

# Letters

## Reconsider LAA office location

It was with concern that the ACT Branch of the LAA noted the decisions made at the General Council of 12 April 1981 to locate permanently the headquarters of the Association in Sydney and not to move to Canberra at any future time.

It is many years since the Association first decided that the headquarters should move to Canberra and this was re-affirmed as recently as March 1979.

As a national association the most appropriate location for its headquarters is Canberra. The LAA can provide services to members equally well from Canberra as from Sydney or Melbourne but Canberra has the advantage of being at the centre of political power in Australia with all the implications this has for the activities of the Association. The proximity to policy making bodies and the opportunity to influence them is an advantage the LAA should not ignore.

Other national associations, 125 of them, have recognised the value of relocation of the central office in Canberra. The latest is another professional association, the Australian Veterinary Association.

It is unfortunate that such a fundamental decision should have been taken on the basis of a Report from the Office Location Working Party which in its own words had 'emphasis on speed and painlessness rather than thoroughness' (Para 1:4). This is surely not good enough for a professional association which is making a most important decision for its future welfare. The very different views of the third member of the Working Party were not adequately incorporated into this final Report and it is the poorer for that omission.

The fact that a property in Sydney was purchased some months before the Report of

that Working Party was to be presented to General Council can only be deplored as a blatant attempt to prejudge and influence the outcome of the Working Party's investigations.

The decision to remain in Sydney can only prejudice the best and most efficient working of this national association. It is not appropriate in this letter to outline in any detail the many positive advantages of relocating in Canberra. To choose one argument from many - housing costs in Sydney are so prohibitive that it must limit choice of a new Executive Director and other staff to those already based in Sydney and this can not be described as desirable.

The ACT Branch hopes that in the future the Association will reconsider this decision on Office Location made at General Council, 12 April 1981.

Averill M.B. Edwards  
President, ACT Branch

## Women librarians

Never mind your statements from 1880 (*Incite* no 5) and 1902 (*Incite* no 3), here's one from 1947:

Living in Melbourne, I had passed the Preliminary Certificate, as awarded by the Australian Institute of Librarians, in 1946. I wanted very much to go and work in Perth - for reasons of an 'affair of the heart' - so I wrote to the Public Library of that fair city.

The reply came - swift and categorical - 'we do not employ women librarians in our library'. I did not keep the letter, but threw it out, with some anger, in haste to rid myself of such a contemptible attitude.

I cannot remember the name of the Librarian of that day, but I wonder when he changed his regulation. Perhaps members from Perth could give us some details of this piece of discrimination, and how it was overcome.

Kathleen Gawler  
Mt Waverley

## Muddled 'remembering'

I should be grateful if you would allow me to correct an error which arose from a bit of muddled 'remembering' I did in the taped conversation, an edited transcript of which was published in the *Australian Library Journal* (vol 30 no 1 1981).

I compiled (I think that it is probably the more appropriate word) some background material on two or three topics of current interest for use by discussion groups, but these were not for *Current Affairs Bulletins*. As I remember it they preceded the first CAB and, I think, appeared only in roneoed form.

My contribution to the work of Professor Greenwood and some others for CABs was only the provision of background and bibliographical material.

Ron McGreal  
Burwood, NSW

## More quizzes

I thoroughly enjoyed the 'Australian Bibliographic Tools Quizz' by Carol Mills in the 23 January issue of *Incite*. I found it cleared up a lot of woolly thoughts, and was very informative. I would certainly appreciate seeing more quizzes published.

Mary Wilson  
Westbourne Park, SA

## WAIT course to help disabled users



Jenny Woodroffe, the course co-ordinator with Alister Shields, a film and TV student.

A LIBRARY and information service to disabled people is a new course aimed at reaching an understanding of the needs of disabled users. Organised by the Department of Library and Information Studies, WAIT, in conjunction with the Advisory Council on Library Services for the Handicapped in WA, it comprises six weekly two and a half hour sessions.

Disabled people representing hearing and visual impairments, as well as physical disability, will join with librarians from special, medical, public and academic libraries, occupational therapists, teachers from special schools and other professionals to share their knowledge of the needs, resources, finance and current research in this field.

This course has been designed specifically with the use of local speakers, so that there will develop in WA, an integrated and comprehensive service to disabled people, noted for its professionalism and co-operation.

The course will encourage further training and research in order to consolidate and unify trends and developments in the area of a library and information service to the disabled.

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