

IFLA President and Secretary-General visit Sydney

The President of IFLA, Dr Hans-Peter Geh, and the Secretary-General Mr Paul Nauta were in Sydney from 16-18 November to meet members of the planning committee for the 1988 IFLA/LAA Conference, and to look at venues and other facilities for the conference. Dr Geh is based in Stuttgart at the Wurtembergische Landesbibliothek — a large combined academic/city library. Mr Nauta hails from IFLA headquarters in The Hague, Amsterdam.



Dr Hans-Peter Geh with Mr Paul Nauta

During their brief visit — their first to Australia — Dr Geh and Mr Nauta looked over the main conference and exhibition venues at the University of NSW, attended a concert in the Concert Hall of the Opera House, where the opening of the IFLA portion of the conference will take place, and saw some of the major hotels where accommodation has been booked for conference delegates.

Dr Geh and Mr Nauta said they were delighted that the Opera House is to feature prominently in the conference, and that delegates will have an opportunity to visit the new State Library of NSW buildings, where the opening reception will be held.

At a reception held at Richmond Villa on Observatory Hill Dr Geh and Mr Nauta met conference sponsors and organisers, and media representatives.

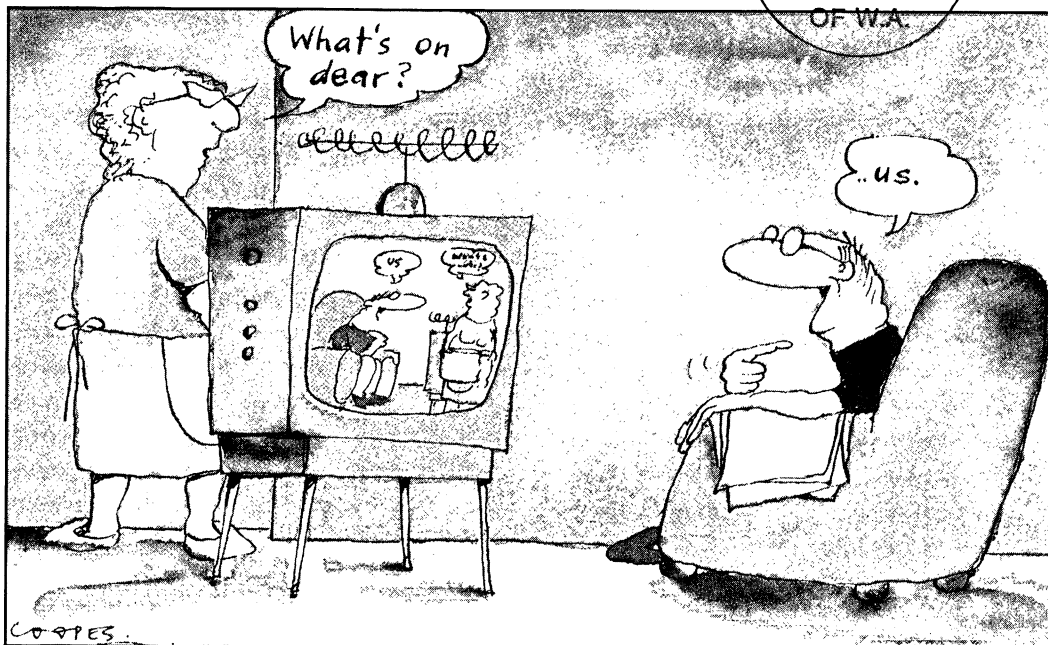
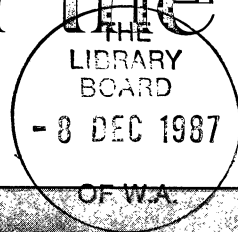


Mr Gavin Crawford, Marketing Manager, James Bennett Library Services (left) with Mr Paul Nauta.



Some of the sponsors who attended the evening.

