

ference . . . LAA/NZLA Conference . . . LAA/NZLA Conference . . . LAA/NZ

Christchurch – it worked

ANOTHER LAA CONFERENCE has passed and by all accounts this, the 21st, was highly successful.

The joint LAA/NZLA Conference, held in Christchurch from 19-23 January, attracted nearly 1000 delegates – approximately 500 from Australia, 400 from New Zealand and over 50 representatives from other countries, including UK, USA, Canada, Fiji, PNG and Guam.

A lesson for future Conference organisers can be learned from this one. All sessions and the trade exhibition were held in the Christchurch Town Hall.

Because everything was happening under

one roof, delegates could inspect the trade exhibition between sessions, meet old and new acquaintances with ease, and arrive at the next session without stepping outside the building. Weather is another reason why conferences should be held under one roof – it rained nearly every day in Christchurch!

Christchurch Town Hall is a superb venue and according to the Mayor of Christchurch, Sydneysiders could have 25 such buildings for the price of the Opera House!

After the official opening by the Australian High Commissioner in New Zealand, Jim Webster, the plenary speaker, Richard De Gennaro, Director of Libraries, University of

Pennsylvania, spoke about the problems faced by libraries in the United States, where new technology and computer-based library catalogue networks are well advanced.

Mr De Gennaro spoke of the need for much higher funding for libraries and said that we must make big plans and aim high. 'That way we may be able to persuade authorities who finance us to come up with enough money to fund the change from old manual to the new-data based network of cataloguing' De Gennaro said.

Mr De Gennaro was thanked by the popular New Zealand National Librarian, Mary Ronnie.

After the official opening many delegates attended the session on 'Marketing Information Services' with Stephen Wall (Horan Wall and Walker, Sydney) and Gary Nicol (Information Resources Officer, SATIS, Canterbury Public Library) as speakers. So great was the demand that it was standing room only long before the session got under way. But this proved to be no problem as the session was moved to a larger area with only a few minutes being lost.

Stephen Wall (a 'stirrer' from way back) told delegates that Australian librarians are still too cautious, quiet and unaggressive in their marketing efforts. 'The data base/telecommunications and computer people are actively marketing their behinds off. If librarians fail to market themselves they could be funded less in real terms, maybe even in dollar terms in the future,' Wall said.

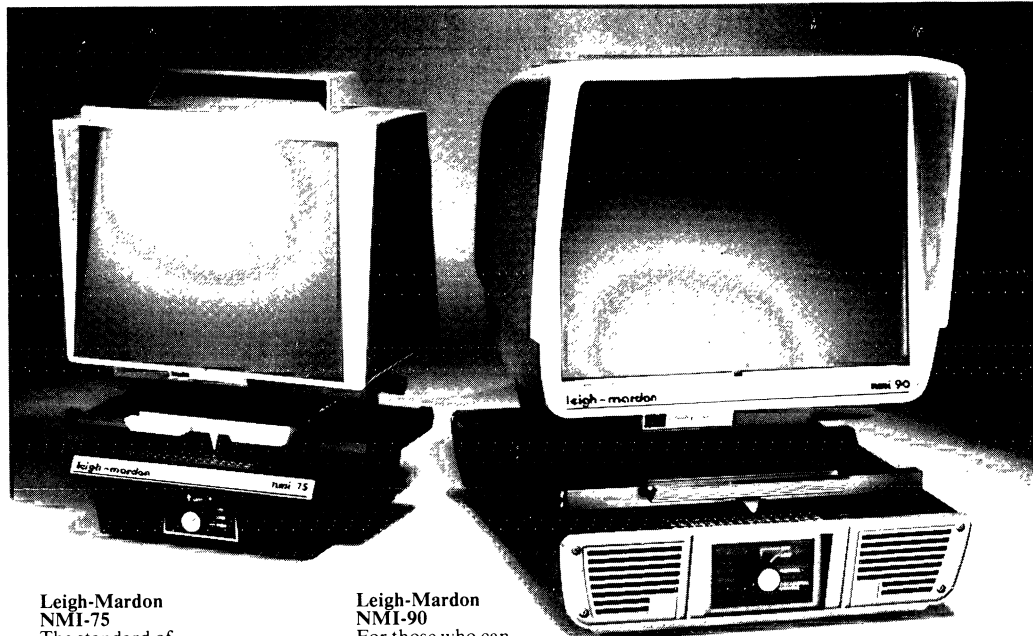
Gary Nicol spoke mainly about marketing information services to the New Zealand business community. He said that 'it is not good enough to concentrate purely on developing and maintaining a well-stocked information service and then expect users to beat a pathway to the door. Agencies offering information services must understand their users and continually communicate with them.'

