

News from the Divisions

SPECIAL LIBRARIES

The long-awaited update of Vera Wicks' *Directory of Special Libraries in Australia* should appear before the end of the year. Funds are available and it will be possible to automate using existing CSIRO programs. As well as a simple update, this will produce elegant typeset copy (using the CSIRO Comtext program), automatically produced indexes, sorted entries by SSAL/SALSSAH symbol, some flexible fields to cope with characteristically idiosyncratic specials, and a set of address labels for the next update. Format will be in book form with perhaps microfiche as an option.

Since it has been said that librarians are now talking co-operation and not meaning ILL, this directory will include brief details of who's automating with what and which networks they've joined. We will also take advantage of the ABS/AACOBS definition for serials/monographs to make more meaningful comparisons possible. I'd also like to collect details of reader seats because space for users has been under threat in Canberra specials and this may be so elsewhere.

To facilitate collecting data and future updates we have established a network of state co-ordinators or subeditors. This should spread the workload and mean that there is a local phone contact point for those of us in the big cities. The central editorial team is Jean Geue, Heather Howard and Gabrielle Watt. Correspondence to Jean Geue at Patents Library, PO Box 200, Woden 2606.

Data collection will commence in the near future - end May or early June. Exact mailing date and State contacts will be given in a future issue of *Incite* as we will need your help to ensure that coverage is as wide as possible.

Jean Geue

VIC BRANCH

National seminar on acquisitions

Approval plans have not been widely used by Australian libraries as a method of acquisition. Is this reluctance justified? What impact has data processing technology had on the viability of such schemes? How relevant are such schemes under tight budgeting situations?

The Victorian Branch is organising a national seminar at Melbourne State College on 27-28 August 1981 to explore these and other related questions.

Entitled 'Approval plans and blanket orders - viable acquisitions techniques for the 80s?', it will provide a forum for discussion by librarians supportive of and sceptical of such schemes. A feature will be a series of talks in which representatives of some major library suppliers including five overseas suppliers, will present their views and explain their services.

Several social functions will be held for seminar participants, and the Acquisitions Special Interest Group is organising trips to various libraries and booksellers in Melbourne in conjunction with the seminar.

For more details contact Bill Cations (03) 341 8567 or c/o Melbourne State College, 757 Swanston Street, Carlton, Vic 3053.

QLD UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE LIBRARIES

Videotex/teletext

On 24 April the section held a one-day seminar 'Videotex and libraries.'

Videotex is one of the many new information technologies that will affect the dissemination of information in the 80s. It is a two-way, interactive medium that connects computer bases to television screens through telephone or cable television lines.

The aim of the seminar was to make participants more aware of the applications of interactive videotex services in the Australian context, and particularly the implications of such services for libraries. The guest speakers were Marge Broward, who supervised the NLA/Telecom/Insearch videotex research project and Sue Nielsen, the project leader and lecturer from the School of Library and Information Studies, Kuring-gai CAE.

Marge Broward gave an overview of computer based information distribution channels of the 80s, concentrating on videotex and teletext. Videotex is an interactive medium, whereas teletext is a one-way, non-interactive medium transmitting information through regular or cable TV broadcast signals. Channel 7's teletext system, 'Seventex' was shown in the afternoon's demonstration session.

Marge presented information on several developments in this area - Prestel, is the videotex system operated by the British Post Office; Viewtron, a videotex system tested in Florida; Antiope, a non-commercial system controlled by the French national postal and telephone authority; Telidon, a new technology being developed in Canada to improve the graphic capabilities of teletext and videotex.

Sue Nielsen addressed the topic 'Videotex and libraries: problems and promises.' Some of the promises videotex makes are its 'user-friendly' operation, its capacity to contain an unlimited amount of information, and the ease with which information can be up-dated.

However, Sue pointed out that problems can arise when data bases are not kept up-to-date and when indexes are inaccurate (for example, leading to empty pages).

For libraries there are the additional problems in the use of a system like Prestel. The 'tree-structure' search method can seem slow to librarians used to online searching; browsing can help to familiarise the user with what is available in the data bases; and costs are billed to the user for each 'page' of information. Some reference queries may be more easily and cheaply answered by using videotex rather than the reference collection.

The afternoon sessions included a demonstration of Seventex and Prestel. An ISD phone link to the UK was provided by Telecom, and Grahame Powles from Telecom's Telegraph and Data Branch demonstrated the capabilities of Prestel. Additionally, a short videotape program on the graphic capabilities of the new Canadian technology, Telidon was shown.

Margaret Walters

NSW BRANCH

Take off 1981

How does the LAA function? What are its services to members? What publications does it offer? How involved is the LAA in lobbying and public affairs on issues of concern to librarians and the community? Can it help with an industrial problem? How can you get to know about the sectional and interest groups in NSW and join in their activities?

The 1981 edition of the NSW Branch *Take off with the LAA* aims to answer these questions and many more. The booklet has been prepared by the Branch's Communications sub-committee to welcome and inform new and continuing members.

Copies have been distributed to NSW divisional committees. Additional copies may be obtained from the Branch Secretary, Philomena Lapsley, Fisher Library, University of Sydney, NSW 2006, (02) 692 3508.