Bracing up for the Bicentenary



Jenny Coopes cartoon courtesy of ABA

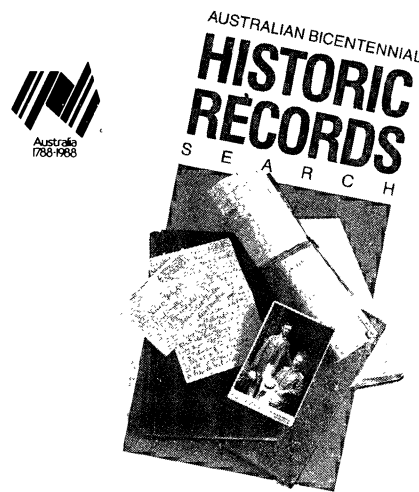
The Bicentenary is nearly upon us. Contemplating the celebration of the nation, the national knees-up, is more like going to a party than its organisers think. Will it really be worth the effort of dressing and getting there? Being enthusiastic about the Bicentenary, at this stage, is like being the first guest to arrive.

But this is December, come January things will be different. Desperate to latch onto anything in the post-Christmas, post-New Year, post-sanity lull we will all become suckers for sentimentality and nationalism. Tall Ships and fireworks will be the cream and passionfruit on the party's pavlova.

Sydney stood still the day the US navy sailed up the harbour. George street thronged with sailors, girls, women pushing strollers and children with balloons. It was 1945 all over again. And all this happened with minimal hype beforehand!

But will the Bicentennial party last the distance? After January when the fireworks are spent, the global TV link-up unhitched, we may well ask 'what Bicentenary?'. For libraries there will be some lasting reminders. The Historic Record Search, something which will be covered more fully in *InCite* next year, is presently locating and recording privately-owned resources throughout the country. A database will give location and content details for letters, diaries, photos and business financial records and correspondence. Researchers will have access to this through major libraries and archives.

Stories from the 200 Greatest Stories Never Told Project will also be available to researchers as the National Library will preserve and keep entries. The stories will provide a wealth of anecdotes and insight into lesser-known incidents in our history.



Hopefully, the best Bicentennial spin-off for both libraries and the nation will be a long-term interest in Australia's past. This interest is bound to bring libraries and their collections into sharp focus and further convince the public of their relevance and worth.

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see page 9 for details

OBITUARIES

Veronica Josephine Young ('Vonnie' Young)

Vonnie Young, Chief Librarian, Randwick Library Service, died on 22 October 1987. Her input to the community where she lived and worked was attested by the hundreds of people who attended a Requiem Mass at the Church of the Sacred Heart on 29 October.

Praise for Vonnie Young's professionalism and drive have come from the Mayor, Ald. John Scullion and other aldermen. In a local paper, Ald. Ken Finn described her as a 'perfectionist who would go to a great deal of trouble to make sure people using the library were given the right service'. He went on to say:

Ten years ago I met Vonnie Young and I was impressed with her devotion to give Randwick the best possible library. Not only was she well-known in library circles in Australia, she enjoyed an international reputation for her professionalism in the field of library work.

Vonnie Young began her career in librarianship at the State Library of NSW and moved to Randwick Library in 1952. In 1962 she was selected by the Library of Congress as one of four librarians from around the world to participate in an international program for library studies. She worked and studied for one year at the Free Library of Pennsylvania.

During her time at Randwick Vonnie worked as Cataloguer, Deputy Librarian and was Chief Librarian from 1974.

Vonnie Young was a member of the LAA from 1950. She sat for the Preliminary Exam and the Registration Certificate and became an Associate in 1965. As an active member she participated regularly in LAA conferences. She also visited the US from time to time to be part of the ALA Conference. In this way she built up a network of local and international colleagues and friends.

Mary Ursula O'Connor

Ursula O'Connor died on 12 November 1987 at the age of 77.

