



## LAA attends National Conference on Technology

From September 26-28 I represented the LAA at the National Conference on Technology, which was organised by the Minister for Science and Technology, Mr Barry Jones. It was attended by an invited membership of 140 representatives from industry, commerce, trade union movement, government departments and professional groups.

The three-day conference explored a number of issues including private R & D; the interaction between private and public research institutions; venture capital; government support for R & D; the job market and the impact of technology; education; the so-called 'sunrise' industries. No mean feat!

The objectives of the Conference were:

1. To consider the positive role of technology in economic development.
2. To explore ways and means of encouraging innovation, including increased research and development, in industry.
3. To examine means of removing inhibitions to and constraints on technological development.
4. To explore the need for and availability of selective assistance to encourage the development and/or revitalisation of industries based on new technological opportunities.
5. To seek ways and means of introducing new technologies that enhance social benefits while at the same time mitigating any disruptive social effects.
6. To explore ways and means of ensuring consultation between all interested and affected sectors of the community on technology related issues.
7. To identify education and training needs of the community in the new technological environment.
8. To examine the role of research in government and tertiary institutions and the mechanisms for increased interaction with industry.
9. To consider the roles of Federal and State Government as part of a national technology strategy.

Day 1 of the Conference, which began at 10 am and continued through dinner, consisted of an opening address by the Prime Minister, Mr R. Hawke and concluded with dinner address by Senator John Button. In between were 17 other speakers including Barry Jones whose interest and energy were apparent throughout the Conference through his excellent chairmanship.

Day 2 consisted again of presented papers until morning tea after which delegates broke into syndicate groups for the remainder of the day to consider designated topics. These were drawn together on Day 3 which included with presentations, panel sessions

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# LAA buys new computer



The LAA's newest staff member, Sue Leonard at the keys of the word processor. Sue and Angela Brommann have been to a word processing course and Jo-anne Fuller has attended a computer course. Publications' staff will go to word processing courses early in 1984.

**On Friday, 30 September the LAA office took delivery of a new computer. It is a fully integrated word processing and data processing Datapoint 8600 system with three 8200 terminals. The CPU also acts as a terminal. The system has 256K of memory and a 20 megabyte disk.**

The decision to consider a new system was made as long ago as June 1981 when it was becoming abundantly clear that the Association required a word processor to facilitate the processing of an increasing volume of paperwork with the same number of staff. A Working Party of the Executive Committee, consisting of Barrie Mitcheson, Alan Bunsell and Susan Acutt was established to investigate the purchase of a word processor.

Almost simultaneously, voucher purchase and redemption increased, which placed an added burden on the present Qantel. It was also becoming clear that the Qantel was unable to provide much of the information required by the General Council, divisions and office staff, such as a printout of new members by Branch.

With the increase in the LAA's business in terms of investments, publications, vouchers and general accounting, the auditors began to express concern at the complexity of manual controls required. At this stage, the purchase of accounting and word

processing packages and additional memory were priced for the Qantel. The capacity for future upgrading in terms of cost, response time and age of the technology was not good.

Preliminary investigations took place into purchasing a stand-alone word processing system, which could communicate with the Qantel. In view of the limitations of the Qantel, it was decided that this would be a short-term measure only, and not in the best interests of the Association.

The search began for a fully integrated word and data processing system for the LAA's membership and vouchers (on present machine), and adding a committee system, full accounting system, stock control and word processing. The system also needed the capacity to automate files such as the *Special Libraries Directory*, salary survey, etc. and the facility to retrieve information from the membership file and merge this with form letters on the word processing system.

In February 1983 a tender document was distributed to a number of companies which had expressed interest in providing a system, and which, upon preliminary investigations, appeared to be able to meet the LAA requirements. The tender date closed in early March. The Working Party then proceeded to a lengthy evaluation of the systems which met our cost and system requirements.

Several demonstrations were held of the systems appearing on the short list. In June a full report was presented to the Executive Committee with a recommendation to purchase a Datapoint system going to the July

## MORE SOURCE

### Pluses and minuses

Now in its twelfth year of publication, *Media review digest 1982* modestly subtitled itself 'the only complete guide to reviews of non-book media'.

It contains some 40,000 citations and cross-references to reviews of films, filmstrips, educational and spoken word records and tapes, slides, kits and other miscellaneous media. There are the customary subject index, geographical index, grade level indications and review ratings (+ or - or +- or \*). It is good to see some Australian material, not only in the software listed, but in the list of periodicals indexed, although the natural North American predominance in coverage is secure.

Special features include select lists of recent film awards and prizes and an index to biographical articles on media figures. *MRD* is rounded off by a list of publishers and distributors addresses. *Media review digest 1982* is published by Pierian Press and costs US\$189.00. (ISBN 0 87650 148 X)

### Evans Head to Byron Bay

The origins of place names are often the subject of reference enquiries in libraries, and there are some good general Australian guides.

