



Library Technicians Section

NSW Group

6th National Library Technician Conference

The organisation of the conference is well underway. Venue: Manly Pacific International, dates: 9-12 July 1991. Theme: 'Bringing the pieces together: communication, change and consolidation'. The aim of the conference is to explore the mission, goals and objectives of the individual, the State Groups, the National Executive, and other relevant bodies, as a means of establishing library technicians as a force in the library world.

Suggested topics are marketing, continuing education, technology, professionalism, organisational behaviour, attitudes, assertiveness training, and networking. The Organising Committee would appreciate comments on these and other topics to contribute towards achieving the aim. Please contact Jean Bailey, Convenor, Organising Committee, 6th National Library Technician Conference, c/- Fisher Library, University of Sydney, NSW 2006, telephone (02) 692 4691.

Despite the serious nature of the aim the members of the committee are determined that the fun they are experiencing in organising the conference will permeate through to the program. Be there!

*Jean Bailey
President*

Online users

On 28 March 1990, the group organised a seminar 'Punchcards on PCs?', where librarians, archivists, and records managers discussed the many issues involved in coping with machine readable records in libraries and archives, from maintaining files to the latest in optical disc technology.

After an introduction by Jean Geue, the group's convenor, Glenys McIver, from NLA, reported on the findings of the ACLIS Working Party on the Preservation of Machine-Readable Records, and David Nash and Jean Geue told horror stories of lost data. David, a Postdoctoral Fellow at the ANU,

recounted the loss of several important linguistic databases through poor house-keeping practices and/or hardware-software incompatibility, while Jean Geue chronicled the difficulties she faced when the libraries where she worked changed or upgraded cataloguing and serials systems.

David Roberts, NSW Regional Office of the Australian Archives, summarised the work of the Australian Council of Archives' Standing Committee on Machine Readable Records and the discussion from the meeting of Disposal staff from various archival institutions held in Canberra the day before. Henry Polach, Head of the Radiocarbon Dating Research Unit, ANU, presented the view of an individual research scientist on the keeping of research records, and described the establishment of international standards to assure research quality through International Quality Systems. Anne-Marie Schwirlich outlined integrated automated control systems for the diverse collections of the Australian War Memorial archives and library.

The afternoon session saw much lively discussion following papers on the legal implications of machine-readable records by Denise Druitt of the Records Management Association of Australia and Diane Bilow, from the Department of Immigration, Local Government and Ethnic Affairs. Whereas Denise emphasised the restraints imposed by the legislation affecting records, Diane described legislative provisions for computer records of passenger movements created in the new Travel and Immigration Processing System (TRIPS) initiated by the Department.

In the final session Brenda Gerrie of InfoScan encompassed the leap from punch-cards to PC-based imaging technology, demonstrating an Olivetti Optical Disc Image System using WORM optical disk, scanners and high resolution laser printers.

In his summing-up Ian McCallum stressed that although the papers presented different experiences and problems, common to all was the need for safe computing by risk management. Machine-readable records were but one form of record, and paper still provided a more permanent form of documentation.

*Geraldine Triffitt
Committee Member*

Public Libraries Section NSW Group

The enthusiastic Executive Officer of 'Images Now', Granville May,

commenced the Section's varied and practical program for 1990. Granville's talk and demonstration on 1 March covered the development and potential of the expanded service which has combined the Photographic Service of the State Library of NSW with the Laser Picture Studio (previously at the Government Printing Office). The pioneering work on development of the laser video disc system, software, and indexing methods (under the supervision of Alan Walker and utilising an expert team of indexers), involved several projects, the major one being the transfer of 200 000 historic images including those from glass negatives, maps and plans for the Photographic Archives Project.

Fast and efficient access to, and information on, visual images and the preservation of fragile material has obvious relevance to Local Studies collections. Granville would be glad to discuss the range of services and likely costs involved in utilisation of laser disc technology — perhaps by several public libraries contributing to one disc — telephone (02) 230 1682.

The Section's activities for the year will include visits to the Water Board Environment Resource Library and to the new Pagewood Library and workshops on Middle-level Supervision, Interviewing Techniques and Staff Selection, Marketing, and another 'technology update'. Tom McKeon and other speakers were involved in an 'education and discussion' session on award restructuring (4 April). A summary of this useful meeting will be included in next inCite.

The Section's Committee is still short of members. We would like to hear from those willing to contribute a small amount of time and their ideas. Please contact Glenys Murray, President, c/- Lane Cove Public Library, telephone (02) 427 5194.

