

# BAUOY BITS... COLUMN OF ONLINE NEWS

The 47th Annual Conference of the New Zealand Library Association (10-15 February 1980) was the scene of much lively debate on the issues surrounding the recent introduction of OASIS (equivalent to MIDAS) and the provision of online searching. The theme of the Conference was *Information Access: Key to New Zealand's Future*, and there was much discussion both during the formal sessions and informally about the effects of the online revolution on traditional library services in New Zealand.

To add fuel to the debate, training sessions on both DIALOG and ORBIT were held in conjunction with the Conference, and over 80 people were initiated into the art of online searching in one or both systems.

Prior to the Conference there had been a series of articles in the Wellington Press concerning online information retrieval, sparked off by the announcement by Rosemary Smith that the Information Centre of UEB Industries Ltd (Auckland) would provide an information service using online information retrieval systems.

A rather heated reply (headlined 'Fact Seekers Warned of Computer Pay Trap') came from Norman Smith of SATIS (Scientific and Technical Information Service) which is attached to the Wellington Public Library. In this article, Mr Smith maintained that manual search methods are both more efficient and less expensive than online searching. A reply by Rosemary Smith was also published.

This debate culminated in a panel debate at the Conference - *Manual versus Computer Searching*, with Rosemary Smith (UEB Industries) and Isobel Mosley (Canterbury Medical Library) on the side of computer searching, and Norman Smith (SATIS) and David Keet (Central Library, Dept of Scientific and Industrial Research) on the side of manual searching.

It became clear at this session that New Zealand librarians face the advent of online searching with the same mixture of excitement and apprehension that we have seen in Australia, but by the end of the Conference and the training sessions, many more librarians were excited at the possibilities of online services than were apprehensive.

Anne Rogers reports that she has been elected Convener of the WA Online Users Group. They have produced a local Union List of User Aids for DIALOG and ORBIT, and have also designed a 'problem form' which all members will use for the recording of technical problems encountered in the use of online systems.

This includes AUSINET and MEDLINE as well as the overseas systems. The information recorded on these forms will be collated each month and forwarded to OTC or the appropriate authority.

WA users have had quite a lot of telecommunication problems, and they hope that if they give OTC a detailed record they will be able to identify the sources of the problems and overcome them as far as possible.

The Group has decided not to start an online newsletter of their own, but will have a column of online news in each monthly issue of *Biblia*, the newsletter of the LAA in WA. This will start with the March issue.

The next meeting of the Group will be on Wednesday, 23 April, at 5.30 pm at the Reid Library, University of Western Australia. Sandra Sawicki will speak on *Cost effective searching on DIALOG*.

The Queensland Online Users Group has recently elected a new committee and adopted a constitution. The new President is Elizabeth Arden, Biological Sciences Library, University of Queensland, replacing Tonia Walker, Qld Institute of Technology. Tonia will be particularly missed as the editor of the lively and informative newsletter. The next meeting of the group will be on Monday, 21 April.

Some time ago the NSW Online Users Group wrote to database producers requesting information on any training materials which may be available for possible training seminars in Australia.

The majority of those to whom we wrote have now replied, and many sent instructional or informational material on their databases.

Rather than itemise the information from each supplier here is a list of those which included useful material, and interested people can contact me direct for further details.

## University of NSW

The staff of the University of New South Wales School of Librarianship have been busy for many months planning a major revision of their Diploma courses.

The School has been very concerned to have informed opinion from library educators and from practitioners - librarians, archivists and others in the information management field and to this end ran a series of three hour seminars each week over a period of several months late last year. Various people involved in developing and providing library and information services were invited to share their ideas about likely development in the information handling area during the 1980s.

Stimulated by these discussions, the School organised a two day curriculum review seminar in January. Once again the aim was to obtain informed input from a wide cross-section of information handling organisations - special librarians, archivists from varied institutions, university librarians, public librarians, recent past students, records managers, education administrators as well as people involved in developing and managing less traditional information handling organisations attended.

This two day seminar like its small scale predecessors also proved immensely stimulating and informative for the staff who are pushing ahead with their plans to develop a new archives management and librarianship course which shares a common core and builds on this in the two areas by means of specialist strands.

The School would be very pleased to hear from anybody who wishes to input ideas about education for information managers in the 80s.

*Patricia Willard*

THE Library Board of Queensland, in agreement with the Director-General of Education, have decided that copies of the *Report of Film Library Services for Queensland* be circulated for perusal and comment. The report is the result of a working party set up in 1979. Copies available from the Library Board of Qld, State Library, William St, Brisbane 4000. Comments should reach the Board by 25 April 1980.

Small miscellaneous advertisements are accepted at the rate of \$2.50 per line, \$10 minimum.

**For Sale** CSIRO has a number of volumes of *Bulletin Signalétique* to sell for the best offer, purchaser to pay freight ex Sydney. The volumes are in the physics, chemistry, mathematics and electronics series and date from 1961-1976. A detailed list is available on application to the Chief Librarian, CSIRO Central Library, 314 Albert St, East Melbourne, 3002. (Attn: Special Project Officer).

**Position wanted** Male librarian, BA, DipLib, MGeneral Studies - varied experience in academic, law and public libraries; position must be based in Sydney. Expertise in media librarianship. Contact: John Conomos (02) 57 3111.

**For Sale** Two library catalogue cabinets, constructed of blackbeam timber. One x one-sided, 48 drawer cabinet; one x two-sided, 120 drawer cabinet. For further information contact: J.D. Gadd, Shire of Corio, Swinburne St, North Geelong, Vic 3215, (052) 79 5244.

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