

FEEDBACK

SCHOOL LIBRARIES SECTION NATIONAL

Publicity campaign

As an awareness raising exercise during Library Week the School Libraries Section focused media attention on the inadequate staffing of libraries in primary schools. Throughout Australia only a small minority of primary school libraries, around 1 percent, are staffed by professionally qualified full-time teacher-librarians. The national Section engaged the services of the NSW public broadcasting consultants, Taylor, Ledden and Associates, to advise on, and devise, a suitable publicity program which would highlight this crisis in school libraries.

- The campaign was made up of two aspects:
- a press release distributed to AAP by the LAA
 - a number of radio messages which were sent to 75 public and commercial radio stations throughout Australia, as well as the ABC

The radio campaign comprised of paid and unpaid placements. Scripts were aimed at parents and encouraged them and other listeners to ask questions about the staffing of libraries in their schools, and to follow up concerns with relevant parents' groups, or the LAA office. The LAA passed on queries to contact persons familiar with the special concerns and problems of each state system.

A special article on school libraries is being prepared for publication in the newsletters of

the state P&C Associations which will build upon the interest raised during the radio campaign. It is anticipated that this should appear early in 1988.

Targeting parents through this type of publicity program represents a new direction for the Schools Section. In the past lobbying concentrated on education authorities and teachers. The national Section looks forward to being able to report on the success of this campaign in a future issue of *InCite*

Hazel Vickers

PUBLIC LIBRARIES SECTION NSW GROUP

Public libraries coming online

The Public Libraries Section, the Metropolitan Chief Librarians' Committee and the Public Libraries Department (State Library of NSW) organised a joint seminar on 9 October to discuss why many public libraries have not come to grips with the provision of online information service and in the words of the keynote speaker, Ross Gibbs from Caringbush Regional Library, have 'jettisoned their information role'.

The need to examine and reorient professional priorities, to cease treating online as 'different', the issue of charging or not charging, and the need for better marketing of services were some of the questions Ross urged public librarians to face or become 'bit players on the fringe of the information game'.

A panel of Reference Librarians — Jan Keith (Wollongong), Mary Sparks (Gosford), Joan Suckling (Penrith) and Maryanne Larkin (Bankstown) discussed the online information services currently being provided by their libraries and plans for the future.

Each of the libraries represented on the panel tackled online service in differing ways and with varying budgets. The importance of service to Council and Council officers as a starting point, the need for experienced searchers, and the need to see online services as supplementary reference sources and as part of the reference library's overall information service, were the main messages of these four positive speakers.

A more detailed summary, (prepared for

the MCLC) plus statements and notes from some of the panel members are available from Diana Oliver.

Do public libraries need reader education?

Whoops! We only gave you half the story on the Public Libraries Section (NSW Group) report of the joint LAA/RARA 'Do public libraries need reader education?' meeting published in the last issue. Leonie Blair's (Educational Services Librarian, Dixon Library, University of New England) contribution was published but Suzanne McShane's contribution was omitted . . .

Suzanne McShane, Reader Education Librarian, Sutherland Shire Library and Information Service, outlined the program at Sutherland which involves sessions for parents, special interest groups, high school groups and the general public. Group sessions include a tour of behind the scenes activities. Emphasis is on how to use the microfiche catalogue and use of resources, including local studies material, microfilm etc. The branch talks are geared to each specific branch library and its place in the Shire network. Contact with, and talks to, community groups such as the local family history group have helped to establish better liaison.

The program is judged to be successful within the limitation of it being part-time — Sue also assists with advising readers. Simple handouts and publicity are used to advertise sessions in both the central and branch libraries.

Please note that tapes of the session plus a bibliography prepared by Leonie Blair for her paper are available from Diana Oliver, Sutherland Shire Library, Eton St, Sutherland 2332 (02) 521 0353. Tapes are free to members of the Public Libraries Section and \$5 to others.

