

# News from the Divisions

## NSW BRANCH

PEOPLE are as important as print as sources of biographical information, according to David Marr, author of *Barwick* and editor of the *National Times*.

Mr Marr was addressing the 1981 AGM of the Branch on 24 March. The subject of the address was 'Researching modern biography in Australian Libraries'.

He said that while much of the information he gathered for his work on Sir Garfield Barwick was available in newspaper, newsletter, archival and report forms, important facts and explanations of incidents were revealed or verified only in discussion with contemporaries of the former Chief Justice.

A serendipitous meeting with one such informant took place in Sydney's Wynyard Station one night after Mr Marr had gone in search of an elusive cup of coffee while doing research in the State Library of NSW.



David Marr

The absence of such a basic amenity as a coffee machine is, according to the author, not the only thing which the State Library tends to try the patience of its research-oriented patrons – the practice of making readers complete a form stating the reasons for requesting a newspaper every time such a request is made is another. Although sympathising with the reasons for insisting on this procedure, it became a source of increasing annoyance for the author.

Bureaucratic obstacles aside, Mr Marr expressed his appreciation to the staff of the Library and to the other librarians and archivists, some of whom were in sole charge of small, special libraries, who assisted him in his work.

Mr Marr lamented the dearth of indexing of Australian newspapers and anticipated with interest the completion of the index of the *Sydney Morning Herald* for the years 1901-1916 being undertaken at the suggestion of Gavin Souter.

Mr Marr later added, in answer to a question from the audience, that the value of information in newspapers, while sometimes unreliable, lies in the detail and immediacy of the reporting. As an example of this, he cited the news item in the *Sun* (Sydney, 13 April 1954), which describes Sir Garfield Barwick carrying his pinstripe pants on a hanger at Sydney airport before flying to London to appear before the Privy Council.

Of particular value to his research for *Barwick* was the private file of John Fairfax

and Sons which indexes that company's own publications. Without this index as an aid, it is less likely that an incident such as the aforementioned would have been unearthed. Mr Marr is interested in converting this file into microform and making it commercially available. The company is less enthusiastic, partly because some of the headings under which items are indexed may render it liable to defamation suits.

Delivered in lively and good-humoured fashion, an audience of over 70 members and visitors warmly applauded Mr Marr's address and numerous questions followed. NSW Branch Past President, Merilyn Bryce, moved the vote of thanks. *Philomena Lapsley*

## Subject indexing for local history

This was the topic of a one-day workshop (the fifth in the Branch's CE Activity in Local History series) held at the Archives Office of NSW on 27 March.

The 65 participants had been circulated with a working copy of *A list of subject headings for local studies and collections* compiled by John Flint (Chief Librarian, Willoughby Municipal Library) and Anne Franklin (Deputy Chief Librarian, Stanton Library), as part of their work in a joint local history project funded by the NSW State Government.

The purpose of the workshop was to discuss thesaurus of model subject headings and cross references suitable for local indexing, with those working on the organisation of local history collections in public libraries. John and Anne as the key speakers of the day covered tremendous ground in the presentation of their material, encouraging questions and comments.

To respond to the *List* and to indicate how indexing of local collections will perforce vary from area to area, there was a panel discussion. Marion Brown (Riverina Community Library Service), Les Petocz (Lithgow City Library) and Bernard Sargeant (Reference Consultant, Western Sydney Region) who are undertaking a part-time assignment of compiling a selected index of Sutherland Council Minutes and local newspapers, 1965-81, discussed their approaches to indexing and rural needs.

It is intended that the *List* and *Manual* will be finalised in two to three months incorporating some recommendations made at the workshop. Under the terms of the grant, copies will be sent to all NSW public libraries.

In the concluding session Anne and John expressed the hope that an 'interest group' of local government librarians responsible for local history services will develop and invited those interested to contact them.

*Patricia Ward*

## NSW CATALOGUERS

The Group has decided to institute an annual lecture in honour of Mollie Thomson. The first annual lecture will be at 8pm on Friday, 9 October 1981 in the Galleries, State Library of New South Wales. The speaker will be Harrison Bryan, Director-General of the National Library of Australia. The topic of the lecture is 'The development of ABN'.

The Group has for sale or hire, video cassettes of a successful one-day seminar on 'Australian Subject Headings'. The seminar was held in May 1980 at the University of Sydney. Speakers were John McKinlay, Jan Fullerton, Mollie Thomson and Janet Hine.

There are four video cassettes of the papers. Rental of the set of four cassettes is \$40 and the price to buy the set is \$200. We will also consider renting or selling the cassettes individually. *Janet Robinson*

## NSW UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE LIBRARIES

### Going on air

The Group has arranged with the radio station 2SER FM to have a series of interview programs go to air, beginning in April 1981.

