A day in the life of

a digital preservation initiative director

VICTORIA REICH

Stanford University Librarian and Director and co-founder of the LOCKSS Program (www.lockss.org),pictured at Internet Archive with (left to right) Jacques Cressaty (Internet Archive), David Rosenthal and Thib Guicherd-Callin (both LOCKSS Program)

Welcome 2011

It's the first 'work day' of 2011! For two weeks, Stanford University has been closed for Holiday Break. Sometimes during vacations I completely disengage by traveling to remote corners of the world to hike or sail, but this time I kept up with e-mail, and had a meeting (or two or three) with key people. For the most part, colleagues were on vacation, and I'm not returning to a huge backlog. Thank goodness!

Online and coffee

At 6 am I start the day with freshly ground coffee and my MacBook Air. My laptop is my only computer and I'm rarely without it. Upon opening the machine, I plug in my back-up disk and scan my inbox. Did any urgent e-mails arrive over the last nine hours? The LOCKSS Program staff works

nearly 'round the clock'. The engineers tend to work into the early morning hours, so when I start looking at e-mail, it has been only a few hours since one of us has been online. All is well. Are there any e-mails that I can answer quickly, or are more appropriately reassigned to one of the engineers?

Good Afternoon Europe

With a second cup of coffee close by, I put through a Skype call to Adam Rusbridge, UK LOCKSS Coordinator. The UK LOCKSS support service is based at EDINA, University of Edinburgh. Adam and I discuss recent developments of the ONIX Serials Online Holdings (SOH) format group. Then, I notice that Professor Michael Seadle is also available on Skype, and IM and ask if he's available for a quick chat. Michael is a co-principal investigator for the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft

(DFG)-funded LuKII project. LuKII is building metadata interoperability between the LOCKSS and German National Library's KOPAL system. Our conversation brings good news: another German library wishes to bring online a LOCKSS box!

Three miles

It's 8 am, and winter in the San Francisco Bay Area. The weather is gray and rainy. No matter, for my health and happiness, almost every morning that I'm home I take a 45-minute, three-mile walk in Palo Alto Baylands. Silicon Valley has taken care to preserve open space and we have acres and acres of protected parklands. The Palo Alto Baylands is a large tract of San Francisco Bay marshland and teems with geese, pelicans, ducks, and egrets. This time is for strategic and tactical thinking.

CLOCKSS Archive mid-morning

Big news! The CLOCKSS Archive (www.clockss.org) has hired its first full-time Executive Director. This morning we're meeting to transfer work from me to him. 2010 was the first year CLOCKSS operated as an independent non-profit organization, and it grew rapidly. Librarians and publishers appreciate and are excited to support an archive that's run 50/50 by librarians and publishers. Uniquely, the CLOCKSS archive makes 'triggered' content freely available to everyone with a web browser. The implications are obvious; CLOCKSS is the only archive that ensures open access content remains freely available. Working with the CLOCKSS

Vicky at Palo Alto Baylands

Board of Directors, the CLOCKSS Executive Committee, and the Library Advisory Councils is an honor and I'm delighted to help bring our new ED up to speed and introduce him to the CLOCKSS community.

Cloud computing and the Internet Archive

Our visits to the Internet Archive in San Francisco are always very productive and usually include lunch. We have several initiatives with the Internet Archive; today we're discussing work the Library of Congress NDIIPP is funding; for the LOCKSS engineers to separate the award-winning LOCKSS bit audit and repair protocol for possible use among cloud storage instances. The Internet Archive has a new cloud storage service, and it's extremely valuable for us to have access to the cloud engineers for this work.

Digital Federal Depository Library Program

Thib Guicherd-Callin and I arrive back to Palo Alto in plenty of time to meet with James Jacobs, Stanford's Government Documents Librarian. James, along with people from 30 other libraries (and counting!) and the LOCKSS staff are collaborating with the Government Printing Office to transform the Federal Depository Library Program from the paper age to the digital age with LOCKSS-USDOCS (http://lockss-usdocs.stanford.edu). In a centralized preservation system, it's easy for someone to alter or to delete, accidentally or purposefully, a document and no one would ever know. In a distributed, decentralized preservation system (like LOCKSS or the paper Federal Depository System) – it is near to impossible for a person to change, or delete, or recall a document without someone noticing. Although most librarians think digital documents are at most risk from format obsolescence, the data shows most digital documents are lost because of unfortunate human actions.

Heading home

I spend some time going through e-mail (although I've been reading and answering e-mail throughout the day) and then head home. My house is a few

miles from campus, a lovely walk when the weather is fine. But because it is a cold, gray day, today I have the car. Dinner time! We have a big kitchen that accommodates many people and cooking is a family hobby. At least once a week friends and/or our grown daughters and their families join us for a cooking evening. It's very easy to cook outstanding meals; we have local organic produce year round.

Evening tea and e-mail

I'm married to an Englishman; evening tea is a welcome ritual. After dinner I sit with tea and my laptop reading and answering e-mail, and working on this essay. Now, though, it's time to stop. Thank you for reading this far!