

The Tripitaka returns to Cambodia

Menna Thomas records a happy ending to a sad story

THE NATIONAL Library has arranged for the return to Cambodia of 51 volumes of Buddhist writings which the Library has been holding in safe-keeping for eighteen years. The Prime Minister, the Hon Paul Keating, MP, presented these sacred books, which included 48 volumes of the *Tripitaka* in the Khmer language, to Prince Sihanouk on 26 September, during his visit to Phnom Penh.

A group of 62 Cambodian Buddhists headed by the Venerable Indamuny Tit-Sakhon of the Vichettaram Monastery had sent this rare collection to the Australian Ambassador to Cambodia on 2 August 1974. They requested that the National Library accept the *Tripitaka* 'as a

sacred thing' and said 'We take this decision to preserve this precious collection against destruction and disappearance, whose value is even more superior than our life'. The National Library accepted the collection, understanding from the letter that it was to be returned to Cambodia in time of peaceful and legitimate sovereignty.

In 1975 the Khmer Rouge took over Cambodia. During the years of terror under the Pol Pot regime which left so many dead, soldiers also destroyed almost all the country's books. The Venerable Indamuny Tit-Sakhon and thirteen of his monks were among those killed at Tuol Sleng High School in Phnom Penh but, today, the Vichettaram Monastery survives, is being restored, and three monks have again taken up residence.

The return of these volumes began when Wendy Fatin, Minister for the Arts & Territories, on behalf of the Prime Minister, formally accepted them from the Director-General of the National Library, Warren Horton, at Parliament House on Wednesday 16 September. She said that this action was 'symbolic of the cultural relations being established between Australia and Cambodia'.

In a letter to the Prime Minister dated 26 September, Prince Sihanouk wrote 'I would like to take this opportunity to express to Your Excellency, to the Government of Australia, to the National Library of Australia, and to the people of Australia my greatest appreciation and deepest gratitude for having undertaken an indispensable and leading role to assist Cambodia not only in the political process, but as well in cultural and social areas as evidenced by this noble gesture.' ■



The Prime Minister, the Hon. Paul Keating, MP, presents the Tripitaka to Prince Sihanouk

Stowe Computing wins export award

Garry Dohnt, Stowe's Managing Director, is justly proud of their success

STOWE COMPUTING Australia, the developers of the BOOK Plus Library Management System, has won the Comtec Information Technology Exporter of the Year Award. The new award has been designed to recognise the export achievements of a South Australian based information technology company.

Stowe has enjoyed an outstanding sales record over the past twelve months, especially in exporting. It attributes its success in large measure to the partnership with IBM Australia.

Three other vital factors have been the dedication and quality of Stowe's staff, the loyalty of its customers, and its strong program of product improvement and enhancement.

Stowe currently employs 50 staff,

most of whom are located in Adelaide. Many of the skilled technical staff responsible for product development joined the company as part of its initial design and development team. There are technical support branch offices in Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Canberra.

Stowe has concentrated on two major application software packages, total management systems for libraries and for local government. Both the library package, BOOK Plus and the local government software, Total Corporate System (TCS), run on IBM's mid-range AS/400 hardware. Worldwide there are currently 64 installations: 33 in Australia, 21 in France, 6 in South Africa, 2 in the United Kingdom, 1 in Switzerland and 1 in New Zealand.

BOOK Plus had to be translated

into French before it was marketed in France, and has also been converted to German for the German speaking European markets of Switzerland, Austria and Germany. The structure of the software, and its adherence to international cataloguing and enquiry standards has ensured the ready acceptance of BOOK Plus in these markets. ■

National Executive of Library Technicians

ERRATUM

The position of President for 1993 was inadvertently omitted from the call for nominations in the last issue of *inCite*. Please note that financial members of the section have until 30 November to nominate for President 1993. Nominations should be sent to Evette House, 29 Sholl Avenue, North Beach WA 6020.