

Access to global information



Leap into your Library —
summer reading program
for children at the Smithton
Library (NW Tasmania)

Robyn Collins

Director
State Library of Tasmania

I was appointed director of the State Library of Tasmania in September 1991. Prior to this appointment, I was chief librarian of Logan City Libraries, a high growth urban local authority in the southern area of Brisbane, and prior to that, worked as a consultant librarian in children's and young adult services in the Public Libraries Division of the State Library of Queensland. I began my career in librarianship as a teacher-librarian in a number of Queensland high schools. In 1978/79 I undertook a Masters Degree in Library Science at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver.

I held a number of executive positions in the Queensland branch of ALIA, including the presidency. I was also a councillor-at-large on the national council of ACLIS. Currently I am the chair of the Tasmanian branch of ACLIS. I was very privileged to be a mentor at the inaugural Aurora Leadership Institute which was conducted by AIMA in November 1995.

As director of the State Library of Tasmania, a significant challenge has been the management of a sixteen percent budget reduction in recent years. This was achieved with no reduction in service provision — in fact, services were increased. The continuing need to operate in a threatened economy is a challenge, however, the benefits that accrue to the community from advances in information technology create exciting prospects and these opportunities will be firmly grasped by the State Library of Tasmania.

An integrated network

The State Library of Tasmania is an integrated state-wide network of public, reference and special libraries providing for the library and information needs of the people of Tasmania. The service encompasses all the traditional functions of a state library — reference, heritage, special collections and the development of state-wide electronic information services — as well as providing a public library service which is delivered through a network of fifty libraries and four bookmobiles state-wide.

The State Library of Tasmania was formally established through legislation enacted in 1943 and, in its present configuration, through legislation enacted in 1984. Nevertheless, the State Library can trace the history of its development back to 1849 when the Tasmanian Public Library was established in Hobart through public subscription. By 1869 the collection was languishing in the loft of a malt-house when James Backhouse Walker began a successful public campaign to revive the library. The library was supported by legislation in 1870 and later, by the establishment of a Carnegie-funded building in 1904–07. In 1962 a new state library building was opened at its present site in Murray Street. In 1972 a major extension was made with the addition of an eleven-storey building to house a variety of services and the stack collections.

The development of the State Library as a state-wide service began effectively in 1965 with the adoption of a 'regionalisation' scheme. A series of agreements were made with local government for the State Library to provide local public library services. This

program, and an extensive building program, were largely actioned under the leadership of Laurie Brown who was state librarian from 1973 to 1986. This program culminated in 1984 with the enactment of a new *Libraries act* which established the Tasmanian Library Advisory Board and regional committees and defined the role of the State Library in the provision of state-wide services. In 1990 the State Library was amalgamated with the Department of Education as part of a whole-of-government restructuring program.

Today, services are delivered through seven large public libraries at Burnie, Devonport, Launceston and in the Hobart area (Hobart, Glenorchy, Rosny and Kingston). There are forty smaller branch libraries across the State and four bookmobiles. Specialist reference and information services are provided through the State Reference Library and the Launceston Reference Library. The focus of heritage services is the Tasmaniana Library which is a repository of published material and ephemera about Tasmania or by Tasmanians. The W L Crowther Library and the Allport Library and Museum of Fine Arts, which were major bequests to the people of Tasmania, are repositories of materials of national importance to Australia's documentation heritage. Services to teachers and the officers of the Department of Education, Community and Cultural Development are provided through the Library and Information Centre.

Global info delivered locally

The State Library's strategic plan lists five goals, the first of which is 'Access to global information delivered locally'. The state-

wide network of libraries provides an infrastructure through which information services can be delivered locally. In the past three years a number of strategies have been implemented to meet this goal.

