

# Fungiis

Newsletter of the  
Far North Queensland GIS Users' Group Inc  
April - June 1994



## Table of Contents

<b>April Workshop a Success</b> A good turnout in Cairns.	Page 2
<b>1994 Seminar</b> Better register now!	Page 2
<b>Lost in Space</b> What's up and what's down in the satellite game.	Page 3
<b>GIS Phone List</b> Who sells what?	Page 4
<b>End of Innocence</b> The Internet comes of age.	Page 5
<b>Integrated Data Exchange Facility for FNQ</b> A new GIS research facility in Atherton.	Page 6
<b>Do you live in Townsville?</b> FNQGIS in Sun City.	Page 7
<b>Far North Stands out at Conference</b> <b>Atherton Shire</b> stands out from the crowd.	Page 7
<b>Membership status &amp; registration form</b> Are you a member? You should be.	Page 8

FNQGIS is a non-profit organisation established as a local forum for knowledge exchange on GIS, and to promote the use and awareness of GIS in the Far North.

This newsletter is published quarterly, and distributed free to members. Articles and advertising are welcome. Material should be submitted to the newsletter editor.

For more information on FNQGIS or the newsletter contact the FNQGIS administrator,  
Frances Carpenter on (070) 95 3309,  
P.O. Box 780, Atherton Q 4883

## April Workshop a Success

Our well attended April workshop set a precedent with an international guest speaker! Mrs Lou Anne Kirby, retired park planner with the Seattle Parks Department, agreed to give us a brief but very entertaining insight into the GIS operations of a relatively small department in a very big city council.

The April workshop was the first event for FNQGIS in many months, and the strong attendance suggested the GIS community in the North is thriving.

Guy Carpenter, with the CSIRO in Atherton, presented a tongue-in-cheek review of the state-of-the-art of GIS. Guy examined the scope of GIS applications, sources of information, common problems, and exploded some GIS myths (and a few balloons).

Peter Ludlow of Sokkia Instruments in Cairns came along to give us an update on Sokkia's current range of GPS equipment. We thank Peter particularly for agreeing to come at very short notice.

The Lands Department speaker, Mr Geoff Hunter, showered us with acronyms and outlined the departments exciting new pricing strategy for non-profit use of government data. The new prices promise us to make use of the Lands Department datasets affordable by many of us for the first time.

Finally, and with his usual entertaining flare, Alan Stafford of Mossman Sugar showed us his new all-singing-and-dancing mobile GIS for cane inspectors use.

## 1994 Seminar

Plans for the FNQGIS annual seminar are almost complete, and it should be a good show.

This year the FNQGIS board decided to alter course somewhat, and extend the seminar to two days. Costs have been kept down by taking advantage of the excellent facilities at the Cairns campus of James Cook University. We have aimed to maximise local content; all of this year's speakers are based here in the North.

Our keynote speaker is Chris Skelly from James Cook University in Townsville. Chris has tentatively titled his talk "How to Lie with GIS".

The first day of the seminar will focus on aspects of human environment, with presentations by the Lands Department, the Department of Transport, and Atherton Shire Council.

Day two will focus on natural resources and the living environment. Topics will include Environmental Audits, GIS in the Sugar Industry and Oil Spill Response.

Each day after lunch attendees will have the opportunity to visit some of the GIS installations around Cairns, interact with vendors, or attend discussion forums on the Internet (day 1) and Natural Resource Modelling (day 2).

As usual we will have a variety of vendors demonstrating their wares at the seminar.

We hope to see you there.

Far North Queensland GIS Group  
1994 Seminar & AGM

# GIS - Mapping The Future

June 6th-7th 1994  
JCU Building  
Cairns Campus of TAFE

For details call Frances Carpenter - (070) 95 3309



# Lost in Space

Take the sense out of remote sensing and what have you got?

There are two new stars in the sky this year, but they should have been much, much more.

On August 9 1993, NOAA 13 was launched. Within 2 weeks it was lost due to a faulty on-board battery charging system.

On October 6, following an apparently normal launch, controllers announced they were unable to contact the new Landsat 6 satellite.

The loss of these two satellites was a considerable setback for the US remote sensing community. Landsat 4 and 5 are showing their age, with degrading sensor quality and only intermittent contact with earth stations. Landsat 6 promised 15 metre resolution, twice that of Landsat 5 and comparable to the offerings of the French-Swedish-Belgian based Spot satellites.

