



AARNET salutes the 20th anniversary of the Internet in Australia

Pioneer of the Internet launches book to commemorate historical milestones

Sydney, AUSTRALIA 26 November 2009 The Governor-General of Australia, Ms Quentin Bryce, AC, will launch a book today at Admiralty House, commissioned by AARNET (Australias Academic and Research Network) to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Internet in Australia.

AARNET 20 years of the Internet in Australia documents the history of how the Internet network was established in Australia through AARNET. The book explores how Australias commercial Internet network, as we know it today, was originally developed by AARNET. It also documents key individuals, events and milestones that led to the growth and development of a high-speed Internet network dedicated to Australias research and education institutions.

Chris Hancock, CEO of AARNET said, 20 years ago, the idea of the Internet only existed in the technical realms of Australias universities and research institutions. The concept of how the Internet could change the way we work, play, learn and communicate was unknown to the general population in Australia. The Internet has become so much a part of our lives now that it is hard to believe it is only 20 years old in Australia.

AARNET made history with Australias very first international Internet connection through a 56 kilobit per second satellite link that connected the University of Melbourne and the University of Hawaii in June 1989. This was the first known direct live overseas link with Australia. Today, the same connection to the United States is 200,000 times faster operating at 10 gigabits (Gbps) per second.

The need for a dedicated high-speed Internet network to serve the research and education community was developed out of the special demands for a network that had the speed and capacity to manage innovative projects and collaboration between Australian and international researchers. AARNETs unique governance and funding arrangements meant its network was always more technically advanced and affordable. AARNET has showcased how innovation and collaboration is possible and is future proofing potential applications for the National Broadband Network into the future.

Some of the references in AARNET 20 years of the Internet in Australia include:

One of the earliest computing networks was CSIRONET, established by Dr Trevor Pearcey in 1963. The first local network in Australia, CSIRONET connected more than 50 computers and more than 250 terminals around Australia in 1976.

Geoff Huston, who is currently the Chief Scientist at the Asia Pacific Network Information Centre (APNIC), was AARNETs first employee in March 1989. As its Network Technical Manager, Huston was responsible for building the Internet network that connected Australian universities Australian National University, University of Melbourne, University of Sydney, University of Queensland, University of Adelaide, University of Western Australia, University of Tasmania and Northern Territory University between April and May 1990.

The first Australian website was established and launched by Australian National University in November 1992 as an experimental server.

AARNET opens its network up to value added resellers in May 1994 to what are widely recognised as Australias first retail Internet Service Providers. This includes Internode, OzEmail and iiNet.

In June 1995, AARNETs main capital city backbone link was 2 Mbps. It connected at 256 Kbps in Northern Territory, 512 Kbps in Tasmania and to the international network at 4.5 Mbps.

CSIRO became the first major organisation in Australia to implement a national VoIP service on AARNETs backbone in November 1999.

Geoff Huston, Chief Scientist of APNIC, who was AARNETs Network Technical Manager from its inception until 1995, said, Being centrally involved in building the Internet in Australia was a unique and highly challenging opportunity. AARNET today continues to demonstrate its relevance and importance to Australias researchers and educators.

The author of the book, Glenda Korporaal, said, For more than half a decade, AARNETs history was also the history of how the Internet was established in Australia. The individuals we have documented in the book were amongst the pioneers of the Internet in Australia. As Australians debate about the merits of the National Broadband Network, they should look at the history of AARNET to gather deeper insights into what may happen in the future.

Hancock said, In the last 20 years, AARNET has enabled many innovations and breakthroughs for Australians via the Internet. We have linked Australian doctors with their peers across Asia to conduct live surgery demonstrations in high definition video. AARNET has been involved in Australias bid for the worlds largest ever astronomy project, the Square Kilometre Array. We introduced Optiportal technology to Australia, giving researchers access to high-definition video collaboration to advance medical science and research.

Today, AARNET serves over one million users in Australias research, tertiary education and scientific sectors. AARNET continues to demonstrate its relevance and importance in promoting collaboration and innovation in Australia through its high-speed network, which will complement the advent of the National Broadband Network.

Hancock said, A National Research and Education Network like AARNet will always be at the forefront of Australias Internet industry because the demands of our researchers and educators greatly exceed that which can be delivered over the commercial networks.

AARNets job is to continually challenge the boundaries of networking and to develop cutting edge applications and services to help future-proof our digital economy.

Limited copies of AARNet 20 years of the Internet in Australia will be available for purchase through www.aarnet.edu.au. The book will be available through major libraries around Australia from December 2009 under the catalogue number ISBN: 978-0-646-52111-4.

Note to Editor:1. Hi-res images can be downloaded from:

Captions <https://rcpt.yousendit.com/781229569/2f65f25bbda781b0104876a8fe3008d4>

History <https://rcpt.yousendit.com/781227693/9e1bd58b916732290a8b5819b1729933>

Case Studies <http://rcpt.yousendit.com/781203974/5b24e4c10a772c6480eeab53f5d896e6>

Chris Hancock <https://rcpt.yousendit.com/781209460/b88a8cef1bfb40f5e374c4885fb8044f>

2. To watch a video for the book launch, visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fPDZd4VNIWI3>. Interview opportunities are available on request, please contact Max Australia.

About AARNet

AARNet Pty Ltd (APL) is the company that operates Australia's Academic and Research Network (AARNet). It is a not-for-profit company limited by shares. The shareholders are 37 Australian universities and the CSIRO. AARNet provides high-capacity leading edge Internet services for the tertiary education and research sector communities and their research partners. AARNet serves more than one million end users who access the network through local area networks at member institutions. For further information, please visit: www.aarnet.edu.au.

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