

Children's Library Services in Tasmania

Following the release of the Trask Report on children's library services in Tasmania, the Tasmanian Branch of the LAA is working hard to publicise its findings. The Branch has issued press releases and has conducted a meeting on the subject of children's library services.

A total of 21 recommendations are set out in the report and the Branch believes their implementation would be a major step towards overcoming the existing problems, and restoring children's services to an acceptable level. (For a detailed meeting report see Tas Branch in 'Feedback' on page 4).

The report, prepared and directed by Margaret Trask, former Head of Library and Information studies at Kuring-gai CAE was commissioned by the Tasmanian Library Board and published last year. The final report was the result of a research project designed to assess the administrative support — both human and material — given by the State Library of Tasmania to its children's library services.

It acknowledges that the standard of children's services in Tasmania has steadily declined since the early 1970s. The main problems identified are a lack of specialist management and direction, insufficient training and performance measures, and a poor understanding of the public library needs of Tasmanian children.

Special funding over a number of years is strongly recommended as a means of replenishing the State Library's depleted stocks of children's materials. Pre-school children and young adults are identified as priority groups for whom considerable attention is urgently required.

Ms Trask's recommendations also high-



light the need to rationalise the number of small lending library service points in the State Library Service and to increase the opening hours at larger service points. Longer Saturday opening hours are seen as essential.

Liaison with the Education Department in developing a program of co-operation with school libraries is stressed in the report while a more developed media profile in newspapers and on radio and television, coupled with greater internal attention by the State Library to publicity and public relations is recommended.

The report concludes that there must be a re-ordering of priorities within the State Library of Tasmania if children's library services are to recover the national reputation they once held.

In particular, the appointment at a senior management level of a specialist children's librarian is crucial to achieving leadership in the planning, development and co-ordination of children's services. The designation of a children's librarian in each of the seven Regional Libraries and the development of staff training programs in library work with children are also of primary importance.

Liz Weir tells it like it is

Liz Weir is the Children's Librarian for the Belfast Education and Library Board who recently visited Australia after winning the Library Association's (Northern Ireland Branch) Andrew Chadwick Award. The award enables local librarians to travel outside the province for study purposes. Liz was also awarded travel grants from the British Library and the Library Services Trust.

While in Australia Liz has been learning about children's services in public libraries in NSW and has been telling groups of librarians about the library scene in Northern Ireland.

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One of the messages Liz has been concerned to get across is that overseas children's librarianship is becoming a declining specialisation. 'Overseas many children's specialists are being forced to justify their very existence. Perhaps one reason for this is the way children are viewed in the community. Children, and the people who work with them, are not given enough credit for what they do — for example, a university lecturer has a stronger position than a preschool teacher, but it is debatable who is more influential.'

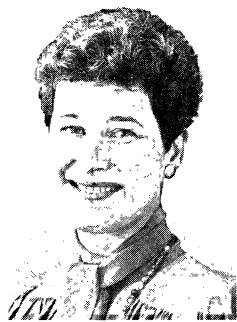
'Outreach and extension were the in things in the 70s but now it's all about measuring output', says Liz. 'It is important that children's librarians keep statistics and fully document what they do. To maintain our status it's not just a case of Pooh parties and storytime, we have to show that we have aims and objectives and can follow through. We have to come up with the goods and show off our results.'

Liz actively supports the view that children's librarians need to promote themselves

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Return of a dynamic librarian

Dr Julie Virgo will help to make the 7th Biennial Medical Librarians Conference Health Sciences Librarians — the Dynamic Communicators' even more dynamic. She will be conducting a workshop at the conference on Wednesday, 16 September.



Dr Virgo began her library career in Adelaide at the State Library of South Australia. In 1966 she moved to the United States where she attended the Graduate Library School at the University of Chicago, gaining MA, MBA, and PHD degrees. She was assistant director of the National Library of Medicine funded training program for medical librarianship,

was a team member on the Biomedical Information Research Project, and taught courses in medical librarianship and library systems.

