

Creating our future!

Have you registered for the Asian Pacific Specials Health and Law Librarians Conference, at the Hotel Conrad, Gold Coast, 23-26 August 1993? If not, Barbara Laffan has a special message for you

When we were asked to take on the conference to be held in Brisbane in '93 it never occurred to us that the Brisbane Convention Centre, planned as part of the Expo '88 site redevelopment would still not have turned a sod by June 1993. The impact of this slow development has had ramifications on the whole of Brisbane's hotel and convention planning. It has been a key influence on the '93 Special Health and Law Librarian's Conference planning and structure.

If you have always done it that way then think again. That has become very much the motto of the Conference Planning Committee. The Conference theme itself, the physical constraints of facilities available to us, the ongoing economic environment faced by our home organisations and our own personal philosophies about productivity and workplace responsibility have combined to give an integrated structure of largely single sessions over a shorter period than earlier conferences.

The conference will be a challenge for those who have agreed to speak and be on panels. We have asked them to present very focused discussion points and given them short snapshots of time on the panel. Their conference papers on the other hand can be as long and discursive as they like to make them. The publication format of proceedings will be on disc, not paper. This creates a challenge for listeners. No paper to read beforehand (unless you bring your own PC notebook with you!) and active listening during panel sessions in order to grasp the key points of the speaker. Research shows that an active listening span is generally 10-12 minutes—hence the timetabling.

Yes, this is not the way it has been done before. But if we don't try to massage the elements that we are faced with, and if we don't have

an outlook that seeks to make things work we will never create our own future—circumstances will simply leave us behind. Ian Keirnan of Clean-Up Australia said the comment that influenced him most was 'If your attitude is that it can't be done, then it won't be done'. We challenge you to help make the '93 Conference a success. Already we have a full trade exhibit and a waiting list of exhibitors. They believe Librarianship is going somewhere! It seems that Librarians too think that we have a viable, successful alternative.

We had 350 registrations before the end of June. In order to make for a more comfortable conference environment we have decided to limit registrations to 600 so make sure you register as early as possible as we cannot guarantee successful registrations in the last weeks as happened in Canberra. Alternative accommodation has been booked up but there is still plenty of room at the Hotel Conrad itself. Though the Hotel Conrad is more expensive the benefits of staying at the Conference venue cannot be discounted.

For the first time at a Library Conference there will be an award for the best Conference presenter (not including Keynote speakers). This anonymously donated award has been instigated because of the donor's belief that Librarians must first and foremost be good communicators, and that public speaking is part of this communication. There will be a perpetual trophy awarded at each succeeding Special Library Conference.

Our closing address will be given by someone who will definitely be part of our future. Cameron O'Reilly, the young Deputy Chief Executive of Australian Provincial Newspapers, talks convincingly of the uses and necessity for information and information professionals in the years that lie ahead. ■



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