

# Providing value-added services

Margaret McGeehan, library manager

Prior to self-government in the ACT, a decision was made that a parliamentary library service for Members and staff in the new ACT Legislature would be provided as an extra function of the existing special library of the department (at that time known as the ACT Administration). By the date of the first Assembly on 11 May 1989 both the Legislative Assembly Library and ACT Administration Library were co-located in the same building as the Legislative Assembly.

Now almost eight years later, the ACT Government and Legislative Assembly Library provides a quality reference and information service to Members and staff of the Legislative Assembly and to officers of the ACT Public Service, and ensures that library clients have access to a comprehensive range of information.

The collection includes an in-depth coverage of matters concerning the government of the ACT; a comprehensive collection of Legislative Assembly publications, committee reports and *Hansard*, and ACT legislation. *Hansard* from the former House of Assembly has been maintained in the archives collection, along with many government publications of the former departments and agencies. *Hansard* from the Commonwealth and New South Wales, and legislation of the Commonwealth and States is frequently accessed.

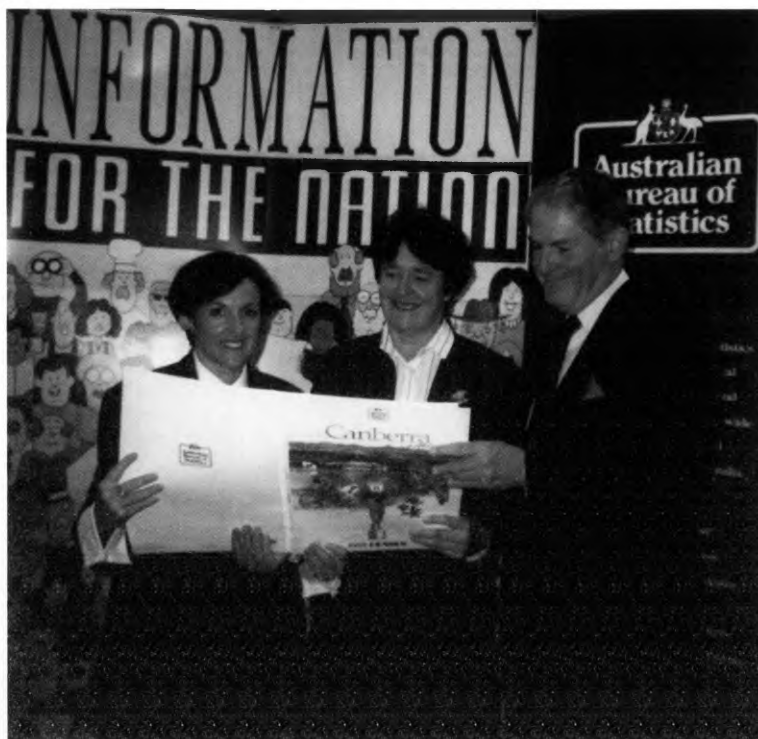
Of particular interest is the collection of statistical material, acquired through membership of the Australian Bureau of Statistics ALP scheme.

Library staff add value to the daily news clippings (provided by a monitoring agency) by allocating subject headings to facilitate retrieval. This has made an already popular service even more so. A recent development has seen the library receive radio and TV news summaries which are then forwarded them to Members. The library has commenced a modest service of recording the local ABC radio station each day.

The library is a full participant of ABN and we have made our holdings widely available as resources to be shared through interlibrary lending.

We have found that benefits have been gained from utilising the same resources to provide an integrated library service to two main groups of clients. There has been an extra challenge occasionally when an issue being debated is also being pursued by the bureaucracy.

You may also be interested to know that there are seventeen elected members to the ACT Legislative Assembly and



ACT Chief Minister Kate Carnell, Margaret McGeehan and Greg Cornwell

they all have supporting staff. The library is the first option for information for more than 5000 ACT public servants in the Chief Minister's Department, the Department of Business, the Arts, Sport and Tourism, the Audit Office and the Department of Urban Services, including Planning and Land Management. ■



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