In 1972 Dr Virgo was appointed the first Director of Education for the Medical Library Association. She was responsible for developing and managing continuing education programs, establishing medical librarianship courses, and designing a national competency-based certification plan for health sciences librarians. In her current position as consultant and Vice President of the Carroll Group, Inc she is head of the Chicago Office, and works on assignments with libraries, information companies, and government agencies.

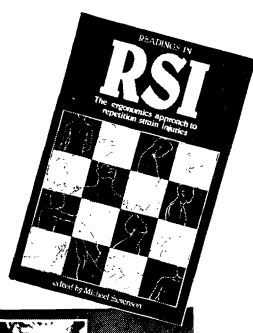
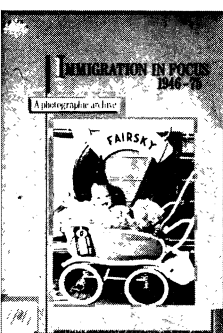
In addition, Dr Virgo has taken office in various capacities in the Medical Library Association and other professional organisations, and published 20 articles and three books. Recent publications have been in the areas of information management, marketing, strategic planning, and cost accounting for libraries.

So Dr Virgo brings to the conference a wealth of experience as a medical librarian,

educator and consultant. Her all-day conference workshop is entitled 'Strategic Planning for Health Services Librarians'. It is intended to cover the principles of strategic planning in libraries and aims to:

- provide background information on strategic planning as a process;
- identify problems with past planning efforts;
- describe strategic planning models;
- allow participants to practise the use of desired futures models;
- begin the design of an individual strategic plan.

Sessions should be informative and challenging. Registration forms and a detailed program should be available soon. So, come to Adelaide in September to hear Dr Virgo and a host of other experts in the field, and perhaps find out why Adelaide produces such world class librarians as Dr Virgo!



In brief

Readings in RSI, edited by Michael Steven-son, is a collection of non-sensational and un-emotional articles on repetition strain injury from an ergonomic viewpoint. Posture, keyboard design, the mechanics of repetition strains, their prevention and treatment are among the topics discussed in detail.

Readings in RSI was published earlier this year by the New South Wales University Press. It costs \$14.95. (ISBN 0 86840 162 5)

Education for peace by Gayle Whyte is another International Year of Peace publication, and is a bibliography of articles, books and theses 'concerned with promoting peace through the educative process'. Published as Monash University Library *Occasional publication* no 3 in November last year, it costs \$4.50 post free. (ISSN 0816-5424; ISBN 0 86746 516 6)



by
David J. Jones

Bay. A three-course meal and Dixieland music with the Moggill Jazz Band, will be followed by a cruise to North Quay Centre on the M.V. Mirima, a showboat with five-star comfort and service, a bar and dance floor. Dress will be semi-formal. Buses will be provided and axis available.

In addition to the Welcome Reception on Tuesday evening (buffet get-together in the Common Room at the TAFE Halls of Residence), there will be a Farewell Function on Friday (light snacks and savouries at the Conference venue, with the possibility of kicking on to the Ridge Rooftop Restaurant).

A view of the city lights from the setting at the Brisbane Jazz Club on the beautiful Brisbane River will be offered on Wednesday night when we will gather for a BBQ meal and dancing to the Rick Purdy Quartet. This is also an opportunity to stroll in the moonlight and enjoy a song requested of wandering musicians. Dress is smart casual.

Whew! Will there be any energy left for the Conference itself? For details of its equally exciting program, contact Bernice Burgess at Bankstown College of TAFE (02) 707 8566 or Cathy Hall at TAFE Division of Library Services (02) 689 5739. But hurry! — motel accommodation cannot be guaranteed after 1 ay.

SOLV REPORT: Geddes Report opens can of worms

According to SOLV's Secretary, Mr Alisdair Wardle, local Councils are going to be faced with the monumental task of looking after funding municipal libraries if the Geddes report is accepted by the State Government.

Mr Wardle feels the report shifts the whole area of responsibility to local governments and with less financial support from the Victorian State Government. 'The implications of the report are that local governments have not come up to scratch with funding in the past. However, it is the State Government that has been lagging. Despite their election policy platform of 50:50 funding, they are currently only contributing 30 percent of the total library budget. The remainder is coming from local government.'

