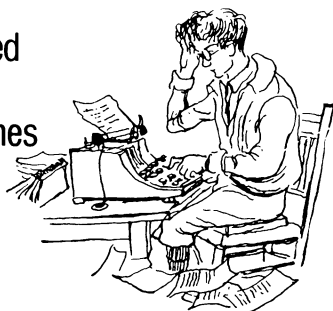


THE SOURCE

edited
and compiled
by
David J. Jones



Who searches what . . . and how 'tis done

Two new Australian directories, neatly complementary, landed in my tray within a few days of each other. One was a first essay into the fertile field of computer-based information retrieval systems in Australia. The other a directory of organisations in Australia which offer online information retrieval services. Both derive from questionnaire responses posed last year. Both look promising.

Alex Byrne's *Directory of online search services in Australia* lists 254 search services in tertiary educational institutions, national and state libraries and government and semi-government authorities. There is also a fair sprinkling of private enterprise special libraries listed. Entries, which are arranged alphabetically by the institution's name, provide full addresses and phone numbers, subject specialisations, the number of searches performed in 1982 (which in some cases might be a guide to the experience of the searchers employed there), charging policies, date established and searchers' names. And of course the search services used by each institution are listed. There is a place index and an index by vendor (i.e. the organisation which has databases 'mounted' on its computers, which the search services listed will interrogate on your behalf). The names and addresses of vendors used by Australian organisations are also listed. This is a very useful first edition.

Alex Byrne's *Directory of online search services in Australia* was published earlier this year in Adelaide by Auslib Press and is available for \$15.00 post free from 3 Mountain Road, Eden Hills, SA 5050. (ISSN 0813-2178)

There are fewer entries in D. Joan Joyce's new directory, but of course the subject is a bit more recherché. In her *Directory of Australian computer-based information retrieval systems* the compiler expresses some surprise at the small number of programs reported, considering the number of organisations she approached. As with all questionnaire-based directories, there is always the risk of returns being completed by the unknowing. No doubt the appearance of this first edition will spur the closeted program-makers into action. Even so, the 46 programs which Joyce lists and briefly describes represent a worthwhile first attempt at listing what is available, with the broad aim of preventing unnecessary duplication of effort and making wider use of existing resources.

Whether you are into mailing lists using a PDP 11/RSTS/E, or poly-hierarchical thesaurus-building on a VAX 11, or even using Kanji on an Apple, someone has been there before, and done it, and you may be able to beg, borrow or buy their program if you like the look of it. To help you around the directory, there is a name index, a subject index and a type of computers index. One of the programs looks very versatile — it is at present being used for bibliographic databases, inventory and maintenance scheduling, hospital patient histories, a Shakespearean dictionary, medical seminars and divorce court proceedings — add a Melbourne Cup sweepstake routine and that could be a bestseller.

Just one of the useful bits of information in D. Joan Joyce's *Directory of Australian computer-based information retrieval programs*, published last year by the Centre for Library Studies, Riverina College of Advanced Education, Wagga Wagga. The directory costs \$11.00 post free. It is number two in the Centre's Occasional Monographs series. (ISBN 0 909561 91 5)

Nautical, but nice

The best kind of coffee-table books are to my mind coffee-table reference books. And the best of these would not disgrace the reference shelf either. Such a book is Scott Baty's *Ships that passed*, a chatty, well-illustrated and fact-filled quarto depicting, as the dust-jacket subtitles it 'the Glorious Era of Travel to Australia and New Zealand' (their capitals, not mine).

This 328-page book describes the lives and

in some cases the demise of about 200 liners and regional cruise ships which passed regularly through Australasian ports on scheduled services between 1920 and 1984. Entries, much of them narrative and none the worse for that, are arranged by shipping company, with a page upwards on each ship: who built her and when, who launched her and when, maiden voyage, vital statistics and livery. Changes of name and ownership, major benefits and facelifts, anecdotes (such as the 'Red Bikini Girl' incident): there's an awful lot in this book.

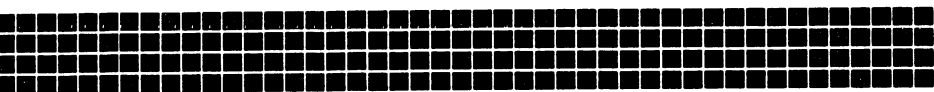
Don't expect it to cover casual visitors, such as the QEII, and don't expect too much from the index, which, alas, refers only to the ships which are dealt with in detail. Still, it's a nice book, the ideal present for a reference librarian with a nautical bent. Scott Baty's *Ships that passed* was published earlier this year by Reed and costs \$24.95. (ISBN 0 7301 0008 1).

Freebie-freebies

Ever needed a peanut butter bookmark? Or a postcard of the Kansas Capitol? Or to read the immortal pamphlet penned by some Pennsylvanian bard: *To spy or not to spy: this [sic] is the question?* All this and, would you believe, more besides, can be found in Carol Smallwood's *Exceptional free library resource materials*, published early this year by Libraries Unlimited.

This is an annotated bibliography of some 857 free booklets, factsheets, posters, kits, games, bookmarks (without, I am pleased to say, attached specimens), comic books and every imaginable freebie which the minds of creative PR persons or customer relations persons have begotten. Sources range from consumer organisations to for-profit companies, government departments to trade and professional associations. Addresses given are all in the United States or its dependencies. Entries are arranged by broad subject groupings — there is no subject index. Australian school librarians can give this work a miss. The *How and where directory*, the yellow pages and a fertile imagination will be much more useful than this curious collection, however useful our American colleagues find it.

Carol Smallwood's *Exceptional free library resource materials* was published by Libraries Unlimited and, for the record, costs US\$18.50. My review copy was supplied by James Bennett. (ISBN 0 87287 406 0)



Information Management

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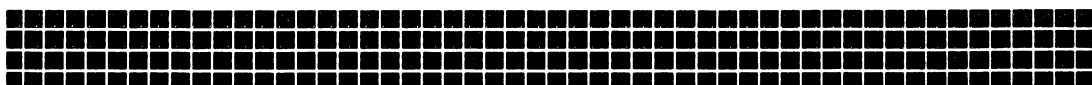
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