

the front line

The validity of the precept of example — 'Do as I do, not as I say' (to reverse the adage) — has been recognised for so long in inculcating new learning, ideas, and mores that it has become an axiom which is universally accepted.

If ever further evidence were needed of the efficacy of 'example' it has been amply illustrated to me over the past week or so in visits to a wide variety of libraries in Adelaide and Perth. Thanks principally to Pat Condon, Jennifer Redding, Alan Bundy and Bernadette Waugh I had the unusual, and as it transpired, the most stimulating experience of visiting special, academic, school, community and state libraries within the space of a few days.

It was my constant wish that I could share this experience with many of you or, more realistically, that such formal tours were organised more frequently by the Branches. I am sure that everyone taking part in such a tour would feel, as I did, interested, excited and proud of the dedication, resourcefulness and imagination displayed by these 'ordinary' members often working under difficulties and in isolation but with high resolve and high professionalism.

I am sure this is why our Past-President, Ian McCallum, after a similar experience last year, has developed the concept of 'model libraries' as part of a practical strategy to interest and educate politicians, community leaders and others of influence who hold the

strings of the public purse, in the value of library services.

As a contribution to the debate on National Information Policy (NIP) at the meeting of General Council in early April, Ian had prepared a paper 'NIP — What next?' in which he points out that the infrastructure of national information services already exists and that what we want is the current system to work better. He proposes that policy-makers and decision-makers should tour and see for themselves that libraries are already operating a defacto national information system. I agree with him that an impressive itinerary could be easily structured.

Alex Byrne, President of the ACT University & College Libraries Section had also written a paper on the LAA and NIP and sought leave to present this at the Council meeting. Alex emphasised the need for hard facts in any marketing program for NIP and provided examples.

A subcommittee of Council re-drafted the one-page statement on NIP and this has been distributed to Branches.

Alan Bundy, Ian McCallum, Jenny Adams, Alex Byrne and I will be meeting in Melbourne at the end of May to develop the model library concept further. This will be distributed for comment, of course, and we hope it will be a practical first step in this renewed and concerted effort to raise the profile of Australian libraries and related information services, and those who work in them.

In the meantime do organise or participate in formal tours of libraries if you possibly can. I'm sure you will be as captivated and enriched as I was in seeing what so many of our colleagues are doing out there.

Peter Dawe
President

Change in Membership Renewal Date

The General Council has changed the date for renewal of membership of the Association. From 1988 membership will need to be renewed by the end of February for members to retain their financial status.

Council considers that with renewal notices being posted in early December, this should give ample time for payment. It will also allow the Association to plan its financial year more satisfactorily.

Sue Phillips
Assistant Director

Get in touch with the LAA by fax. The LAA's fax number is 692 0689.

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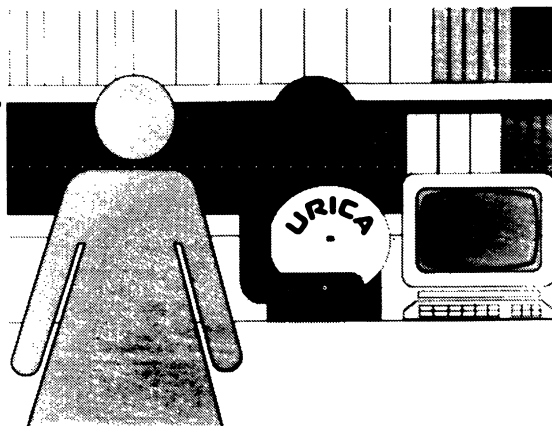
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