Mr Wardle predicts that municipal councils will react strongly to the shift, particularly because the report also does not show the effects of the \$2 million reduction announced by the Minister for the Arts. 'If the \$2 million is not restored to libraries and the Geddes report is accepted, local councils will be faced with no alternatives but to buy fewer books, impose shorter working hours or reduce staff' says Mr Wardle.

The report also opens the way for user charges for a range of library services, although not on books. 'If this comes in it will only raise a pittance and will fly in the face of Labor Party policy on user charges' says Mr Wardle.

'The report does have some good points, but the big question will be in the second Geddes report on how the funding basis will be implemented.'

Liz Weir tells it like it is — article continued from front page.

and their services. 'Promotion of our services should be an integral part of our work, not just a frill'. There is also a need to target audiences and look closely at the range of services offered. During her time in Australia Liz appeared on television in Sydney and Wollongong and articles about her visit appeared in local papers. With the amount of media concentrated in Belfast Liz has learned to use press and TV coverage to full advantage. On returning home she will be discussing her trip in an interview with the BBC.



Photo: Liz Weir, Children's Librarian Belfast Education and Library Board (left) with Miranda Harrowell, Children's Librarian, Ryde Municipal Library, (middle) and Alex Wileman the host of the Channel 7 Sydney children's program *Cartoon Connection*.

According to Liz it is vital for children's librarians to belong to their professional association, not only because it can help in the fight for maintaining positions and standards but also as it provides a mechanism for librarians to come together to co-operate for research and promotion. 'Children's librarians need to write for their professional journals and to support their professional association' says Liz. For more news about Liz Weir's 'Australian experience' see future issues of *InCite* and *Orana*.

LIBRARIES ALONE: Rural and Isolated Libraries Conference Wagga Wagga, NSW. 21st - 23rd July, 1987

This Conference aims to gather together librarians from rural and isolated areas in Australia to discuss and disseminate ideas and practical ways of solving the problems inherent in being physically separate from the main centres of population.

In keeping with the emphasis on practical problem-solving, the Conference will include a mix of plenary and workshop sessions, covering such topics as education and professional development of librarians; networks and regional co-operation; financial and political management and the provision of library services in rural and isolated areas. Trade displays and demonstrations of communication systems such as VIATEL, MINERVA, AUSPAC, will also be featured in the Conference.

Keynote Speaker:
Prof. Bernard Vavrek,
Director, Center for the Study of Rural Librarianship,
Clarion State University, Pennsylvania, USA

The venue for the Conference is the Riverina-Murray Institute of Higher Education which is located 8km from the city of Wagga Wagga (4th largest city in NSW). Accommodation will be available on-campus within short walking distance of all conference venues. Because of the distance of the Institute from Wagga, this option is generally preferred. However, excellent accommodation (at country rates) may be found in Wagga itself.

All delegates are invited to attend the few social functions arranged, such as the Conference Dinner on Tuesday 21st (which will include a performance by students from RMIHE's Centre for the Performing Arts), and a wine tasting featuring wines from the Institute's own teaching and commercial Winery. On Friday 24th a number of day tours, covering Wagga & district libraries, Canberra libraries, or Riverina sightseeing have been arranged and will be offered subject to demand.

The Registration Fee covers all sessions of the Conference, pre-conference papers, and all morning & afternoon teas. Those paying the fee for all 3 days will also receive a copy of the Conference Proceedings. The cost of the Conference Dinner, accommodation, and the optional tours are not included in the registration fee.

REGISTRATION FEES

LAA Members	\$110
Non-members LAA	\$140
Students	\$60

Special Rates	LAA Members	Non-members
Day rate	\$40	\$60
Day rate (student)	\$20	\$30

CONFERENCE DINNER

Included in accommodation fee if staying on-campus.
If not, the Conference dinner fee will be \$25.

REGISTER NOW!

All fees should be received by the Steering Committee no later than 29 May 1987. A discount of 15% applies until 24 April, 1987.

For further enquiries, brochures, and registration forms, please contact:

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c/- School of Information Studies,
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