

## Celebrating our society!

### Australian Library Week: 14-21 October 1990

**A** LONG, LONG time ago, in 1948 in fact, a Library Week Committee was established and nurtured by a trustee of the State Library of Victoria Alfred McMicken. By 1966 this Victorian Committee had sponsored fifteen 'library weeks' and armed with the examples of National Library Week in the USA and UK they dreamt of grander things.

In May 1966 this Committee convened a meeting in Sydney of librarians, booksellers and publishers, which culminated in the establishment of the Australian Library Week Council, later to become the Australian Library Promotion Council.

The first National Library Week, under the banner 'Read for an Age of Change', burst forth in 1968. Up until its dissolution in 1988 the Australian Library Promotion Council each year set the theme for Australian Library Week and supported this with the production of posters, bookmarks and other materials. State committees of the Council organised a range of programs at the local level seminars, literary luncheons, meet the author programs, exhibition, etc.

The aims of ALPC, which included 'to raise the level of public awareness of the value, role and importance of libraries in Australia and to promote appreciation of library services in and for all aspects of society, education, culture and the arts, community affairs, government, the sciences, industry, commerce, agriculture, leisure', sit comfortably with the ALIA's own objectives. Thus the role of coordinator of Australian Library Week was assumed by the Association.

#### A parrot with a purpose

Enter 'Libraries for Life' and a parrot with a purpose, who appears in the ALIA's specially commissioned Australian Library Week 1990 poster and sticker.

*Australian Library week is a celebration of the very essence of our society—the brick by which all decisions and structures, surreal and concrete, are built. Information. Our guarantee of a future.*

And such a celebration it will be!

The national launch, jointly hosted by the Australian Library and Information Association and the Library Board of Queensland will be held in the foyer of the

State Library of Queensland on Monday, 15 October. Tim Bowden — BACKCHAT'S backbone, broadcaster, journalist and author — will lord over proceedings, promising many a quotable time.

#### Mandolins and Margaret

In NSW the opening of Australian Library Week will be staged on Saturday, 13 October at Stanton Library North Sydney. The Sydney Mandolin Orchestra will introduce the evening followed by short talks and readings. Radio's hard-headed personality Margaret Throsby will act as moderator, reining in Franca Arena AM, MLC and executive member of the Ethnic communities Council of NSW, authors Alex Buzo and Penny Hall, Edmond Capon, Director of the Art Gallery of NSW, and stage, film and television actress Deidre Rubenstein. A representative from the National Consultative Council for International Literacy year will also join in.

The Country Libraries Association, Central Eastern Zone, has planned the Hunter Libraries Summit and Expo at Newcastle Central Library, to be launched on Friday, 12 October by the NSW State Librarian, Alison Crook. The Expo will feature new library technology and the resources available through the Public Libraries Branch of the State Library of NSW. Highlights will be the Work and Play exhibit, including video disc access to thousands of photographs. Traditional and non-traditional services will be displayed covering Special Needs, Children's Services and Extension Services. The Expo will be open to the public from 12-20 October.

Queensland has Kay Cottee on Tuesday 16 October. Australian Library Week will be celebrated at the Mayfair Crest International Hotel. The Queensland Library Promotion Council has organised an evening which will feature Kay, and the presentation of the Public and School Library Promotion Awards and the Joan Gamble Award for services to people with disabilities.

Spreading the message. In *South Australia*, a 5-day program focusing on how libraries can meet the information and education needs of the community in the normal course of life -- from recreational to workplace needs -- will

## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

### News and Articles

*Your career*

5

*The Source*

14

### Regular Features

*Front line*

3

*Direct line*

4

*In the News*

6

*Feedback*

9

*Events*

12

REGISTERED BY AUSTRALIA POST  
PUBLICATION N° NBG 1263

ISSN 0 158-0876

be staged in the Die Gallerie Arcade, in Adelaide's central shopping area. The daily exhibits will concentrate on health, life, information, education, literacy and business.

This event was jointly organised by the ALIA SA Branch, the Library Promotion Committee and the Australian Council of Library and Information services.

Tasmania will launch Library Week on Monday, 15 October with the opening of an exhibition in the State Library of Tasmania.

