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desk. Herbert S White in his regular column (pp 66-67) highlighted some of these same issues in the context of professional associations — the American Library Association in particular.

Where **do** our responsibilities and subsequent accountabilities lie? As members of a professional association, as employees of a particular organisation or institution, or both?

White also raises questions about the structure of the American Library Association, why individuals belong to the parent association or not, attend conferences, etc. A timely article, in conjunction with Kay's, in the Australian context of our first ALIA national conference. We are indeed looking forward to the warm welcome of Perth and the opportunity to exchange ideas, participate and *share and listen* to each other's viewpoints.

*Diane Booker*

#### Dear Editor,

I refer to N Radford's letter on the Biennial Conference in Perth, *inCite* 16 July.

Dr Radford and the members have to decide what they want of the Biennial Conference. The Registration fee can be reduced and fees of every member of ALIA used to subsidise those who do attend. I would rather pay my own way, deduct it from my tax than stay at home and have my annual fee money used to subsidise this activity. Why shouldn't the Conference pay for itself — *ALJ* does, many continuing education activities do and it is a respectable expectation within the wider community now, as well.

This Association operates in a country of vast distances — Northern Territory, Western Australia and Tasmania will always be more expensive to reach. Should ALIA therefore only hold the Biennial in the Koala Triangle cities where it is cheaper to travel for more people? What would that say about a democratically operating association?

What evidence is offered to show that participation and professional development of young librarians and library technicians is prevented because we have a pay as you go Biennial Conference which is worth the cost of the sacrifice? Those who decide not to go to Perth because it is too expensive should flock to 1992 at Albury-Wodonga but I'll bet we have the same moaning correspondence for that conference too!

*Averill MB Edwards*  
Immediate Past President

#### How to get your letter published!

- Keep it under 250 words.
- Make it legible. If handwritten, make it double spaced.
- Give a contact address and telephone number.
- Send it to: The Editor, *inCite*, Australian Library and Information Association, PO Box E441, Queen Victoria Terrace, ACT 2600.

Letters may be edited for space unless marked for publication in full or not at all.

# N IN THE NEWS

## Break down the barriers!

The ALIA Special Interest Group on Library and Information Services for People with Disabilities has presented two workshops in recent months to improve librarians' skills and understanding in providing services to library users with disabilities.

Such disabilities may involve impairment of sight, hearing or intellect. In one of the workshops professional actors played characters with these problems to enable practice and discussion.

Approximately 1 per cent of the population has an intellectual disability and most of these are able to take their place in the community to some extent and take up positions in the workforce. These people are likely to become library users and we need to be able to offer them an appropriate service.

Hearing impaired people use the speaker's whole face for clues to understand the conversation. It is therefore important to speak clearly, face the light, face the listener at their level (do not look up or down), be patient, be prepared to recapitulate, say if you haven't understood what is required, write message if necessary, use gestures and body language.

The message from both workshops was that librarians as service providers must become aware of the requirements of disabled library users and with this in mind should look critically at content, format and accessibility of their library collections.

## May Gibbs week 28 Oct-3 Nov 1990 Read in for Nutcote

Now is the time to honour May Gibbs and to enjoy memories of Snugglepot and Cuddlepie, Bib and Bub, Mr Lizard, Mrs Snake and all she created in Gumnut Land and to raise money to buy May's home Nutcote for the Nation.

In 1990, the International Year of Literacy, please join in the Read In for Nutcote during May Gibbs Week 28 October-3 November.

To participate in the Read In for Nutcote you read a poem, short story or any part of a work of a favourite Australian writer and then donate to buy Nutcote for the Nation: Adults: \$1 (or more) per read, Children/Pensioners: 50c.

You may decide to read to yourself.

You may decide to read to a group: in a schoolroom — in a library — at a meeting or in the board room — at home or a

## Collection development at the Library and Information Service of Western Australia

The first volume of Library and Information Service of Western Australia's statement on collection development policy was launched on 27 July 1990, 8 years after the 2nd edition of *Book provision and book selection: Policy and practice* was produced.

That earlier statement described the relationship between the collections of materials in the then State Reference Library and those in public libraries but gave little detailed information and contained nothing on the State Archives.

The new 198 page document is entitled *Post imperfect, future imperative: Collection development at The Library and Information Service of Western Australia Vol 1. The Alexander Library Building Collections*. It took 18 months to complete, and is the combined work of a committee comprising: Patrick Moore — chairperson, Library and Information Service of Western Australia managers, and all of the reference librarians involved in book selection, and staff of the State Archives.

The document provides a detailed analysis of the existing collections describing both their strengths and weaknesses and future collecting intentions. It also provides information on alternative collections in Western Australia.

There are limited copies available for sale at \$35 per copy from the Office of the State Librarian, telephone (09) 427 3328. Comments are welcomed and encouraged.



friend's place — at a party or a barbecue — at a picnic in the park — beside a billabong — on a mountain or in a valley — in a club or a pub — or wherever Australians gather to enjoy our rich literary heritage.

