Fungis Online Newsletter

September 2003 - Issue 2

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1) Chairperson Report

Hello and welcome to another bumper edition of the FUNGIS Newsletter. The new Executive Committee is 'sleeves up' and into another 12 months of activities. The results of the questionnaire, distributed at this year's conference, suggest that members benefit most from their association with FUNGIS through organised activities, such as workshops and user forums. As a result, we will be busy trying to coordinate and/or support as many of these events as our resources will allow. A contributing factor in the number of activities we can conduct depends largely on your contribution as a member. I strongly encourage your participation with suggestions, assistance and attendance at these events to ensure their success. Remember that FUNGIS is your '**User**' group – take advantage of that.

Congratulations to those who have joined the Executive Committee this year. Welcome to new ~~victims,~~ er…members, Rueben Sinclair – LGA Representative (Mareeba SC), Colleen Hallmond – Education Representative (TNQT) and Sharlene Blakeney – State Govt Representative (NRM Mareeba). Sharlene, in fact, rejoins us after serving in previous years as Secretariat. I'll take this opportunity also to mention the outgoing members of the Exec. They have all contributed enormously to the activities of FUNGIS in recent years. On behalf of FUNGIS I extend my gratitude and thanks to Peter Wilson, Rachel Mills, Jan Carr and Shane Albertson for their efforts. Guys - There will always be something to do around here if you get bored!

Much has been achieved in the last 12 months. There were beers to be had while the sun went down over Yorkeys Knob. We trekked to Atherton to hear about QSIIS, the Survey Mapping Bill and a new Geoscape CD among other things. Back to the nosebleeds a couple of months later, this time to meet with the Wetlands Board to progress our relationship. FUNGIS members turned out in force to show support for and contribute to the QSIIS Strategic Directions Workshop at Cairns City Council. We put on our best thongs and enjoyed a "Casual Night of Colour" at the Botanic Gardens and then topped it all off with our Annual Conference on the Esplanade to discuss our options with the newly formed Spatial Sciences Institute (SSI). We have thrown our efforts behind the introduction of a Certificate III Spatial Information Services course at Atherton TAFE. Behind the scenes we have continued to pursue ways that may allow us to conduct member activities at the Mareeba Wetlands. The 'Spatial Angels' concept is still bouncing around as the Exec. ploughs through the paperwork of another possible funding source. Lisa's new role as Communications Representative will assist us finding ways to improve the way in which we provide information, services and events for you. Other current projects include supporting a workshop to find a standard Catchment Addressing System and an 'Art in GIS' / End of Year Event at Atherton (We will keep you posted on both). Whew! Is that enough yet? If I continue I'll never make the deadline. My apologies to the Exec if I've forgotten anything - age does that to you.

With much pleasure I announce that FUNGIS will be very well represented at the inaugural conference of the Spatial Sciences Institute – SSC2003, in Canberra. Lisa Newton, Les Searle, Geoff Hunter and I will

all be attending. With Peter Wilson's presence already being felt in the 'dead centre' since his move there, I will be expecting a warm reception from our hosts for the Far Northern contingent. Will look forward to bringing you news of the proceedings upon our return.

That's all folks! I hope you enjoy reading the articles in this issue as much as I have. There will be another edition out before the end of the year. Remember that this is your newsletter – and your User group. If you have any articles or news that you want to contribute, or can suggest something that you want to read about then let us know. An advantage of the online newsletter is that we're not limited by space. See you at the End-of-Year event!!!

Cheers,

Mark Hopp
Chairman

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2) Summary of Tafe Course Information session:

Education and training in Spatial Information Services or GIS, has taken several steps forward in the North Queensland region in the last two months. Not only has the Tropical North Queensland TAFE (TNQT) received registration to deliver nationally accredited training in the Certificate III in Spatial Information Services (SIS), eager GIS users have started on the path to receiving recognition for their GIS skills, by enrolling in the Certificate III, Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) program offered from the Atherton and Mareeba campuses of TAFE. The Certificate III in Spatial Information Services includes competencies on data collection, data storage and retrieval and data maintenance, plus occupational health & safety, improving processes and workplace communication.

15 GIS users have attended introductory workshops on the content of the Certificate III in Spatial Information Services and on how to prepare their RPL applications for assessment. The industries the students come from include local government, natural resource management, primary industries, health services and vocational education Students can use workplace-based projects to demonstrate their competence. For students who need refreshing or an extension of skills in a particular area of the program, workshops on the spatial specific competencies will be held in November.

