

WHO KNOWS?

The papers may shake your thinking...

THIS COMMENT best sums up the responses received by Roy Sanders, Conference Chair of ALIA's 1992 Conference, to a few questions put to Conference registrants about their expectations. Roy interviewed a variety of people, from a library technician to the Director-General of the National Library of Australia and found that they all had essentially similar expectations.

Widening and consolidating a network of colleagues is an important factor for a rural librarian, a librarian in a University library, a University librarian, a special librarian, the Director-

General and a library technician. The possibility of new ideas from conference papers also play an important part in this group's expectations.

Organisations and users stand to gain enormous benefits from the attendance of the people interviewed at the Conference. Such comments as 'more efficient library service', 'improved techniques in being pro-active with users', 'using my network to add value to services' can only be contagious in their effects on the staff and the users of libraries.

Many of the benefits of Conference attendance are not always immediately quantifiable. It

is here that the words of the Director-General are pertinent: 'a lot of the benefit is long-term and indirect—who knows?', as are the words of the technician: 'all experience has its benefits in ways not often evident at the time'.

The expectations of this diverse group are positive and forward looking, supported by an understanding of the important role that people play in our profession. Especially at a time of financial constraint, can't we all do with a little dose of 'papers that shake our thinking' and 'sharing ideas'. And all this in an era of 'heavy Victorian red'!

Who knows indeed? ■



Research Libraries Group President James Michalko (on left) will be a keynote speaker at ALIA '92. Here he greets ANU Librarian Colin Steele, who visited RLG in May to discuss recent RLG initiatives in information delivery and collections independence. Colin also explored prospects for cooperation between Australian and North American research libraries.