

## The professional question

While I agree with the comments made by Professor Whyte (InCite 4 July) on the amateurish and simplistic notion our president seems to hold on the question of professionalism, it would have been more appropriate and certainly more realistic had the nursesnursing aide analogy been used.

Hanns Possin, Nepean CAE

# It's membership that matters

Several letters in *InCite* 4 July have taken our President to task about his mental leap on the place of Technician members in the Association expressed in his statement on p2 *InCite* 6. June

For the future of the Association he should stand unrepentant about the thrust, if not the letter, of what he was saying. The priority for our Association in the years ahead is to develop that comprehensive membership and strong financial base without which our chances of making any real impact on the direction of Australian society and serving the overall interests of members are minimal.

Technician employment is a growth area in library and information services. My discussions with technicians in South Australia lead me to conclude that:

- 1. Technicians would like to participate in the Association, particularly if such membership provided letters after their names.
- 2. Technicians will remain substantially

alienated from the Association by any issistence of librarian members that the reserve to themselves the designation 'professional'.

The debate about the definition of 'profesional' will never be resolved — the sooner this recognised and we eliminate or at least mi imise its use the better.

Let's forget about a 'professional' membe ship category — it will not affect our standi as a 'professional' Association in the eyes the world. Let's have Librarian Members at Technician Members, both eligible for lette after their names. There is no other way o of the imbroglio, a way which reconciles the needs of those who would join the flight at those already on board. All passengers a needed if we are to substantiate our claim national representation and leadership in li rary and information services.

Alan Bune President (S.

### Congratulations!

I must confess that I had some reservatio about the LAA Biennial Conference being he at Darwin. I suppose one of the main reaso was the DISTANCE — to organise and to trav and high EXPENSES.

As it turned out, only half the usual numb of librarians and others attended. Perhaps b cause it was attended by less numbers, the a tivities for the whole week ran smoothly.

As a person who has attended a few LA conferences during the last 10 years, I thoug the organisation of the 1986 biennial LA Conference at Darwin was one of the bes The opening ceremony was unusual; perha only Darwin weather can permit such outdo activities, feeding 900 people with BBQ on tl spot is no easy task for anyone, but everyon got things to eat and drink and enjoyed tl performance by Aborigines.

In spite of the strange exterior of the Da win Performing Arts centre, I rather becan attached to that place in the end. Having a experience to listen to a music concert during the week, in the evening in the same roof gave me a better idea what the atmosphe can be like when it is used for performing art

One cannot attend all sessions beside Ke note speakers; and I found if I chose goo elective sessions, I felt the Conference we good. If I chose wrong ones (for myself, nothers), then I felt I did not get so much out the Conferences. This year I must have chose the right ones, mostly anyhow.

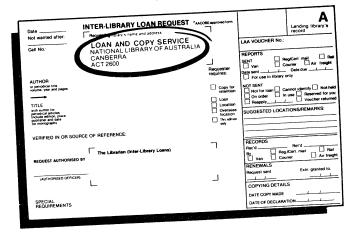
I thought most of the Keynote Speake ranged from good to excellent. A few cou have had a bit more life in their presentation Starting the Conference with Dr Chen's veraudio-visual and lively presentation, and fi ishing the week with Mr Warren Horton's verserious and demanding session, was an excelent order. The closing session was again verbarwinian and unusual in a very enjoyab way.

This is the first time that Brighton Cir Council sent a councillor to a LAA Confe ence. I actually enjoyed the experience of it troducing him to our profession at large. I was most impressed with the librarians' power of organising the Conference so well for suce a large number of attendants. I told him ware experts in organising information ar people, and at retrieving them (informatic and people) when they are needed.

Congratulations to all organisers, especial Darwin-based colleagues, for your exceller efforts and results.

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