Accreditation in the Certificate III program through the RPL process is available on an ongoing basis and can be accessed from any location.

TNQT is also actively involved in developing an educational pathway in spatial information that will span secondary education, vocational education and tertiary education. The Atherton State High School and James Cook University are working with TNQT to ensure the training delivered at each level is recognised by and leads into following levels of training. Future directions for TNQT and the regions high schools, include offering the Certificate III in high schools and the Diploma of Spatial Information Services at TAFE.

Any one interested in finding out more about the training options available with TNQT can do so by calling the Atherton campus on 4091 4267, or the Mareeba campus on 4092 8800.

3) Conference Presentations:

Tim Barker - Nick De Weger - Colleen Hallmond - Greg Hickey - Graham Stanton - Lisa Newton

Peter Swan - Lee Smith - Terry Webb - M'Lis Flynn - Rose Read - Stuart Kininmonth

9:15am Keynote Speaker
Tim Barker | Director QSIIS Information Office
Office of Economic and Statistical Research
Queensland Treasury

TITLE: A BRAND DNA FOR THE SPATIAL INFORMATION INDUSTRY

After beginning his career as a chainmen assisting in geodetic surveys around the tin mines of Herberton over 20 years ago, Tim has gained experience in a range of technical and policy position within the spatial information industry throughout Australia, Canada and Great Britain.

He has been member of both AURISA and the ISA since the late 1980's, holding committee and council positions with the former. Tim is currently President Elect for AURISA and will hold a position on the Spatial Sciences Institute Board from September, representing the Spatial Information Commission.

Tim's presentation today details the process and outcomes of an ANZLIC workshop held in Sydney in May 2003 to create a Brand DNA for the spatial information industry.

10:00am Nick de Wager | Formerly Senior Surveyor NRM Townsville
Northern Group Chairman ISAQ

TITLE: Introduction to SSIQ Northern Group

Nick de Wager, Licensed Surveyor, Fellow Institution of Surveyors Australia (ISA) (now Spatial Sciences Institute (SSI)).

Sort of Retired, previously Senior Surveyor Department of Natural Resources, Townsville and Western Districts.

Part Time Lecturer at James Cook University - School of Engineering.

Board Member Institution of Surveyors Australia, Queensland Division (ISAQ).

Federal Counsellor and Board Member Institution of Surveyors Australia (ISA).

Chairman of the Northern Group of ISAQ (now SSIQ).

The Paper *"Introduction to SSIQ Northern Group"* is delivered wearing the last hat as Chairman of the Northern Group of ISAQ with an end to encourage FUNGIS and all other Spatial Scientists and GIS Users to consider a United Industry by joining *The Spatial Sciences Institute* as a member of the Northern Group. The Paper outlines the Regional Group policies for member rural services in the North.

11:00am Colleen Hallmond | District Manager
Tablelands Region, Tropical North Queensland TAFE

TITLE: Tertiary Education in GIS

Colleen Hallmond, a long term resident of the Atherton Tablelands.

I have been working with the Tropical North Queensland TAFE for 8 years and have been very involved in the development of the Mareeba and Atherton campuses during that time.

Her current role of District Manager for the Tablelands region combines operational Management with business and community development.

Inspired by the dedication of Atherton, Eacham and Herberton shire to utilise GIS to its maximum potential, for the benefit of the broader Tablelands community Colleen and the Atherton campus team, have been working consistently over the last 12 months to provide accredited training to recognise existing skills and develop educational and career pathways for new and existing users.

Colleen is here today to give us more of the background of the program development and inform us on the vocational education opportunities that exist for FNQ GIS users.

11:30am Greg Hickey | Account Manager - Local Government
Mapinfo Australia

TITLE: Open GIS Consortium (OGC)

While a surveyor with the then Dept of Geographic Information, Greg undertook a role with the Department's Data Management group as an analyst programmer with the DCDB capture project. That the Fortran programming language was used for all this work indicates just how long ago this was. Greg later transferred to the Department's GIS section. During this time the Department was leading the way in the promotion of GIS technology to both local and overseas industries.

After moving to a private enterprise sales organisation, Greg was involved with some of the very first sales of GIS software in Qld. Now with MapInfo, Greg is today talking about the Open GIS Consortium within the context of local data in the Global village.

