

Peter Harold Dawe, BA, FLAA, 1932–1992

Peter Judge remembers a long-time friend and colleague

PETER DAWE left us on 3 September, far too soon, with so much still to give both to his family and to his many friends and colleagues. He had enjoyed a long and distinguished career as a librarian, marked in August 1984 by the LAA conferring on him the distinction of Fellowship. In 1987 he was President of the Association.

Peter had played an active part in the Association since 1956, when he was Secretary of the SA Branch, becoming Branch President in 1959. From 1964/66 he was President and Councillor of the Special Libraries Section. He later became a Committee member of the Victorian Group of the Information Science Section.

His Fellowship citation noted that he was at the forefront of the change in the role of the professional librarian, from custodian to active purveyor of information, particularly through the application of technology. In this context, he was chosen as one of the two Associate Examiners for the inaugural Registration Examination paper in *Data Processing and Information Retrieval* in 1969. Similarly, he was the first Convener of the AACOBS Working Party on *Systems and Communications* in 1973. His contributions to AACOBS on the Victorian Regional Committee, in the full AACOBS Council and on its Standing Committee were always practical and far-sighted.

His interest in the future of the profession was shown by his participation on course advisory committees of RMIT, Ballarat CAE, Canberra Technical College and on the Program Development Committee for the International Training Course for Librarians in 1976/77.

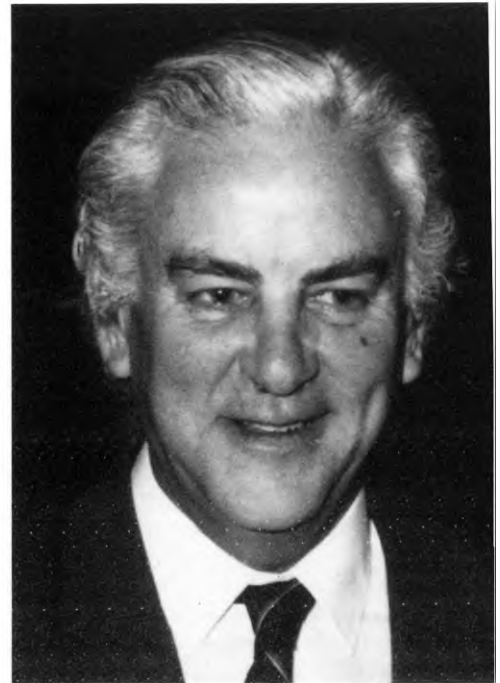
At the international level he was Secretary of the Australian National Committee of the International Federation for Information and Documentation (FID) 1971-1988. He was also Secretary of FID's Commission for Asia and Oceania 1973-1976 and represented Australia at the General Assemblies of that body several times. His lively personality and willingness to cooperate always impressed themselves on our Asian and Pacific colleagues.

He was always active in encouraging and facilitating cooperation between libraries and avoiding duplication of effort. Almost his first act when taking over as Chief Librarian of CSIRO was to persuade the Organisation to bring *Scientific Serials in Australian Libraries* up to date, which was completed in 1975/76. He participated actively in the

CSIRO/NLA Joint Consultative Committee, which then met regularly to plan complementary activities of the two bodies. His paper at the National Interlending Conference in 1983 led to his becoming Convener of the *Working Party on Document Delivery in Australia*, the report of which was presented at the LAA Conference in the following August. At a time when the profession was undergoing massive change, he was a facilitator as well as a leader among his colleagues.

Peter began his library career in Adelaide in 1950, as an assistant in the Public Library, then in the Government Department libraries in which he rose to become Librarian in Charge. He passed his Registration examination in 1958, and joined the CSIRO Division of Soils, still in Adelaide, then moved in 1966 to the CSIRO Central Library in Melbourne as Projects Officer. Promotion was swift—he became Deputy Chief Librarian in 1970 and was appointed Chief Librarian of CSIRO in 1973 (only the third CSIRO Chief Librarian since 1916, following Ellinor Archer and then Betty Doubleday). He remained in that position until 1988, when massive restructuring of CSIRO's Corporate Centre made his position invidious. Peter had seen Chief Librarian of CSIRO as the climax of his career, and for a while he was shattered by what he felt was the destruction of everything he had worked for. However, his professional life came together again, first as a part-time lecturer in the RMIT, then when he was appointed Deputy Librarian at the Box Hill-Doncaster Regional Library in 1990. His generous personality, boundless enthusiasm and optimism quickly endeared him as a trusted colleague and friend to all the staff.

It was a mark of the resilience and



courage of the man that he was able to redirect his professional skills and cultural awareness to suit a different but equally complex library environment, so that in a very short time he had pioneered a major survey of library users (about to be published), revamped the library's publicity and publications programs and launched a highly successful series of public seminars on recent developments in science and technology. Peter was busy, happy and productive up to the moment of his sudden, unexpected departure.

He will be sadly missed. Peter's friends and colleagues in the Association send their deepest sympathy to Sue, his widow (another long-time ALIA member), and to his family.

(Peter Judge gratefully acknowledges contributions to this appreciation, with affection and esteem, from Peter Stansfield and John Thawley.) ■



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