

HUB OF A

cultural centre

The Alexander Library
Building, home of LISWA



Lynn Allen

**Chief executive officer
Library and Information
Service of Western
Australia**

Since 1989 I have held the positions of state librarian and chief executive officer of the Library and Information Service of Western Australia (LISWA).

LISWA has responsibility for delivering services to a range of sectors and clients with a budget of \$26 million and a staff of over 300.

I am a qualified librarian, with a Masters degree from the University of Western Australia and a PhD from Murdoch University, and I write extensively on the use of information technology in text-based retrieval systems, planning and management.

I have over 20 years experience in libraries and six in the private sector working with information technologies and consultants on a range of software projects, including library, full-text systems and records management systems.

I am currently chair of the Council of Australian State Libraries, a member of Curtin University of Technology Council, the WA Information Policy Committee and the WAGovernments Chief Executive Officer Consultative Group. In the mid-1980s I was a member of the Science Industry and Technology Council of WA. I was also ALIA president in 1990, and am a Fellow of the Australian Institute of Management.

About the service

The Library and Information Service of Western Australia (LISWA) began in 1889 as the Victoria Public Library (later the Public Library of Western Australia) with J S Battye as the first librarian. However, when the newly established Library Board of Western Australia took on responsibility for the State Library in 1956, the foundations for the current structure were laid.

Services and collections were extended over the following thirty years to a point where they extended over many buildings. The State Reference Library was reorganised along subject lines, and a number of special collections and services such as the Central Music Library, the Research Collection of Children's literature and the Infolink Government and Community Information Service, were established. The building in James Street also contained the J S Batty Library of West Australian History, which was responsible for the collection and preservation of the state's documentary heritage including the public records of state and local government. During this time LISWA also acquired the State Film Centre which provided a film lending service.

In 1985 the Alexander Library Building was opened. This award-winning building is the hub of the Perth Cultural Centre. It brought all of LISWA's services and collections together under one roof and provided a focal point to promote its services to the community. Use of all services increased by over fifty per cent in the next few years as people were attracted to facilities such as the theatre, meeting rooms and exhibition areas.

The electronic delivery of information has become increasingly important. Automation was introduced to the library in 1983, and with the move to the Alexander Library Building, clients were able to search the database themselves. New services such as CD-ROMs were gradually introduced and staff continued to make use of external databases to meet client demands. Early in the 1990s the need to upgrade the system became obvious, and after an extensive evaluation process, a new computer system using Digital equipment and the Innopac Library System was launched in 1995.

1996 sees LISWA with a new structure which focuses on service delivery programs to clients. Team-based service has meant the splitting of large branches into smaller teams organised to serve particular client groups. The State Reference Library has teams focussed on arts and literature, society and citizenship, business and management, industry and technology, and the performing arts. In response to client demands the opening hours of the Alexander Library Building have also been increased by 12.5 hours per week to a total of 74.5 hours.

To foster discussion about its future LISWA has produced the document *Blueprint 2*. Extensive community consultation has taken place and this will feed into a new strategic plan to the year 2000. New developments planned include the 'Leonardo virtual cultural centre project' which will develop multimedia products based on the collections of the library and the Western Australian Museum, and the development of a centre for the book, developing public programs to celebrate reading, books and writing.

Navigate with Knowit

LISWA's new world wide web interface to its computer system has been well-received by the public. The interface is in two parts: the first being LISWA's home page (<http://www.liswa.wa.gov.au/>) providing information about LISWA, the Alexander Library Building, collections, services and policies, and the other is the web interface to the library's database.

Project Information Access is the title of LISWA's computer upgrade project. In the request for tender the aim was to have an interface which was intuitive and easy for clients to use. Planning for implementation proceeded on the basis of the text-based system. However, use of the Internet and tech-



nology was developing rapidly and having made the decision to install fifty computers as workstations in public areas, LISWA was able to make a late decision to develop its own web page as the interface to the catalogue, and install both the text-based and web version of Innopac as the interface to its database without affecting the date for implementation.

LISWA's home page contains hundreds of pages of information, with hypertext links providing a quick means of jumping between related pieces of information. Apart from descriptive information there are floor plans of each floor in the Alexander Library Building with links to information about the collections and services. The text and pages were developed with assistance from a consultant, in collaboration with LISWA's graphic designer. A decision was made that information should be displayed on a single page where possible and graphics used sparingly to speed the system. The skills needed to produce web pages are now available internally and it is hoped to decentralise the maintenance of the pages to staff in service delivery areas.

The implementation of the Innopac system within LISWA coincided with the launch of Innovative's web interface *Webpac*. LISWA took advantage of this situation to be one of the first large libraries in the world to introduce the system for its public catalogue. It provides an easy point-and-click means of accessing the catalogue with certain fields such as author, subject and series displayed as hypertext links which can then be used to navigate easily through the catalogue. The interface will allow LISWA to display its photographic collection in the future. Another feature is the ability to insert links to external Internet sites which can be used to provide additional information about a subject or the ability to catalogue materials which are not held within the library. LISWA staff selected and implemented the systems without additional resources while keeping the old system going. ■



Annual General Meeting

The 8th Annual General Meeting of the Australian Library and Information Association will be held in conjunction with the 4th Biennial Conference on Thursday 10 October at 9.45am at the World Congress Centre in Melbourne.

AGENDA

1. Notice of convening meeting
2. Apologies
3. Minutes of the 1995 AGM
4. Presentation of the 1995 *Annual report* and balance sheet, and income and expenditure account
5. Presentation of supplementary balance sheet and supplementary income and expenditure account to 30 June 1996
6. Appointment of auditors
7. Presentation of awards
8. General business

RULES OF MEETING

1. Motions for discussion at the AGM are to be forwarded in writing, in duplicate, to the executive director, ALIA, PO Box E441, Queen Victoria Terrace, ACT 2600 by 1 August 1996. Motions should be signed by the movers either individually or on behalf of a division of the Association. All such motions received will be published in the AGM agenda notice in *inCite*, (1 September and 1 October respectively).
2. All motions to be put to the AGM must appear in this published agenda.
3. The only terms that may be raised under general business are those of an informal nature, or those that are within the scope of the business already laid down. Motions of a substantial nature relating to items not covered in the notice of the meeting will not be allowed.
4. If any item of urgency arises which is not within the business of the meeting the chairperson has the power to accept it without notice, or rule that due notice must be given.
5. All motions additional to those on the printed agenda and in accordance with 4 above, and amendments, shall be written in triplicate and signed by the movers (forms will be provided), one copy to be delivered to the chair, the second to the projectionist, the third to the mover.
6. When addressing the chair, the person desiring recognition will properly identify themselves, giving their name and affiliation. Only ALIA members may speak.
7. Debate shall be limited to 3 minutes for each speaker, no speaker may have the floor twice on the same question until all who wish to speak have spoken.
8. Proxies. To be valid, proxies must be in the form set out in By-law 15 and be in the hands of the executive director, at the ALIA National Office, PO Box E441, Queen Victoria Terrace, ACT 2600, e-mail address: enquiry@alia.org.au by 5pm on 30 September 1996. Proxy forms must not specify how the holder of the proxy is to vote on specific areas.
9. By general consent, if there be no objection, or by a two-thirds vote, any rule governing the debate may be suspended.
10. The chairperson's rulings on procedural matters may not be debated. The reference for rules and their interpretation by the Parliamentarian will be Joske's *The law and procedure at meetings in Australia*, 8th ed, 1994. A Parliamentarian will be appointed to advise the chairperson on procedures and to assist in determining the results of a poll of members present if necessary.