

Letters

Computers — Every library should have one

Congratulations on your article in *Incite* (no6, 17 April) about computers in metropolitan libraries. Every library should have one, not only a selected few.

I cannot understand why some librarians should feel apprehensive towards the idea. Perhaps opposition comes only from those who do not know what computers are all about.)

When one hears about 'space invaders', one is inclined to think of noisy, clumsy, pinball-parlour type contraptions and the rowdy element associated with them. Space invaders on a computer is of course an entirely different thing.

Educating the public (and librarians) to the true nature of computers can only gain you support, not disapproval.

Perhaps another reason why some librarians feel cool towards computers is that an inexperienced (or uninterested) person can find program cassette loading a frustrating, boring chore.

This is understandable, but why not leave computer loading to the user? Most adults and children can load a program themselves after only about an hour at the computer.

I have been told that the computers are cassette loaded with games when the library opens in the morning and are left that way for the rest of the day. This could be unfair to visitors wishing to use the computer as other than a games machine.

Many visitors would be reluctant to wipe a reloaded program or put the staff to the trouble of having to reload the computer after they have finished with it. Thus a computer could remain unused until after school hours.

Wouldn't it be better to leave the computers unprogrammed during the day for the use of adult visitors and serious students, and games program them only after, say, 3.30pm?

I hope some of my suggestions help towards dispelling any fears about, or disapproval of, 'space invader machines' in our libraries.

D. Cowan
Hunters Hill, NSW

Reckless slogan

I am astounded by the semantic naiveté underlying the choice of this year's slogan for Australian Library Week.

In its literal sense 'Get Booked' has unpleasant connotations — raising spectres of large policemen and equally large fines — and that's bad enough.

But consider the reaction the average teenager or young person would have to anything starting with 'Get . . . !'

There are those of us who can and do use a little gentle bawdiness to promote our libraries — but this slogan is nothing short of reckless.

Jenny Cram, Goulburn, NSW

Librarians hiding behind Councils

Thank you for the opportunity to reply to the article about electronic games in libraries (*Incite* no6, 17 April).

I am a teacher-librarian in a very popular school library. I have found games like Battleship, Monopoly, Scrabble, etc so popular with the children (we have approximately 100 children per day using the library at lunchtime and recess) that I am going to buy a whole lot more to let out on loan.

Our cassette stories and music cassettes are extremely popular. One of our most popular games is Dataman (what a boon!) it is an electronic maths game and the children and adults love it. I have never seen one in a public library.

I feel that anything which will drag our public libraries (albeit, screaming) into the 20th century will be of benefit. Time and again, in public libraries in the country, one sees shelves of books which are seldom borrowed, very few cassettes, few or no posters and no orientation to anything but print material.

These print orientated librarians are cutting off their own life blood because children are not as solely print orientated as our public librarians think they are!

I despair of the backward thinking of public libraries — our public library doesn't even have a suggestion box and requests for cassettes are met with bland indifference.

I know of one public librarian who doesn't even like children — she certainly wouldn't like electronic games.

You will, I am sure, have a very interesting time reading about all the reasons why public libraries should *not* have electronic games (or anything vaguely up-to-date, except books) in their precincts.

No doubt most librarians will hide behind their councils and say 'we wouldn't be allowed'. Why not ask the potential users as well? You might get a very different answer. Librarians mostly don't know!

D. Morris, Muswellbrook, NSW

South Australia's 150th Anniversary

1986 will be the 150th Anniversary of the founding of South Australia and a Jubilee 150 Education Committee has been established as part of the official Jubilee 150 organisation.

Joan Brewer, a member of the above Committee, has been appointed to a sub-committee on publications.

If any teachers or teacher-librarians have ideas on publications which might be appropriate for production in 1986, please contact Joan Brewer, School Librarianship Department, Adelaide College of the Arts and Education (08) 223 8911; or Dean Manuel, Hartley CAE, (08) 332 4711.

CITY OF NOARLUNGA

Applications are invited for a

CHIEF LIBRARIAN

for the

Noarlunga College/ Community Library

The City of Noarlunga and the SA Department of Further Education are developing a joint College and Community Library which will provide a full public library service to the Noarlunga community, and an educational library service to the staff and students of the new Noarlunga Community College. The development and operation of the joint service will be overseen by a Management Committee representing the City Council and the Department.

The Chief Librarian shall be responsible to the Executive Officer for the day to day administration of the joint Library, and the supervision of the joint Library staff, and shall report to the Management Committee concerning the professional aspects of the Library operations. Considerable liaison will be necessary with the Town Clerk and the College Principal to ensure that the Library collections and requirements adequately reflect community and educational needs respectively.

Qualifications: It is essential that applicants are qualified professional librarians with experience in the administration and management of public and/or college library services, and preferably with a working knowledge of computer applications in libraries. Qualifications in the field of education would be an advantage.

The successful applicant will be employed by the City of Noarlunga, and conditions of employment will be in accordance with the Municipal Officers' Association (SA) Award. Preference will be given to members of that Association or those willing to become a member.

Salary range \$17,999 to \$19,398, subject to negotiations depending on qualifications, experience and suitability.

A detailed job description and further information is available on request to the Assistant Town Clerk — Administration (Mr R. E. Oswald, phone (08) 382 1022) or the Department of Further Education (Mr A. J. Brown, phone (08) 227 4229).

Applications clearly marked 'Confidential' should be forwarded to the Chairman, Joint Library Management Committee, City of Noarlunga, Box 408, Noarlunga Centre, SA 5168, for receipt by Friday, 3 July 1981.

C.A.C. Catt, Town Clerk



JUST PUBLISHED

Announcing three new publications of the Library Association of Australia.

Local History: Conservation and restoration procedures for public libraries
Occasional paper no 4 from the LAA NSW Branch.
Cost: \$5 (\$4 to LAA members).

Interlending in the 80s

Proceedings of the national conference, sponsored by the LAA Qld Branch and the UCLS Qld Group.
Cost: \$15 (\$11 to LAA members).

Periodicals for School Libraries

Published by the LAA School Libraries Section NSW Group.
Cost: \$10 (\$6 to LAA members).

All available from the LAA, 473 Elizabeth Street, Surry Hills, NSW 2010.