

Workshop looks at Copyright Act

A COPYRIGHT WORKSHOP held at the National Library of Australia on 1 June attracted 145 librarians, public servants and administrators from Canberra, Melbourne, Sydney and NSW country centres.

Organised by the ACT Branch of the Association, the workshop looked at the 1980 amendments to the Australian Copyright Act, and the impact these will have on libraries.

The keynote address was delivered by Derek Fielding (University Librarian, University of Queensland) and introduced many of the issues which were taken up by later speakers, including the problems caused by new technology and the possibility of blanket licensing.

Peter Banki (Australian Copyright Council) said the Act's new sanctions balanced new freedoms and that despite the problems, the new amendments could be made to work. In many areas there is room for negotiation between librarians and authors and publishers. The amendments and the difficulties libraries may have in their interpretation were then discussed in detail by Beth Stone (National Library).

The Attorney-General's Department provided Robin Bell and Bob Eagers for a general question and answer session. This was very lively, with the definitions of such phrases as 'same subject' and 'reasonable time and ordinary commercial price' coming under scrutiny.

Colin Clark (Director of the Instructional Resources Unit, ANU) drew attention in an entertaining manner to the many copyright problems in the audiovisual area, unaddressed by the 1980 amendments and urgently needing attention.

Finally Dennis Pearce (Professor of Law, ANU) drew out his crystal ball and attempted to look into the future for copyright; to at least



Photographed at the Copyright workshop, left to right: The Vice-President, Peter Clayton, and President of the LAA ACT Branch, Averill Edwards; Peter Banki, Legal Research Officer of the Australian Copyright Council; and Derek Fielding, Librarian of the University of Qld.

one listener, that future seemed murky. As well as new technologies like cable television to be taken into account, there are entirely new areas to be considered, such as folklore. In addition, Professor Pearce believes the current amendments will not prove satisfactory.

A recording of the Workshop was made and is being transcribed. The ACT Branch hopes to publish the workshop *Proceedings* in the near future. It now looks as if, because of delays in producing the Regulations, the amendments will not come into effect until after the beginning of August (not on 1 July as expected). The Branch has been asked to consider holding a follow-up workshop (Copyright 2?) after the Act has been in operation for a couple of months. Any comment on this would be welcome.

Peter Clayton

TV COMMERCIAL

THE AUSTRALIAN LISTENING Library has produced a television commercial aimed at increasing public awareness of the availability of audio materials for visually and physically handicapped persons at local public libraries.

Video cassettes of the commercial have been sent to television stations throughout Australia. It is expected that the commercial will be shown as a community service over the next three months.

Further information on this publicity campaign can be obtained from the Australian Listening Library, PO Box H162, Australia Square, Sydney NSW 2000.

From Link-up no 8, May 1981.

Reading machine for the blind



A Kurzweil Reading Machine for the blind was demonstrated at the Second National Seminar on Library Services for the Handicapped held in Canberra on 18-20 May 1981.

The Kurzweil Reading Machine converts printed materials, as found in books, magazines, typewritten letters and reports, in different styles and sizes of type, into synthetic English speech which is readily understandable after a short period of familiarisation. The KRM, therefore, allows immediate access by visually impaired persons to most library materials without those materials being converted into braille or audio formats.

Obituary

Sir William Edward Lodewyk Hamilton Crowther died in Hobart on 31 May 1981, three weeks after his 94th birthday.

During his life, Sir William collected anything to do with Tasmania and its history and was a truly great Tasmanian patriot.

Little mention has been made in the media of Sir William's very great contribution towards the collecting of books, prints, charts, maps, painting, scrimshaw and other materials relating to Tasmania's maritime history.

The collection is considered to be one of the finest of its type in Australia. Housed in the State Library of Tasmania as the W.L. Crowther Library.

When Sir William handed over his library of some 15,000 items to the people of Tasmania in 1964, the then Premier, the Hon Eric Reece said 'I would like, on behalf of the Government of the people of Tasmania, to say to Dr Crowther this morning that it is a great pleasure for me and a pride — a personal pride — to be able to accept this very generous gift to the State Library. Many, many thanks. What a great gift this is and what a splendid thing it is that we have had the Crowther family with us for so long to make this day possible, and to you, Dr Crowther, and to all members of your family who have played a magnificent part in this, may I say thank you very much in accepting the collection for housing in this building'.

Taken in part from a State Library of Tasmania Bulletin; author David Hinley.