

Children's librarians to be rewarded

The Children's and Youth Services Section (NSW Group) are currently calling for nominations for the *Marjorie Cotton Award* and the *Bess Thomas Award* (see accompanying advertisements). These awards are to honour two very dedicated librarians, who were successful pioneers of public library services for children.

Following is a summary of the achievements of these two remarkable librarians, illustrating why these awards were initiated in their honour and thus what an honour it would be to be a recipient of either one.

Marjorie Cotton

As the first professionally qualified Children's Librarian in NSW, Marjorie Cotton initiated programs to attract young people into public libraries, which form the basis of children's services today.

Marjorie Cotton's influence reached far beyond the walls of the public libraries in which she worked, these being Kur-ing-gai, Newcastle, Randwick and Woollahra. As the first President of LAA Children's Libraries Section in 1953, she worked with

other section members to introduce the quarterly *Book Review Bulletin* for children's books. She lobbied for the easing of trade restrictions to allow imports of the Caldecott Award picture books, persuaded artist Desmond Digby to create *Waltzing Matilda* which won *Picture book of the Year* in 1971, and wrote a section for Maurice Saxby's second volume on the *History of Australian Children's Literature*. Throughout her career, Marjorie Cotton's commitment was always to excellence in children's literature and librarianship.

Bess Thomas

In 1934 Bess Thomas co-founded the Mosman Children's Library with a mere 350 books, papers and magazines. She also established a voluntary organisation known as Friends of Mosman children's library, the first of its kind in NSW which operated until the 1950's. The children's library went from strength to strength and by 1951 there were 17 000 volumes and a membership of 6 250.

Bess Thomas was the first woman in NSW to be appointed to the position of Municipal Librarian

in 1945. With an emphasis on outreach activities to children she implemented story hours, book review and chess groups and dramatisations. She also believed in the importance of continuing education and in 1954 hosted one of the first training courses for Children's Librarians. This five day course included lectures, workshops and book buying for thirty librarians from four states.

Bess retired in 1962 and her dedication to children's library services and Mosman Library were acknowledged by J W Metcalfe, Director of the School of Librarianship, University of NSW. On her death a few years later, she left \$200 to the LAA Children's Library Section. From this bequest was born the Bess Thomas Award. Initially it was for a 'distinguished contribution to the literature of children's librarianship'. However, after a disappointing response the award was changed in 1992 to its present form.

Both of these librarians recognised the value of the combination of children and books and of trained Children's Librarians to unite and promote the two. ■

The Children's and Youth Services Section (ALIA)

Marjorie Cotton Award

Nominations are now being called for the Award for 1996.

The inaugural award is in honour of Marjorie Cotton, a pioneer in the field of Children's Librarianship in Australia. The Award will take the form of a Citation and Certificate honouring the recipient.

Aims: •To promote the role and image of Children's and Youth Services Librarians •To recognise individual achievement and co-operative networking in providing services for young people in public libraries •To encourage Children's and Youth Services Librarians to actively support the profession and the Association.

Eligibility: This award is open to any member of the Australian Library Information Association, Children's and Youth Services Section, who is employed as a Children's/Youth Services Librarian in a public library. Current members of National and State Children's and Youth Services committees may not be nominated. Nominations may be made by members of the Association, employers or colleagues and should be directed to the address below

Each nomination must have a proposer, seconder and the consent of the nominee.

Selection criteria: •Outstanding contribution in developing, implementing and promoting services to young people in a public library. •Active participation in co-operative networks, committees or groups furthering the development of public library services to young people. •Research, publication and presentation of paper on the subject of Children's/Youth librarianship or literature.

All of the above criteria are not mandatory; each nominee will be judged on individual merit.

Nominations should be sent to the National President, CYSS, c/o Public Libraries Branch, State Library of NSW, Macquarie Street, Sydney, NSW, 2000. Enquiries Sue Parkinson Tel (02) 230 1523 Fax (02) 230 1615. Nominations close 31 January 1996.

This award will be presented at the 1996 ALIA Conference in Melbourne.

The Children's and Youth Services Section (ALIA)

Bess Thomas Award

Nominations are now being called for the Award for 1996.

A grant of \$250 will be awarded for a project initiating or supplementing services for young people in public libraries. A report of the project will be submitted to *inCite* and ORANA by the successful recipient within 12 months of the Award.

Aims

- To encourage and support the development of innovative and significant public library services to young people.
- To promote public and professional awareness of the importance of services to young people in public libraries.
- To honour the bequest made by Bess Thomas and commemorate her contribution to Australian children's libraries.

Eligibility

An individual public library service, regional service or co-operative network is eligible to complete a submission for funding. Submissions may be made by the Children's/Youth Services Librarians with the consent of the employer.

Selection criteria

- Innovative and significant proposals for the implementation or development of services or resources for young people in a public library.
- Projected benefits of the project.
- Demonstration of special needs or disadvantages.

Submissions

Please send submissions to the National Secretary, CYSS, c/o Public Libraries Branch, State Library of NSW, Macquarie Street, Sydney, NSW, 2000. Enquiries: Sue Parkinson Ph (02) 230 1523 Fax (02) 230 1615. Submissions close 31 January 1996.

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