

**PRESERVATION
SIG**

Visit to Canberra

Surely there can be no more impressive a sight for the first-time visitor to Canberra than the size of the Preservation Department at the National Library. In this brief account of the visit I will highlight three techniques: readers will know that details of many other specific techniques have been reported in the pages of *InCite* and the literature of conservation. The extensive array of equipment on view in the spacious accommodation allocated to book conservation, the treatment of works of art on paper, manuscripts, photographs and oil paintings has been culled from the world's leading suppliers. It's a worthwhile investment.

The Group inspected the NLA's vacuum packager. By excluding air from books overall dimensions can be reduced by up to ten percent. Newspapers benefit by creating a solid block that not only shelves easily but which can also be instantaneously unpacked. Attention was also drawn to the vertical mount cutter. It not only saves space, but cuts rectangles, ovals and circles beautifully.

Our final treat was a viewing of the temperature and humidity monitoring system that works through the mains electricity supply. No more wires between sensors and the host computer. Freedom to use sensors wherever there are plugs! To summarise. I've seen the future. It works, but there must be an awful lot of walking there.

Alan G. Howell
Manager, Preservation Department
State Library NSW

Conserve Them All My Days

— by Karl G. Schmude

Two basic models have thus far emerged in the field of preservation as forms of support for individual libraries.

One is a centralised model in which a single library conserves its own collection and provides advice and service to other libraries. The other is a decentralised system in which co-operative programs are developed on a regional basis.

The most common example of a centralised model is occurring in countries where a National Preservation Office has been established.

In Britain, for example, an office was created in 1984 by the British Library. Its principal aims are:

1. to promote awareness of pressing conservation problems, and the need for good practices
2. to provide information and referral services on preservation issues
3. to investigate and initiate debate on important national developments, and
4. to encourage co-operative initiatives.

The centralised system offers certain advantages, such as economy of scale and overall co-ordination of effort, though it has so far failed to find appeal in Australia in other areas (such as document delivery).

By comparison, a decentralised approach to preservation has been adopted in a number of American States, such as Ohio and Illinois. The Illinois Co-operative Conservation Program (ICCP), for example, was launched in 1982, after a survey had established a need and desire for co-operatively based services to cover the more than 1,200 libraries in Illinois.

The Library at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale at first served as the centre of activities, but in July this year the Illinois State Library created an Office of Preservation and assumed responsibility for the state-wide program of service.

The Illinois Program addressed the long term conservation needs of unique, rare, or local history materials as well as the maintenance, repair and binding of general circulating collections. It adopted a phased approach to the conservation problem with an emphasis on the dissemination of basic conservation information, followed by access to specific advice and assistance.

Workshops have been held to increase the expertise of staff in the conservation area, and the ICCP Office has been active in producing brochures and training materials for all types of libraries in the state.

In reflecting on the applicability of these models to Australia, it seems likely that a combined approach will develop — involving state-based and federal initiatives co-ordinated through a body like ALIC or its successor.

Certainly the enhanced facilities now in operation in the National Library in Canberra and those soon to be upgraded at the State Libraries (such as those of New South Wales and Victoria) augur well for the future development of a national preservation program in Australia.

Karl G. Schmude is University Librarian University of New England, Armidale NSW.

**SOURCES OF AUSTRALIAN
COMPANY INFORMATION**

February 10, 1988

- | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| Printed | — Pam Clements |
| Online | — Maria Gallipoli |
| The Top 500 | — Anne Marie Sykes |
| Corporate Intelligence | — June Anderson |

**RMIT Institute Function Room,
Bldg 8 L2
360 Swanston Street.
1.30-5.30pm**

**Cost:
\$55 LAA members; \$80 non-members
Enquiries: Patricia Owen (03) 660 2313**

Bringing you IFLA/LAA 88...



Members of the IFLA/LAA 1988 Conference Committee and Conveners of Committees: Back row: Sue Phillips (Assistant Director); John Rodwell (Exhibitions); Dagmar Schmie maier (LAA Conference Program); Isabella Trahn (Venues and Facilities); Frances Lemme (Accommodation); Janet Robinson (LAA Publications); Hans Groenewegen (IFLA Conference Treasurer). Front row: Beth McLaren (Pre/Post Conference Programs); Barrie Mitcheso (Chairman IFLA Conference Committee); Dulcie Stretton (Conference Organiser); Margar Trask (Chair, LAA Conference Committee); Jan Cree (LAA Conference Treasurer); Hele Sweeny (IFLA Conference Secretary).



**FLIS FOR
LIBRARY STAFF**

Experienced and qualified librarians and library technicians available for part time or full time, temporary or permanent positions.
Contact: **Freelance Library & Information Services Pty. Ltd., 27 Kasouka Rd, Camberwell, 3124. Ph. (03) 813 1925**