NOAA 13 was to replace NOAA 11, launched in September 1988 and nearing the end of its operational life. Both NOAA 11 and 12 are still operational, but the loss of NOAA 13 will postpone the retirement of NOAA 11.

## Spot 3 flies

In the midst of the US losses, the new Spot 3 satellite was successfully launched on September 25 1993. Spot 3 is essentially the same as Spot 2, offering 10 metre panchromatic resolution and 20 metre multispectral resolution.

and...

The European Space Agency's ERS-2 radar satellite, expected to be launched this year has been delayed until at least 1995.

Following the success of Spot imagery during the Gulf War, the French have developed a spy satellite believed to deliver sub-metre imagery. The Helios satellite will be launched this year by Arianespace.

# GPS Constellation Complete

The constellation of Navstar satellites which support the Global Positioning System (GPS) is now fully operational. The US Air Force launched another Navstar satellite in March this year.

The final constellation requires 24 satellites. So far 34 satellites have been launched (35 counting the failed launch in 1981). 8 satellites have been shut down, and 26 remain operational in orbit.

```
R 112045Z FEB 94
FM 2SOPS FALCON AFB CO//DOAI//
UNCLAS
NOTICE ADVISORY TO NAVSTAR USERS
(NANU) 050-94042
SUBJ: ACTIVATION OF ANTI-SPOOFING
(A/S)
1. CONDITION: A/S WAS ACTIVATED ON
DAY 031 (JAN 31 94) AT 0000 UTC.
DUE TO THE 8 DEC 93 DECLARATION OF
INITIAL OPERATIONAL CAPABILITY
(IOC) THE P-CODE WILL NOT NORMALLY BE
AVAILABLE TO USERS WHO DO NOT
HAVE VALID CRYPTOGRAPHIC KEYS (IAW
FEDERAL RADIONAVIGATION PLAN 1992).
2. POC: CAPT THOMPSON AT (719)
550-6378 OR DSN 560-6378.
RECEIVED AT USNO 14 FEB 94
```

**US Naval Observatory advisory  
to Navstar users regarding  
GPS anti-spoofing system.**

Additional Navstar satellites have been manufactured, and will be launched as required to replace aging satellites. Two are expected to be launched this year, and two more next year.

The anti-spoofing system mentioned in the military release above refers to a scheme designed to make it impossible to generate fake GPS signals which might fool military GPS receivers.

# GIS Phone Book

Last week I spent an exasperating couple of hours trying to find the phone number for a well-known GIS vendor. Oddly enough I could find "*geosynthetic materials*" in the yellow pages, but not GIS software.

Based on this experience, I thought it would be useful to compile a list of contact numbers for the most popular GIS vendors. Below you will find the first version of the list.

I hope this list will also help newcomers to the field to distinguish between the confusing array of popular software vendors; ESRI and ERSIS, MapInfo and ARC/INFO.

I've started with a core list of GIS and Image Processing vendors, and expect to incorporate GPS vendors and providers of data and services in the near future. I'd be happy to take suggestions for vendors to add.

The list must remain relatively short - ideally no more than two printed pages in total. Only vendors which the editor feels are relevant to the members of FNQGIS will be considered.

Of course anyone is welcome to buy advertising space on our pages!

Please fax corrections or additions to Guy Carpenter on (070) 913245.

Vendor	Product	Function	Platform	Contact
ERM	ER Mapper	IP	Unix	Tel: 09 388 2900 Fax: 09 388 2901 email: support@ermusa.com
DLSR	Sage	GIS	PC	Tel: 03 347 6363 Fax: 03 347 6363
ERSIS	MapInfo	GIS	PC	Tel: 07 844 7744
ESRI	ARC/INFO	GIS	Unix	Tel: 07 831 3210 Fax: 07 831 3214
InfoMaster	SPANS GEODIS	GIS	Unix, OS/2	Tel: 02 567 7366 Fax: 02 567 7892
GenaSys	GenaMap	GIS	.	Tel: 07 369 9511
MPA Communications	MicroBrian	IP	PC	Tel: 03 724 4488 Fax: 03 723 7859

This list is maintained by FNQGIS as a service to members. FNQGIS does not endorse any particular vendor or product, and takes no responsibility for errors or omissions. Please send corrections to the newsletter editor.

**IP** = Image Processing  
**GIS** = Geographical Information System



# End of Innocence

The Internet comes of age

-Guy Carpenter

Chances are by now you've heard of the Internet. The popular press has pounced on the previously private playground of academics and researchers like so many tourists in a T-shirt shop.

