

FRONT LINE



Philippa Middleton - President, SA Branch

As seems to be happening elsewhere, public library issues are to the fore this year in South Australia, but perhaps unlike some other parts of the country, we have had at least two good news stories. Both have been longstanding issues, illustrating the need for patience, persistence and logical persuasion in lobbying.

A place on the Libraries Board of South Australia now exists for a public

librarian or community information officer. Congratulations must go to Janice Nitschke, Chief Librarian of the Millicent Public Library, who has been nominated to the position by the Local Government Association.

The State Government has recently provided \$669 000 for six public libraries that had been awaiting these promised building funds. Because of the delay, some libraries were facing closure or major service cuts. The Nuriootpa Friends of the Library masterminded an effective campaign, winning much community support; and the visit to the threatened library by National ALIA President, Averill Edwards, received media coverage.

The Branch has been involved in local government and tertiary amalgamation debates. The tertiary merger proposals involve not only the libraries of Adelaide and Flinders Universities, SAIT and SACAE, but also the library schools at the latter two institutions. At this stage the likely mergers appear to be Adelaide and (most of) SACAE and SAIT and Flinders, though the discussions appear to have hit rocky ground at the moment.

We have also been working on strengthening the links between employers and educators through joint

meetings and contributions to course advisory processes. A recruitment group is also looking at image promotion. It is planned to hold a meeting at the end of the year where employers and educators can discuss current issues that need to be covered in the following year's courses.

These activities of lobbying and promotion can be seen to fall under the IFTN banner, and indeed the SA launch of IFTN was one of Branch's first functions for 1989. Talking of firsts, SA Branch is delighted to have had the first national AGM of ALIA in Adelaide, followed by a meeting of General Council, and Anne Hazell and Alan Bundy have organised the first national forum on library promotion called 'Promote and flourish', again which was held in Adelaide.

More than 1000 letters were sent to candidates for the May Local Government elections, and, while the response was not great in numbers of letters back, the content was generally supportive, showing a great deal of commitment to and knowledge of public libraries. The SA Public Libraries Section has produced an excellent information kit for elected members, which was jointly

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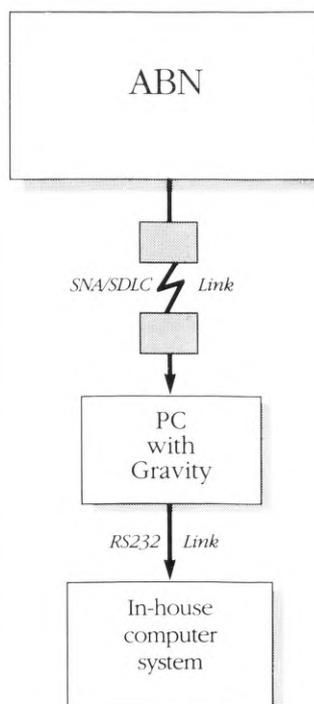
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IN THE NEWS

ASTINFO

UNESCO, through its Asian and Pacific Science and Technology Information Exchange network (ASTINFO), has given the National Library of Australia a grant to conduct a 3-year pilot project with the aim of assessing the supply and demand patterns for science and technology information in twelve developing Asian countries.

ASTINFO representative institutions in the Peoples' Republic of China, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Nepal, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam will participate in the study.

The project will enable science and technology libraries and research institutions nominated by coordinating units in these countries to make requests for photocopies of articles from science and technology serials held at the National Library of Australia for A\$2 per request. (The standard Australian cost of A\$6 per photocopied article will be subsidised by UNESCO at A\$4 per request.) To encourage participation in the project, the first fifty requests from each country will be free. Thereafter, the fee of A\$2 will apply.

For more information, contact: Ms Elizabeth Watt, ASTINFO Project Officer, National Library of Australia, Canberra, ACT 2600; telephone (062) 62 1642.

Macquarie automates

Computer Library Services International (Australia) Pty Ltd (CLSI) has been awarded the \$1 million library automation contract for Macquarie University in Sydney. The company will begin work immediately on the installation of its UNIX-based LIBS 100 integrated library automation system.

The LIBS 100 system is the world's most widely used library automation and information access system, with more than 300 units installed and more than 2000 libraries online. It will pro-

vide access to the National Library of Australia's ABN Service for online selection and downline loading of bibliographic records, as well as access to a range of other external databases, including the online catalogues in a number of other NSW-based academic libraries.

CLSI report that students and academic staff at Macquarie University will eventually be able to access the online catalogue from their homes and offices via the Campus local area network and dial-in facilities.

Reflective insight

The inaugural National Audio Book of the Year Award, administered by the National Library of Australia, has been won by the Christian Blind Mission International (Aust.) Tape Library for its production of *A circle of quiet*, by partially sighted author Madeleine L'Engle.

The Minister for the Arts, Tourism and Territories, the Hon. Clyde Holding, announced the Award winner at a luncheon hosted by Sir Ninian Stephen at the Southern Cross Hotel, Melbourne, on 6 July.

A circle of quiet, which is recorded on seven cassettes, is narrated by Melbourne actor and narrator Irene Pappas.

The Head of Library Services of the Christian Blind Mission International, Mrs Beth Lodge, says *A circle of quiet* was chosen 'because of its particular insights from a person who is herself partially blind, and because of its unusual reflective style'.

Speaking on behalf of the judging panel, Mrs Trish Trinick, herself only partially sighted, says the award is long overdue. She says that the scope of this year's entries — ranging from teaching cassettes for children, with accompanying book and coloured pencils, to short stories, novels, teaching manuals and course materials for students — is very encouraging.

The three other shortlisted publishers were:

- Association for the Blind of Western Australia (*The sugar mother* by Elizabeth Jolley, narrated by Pat Stroud);
- Hear a Book Service (*Perestroika* by Mikhail Gorbachev, narrated by Maurice Day); and
- Queensland Tape Service for the Handicapped (*Special dynamic* by Alexander Fullerton, narrated by Graham Webster).

Judging criteria were set by the

Guidelines for the production of audio materials for print handicapped readers developed by users and producers of reading materials in audio. *The Guidelines* are published by the National Library of Australia. For more information, contact: Susanne Bruhn, NLA Chief Librarian, Disability Services Section, National Library of Australia, Parkes Place, Canberra, ACT 2600; telephone (062) 62 1111.

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funded by ALIA (SA Branch), the Libraries Board of SA, the Chief Librarian's Association of SA and the Local Government Association.

South Australian library and information workers have a host of conferences, seminars and meetings to choose from this year. They can read all about it in our quality monthly newsletter *Inter Alia*. We have just had a most successful SAIT centenary seminar on 'Alternative careers for information professionals', and the National Special and Law Librarians', and the International Cataloguers', Conferences are almost upon us.

The Branch's country conference will be held at Port Lincoln on Eyre Peninsula. Many of the sessions will be open to the public. Topics cover resources that can be used in child development, choosing a computer, health information and information careers. Other sessions are on user pays, lobbying, literature and ergonomics, and one, on networking, is called 'From the cradle to the grave'. This title neatly summarises the scope of our responsibilities as library and information workers. The demands for quantity, quality and accessibility of library and information services are increasing, while the boundaries are widening and blurring. It's an exciting time for the information industry, of which we are part, and it is a particular challenge to meet both the economic and social justice needs of our communities.

I would like to pay tribute to the very many ALIA members who voluntarily meet these challenges with a great deal of energy and ability and who are living proof of the power of people and ideas. I'm proud to say there's plenty of this spirit in South Australia.

Philippa Middleton
SA Branch President