

News from the Divisions

NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL GROUP

The New England Regional Group held its first meeting for 1986 on Thursday 10 April. It was a workshop on On-Line searching, conducted by Pamela Johnson from Enterprise in Sydney.

The three hour workshop proved to be very popular, the full enrolment of 15 being reached well before the closing date. Members attended from Gunnedah, Walcha, Tamworth as well as local Armidale members. We hope that future group activities planned for later in the year prove to be as successful as the On-Line workshop.

The Executive for the New England Regional Group is as follows:

<i>President</i>	Craig Grimison Dixson Library University of New England 2351 (067) 73 2168
<i>Secretary/ Treasurer</i>	Vicki Williamson Armidale College of Advanced Education Mossman Street 2350 (067) 73 4264
<i>Committee Member</i>	Jean McBride Memorial Library Faulkner Street Armidale 2350 (067) 72 8687

UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE LIBRARIES SECTION (WA BRANCH)

'When do we make the change?' was the question being asked enthusiastically by some reference staff following UCLS (WA)'s debate on 'Para-professional staff should replace professional staff as first-point-of-contact for reference services', on Monday May 5.

Sixty-two librarians, para-professionals and students participated in a stimulating debate led by Margaret Jones, Acting Reader Services Librarian, University of Western Aus-

tralia, speaking in favour of the motion, and Ian Tweedie, Reader Services Librarian, Murdoch University, speaking against it. Tony Ralli moderated ably.

A vote taken at the end of the debate saw 37 attendees (most of them, librarians) in favour of the motion, and 8 against.

The formal presentations are likely to be published, and on the evidence of the UCLS (WA) meeting, a very interesting professional debate should result!

Jane E. Klobas
Hon. Secretary, UCLS (WA)

(WA GROUP)

Highlights of the Annual Report for 1985

The WA Group of the School Libraries Section completed another busy year. The highlights of the year were the continued growth of the Western Australian Young Readers Award and the opportunity to attend the IBBY Loughborough Conference on children's literature held in Perth in September.

General meetings were held at least once per term and these ranged from one held at the Audio-visual Branch of the Western Australian Education Department to see the new studios and to view new materials from the Branch and the ABC; a visit to the work areas of the new Alexander Library; and a fascinating talk on adolescent sub-literature entitled 'Weaning readers from the glass teat' by Grant Stone who introduced us to many comics and magazines that appeal to the adolescent.

1985 also saw the formation of a sub-Committee on OnLine Information Services for Schools (OLISS). This committee is investigating the various OnLine services with the intention of publishing a book some time this year.

The WAYRBA has been mentioned in an earlier report in *Biblia*. The counting of around 30,000 votes certainly shows how popular it is.

As well the Section has been represented on various committees and it has made representations on behalf of its members to the ABC (with negligible success) and the Education

Department over its literacy document.

The Section is looking forward to another busy year with the Darwin conference, WAYRBA, a campaign for teacher librarians in primary schools and the OLISS publication.

Margaret Phillips
President

WA BRANCH

The Annual General Meeting of the Western Australian Branch Council of the LAA was held on Tuesday, March 25 in the new Alexander Library Building in Perth. The major events of the evening included the presentation of the Sharr Medal, the awarding of a citation to the family of Mrs Brenda Freeman and an address by Dr Peter Reeves.

The 1985 F.A. Sharr Medal was awarded to Mr Mark Bickerton, an outstanding student from the Western Australian College of Advanced Education. Mark successfully completed the three year Diploma of Teaching (Teacher Librarianship) course at the College and is now employed at Willetton Senior High School in Perth. Mr Sharr himself presented the medal and gave an interesting talk on the status of Librarians in the community. This presentation marked the tenth year of the award.

The meeting went on to present a citation to the husband of the late Brenda Freeman. Brenda had been a student of Librarianship at the Western Australian Institute of Technology and had shown outstanding ability before her death in 1985.

Dr Peter Reeves, Associate Director of Arts and Social Sciences at the Western Australian Institute of Technology gave the major address of the evening. He told the meeting that he was speaking as a scholar of thirty years standing, and as man who had 'built his career on the shoulders of Librarians'.

Dr Reeves voiced his concern over the poor present financial position of academic libraries, the lack of Archival Departments within these libraries and the shortage of primary and secondary materials of interest to librarians. He pointed out the danger to serious scholars inherent in relying on computer assisted information retrieval methods and he also questioned the practice of 'weeding' in libraries on the grounds that obsolete books were of value to Historians.

Dr Reeves concluded by suggesting that Librarians in Academic Libraries take a serious look at themselves and decide whether they prefer to be academics or administrators. His address was well received and occasioned much thoughtful comment afterwards. The meeting ended with a buffet supper.

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