Terms like "surfing the internet" and "cyberspace" have given a radical face-lift to the industry more accustomed to grey descriptions like "Wide Area Networking". The arrival of the internet in the public consciousness has been something of a *débutantes* ball for the net; the end of a long period of innocence, a transition into a period of upheaval, and a search for a new identity.

Physically the Internet is little more than a collection of local area networks (LANs) connected together by long distance data lines. While the technology required to achieve this is by no means trivial, the essential spirit of the network is in the culture of the people who live there. Unfortunately this is the thing most under threat as the network enters a new age.

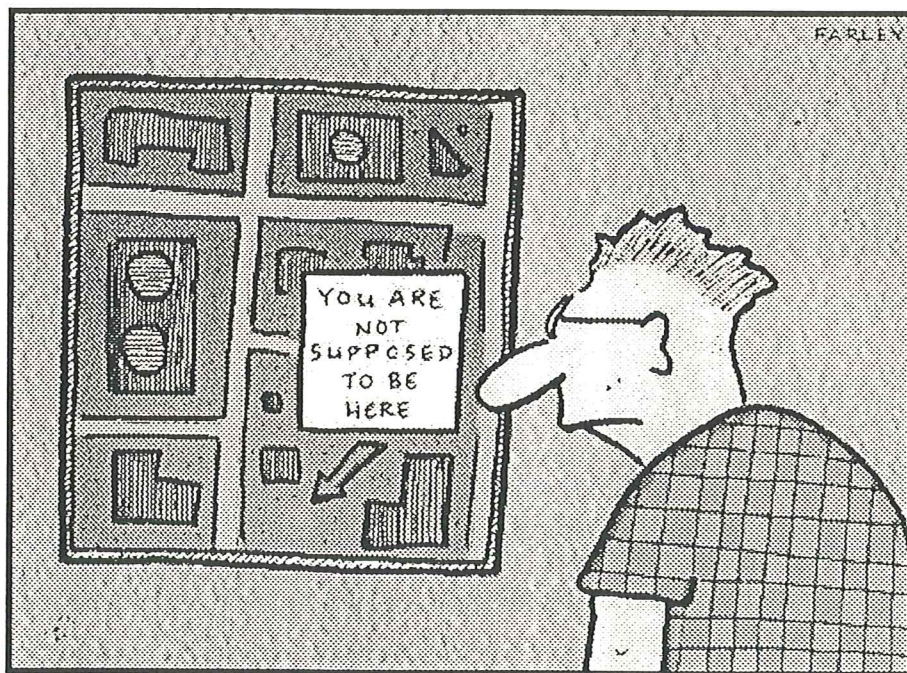
Traditionally universities have been the big players on the net, and under their influence the network has grown up in a peculiarly unselfish environment. Network citizens were far more versant with concepts of freedom of information and common good than with the modern mantras of cost recovery and accountability.

Newcomers to the net shake their heads in disbelief when told that the networking software is free (and well written), that there is no per-message charge for sending and receiving mail, that the database they are using is located in another country and that there is no charge for using it. Incredulity turns to suspicion when they get energetic and effective help from people with no evident interest in their well-being. Hundreds of thousands of people working solely for the satisfaction of contributing to something they believe in?

Apr - Jun 1994

This suspicion is well placed. The economic model upon which the network is built is only sustainable within the protected environment of academia or the R&D sections of big business where time and money spent on internetworking can be nebulously linked to future profits without real evidence of causality.

As the network grows to connect individuals and smaller businesses with lower margins and greater demand for value-for-money, the network cannot help but change character. The emergence of blatant profiteering, built upon the freely-given labour of others will sour the air irrevocably.



Dr Fun

reprinted with author's permission.

A West Australian court recently awarded \$40,000 in damages to a former U of WA employee in a lawsuit over libelous remarks made on the net. This is the first such case and it marks a milestone on the net's journey into adulthood.

Like the *débutante*, the net will undoubtedly find a new niche after this transition. However those of us who knew her as a child cannot help but mourn the end of innocence.



# Integrated Data Exchange Facility Coming to Far North Queensland

A new GIS facility, part of the Cooperative Research Centre for Tropical Rainforest Ecology and Management, is to be established in the Far North. The facility, known as the Integrated Data Exchange Facility (IDEF), will be based at the CSIRO Tropical Forest Research Centre in Atherton.

