

Project MIND . . . a column on meeting the information needs of the disabled

DEAKIN UNIVERSITY is moving into the field of providing off-campus studies for handicapped students. A recently commissioned report to the Dean of Student Services has now been received, and the university is examining the possibilities of offering three courses in the near future. Inquiries should be directed to Mr Vic Gough, Deakin University, 3217.



A Kurzweil Reading Machine (KRM) has been installed at the Royal Victorian Institute for the Blind, Melbourne. The KRM (see *Incite* no8, 16 May) is a computer-dependent print-to-speech translator which looks like a photocopying machine. Inquiries to Public Relations, RVIB, 557 St Kilda Road, Melbourne. Sample KRM tapes available from L. Junor, Melbourne State College, Carlton, on receipt of stamped blank cassette.

An adjustable-speed cassette tape recorder with the ability to keep voice pitch constant over the range of half to two and a half times the normal rate of replay may be an asset to listeners who have to study books on tape. Several such units, known as speech time compressors, are currently available. They range between \$190 and \$650 and are stocked by Wormald International Sensory Aids, Television Research Industries and Rank Industries.

A hand-held calculator-sized electronic printer is now available to promote conversation for recently-deaf persons who have not learned to lip-read or to sign-talk. The device has the 26 alphabet characters plus numerals on the keyboard. When the keys are pressed printed characters silently emerge on a nar-

row paper tape. The Canon Communicator costs approx \$450 and is available from Canon Australia.

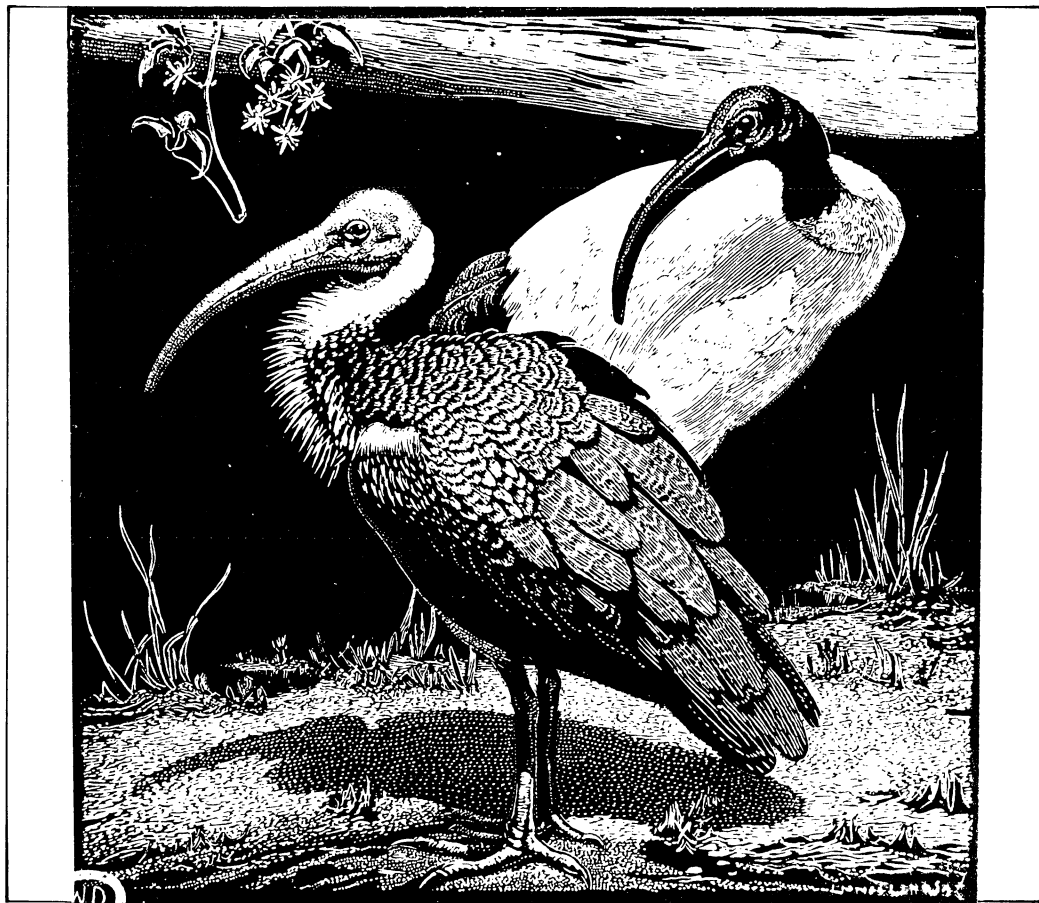
Increased numbers of the cassette magazine *Library Talk* are being made available by the Braille and Talking Book Library. *Library Talk* is available free and post-free to persons who cannot read printed matter adequately. Topics typically include reviews of new braille and audio books, anecdotes, interviews and information likely to interest print-handicapped persons. Librarians who wish to obtain it for library circulation or who wish to refer eligible borrowers should contact the Braille and Talking Book Library, 31 Commercial Road, South Yarra 3141. Phone (03) 26 3465. Interstate inquiries welcome.



