NEW LIBRARY FOR NSWIT

In February, 1985 the Information Resources Service of the New South Wales Institute of Technology moved into its first library building on the corner of Quay Street and Ultimo Road, Haymarket. Its central location has already made the library a popular meeting place. AACOBS Council Meeting and National Seminar will be held at The Institute in late August; those attending will have an opportunity to inspect the new library facilities.

The total building occupies an entire city block and in separate wings also houses the Faculties of Law and Business and the Institute of Technical and Teacher Education of the Sydney College of Advanced Education. Both the Brickfield Hill and Broadway libraries have been housed in the new building making the Markets library a useful collection for multi-disciplinary studies.

Philip Cox and Partners were the architects. Philip Cox is a well-known architectural historian and in this building he has combined sections of the original brick walls and other notable features, such as the bell-tower, with the new building in a sensitive and attractive way. Particularly interesting is the repetition in the new brickwork of the banded brickwork of the old — often known as the blood and bandages school of architecture. The restored bell-tower stands sentinel outside a series of curved walls of relective glass on the library's four upper levels. The glass reflects the bell-tower and, at ground level, activity in the street thus providing passersby with entertainment.
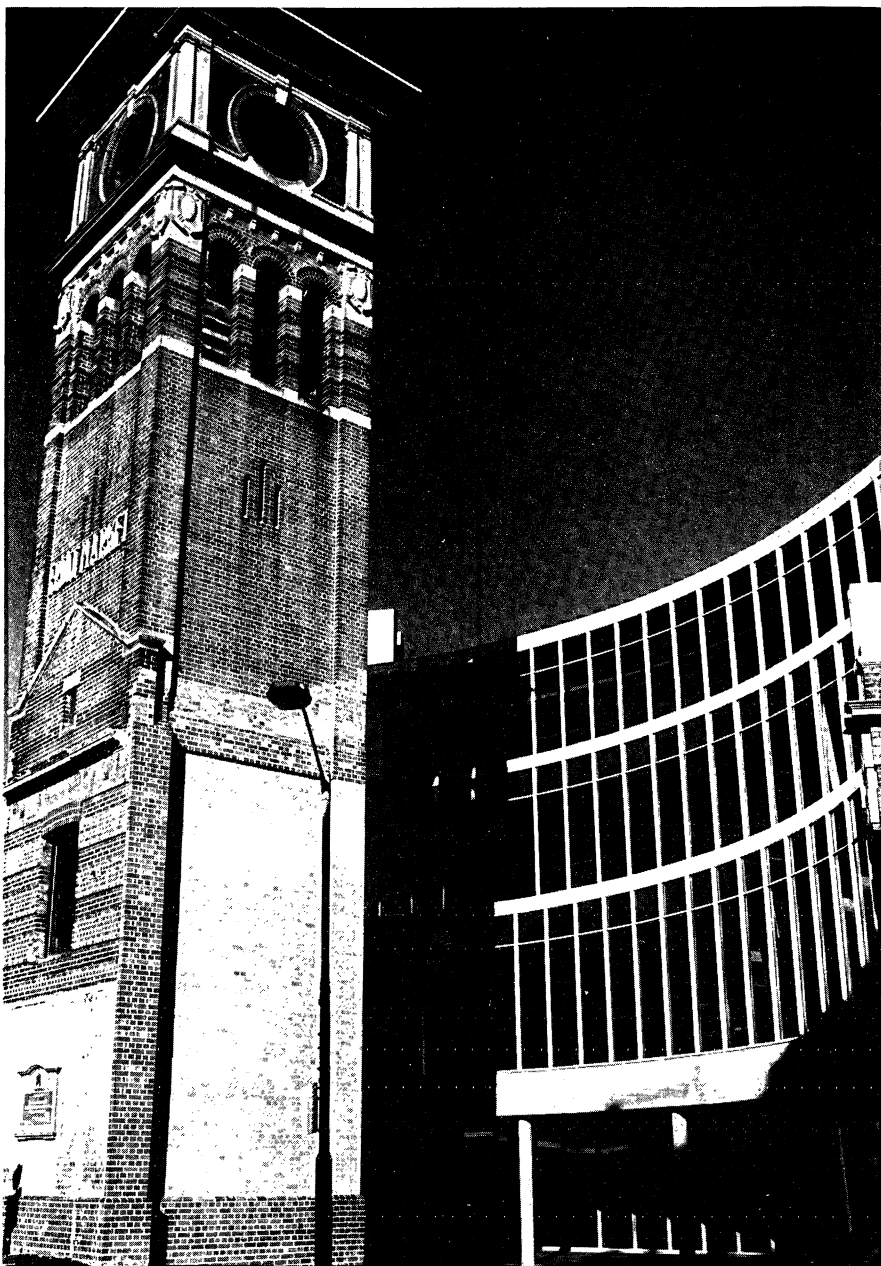
PLANNING

Planning for the library, which began in 1977, was influenced by Keyes Metcalf and his colleagues. Metcalf had emphasised the need to design a building to meet a need rather than a budget. An analysis was made of the Institute's library accommodation needs to the year 2000. The new building is Stage I with 5,245 m^2. Space is available at the rear of the building to accommodate a Stage II of 4,500 m^2 and a Stage III which would add another 6,000 m^2 making a final building of 15,745 m^2. Stage accommodates 668 seats and could hold an estimated 220,000 volumes.

In designing Stage I the architects were influenced by the final requirements of the building. For example it wraps around the car-park over which the library extension will be built; the toilets and central staircase and fire stairs are placed appropriately for the final stage. There are five levels, Level 1 being a stack and dock area opening into the car park. Entry to the building is on Level 2 with ramp access for handicapped students; a lift is also provided. The building is air conditioned.