1:00pm Graham Stanton | Assistant Government Statistician
Office of Economic and Statistical Research, Queensland Treasury

TITLE: Census & Register of Strategic Information

Graham is currently responsible for providing leadership to the development and implementation of high-level strategies for Government for improved access to and use of statistics and spatial information products.

Graham has developed strong links with the information industry through his former role as Director of the QSIIS Information Office and his involvement with the Australasian Urban and Regional Information Systems Association (AURISA) and with the International Map Trade Association (IMTA). He was installed as a Fellow of AURISA in 2001 and is the current President of the Asia Pacific Region of IMTA.

Today Graham will talk about conducting a *Census of Strategic Information* at the end of 2002 and the establishment and launch in March 2003 of an online interactive repository of metadata on Government information data bases known as the *Register of Strategic Information.*

1:30pm Lisa Newton | Regional GIS Co-ordinator
Dept. of Local Government and Planning

TITLE: A Regional Information Management System in Far North Queensland

Anyone at a FUNGIS Conference would already know Lisa Newton, formerly known as Lisa Rutten as the FUNGIS Chair. Lisa has been in the Spatial Information Industry since 1994 and has worked with a great deal of local GIS Units through her position as Regional GIS Coordinator for Department of Local Government and Planning working on Regional Plans throughout the State.

Lisa is speaking today about the Regional Information Management System for Far North Qld. This concept is a result of the FNQ Regional Planning Project and aims to bring together all information relevant to the FNQ Regional Plan into a single searchable directory accessible across the Internet. At this stage, the project is at the Technical Trial stage. Lisa will be describing the decisions and resolutions that have been reached so far in the development of the Technical Trial.

9:30am Keynote Speaker — Peter Swan | Vice President
Spatial Sciences Institute

TITLE: Spatial Sciences Institute

Peter Swan – B. Surv (UQ), Lic Surv (Qld), FIS Aust. Peter is a Senior Surveyor with the Department of Natural Resources and Mines in Brisbane. He holds a Bachelor degree in Surveying from the University of Queensland and is Registered and Licensed by the Surveyors Board of Queensland. Peter was Congress Manager for the 42nd Australian Surveyors Congress – *2001 A Spatial Odyssey* - held in Brisbane in September 2001. He is a Fellow of the Institution of Surveyors, Australia, and a Past President of the Queensland Division of the Institution of Surveyors, Australia. Peter is currently the National President of the Institution of Surveyors, Australia and Interim Vice President of the Spatial Sciences Institute.

10:00am Terry Webb | GIS Project Manager
Wet Tropics Management Authority

TITLE: Regional Data...Is It Ever Current?

I worked as a civil engineering drafter during the eighties and then changed to GIS in 1990. Now I'm working in the environmental field with Wet Tropics Management Authority.

In most of my work, GIS has been a tool providing information to help others do their job. In contrast, the project this talk focuses on involves the development of a significant product in its own right. "Vegetation Mapping of the Wet Tropics bioregion" will result in maps and digital data and ideally a book.

The whole project will take six years to complete. I pose the question to a local group of people, "How do we look after this data? How do we keep it current?

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1:45pm Lee Smith | Sales & Marketing Manager
Webmap

TITLE: Spatial Data: Maximising the Benefits!

Lee Smith B.Surv (NSW), L.S., P.Grad.Dipl (ITC), M.App.Sc. (S.A.I.T.)

Abstract:
How do we maximize the benefits of spatial data projects?
There are three key areas:
- Optimising the project and technology
- Collaboration and multi-user data
- Data distribution and accessibility

Advances in aerial mapping technologies offer new options, cost savings and quality benefits.
The challenge is to optimise the new technologies to deliver value for money, efficiency and performance.
Some recent significant advances in aerial mapping, which provide improved quality and cost savings are outlined.

The concept of multi-user spatial data builds on collaboration and partnerships in mapping; it emphasizes cost sharing & reduced costs for spatial data. It offers an opportunity for organisations to make their aerial mapping data more widely available via data warehousing. This in turn provides revenue returns and opportunities for update and revision programmes.

Data accessibility and distribution is essential to maximize the benefits of spatial information.
This involves effective distribution internally across an organisation. It extends to external distribution and access by stakeholders, clients, businesses and the wider community.
GIS technology and Internet delivery are the key components.

