

1988 and IFLA

I agree wholeheartedly with the views of Marina Garlick (*ALJ* February 84) and Neil Radford (*InCite*, 6 April 1984) regarding General Council's decision to host the 1988 IFLA Conference in Sydney. My concern, which has been present since I first became aware of this decision, has increased to alarm upon learning that the NSW Branch is to host a 1988 Biennial Conference prior to the IFLA Conference (Call for Nominations, *InCite*, 6 April 1984).

By what stroke of fevered imagination can we contemplate staging two major conferences back-to-back? Like others who have been involved, I know that biennial conferences succeed only through the dedicated efforts of a small army of volunteer workers. The drain on human resources is enormous and I can only begin to contemplate the extra strain placed on these resources by the staging of an IFLA Conference as well.

Furthermore, as Neil Radford points out, hosting IFLA will require considerable government support. I believe that General Council has a responsibility to the membership to detail the cost of mounting the IFLA Conference in 1988, what level of government support is required, and what firm commitments have been received from government. Just as there is no merit in running a second-rate conference, there is no merit in running a conference which may bankrupt the Association.

Gordon Bower
Librarian, AIDC

As one of Australia's more regular IFLA-goers, I must agree with Marina Garlick and Neil Radford that Sydney is not the place for an IFLA conference in 1988, especially if it should be planned end-on to the LAA Biennial Conference. However, Mrs Garlick's limited experience, and Dr Radford's self-confessed total ignorance, of IFLA hardly qualifies them to comment on the general appropriateness of the IFLA conference being held in Australia.

Perhaps it is Sydney's smog that causes the myopic vision that cannot see beyond the Blue Mountains, let alone beyond our national borders. It has long been a regret of a number of Australian librarians that more of their colleagues do not take an active part in world

library activities, of which IFLA is the premier forum. The benefits would be mutual, for I know that Australian libraries and librarians rank with the best anywhere.

It is, however, my belief that Australian librarians should do much more to overcome our geographical isolation, and that to that end, the holding of the major international library conference in this country is not only desirable but long overdue. It should not however be confused with a national conference, which is very different in style, content and purpose. Therefore, Sydney in 1988 is inappropriate, although another location, in the year we all celebrate the national bi-centenary (not just NSW let it be noted), should be proposed. Naturally I favour Perth, and there are a number of good logistical, geographical and climatic arguments in its favour.

Lastly, I must deplore the miserly and parochial attitudes of my otherwise esteemed colleagues in the matter of public financial support. I would be most surprised if the national and state governments, at least in WA, and the city authorities, at least in Perth, could not and would not match the support that is normally accorded to IFLA conferences in other countries, many of which are considerably less affluent than Australia. It is nothing but a red herring to suggest that such support might be at the expense of other funding for library purposes. It must be clear, even to Mrs Garlick and Dr Radford, that the sum involved would be insignificant in the context of total national expenditure on libraries, while it is an insult to our authorities to imply that the suggested trade-off would be required. *G G Allen*
Principal Librarian, WAIT

As the LAA in its wisdom (?) delayed the publication of my letter about the IFLA conference for 4½ months, I feel it incumbent upon me to add a postscript.

I would point out that IFLA does *not* regard the LAA as having made a final commitment for the 1988 IFLA conference to be held in Sydney. The invitation has not yet been officially presented to IFLA General Council and so can still be withdrawn.

This is evident from papers prepared by the then LAA President for the November 1983 LAA General Council meeting and from personal communications I have had from a member of the IFLA Professional Board.

I would suggest that the LAA Executive and General Council are being manipulated into proceeding with IFLA 1988 by a small group

who have little regard for the real concerns of the rank and file membership.

I join Dr Neil Radford (*InCite*, 6 April, 1984) in calling for a re-examination of the LAA's priorities in this regard.

Given that the Association's membership has fallen by some 2,000 (i.e. 25%) in recent years, would it not be more appropriate for the LAA to concentrate on real professional issues rather than trying to gain some illusory 'international prestige and glory' (to quote Dr Radford) through a costly and inappropriate conference at a time when resources in New South Wales will be stretched to the limit?

Marina Garlick
18/4/84

(Editor's note: Ms Garlick's letter, addressed to the *Australian Library Journal* arrived too late for publication in the November issue. When space permits, *ALJ* letters are published in the first available issue of *InCite*: these were issues 1 and 2 for 1984 and space was at a premium. The letter went into the February *Journal*, which was distributed with *InCite* No.3.)

12th ICA Conference, Perth 1984

In association with the Conference to be held in Perth from 2 to 13 August 1984 the Western Australian Branch of the Australian Map Circle is proposing to organise a symposium on Map Marketing to be conducted in one of the exhibition areas at the Perth Concert Hall. The symposium will be programmed as an alternative to the technical tours.

