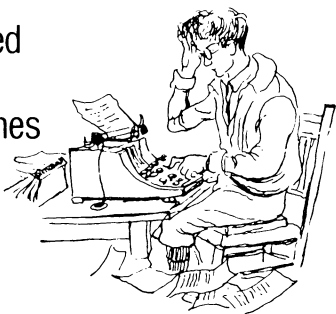


THE SOURCE

edited
and compiled
by
David J. Jones



Practicum makes perfect?

The benefits of obtaining something approximating real life experiences during a course in librarianship are obvious. For the student even the most theoretical subjects assume a material form; for the libraries involved the benefit, at best, of a recently-tutored and hopefully unprejudiced mind, quite apart from any hard work which results.

Eighty-seven Victorian libraries which are willing to participate in the 'practical education of generalist librarianship students' are listed in *Libraries for practicum*, which was published last year by the LAA Victorian Branch. Special, academic and public libraries are represented. There is a heading for school libraries, but the entries beneath it look more like specials to me.

Each entry provides the name and telephone number of a contact person, indicates subject strengths, specifies how many students can be accommodated and when is the best time to come. This is just the beginning of what promises to be a useful little publication for library school staff in that state. Occasional updates are promised.

Further information on *Libraries for practicum* can be obtained from Beatrice Fincher, Book House, 199 Cardigan Street, Carlton Vic 3052. (ISSN 0726-4836).

Who's almost who

The daunting task of compiling a biographical directory of library and information service workers in North America has come to fruition, after a few hiccups. The production of *Who's who in library and information ser-*

vice began in 1979, under the editorial direction of the American Library Association, but with another publisher, K. G. Saur as co-producer. In 1980 the co-publisher withdrew from the project, but in the (northern) winter of 1980-81 the ALA assumed full responsibility for the work. The carefully-mapped strategy to net biographees, the criteria for inclusion, the editing process and the overall production plan are described briefly in the editor's introduction to the work which finally saw the light of day in April last year.

Under the eligibility guidelines spelt out in the user's guide, the geographical limitations (which are not obvious from the title) become clear — coverage is of 'persons working in the United States, Canada, their territories, and North Americans working in U.S. and Canadian military, diplomatic, professional, and other agencies abroad'. The fields of activity (broad) and educational requirements (generally high) and other qualifications for inclusion are also spelt out.

So out of the mass of librarians working in North America we have around 12,000 of the 'leading men and women', their skeletal biographical details and fields of activity duly recorded, and, incidentally, checked in proof by the biographees themselves. The editors have certainly striven mightily in the interests of accuracy. Some may question the odd omission here or there of key figures — why is Summit in and not Egeland? Why no Donald T. Hawkins, whose articles on online information retrieval are certainly as well known as Mary Berger's? North Americans will I guess have a fruitful field for playing spot the missing person.

But at least the work has at last been published. The economics of publishing a work of this kind being what they are, we may never see the like of it again. It is twelve years since the production of its predecessor (*A biographical directory of librarians in the United States and Canada*). One hopes that an expanded successor, edited to the same tight standards as the present work, will appear before the millennium.

Who's who in library and information services was published last year by the American Library Association. It costs US\$150 (ISBN 0 8389 0351 7).

Downs, Downs and yet more Downs

In 1951 the American Library Association

published *American library resources: a bibliographical guide*, by Robert B. Downs. This was essentially a bibliography of bibliographies, listing all published American library catalogues, checklists of specialist collections in libraries, calendars of manuscripts or archives, exhibition catalogues, guides to collections, in short anything that will 'guide the scholar, research worker, or advanced student in finding significant material'.

Since the main work was published, Downs has added decennial supplements, the latest of which, covering 1971-1980, was published by the ALA in 1981. The 4258 items listed here, classified by subject and excellently indexed, attest both the diligence of Downs and those who assisted him and the wealth of American library resources in all fields of knowledge.

American library resources: a bibliographical guide: supplement 1971-1980 was published in 1981 by the ALA. It costs US\$30 (ISBN 0 8389 0342 8). Oddly a cumulative index to *American library resources* published at the same time only indexes the original work and the first two decennial supplements, not the new supplement. I cannot for the life of me understand why the index to the latest volume was not cumulated with it.

If you need the convenience of one alphabet to search instead of three, then Clara D. Keller's compilation *American library resources: cumulative index: 1870-1970* is for you. It costs US\$25 (ISBN 0 8389 0341 X).

1982 was a good year for Downs too. It saw the publication of his *Landmarks in science: Hippocrates to Carson*. This offers some thoughtful assessments of scientific greats from c.460 B.C. to the present day, weaving into the biography the leitmotif of the works for which the figures are today best known. 74 major figures from all fields of science are dealt with in the 300-odd pages at his disposal — some may quibble with his selection of some of his subjects, but after all this is a personal choice, not the result of an academy ballot.

The articles are certainly readable and informative, and a good way, perhaps, of stimulating interest in further study of particular figures. Robert B. Downs' *Landmarks in science* was published in 1982 by Libraries Unlimited. It costs US\$23.50 and is available locally from the James Bennett Group (ISBN 0 87287 295 5).



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