Patricia Ward

HAPPENINGS continued from page 5

ACT

June 11 LAA Cataloguers Section ACT Group COMMITTEE MEETING 5.30pm MACDONALD ROOM, MENZIES BLDG, ANU LIBRARY. Meetings for 1981 will be held second Thursday of each month, same time, same place as above. Dates of future meetings: 9 July, 13 Aug, 10 Sept, 8 Oct, 12 Nov, 10 Dec. Contact: Philip Keane (062) 49 3417.

June 11 LAA ACT Branch MEETING *Bicentennial history project*. 7.30pm NLA READERS LOUNGE. Speakers: Prof Inglis, Dr McQuilton, Dr Spearitt. Contact: Peter Clayton (062) 52 2051.

June 11-12 ACI ORBIT Service NEW USER TRAINING COURSE 1½ days. Cost: \$120. ADVANCED USER TRAINING ½ day. Cost: \$50. CANBERRA. Contact: Steve Cartland (062) 47 0988.

June 11 LAA Cataloguers' Section ACT Group COMMITTEE MEETING 5.30pm SEMINAR ROOM, MENZIES BLDG, ANU. Guest speaker: Harrison Bryan (Director-General, NLA). Contact: Philip Keane (062) 89 8177.

June 15 Peter Judge will show slides of his recent visit to Chinese and Japanese libraries and mention current trends in information policy in China. 12-2pm CSIRO HQ, CONFERENCE ROOM, LIMESTONE AVE. Slides at 12.30pm. Contact: Gay Watt (062) 43 3288.

June 15-19 Insearch DIAL Services DIALOG SYSTEM SEMINAR CANBERRA. Contact: Katie Blake, phone (02) 264 6344. See *Incite* No 2 for more details.

June 18 LAA ACT Branch MID-WINTER DINNER 7 for 7.30pm ANU STAFF CENTRE. Guest speaker: John Balnaves. Presentation of ACT Branch prizes to CCAE graduate and under-graduate librarianship students. Cost: \$12 each. Acceptances to D. Carroll (062) 62 1602 or A. Edwards (062) 62 1509.

June 22 LAA Special Libraries Section ACT Group PARLIAMENTARY LIBRARY VISIT 10.30am-12.30pm Contact: Mr N. Prendergast (062) 72 7274. (Numbers limited, but names will be taken for another session later in the year).

July 2 LAA ACT Branch COUNCIL MEETING 5.30pm READERS LOUNGE, NLA. Meetings for 1981 will be held on first Thursday of each month, same time, same place as above. Dates of future meetings: 6 Aug, 3 Sept, 1 Oct, 5 Nov, 3 Dec. Contact: Janet Perremont (062) 66 3572.

July 10 LAA Cataloguers' Section ACT Group FULL DAY SEMINAR *Serials cataloguing in the 1980s*. More details later.

Contact: Philip Keane (062) 89 8177.

July 22 Canberra On-Line Users Group MEETING *BMR in-house data bases - GEODEX, OSHAL, CABIB, LIBLN* 4.30pm BMR. Numbers limited. Possibility of second session if sufficient demand. Contact Ray Lorenz (062) 49 9708.

July 24 UCLS ACT Group ONE-DAY SEMINAR *Management of change* ANU. Contact: Colin Steele (062) 49 2003. **Please note change of date.**

Riverina

June 21 Riverina Regional Group SEMINAR *Children's books from view of publishers and authors*. 10.30am-4pm ALBURY TECHNICAL COLLEGE. Speakers: Julia McCrae and local authors. Fee: \$40 incl lunch. Contact: Anne Holloway (060) 21 4852 or Chris Frey (069) 23 2381 by 14 June.

September 16 LAA NSW/Vic Branches JOINT MEETING. WAGGA WAGGA. Speaker: Harrison Bryan. Contact: Helena Hicks (069) 62 1700.

NT

August 17 LAA NT Branch MEETING *Developments in copy-right law* 7.45pm SUPREME COURT, DARWIN. Speakers: Gil Jennex and a member of the legal profession. Contact: Lauris Suiter (089) 89 7446.

September 6 LAA NT Branch MEETING *The LAA and isolation* ALICE SPRINGS. (In conjunction with 'Libraries in Isolation' conference). Contact: Lauris Suiter (089) 89 7446.

October 19 LAA NT Branch MEETING *Report of the 'Libraries in isolation' conference* 7.45pm DARWIN CITY PUBLIC LIBRARY. Contact: Lauris Suiter (089) 89 7446.

November 16 LAA NT Branch AGM 7.45pm CASUARINA PUBLIC LIBRARY. Contact: Lauris Suiter (089) 89 7446.

December 5 LAA NT Branch CHRISTMAS FUNCTION. Venue to be decided. Contact: Lauris Suiter (089) 89 7446.

Western Australia

June 9 Perth Online Users Group MEETING. 5.30pm SEMINAR ROOM, REID LIBRARY, UNI OF WA.

August 25-26 ACI ORBIT Service Course PERTH. Contact: Bob Till (09) 321 2859. See ACT June 11-12 for more details.