://www.freepint.com/bookshef>>

**"Your Essential Guide to Career Success"**  
Written by Sheila Pantry, Peter Griffiths  
Reviewed by Olivia Freeman

I wish that I had had this book at the start of my career. However, having said that, the book contains many valuable tips, even for someone at an advanced stage in their career. This is a very readable book and each chapter follows the same clear and concise format, ending with a bullet pointed summary. I have not seen the first edition but this second edition has been well researched and brought up to date with recent developments and name changes.

The book opens with an overview of the 21st century employment market for library and information professionals, which includes some information on working overseas. This brief introduction leads quickly on to the nub of career success, which is career planning. Readers are introduced to risk assessment for jobs and applying ratings to their current jobs. Action is advocated.

There is useful background for people at the start of their careers with an overview of the differing types of work and range of organisations that employ information professionals, there are also brief descriptions of related fields such as competitor intelligence and knowledge management. Professional bodies, employment agencies and accredited courses are described, and a full list of names, addresses and contacts has been included at the back of the book. Extensive sources of further information are also given.

There are some useful pointers on how to look at job advertisements, both internal and external, and how to decide whether to apply and if they fit in with your career plan; alongside this are some tips on how to do your CV and how to plan for promotion and how to compare your current post with a potential new post. There is also a useful section on the value of mentoring.

I particularly liked the chapter on 'Your Successful Interview', which contains much good advice on how to prepare for interview. The interview is the most difficult stage of getting a job, as there is only a very short time to create a

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good impression. The different kinds of interview are described, along with the types of psychometric or intelligence tests that are increasingly included at interview. The book is written in a very reassuring, confidence-giving style, which would be very helpful to anyone preparing for an interview. Personally I found the first time I had to give a presentation at an interview very scary and I actually sought verbal reassurance.

The book ends with career case studies based on asking a number of questions relating to personal career planning and use of skills. Participants were also asked who or what influenced their career moves. It is evident from the responses that the authors of the book are both experienced mentors, who have given others substantial guidance in their careers.

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## FEATURE ARTICLE

### "Curious about Clio? History and Historians on the Web"

By Andrew Humphries



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During the last couple of years, 'history' has been described as both "the new gardening" (Professor R. J. Evans) and "the new rock 'n' roll" (World Congress of History Producers). What both of these comments allude to is the high levels of popularity that history currently enjoys, both in popular culture and academia, and this is reflected in the vast numbers of websites that are available on the subject. These sites vary enormously in quality, scholarlyness and sometimes accuracy, and range from personal family trees to highly specialised online books. I have tried here to identify those sites which will be of interest to those imbued with the spirit of Clio, the muse of history, and who are keen to find out more about academic history and historians.

#### Facts and Figures

The building blocks of history are the facts and figures: the names, places, dates, people and events which have played a part in our heritage. The best places to find accurate information quickly are the online encyclopedias, particularly Encyclopedia.com <<http://www.encyclopedia.com>> which gives more free information than many of the others. Also of interest is Wikipedia <<http://www.wikipedia.org>>, the encyclopedia-community where members of the online public submit the entries. The accuracy of the information is usually very good and the embedded links can take you off on some interesting and entertaining tangents.

Another good source for basic historical information is the BBC History site <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history>>. Amongst the fun games and the animated depictions of the Dunkirk landings, you will find an excellent collection of introductory essays on topics ranging from Life in an Iron Age Village to The End of Soviet Communism. These pieces are often written by the leading academic experts in the field and are accompanied by a list of related links so they make a good starting point for further exploration.

There are also a large number of timelines available which will help you out with 'what happened when' questions. The BBC History site has an excellent timeline on British history <<http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/timelines>> and there is a good, though slightly messy, general timeline at HyperHistory <[http://www.hyperhistory.com/online\\_n2/History\\_n2/a.html](http://www.hyperhistory.com/online_n2/History_n2/a.html)>. If you want more specific information, enter the era (e.g. Ancient Greece) or event (e.g. World War II) in which you are interested, with the word 'timeline', into a search engine and you will usually get a healthy return.

#### Online Archives

One of the ways the internet has been of most use to historians is by allowing digitised archives to be made widely available. Of course, many people still prefer to visit the actual archives with their familiar sights and smells, but by using resources such as Access to Archives <<http://www.a2a.org.uk>> they can at least be

sure that they won't have a wasted trip. Access to Archives has digitised records from a large number of local record offices and by searching on a keyword you can find where that word appears in archives around the UK.

Many of the centralised UK archives at the Public Record Office <<http://www.pro.gov.uk>> are also being made available on the web. From the homepage you can link to their services such as Family Records <<http://www.familyrecords.gov.uk>>, where you can find information on births, marriages, deaths and more, and the 1901 Census data <<http://www.census.pro.gov.uk>>, which famously crashed when it first launched because of the sheer weight of traffic. In the US, too, you can find a lot of information on public records at the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) site at <<http://www.archives.gov>>.

Another archival project which will be of use a large number of people is the digitisation of the Old Bailey records <<http://www.oldbaileyonline.org>>. Records are currently available from 1674 to 1834 and work is ongoing to bring this nearer the present day.

