

The LAA and lobbying

Following the November 1983 meeting of General Council, a memo was sent to all Divisions asking them to identify target areas for the Association's lobbying programme in 1984. At the same time a letter was written to all Branches by the General Councillor at Large, Anne Hazell. Both documents stated that lobbying objectives would be collated by Anne Hazell for discussion at the March 1984 General Council meeting.

Replies were received from the Victorian, ACT and Tasmanian Branches, the WA Child-

ren's Section and the SA Public Libraries Section (supported by the SA Branch).

Funding for public libraries was seen as a lobbying priority at both the federal and state levels by all three Branches and the SA Public Libraries Section. Within this broad topic, specific targets mentioned were

- migrant groups
- young adults
- state library divisions concerned with public libraries

It was suggested that, in addition to federal lobbying, annual appointments should be set up at the state level with the relevant Minis-

ter. The WA Children's Section identified a range of needs in the area of library and information service to the disabled with lobbying to focus on such a service being 'incorporated with the established (existing) community-based public library system already in existence throughout Australia'.

Apart from funding for public libraries, the lobbying issues identified were

- the need for all employers in all states to accept the same level of qualifications and awards for particular jobs (Tas./Vic.)
- copyright including a.v. and computer software (Vic.)
- import duties on a.v. materials (Vic.)
- encouraging government departments and/or private industry to ensure that library and information services become integral parts of their activities (Tas.)
- increasing awareness of library and information services in all areas (Tas.)
- co-operation between and within government departments and industry e.g. in relation to network sharing (Tas.)
- funding for national and international network programmes e.g. in areas of current research projects (Tas.)

It was generally agreed that lobbying at the federal level should be carried out by the President in association with the members who are best informed about the particular issue of concern and at the local level by appropriate Branch Council.

No suggestions were made about a possible timetable for lobbying in 1984 but mention was made of the need for the Association to continue to be reactive as particular issues arise as well as establishing ongoing lobbying programmes particularly in the area of public library funding.

All Branches agreed with the proposal of the General Councillor at Large that lobbying should appear on the agenda for every General Council meeting with outlines of progress at the federal level from the President and at the local level as part of General Councillors' reports.

Anne M. Hazell
General Councillor at Large



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And later, when Frank Hardy was tried for criminal libel because of the book, George Seelaf raised funds to pay for Hardy's defence.

These activities led to Seelaf becoming a founding member and the first chairman of the Australasian Book Society, a co-operative publishing venture which was founded in 1957.

Since the mid-seventies George Seelaf has been actively involved in arts and the community and is also an executive member of the Library Promotion Committee of Victoria.

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