Victorians will be heading out to open Australian Library Week. The ALIA Victorian Branch and the Victorian Public Library Expo Association have joined forces to present the Victorian Library Expo on the lawns outside the State Library of Victoria, on Tuesday 16 October.

Five sub-theme marquees will exhibit the diverse and extensive role libraries play in the community. Explore libraries for culture and recreation,

*continued 3...*

Recommendations for the States library services include:

- 2 regions rather than the present 3
- a rationalisation of branch libraries with closure of 33 branches and 17.4 jobs to go
- libraries to close Mondays and remain open all day Saturday.

ALIA agrees in principle with the thrust of the report and with many of the recommendations relating to the re-organisation of the State and local libraries which, we gather, are in line with recommendations of the internal review.

Now, our concerns — and I must stress that my comments relate to the Interim Report of the Review; the final report is to be presented to the government at the time of this article going to press.

Far from providing a comprehensive overview of the provision of information services in the State, the report's treatment has been fragmentary with some serious omissions.

We applaud the recommendation that the vacant position of State Librarian be filled as an urgent priority but the level of the appointment is not a reflection of what is arguably the most significant library position in the state. The salary of the public service level recommended is significantly lower than that of State Librarians in other States and that of the University Librarian, making it unlikely that the position will attract applicants of

the calibre required.

It is not clear how the industrial issues arising from the branch library closures will be resolved.

The State Library of Tasmania is responsible for the network of 17 Government agency libraries making up the Government Library and Information Service. ALIA recommended that the GLIS model should be examined in some detail to determine its potential for serving as a model in the development of the State service. That the Interim Report has failed to consider this area of the State Library operation is a further indication of the misunderstanding of its role in information provision.

### Devolution of responsibility

Another area to have fared poorly in the Interim Report is that of school libraries which, despite our submission, have received no explicit consideration. The main organising principle of the Report recommendations on education has been one of devolution of responsibility and resources to the local level. School library resources and levels of staffing are therefore to be determined at the discretion of the principal in consultation with the district director. Our insistence on the need for a departmental policy on minimum standards both to maintain standards and ensure equity of resource

provision was ignored.

The Report did recommend the retention of existing levels of specialist teachers (including, by implication, teacher-librarians) before the allocation of classroom teachers but already this is meeting with some opposition from principals who feel it infringes their discretionary authority.

We have stated that the primary role of school libraries is to support the school curriculum and to that degree the collection must be tailored to the curricula requirements of the individual school. However, a succession of Education Department policy documents reiterating the requirement that resource based teaching and learning form part of the core curriculum implies quality resource provision. Certainly a diminished curriculum will require a corresponding diminution of resource provision but the Report has specifically stated that the quality of education is to be maintained.

School libraries must be seen as part of the totality of information services for children, the other component being that provided by the children's and young adult services of the State and local libraries. The present level of provision has been arrived at over the last few decades as a result of the concerted efforts of professionals, State and Commonwealth initiatives and the insistence on recognised minimum standards. The next few years could well see these hard won gains considerably eroded.

We don't yet know how the government will implement the report but its recommendations appear to substantially fulfil its requirements. We have not seen the final report — it is possible that it may have been amended in line with our submission. We await its release with interest but no great optimism.

*Robin Goodram*  
President  
Tasmanian Branch



*continued from 1...*

libraries in education, libraries in the workplace, libraries supporting every need, libraries as a career. These displays will be complemented by product demonstrations and enlivened by the occasional busker.

The ALIA WA Branch, in conjunction with the Library Promotion Council of WA, has coordinated the relaunching of the Alfred McMicken Award for public library promotion, to be held during the ALIA 1990 conference — a preview of Australian Library Week events in *Western Australia*.

Leave your magnifying glasses at home — you don't have to look hard (or far) to find enthusiastic and enthralling 'life' in your library.

*Australian Library Week. A tradition alive and flourishing.*



## National InterLibrary Loans meeting



## Call for Proposals

The Australian Library and Information Association is convening a nationally representative meeting, on Thursday, 22 November 1990 to discuss the development of a more efficient system of payment for interlibrary loans in Australia. Expressions of interest in presenting proposals for new ILL payment options and strategies are invited. They should be directed to the Conference Manager, ALIA, PO Box E441, Queen Victoria Terrace, ACT 2600.

**Submissions are required by 24 October 1990**