Arrange a Read In as you see fit! Australian authors have donated book awards for original and/or outstanding effort. Send details if you wish to be considered for an award. What counts is that Australians everywhere read and pay to buy Nutcote as a national treasure.

Money raised from the Read In can be deposited at any branch of the Commonwealth Savings Bank by quoting The Nutcote Trust Account No. 908 916 and Branch No. 2217 or forwarded to The Nutcote Trust, PO Box 12, North Sydney, 2059.

Let's make it hum!!!! By gum!!!!

# Conserving our culture

The Australian Institute for the Conservation of Cultural Materials (AICCM) held its annual conference in Launceston from 13 to 16 August 1990. In contrast to previous conferences which have tended to be technical and rather inward looking, this meeting, while not neglecting technical matters, attempted to address the broader issues of what roles conservators and the AICCM should play in the wider community.

In exploring this theme, the speakers, who represented a large number of different interest groups, gave their views on:

- how conservation issues could be brought to the attention of a wider group of people
- how conservators could improve their relationships with other professionals, such as curators, architects, librarians, archivists, publishers, scientists, paper manufacturers, and members of the general public, with whom they have regular contact.

The experiences of many environmentalists were drawn upon by Bob Brown, Independent Tasmanian MHA, and Phillip Toyne, Director of the Australian Conservation Foundation, to illustrate how issues can be brought to the attention of the public.

Of particular interest to readers of *inCite* were the first day's sessions which had the theme of Striving for a Longer Life for Paper and the Environment. Presentations covered a broad range of issues dealing with the production, permanence, use and availability of many

types of paper in Australia. The presentation by Dan Sprod, Blubber Head Press, highlighted the lack of knowledge in the publishing and printing industries of the problems created in libraries by the use of poor quality papers.

Government directives to institutions to 'go commercial' were covered on the second day during discussions which examined the issue of Private Conservation: Directions and Issues. The experiences of institutions which have been required to follow this path indicate that the marketing of conservation services is not an automatic revenue raising activity. Difficulties identified in the use of private conservators by institutions were related to the isolation of conservation from the preservation management of collections.

The third day was devoted to working group sessions. The Archival Paper Action Group had a very successful meeting in which the activities of the past year were reviewed and a plan of action was prepared for the coming year. One of the main tasks for the coming year is to establish contact with other professional organisations such as ALIA, ACLIS Preservation Committees, ASA, CSIRO, and the Records Management Association.

The last day's session, Conservation and the Wider Community, opened with a presentation by Andrew Reeves, Museum of Victoria, on the negotiations for the establishment of a Heritage Collections Council. He described the Heritage Collections Working Group which has been set up with a budget of \$300 000 over 3 years

to define the National Collection, to survey its condition, to assess its preservation needs, to recommend strategies for access and to promote its importance. The session went on to examine the relationships between conservators and other professionals working in collecting institutions.

The conference concluded with a panel session which debated how the conservation of cultural materials could be made of more significance to the general public and to the broad range of professionals employed in the 'cultural industries'. The general conclusion was that if conservators are to maintain a professional identity, while at the same time playing a more significant role in the collecting institutions and in the wider community, it is essential that they: increase their knowledge of factors affecting the significance of items; communicate more effectively with other professionals and with members of the public; establish strong professional links with related professional organisations; and encourage the teaching of conservation and preservation in a wide variety of professions.

The conference received very wide local media coverage and towards the end of the conference it was not uncommon to find taxi drivers and shop keepers who knew all about the brittle Book Problem in libraries! The proceedings of the conference are to be published at the end of September 1990.

Lynn Allen  
National Library of Australia



## Northcote Library on the National agenda

Northcote Library received a National Agenda for Women Grant in 1989 to run a successful series of courses designed to meet women's needs and broaden their horizons.

Starting with 'Search for Self' and 'Communication Skills' courses, the program then moved on to assertiveness training groups followed by 'Stress Management and Conflict Resolution' and 'Fulfilling Relationships'.

Aside from the immediate service provided by the classes, the grant had a 'seeding' effect, in that the library was able to demonstrate the community need for continuing education of this sort to other funding bodies.



## Expo's for public library promotion

Victoria's fourth Public Library Expo will be opened on Tuesday, 16 October 1990, in the Bourke Street Mall during Australian Library Week. On Saturday,

20 October, there will be Expo's at the Chadstone Shopping Centre, Highpoint West Shopping Centre and Southland Shopping Centre. On Friday, 26 October, the final Expo for this year will be held at the Knox City Shopping Centre.

The Expo's will feature displays of library services as well as activities such as storytellers, puppet theatres and entertainers. They are being organised by the Victorian Public Library Expo Association (VPLEA), to promote the interest in and use of public libraries; to organise at least one public library expo per year; to cooperate with other organisations with similar aims, including the Library Promotion Committee of Victoria; and to raise funds for these aims.

Membership of the Association is open to all Victorian public libraries, professional and related organisations, and groups or individuals who support the Association's aims. The VPLEA enjoys the support of the library industry and many professional bodies. Fund-raising is from the general support of the library industry, as well as by direct sponsorship appeals to library related organisations.