To maximize the benefits of mapping and spatial data projects we need to look at the total project in three areas - it is necessary to consider not only the project technology and specifications, but wider issues such as collaboration, multi-data use and internet data delivery.

How will the Spatial Industry and professions react to these spatial data changes and opportunities? Will the response be innovative- seeing opportunities to open up new markets; or, market focused and seeing opportunities to open up new services, or a more traditional approach that incorporates efficiency improvements in the existing products and services?

2:15pm M'Lis Flynn | R.M.I.T. - Masters Project
(Also GIS Officer – WTMA)

TITLE: GIS in an African Village

M'Lis has been a GIS officer with the Wet Tropics Management Authority in Cairns for 5 years. She is currently also undertaking a Masters degree in International and Community Development at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University (RMIT) as an external student. In 2001 M'Lis returned to Kenya, Africa and became involved with a grassroots, entirely community-run organisation called the Ugunja Community Resource Centre. Her plan is to return to the Centre and through the use of participatory mapping techniques enable local people to utilise their wealth of indigenous knowledge for development of their own community in an appropriate way.
Today M'Lis will be talking about participatory mapping techniques currently being used in Vietnam and the Philippines and her proposal for their application in Ugunja and other indigenous and/or developing communities.

3:15pm Rose Read | Senior Account Manager
ESRI Australia

TITLE: What's new in ArcGIS 8.3

Original trained as a Surveyor and has have worked for ESRI Australia for 9 years

Rose's presentation will highlight some of the new features available in version 8.3, particular for any ArcView users in the audience, but with a mind to the broader audiences interests.

3:45pm Stuart Kininmonth | GIS Manager
Australian Institute Marine Science

TITLE: Modelling Fish Communities on the Great Barrier Reef

Protecting the fish communities on the Great Barrier Reef is an important role for the relevant management authorities. However the size of the marine park and the complexity of the reef and fish communities make planning difficult.

Scientists can provide advice through predictive modelling. This talk outlines some of the geospatial models that are being used to guide planners. In particular the work on currents and fish dispersal will be discussed with a view to highlighting some of the new GIS methods that are available.

SPEAKER DETAILS:
Stuart Kininmonth has 12 years experience in managing geographic information systems (GIS) from the alpine Gippsland forests to the pristine Kakadu savannahs to the tropical coral reefs. He develops and manages the GIS at the Australian Institute of Marine Science and the CRC Reef where the emphasis is on supporting scientific endeavours through data access and display. Using state of the art web-based mapping with spatial information stored in object-
orientated relational databases the GIS provides functionality previously unheard of in the science community. Stuart's interests also include research into ecology with a focus on regional connectivity. With previous experience with CSIRO, Parks Australia, Victorian Department of Natural Resources and Environment and Greening Australia, Stuart brings a holistic approach to implementing new technologies into practical applications.

4) Positioning Fungis Open Forum Summary:

"POSITIONING FUNGIS"
A Summary of the Open SSI FORUM at the FUNGIS Annual Seminar
7 AUGUST 2003

The **purpose** of the open forum was to encourage vigorous debate on the options available in positioning the future of FUNGIS considering the emergence of Spatial Sciences Institute (SSI).

The seminar had earlier received two informative presentations from Peter Swan of the SSI, updating members on progress to date in the establishment of the SS and Nick DeWeger on how the Surveyors Northern Group is positioning their group.

As usual there was healthy and constructive debate with many different views put forward. The following is a **summary** of those views – (for the full minutes of comments provided please see the FUNGIS website www.fungis.org)

- Forum to give direction for FUNGIS Executive Committee to take

- FUNGIS has written to SSI asking for answers to questions.
- Way up the for and against – newsletter/website/egroups/seminars.
- We need to work out where FUNGIS is to fit in.
- Open communications with SSI – keep lines open.
- Enter into dialogue with SSIQ (Qld Branch) to see what can happen.

- Operate as 2 separate bodies and see where it takes us.
- FUNGIS is a user group.
- Doesn't believe FUNGIS is a user group, we get FUN out of I, don't take it out.

- Now more aware of the structure of SSI but what will it do
- What on-ground support facility will be available
- Nationally strong focus group – what happens locally
- Don't know if we integrated with SSI – how much autonomy we would have as FUNGIS.
- Will have SSI & FUNGIS fishing in same pond - could both survive.
- State/National v. Local.
- What is SSI going to provide FUNGIS?

