

## Beyond Google—Exploring other Search Engines and Directories

by Peter McCracken

This fall marks the bicentennial of Nelson's victory over the French at the Battle of Trafalgar and Nelson's death, as well. In this issue, rather than just exploring sites that discuss Nelson and his life, I'd like to explore ways of finding more information about Nelson online: that is, ways of searching beyond Google.

Search engines like Google, Yahoo!, AltaVista, and others all use computers to "crawl" web pages and compile data about each page. The results can be spotty, at best: a Google search for "paris hilton," for example, will return information about the fine hotel in that great city, but also much that you didn't bargain for, unless you were searching for Paris Hilton, the ... whatever she is. Nonetheless, other systems do exist. Real people, looking at real web pages, place web sites into structures and assign organization. One such site is Directory MOZilla at [www.dmoz.org](http://www.dmoz.org), "the largest human-edited directory of the web." Anyone can sign up to be an editor and assign sites to the existing directory or expand it as needed.

Like all web directories, dmoz has a search box in addition to its structure; so you can type in "horatio nelson" and find Society: History: By Time Period: Nineteenth Century: Wars and Conflicts: Napoleonic Wars: Personalities: Nelson, Horatio. About a dozen entries are included on Nelson, the top being the Nelson Society at <http://www.nelson-society.org.uk/>.

Similar projects include the Librarians' Index to the Internet at <http://www.lii.org>, which provides a link to a biographical site created by the BBC. The Internet Public Library at <http://www.ipl.org> was created by the University of Michigan's School of Information and does similar work but does not have as many entries; a search for "horatio nelson" returned results for Nelson Mandela and Willie Nelson, but no Horatio Nelson.

Yahoo! maintains a directory at <http://dir.yahoo.com>, but it is primarily designed for businesses that want to advertise on the web. A search of that site turned up just 10 sites about Nelson, while a Yahoo! search found well over 100,000. Google also has

a directory, at <http://www.google.com/dirhp>, and a search there returned nearly 100 useful sites.

There are, of course, many different search engines—not just Google and Yahoo! Looksmart, for instance, at <http://www.looksmart.com>, searches millions of articles in addition to their human-maintained directory. You might find, for example, an article from the June 2005 *Greater Baton Rouge Business Report* about the "Lord Nelson Pub," in a Baton Rouge couple's home.


Because different search engines return different results, some folks like to search the search engines. Sites like <http://www.metacrawler.com>, <http://www.ixquick.com>, and <http://www.ithaki.com> take your search, send it to a collection of major search engines (such as Google, Yahoo!, Looksmart, and others), and then compile and return the results. Most results pages have a nice "Are you looking for?" box, which can help you narrow your results to find the most relevant ones.

My favorite resource, though, is Wikipedia, at <http://www.wikipedia.org>. It's a fascinating attempt at creating the largest encyclopedia anywhere. Anyone can create or edit any entry in Wikipedia, so some feel it does not have the accuracy or imprimatur of something like *Encyclopedia Britannica*. But with over 600,000 entries in English (and tens of thousands in dozens of other languages), the project dwarfs any print encyclopedia, and the quality is remarkably high. Entries on a handful of controversial topics are frozen, so only a few editors can change them, but on the whole, the system works quite well. Reading each daily featured article is a great way to learn a bit about many random topics.

Suggestions for other sites worth mentioning are welcome at [shipindex@yahoo.com](mailto:shipindex@yahoo.com). See <http://www.shipindex.org> for a compilation of over 100,000 ship names from indexes to dozens of books and journals. ⚓



**J. TUTTLE**



**MARITIME  
BOOKS**

1806 Laurel Crest  
Madison, Wisconsin 53705-1065  
(608) 238-SAIL  
FAX (608)-238-7249  
Email: [tuttlemaritime@charter.net](mailto:tuttlemaritime@charter.net)  
<http://tuttlemaritime.com>

**U.S. MILITARY MEDALS & RIBBONS**


**FREE CATALOG!  
FREE SHIPPING!**  
**TOLL FREE TEL: 800-864-5062**  
**VETS SUPPLY LINE**  
**10550 CO. RD 81, #218**  
**MAPLE GROVE, MN 55369**

**DOG TAGS**      **PATCHES**  
**CUSTOM BALL CAPS-NAVY SHIP CAPS**  
**WEB SITE: [www.vetssupplyline.com](http://www.vetssupplyline.com)**

A new book entitled

***We Were There***

**The USS Indianapolis Tragedy**

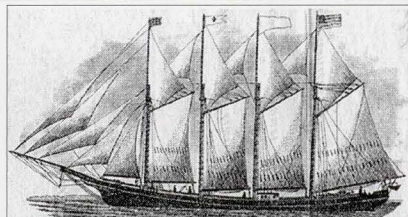
By L. Peter Wren, a rescue officer who pulled the men from the sea.

This is the rest of the story—a compilation of never before told oral histories—as told by airmen, sailors, and others who were there.


Soft Cover: \$15.95  
Hard Cover: \$25.95  
+\$3 s/h

Make Checks or money orders payable to:  
**WREN ENTERPRIZES**

1011 Ridgetop Road, Richmond, VA 23229-6733



**SHIPS** on banknotes, postcards, stocks, bonds, yachting medals. Nautical books, and objects relating to the sea. See us online, or visit us in person at our downtown Manhattan sales gallery.

  
ESTABLISHED 1860

2 Rector St., 12th Floor  
New York, NY 10006

**[smytheonline.com](http://smytheonline.com)**

**800-622-1880      212-943-1880**

We buy, sell and auction coins, paper money, stocks, bonds, autographs.