For the Richmond-Tweed Region there is now a local product, published by the Richmond-Tweed Regional Library, to provide the necessary answers. *Place names of the Richmond Region* is the first of the Place Names of Northern New South Wales Series, which should prove a most useful series in local reference libraries, judging by the present work.

When people ask why Nimbin is so named (from the Bundjalung word for 'wise-man, little-man or hobbit-cum-sage'), and who the Meldrum in Meldrum's Creek was, this little 52-page work will come to the rescue. And if you can't pronounce one of the euphonious names, guidance is given on that too.

Compiled as a joint venture between the Richmond-Tweed Regional Library and the Richmond River Historical Society, *Place names of the Richmond Region* was published earlier this year by the Richmond-Tweed Regional Library and costs \$5.00 (plus 50¢ postage within NSW, 60¢ interstate). (ISBN 0 949 459 00 3; ISBN 0 949 459 01 1 (series)).

## TECHNOLOGY CONFERENCE

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and a closing address by Barry Jones.

Although Barry Jones seemed to be disappointed with the outcome of the conference I am not sure that some objectives were not at least, partially achieved. The general media coverage was, I thought, a little disappointing and negative in tone. Possibly this reflected the lack of sensationalism associated with such an intellectual activity (comparisons should be made with the LAA's Futures Committee). It is not surprising that more significant progress was not made when the range and diversity or represented interests is considered. That Barry Jones did not fully awaken the sleepers with his 'shock of recognition in an age of rapid technological change' is not surprising. His closing diatribe against the slow progress revealed his disappointment although, in foreshadowing a second conference in 1984, he acknowledged that the sleepers were slowly awakening.

I believe that the LAA was fortunate to receive an invitation to this conference and I hope we will be in attendance at the second conference should it be held. It was certainly a salutary experience to hear the word *information* used at least once every hour during the three days but the word *library* used only once (except for my syndicate group).

The proceedings of the Conference are to be issued shortly and will be available to members. The Minister is to be congratulated for his efforts in trying to focus attention on the problems of technology and the future and bring such diverse elements together.

B. Mitcheson  
President

### Australian Librarian's Manual, Vol 1 — Documents

Compiled by David Jones

Sydney: LAA, 1982.

ISBN 0 86804 009 6, 900 pp.

Price: \$80.00, \$60.00 LAA members, plus \$3.00 postage and packing.

Available from the LAA, 376 Jones Street, Ultimo NSW 2007, or through Bennetts and Mannings.



**NEW FROM LAA!**

**Readings in Australian Librarianship III:**

## SCHOOL LIBRARIANSHIP

Compiled by John Cook  
ISBN 0 86804 017 7

From now until December 31, this newly published title will be available at a special price — \$18 to non-members and \$12 to LAA members. (From January 1 1984 it will be \$22.50 to non-members and \$15 to LAA members.)

In addition all purchasers during the special offer period will also receive, free of charge, copies of numbers I and II in the Readings series.

Send payment with order to Library Association of Australia, 376 Jones Street, Ultimo NSW 2007.



# News from the Divisions

### NSW ONLINE USERS GROUP

The September meeting of the NSW Online Users Group was addressed by Malcolm Harrison, a consultant from Computer Power. Mr Harrison gave a most informative talk on the Computerised Legal Information Retrieval Service (CLIRS). A contract for the CLIRS project has been signed by Computer Power with the NSW, Victorian and Commonwealth Governments.

The aim of the CLIRS project is to provide easy, cost effective, Australia-wide, on-line access to sources of information on Commonwealth and State legislation. Status software, which is a Fortran based full text system, is being used and it is compatible with all major hardware systems. Initially access to the full text of case law records, acts, regulations and selected secondary material will be provided. Other sources of information which may be provided online in the future include land titles, probate matters, Hansard, and planning and environment decisions.

The CLIRS system will obviously be attractive to a broad range of users in fields such as accounting, legal aid, commerce, local government, union administration and legal research. Some of the problems associated with providing full text online legal information include the placement of footnotes and definitions, the contextual meaning of substantive words, the particular importance of commonly used words and referential phrases, and non-standardised forms of numbering. Although no firm decision on costing has yet been provided, it is envisaged that the approximate online cost will be \$100/hour, on a user pay principle.

### ACT BRANCH

#### *Multi-culturalism and Libraries*

The ACT Branch, in conjunction with the School Library Association of Canberra and District, is organising a Seminar on Multi-culturalism and Libraries on Friday 18th November at the Erindale Centre Conference Room. The seminar is directed towards teacher librarians and those working in public libraries but it should also interest ESL teachers, those interested in multi-cultural curricula, in teaching foreign languages and members of the public.

The seminar will take place from 2.00 pm-6.00 pm and will be followed by the official launching of *Buying books in other languages — a handbook for Australian schools and public libraries* by Anne Holmes and Derek Whitehead. Seminar participants will then adjourn to the Peking Restaurant, Phillip, for a Chinese banquet. Cost is \$30 for LAA and SLACAD members and \$35 for non-members. Contact Pauline Haldane (062) 62 1615 for further details.

BOOK REVIEWS — Issue 20 will contain a special supplement of book reviews.