On Tuesday, Barry Jones, Shadow Minister for Science of Technology (Aust), spoke about the battle to control information sources. 'The community is the collective victim of profoundly unequal access to information,' he said. 'The public servants have about 85 percent of the information and members of Parliament have about 15 percent, mostly from leaks or newspaper reports,' said Mr Jones.

The following day, Miles Jackson, Professor of Library Studies at the University of Hawaii, spoke about the problems of getting information to and from Hawaii and to other islands in the Pacific. 'The University has the use of a satellite, Peacesat, and this is an important channel of communication,' Professor Jackson said. 'How much longer this satellite will last is anybody's guess, as it was supposed to disintegrate five years ago. Librarians in Hawaii face communication problems because many islands do not have a telex link,' he added.

I'm sure readers will understand that it was not possible for this writer to attend many sessions as 'peopling' the LAA exhibition stand was pretty much a full time job. I heard good reports about many sessions but if you didn't attend you'll have to wait until the middle of April when the Conference *Proceedings* will be published.

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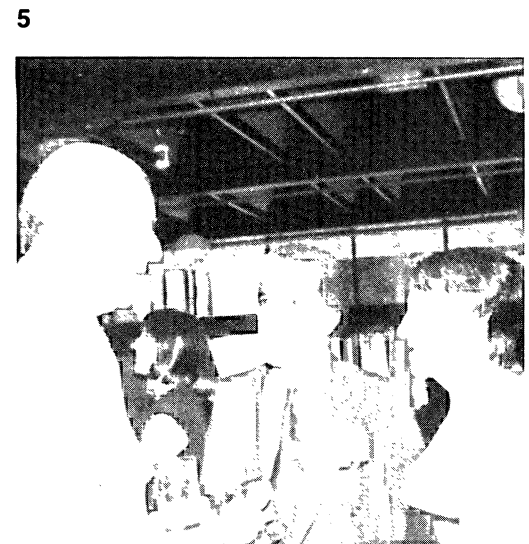
Conference . . . LAA/NZLA Conference . . . LAA/NZLA Conference . . . LAA ... and played



1 During session breaks, members of the LAA Executive attended the LAA stand. Here, Secretary Euan Miller arrives to help Gordon Bower (Executive Director) and Sue Phillips (Executive Assistant).

2 Moira Mackinnon from Monash managed to capture two attractive delegates — Des Tellis (left) from the Australian Mineral Foundation, SA, and Ian Tweedie from Murdoch University.

3 Professor Jean Whyte (Monash) and Ted Flowers (Chairman of the LAA's Board of Education) educate dancers on how the 'Jive' should be done. 4 Professor Mel Weinstock (UNSW) and Virginia De Crespigny (Rusden State College) decide that conversation is less strenuous than jiving.



5 The President of the LAA, Jim Dwyer (left), chats with Miles Jackson (University of Hawaii) and Margaret Trask (Kuring-gai).

6 John Cook (left), from Infotech WA, shares a joke with Joan Brewer (Adelaide College of the Arts) and her husband, John, who is holding a copy of John Cook's newly published book *School Librarianship*.