- We could be local manifests of Spatial Commission of SSI.
- Make sure structure is what we're happy with - make it happen.
- Be proactive.
- Could have best of both.
- FUNGIS has strength in numbers – close – in a strong position to do something.
- Spatial Sciences group can be what FUNGIS members want it to be.
- FUNGIS needs to be active in becoming involved with SSI.
- Members have to drive - if there is demand it could happen.

- If FUNGIS became part of SSIQ your administrative structure would fit in.
- Get support of all types – admin, funding etc.
- Run activities as we do now.
- Access to a big funding base.

- FUNGIS caters for non-traditional users. Groups you wouldn't pick up as part of SSI.
- Do we have to pay extra to become a member of SSI
- FUNGIS encourages and supports members coming from different professions.
- Unlikely to join SSI – FUNGIS has a more local focus.
- FUNGIS is close, local and affordable.
- Could we have lower costs if only accessing local services?

- Everyone has capacity to belong to more than one organization.
- FUNGIS is more like a club – be part of your neighbourhood, keep the FUN!

- Do we know enough about SSI yet? Show of hands - No.

- As SSI evolves we will be more informed to make decisions.
- Information will flow through.
- Where to take from here?
- What do you want Executive Committee to do?
- Resolution to be raised for decision during the AGM.

- Up to members what happens to FUNGIS.
- Information back to members – keep informed.

Outcome

The following resolution was carried at the AGM -

"FunGIS will retain it's independence, and the essence that is FunGIS.
The **Executive will continue to communicate with SSIQ** on issues such as accreditation and partnership possibilities, and **report back to members regularly** through the next twelve months.
The communication with SSIQ will be assertive, and focused on **maintaining FunGIS values including accessibility, local focus, fun, inclusion of non-specialists, GIS User Group, and membership costs."**

5) **Fungis Social Article 1:**

The FUNGIS Seminar was, for me an outstanding success. I goto Seminars for a variety of reasons, the least important on my personal scale are the papers, however M'lis paper ' GIS in an African Village' did score 100% for me, probably because it brought me back to childhood days and playing with sticky paper and coloured bits of string. The mystery tour was a major let down. I really hoped to have a drive in their Jeep and they didn't offer to let us shoot anything. It was a major coup by Mark to score the excellent presence of 2 top presenters, Tim Barker and Graham Stanton. Both could have given us a really boring bureaucratic session but succeeded in being informative as well as entertaining.

I really enjoy watching the delegates at conferences. You have a great range of "types". Firstly the " really intelligent type" they sit, leaning slightly forward, eyes glazed, periodically nodding agreement with the speakers profound words, they are also the people who take copious notes. Ask them later their opinion about a salient detail from 2 papers ago and usually they haven't a clue.
The next category is the " sleeper " it contains a range of people, firstly the ones who drank too much at the dinner, had a huge breakfast in the Hotel (normally breakfast is a cup of coffee and a biscuit from the office tearoom). Well, the head snapping, paper dropping is great fun to watch. The other main class of sleeper is the poor character that actually comes to seminars to have a rest. Their life is full of long days, stress and impossible deadlines. You can tell this type, as they are sleeping professionals. The posture in the seat ensures they will not fall off, the head is tilted forward and the hands are clasped. The applause at papers' end gently brings them to the surface. The bit that really pings me off is that they can recall what actually was said, perhaps by aural osmosis.
The " fiddler " is a good target, you know the sort, they do things to various parts of their body, the hair fluffer, the beard stroker, the crutch scratcher, and the necklace twiddler. I consider the entire Seminar an outstanding success if I spring a *nose picker*, imagine the scenario, a tentative tug of the nose tip, a shifty roll of the eyes and then a quick pick, now you let them become aware that you are looking in the pickers direction, panic what to do with the snotty ball.
Let us not forget the "showbagger" you recognize them by the bulging sample bag containing 3 ESRI Map books, 2 MapInfo stubby coolers, 6 pens pinched from the box of bags at the registration desk etc. etc.

The tea breaks are also a great watching experience, cup in one hand, Danish pastry in the other, keep them talking, the sticky contents ooze down the wrist or fall to the floor via a white shirt. Conference Dinner. Major rule is to sit at a table with Industry reps. THEY BUY WINE, be careful here, you could end up with a party animal like the junior ESRI rep and not even make it to day two. My final target is at the dinner; yes they only come for the food. I don't waste much time on these targets, as I am usually too busy, sitting at the reps table quaffing a good red.

