

## Directory of Australian Directories

Ralph Reid, 'directory gazer' looks at some of the directories reviewed for the LAA's *Directory of Australian Directories*.

The process of directory compilation is generally a thankless one, and always vexatious. If it was supported by unlimited resources of time, money and expertise then conceivably all directories would be minor masterpieces; but it isn't, and they aren't. Most directories meet their major objective of information provision and, given the widely different circumstances and conditions under which they are put together, there is then doubtful validity in comparing directories (even those that address the same subject areas) and using terms like 'better' or 'best'.

So, with this in mind, I would like to briefly mention some of the 500 or so directories which I reviewed and described during compilation of data for the first edition of the *Directory of Australian Directories*, those which had some characteristics that caught my fancy. A second short article will concentrate on several library directories; this first one will deal with some more general ones.

Firstly, the *Australian Agricultural Year Book*, published for the National Farmers' Federation and edited by Julian Cribb. Surely one of the most attractive and informative of publications; lavishly illustrated and presented, it contains not only directory data but is also a mine of information on all aspects of agriculture, livestock, cropping and fishing industries. Maps, statistics on all aspects of production and trade, numerous in-depth articles on a variety of facets of primary industry. More than a mere directory; it is potentially a valuable teaching resource as well.

Also looking at rural topics is the *Australian Small Farms Handbook*, compiled by Mark

Pearson and published by Second Back Row Press. It deals with services, supplies, equipment and information sources for the small farmer and is organised in subject sections for organisations, a services and equipment catalogue, books and journals, special libraries, training, and a calendar of major events. In short, a most thorough, informative and attractive resource.

All of the Horan Wall and Walker guides represent excellent value for money in a diversity of fields. The *Cheap Eats* and *Bargain Shopper's Guide* series for each of the major capital cities are typical of the range; consumer-oriented, cheap, widely available, and a refreshingly simple interpretation of how information can be packaged and marketed.

Education directories proliferate, and despite some inevitable duplication are generally well organised and worthwhile. One with a slightly different orientation and an imaginative presentation is *What's Where and What's About*, from Aquarius Promotions. It lists organisations which supply educational resource material, and venues for camps and excursions in the ACT, NSW and Victoria.

The single biggest subject field for directories is that of community information, and these directories come in all shapes and sizes. Of them, three are worthy of mention. The Thebarton (South Australia) community information calendar is a novel break away from the normal A4/A5 booklet format, as is the nifty little purse/pocket-sized *Information '86* produced by the Bankstown (NSW) City Library.

But for a community directory which best illustrates all the proper design and presentation techniques, look no further than the November 1985 edition of *Community Directory: City of Melbourne*, produced by the Melbourne City Council Libraries and Community Information Branch. This particular edition, designed by Mark Carter, can probably not be faulted for content and certainly not for presentation.

Ralph Reid

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### LIBRARY TECHNICIANS SECTION NSW GROUP

Three of our committee members attended the one-day seminar in Armidale on 29 June entitled 'Para-professionals in libraries'. This was organised by the New England Regional Group of the LAA and was made possible through the support of NSW Branch Council.

Guest speaker Beverley Runcie, Acting Head, School of Library Studies Sydney College of TAFE, gave a very comprehensive outline of the Library Practice Associate Diploma Course. Linda Sercombe, Assistant Library Technician at Armidale CAE and Lexie Zantiois, Senior Library Technician, State Library of NSW spoke on aspects of working and studying as a library technician. Ted Flowers, University Librarian, University of Newcastle spoke on the para-professional in the library, applying this particularly to library technicians working in university libraries.

A very real feeling of isolation, particularly in the area of education and training, was made apparent by technicians in country centres. At the moment six para-professionals who are completing the only external course available to them, through South Australian TAFE, are employed at Armidale CAE and university libraries. Arrangements with SA and NSW TAFE have accommodated these students for block release in required subjects. However this

cannot be an ongoing arrangement. One of the technicians spoke of the difficulties associated with studying this way.

The plenary session concluded the proceedings and a number of positive suggestions were put forward regarding distance education for rural-based library technicians.

The hospitality of the New England Regional Group was wonderful and the seminar dinner held that evening, rounded the day off perfectly!

A full report on this seminar will be published in the next *Lib-tec*. This publication is free to all library technician members of the LAA. All technicians are urged to not only join the LAA but pay the \$5 extra to nominate their preference for joining the Library Technicians Section.

Marlene Knowles

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### LAA Study Grant Award deadline extended till 1 December

The Library Association of Australia will make funds available each year to support practising librarians wishing to undertake a study project. The number of awards in any year will depend upon the funds available and the estimated costs of proposals received.

The Association's intention in offering study grants is to provide an opportunity for librarians to undertake projects they would otherwise be unable to do because of the time and costs involved.

### Conditions

- Available to a practising librarian in a supervisory or middle management position, with a minimum of three years' experience in library and information work.
- For the purpose of undertaking a study program on a selected library/information issue or problem of present and future relevance to the development and improvement of library and information services in Australia.
- The study may include opportunity for preliminary work, local or overseas visits/consultations, attachment to another organisation, preparation of a publication, further educational qualification.
- The study is to culminate in a written report in two parts, provided to the Association. The first is a chronological summary of the project components together with a statement of the value derived, provided within one month of the project's culmination. The second component is a comprehensive report provided within four months of the project's culmination.
- It is expected that the study project will provide an opportunity for self development as well as benefit to the successful applicant's institution and present position.
- The award is not intended to be used to fund research projects.
- Applicants should complete an application form which gives:
  - A brief description of the study project, including aims; benefits to the individual and to the institution; possible outcomes of a project.
  - Identification and reasons for choice of particular institutions, persons or activities.
  - Itinerary, timetable, travel/accommodation costs involved.
  - Details of any other funds or facilities being provided for the study project.
  - A curriculum vitae.
  - 2 referees' reports.
- Applicants must be financial members of the LAA.

Application forms are available from LAA House and applications for an award in 1988 should reach the Assistant Director, LAA House, 376 Jones Street, Ultimo NSW 2007 by 1 December 1987

### CONSERVATION SIG

The Conservation SIG, the LAA's newest Special Interest Group had its inaugural meeting at Fisher Library, University of Sydney, on 27 May with 12 people attending. The Group elected Janine Schmidt Convenor and Tom Taylor Secretary/Treasurer. The committee of eight includes three people who are based outside Sydney. Elected as committee members were Karl Schmude, Jan Lyall, Carol Mills, Trevor Mills and Monique Reiher. The first group activity, a trip to the National Library's Preservation Laboratory, is planned for 17 October. People interested in attending should contact Tom Taylor on (02) 692 4162 (w) or (02) 516 2317.