

## Comat project

Concern about the condition of the moving image and sound recordings in the National Film & Sound Archive prompted the Minister, The Hon. David Simmons MP, to set up an inquiry to examine and recommend on Archive functions, activities and priorities; recommend on the allocation of resources so that undue risk-taking be reduced; and on a timetable for implementation and duration of any proposed reallocation of resources.

As a result, a major drive to consolidate and survey the Archive's collection commenced in April 1991, and will continue for 2 years. Poorly housed material will be relocated; levels of known or suspected deterioration in collection materials will be assessed; backlogged materials will be accessioned (examined, numbered and labelled, properly packaged) so that it can be properly managed and retrieved in future.

*Comat* (Collection Management Team) is the name given to the task force that will concentrate on the following three major tasks over a 2-year period:

1. Moving the Australian component of the Archive's presently scattered collection into the recently completed environmentally controlled repository in the Canberra suburb of Mitchell.
2. Accessioning the material as it is moved.
3. Undertaking urgent audio tape preservation work.

While in the short-term *Comat* will disrupt the Archive's established routine, the project is nonetheless essential for the survival of the national collection. Future benefits include:

- a fully accessioned Australian collection housed in a high quality environment;
- a bigger database for users to access the collection;
- the disposal of unwanted materials that currently occupy expensive space;
- Archive staff with a much better understanding of the collection, able to provide better services to users; and in addition,
- gaps in the collection will have been identified for future acquisition work.

## Objectives

The Project has six major goals to be achieved in a 2-year time frame:

- the entire Australian preservation collection will be transferred into the Mitchell repository;
- all Australian material will be accessioned;
- the condition of the Australian audio tape collection will have been assessed;
- an audio tape preservation program aimed at ensuring the survival of material of high heritage value will be well advanced;
- the remaining preservation needs will be quantified; and
- significant progress will have been made in deselection of materials no longer required.

For further information contact Michele Parsons on (06) 267 1711.

*Michele Parsons*

## Report on ACLIS WAIRE project

The Western Australian Information Researcher's Exchange had its genesis in a seminar organised in 1986 by Andy Exon and Julie Richards in Perth. The proceedings, 'A Research Agenda for Western Australian Libraries... report of a meeting held on 20 June 1986 at the WAIT' are available from Curtin University Library (price \$11.50 inc. p/p). At this meeting I flagged a concern about the lack of information on 'informal' research being executed, particularly by practitioners, in Australian libraries. *Australian Library and Information Research* an NLA publication, and *Australian Library and Information Science Abstracts* (ALISA) catered for the more formal Australian research efforts in our field.

A small working party comprising Andy Exon, Jane Klobas, Melanie Harris, Jacqui Ecclestone and myself met occasionally after that meeting to develop our ideas. Andy Exon was the driving force behind what then became WAIRE and introduced the concept to IFLA, the literature and other library and information research environments.

Our interests came to the attention of ACLIS and we were asked in 1990 to present a Research Proposal to the ACLIS National Council for funding. Approval was given for

the pilot project based on Western Australian library and information services, to see whether (1) there was an interest in participation, and (2) there was indeed any 'informal' and formal research being carried out. The project is now under way, with Professor Patricia Layzell Ward as project leader. We expect that the final report with recommendations will be prepared for submission to ACLIS National Council in the third quarter of 1991.

A questionnaire has recently been sent to numerous Western Australian library and information services. The request stressed that 'informal', 'in progress' and seemingly modest research projects should be reported, that the period covered for reporting was 1990. The deadline for return of the questionnaires was 28 June 1991.

The success of the project will be measured by the rate of return of completed questionnaires, and the data elicited from them. A recommendation made by the Steering Committee in the Research Proposal is that should the project be deemed a success, then a national effort to capture similar information (AIRE — Australian Information Researcher's Exchange) should be undertaken.

*Kerry Smith*

Chairperson, ACLIS WAIRE project

## Who's Where

**Chris Hill** was recently appointed Associate University Librarian at Edith Cowan University, Perth, where his primary responsibility will be for all User Services activity. He is based at the Churchlands campus but also has responsibility for Cowan's other campus libraries, at Joondalup, Mount Lawley and Bunbury. Prior to taking up this position, Chris was Public Services Librarian at Murdoch University where he had worked in various capacities, mostly involved with reference and information retrieval, for 7 years. He has also worked at Curtin University and, for a short period, at the University of Western Australia. As well as a Diploma in Librarianship from Aberystwyth, Chris has a research degree in Fine Arts from UWA and a Graduate Diploma in Art and Design from Curtin.

The NSW Branch Council has pleasure in announcing that the casual vacancy for Vice-President has been filled by **Nyree Diggins**, Manager, Unilever Information Services Department, PO Box 777, Carlingford, NSW 2118, telephone (02) 871 9310, fax (02) 871 9794.

**Mary Baker**, Library Services Specialist with Bennett-Ebsco Subscription Services, has taken up the vacant position of Branch



*Frances Bluhdorn*

Councillor. Address details — 35 Mitchell Street, North Sydney, NSW 2060, telephone (02) 922 5600, fax (02) 922 6659.

**Frances Bluhdorn**, Vice-President (and President Elect), NSW Branch Council, has taken over from Craig Grimison as President for the second half of 1991 — Craig is overseas on a Blackwells Scholarship. Frances has recently taken up a position with the Royal Australian Historical Association and may be contacted as follows: Frances Bluhdorn, Library Coordinator, Royal Australian Historical Association, 133 Macquarie Street, Sydney NSW 2000, telephone (02) 247 8001, fax (02) 247 7854.