

form the stamper. This is done by electroplating a nickel layer onto the silver and building it up to a sufficient strength so that the glass with its remaining coating can be pulled away, leaving a 'negative' of the original on which what were pits in the coating are now bumps on the nickel. This is the stamper, once it has had its hole put *exactly* in the centre.....it's not so easy to find! The only wrinkle is that both the glass check disc and the plastic production disc are read through the base so that the sense of the pits when reading is exactly opposite to the sense of the pits when writing..... And thereby hangs another tale; *exactly* how does the disc get read? The answer is that nobody really knows. What is true is that the signal returning from a laser spot that covers a region of a disc that includes (part of) a pit is less than the signal coming back from an unpitted region. The relative contributions of destructive interference (the pit depth was chosen to be a quarter of a wavelength of the original gas laser light), diffraction and magic are unknown. **DRC**

## who, what, where

Prof Ching-chih Chen, Associate Dean Simmons College Graduate School of Library and Information Science, 300 The Fenway, Boston, Massachusetts 02115, USA.

Project Emperor-I is a videodisc application in the humanities. Two NTSC videodiscs have been produced, recording the artifacts from the period of the first Emperor of China (Ch'in Dynasty). His magnificent tomb near Xian with 7,000 life-sized terracotta figures provides much of the visual material. The discs are constructed in 'chapters' and searching can be by chapter or frame. The first disc contains 200

segments of motion pictures and over 4,000 still frames, the second has a collection of videotaped interviews with archaeologists and other subject specialists. A comprehensive database is being constructed which will permit rapid retrieval of textual, visual and audio information. The project was supported mainly by the Humanities Project in Libraries, US National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH).

Jack McBride, IVC, 1818 N Street NW, Washington DC 20036, USA. Tel: (202) 887 1700.

According to a recent press release from 'The Videodisc Monitor', the Smithsonian Institution and the Interactive Video Consortium of Public Broadcasting Stations (see Newsletter 9) have jointly established a National Demonstration Laboratory for Interactive Educational Technologies (NDL) on the campus of the Smithsonian in Washington DC. The aim is to provide an environment for educators to have access to all interactive technologies, without commercial pressure or bias. It will offer a facility for designing and developing potential projects.

Clive Moffatt, Blackrod Ltd, Three-ways House, 40-44 Clipstone Street, London W1P 7EA. Tel: (01) 637 9376.

Blackrod Interactive Services Ltd has announced a major contract to design and produce six interactive programmes for Jaguar Cars. The programmes will provide training for Jaguar's network of dealers in the UK and continental Europe and various language versions will be produced. The company is also seeking support for a project concerned with drug abuse. Financial support from the DTI depends on raising about £150,000 towards production costs from other sources.

Terracotta figures from the Xian tomb