AUSTRALIAN DATABASE  
DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

### Will Online Go Offline?

A seminar on the future direction of  
the Australian database industry

Melbourne Zoo  
Convention Centre

Wednesday 14 November 1990

Cost \$150 (includes lunch & teas)

Further information &  
registration forms:

Lea Giles-Peters Ph (03) 418 7339  
Fax (03) 419 0459

# Racial vilification

'How like a fawning publican he looks!  
I hate him, for he is a Christian, ...'  
Merchant of Venice, I.i.42

'You call me misbeliever, cut-throat dog,  
And spit upon my Jewish gaberdine.'  
Ibid., 112.

New South Wales leads Australia in with a law to combat racial vilification, although Western Australia is currently legislating to oppose written vilification and Victoria has begun consideration of similar action.

This word *vilification* may be new to some of us. The NSW Anti-Discrimination Board defines it as:

- a racist act or action, that
- happens publicly as opposed to privately, and that
- could encourage others to hate, have serious contempt for, or severely ridicule a person, or a group of people, because of their race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national background.

Shylock's soliloquising comment on Antonio is therefore not vilification, but his complaint about the bad treatment he had received would certainly be justified.

Examples of racial vilification, and hence against the law in NSW, *might* be:

- writing racist graffiti
- making racist speeches or statements in public
- abusing someone in a racist way in public
- making racist statements or remarks in a newspaper or journal, or on the radio or television
- wearing racist symbols (such as badges) or clothing with racist slogans



in public

- making racist gestures in public (for example, 'Heil Hitler' salutes)
- distributing material that you know expresses or promotes racial hatred
- putting up racist posters in public
- publishing racist material.

But note that *might* — to fall within the meaning of the act, these examples would have to:

- happen publicly
- encourage hatred, serious contempt or severe ridicule
- come outside free speech, fair comment or the reporting of acts of vilification.

In NSW, people feeling themselves subject to racial vilification can call the Anti-Discrimination Board to discuss the incident and find out what to do next. Formal complaints can go up to the Equal Opportunity Tribunal which can order apologies and retractions or award damages up to \$40 000. If Shylock confronted the Merchant of *Sydney* instead of *Venice*, he might get his pound of flesh after all.

## Serials

The Australian Serials Special Interest Group (ASSIG) of ALIA is conducting a seminar in conjunction with its AGM at the 1990 ALIA Conference in Perth. It will be held on Monday, 1 October from 2 pm to 6 pm.

ASSIG has arranged three speakers. Dr Toby Burrows (Divisional Librarian, Technical Services, University of Western Australia) will address the topic 'Journals about Journals and Serials about Serials'. Elisabeth Brown (Senior Librarian, Newling Learning Resource Centre, University of New England) will speak on 'Recent Developments in Overseas Serials Control', and Dr Shane O'Neill (Managing Director, Bowker-Saur London and publisher of the British Library Association Journals) will talk about 'Publishing for the Profession'.

The speakers will be followed by the ASSIG Annual General Meeting and drinks supplied by the Group.

## Staff development seminar

This seminar, organised by SACAE Library on 19 and 20 July, attracted 50 participants from all over Australia.

Dr Barry Elsey, the facilitator, from the Centre of Human Resource Studies at SACAE Underdale, introduced a theoretical model of staff development which was illustrated by case studies from speakers from around Australia. Topics covered included policy and planning, needs identification and evaluation of staff development.

Evaluation sheets later completed by the participants have shown strong support for further national or state conferences. The seminar achieved its aims, which were to establish a national identity for library staff involved in staff development and to begin to organise a national network.

It was proposed that each State should establish a Special Interest Group for staff development and draw up a policy statement, which will contribute to a national statement for ALIA. A national directory of library staff development personnel and a national directory of staff development packages for induction, training etc. will also be prepared.

Letters requesting information and input have been sent to major libraries. Anyone not receiving the request who would like to contribute or who would like more information, should contact Jane Hiscock (SACAE), telephone (08) 354 6357, fax (08) 354 6699, or Peter Haddad (NLA), Isabella Trahn (UNSW), Joanne Rutherford (U of Q), Pam Longley (La Trobe Uni), or Patricia Cawley (Murdoch Uni).

## Joan Martin's Letter of Recognition

More than 50 friends and colleagues from Melbourne libraries gathered in the lounge of the Kooyong Lawn Tennis Club on 1 August to honour Joan Martin and her work for health related libraries over the past 25 years.

The function provided the perfect opportunity for the presentation of Joan's recently awarded Letter of Recognition.

Bruce Davidson, General Treasurer of ALIA, and General Councillor for Victoria, presented the award, giving a background of its place in the ALIA award structure, followed by a reading of the citation.

Ann McGalliard (Family Medicine Program), a long-time friend and colleague of Joan then gave a more personal resumé of Joan's career, and presented a gift on behalf of the Health Libraries Section (Victorian Group).

A most enjoyable evening made a fitting tribute to a warm-hearted friend and colleague.



Bruce Davidson presenting Joan Martin with the Letter of Recognition