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munication charges and a drive for increased cost-recovery has led to a fairly static market in Australia. The greatest growth is in those universities, such as Melbourne, where searching is significantly subsidised by the library. Considerable inroads have been made into retrospective conversion, although clearly the libraries with larger databases of more esoteric or difficult material face the greatest problems. Inhouse use of microcomputers, as well as microcomputer laboratories, largely supported by computer centres, have flourished in recent years in university libraries.

## Staffing issues

1988 CAUL budget statistics confirm, as mentioned earlier, a significant percentage reduction in the staffing/book ratio. It is likely that budgetary constraints will continue to impact on staffing levels. As structures are redefined, it may well be that the level of existing librarian services will be reassessed and an increase in the para-professional workforce take place, although clearly operating at different levels within the new structures rather than simply being enacted as cost-cutting measures. There may well be a greater transfer of responsibility from library staff to user communities for decisions on access to information, book selection and budget allocations.

The greatest stress is likely to be faced by middle managers affected by career path demands from lower paid staff and management accountability requests from above, eg through performance appraisal by library administrators. Considerable and continuing staff training will be required as library skills change and evolve. Staff may also be required to be more entrepreneurial in increased cost recovery operations to recoup more of a

library's recurrent budget needs or to generate funds for new initiatives.

What has been called in Britain 'the divine right' of university libraries to prosper will clearly be reassessed in these contexts by administrators and bureaucrats. A generation of distinguished Australian university librarians has retired, or shortly will retire, from the active policy arena. The demands on the 'new generation' will be greater than their predecessors faced in the 1960s and 1970s and administrative stress and library reviews may well prove to be the norm.

## Priorities in service

Along with demands for more quantitative evaluation of library services, the need for cost-recovery of services to private organisations, eg law firms, may be required. It was recently estimated that 50 percent of the Library of the University of New South Wales users on weekends are not members of the University. In this local context, revisions of library services may well need to be reassessed and renegotiated. Figures of student use in libraries increasingly continue to focus on short loan areas, microcomputer laboratories and photocopying machines! Specific responsibilities for external students may well need to be redefined in the light of conflicting priorities. Here Deakin University, in particular, has been prominent in providing off-campus services, such as in document delivery and network database access.

## Future directions

Considerable care needs to be taken in local and national environments to avoid university libraries in particular and libraries in general, being overlooked in strategic planning exercises or providing easy budgetary savings. The

implementation of mega-universities will bring significant short-term problems in terms of staffing, integration of services, catalogues, collections, etc., as well as potential gains in the long-term. The main thrust in such higher education reforms will be to balance the need for national and state cooperation in the context of additional costs incurred at the local level.

The place of the library within the whole area of 'educational technology' may lead to libraries being placed increasingly under or alongside university computer and educational technology centres. The accessing of information from different sources, eg satellites for Russian and Japanese television data or online databases by users directly, will ensure libraries and their staff are more flexible even without reduced budgets.

University libraries must reflect more directly and politically, the wishes, real or perceived, of their users and lobby effectively for the pursuit of excellence in their locally redefined context of needs, be it in collections or services. It is clear, however, that whatever the problems, university libraries will continue to be a very significant provider of the nation's library and information resources.



Colin Steele has been Librarian of the ANU since 1980. Prior to that he was Deputy Librarian from 1976 and Assistant Librarian at the Bodleian Library, Oxford from 1967. He is currently ACT Branch President and has also served as President of UCLS ACT Group. He has also been a member of the AACOBs Standing Committee and is currently a member of the AACOBs Council.

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|-----------|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|------------|--------|-------------------|-------------|-------------------------------------|
| Sydney    | Feb 19                     | Mar 3                     | Apr 13                      | Jun 1       | Apr 8      | May 10 | May 27            | May 12      | May 3                               |
| Adelaide  | Mar 1                      | Mar 4                     | Mar 2                       | Mar 3       | Mar 7      | Mar 9  | Mar 10            | Mar 8       | —                                   |
| Melbourne | Mar 29                     | Mar 30                    | Mar 31                      | Mar 28      | Mar 25     | Mar 24 | Mar 23            | Mar 22      | —                                   |
| Perth     | Apr 26                     | Apr 29                    | Apr 28                      | Apr 27      | Apr 22     | Apr 21 | Apr 20            | Apr 19      | —                                   |
| Brisbane  | May 18                     | May 20                    | May 16                      | May 17      | May 24     | May 19 | May 23            | May 25      | —                                   |
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| Canberra  | Jul 19                     | Jul 22                    | Jul 18                      | Jul 20      | Jul 25     | Jul 21 | Jul 26            | Jul 27      | —                                   |
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Costs of courses (including lunch) are:

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## TRAINING REGISTRATION

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