CATALOGUERS SECTION NSW GROUP

A one-day seminar entitled 'OPAC Update' will be held in Sydney on Monday 18 January 1988, organised jointly by the NSW Groups of Cataloguers and Information Science Sections. The main speaker will be Charles Hildreth with the topic 'The Quest for the 3rd Generation OPACS — Obstacles and New Developments; plus the Common Language'.

Cost for participants will be \$65 for LAA members and \$90 for non-members. The venue is still to be finalised. Further information and application forms may be obtained from Eugenie Greig, Library, Macquarie University, NSW 2109 (02) 805 7525.

LIBRARY TECHNICIANS SECTION SA GROUP

A group of 30 external students and Committee members had an informative evening on 20 July when Mr Gary Benson, Media Studies, Adelaide College of TAFE and members of the Video Disc Unit demonstrated various aspects of desk top publishing, and the latest compact disc technology. For many of the students it was their first opportunity to have hands-on experience.

The Section's AGM is to be held on 16 November at the Adelaide College of TAFE in the Staff Lounge at 7.00 pm. Everyone is welcome.

V. E. Hopwood
Secretary

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**SCHOOL LIBRARIES SECTION
VICTORIAN GROUP**

It's a well-worn cliché that quality counts more than quantity, so although we were disappointed at the small number of people who turned up to our joint meeting with Children's Section and SLAV, we were more than happy with the way the evening panned out.

Jane Tanner, illustrator of *There's a Sea in my Bedroom*, ably supported by her original drawings, gave us a fascinating insight into the way she works. Roseanne Turner, Penguin Books, then took us on a guided tour of the byways of modern publishing. It was a rare opportunity to get to know people at the forefront of publishing and it was a shame more librarians could not attend.

Our next meeting will be a dinner at Federici's, 163 Grattan St, Carlton, on 10 November. The speaker will be Mary Ronnie of Monash University's School of Library Studies. She has the reputation of being a positive thinker with a great sense of humour so we are expecting an entertaining evening.

Maelor Himbury
Secretary

VICTORIAN BRANCH

Branch Council

The major items at the October meeting were discussions on how the Branch should respond to the Geddes Report on publicly funded libraries in Victoria and to the Hancock Report on State Library Development.

A formal invitation for a Branch Council representative to join each of the Geddes Report committees set up by Pat Stewart, Libraries Review Co-ordinator, was received. A long debate about how Branch Council should respond ensued and it was plain that there were strong divisions of opinion about whether the Branch should be seen to be a party to these committees. It was decided that

Branch Council should go ahead with a general meeting to discuss the issues involved and to formulate a Branch-wide policy on the Geddes reports. The meeting will take place in the Queen's Hall, State Library of Victoria 6.00 pm for 6.30 pm 19 November 1987. This is an important issue and all members are urged to attend.

There were no such divisions on the subject of the new building for the State Library. It was agreed that all possible means should be sought to publicise the need as outlined in the Hancock Report, and the television and press coverage already gained by Branch President, Ann Forbes, was welcomed. Strong public support is needed to ensure that the politicians do not let the library down and a public meeting will be held, with all the major figures invited. A forum, Building for the future: a new State Library for Victoria will be held in the Queen's Hall, State Library of Victoria. See Happenings for details.

Ray Price

**NORTH QUEENSLAND
REGIONAL GROUP**

**Continuing Education —
Near and Far**

This was prepared for Twila Herr, convenor of the LAA's Continuing Education Committee, and formed part of an ongoing discussion of some aspects of the LAA's current policy on continuing education. The inspiration for these particular comments was the paper 'Continuing education activities in the LAA' presented to the General Council Meeting in September. This is a most thoughtful and helpful paper and formed the basis for a discussion by the North Queensland Regional Group Executive Committee.

