

Direct Line



Sue Kosse
Executive
Director

Each new year in the National office seems to rapidly take on a colour all of its own; and 1991 is shaping up to be no different. As well as progressing the business of the previous years, the National office staff have been busily working on the new agendas set for 1991, and on resolving some of those readily solved problems identified by Branches in the strategic issues discussion papers.

The critical activity for the first four months of any year in the National office, is the processing of the membership renewals. After many long hours of data input checking and computer failures, this is completely up to date with one third of the budget 1991 target having been met already.

inCite, as you will have already noticed, has undergone some design changes under the creative direction of Ivan Trundle. Support kits for Divisions are being put together ready for mailing, with the *Vital Link* and *Office Bearers' Guide* also nearing completion.

The evaluation of the replacement computer system is continuing with a second round of advertisements having been placed in mid January. Computer hardware and software to support the conference secretariat has been purchased and staff trained. The system is now being heavily utilised. The annual audit has commenced once again, with, at the auditors' request, Simon Hazelbrook taking a more involved role in this time consuming but important process.

Other ongoing activity includes: Helen Mandl's work with Divisions and attendance at their conferences; Carol Kenchington's investigations of a database for professional development and pursuit of registration as an Industry Training Agent. Tom McKeon is progressing in the establishment of a Skills Formation Project and is working with Mairéad Browne on the Workforce Data Project begun in 1989. Mary Papachristos has been busy organising the first Board of Education meeting for 1991, and preparing for the three course recognition visits in 1991.

It has also been pleasing to see that one

of the longest ongoing projects involving the National office, the revision of the Constitution, has reached its final stage. Begun in 1984, the revised By-Laws are currently with the Governor-General awaiting his approval.

Association Committees have also been active in the first 2 months of 1991, with the International Relations Committee, Executive Committee, Board of Education and ALIA Press Board all having met and enthusiastically worked their separate ways through complex agenda items.

Other issues being worked on by National office staff include the draft strategic planning document and Australian Literacy Week. Both items will be discussed at the March General Council meeting.

Externally, efforts have been focussed upon submissions to the Senate Standing Committee on Long Term Strategies Inquiry into Australia as an Information Society and the proposed changes to the State Library of South Australia. There is little doubt that these issues will continue to figure high on the Association's external agenda for some months to come.

With such a complex and full agenda there has been little time for grass to grow under the feet of staff in the National office, but I remain hopeful that it will grow on the nature strip at the front of ALIA House. □

Pocket Line



Tom McKeon
Industrial
Information
Officer

A recent publication that will interest many members of ALIA is *Double Take: The Links Between Paid and Unpaid Work*, by Janeen Baxter and Diane Gibson with Mark Lynch-Blosse. Canberra: AGPS, 1990 viii+129 pp. Paperback. ISBN 0 644 11291 3.

Do Australian working women 'share' the duties of housework and childcare with their male partners or do men merely help? Do women who work full-time perform less domestic labour than those who work part-time?

In *Double Take* the authors investigate how the double burden of unpaid domestic labour and paid work affects women and men in Australia.

The book explores three main areas:

- the pattern of domestic labour arrangements between men and women in the family;
- The nature, and extent, of sex segmentation in the labour force;
- The relationship, between domestic labour patterns and women's and men's access to, and opportunity to pursue careers in the paid labour market.

Therefore, the book looks at the continuing responsibility that women have for household labour and how this relates to participation in the paid workforce. The book refers to previous studies and theories concerning women and work, but is based upon two survey samples drawing on the 1981 Australian Census of Persons and Households and produces statistical evidence in exploring its themes.

The authors conclude that women are still responsible for most domestic labour. Interestingly women with part-time paid employment appear to experience the longest working week., their domestic labour contribution being much higher than women in full-time paid employment.

The chapter 'Power, Attitudes and Time' examines how men may contribute increased hours of domestic labour, but women are burdened with responsibility and decision making chores. The book finds that women with higher earning power have more power within the home.

In looking at the paid workforce, it is argued that differences in occupational and educational

status do not fully account for the 20 per cent difference in earning power between men and women. The book then addresses the relationship between domestic and paid work. The study finds that the two fields are inter-related for women but not for men. Thus for women, participation in the paid labour force is determined by private responsibilities.

The book contains a wealth of information and this brief column cannot do justice to the many variables that are examined in the study. It is well written with the research methods clearly explained in appendices, and features an extensive bibliography on theories of women's work. □



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