Glenys Murray

Public Libraries Section NSW Group

Award Restructuring — a meeting at Burwood-Drummoyne Public Library on 4 April attracted over 60 public library workers to hear Tom McKeon, Industrial and Information Officer, ALIA, Faye Lawrence, Chief Librarian, Woollahra Municipal Library and President, Association of Local Government Librarians in NSW, and Margaret Redrup, Branch Librarian, Fairfield City Library.



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Tom summarised the background and principles and explained the terms used in award restructuring. He emphasised that library workers perform a wide range of tasks and should not be daunted by multi-skilling and other requirements. The development of skills not dependent on supervision, a broader range of tasks, career paths, and training opportunities for all are basic to the required significant changes in work organisation. Tom urged library and information staff to take up opportunities to be involved in negotiating and other committees. ALIA is concerned about differing standards. Portability is needed, or people will be disadvantaged. (See Tom's series of very useful articles in recent issues of *inCite*.)

Faye Lawrence outlined work being done on a skills listing for Librarians and for Library Technicians. Meetings with the Municipal Employees Union (MEU) and the Local Government and Shires' Associations and contributions made to improve the Local Government OCR Workplus Skills Questionnaire which was recently used in a sample of ten Councils in NSW were discussed.

Margaret Redrup discussed the validity of the marathon questionnaire for use in developing a skills based award and listed likely 'skills families' which could result from the report — due to go to the LGA/MEU Management Coordination Committee in May.

Louise Lansley, Department of Industrial Relations and Employment joined the panel for discussion.

A video *What's It All About: Award Restructuring In Local Government* was recently distributed to all Councils in NSW. It is worth seeing. Your Council's Personnel Officer will know about it.

Several useful journal articles were available at the meeting. If you couldn't make it and would like copies contact Diana Oliver, telephone (02) 521 0353.

Suggested public library staff contact Margaret Redrup re information on progress with award restructuring and be active about contributing your ideas and discuss your concerns. She is doing a great job representing you on the Management Committee of the Local Government Officers' Branch (MEU) — not an easy task. Laurie Urane represents Chief Librarians on this Committee. They need your input and assistance.

Glenys Murray
President

Special Libraries Section

Victorian Group

ALIBI using BRS Search

The Arthur Robinson and Hedderwicks (law firm) library was the venue for the first meeting for 1990 held on 3 April. Over 30 librarians gathered in the conference room (affording magnificent views of the city of Melbourne) to hear the librarian Ruth Bird talk about and demonstrate the library information system using BRS Search, UNIX and XENIX based software.

Ruth explained how she approached the enormous task of automating the library from making the choice, implementing it, training users and current and future developments.

The main consideration for choosing BRS Search apart from being compatible with the existing hardware, was its user-friendliness a key factor in getting 'legal eagles' to use it. With 150 legal staff, currently there are 25 terminals which can access ALIBI and there are plans to increase the number so that everyone can access the library information system from their desks.

Beginning 18 months ago, the collection was retrospectively catalogued and now 13 000 items are in the main database LOIS (Library Online Information System). Ruth demonstrated searching LOIS using Searchmate, the menu driven system for library users which supports free text searching across all fields using Boolean logic. Searches can be saved for later use and we were also shown how a cross database search works, which allows for several databases to be searched at the same time.

Other databases on ALIBI include OPIN containing opinions, memoranda, letters of advice and the precedents database including abstracts of valuable in-house information. Another database contains notices of the NCSC and circulation lists for legal staff are held in a separate database. New databases to be developed from users suggestions include an index to journals and law reports which replaces the need to photocopy contents pages, and a database of recent acquisitions which is the basis for a weekly printed list sent to all staff.

Ruth stressed the importance of training library users not only in the use of ALIBI, which was conducted in small groups after working hours, but a training session on introduction to computers. In addition to the training which was well attended by legal staff, Ruth stressed the importance of preparing

written handbooks and having procedures available near every terminal.

The number and variety of questions from all present was an indication of the interest created by the talk and demonstration which was very professional. A tour of the library followed and we had a chance to see the physical changes brought by automation.

The committee wish to thank Ruth Bird for giving librarians an insight into a successful library automation project which all present found beneficial and gave us the enthusiasm and drive to get back to our respective libraries and start automating!

A Anthonisz
Publicity Officer

SA Branch

Val Gauld School

Community Library Award

The Ceduna Community School Library's very successful local history activities program has won the inaugural Val Gauld School Community Library Award. In 1989 the ALIA SA Branch initiated the award to acknowledge the achievements of the school community library program in South Australia and to recognise the valued contribution made to the program by Val Gauld, the Executive Officer of the Education Department's School Community Libraries Committee, for many years. South Australia's school community library program began in 1977 and there are now over 40 school community libraries servicing mainly rural populations of 3000 or less.