The real major feature for me is the fellowship, the exchange of information and just being with a bunch of people who have a common interest.

6) Fungis Conference Social Article 2: (Rose Read ESRI Australia)

The annual FUNGIS conference has long been a well kept secret within ESRI, so I was a bit worried when Warwick Sayers joined our Canberra office, but Susie and I still both made it for another year. (It was hailing in Canberra last time I spoke to Warwick.)

What a great venue! The tone was set for the whole conference when the Hotel Notice Board used the mouldy spelling for the FUNGIS group. It was great to catch up with everyone again. A few new looks: even Alistair's hair is tall; Reuben looking like he has been back out working in the field; and many Townsvillians, and from further south, so FUNGIS <u>must</u> be famous.

The question on everybody's lips is always will the Mystery Tour stack up to the famous Peter Wilson bus trip and we got a few hints through the morning that it might when Mark asked us to be sure we had Photo ID. As we journeyed south I hoped for a minute that maybe we were going to Mission Beach after all, but Alan soon had it figured out, especially since it had been some time since we'd seen the other FUNGIS lifer.

The mystery was revealed when we were inspected by Captain Toby at the gates of 51FNQ and several quick change artists appeared from our morning session. It was an eye opener to see all the activity of the group and great to see the "other" side of some of those folk we thought we had all figured out. I also now know that if I go north in wet session I need a boat, I know the procedure for coming along side a bigger boat, and I know why I should not get out of the boat.

We had heard in Tim Barker's presentation that a walk to the lagoon was well worth the energy, and so somehow we managed to fit one in before the next hectic social function. He was right, although no locals we spoke to had swum there yet, so we were a bit nervous. It must be too cold. ☺

The seafood feast at the conference dinner was a real winner and the company a pleasure. The conversation bubbled along and suddenly I noticed how loud we were all talking! Although we were not the last ones left standing, the crowd had thinned somewhat by the time we said goodnight. We learnt a lot about the purpose of different tread on skateboards. I didn't have a huge night and didn't get any dirt from those who might have. Susie says this is because I'm getting old.

It was quite an honour to be selected to present second last only to Stuart. Stuart must just have the best GIS job ever. It was great to do a presentation for such an appreciative crowd although I suspect a particular ringleader was mostly responsible.

As always, the FUNGIS conference was a pleasure. So, when's the next one? But don't tell Susie.

7) Herberton - Watsonville Rush Track - GIS & Historical Tourism:

MAPPING OUR HERITAGE WITH GIS
RUSH TRACK PROJECT

Recently the Mareeba Shire Council donated the services of a GIS officer and DGPS equipment to the Eacham Historical Society for the purpose of recording the location and features of the historical Rush Track.

The Rush Track is considered to have significant heritage value and from the early 1880s until 1917 was used to carry tin and copper concentrate from the Bischoff Mill on the Walsh River, near Watsonville to Herberton.
A comprehensive account of the Rush Track project and the historical record it seeks to preserve can be found at the following website:
http://www.planetarypower.com.au/info/rushtrack
Eacham Historical Society
http://www.cyberwizards.com.au/~eachist/

