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NEWS FROM THE DIVISIONS

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MEDICAL LIBRARIES SECTION SA

On 28 November 1986, South Australian College of Advanced Education Library, in conjunction with Medical Libraries Section of South Australia will hold a National Seminar on 'Health Sciences: alternatives, choices and change'.

The Seminar addresses the current and future information needs of health personnel and how libraries can respond in meeting these needs.

The programme includes two inter-state speakers; Dr Nancy Lane is speaking on education for health sciences librarianship, and Frances Bluhdorn is speaking about peer review. Other speakers will cover such topics as changes in nursing education, information needs of country health personnel, medical databases and microcomputers in health libraries.

Registrations together with payment of \$45 (for lunch and teas) should be sent by 7 November to: Margaret Russon, SACAE Library, Sturt Road, BEDFORD PARK SA 5042. Phone (08) 275 5289 Telex SACLIB AA88420.

HAPPENINGS: Notices for Happenings should be sent to the Assistant Publications Officer by the correct closing date. Notices are then retained on file until the due date, so a second notice is unnecessary unless there has been a change.

Bantam gets redback

By and large, the kinds of books sent to *InCite* and the *Australian Library Journal* for review are not the kind you want to spend the week-end reading. Usually we're pleased to dispose of them fairly quickly to someone who will review them out of sense of responsibility to the profession, you might say.

But every now and then, something that looks suspiciously like a real book turns up, and we all get quite excited! It's not necessarily the kind of book you'd have chosen for yourself in a bookshop, but a real book nonetheless, without a mention of cataloguing or shelving or ergonomic workstations . . .

But today the impossible, the unthinkable happened! After hours of proofreading, handling phone enquiries and keeping check on a number of projects that are at different stages, I was able to turn my attention to the three packages that had arrived with my mail.

One contained an issue of a journal now available for the first time in machine readable format. Definitely not weekend reading. The second contained something like a real book; it was about Australian films and looked interesting — but not the kind of book I could hardly wait to start.

The third package was heavier and I assumed it would be one of those text books that move heavily along the table at Editorial board meetings when suitable reviewers are selected. But as it emerged from its brown paper cocoon I could see that this was a butterfly of brilliant hue. Obviously not a library science title, more like science fiction I thought. The cover design was like Ken Done out of control, with only tomato sauce and egg yolk to colour in with. The cover designer must have chosen the purple cockatoo as being brash to appeal to Australian readers but then, oh joy and delight, I saw that this was indeed a REAL BOOK, by an author I enjoyed reading. A book I'd have bought for myself. It was the latest Howard Jacobson.

I only discovered the delightful Mr Jacobson towards the end of last year when Christmas shopping. His second book, *Peeping Tom* lay in the specials tray at David Jones — the publishers had unwisely selected black for the dustjacket and any booksellers could have told them that books with shiny black covers look old after the first customer has browsed through them. And this one had finger prints and scratchy marks from being pressed against other books. A quick flash through *Peeping Tom* convinced me that I should pay the \$5 being asked for it and pamper myself with is mixture of humour, bawdiness and intellectual stuff about Thomas Hardy . . .

And it surpassed all my expectations. By the time — I had finished the book, Howard Jacobson had joined that small but select group of writers whose books I'd take with me if intending to be stranded on a desert island.

What wonderful quirk of fate made Bantam Books send me his latest title, *Redback*, at a time when the thought of a 'good read' seemed very appealing indeed. If I get away right on five tonight, by the time I've bought the vegies and fed the cats I can be pouring a gin and tonic and starting to read the book by 6! Preparing the window frames for painting may well have to wait after all and I may go without the *National Times on Sunday* and give preference to Howard Jacobson this weekend!

Hard luck on the publishers who were sending it to me for publicity . . . Or maybe not . . .

Brenda Pittard

BRAVO ENA!

At the Sydney Journalists Club on October 7 a dinner was held by International PEN in honour of the recent OAM awards to Ena Noel and writer Stephen Kelen.

InCite readers will already be well aware of Ena's work on behalf of children's books, and it is fitting that her unflagging effort and enthusiasm has been recognised and rewarded.

Ena told guests something of the history of IBBY, emphasising the triumph that this year has brought in the dual IBBY awards to Patricia Wrightson and Robert Ingpen — they won the top writing and illustrating awards, with this being the first occasion on which Australia has received an award in this prestigious recognition of achievement in children's literature.

Ena Noel, aptly described by PEN chairman Alec Sheppard as a 'diminutive bundle of energy' has made a remarkable contribution to the cause of children's books throughout the world and her many friends will share in her pleasure at this award.

Brenda Pittard

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Contact John Horacek, Editor, AARL, La Trobe University, Bundoora Vic 3083.

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