Val Gauld (left) presents the Val Gauld School Community Library Award to Pauline Jolly, Librarian, Ceduna Community School Library.

The annual award which is for a program designed to enhance, for both the public and school clients, the services offered by school community libraries is sponsored by Auslib Press. The Ceduna Community School Library's local history activities have

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included compiling books, establishing a local history collection, arranging walking tours, helping clients with research, and assisting with projects to record the sites of old schools. This year the Librarian, Pauline Jolly, will be working with a group of secondary students to research the history of the shops in Ceduna. These ongoing local history activities provide a fine example of a program which fosters links between the library and its users and extends library services to support the local history interests of the community.

The South Australian Branch will be calling for submissions for the second Val Gauld School Community Library Award in September.

Jan Heath
President

WHO'S WHERE

Brian Howes, formerly of the Public Library of South Australia, has moved to Angaston, in the heart of the wine area of the Barossa Valley in South Australia, from where he will continue to operate as Magpie Books, publishing guides and directories for the antiquarian book-trade. He also offers a collection development service to libraries and would be pleased to have contact with libraries or individuals interested in hearing more about this service. Address is 111 Murray Street, Angaston, SA 5353.

Nora Hinchin, formerly Library Director, Stanton Library, North Sydney has been appointed City Librarian, City of Sydney Public Library. Nora took up her position on 5 March 1990. She becomes the fifth City Librarian, following Charles Bertie, Frank Bell, John Lyons and Sarah Walters.

A member of the City Library's staff from 1962 to 1969, Nora brings an awareness of the library's history and traditions to her new role. Added to which are the drive and determination to launch the library into the new decade and the 21st century. The relocation of the Haymarket Branch to a heritage building on the corner of George and Hay Streets, Sydney is high on her agenda, and plans for a new Central Library are already underway.

IN THE NEWS

Libraries and expert systems at Wagga

Two leading international figures in information management with computer expert systems will be the keynote speakers at a conference at Charles Sturt University — Riverina, Wagga, in July. The conference, from 22-24 July, will bring together librarians, information managers and expert systems developers to explore current Australian and overseas research in this field.

The special speakers are Forbes Gibb from the University of Strathclyde in the United Kingdom and Dr John Richardson, Professor at the Graduate School of Library and Information Science, UCLA in the United States.

Papers will explore the technology of the expert system, its various applications in information management, the implications of expert systems for the librarian and the managerial-social issues.

For registration forms see page 14 of this issue. Further information is available from the conference convenor, Craig McDonald, at Charles Sturt University — Riverina, telephone (069) 22 2594, fax (069) 22 2733, or write to PO Box 588, Wagga Wagga, NSW 2650.

Eusidic forms 'future' group

Eusidic, the European Association of Information Services, has formed a group of ten membership representatives to look at scenarios for Eusidic's future. The group will be meeting during the first part of 1990 and will present various options to Eusidic's Council and membership in the Autumn of this year. Chairman of the group will be Arnold de Kemp of Springer-Verlag, current Chairman of Eusidic.

For further information contact Eusidic's Secretariat at 9A High Street, Calne, Wiltshire, SN11 0BS, England, telephone +44 (0) 249 814 584, fax +44 (0) 249 813 656.

IBM be-Stowes award

Stowe Computing Australia has won the prestigious IBM Marketing Contractor of the Year award for South Australia.

A director of Stowe and the company's General Manager — Local Government, Steve Howe, said the award particularly recognised the company's Local Government, Library, and Application Solutions divisions.

Extel cards

Ferntree Information has introduced an online version of Extel Cards, in-depth financial and corporate summaries of leading British and international companies, to its profile service from the *Financial Times*.

Extel Cards have established a 70-year track record for accurate facts, figures, background, news and analysis on more than 7000 companies. The cards are compiled by financial specialists to a standard format. For more information contact Steve Cartland, telephone (02) 437 6322.

New book base

Tait Bookshop has moved. After having been in the Melbourne CBD for all its life (from about 1908!) the big change was effected in March. The inner suburb location at 687 Nicholson Street, North Carlton, VIC 3054 has plenty of parking or alternatively is only a 20 minute tram ride from the city.

Manager Joy Sheehan hopes that this convenience will prompt Victorian and interstate librarians to visit Tait's new base — where they will be made most welcome. Joy can be contacted on (03) 322 1533.

Research Project

Expressions of interest are invited for a research project concerning the provision of library services in Tasmania for people with disabilities.

The research project, for which funds are currently being sought from the Sir John Morris Memorial Trust Fund, will be supervised by the State Advisory Committee on library services to people with disabilities in association with the State Library of Tasmania.