The original focus of the project was to secure historical records but a number of issues made it necessary to accurately record the track location and features of significance.
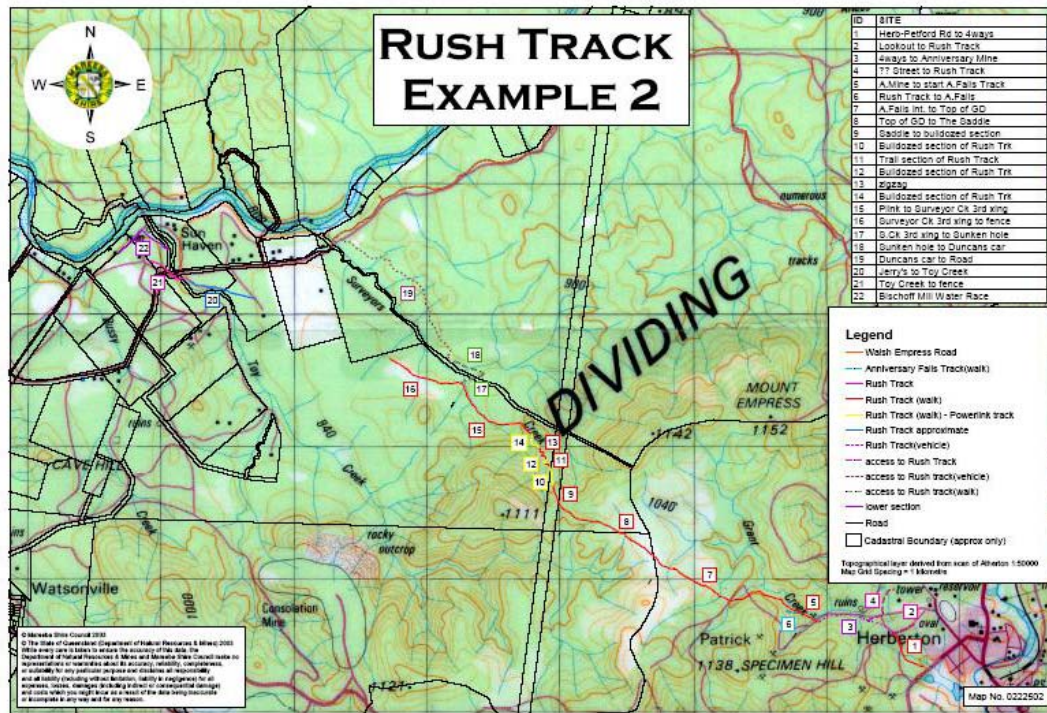- Growing interest in cultural tourism i.e. the Heritage Trails Network.
- Discovery of possibly the most northern population of the Magnificent Brood Frog adjacent to the track.
- Respecting the aspirations and culturally significant sites of the Bar Barrum people.
- The impact of the Chalumbin to Springmount high voltage power line, which runs across the zigzag section of the Rush Track.

The spatial data was collected over one day using Arcpad 6 with a Sokkia Axis3 DGPS, a metal detector and two experienced local historians, Max Enfield and Duncan Ray. The weather was superb and the crossing of the Great Divide provided some much needed exercise.

Although the data was collected in one day the extensive research and experience on the track undertaken by the two guides not only made the day informative but also are important factors for keeping the mapping costs economical.

Back in the office with my trusty Arcmap 8.3, I cleaned up the lines and points, tidied up some attributes and created a couple of example maps to give the historical society members some ideas for map presentation and so they could visualize what data was collected.

Sometime in the near future this new data will be used for the Rush Track Website illustrations, promotional material & map production, physical marking of the track and to assist the Eacham Historical Society, the Bar-Barrum People, Powerlink Queensland and the Environmental Protection Agency in their discussions on issues relating to the protection and future management of the Track.

More images available on the FunGIS website:

http://www.fungis.org/Docs/newsletters/Example_Rush_trk_2.pdf

http://www.fungis.org/Docs/newsletters/Example_Rush_trk_1.pdf

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8) **End of Year Event:**

"Art in computer mapping - GIS"

For the month of December @GIS will be holding a display of GIS talent in the Foyer Gallery at the Atherton Shire Council.

This is an opportunity for the GIS professionals of Far North Queensland to display their skills to the wider community.

It will cover traditional maps, thematic maps, analytical maps etc.
There will be a variety of categories, an opening, media coverage, prizes, and an opportunity to sell products.

We would like suggestions, especially for categories, and suggestions for generous prize providers.

Put your thinking cap on and watch for more details on the Fungis web site.

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9) Rapidview - Health Demo

The feedback I gained contained information outlined in the following paragraphs.

Products in the market already using MapInfo MapXMobile that I was alerted to include:

AUSTRALIAN:
RapidView by Rapidmap - www.rapidmap.com.au
Discover Mobile from Encom - www.encom.com.au
MobileMap from MapSolutions - www.mapsolutions.com.au
Mobile Data Assistant from Open Spatial - www.openspatial.com.au
GeobaseMap by Examin Technologies - www.geobasemap.com

ENGLISH:
HandyGIS by HandyGIS? - www.handygis.com

EGYPTIAN:
MapOnHand by DotMap S.A.E. - www.dotmap.com.eg

All of these products seem to be very functional from a GIS perspective and some of the companies above are flexible and willing to customise solutions to allow the linking of a Mobile RDMS in the background (MobileSQL?? databases) for secondary data capture that is not directly related to the attributes of a cadastral parcel (or whatever...).

