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ByELAM

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WSFII LIMEHOUSE TOWNHALL 2005

The most recent of a series of World Summits on Free Information Infrastructures, took place between the 1st and 3rd October 2005 at Limehouse Town hall in London. This gathering of free infrastructure developers of all kinds sought to create not only a convivial and 'open' space to represent practices and validate knowledge, but also effect its locality with some of the possibilities of free infrastructure practice.

A programme of talks, demonstrations and discussion on free networks, alternative currencies, civic information, infra-red networks, open geodata and mapping [full programme : <http://www.okfn.org/wsfii/programme.html>], was preceded by a week of workshop 'streams' including a book writing project : 'Wireless for Development' to be published by O'Reilly and the 'WSFII organisers stream' charged with organising an international summit to take place near Bangalore, India in November 2006. Members of ELAM visited WSFII during the summit and preparatory discussions and sneaking about behind the scenes recorded exchanges, vox pops and interviews with participants and visitors to the conference. The following audio files are extended interviews made available for streaming and download as well as torrent files

INTERVIEWS*

Arun Mehta

Pull : 'WSIS is apparently waiting for a decent burial at Tunis'

Part of the WSFII organisers stream, Arun Mehta also gave the final keynote talk of the 'summit'. Here Arun talks disability, radio and social organisation. His plans to use combinations of 15mm FM transmitters and 802.11b wireless for point to point and networked communications in rural India and the prospects for WSFII 2006.

Elektra

Pull : 'commercialisation of the spectrum is happening all the time'

Elektra, part of Freifunk Berlin [<http://freifunk.net/>] talked about regulation and deregulation of the spectrum. The relationship between pirate radio and wireless networking - empowering social communication and the human protocols embedded in networking technologies.

Ile Sans Fils

Pull: 'most of the spaces we would identify with "public space" are privately owned'

Ile Sans Fils [<http://www.ilesansfil.org/>] are a volunteer organisation based in Montreal where they have established a free wireless network throughout the city. Here they discuss the differing constitution of public spaces in Canada and Europe and describe how the projects they have initiated further social communication in WLAN space.

Juergen Neumann

Pull : 'There is now a Freifunk network in almost every major city in Germany'

Juergen Neumann of Freifunk Berlin [<http://freifunk.net>] also took part in the WSFII organisers stream explains the roots of the Freifunk project in earlier experiments by London's Consume network and his views on the social grounding of the WSFII organising process.

Keith Hart

Pull : 'The conventional organisation of money is, in my view, temporary'

Keith Hart teaches at Goldsmiths and is working on the political possibilities of alternative currency. He discusses his online project the Memory Bank[www.thememorybank.co.uk] and the relationship he posits between intellectual property, the information age and the emergence of new monetary systems (and value).

Richard Barbrook

Pull: 'Those who forget the future are condemned to repeat it'

Richard Barbrook on the meshing of his archeology of the American view of the future as the information society, CIA-funded Labour think tanks and 3rd way politics. Soviet cybernetics, just in time production, Edward Teller coming round for dinner and more.

Rufus Pollock

Pull: 'If you actually want change its maybe not the most constructive way to say "We're gonna destroy you"'

Rufus Pollock of The Open Knowledge Foundation talks about his project KnowledgeForge as well as breaking down the relationships between software monopolies, UK government and FLOSS.

Peter Brownell

Pull: 'We need to start providing local services that the businesses can pay for with the lime'

Peter Brownell - aka 'Greenman', central banker of the limes project and 'self-confessed anarchist capitalist' explains the alternative currency system in place at Limehouse Town Hall as part of WSFII and the shaky beginnings of its nesting in Limehouse's grey economy.

Schuyler Erle

Pull: 'We've been trying to fuse the enthusiasm of citizen cartographers with the traditional expertise of the GIS elite'

Schuyler Erle is a free software developer and is involved in the OpenStreetmap project. Here he talks about the open GeoData workshops he has been running at WSFII, Google's new Googlemap software and the relationship between freemaps, opengeodata and wireless.

Volker Grassmuck

Pull: 'Things like software and seeds for example are very much related to methods of openly sharing'

Volker Grassmuck organiser of the Wizards of OS conference talks about WSFII, emerging issues in the crossover of forms and organising methods from Open Source to knowledge and the next Wizards of OS in August 2006.

*Includes interview with Toni Pruig conducted at Open Congress, London, August 2005.

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