LAYOUT AND INTERIOR DESIGN

Arriving in the library, readers enter a 'library street' of sign posting which on the right leads them past the information desk and book return, circulation and closed reserve, photocopying, audio-visual section, the computer terminal rooms, and lastly, to the seminar rooms. The library's computer room is beyond these and has a separate air conditioning sys-

The Belltower — the old and the new

tem. To the left of the 'street' are the microfiche catalogues, reference collection and current periodicals and microforms with informal seating. Some carrels and tables are also provided for readers.

Behind the circulation desk lies the reader services space with staff desks grouped into three sections: circulation, reference and audio-visual. The four major service points, which can be reduced to two in quiet times, are the information, circulation, closed reserve and audio-visual and equipment desks. An after-hours book-return chute has been placed outside the library entrance, under the supervision of security staff who are located in the foyer.

Efforts have been made to provide ergonomic office furniture and the circulation desk has been ergonomically designed so that the screens of the online loans system terminals

can be seen by both users and library staff together, ensuring that users do not regard the technology as unfriendly or secretive.

Upper levels are reached by a central curved staircase covered by a clear glass turret that allows sunlight to play across the stairs. The stairwell space can be used for displays.

On Level 3 the central administration is located one floor above the information desk and next to the lift. This places it halfway between reader services and technical services staff. Technical services is located on Level 3 with direct access via a goods lift from the dock. Level 3 accommodates the law collection and the Insearch/Dialog Office which handles the Australasian contract for Dialog Information Retrieval System, Paolo Alto, California. Dialog training is carried out in the library's seminar rooms on level 2.

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Levels 4 and 5 accommodate stacks and readers. A 7 metre module between columns has been used with 1.36 metre centres to the ranges. On Level 4 a pleasant staff room looks out on an urban landscape.

Light colours have been chosen for the interior. The wool carpet from New Zealand is rose, walls range from grey, cream to rose, and the ceiling which is over 3 metres high consists of concrete waffle blocks. The capitals on the round concrete columns remind one of Egyptian temples. The general atmosphere of the library is warmly welcoming.

LIGHTING

The lighting is an interesting and successful feature of the building. Although designed as a unique system, by the time lights were supplied a German system was available that met the specification. That system is now marketed by Associated Lighting Industries. The fluorescent lights lie parallel to the ranges, not at right-angles in the traditional way. Flexibility is achieved by the lights themselves being adjustable from right to left or turned a full 180 degrees if stacks are relocated at a new angle. Tubes can be added or removed in channels and deflectors attached if light needs to be spread. Lights can be turned off in sections to save electricity if this is necessary.
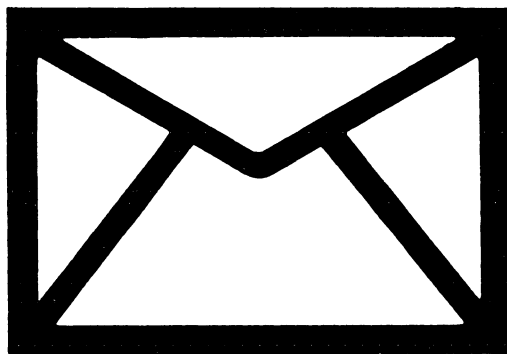
COMPUTING

Cabling and electrical services throughout the building are in ducted skirting boards. Currently installed are: Circus online circulation on the PDP 11/34; the Televideo microprocessor which supports five workstations, one of which is located in each library department and supporting centrally one fast printer and one of letter quality; two computer terminals and a printer for the CLANN online cataloguing system; 36 terminals connected to the Central Computing Facility most of which are for student use but some for convenience of library staff; the Institute's LAN and the AAP Online Information Service. Eight telephone connections are available for dial-up access to a variety of databases including Dialog, Medianet and ABN.

The next major systems change to be accommodated will be the introduction of the CLANN Geac System, with Online Public Access Catalogues replacing the current CLANN microfiche, and the Geac Circulation System replacing the Circus System. The installation is planned to begin in October 1985 and should be completed by February 1986.

In general the new library has proved popular with patrons and comfortable for library staff and a vast improvement on the temporary accommodation of the past fourteen years. It provides an attractive and very visible presence for the Information Resources Service of the New South Wales Institute of Technology.

Dorothy Peake
Head, Information Resources Service

Remote requests

In 1984 the Copyright Act was amended by adding provision for libraries to meet requests from readers at a distance from a library without actually having to receive a request and declaration in writing. This was done by adding to Section 49 two new sub-sections (2A) and (2B).

I would be interested to hear from any librarian who is receiving non-specific requests from 'remote' readers, that is to say requests for information rather than for a particular item known to the requester, and who feels unable to meet such requests under the amended provisions.

At the time the amendments were made I pointed out to the Attorney-General's Department that the new sub-sections appeared to restrict libraries to supplying specific items, that is those about which the requester had details of author, title etc. As always this is a matter of interpretation of the Act and it is not worthwhile pursuing the question further unless libraries are being prevented from meeting a reasonably substantial body of requests.

Could I also invite readers to contact me about any other copyright problems relating to photocopying which they may be experiencing. In particular I would welcome information about problems with the copying of unpublished material since I hope to make a submission to the Department about this problem before the end of the year.

Please do not send me, at this stage, comments on problems with audio-visual copying in educational institutions. However, I would be interested to hear from public libraries and special libraries about their problems with A/V copying.

Finally I would be interested in any problems which libraries may be having with copyright in computer programmes or data banks.

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