Some of the above companies have comprehensive product information on their websites which enables easy comparison of their product. Some, unfortunately, have little or no documentation publicly available yet. Most of these products have comprehensive software on the desktop to facilitate data management between the mobile and desktop tables and, of course, custom form building.

Some other comments received by MapInfo-L'ers:

"Some people mentioned MapX Mobile. You should know though
that there is a problem with the software running on the new Pocket PC 2003 Operating System.
MapX Mobile runs OK on Pocket PC 2002, but the 2003 OS is different and is causing some problems. MapInfo Corp
needs to work on the MapX Mobile code to make it compatible with the 2003 OS.
If you buy a MapX Mobile app, make sure that your pocket PC is running the older OS."

"Try MapXMobile from www.mapinfo.com where you can download a trial version with some samples in embedded VM and C++."

"... MobileMapX is the obvious answer and the demo version is free.. if you are a VB programmer."

"There are several companies out there who will set something up for you and i am sure you have been plagued already (some of them are very good...'handygis' looks very slick and is modular). However, My suggestion is if you have an IT mind or better still an IT unit why not point them towards mapxmobile and see if any of their VB skilled staff couldnt do something v cheap for you?

I looked at MapXmobile for BGS last year, the development kit is free, the microsoft eVB/eVC development kit is free, the pocket pc emulators (so you program on a desktop to 'see how it'll work') are free and it is very easy to learn how to use and programme. You only have to pay for a license once you have got the system up and running and you are 100% happy with it (then you have to buy a minimum 10 seats at about £280 sterling a seat (but i bet its cheaper in Oz)

I built a 'hard-coded' relational database using Mapinfo tables and a pocket access format database for geologists (you dont need pocket access you just use the pocket jet engine in th eVB freeware) It took 4 working days to build a system to capture geology data from topography, exposures, boreholes and soil samples, including photos and 'notes'..all very tricky one-to-many
attributes, all interlinked.....and i can assure you i am not a mapx or VB programmer..the only downside was i could not get our GPS to work (my vb skills were not up to it) I am told it is easily doable but eVC is better at doing this...In the end BGS was given a very slick ESRI-built presentation using arcpad and they blew me away with built in icons functions etc and BGS bought into arcpad (we are mostly esri anyway) (though i note with satisfaction that we promptly modified their arcpad software to adopt the stuff i had done in mapxmobile........)"

"Some years ago there was a product called Map'in'Hand, developed by a MapInfo reseller, but MapInfo bought the company and quickly

retired the product to promote their MapXtend instead. However, MapXtend is a client/server solution, requiring MapXtreme/Java at
the server, so that's not what you're looking for.

MapInfo do have a product called MapX Mobile (MapX for Windows CE), which will fit your request. However, it's a developer's product, and probably quite costly to deploy (the SDK is free). And it will require a good deal of programming, unless someone has made a commercial product.

The hardware problem you face is that having TAB files on the PDA requires a lot of memory, and the largest Palm (Tungsten) only has a maximum 150 Mb "disk space" with an 128 Mb expansian card. Some of the PocketPC (e.g. the iPaq) have optional microdrives with Gb of space, so that seems the better option.

There are plenty of free or cheap apps for e.g. Palm OS out there supporting Shape files, but not TAB. ....."

"Check out the mobile mapping products from: Examin (www.geobasemap.com) and also Encom (www.encom.com.au). I have used the former and there are customizable forms, very nice. Just starting to test out the latter. I have experience with products from both of them (both are australian) and they are excellent."

Further information:

From my enquiries, most systems seem to be based on a per mobile seat basis with the cost for MapXMobile usually being around AU$500 + GST. Additional software 'off the shelf' by the above vendors can set you back anywhere between AU$400-1000.

To meet my needs of using the MapXMobile product to view a map (in my case of the cadastre - property polygons) and subsequently click on a property and bring up a customised form linked to a mobile database, it would seem there is no 'off the shelf' solution. Several companies have proposed solutions, all of which involve development time (and obvious associated costs), and of course, additional software to meet that capacity.

Some of the vendors have very capable data management software back on the 'desktop' to enable appending of new records and changes to existing records on the Main Desktop Mapinfo.TAB's if that meets your data capture needs.

Thanks once again to all who took the time to reply.

Alistair Hart

10) Conference 2003 Pictures

Mark at Army

Mark and Alan

Alan Cameraman

Rose's Table

Graham and Geoff

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