A more varied collection of historical documents, as well as links to related sites, can be found at the impressive Internet History Sourcebook Project <<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall>>. This collection has been put together by Paul Halsall at Fordham University and has three main components: Ancient History Sourcebook,

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- FreePint No.133 20th March 2003. "Military History on the Internet" and "Librarians & Comics" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/200303.htm>
- FreePint No.108 21st March 2002. "An introduction to the Netherlands on the web" and "Evolution or revolution: the future of scholarly publishing" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/210302.htm>
- FreePint No.83, 15th March 2001. "XML - the DNA of the Internet" and "Freedom of Information" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/150301.htm>
- FreePint No.58, 16th March 2000. "Portals" and "WWW.OED.COM - A New Home for the Dictionary" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/160300.htm>
- FreePint No.34, 18th March 1999. "Pharmaceutical/ health information on the Web" and "Who goes there...? - Access Control Issues for Internet-based information services" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/180399.htm>
- FreePint No.10, 19th March 1998. "Working the Net" and "Business and Accounting Resources on the Web" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/190398.htm>

**Related FreePint links:**

- 'Arts and Humanities' articles in the FreePint Portal <<http://www.freepint.com/go/p187>>
- Post a message to the author, Andrew Humphries, or suggest further resources at the FreePint Bar <<http://www.freepint.com/bar>>
- Read this article online, with activated hyperlinks <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/180304.htm#feature>>
- Access the entire archive of FreePint content <http://www.freepint.com/portal/content/>

Medieval Sourcebook and Modern History Sourcebook. Almost all of the material is copy-permitted which means that it can be used in the classroom making it a great resource for history teachers of all levels.

**Academic Publications**

You can follow what the professional historians are writing formally in the journals. For those interested in British history, the first place to look is the Royal Historical Society Bibliography <<http://www.rhs.ac.uk/bibwel.asp>> which contains information on over 300,000 books, articles and chapters from edited books. You will not find the full-text of any of these publications but you will find an entry for almost everything that has been published on British history. Those interested in other areas should consult The History Journals Guide <<http://www.history-journals.de>>, a searchable database of all the major journals, which has the titles arranged chronologically, thematically and geographically.

The more informal writings of academic historians can be seen in the various discussion lists, the most famous and useful of which come under the H-Net umbrella <<http://www.h-net.org>>. H-Net is a collection of discussion lists on a large range of topics. Individual lists vary in how active they are and in their rules of membership but the list archives are open to anyone and most list homepages have a good related links section. The individual list that is most worthy of special mention is H-Net Review <<http://www.h-net.org/reviews>> which brings together all of the book reviews published on the other lists.

**Academic Websites**

Many university history departments have useful sites which provide faculty biographies and related links but there are two academic sites which deserve a special mention - the Center for History and New Media (CHNM) and the Institute of Historical Research (IHR). Based at George Mason University, the CHNM <<http://chnm.gmu.edu/index1.html>> contains a number of useful resources, primary amongst which is the History News Network <<http://hnn.us>>. This site publishes articles looking at the 'history behind the headlines', or how the past affects current affairs, and allows readers to comment on pieces they have read.

The CHNM also provides a Guide to History on the Web <<http://chnm.gmu.edu/assets/historyweb/historyweb.php>> which is a database of 5000 US and World history websites, which you can search by type of website, geographical area and topic. The IHR site <<http://www.history.ac.uk>> contains a similar database of websites in its History Online resource area <<http://www.history.ac.uk/ihr/Resources/search.html>>, this time you will find a much greater number of results on British history.

All of the sites featured in these collections have been deemed to be of an academic standard but beyond that there is no way to tell which are the best - this can be a problem when faced with hundreds of search results. One attempt to combat this problem is the MERLOT (Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching) project <<http://www.merlot.org>>.

**DigBig: Long URLs shortened.**

Paste in your long Web address and get a short one back. Quick, free. Long URL problem solved:

<<http://www.DigBig.com/>>

This site publishes reviews of academic websites in all disciplines - History sites can be found in the 'Humanities' section - and reviews are separated into those which have been conducted by MERLOT's academic reviewers and those which have been sent in by users.

**Historians**

Another part of the IHR's History Online resource is Teachers of History <<http://www.history.ac.uk/ihr/Resources/Teachers>>, a list of UK-based academics which you can browse by institution, research interest and surname. This is useful if you know the name of a historian and want to know which institution they are at or if you want to know who the academic experts in a particular field of history are.

Once you have found the name and institution of a particular historian, it is often worth visiting the department's homepage to find out more. This is where the Center for History and New Media's Guide to History Departments <<http://chnm.gmu.edu/assets/historydepts/departments.php>> becomes useful. Here you can search on the name of a university or city and your search results will all be linked to the history departments which match your criteria. This is particularly useful because departmental websites are not always easy to find through university homepages.

**Studying History at University**

History is one of the most popular subjects at all levels of learning and courses on it are much in demand. The Guardian's take on the best History departments <<http://education.guardian.co.uk/higher/unitable/0,,-4663990,00.html>> is interesting because it tries to take into account the quality of the teaching at each institution - although the site itself admits that some of the teaching scores are now out of date.

However, the industry standard score -- the grade achieved in the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) -- takes no account of the quality of teaching. The results for History departments of the last RAE, in 2001, can be found on the Higher Education and Research Opportunities (HERO) site <<http://digbig.com/3wyy>>. This is the rating on which a department's funding is based but it is probably worth looking at both scores to get a more rounded guide to the best history departments.

Historians spend a lot of their time researching: scouring archives and leafing through papers trying to discover new things. I have tried to identify websites which not only represent the best sources of information on history and historians but also provide opportunities for people to explore further and conduct a lot of their historical research on the web.