She was born on 21 April 1910 in South Melbourne and moved to Malvern with her family in 1918. She was educated at the Catholic Ladies College, East Melbourne, and at Melbourne University where she graduated as a Bachelor of Arts in German language and literature in 1933. She completed the Registration Examinations of the LAA in 1947 and became an Associate in 1950.

In 1927, as a young woman of 17 she began work at the Melbourne Public Library (now the State Library of Victoria). She worked first in the Lending Library under T. F. Cooke where she learnt the routines of cataloguing, classification and reference work. Conditions of entry to junior positions in the Library at that time were knowledge of two languages

and an undertaking to complete an Arts course. No free time was given to attend lectures and students paid their own fees. Positions for women were rarely available and much sought after.

After 3 years she moved to the Cataloguing Department of the Reference Library under C. A. McCallum. It was here that she was to become, 20 years later, Head Cataloguer, a position which she held from 1947 to 1960.

During most of this period she lectured in the Library Training School of the State Library, which had been set up at the same time as the Free Library Service Board to train librarians for the new public libraries being established under the municipal library subsidy scheme. In 1960 she was appointed Principal of the School, a position which she held until her retirement 10 years later.

Ursula O'Connor was a foundation member of the Australian Institute of Librarians and was one of the group photographed in Canberra at the inaugural conference whose 50th anniversary was celebrated a few months ago. She was Victorian Branch Secretary from 1949 to 1952.

In the 1950s she visited England to study English libraries. In 1955 she spent a year at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh working as Cataloguer, and later spent time at the Tokyo Library School attached to the National Library of Japan.

Barrett Reid, a long-time colleague, writes of Ursula O'Connor:

As Head Cataloguer of the Public Library of Victoria, and subsequently as Principal of the Library Training School of the State Library of Victoria, Ursula O'Connor was one of the few women in the library profession of that time who achieved a role in senior management. A gentle and modest person, she clearly thought she had two great responsibilities: one, to convince others of equal rights for women in the library profession, and two, to encourage staff, and indeed people in libraries in general, to understand that librarianship was a profession which had its own discipline and standards. She discharged these responsibilities splendidly, leading always by personal example. Many Victorians who began to work in libraries in the 1940s and 1950s will acknowledge that it was Ursula O'Connor who encouraged them to look to the national Association and to national qualifications.

In cataloguing she made a major contribution by linking the Public Library's own high standard but idiosyncratic cataloguing rules firmly with national and international standards. A major battle had to be fought and won; Ursula's achievement was as distinguished as it was lonely.

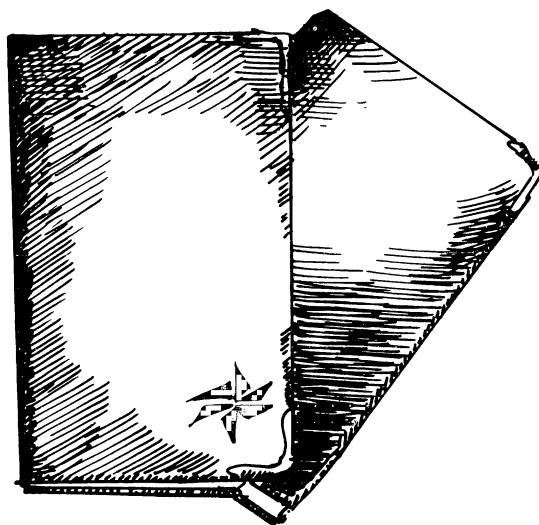
I have mentioned her gentleness and modesty. It is with these qualities in mind that her decision to fight for professional standards against the directions of a paternalistic administration and heightened censure by the Public Service Board can be seen in the special colours of integrity and courage.

Personally conservative she yet had a quick sympathy for young people which, mixed with a nice sense of humour, made her especially likeable. For over 40 years at the State Library of Victoria, Ursula O'Connor influenced generations of young librarians, so many of whom will mourn the passing not only of a mentor but a friend.

Jane La Scala
Barrett Reid

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