



## Fees

I feel I must express my astonishment at the quibbling — yes — quibbling over fees. Checking out the scale of fees which keep LAA House and staff afloat, if your salary is over \$40,000 p.a., then a paltry \$5 *per week* is all you contribute: if your salary is between \$20,000-\$25,000, then your contribution is just under \$3 *per week*, and of course it is tax deductible!

Compare these small weekly amounts with what it costs to run your car (a potential killer) or your weekly entertainment costs, then the LAA (the professional watchdog for library workers) is good value. Comparisons could be made with sporting bodies or other types of clubs, but my point is that although \$258 down to \$23 seems a lot to pay out all at once, recognise that the weekly amount is infinitesimal by comparison. I have never considered the fees too high, and always paid up annually on time. In these days of rising costs the LAA is to be congratulated on reducing fees last year — did any other association do this?

*Joan Walker*

## Not proceeding

The 26 July 1985 issue of *InCite* carries a notice about the proposed publication by CAVAL of the AARL Annual Statistics in a form suitable for processing by the Lotus 1-2-3 package.

Unfortunately we have run into copyright difficulties with this project and we are not proceeding with it. I apologize to all those who might have been interested.

*Hans W. Groenewegen*  
Executive Director

## Librarians and censorship

I read your article in *InCite* regarding 'Censorship in Schools' and wish to advise that it has been my consistent observation that censorship is certainly taking place in libraries. However, it has been my experience that the censorship is, in the majority of cases, being exercised by the librarians, and more particularly by librarians of definite political persuasion. In fact I would go so far as to say that some librarians of certain political persuasions see censorship of opposing views, and promotion of their own particular views as an integral part of their 'duties' as a librarian and as a member of their political persuasion. These same librarians also openly use election and other occasions to promote staff-chosen political candidates and parties, and no attempt at balance or 'fair-play' has been entertained. To be more specific. It has been my consistent experience to observe that Labor political views, Marxist political views; radical movements such as Women's Liberation; Aboriginal movements; 'Peace' Movements; Environmentalists and related Movements; Amnesty International; and other Marxist movements, as well as radical religious and other 'trendy' movements are freely featured, but attempts by persons of Australian heritage and cultural groups have been frustrated when their viewpoints have sought expression.

My personal observations and experience have covered universities in Victoria, NSW, Queensland and SA, and CAE libraries in New South Wales, as well as public libraries in northern NSW.

I have personally experienced the refusal by several libraries to purchase required reading University texts on the pretext of 'insufficient funds', whilst at the same time non-curricular material on lesbianism, homosexuality, radical political movements etc. has been freely purchased. In the area involved, the latter material is in low demand, whilst the texts were vital because access to them was not possible through alternative sources.

A balanced view on women's issues could not be obtained until the Principal of the CAE was consulted and he personally authorised balancing books and material for purchase.

Persons of my knowledge have experienced aggressive opposition when attempting to present libraries with a balance to the unproven theory of evolution.\* The balancing view was that of creation which has been part of Australia's culture since inception. In one

case the parent presenting the non-sectarian material was brought before the headmaster of the school, the child was victimised by the librarian and suffered personal distress. In another case, a librarian refused to accept a gift subscription to a school even though given by a parent of one of the students. The teacher librarian wrote to the publishers of the magazine involved asking that 'the subscription officer remove the school's address from your current mailing list. Further, if other gift subscriptions arrive, please ignore them'. The magazine *Ex Nihilo* is researched, factual and attractively presented. It is widely read. The State concerned has scripture classes in the school and these classes would feature creation at some time. But the librarian, in exercising her bias, withheld this information from all of the school's population.

It has been my observation that 'establishment-type' librarians seem to be more democratic in their choice of library material, whilst the 'radical'-type librarian is more readily intolerant of opposing viewpoints and more aggressive in censoring out such viewpoints from library material. This was particularly evident in the LAA *InCite* of 17 May under the heading 'The LAA supports Peter Rabbit'. I may not have agreed with all the rationale of Liz Maher, but it was refreshing to read of the LAA's reply and stand on such politically motivated censorship. May I encourage the LAA to fight for such fair-minded, democratic, caring concern for readers. The welfare of our children, and our nation, rests to a large extent, on our shoulders.

*V.L. Williams*

\*Some leading scientists have now discarded evolution for a creation hypothesis.

## LETTERS — see also page 8

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**OCELOT**

**MORE LETTERS**



This letter arrived too late for the August issue of the *Australian Library Journal* and is therefore included in *InCite*. It will also appear in the November issue of the *Journal*.

The letter from Gordon Bower in *ALJ*, May 1985 is a little unfair on the achievements of the earlier Federal Aid campaign. As chairman of that campaign I should like to offer another perspective.

Although on the surface, support from the Federal Government was limited to three specific areas, two of these areas at least offer potential for further significant resource allocation.

In the first place the establishment of ALIC provides libraries and information centres with a vehicle for significant improvements in funding. Already the Council meets regularly and has established the first effective dialogue between States and the Commonwealth on library matters. This has led to a plan for major library development, action to improve the conservation of materials and the opportunity for an effective and equitable inter-library loan system. Despite the fact that this body was specifically excluded from a funding

role, it in fact has been able to attract significant funds to libraries.

Secondly the development in services to the disabled has led to increased funding at the Federal level, a plan that has upgraded standards and services throughout Australia, and an improvement in the range of materials and equipment.

The only proposal that failed was the joint-use study and that was the fault of the report rather than the Government's intentions.

The real impact of the campaign was not felt at the Federal level at all, but did lead to tremendous improvements in services — and after all it is the end rather than the means by which success should be judged. Queensland, New South Wales and South Australia have all received significant funding increases at both the State and local government levels as a consequence of the campaign. Active committees in these States together with strong lobby support from politicians, influential librarians and decision-makers was the reason for this success. That some of the remaining States and Territories did not have the same success is disappointing but nobody on the campaign expected everything to be solved overnight.

With this present campaign targeted at specific areas, similar success can be expected also. Already the Department of Territories and Local Government has responded to the first round of lobbying and has funded seminars on local government information, provided grants for community information services and will announce in the 1985/86 budget grants in the hundreds of thousands of dollars range to some States for information provision. In South Australia at least, these will be going into the public library arena.

It must not be forgotten that we have three

spheres of government. In the last campaign there was considerable caution expressed by both State and local government at the thought of Federal funding for public libraries. The traditional resource providers were reluctant to have a big brother taking over their responsibility. We must remember that the ultimate aim is increased resources for increased services for public libraries — in the end it does not matter at all from whence the money comes.

*Euan M. Miller*  
State Librarian, SA

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