

Amalgamations: fact or fancy?

Amalgamations: fact or fancy? was the quizzical title of a 1-day seminar held at the Australian National University (ANU) on Thursday 27 April by UCLS/ACT and the ANU Library.

The first speaker was Dr Russell Linke, Counsellor to the National Board of Employment, Education and Training, who was a member of the Task Force on Amalgamations in Higher Education, which has recently reported to the Federal Government. Dr Linke brought participants up to date on:

- amalgamation developments nationally;
- developments in external studies; (Dr Linke was a member of the Group which has recommended the eight National Distance Education Centres for Australia.)
- the Federal Government's proposed comprehensive review of Library Provision in Higher Education Institutions.

A number of case studies were presented at the Seminar. One by Dr Brian Cook from Brisbane CAE indicated the tremendous amount of time, effort and money that had been put into developing the very successful unified library system at BCAE, and how frustrating and wasteful it is that much of that achievement may be minimised by further amalgamations. Dr Cook also emphasised the importance of amalgamat-

ing institutions appointing their chief librarians as early as possible.

Earle Gow, Librarian of La Trobe University in Melbourne, spoke about the relatively smooth library amalgamation of La Trobe University and the Lincoln Institute of Health Sciences. He did emphasise, though, that the library amalgamation had really been the amalgamation success story, with the institutional administrators and academics having more difficulties.

In my own paper I focused on the issues that will need to be confronted with university-college library amalgamations, which characterise the latest amalgamations, using as my reference point my 1981 Report *Amalgamations and Libraries*, which delineates guidelines for both institutional administrators and librarians of amalgamating institutions.

In the final case study, Geoff Allen, National President of UCLS and Librarian, Curtin University of Technology, Perth, spoke about the multicampus operation of Curtin, and more particularly about the results of his survey of forty-one library staff at the amalgamated WA College of Advanced Education.

This survey of staff who were employed before the amalgamation in 1982 suggested that a large number consider they have been disadvantaged by amalgamation professionally and personally, and that library user services have been affected, although the Library had developed technologically.

Concluding shorter papers, chaired by Professor Peter Karmel, were given by Geoffrey Thompson (General Manager of Special Projects Westpac Banking Corporation), Ken McAlpine (Industrial Officer, Victoria Colleges and Universities Staff Association), Denis Richardson (Librarian, University of Melbourne, and Chairman of CAVAL) and Frank Hambly (Secretary of the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee).

Geoffrey Thompson spoke in favour of the idea of using the Library to develop the 'corporate' image of new institutions, and about his experience in the amalgamation of the Bank of NSW and the Commercial Bank of Australia — involving 32 000 people!

Thanks to a lot of hard work by Colin Steele, Margaret Henty and colleagues, Amalgamations: fact or fancy? was a timely and well-organised seminar,

particularly useful for those who have not previously had to consider amalgamation or multicampus issues.

The challenge for all participants is to ensure that these library and resource considerations become an important item on the agenda of all amalgamating institutions.

In the next issue of *InCite* there will be an update on just what amalgamations are now fact and what, decreasingly, are still fancy.

Alan Bundy
South Australian College of
Advanced Education



Standing up front

In the foreword to *The art of speaking made simple*, by W.R.

Gonding and E.W. Mamen, James Dodding writes:

Speech is the most important means of communication people have with one another and it is essential to be able to use it fluently, effectively and with confidence. It is equally essential, both professionally and socially, to know what is appropriate to the occasion — what to say, when to say it and how to say it.

Does the prospect of speaking in public terrify you? Do you dread the moment of standing in front of a group of people and speaking? You are not alone! In recognising the increasing demands on librarians for public speaking, ALIA is organising a seminar on 'Public speaking and communication skills' for Friday 21 July.

Fine tuning

Public speaking is learned not through intellect alone, nor just by training and study, but by actually doing it. A good speaker is not one who has been taught about speaking but, rather, one who has *experienced* public performance and has developed confidence.