It is hoped to bring together representatives of the leading map distributors, Australian map producing agencies and map librarians to discuss problems of map distribution and supply.

It is hoped that as many attending librarians as possible will take this opportunity to join an international assembly of producers, suppliers and users.

Please let the undersigned know if you are able to attend this symposium. *W H Lamble*
Chairman, Australian Map Circle (WA Branch)
112 Roseberry St, Bedford, WA 6052.

MORE LETTERS OVERLEAF

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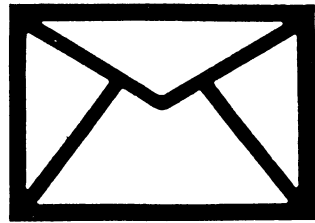
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SECOND POST

Membership fees

Regarding membership fees for 1984 and following years.

I am concerned that the arguments for restricting institutional membership fees might be heeded, unless redressed by a contrary viewpoint. I believe Council should move to transfer fee burden from individuals to institutions, and to establish a large range of size categories in the institutional fee schedule.

1. L.A.A. INSTITUTIONAL MEMBERSHIP income in 1984 will still be indefensibly LOW relative to services provided, to concessions given, and to personal membership fees.
2. My analysis of the fees schedules (published in *InCite* 30/9/83) shows *personal* members relative to *institutional* members paying at *least five times* up to probably *65 times* the PERCENTAGE OF INCOME . . . *On average*, I would estimate, the personal fee will claim 0.65% of gross income/salary and the institutional fee will claim less than 0.05% of net income/budget.

How so?

- (a) On the personal scale, excluding the poor employed (\$8,500 p.a.) and 'Mt. Everest Society' (\$40,000 p.a.), the percentage of salary *actually ranges* from 0.6% to 0.8% (rounded to one decimal place).
- (b) On the institutional scale the determinant is not total budget/income but rather *staff & materials expenditure budget* — which may approximate 60% to 80% of *total expenditure/income*. On that scale, the three institutional 'middle classes' face fees of 0.04% to 0.2% of specified expenditure *OR* 0.03 to 0.1% of *total income/expenditure*. The 'Small/poor' libraries face 0.1 to 0.2% and the 'Mt. Everest' libraries face 0.05 to less than 0.1% of respective *total* budgets.
3. *From a 'socialist' viewpoint*, the institutions are *not* paying according to ability, are *not* paying equitably, and *are* subsidised by personal members. Moreover, amongst institutions, the large/strong are not paying according to ability because of inadequate levels or class groupings.

4. *From a survival economics viewpoint, the institutions have vastly more disposable income than persons*
 - (a) Institutions must pay their staff (Yes!) must buy materials/fodder (though the quantity is nowhere near fixed!), and face (maybe) declining income.
 - (b) Persons *must* feed self and/or spouse and/or children and/or other persons, *must* pay housing, clothing, food, transport, other dependants, Tax, and other debts, *and* have been wage-paused.
5. There are extra benefits to institutions: the publications, seminar concessions (for more seminars than any personal member individually could attend), *plus the lobbying*. The Library promotion or lobbying and professional advancement is of great benefit to the institutions, and only very indirect limited benefit to individuals. It is very altruistic to subsidise our employers, but I can see no defence for doing so. (Try a referendum on this issue?) The institutional benefits are much greater than the personal benefits and the fees should reflect this.
6. A substantial part of the money from membership fees has been distributed as 'capitation' to interest groups, regional groups, etc. Through those groups it subsidises seminars and publications (mostly). Because institutions are the real END beneficiaries of these informing efforts, the beneficiary institutions should pay . . . at the door or through subscriptions.
7. *Conclusion*: I do not have the benefit of the past years' tables of numbers of personal and institutional members in each category, and corresponding income by 'class'. Therefore I cannot complete the analysis.

I endorse the \$75 'Basic Servicing Cost' approach.

I endorse the concession to students and unemployed — and reversal of 'employed elsewhere' concession.

Perhaps the institutional deal should be repackaged to separate 'membership' (fees on a scale of \$75 to \$750, according to budget), from 'periodicals' (separate add-on rates, and multiple copies for larger libraries), and 'information services' (industrial, consultancy/referral, vouchers, etc).

The interest group and regional group capitation could be reduced in favour of institutions paying direct costs and personal unattached members paying marginally less.

Aim for a real maximum personal fee not

greater than 0.5% of gross salary.

Frankly, I am reluctant to renew membership on existing terms. My deputy and I together pay as much as our employing institutions — for the benefit of libraries. This is absurd.

I urge librarians to get these fees in perspective. Recall the LAA's objectives — altruistic and pro-institution. Vote for the institutions paying their way. I urge the librarians who are library managers to insist that their libraries support the LAA's efforts on the part of libraries, and be prepared for those libraries to shoulder a fair share of the costs.

Duncan Marshall

Chief Librarian,

Riverina Community Library Service

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Janet Thomas

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