Firstly, the Group agrees that any discussion of the role of the LAA in continuing education will remain confused unless there is some kind of agreed definition. We incline towards the broader view, perhaps something akin to the statement in the *ALA Glossary of Library and Information Science*:

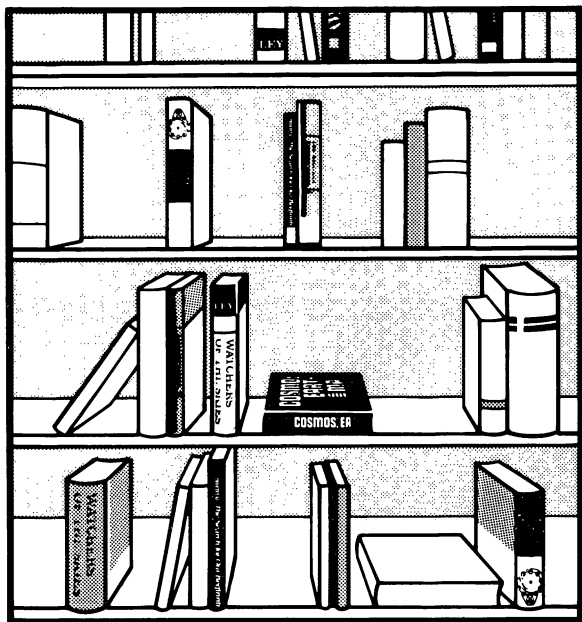
continuing education — *The activities by which library and other information agency personnel purposefully seek to improve, diversify, or change their professional- or job-related knowledge, attitudes, or skills. Continuing education activities include short courses, full-term courses, institutes, workshops, conferences, home study courses, learning packages, and other educational activities undertaken by staff members individually by their own initiative.*

We are most surprised that conferences have not traditionally been considered within the continuing education ambit. In addition, the Group would like to see an emphasis on 'home study courses' and 'learning packages' because only these methods place all members of the Association on an equal footing. For members at a distance, or with disabilities or with pressing family or personal commitments, formal courses and conferences can never do this. The ALA itself has provided some good examples with its continuing education programs in American libraries, as have a number of other professional bodies in Australia. The Queensland Branch has established a useful procedure of taping selected meetings. Has the LAA surveyed other groups for strategies and ideas?

This leads to the second point. We find it hard to believe that a professional association does not have a responsibility to its members for continuing education. In our submission to the Corporate Plan and Review Committee we said that 'continuing education is the most important activity with which the Association deals'. We stand by that comment, but the Report of the Committee did not appear to agree, as its recommendations (32 and 33) deal with mechanics, not principles.

In that respect, we are disheartened by General Council's apparent view that the role of continuing education, a bit like lamington drives, is a source of fund-raising for the LAA. Rather than negatively stating that CE 'lost' \$1,257 in 1986 plus overheads of \$5,000, we would prefer to say that the Association expended \$6,257 on CE in 1986, a miniscule proportion of its operating budget. We would

Continued page 14



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**Sydney Adventist High School, NSW.
Alwyn Campbell, Teacher/Librarian.**

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LAA Study Grant Award

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

Travel discounts for LAA members

The LAA has opened an account with ANZ Travel, which gives members reduced airfares in Australia and overseas, and discounts for hotel bookings, holiday packages, coach fares, travel insurance and car rentals.

This issue of *InCite* contains a brochure on ANZ Travel and its services, and your Member's Privilege Card. This service represents one more advantage of being a member of the LAA, and we invite you to make use of it for your business and leisure travel.

Sue Phillips
Acting Director

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see nothing improper in the LAA expending 5 percent of members' funds (\$40,000?) on CE, or of budgeting for \$60,000 with an anticipated income of \$20,000. This is far more than a semantic difference, for it affects the way that members perceive and react to their Association.

