

# 'Store of books' becomes specialist library

Question: When does a 'store of books' become a library? Answer: When there is a detailed catalogue in place.

For many years, the Information Centre at the Australian Red Cross National Headquarters has been a 'store of books', an interesting 'store of books' without doubt, but not a 'library' in the true sense. However, all this is about to change. The implementation of a catalogue of materials currently held at the Centre is underway, paving the way for full recognition of the collection as a specialist library.

Soon, all Australian Red Cross Divisions will receive a microfiche catalogue covering recent additions to the Information Centre's holdings. The microfiche will be updated on a quarterly basis to ensure that Divisions are kept aware of all acquisitions.

The final step towards full 'library' status will occur in mid 1988 when access to much of the Centre's collection will be available to users of ABN.

According to the Centre's Librarian, Andrew Shiells, this will be the culmination of 4 years hard work.

When Andrew joined the staff of the Information Centre in 1984, there was only an elementary inventory of the holdings of books, journals, videos and films. He knew that the Centre had some valuable resource material, but the records were so rudimentary that he had to start from scratch. One of the first tasks was to assist in the establishment of a basic manual catalogue. During the months that followed, much of the collection was rationalised and future priorities worked out. After hours of painstaking work the result was a solid information base which would serve to guide the collection's future growth.

'This process enabled us to pin-point our strengths and weaknesses', explains Andrew. 'We realised, for example, that we held an important collection of materials relating to international humanitarian law, a detailed collection of information on disaster relief and, of course, we were very strong in Red Cross material. Indeed, the Information Centre currently maintains a collection of approximately 3000 books, 400 serials, 150 videos and 200 films'.

In 1985, the Centre obtained access to reference information in the ABN system. This meant that NBQ requests for bibliographic information about holdings of all libraries in ABN could be responded to quickly and easily.

Much of the Information Centre's holdings will be attached to ABN by mid 1988. The Centre will then have attained the status of a major specialist library. 'This our Bicentennial project', says Andrew 'our holdings will be available, via interlibrary loan, to specialists all over Australia. We will not be only a source of information for Red Cross people, but also online to the wider public'.

The Australian Red Cross Information Centre is located at Red Cross National Headquarters in Melbourne and is open weekdays from 9.00 am until 5.00 pm. All bibliographic enquiries or requests for loans should be made to the Librarian, Andrew Schiells, on (03) 419 7533 ext 65.

## Information Online 88 — Conference Update

Planning for the conference, to be held in Sydney on 19-21 January 1988, is moving ahead rapidly. Already we are assembling a conference program which will show the very latest in the online field and challenge delegates to think of future applications and impacts of online technology. We are confident there will be much to stimulate the increasing number of librarians using online information sources, and also progressive business people and data processing professionals in the online environment.

We are now confident that Martha Williams, editor of one of the best-known guides to online database services, will agree to be one of our keynote speakers, and other equally eminent speakers are in the pipeline. We are especially aiming to attract authoritative speakers from Europe and/or Asia to bring us up-to-date on developments in those regions.

The high calibre of the many and varied

suppliers to the online industry which have exhibited at previous conferences will continue at Information Online 88, again providing delegates and others with the opportunity to catch up with the latest trends and developments in online information products and services.

Exhibitors which have already booked include: AAP Information Services, ABN, the Australian Database Development Association, Australian Laser Disk Information Services, Biosciences Information Service, CLIRS, CSIRO Australis, Cuadra Associates, Derwent Publications, ICC Information Group, IDAPS Information Services, Information Express, Insearch/DIALOG, IP Sharp Associates, INSPEC, Orbit Information Technologies, OTC and STN International.

The Information Online 88 Conference and Exhibition will truly provide all who attend with valuable information and insights into the future online world.

Andrew Mackenzie



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## BRANCH LIBRARIAN MULTICULTURAL SERVICES

Applications are invited from suitably qualified persons for the position of Multicultural Branch Librarian.

The duties of this position include responsibility for the provision of multicultural services and materials as well as responsibility for the supervision of staff and services at the Mascot Branch.

The successful applicant will be required to hold appropriate tertiary qualifications and be eligible for professional membership of the Library Association of Australia. Practical library experience and a demonstrated special interest in providing multicultural library services are preferred. Experience in supervising staff and fluency in a language other than English would be an advantage.

The conditions of employment will be in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government Salaried Officers' Award. Salary is negotiable subject to qualifications and experience, but it is expected that the appointment will be made with an initial weekly remuneration in the range of Librarian Grade 1 (\$414.20) — Librarian Grade 10 (\$470.50). A shift allowance is also payable.

Applications in writing will received by the undersigned until noon 29 May 1987. However any person having difficulty in meeting this deadline for written applications should telephone the Chief Librarian. Written applications should provide full details of relevant experience, qualifications, personal data and copies of references. Further information is available from Mrs Barbara Hall, tel (02) 669 3566 ext 261.

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