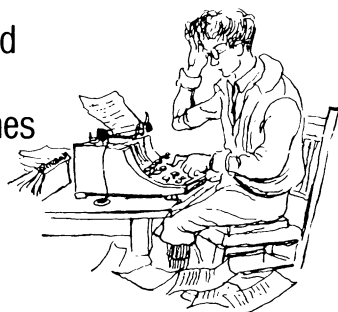


THE SOURCE

edited
and compiled
by
David J. Jones



State secrets (and federal)

South Australian secrets summary (SASS) is a slightly tongue-in-cheek dip into the range and extent of information kept secret by Federal and State governments in Australia.

SAAS Occasional paper no 1 (June 1981) consists of extracts from the press which, with a minimum of comment, show how far FOI has to go.

SASS editors, the Freedom of Information Working Party of the LAA South Australian Branch, say that their publication is 'designed to bring to public attention the need for effective Freedom of Information legislation. The SASS symbol is a ferret holding a leek'.

The spirit of the whole collection of quotations is summed up in the first: 'Both Treasury Chief, Mr John Stone, and Public Service Board Chairman, Sir William Cole, declined to speak to the Age newspaper about freedom of information (Age, April 8, 1981).'

SASS Occasional papers are available from PO Box 47, Rundle Street, Adelaide, SA 5000. (If they have an ISSN, they're keeping it to themselves.)

Healthy start

The ACT Branch of the Australian Medical Librarians' Group has published a directory of libraries in the life sciences area in Australia. Compiled by Marguret Price and Bert Pribac, *Life sciences libraries in Australia* lists 237 institutions arranged by state, and then alphabetically. Each entry includes information about collection size, lending policy, classification, staff and subject areas covered. There is a subject index which, relying on the information provided by respondents to a questionnaire, should obviously be used with caution.

The compilers have appended a list of Australian Medline Centres, which is a useful feature, and for those who would like to delve a little into the background of Australian life sciences libraries, there is a short bibliography. Altogether this is an excellent debut for a directory which, it is hoped by the compilers, will appear every two years. *Life sciences libraries in Australia* was published last year by the Australian Medical Librarians' Group (ACT Branch) and is available from Bert Pribac, 35 Brereton Street, Garran, ACT 2605. It costs \$10.00. No ISBN.

A for effort

The ninth and last edition of *Current Australian serials* was published by the National Library of Australia in 1975. This ageing work can now be safely retired with the appearance of *Australian serials in print*, the first edition of which was published in October 1981 by D. W. Thorpe.

The scope of this list, which it is hoped will be produced annually, is Australian pe-

riodicals, magazines, directories, yearbooks, newspapers, trade publications, proceedings and newsletters.

The introduction also spells out its deliberate exclusions, such as conference reports, annual reports, school magazines, prospectuses, handbooks and most government department reports.

You will not find as much descriptive material as *Current Australian serials*, but the compilers believe they have supplied 'the essential information' such as title and subtitle, name and address of publisher, year of first publication, price, frequency, circulation and ISSN where known. Notes on the content are also given in some cases.

Partly because this edition relies heavily upon responses to requests for information from many hundreds of publishers, it has acknowledged areas of incompleteness. *Guidelines*, for example, is not listed, nor *Orana*, *Choice*, *Cataloguing Australia*, *Labour history*, *Link-up*, *Australian library news*.

The editors invite comments for additions and improvements to future editions.

A useful feature, in most cases, in *Australian serials in print* is the normal use of two entries per title - one under the title itself and the other under the subject, unless the subject is indicated by the first word of the title. The subject entries are in fact rather patchy and should be treated with caution.

There are inconsistencies in headings ('film' and 'films' are both used without apparent distinction, 'philatelics' and 'philately' likewise, with *Australian stamp monthly* appearing under neither). The letter-by-letter arrangement, ignoring punctuation, should also be noted.

One very useful feature is the use of catchwords. Hence you find *Australian financial review* under *Financial review* as well as under its proper title. This is very helpful with misused titles.

Care is needed, however, in tracing titles beginning with acronyms or abbreviations - some are listed at the beginning of the relevant letter of the alphabet, others are treated as words.

There is nothing conceptually wrong with this work: in its own right it is a very useful reference tool. Feedback and refinement should make the second and future editions even more useful.

Australian serials in print 1981 is published by D. W. Thorpe. It costs \$20.00. (ISSN 0725-5462; ISBN 0 909532 29 X).

Welcome appearance

One of the many products which have appeared as a prelude to the 1988 Bicentennial is a very useful index of periodical articles on Australian history.

The index, which was compiled by Victor Crittenden and John Thawley, is no2 in the series Historical Bibliography Monograph.

As part of 'Australia 1788-1988 A Bicentennial History' the index should be of considerable assistance to authors preparing material for the Bicentennial, as well as being of more permanent use to many others.

Index to journal articles on Australian history for 1979 will be followed in quick succession by another volume which will cover the period 1973 to 1978 inclusive, annual volumes to cover 1980 and 1988 and cumulations. The period prior to 1973 was of course covered by Hogan, Yarwood and Ward's *Index to journal articles on Australian history* which was published by the University of New England in 1976.

'Basically the same headings' are used in the 1979 index as were used in the UNE index, which will incidentally be incorporated

in the final cumulation of the indexes. There are subject, author and book review indexes.

Index to journal articles on Australian history for 1979 was published last year by Australia 1788-1988: A Bicentennial History (Reference), University of New South Wales, Kensington, NSW 2033. (ISBN 0 949776 01 7).

Libraries & People

SOMETIMES IT SEEMS that libraries are so involved with systems, cataloguing and so on, that the people who come to libraries are forgotten!

That is why it was so refreshing to read a recent bulletin from Tasmania's State Library which begins with the statement that one of their most important functions is providing library services for children. And clearly they do a very good job of it!

Aware that encouraging children to read and make use of library facilities produces adults with lively and enquiring minds, the Hobart Children's Library's facilities begin with pre-school children in mind. Special sessions are held for them each week, with a wide range of activities including film screenings, story-telling, singing, finger play, and puppets.

Games and toys are available for use in the library during normal library hours. There is even a stamp swapping service for young philatelists, and the library staff are interested in the children's hobbies, encouraging them to display items from unusual hobbies in the library.

Finding material for use in school projects is often extremely difficult, and the library helps with this too. An extensive file of suitable project material is kept, and the children are encouraged to make use of this.

Children can borrow four books at a time, and may also borrow records and cassettes, for which a small fee is charged. Throughout the state there are also bookmobiles providing library services for children.

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