

The impact of IT on library design

Dr David Jones, convenor, Library Buildings and Equipment special interest group

Over thirty participants attended the inaugural function of the ALIA Library Buildings and Equipment Special Interest Group at the State Library of New South Wales on Monday 9 September. Those attending heard the views of a panel of speakers from diverse backgrounds on the impacts of information technology on library planning and design.

Kerrie Millgate, manager of library services of the Australian Securities Commission, spoke from the perspective of a special library system within an organisation with highly sophisticated information technology provision. Here the potential to deliver direct to the desktops of Commission officers, and to take advantage of the space savings of legal and other materials in electronic form, is very marked. Steve O'Connor, university librarian of the University of Technology, Sydney, discussed the ways in which his library adapted to, and in many cases anticipated, the demands of new media and new client needs. He emphasised the continuing

need for adequate space for materials in traditional formats, and for adequate equipment and training space for staff and clients. Geoff Larkin, director of the architectural firm Stephenson and Turner International, presented an illustrated talk on the way information technology is accommodated in a number of French and Singaporean libraries which he has recently visited. Paul Scully, consultant with the State Library of New South Wales Public Libraries branch, adverted to the opportunities which Internet access provides, particularly for public libraries, to make resources more widely available, to make themselves better known and to introduce information technology concepts to a wider public. He noted the success of Internet projects in creating local databases of community information — information which was often already being collected for publication.

Dr David J Jones, convenor of the special interest group, addressed the issues of defining space requirements when planning new

or assessing existing premises, and the need to combat the simplistic view that everything would be miniturised or available through the Internet, and that libraries would need less and less space.

He identified several factors tending to increase space demands, especially for public and academic libraries: the need for training space for users and staff; the additional space for PCs and printers, as well as writing space (frequently overlooked); increased demand generated by greater public awareness of library resources via the Internet; and the need for some libraries to cater for a variety of formats. He emphasised the need to create adaptable spaces which could cope with future technological and other changes.

In the lively discussion which ensued it was clear that there will be plenty of topics for the special interest group to pursue in the future, and suggestions for further topics and ways of communicating with other interested parties were invited.



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in the Next Century. 9–12.30pm. Uni of Qld, Axon Room, Student Union Building. Presenters from Uni of Queensland, Griffith Uni and QUT. \$20 staff/institution/student members of ACLIS, \$25 non-members. Contact: Cheryl Stevens, ph (07) 3875 3131, e-mail C.Stevens@ins.gu.edu.au.

• **9/12 Qld Library Technicians Section AGM.** State Library of Qld, Metway Theatre, 5.30pm for 6pm. Contact: Ailsa O'Donnell, ph (07) 3259 3025, fax (07) 3259 3086.

9–10/12 AIMA Training and Consultancy Services Ltd *Benchmarking your library.* Mercure Hotel, North Quay, 9–5pm (9/12), 9–1pm (10/12). For further information contact: Rosemary Turner, ph (06) 262 1223, fax (06) 257 1703, e-mail aima@nla.gov.au.

• **18/12 Qld Public Libraries Section.** *The great debate: censorship on the net.* 6.00pm for 6.30pm, members \$10, others \$15. Central City Library Theatre, City Plaza, Corner Ann, George and Adelaide Streets, Brisbane. Contact: Del Simpson, ph (07) 3403 9511 (b/h), e-mail simpson@gil.com.au.

• **18/12 Qld Public Library Section AGM and End of Year dinner** AGM venue: Central City Library Theatre, City Plaza, Corner Ann, George and Adelaide Streets, Brisbane, 6.30pm. Dinner venue: Picaso's Restaurant, 7pm. Contact: Brenda Simpson, ph (07) 3403 8621.

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• **11/11 SA RAISS AGM** RAISS Remembers on Remembrance Day. RAISS remembers reference and reminiscences with Geritt Stafford. 5.30pm for 5.45pm, Royal Society Meeting Rooms, SA Museum, Kintore Avenue. Dinner to follow at Chesser Cellars. RSVP to Margaret Apsey, ph (08) 8201 2157 or e-mail margaret.apsey@flinders.edu.au by 1/11.

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