

Melissa Petherbridge: how the Sydney Olympics 2000 Library helped win the bid

Winning an Olympic bid is essentially about convincing 91 International Olympic Committee (IOC) members that your city would do a fantastic job hosting the Olympic Games. This is largely accomplished in two ways—through publications and personal visits. Our Bid books—a 550 page, 3 volume detailed plan of how Sydney would conduct the Games—were the culmination of two years hard work. Extensive research was undertaken to assess what had been offered in past bids and what had actually been delivered by past host cities.

The library played a vital role in compiling this data for appropriate staff to analyse. IOC members and many other prominent persons come to visit each city, inspect plans and try to decide between the worthy candidates. Sydney's VIP visits began in October 1991. During these visits, a tour

of the library was a key item on the agenda. Even a cursory look through the library made it abundantly clear to our visitors that Sydney's promises were backed up by substantial research on all aspects of organising an Olympic Games. During his visit, IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch requested a complete set of our original research. To our knowledge, no other bidding city had ever used a library to help organise and promote its bid.

The collection consists of approximately 3000 library items, 3500 files, 5000 slides, and 500 videos. The library manages virtually all forms of information within the bid office through a series of parallel databases. The collection strengths include past Olympic bids, Post Games Reports, Olympic architecture and technical publications on all of the summer Olympic sports.

As we headed toward that fateful day—23 September 1993—interest

and concern for our library grew. What would happen to the collection should we lose? At least one National Olympic Committee wanted the collection, as well as cities bidding for the 2004 Olympic Games. There was also interest from other libraries, most notably the National Sport Information Centre (NSIC) at the Australian Institute of Sport in Canberra—our sponsoring library, whose help had been invaluable. Now the library has a promising future and will grow to enormous proportions by the year 2000 (projections include 100 000 files, 10 000 library items, 200 000 slides and 5000 videos).

The Sydney 2000 Library has been a very special library in every sense of the term. Mostly because it has shown how much a library can contribute to the success of a corporate team. To our Bid team, the work library now means a total information system. ■

Northcote/Preston Health Collection

Good health shared in any language

Northcote and Preston libraries now share exciting new collections of health information, thanks to the Northcote/Preston Health Resources Network, formed in response to reports that women, youth, and those from non-English speaking backgrounds suffer from a lack of access to appropriate health information.

Initially, over 250 health related organisations were contacted by questionnaire, asking them to identify health information resources of most use to the target groups. Resources marked by the organisation as useful for people with low literacy skills, non-English speakers, with non-technical language and information most often requested, were noted as high priorities for inclusion in the Health Collection. The response was excellent with many valuable suggestions given.

A Co-operative Project Grant from the Ministry for the Arts was used to purchase approxi-



The Mayor of Northcote (centre) with Graham Dudley from the Ministry of Health and project worker Savica Dragic

mately four hundred items. Resources were purchased in many community languages covering a wide range of topics such as asthma, schizophrenia, family planning, child safety, sexuality, women's health etc.

A database of health-related agencies and services has been developed as a by-product of this research, and this information will be printed and distributed to health services providers, support groups and libraries. ■