The Cairns based CRC-TREM is a collaborative venture between the CSIRO, James Cook University of North Queensland, the University of Queensland, the Wet Tropics Management Authority and Griffith University, with additional funding provided by the federal government.

The Integrated Data Exchange Facility will provide a centre of GIS expertise and resources for the research projects in the CRC. The facility is expected to begin operation in July this year.

CRC projects will be investigating issues such as forest restoration, rare and endangered species, rainforest tourism and the effects of disturbance on tropical rainforests. IDEF will work with these projects to generate mutually-compatible spatially referenced datasets, and to apply state of the art modelling and mapping techniques.

Centralised GIS services in the CRC will minimise redundancy and maximise interaction and data-sharing between projects.

IDEF will work closely with the CRC project TROFIS (Tropical Forest Information System) which has been developing survey and modelling methods appropriate for use in tropical rainforests.

IDEF's expertise will also extend to data networks. All participating institutions in the CRC will be connected to the Australian Academic Research Network (AARNet), which will be used to provide quick, inexpensive and reliable data exchange between CRC sites.

The Integrated Data Exchange Facility will provide internetworking assistance to those sites not already connected.

---

## AURISA '94

### 22ND ANNUAL INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE AND TECHNICAL EXHIBITION

Of the Australasian Urban and Regional  
Information Systems Association

The mandatory conference for those interested in spatially related information systems (GIS, LIS, SIS and extended CAD) with the focus on the BOTTOM LINE - What is your Bottom Line? Is it what you want?

Attend workshops, participate in the conference, visit the biggest exhibition of its type.

BE THERE!

EXPOSURE, EXPERIENCE, EXPERTISE

**21-25 November 1994**

**Darling Harbour, Sydney**

EXHIBITION OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE  
- REGISTER EARLY -

Contact:

AURISA '94 SECRETARIAT  
PO BOX 2200  
CANBERRA ACT 2601  
Phone: 06 257 3299  
Fax: 06 257 3256

## Do You Live In Townsville?

Then how about helping arrange a FNQGIS workshop in Townsville?

With an increasing number of members from Townsville, FNQGIS is interested in getting some workshop action going in Sun City.

We'd like to hear from anyone who would be prepared to talk at a Townsville based workshop, and also from anyone who could help arrange a venue.

This is the perfect way to make friends and influence people, so call Frances Carpenter on (070) 953309.

---

## Far North Stands Out at Conference

Atherton Shire Council was recognised at the Australian Remote Sensing Conference in Melbourne as being the only local government agency to present a paper at the conference. In fact no other local government agencies were registered as attendees.

Bob Peever represented Atherton Shire Council and presented two joint papers with Pauline Catt of the Key Centre for Remote Sensing at James Cook University of North Queensland in Townsville.

The council's involvement was applauded during the closing session, and Bob indicated the feedback from conference-goers was extremely positive.

## ***Advertise in Fungis!***

**Selling products or services?  
We can help you reach your target audience**

The FNQGIS newsletter "Fungis" is published quarterly. It reaches most of the GIS professionals in the Far North. You can help us defray printing and mailing costs. We can help you get your message to the people that matter.

For details contact  
Frances Carpenter on (070) 953309



## New Membership Arrangements

As a result of suggestions from members, the management committee has agreed to a number of changes to make membership more flexible.

Instead of a rigid July-to-June financial calendar, membership will now be accounted for quarterly. Membership will be valid for four quarters including the quarter in which payment is received. This should encourage potential members to join at any time during the year without unduly taxing our administrative resources.

This change has been effected retroactively to benefit current members. The sticker below indicates your membership status.

The management committee has also agreed to introduce a discount membership rate of \$10 per annum for full time students and the unemployed.

Corporate members are entitled to send up to 6 representatives to any FNQGIS function at members price. Additional attendees will pay at the non-members rate.

## Are You A Member?

FNQGIS relies on your support to keep things moving. Support local initiative and be a financial member.

### Annual Membership (tick one)

Individual \$30 ☐

Corporate \$50 ☐

Full Time Student \$10  
or Unemployed ☐

Bob Peever  
Atherton Shire Council  
PO Box 573  
ATHERTON Q 4883  
*Corporate member through Sept '94*

### FAR NORTH QUEENSLAND GIS USERS GROUP INC. Membership Subscription Renewal

NAME: .....

ORGANISATION: .....

ADDRESS: .....

..... POSTCODE: .....

WORK PHONE: .....

FAX: .....

Mail to: FNGIS Secretary, PO Box 780, Atherton Q 4883