

# News from the Divisions

## LITERACY SECTION

THE Annual General Meeting of the newly-established Literacy Section (formerly Adult Literacy Special Interest Group) was held on 25 February. The Section was created by General Council in November 1979, following a successful petition by members in various states. The Executive is as follows: President/General Councillor: Helen Modra; Secretary: Linda L. Stevenson; Treasurer: Lydia Klimovitch; Council members: Jane Wilson, Julie Wilson, Norma Edwards.

At the Annual General Meeting, the new President (formerly convener of the Adult Literacy Special Interest Group) outlined the activities of the group in the two years of its existence, 1978-79.

Highlights of those years were:

Public meetings, mainly in Melbourne, offering librarians the opportunity to acquaint themselves with various aspects of the literacy issue;

Joint activities with the Victorian and NSW Adult Literacy Councils;

Participation in the second and third national conferences of the Australian Council of Adult Literacy, and conducting special workshops for librarians;

Support of LAA-sponsored visit to Australia by Emeritus Professor Helen H. Lyman, world authority on libraries and literacy, and the conduct of special workshops in various states featuring Professor Lyman;

Drafting of an LAA Policy on Libraries and Literacy, adopted by General Council August 1979 and to be published in the Association's *Handbook* from now on;

Co-ordination by the President of a Committee to prepare a submission to the Senate Standing Committee on Education and the Arts' Inquiry into Education for Employment. This document was drafted by the President with input from ASLA and the LAA School Libraries Section;

Growth of membership of the Group to approximately 60 at the end of 1979;

Preparation and distribution of basic reading list on libraries and literacy.

The tasks confronting the Section are enormous. The new Executive will meet again on April 14 to develop program objectives in the light of the following:

a) need to maintain ongoing continuing education programs at more than one level, that is, to provide basic training for those librarians who have not yet realised the significance of the literacy issue in Australia and worldwide, and also to provide a forum for, and give support to, that growing number of librarians who are now actively involved in literacy work and have a variety of problems to solve;

b) need for continuing policy initiatives and for liaison between the LAA, agencies of government concerned with literacy, and professional bodies in the literacy field, such as the Australian Council of Adult Literacy and the state literacy councils where they exist;

c) need to move for greater commitment in formal courses in librarianship, of curriculum planning time and resources for the study of

literacy and related issues;

d) need for continuing liaison with sister organisations eg ALA, NZLA, LA, CLA, whose experience with a variety of approaches to library literacy work have much to teach us;

e) need for maximising access to information about existing teaching materials and to encourage greater publication, through close liaison with literacy agencies, publishers and other interested bodies;

f) need to pursue all possible channels whereby communications about literacy might be enhanced, with particular emphasis on the need for effective information service to literacy administrators and literacy agencies.

The consequences of illiteracy are of very great significance both personally and politically. (Send for our reading list if you are not yet convinced of this!) If, as professionals, we are concerned about the information disadvantaged, we have an obligation to engage in literacy work, and to work to empower those who are disadvantaged in a society dependent on information transfer and use. This involves in particular the promotion of reading and other information skills.

You can support the work of the new section in many ways, and your new Executive hopes that you will:

a) join the Section when you renew your membership;

b) undertake to become informed on the issue of literacy and library responses to illiteracy;

c) promote, within your own Divisions and with the assistance of the Section, programs for members which will accord with the Section's overall objectives.

Further information and a reading list may be obtained by writing to the Section, c/o PO Box 91, Armadale, Vic 3143.

Helen M. Modra, President

## NSW PUBLIC LIBRARIES

'EVEN the weather was beautiful' commented one librarian who attended the 'Wollongong Weekend', organised by the NSW Public Libraries Group, on 22 and 23 March.

The activity was organised with the assistance of staff from Wollongong City Library.

The object of the Weekend was to allow library workers from the Wollongong area and Sydney to meet and discuss problems and for the Sydney participants to visit Shellharbour Central Library and Wollongong City Library.

On Saturday, staff from the Wollongong City Library gave audiovisual presentations about various aspects of the service.

There was a presentation outlining the library's promotional activities. Many thousands of people have attended these activities, and some have been televised.

Afternoon sessions were concerned with Migrant Services and Cataloguing, Community Information Service and Management.

The last talk was an address by the City Librarian, Richard Drake, who brought together all the themes from the previous talks and presentations. He outlined the philosophy which underlines the library service, indicating particularly the 'marketing approach'.

A dinner in the evening allowed participants to meet, mix and talk in an informal and easy atmosphere.

Guests were honoured with a visit by the Mayor of Wollongong, Mr Arkell. The Mayor welcomed the guests from Sydney and praised Wollongong City Library, its Librarian and

staff. Many commented on the civic spirit which Mr Arkell displayed and his enthusiasm for public libraries.

On the Sunday guests motored to the Shellharbour Central Library at Warilla. After a 'look around' the Chief Librarian, Ms Diane Allen, gave an address outlining the history and development of the library. A good deal of interest and discussion centered around the computerisation of the catalogue.

A barbecue lunch and swim at Austinmere rounded off the weekend.

## VICTORIAN BRANCH

### Registration lectures

FREE lectures, open to all students of LAA Registration subjects, have been arranged at the following times and places:

**Paper 202** (*Bibliographical organisation of library material*). Lecturer: Graham Dudley; Time: Thursday, 5.30-7.30pm, started 27 March; Place: Library Council of Victoria Seminar Rooms, 1st Floor, PLD, 181 La Trobe St, Melbourne.

**Paper 401(c)** (*Book selection, collection building and assistance to readers in school and children's libraries*). Lecturer: Margaret Dunkle; Time: Wednesday, 5.30-7.30pm, starts 16 April; Place: Children's Demonstration Library, Grd Floor, PLD, 181 La Trobe St, Melbourne.

**Paper 402** (*Advanced cataloguing and classification*). If sufficient demand, lectures will be given in this subject by Graham Dudley. Time and date to be decided. Contact Mr Dudley (03) 669 9888.

**Paper 407** (*Readers and reading*). Lecturer: Gordon Dadswell; Time: Wednesday, 5.30-7.30pm, started 26 March; Place: LCV Seminar Rooms, 1st Floor, PLD, 181 La Trobe St, Melbourne.

Further enquiries to Jane La Scala (03) 669 9937.

### Meetings recorded

THE branch is making tape recordings of all its meetings, and Margaret Cameron can send a copy to any interested person who supplies two C60 blank cassettes. Meg's address is The Library, Deakin University, Victoria 3127, (052) 471 1111.

## UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE LIBRARIES

### Librarians' Annual Reports

THE UCLS Committee plans to include in forthcoming issues of this news column, a series of notes on current developments in Australian tertiary libraries. To assist us in preparing these notes, could all librarians of universities and colleges please send a copy of their 1979 Annual Report to Colin Cayless, President, UCLS, Queensland Institute of Technology Library, PO Box 2434, Brisbane, Qld 4001.

### General Council

Pam Longley of La Trobe University, and currently President of the Victorian UCLS Branch, attended the March meeting of the LAA General Council on behalf of the Section. A report of items of interest arising from the meeting will appear in a later issue of this column.

### Interlending in the 80s: a national conference

The program has been finalised for the conference to be held 27-29 August at the University of Queensland under the joint sponsorship of the LAA Queensland Branch and UCLS. For further details and registration forms, write to the Publicity Officer, Interlending in the 80s Conference, Queensland Institute of Technology Library, PO Box 2434, Brisbane, 4001.