The importance of the olfactory sense of a communicator is often overlooked. However, it gives substantial information about the freshness or putridness of foods, it contributes to taste sensation and warns persons of dangers associated with gas, smoke and fire. An 'artificial nose' has been developed by Dr Carter Collins of the Smith-Kettlewell Institute in California. It has analytic and threshold sensitivity levels superior to that of humans and of animals renowned for sense of smell, eg dogs. Applications are likely to be in the area of law enforcement (drugs, etc) and cosmetics initially.

All contributions to this column should be sent to Lloyd Junor, Lecturer in Media Studies, Department of Librarianship, Melbourne State College, 757 Swanson Street, Carlton, 3053. Phone (03) 341 8111.

An exhibition of woodcuts by Lionel Lindsay is now being held at the State Library of New South Wales. It will run until 31 August. The woodcut shown here is titled 'Ibis'.



LAA/NZLA Conference: latest news

MANY LIBRARIANS have expressed a desire to see some of New Zealand either before or after the conference. In the previous issue of *Incite* (no8, 16 May) four bus tours were advertised.

If you're not a lover of long bus tours, there are many other options available: 'drive-yourself' holidays; boat, canoe or plane excursions; long or short bus or rail tours; walking or tramping, fishing or hunting adventures, and whatever else you can imagine.

Our contact in Christchurch for all travel within New Zealand is Jim Mangnall, Atlantic and Pacific Travel Ltd, PO Box 2607, Christchurch. Write to Jim, mention you are attending the conference, and give him details of your requirements. Remember, the conference is being held during a peak travel period, so early bookings are essential. It would be a good idea to write straight away.

Please note when making your trans-Tasman flight booking that 'Group Travel' blocks have been arranged to depart up to 13 days before the conference and to return up to 13 days after the conference in order to accommodate your holiday plans.

Plan now -- make the most of your trip -- January is just around the corner!

Read the sound track

TONIGHT TRY watching television with the sound turned off. Within just a few moments you will understand the frustration of three million viewers who are deaf or hard of hearing.

Night after night they must guess at what is being said on television. Often they invent their own plots and narrative. Both the BBC and ITV companies already have available to them all the technology necessary to provide optional sub-titles using teletext -- a way of transmitting pages of text at the same time as ordinary television programmes.

Apart from the obvious social benefits, such a service would immediately boost sales of teletext sets. But the ITV companies, while researching the psychological and linguistic problems behind closed doors, have not yet transmitted any sub-titled programme. Thanks mainly to socially conscious pressure groups inside TV Centre, the BBC has made a few pioneering transmissions and the pitiful gratitude shown by deaf viewers with teletext receivers is nothing short of gut-rendering.

Both the BBC and ITV companies blame shortage of cash for their failure to follow the US, where deaf subtitling is growing fast. A government grant of just a million pounds a year to each channel would open the door to hours of sub-titles a night. The millions of pounds it now costs to screen just one prestigious feature film would do the same.

Tonight, after watching television with the sound temporarily switched off, ask yourself a simple question. Would you be prepared to forfeit one screening of *The Sound of Music* or a James Bond epic to give deaf viewers the equivalent of sound every night for a full year?

Adrian Hope

From *New Scientist* 14 February 1980