



Women in librarianship

At the recent seminar 'The Library Workforce' a resolution was passed that a Standing Committee on the Status of Women in Librarianship be established. This committee is to be appointed by the General Council of the L.A.A. The actual composition of the Committee, i.e. which people, representing which interests, was not specified.

This Committee is vital to the interests of women in librarianship, and to our profession as a whole, but I am concerned that from the start it could be doomed to be ineffective. The purpose of the establishment of this Committee is political, i.e. it is concerned with the power, or lack of it, of women in the profession. In a political context, it is naive to expect that those with power (primarily men) will voluntarily share this power with others. To do so would be for them to act against their own vested interests, in an idealistic spirit of democracy and fair play. The experience of political groups such as Women's Electoral Lobby, has shown that to expect this is politically naive.

People who are in a position of power have a vested interest also in retaining the shape of the hierarchical structure in which they acquired their power. I would hope that the Committee would not only consider ways of raising the status of women within the existing structure but also consider the possibilities of changing the structure of the profession. For example, the Committee could investigate ways of making the career structure less hierarchical, perhaps by making a formal split between professional and administrative functions analogous to the case of doctors and hospital administrators.

It seems to me that the Committee will conduct itself in a more imaginative and potentially forceful manner, if it consists of the people who have most to gain from its effectiveness, i.e. women. I realize that it is unrealistic to talk of women as if we form a homogenous group. Apart from individual

differences in aspirations, beliefs and values, the political interests of the few top women in librarianship may well be identical to those of men. Because of this fact, people need not fear that a Committee composed of women would 'divide' the profession along lines of sex.

I hope that women in the profession will pressurize the LAA so that the new Committee will truly represent the interests of women and not merely be a token, empty paean to some vague liberal ideal.

Susan Fisher
Monash University

29.11.82

Annual reports wanted

Librarians! Don't throw away your superseded annual reports. We need them!

The Australian Graduate School of Management has been microfiching the annual reports of Australian public companies for a number of years.

About 18,000 reports have been filmed so far. The project is an ongoing one and currently the 1982 reports are being filmed.

We are in the process of adding more companies to the file and we are anxious to obtain any reports which librarians may decide to discard for space reasons.

We are mainly interested in the reports of Australian companies (both public and private) but overseas reports of companies from other countries such as New Zealand are also welcome.

Would any librarians who wish to get rid of annual reports please contact us so that we can arrange collection and/or freight.

This side of Australia's economic history is an important one and putting on to microfiche is one way of preserving these records and making them widely available.

Please contact Ray Penn (02) 662 0393.

Pamela Taylor
AGSM Librarian

7.12.82

University of New South Wales

Binding standards

I refer to the letter from Craig Grimison on Binding Standards in *InCite* volume 3 no 21 (19 November 1982).

The Joint Standing Committee for the Booktrade has been set up 'to consider matters affecting the publication and/or distribution of books and associated materials within Australia which may be of concern to the constituent bodies' (the ABA, the ABPA and the LAA).

The problem of binding standards is certainly one with which the Joint Standing Committee should concern itself, and I will be happy to raise this matter at the next meeting of the Committee.

I take this opportunity to draw the existence of this committee to the attention of members of the Association, and to ask members to raise with the representatives of the LAA (Denis Richardson, University of Melbourne) and Pam Trier (La Trobe University) matters which they wish the Joint Standing Committee to consider.

Pam Trier
La Trobe University

13.12.82

Anti-discrimination report

During the last few weeks, the NSW Parliament has debated and passed the Anti-Discrimination (Amendment) Act. This extends the provisions of the Act to include discrimination on the grounds of homosexuality.

During the debate all the old prejudices and misinformation were again paraded before the public through the utterances of people in various religious and parliamentary positions. We are concerned about the effects of those reiterated falsehoods and myths since gay people are not often able to present factual information. Through our work at the Gay Counselling Service we often hear how gay people are faced with scorn, derision and, on occasion, actual physical attacks, all of which can be traced back to this lack of truthful information.

There is generally a great dearth of unbiased, up-to-date material on homosexuality in most libraries. Even medical libraries tend to have only a few outdated books which have often been superseded by more recent and more value-free research. A reading list of positive material is available from the Gay Counselling Service, GPO Box 5074, Sydney NSW 2001.

There is, however, one publication which we would like to draw to your attention. That is the report of the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board, 'Discrimination and Homosexuality'. It is a most comprehensive document which details the areas in which discrimination is experienced. This report was the basis on which the NSW Parliament altered the Act and it contains a wealth of information and background material. We feel that no library in the State should be without a copy and we wholeheartedly recommend it to readers.

John D Greenway
Honorary Secretary
Gay Counselling Service

4.12.82.

The role of the AGM – still under discussion

AT ITS RECENT meeting, General Council passed a new By-Law relating to the role of the Annual General Meeting and the governance of the Association (GC294/82). This followed lengthy discussion by Council and the membership as documented in *InCite* in 1982.

Whilst the By-Law was passed by Council, notice was given that a move would be made at the March meeting of General Council to rescind GC294/82.

The endorsed By-Law appears below. Comments are most welcome but must be received at the office by 16th February.

'The government of the Association shall be entrusted to the General Council subject to any other By-Law, and save as provided in this By-Law no resolution passed at General Meetings of the Association shall be effective until ratified by General Council.

Decisions of the General Council relating to resolutions passed at General Meetings of the Association shall be communicated to the respective divisions of the Association, and shall be binding on all members, provided that a decision of General Council shall be submitted to a plebiscite of all financial members of the Association by postal ballot if requested by (i) properly constituted meetings of two divisions (other than a sectional group or regional group) of the Association held within 60 days of the date of publication of the notice advising members of that decision; such plebiscite to be held within 90 days of receipt of the request; or (ii) a peti-

tion signed by 10 percent of the financial members of the Association within 60 days of the date of publication of the notice advising members of that decision, such plebiscite to be held within 90 days of receipt of the petition.

A request for a plebiscite shall be communicated to the President of the Association in writing, who shall upon receipt of such a request direct the Executive Director to submit such decision to a plebiscite of all financial members of the Association by postal ballot. The decision of a majority of members voting in such plebiscite shall be final.'

Susan Acutt
Executive Director

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