

tralian Libraries, a seminar presented by Informat at the State Library, Seminar Room 3, 12-1.30pm. RSVP: Elizabeth Drynan, Ph: (02) 9958 7099.

**27-28/6 Exploring and navigating the Internet.** Uni of NSW, School of Information, Library and Archive Studies. Contact: Maureen Henninger, Ph: (02) 385 3589, Fax: (02) 385 3430, e-mail: M.Henninger@unsw.edu.au.

• **3/7 Riverina regional group.** Professional development workshop. Speaker: Jennefer Nicholson plus panels and individual consultations. Riverina Institute of TAFE library. 9-12.30pm, ALIA members \$15; others \$20. Contact: Chris Griffiths, Ph: (069) 332 347, Fax: (069) 332 900, e-mail: cgriffiths@csu.edu.au. RSVP by 26/6.

**3,17 & 31/7 Introduction to INMAGIC DB/TextWorks, Designing databases using INMAGIC DB/TextWorks, and INMAGIC DB/TextWorks bridging course.** Full day course 9-5pm. Venue: Trimagic Software. For information and bookings contact: Trimagic Software, Authorised Training Centre. Ph: (02) 413 1799, Fax: (02) 413 1710.

**10/7 Performance indicators for libraries: a one day workshop.** Uni of NSW, School of Information, Library and Archive Studies. Contact: Maureen Henninger, Ph: (02) 385 3589, Fax: (02) 385 3430, e-mail: M.Henninger@unsw.edu.au.

**16/7 Introduction to OASIS: held over five Tuesday evenings.** Uni of NSW, School of Information, Library and Archive Studies. Contact: Maureen Henninger, Ph: (02) 385 3589, Fax: (02) 385 3430, e-mail: M.Henninger@unsw.edu.au.

**16-30/7 Insearch/Knight-Ridder Information Seminars.** Introductory DIALOG (16/7), Business (30/7). Sydney contact: (02) 212 2867.

**17/7 Becoming an Internet server: designing home pages.** Uni of NSW, School of Information, Library and Archive Studies. Contact: Maureen Henninger, Ph: (02) 385 3589, Fax: (02) 385 3430, e-mail: M.Henninger@unsw.edu.au.

**24/7 Multimedia: copyright issues.** Uni of NSW, School of Information, Library and Archive Studies. Contact: Maureen Henninger, Ph: (02) 385 3589, Fax: (02) 385 3430, e-mail: M.Henninger@unsw.edu.au.

**31/7 Clients, services and quality: a one day workshop.** Uni of NSW, School of Information, Library and Archive Studies. Contact: Maureen Henninger, Ph: (02) 385 3589, Fax: (02) 385 3430, e-mail: M.Henninger@unsw.edu.au.

• **21/8 NSW special libraries section: Librarians networking dinner.** 6pm for 6.30pm at Savion Restaurant, 38 Wairoa Avenue, Bondi. \$15 specials, \$16 ALIA and students, \$17 others. RSVP: Ilana Cohen, Ph: (02) 385 2682; Fax: (02) 385 6141.

## QLD

• **18/6-18/12 QLD public library section committee meetings.** Committee will meet on the third Wednesday in each month, with a Section activity held on alternate months. Full details will be revealed in Quill and through mail-outs. Meeting dates: 18/6, 21/8, 16/10.

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# Library, language and literature

Debra Rosenfeldt, Public programs manager, Dandenong Valley Regional Library Service

There can be few places more culturally diverse than the suburbs of Springvale and Dandenong on the outskirts of Melbourne, where 41 per cent of the population speak a language other than English at home. Since the Italians and Greeks arrived in the 1960s, successive waves of immigrants have settled in the area, with the newest settlers coming from Vietnam, Cambodia and China.

In 1992 the City of Springvale commissioned a survey which revealed that 80 per cent of residents from non-English speaking backgrounds were familiar with their local library, and an astonishing 72 per cent of newer settlers were regular library users.

Many of these newer settlers use the library to borrow books, magazines and audio-visual materials in their own language. The Springvale and Dandenong branches hold some 22 000 catalogued items in sixteen languages other than English. The largest collections are in Chinese (4228 items), Vietnamese (3533 items), Italian (2188 items) and Greek (1767 items).

Demand for the Chinese and Vietnamese material, in particular, is very great, with 77 per cent of the Chinese and 62 per cent of the Vietnamese collections on loan at any given time. The substantial size of these collections is a drawback for the library service, especially at Springvale where 15 per cent of the loans are to non-residents.

Finding the funding to keep the Chinese and Vietnamese collections growing at a rate to meet demand is an on-going difficulty for the library, partly alleviated in 1995 when the Victorian Ministry for the Arts allocated a special grant of \$10 000 for the purchase of additional materials.

A further grant has enabled the library to produce bi-lingual brochures introducing the library service to its key ethnic groups.

In recognition of its significance to non-English speaking settlers the library service has become home to *Library, language and literacy*, a free, professional service funded by the local council, the Department of Employment, Education and Training, and Adult Community Education and Further Education. The aims of this service are to

*Eighty per cent of residents from non-English speaking backgrounds were familiar with their local library, and an astonishing seventy-two per cent of newer settlers were regular library users.*

help adults to learn English, and to help English speaking adults learn to read and write. It offers advice and referrals to courses and services, as well as its own accredited programs, such as the *Certificate of spoken and written English*, and *Computer assisted language learning*. The Springvale and Dandenong offices each serve over one thousand clients annually.

Another aspect of Dandenong Valley Regional Library's service to its culturally diverse community has been its outstandingly successful 1994 and 1995 'Linking cultures' literary festivals, which have offered an exciting mix of facts, food and fiction, including papers by researchers Morag Loh and Andrew Markus, a talk by Asian food expert Elizabeth Chong, and discussion with acclaimed authors Ding Xiaoqui, Trevor Hay, Fang Xiangshu, Alex Miller, James and Julie Chang, and poet Ouyang Yu.

Topics covered have ranged from the role of women in modern China, to the Taiwanese perception of Australian culture, to heated debate about the changes to Chinese script and the problems of translation.

Every day over 2000 people visit the Springvale and Dandenong branches of the Dandenong Valley Regional Library Service, many from non-English speaking backgrounds, and many from outside the immediate area. Some come to borrow from the substantial ethnic collections, some come to learn to speak, read and write in English, and others come to find company or to relax peacefully in the welcoming, comfortable environment that the library provides. The library is a vital, vibrant community centre, important to all people, but especially to those from non-English speaking backgrounds. ■