Thirdly, we are now clear on the point that the 'National' in the 'National CE program' refers to the role of the Head Office as organiser and underwriter. This is very useful, but we regret the demise of activities which are offered nationally. Certainly, for 1987 and 1988 the majority of CE proposals are state or even city based. Only those from the School Librarians Section adopt a national focus and it may well be that there is a need to encourage the Sections to take a much more active role. University, public and special librarians, for example, do have CE needs which are not comfortably met within the normal framework of Branches (or Regional Groups) as the main service providers. Is it only the Regional Groups who still care about national offerings?

Finally, our concern with the profit motive is most clearly illustrated with LAA 'approved activities'. These, by definition, must have a profit component and by their nature the LAA is precluded from subsidising (or, once again more constructively, co-funding) them. There is a proper place for entrepreneurial CE programs, but the LAA should not adopt the mistaken view that it is discharging fully its obligation to continuing education by allowing its name to be used.

The LAA takes a justified pride in having controlled its fee level over the past two years. It should be realised, however, that members probably on average pay out another \$120 per year on conferences, workshops and the like. Thus, the cost of receiving a full range of legitimate membership services from the LAA is far higher than the fee structure, considered in isolation, would suggest. Our Regional Group members receive less for their membership fees than those members living in Sydney, for example, in terms of the variety and richness of professional and educational resources available to them. When faced with the prospect of large, profit-making fees for continuing education activities, it is perhaps understandable that there is some disquiet in the ranks.

John McKinlay
President

DISTANCE EDUCATION SIG

A seminar on library service to external students will be organised by the Distance Education SIG in 1988. Anyone interested in contributing should contact the Group's new Convenor, Craig Grimison, at the Dixon Library, University of New England, (067) 73 2468.

Forthcoming newsletter themes are: Conference comments (No. 11, Oct.), The Context of distance (No. 12, Dec.) and Reader Education for External Studies Students (No 13, March 1988).

The Group's new Secretary/Treasurer is Morris Bellamy, C/- Hibberd Library, Weipa, Qld 4874, (070) 69 7101.

Shirley R. Cohen

SPECIAL LIBRARIANS SECTION NSW GROUP

NSW Specials will be holding their Annual General Meeting and Christmas Party at the AMP Building, Circular Quay on 9 December 1987. The meeting will commence at 6.00 pm on the 5th floor and will be followed by refreshments in the library on the 25th floor.

If you would like the opportunity to taste the LAA Anniversary wine with a view of Sydney at night make sure you don't miss this festive occasion. Contact Terri-Anne Blackall or Paula Smith (02) 234 7118. PS the NSW District Librarians' Christmas Lunch will be held at Julianas, Hilton Hotel on 4 December, contact Sue Gock (02) 234 7119

NORTHERN AREAS REGIONAL GROUP TASMANIA

Local government levy

The Northern Areas Regional Group (NARG) generated the following press release in September:

The Tasmanian Northern Areas Regional Group is concerned about the doubling of the local government library levy.

Tasmania was, and still is, the only state to have a totally state government run library service. Municipalities totally relinquished their libraries in 1979 and the 1984 Libraries Act emasculated the Tasmanian Library Board and reduced all local government involvement to merely an advisory level. It seems incongruous that local government will have to pay for a service over which it has no control or responsibility.

NARG members wish to know if this increase in the levy is simply an extension of the tax gathering that local government performs for the state government or is it the thin end of the wedge cutting into the viability of the Tasmanian Library Service?

NARG appreciates the difficulty in funding government services and appreciates that, in the current economic climate, some small libraries may have to close or services may have to be rationalised, but believes that a minimum quality of service must be preserved and promoted. The Library Association of Australia seeks assurance and affirmation of the government's intentions in this vital community area.

LIBRARY TECHNICIAN SECTION National Executive

The following positions are declared vacant for the 1988 term:

- President
- Vice-President
- Secretary
- Treasurer
- Publications Officer

Nominations will close on November 30, 1987. Would those nominating for any of the above positions please forward name, address, phone number, and position sought to Ian Goldsmith, PO Box 17, Paramatta 2150 (w) (02) 217-3674.