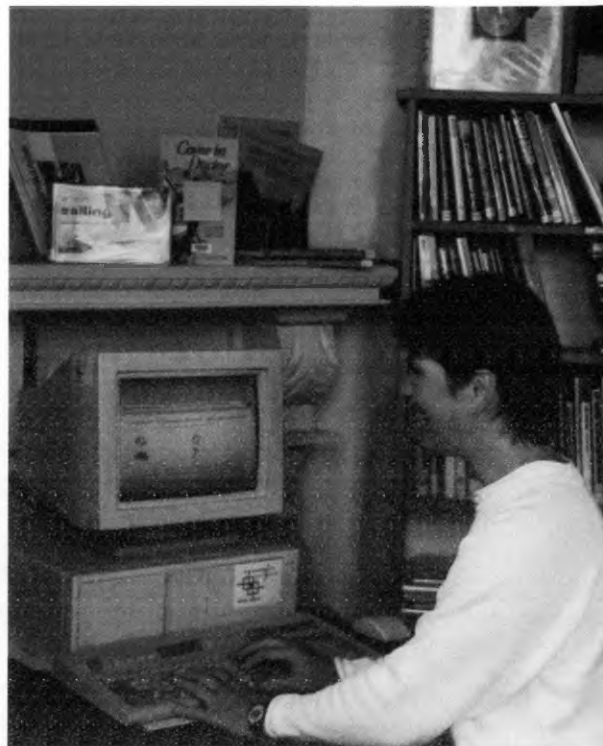
The first was the installation of the Tasmanian Library and Information System (TALIS) which is the automated catalogue of all State Library collections, school and senior college collections and the TAFE library collections. TALIS also provides access to the University of Tasmania Library catalogue and a variety of databases. TALIS is currently installed in 35 State Library service points which represent about ninety per cent of the State Library's customer base. It is also installed in eighty-six schools. Evidence of how well the service has been received can be seen in the number of reservations placed in State Library outlets which has increased from 47 000 in 1992-93 to an estimated 285 000 in 1995-96.

The second strategy was to provide public access to the Internet in all city and reference libraries. Internet access has also been provided in a further twenty-nine libraries through the Department of Social Security's Community Information Network pilot program. Public access to the Internet is provided as a free service.

The third strategy is the development of *Tasmania online* on the world wide web (<http://www.tased.edu.au/tasonline/>). *Tasmania online* has two goals, firstly to list and

index every site on the Web which contains information about Tasmania and secondly to provide non-profit community organisations the opportunity to publish on the Web. Since November 1995 some 400 Web sites about Tasmania have been identified and are accessible through *Tasmania online* and approximately forty community groups have been published on *Tasmania online*.

In the immediate future the priorities for the State Library will be to implement a formal staff training program. A consultancy is currently underway to effect this aim. The Associate Diploma in Applied Science (library technician) qualification has recently been recognised. Alliances will be developed to improve service provision, for example, better services for children and young people in partnership with the Education Division and, with the Tasmanian Museum and Art Gallery and the Archives Office, development of imaging projects which will make Tasmania's documentary heritage more accessible. ■




A reader at the Strahan Library accessing the Internet through the Community Information Network


White Room
Electronic Publishing Pty. Ltd.

presents...

The Directory of Australian CD-ROMs

the perfect selection tool for Australian content

 lists more than 300 locally produced titles with full text, multimedia and bibliographic applications covering a wide range of topics.

 contains full descriptive details for all listed CD-ROMs, including title, publisher, available platforms, brief outline, pricing information, awards, review citations and more...

PRINT VERSION \$29.00

CD-ROM VERSION \$69.00

AVAILABLE FROM:

White Room
Electronic Publishing Pty. Ltd.

PO Box 12536, A'Beckett Street,
Melbourne VIC 8006

Phone/Fax: (03) 94893735

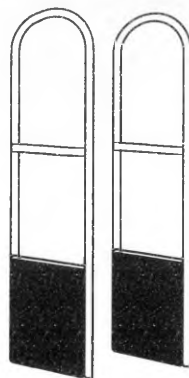
Email: whitroom@vicnet.net.au

[Http://www.whitroom.com.au](http://www.whitroom.com.au)

STOP THIEVING!!

with *MicroTag*
Library Security Systems

NOW OFFERING OUR NEW MAGNETIC SYSTEM FOR FULL CIRCULATION



Put a



to

**BOOK THEFT
IN YOUR
LIBRARY**

THEY'RE EFFECTIVE...

The *MicroTag* Security Systems have a documented record of reducing book losses by an average of 80-90% by offering the latest in radio frequency and electromagnetic technologies.

THEY'RE SIMPLE...

By far the most trim, least complicated of all existing systems to install, operate, and maintain. Protecting your collection is quick, easy and very economical.

THEY'RE RELIABLE...

No embarrassment due to false alarms. An alarm means an attempted book theft. Excellent detection.

THEY'RE INEXPENSIVE...

We market these systems to be within the budget of every library or media centre.

Phone *MicroTag* now for an obligation free quote:

Melbourne (03) 9525 2757	Canberra (06) 281 6940
Sydney (02) 398 9088	Brisbane (07) 376 5124
Adelaide (08) 270 1553	

For all other areas phone 1800 339 473 (freecall)

MicroTag

Security Systems (Aust) Pty. Ltd.