'But where do I start?' you may ask, correctly. Long before you stand in front of a group of people you should prepare. And remember, it is not intricate points of public performance that impress the audience most, but tuning to the needs of your listeners.

Before you even think about pronunciation, body language or humour, you will need to identify the audience, assess its needs and formulate your

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presentation according to those needs. It is important that you put aside, for a while, what you want to say, and concentrate on the three points above.

Music to their ears

People are interested in what they want to hear, not, in general, in what other people want to say. Hence, to give a good speech, or a speech that is well received even if it is academically not so good, what you say must coincide with what people want to hear. So first you need to identify the appropriate audience.

Once you have found those who are likely to have an interest in your message and know how to get them together, you can go to the next stage. With only a general topic in mind, 'sound out' your potential audience, either by just listening to what they say spontaneously, or through surveys or research. Be flexible in analysing the results.

After considering what the majority of people who will constitute your audience think and feel in relation to the topic you would like to cover, you can formulate the details of your speech. Following this procedure will give you a great deal of confidence and will help you get good results. People will appreciate a speech that is close to their hearts, while you will have the satisfaction of adding to their knowledge!

All this and much more will be covered in the seminar on 21 July. You will find a brochure about the seminar in this issue of *InCite*. Everybody is welcome.

Bo Robertson

Preservation conference

The NSW Branch Bicentennial Conservation Project will wind up a successful 3-year program with a 1-day conference on 3 August: 'Conservation on the move, NSW ... onward to 2001: preserving Australia's documentary heritage'.

The conference will examine preservation strategies and future plans. Topics include the Australian Libraries Summit resolutions on preservation, microformats, the permanent paper chase, education and case studies in community conservation — a tight program for forward commitment.

Speakers will include Alison Crook (State Librarian), Janine Schmidt and Jan Lyall (ACLIS Conservation Committee), Helen Price (Bicentennial Conservator), Judy Washington (Archivist and Local Studies Librarian), Ann Pederson (Archives Administration, University of NSW), Alan Howell (Manager, Preservation, State Library of NSW) and a representative from the ALIA Board of Education. Allied associations and groups such as AICCM and RAHS are being invited to send nominees.

See Events for registration details. For more information, contact Patricia Ward, Convener, telephone (02) 337 6214.

Family Award

The 1988 Family Award for Children's Books has gone to *You take the high road* by Mary K. Pershall, published by Penguin. This Award is presented by the NSW Family Therapy Association as part of Children's Book Week. The Association's members include psychologists, social workers, doctors and other professionals. The Award of \$400 is made annually to acknowledge the strengths of Australian families in facing life's challenges.

You take the high road was chosen out of thirty-three entries. It depicts a family preparing for the arrival of a long-awaited second child, and then being shattered by the child's accidental drowning.

The judges also highly recommend:

- *Melanie and the night animal* by Gillian Rubinstein (Omnibus) — a delightful mystery about a shy 8-year-old girl who is encouraged by her family to conquer her fears;
- *A hippo doing backstroke* by Thurley Fowler (Hodder and Stoughton) — a humorous account of one family's response to the problems of a 10-year-old boy with a low opinion of himself;
- *Jodie's journey* by Colin Thiele (Walter McVitty) — a moving story of a 13-year-old and her family in which the heroine displays courage in escaping a major bush fire, despite her crippling disease.



REFERENCE SERVICES: COMMON TIES

CALL FOR PAPERS

The third National Reference Librarians' Conference and UCLS (Vic Group) Reader Education Seminar will be held in Melbourne on November 17-19, 1989.

The four main topics are: fee based services; new technology; performance measures; and the client, as they relate to reference services and reader education. Reference librarians and other interested people are invited to submit proposals for papers and workshops on these themes.

A brief outline with an abstract (for papers) should reach the Program Committee no later than July 31. The address for all proposals is:

Leigh Oldmeadow, Hargraves Library, Monash University, Clayton, Victoria 3168.