The aims of these interviews are to discuss issues specific to the information field and to allow these issues to be disseminated to the general community. We feel that a medium such as 2SER is a good way to bring to the attention of the listening public some of the ideas and activities associated with the information sector of the community.

The programs will go to air at 7.45pm each Monday, beginning on the 6 April 1981 and will be in the following order:

Monday 6: Dorothy Peake, NSW Institute of Technology, speaking with Margaret Penson on 'Information and Technology'.

Monday 13: Margaret Trask, Kuring-gai CAE, speaking with Rosemary Moon on 'Education, Librarians and the Future.'

Monday 20: Joy Burke, NSW State Library, speaking with Margaret Simpson on 'Community Information.'

There will be three following interviews and details of these will be in the next *Incite*.

Please contact Margaret Penson (02) 662 3661 during working hours for further information.

## NSW SCHOOL LIBRARIES

### New publication launched

The new publication *Periodicals for School Libraries* was launched at the AGM of the Group on 24 February at the Northern Districts Education Centre.

Sheena Coupe, the compiler of the publication spoke to the 60 members in attendance, explaining her research methods and the problems encountered in acquisition and selection of the numerous titles surveyed. An extensive array of the periodicals were displayed in the Centre.

The President's Report for 1980 highlighted the year's achievements which included a number of well-attended seminars, some successful publications, and a renewed emphasis on communication with section members and with other state and national bodies concerned with school libraries.

Janet Hansen, the 1981 President, expressed the need for members to become more involved in the activities of the section during 1981.

*M.J. Stannus*

## TECHNICIANS

Anne Brinson, President of the Library Technicians Section and Ian Gordon, President of the NSW Library Technicians Sectional Group have recently addressed meetings in Wollongong and Newcastle on the topic of 'Library technicians in the workforce'.

On Wednesday, 18 March, approximately 30 people attended the meeting held at Wollongong CAE. The meeting at Newcastle's College of TAFE on Thursday, 26 March, was attended by 42 people.

Questions raised at both meetings included problems in obtaining work experience, voluntary work, and industrial coverage.

Interest was expressed in the role the LAA and in particular the Library Technicians Section had played in achieving gains for Library Technicians. A number of people indicated that they intended to join the Association.

*Ian Gordon*  
*Continued p10*

# Report of first General Council meeting in 1981

THE FIRST 1981 meeting of General Council was held in Melbourne on 12 and 13 March. Meetings of the Executive Committee and Futures Committee preceded the Council meeting. Some of the main issues considered during the meeting were as follows:

## Manpower project

Mr Barrie Mitcheson, Convener of the sub-committee of the Victorian Branch conducting the manpower project, presented a progress report on the questionnaires from individuals, employers and library schools. Analysis of responses to the personal questionnaire has commenced, and the committee hopes to finish the project by mid-1981.

## Statement on the national bibliographic organisation of nonbook materials in Australia

To date the national bibliographic control of information published in Australia has been restricted largely to information in print form. The Association's Audiovisual Services Committee believes that it should include all products of the publishing industry. The Committee has prepared a draft statement on the national bibliographic organisation of nonbook materials which has been endorsed by Council as an expression of the Association's views, and will be forwarded to the National Library of Australia for consideration. Particular note has been made of the recommendations relating to MARC formats suitable for use with all media.

## Members in isolation

For some time General Council has been investigating the needs of isolated members and the services which can be provided for them. It considers isolation to be more than a matter of distance from a major centre — members who are employed in small libraries, or who are out of the workforce are often as cut off from professional contact as those in Weipa or the Pilbara.

## All about the Middle East

A NEW association on Middle East studies is being formed in Australia, the Australasian Middle East Studies Association (AMESA). In conjunction with the formation of this Association the Footscray Institute of Technology Library is producing a monthly current awareness bulletin on the Middle East and conducting a national seminar, 'Sources of information on the Middle East', on Monday, 31 August.

The aim of the seminar is to highlight the resources related to the Middle East available to businessmen, politicians, the media and academics in Australia at present. As well, it is hoped to isolate areas where problems do arise in relation to access to information on the Middle East and to seek means of resolution.

The Library is also conducting a study into Australian holdings on all aspects of the Middle East and would welcome contact with all libraries having substantial holdings in this area.

For copies of the monthly bulletin (gratis) or further information on the seminar contact Fran Hegarty, Humanities Librarian, Footscray Institute of Technology Library, PO Box 64, Footscray, 3011. Telephone (03) 688 4274. Telex FITLEX 36596.

All Branches make special arrangements for their members outside the large metropolitan centres — by recording meetings and speakers and making tapes available for loan, by holding some of their meetings outside capital cities, and by including country centres in the itineraries of guest speakers wherever possible.

Councillors generally felt that there was a need for better communication about all activities of the Association and its divisions, through *Incite*, Branch newsletters and other available media.

Three major activities planned for 1981 are a national conference on 'Libraries in isolation', arranged jointly by the Northern Territory to be held in Alice Springs from 4-6 September, a national workshop on 'Library services in distance education' scheduled for 15 and 16 June in Brisbane, and a North Queensland Regional Group seminar on 'The right to information' to be held in Townsville on 4 and 5 September. Further details of these programs appear in 'Happenings'.

## Student fees

The issue of special fees for student members of the LAA was raised by the NSW Branch at the 1980 AGM. That meeting called on General Council to consider reinstating a special fee category for student members, with a fee equal to two thirds of the next lowest membership fee.

After lengthy discussion Council finally resolved that it 'acknowledges its professional responsibility to students of librarianship and the need to involve students in the Association's activities, and as a tangible expression of this responsibility recommends that the fee for student membership should not exceed two thirds of the other lowest fee'.

This resolution will be taken into account by the General Treasurer when framing the draft budget and fees schedule for 1982.

## Membership of JSCAACR

In 1979 the Association sought membership of the Joint Steering Committee for the revision of AACR. Australia has now been invited to name one representative to the Committee, with full voting rights. Funding to the level of \$1600 annually has been provided, with the balance of costs to be shared by the LAA and the National Library of Australia.

The Australian Committee on Cataloguing, a body comprising representatives of the Association, AACOBS and the National Library, has been asked to nominate a representative to attend the 1981 meeting of the Joint Steering Committee to be held in San Francisco in July.

## Office Location Committee

In 1979 a committee was established to prepare a report on the future location of the Association's head office. Committee members were the then General Treasurer, Barry McIntyre, Brenda Gerrie and Pixie Crook. A detailed 30-page report submitted by Barry McIntyre and Pixie Crook examined the functions performed by the head office, and the implications of the nature of those functions on the location of the office. Particular attention was given to servicing the needs of members, and to lobbying.

The committee considered four options — to purchase a property in Sydney, to lease a property in Sydney, or to lease or purchase in Canberra. Melbourne was not seen to offer significant advantages over Sydney, in view of the cost of relocating staff and property. The committee recommended to Council that

the Association's office should remain in Sydney in premises owned by the Association.

Brenda Gerrie's views were not included in the report, and she was not able to be present at the Council meeting. The ACT Branch President, Averill Edwards, reported on the Branch's behalf. The Branch believed that the committee's report took only a short-term view, and that over a longer period relocation expenses would be lower. It maintained that lobbying could be done most effectively in Canberra, and that a Sydney-based Association may not be able to attract permanent staff from outside Sydney because of the high cost of accommodation.

Council accepted the recommendations of the committee, with all but the Canberra members of Council voting to retain the office in Sydney.

## LAA staff

A number of changes have taken place in the LAA staff in the past month. Judith Hill has been appointed as Industrial Officer and Marilyn Bryce as Continuing Education Officer. Both attended the meeting of General Council, gave brief reports on their backgrounds and outlined their preliminary views on their new positions.

The Executive Director, Gordon Bower, who has held that position since January 1978, advised that he had been offered the position of Executive Director of the Australian Gallery Directors Council, and intended to accept the post. He expected to leave the Association towards the end of April. Advertisements would be placed in national papers and *Incite* at the end of March. The present Assistant to the Executive Director, Sue Phillips, will be acting Executive Director from the end of April.

## News from Divisions *cont*

### NSW INFORMATION SCIENCE SECTION

Chris Sanderson of I.P. Sharp and Ian McCallum of ACI Computer Services will be guest speakers at the meeting of the Section on 8 July at the Archives Office, 2 Globe Street, Sydney. Drinks are served at 6, for the 6.30 meeting.

Both Chris and Ian are excited by the technological advances relating to electronic mail services, which promise to close the time gap between retrieval of relevant references and the subsequent delivery of full documents. *Elizabeth Swan*

### WA SCHOOL LIBRARIES

#### Young readers' book award

After a successful launching in 1980, the WA young readers' book award is operating again in 1981. The award is one in which young readers have a major say.

Whether or not you participated last year you are invited to participate in 1981. Nominations of titles have been received from schools and public libraries. Two selection panels have reduced these titles to a list of approximately 50 in each of two sections: Primary (years 4 to 7); Secondary (years 8 to 10).

During 1981 young readers at schools and public libraries will be encouraged to read as many of these books as possible and fill in evaluation forms.

If you wish to participate in this award, contact Leila Hoffman, PO Box 259, Claremont, WA 6010.