



Helen Hayes, university librarian, University of Melbourne

Space — or the lack of it — is a big issue for many university libraries, particularly for the older university libraries which are often confined by locations in central, prime real estate. The Better Baillieu Library Project has been established to address space problems in the University of Melbourne library system. In line with agreed management principles the project was designed in a quality environment by Graeme Murphy who directed the entire project.

In 1991 the University of Melbourne library was one hundred and ten per cent full. All lift wells and vacant floor areas were stacked with unshelved books. Shelving was made very difficult because of jammed bookstacks and dozens of book sequences which better reflected practices that were important in the late 1950s than to the needs of the 1990s.

Our preference would have been for a vast new building but we had to settle for adapting the ones we had, starting with the central Baillieu Library. We needed a real, workable solution. Using a quality template we chose consultants with whom we could collaborate. Working with our staff, the consultants looked at workflows within the existing building, considered past and future collection growth and the needs imposed by an expanding electronic environment. They asked our customers (academic staff, students and library staff) what they required in the new plan. We asked the consultants to produce a plan for ten years expansion in a user friendly, flexible environment for the benefit of our customers. The consultants required that some low-use material be relocated, and that any non-load bearing internal walls be removed. They ran a series of forums

for staff and users. They looked at process improvement requirements and the need for future flexibility. A partnership was formed between the university's Property and Buildings Division, the library's planning team and the consultants to support the process and ensure that the planning was in place, timelines achieved and communication maintained at all levels.

An eight-stage flexible plan was developed to transform the Baillieu Library into an efficient building which would sustain a further eight to ten years growth. The cost was \$9 million. The university was impressed with the plan, which was based on the most efficient possible use of resources, including the refurbishment of existing furnishings such as the recovering the 1959 Mitzi chairs.

To pay for all this, a fundraising program commenced as a future example to the university of how good practice could be applied university-wide. This approach has already achieved benefits which are wider than the library fundraising project, including a consolidated university donor list, good networks and better approaches to foundations.

In the longer term we hope to better address the needs of all our users by reducing our twenty-two sites to six major satellite libraries. In 1997, work will commence on our Life Sciences library and fundraising will begin to redevelop the law library. These projects will significantly improve the services we can give to our customers.

above: The Baillieu Library at the University of Melbourne, in 1960. The Better Baillieu library project will maintain the integrity of the building's modernist, mid-century design.



ACT

• **6/3-12/6 ACT Special Libraries Section.** *Librarian's Libations with Specials at the Hyatt*, at 5.30pm. Every first payday of the month (6/3; 3/4; 1/5; 12/6). Contact: Libby Coates, ph (06) 266 2346.

• **10/3 Asia-Pacific Special Interest Group.** *The Internet and its expansion into our region.* NLA 4th Floor Conference Room. 12.30-1.30pm. Contact: Marie Sexton, ph (06) 262 1519, msexton@nla.gov.au.

• **12/3 Lunch welcoming new library students to TAFE.** *Guest Speaker: Marie Murphy, ALIA.* Library Lab, first floor, 12.30pm. ACT Branch Council president will also attend. Past/present students welcome. Members attending please bring a plate. RSVP: Edith Hackworthy, ph (06) 268 8120 or Glenis Matheson, ph (06) 277 2448.

• **14/3 Launching of the new ALIA publication** — *Asian resources: a directory of databases on Asia accessible in Australia*, compiled by Nereida Cross and edited by Susan MacDougall. Funded by ACLIS, and produced by ALIA. Contact: Marie Sexton, ph (06) 262 1519, msexton@nla.gov.au.

• **19/3 ACT Branch Council and AGM.** 5.30pm, NLA, Mezzanine Room. Contact: Lisa Spillers, ph (06) 249 3388, lisas@library.anu.edu.au

• **21/3-15/8 ACT Cataloguers Group.** *Conference planning meeting.* 12.30-1.30pm, NLA, Mezzanine Room A/B (21/3; 20/6), Training Room A/B (18/4; 16/5; 18/7; 15/8). Contact: Cheryl Bowman, ph (06) 252 6606, fax (06) 252 6906, cheryl.bowman@abs.gov.au

• **9/4 ACT Branch. Professional meeting.** For further information contact: Edith Hackworthy, ph (06) 268 8120, e-hackworthy@adfa.oz.au.

• **10/4 APSIG.** *Collaborative infrastructures for Asian studies: news from the Association of Asian Studies annual meeting, Chicago, March 1997.* Dr T Matthew Ciolek, ANU. 4.30pm, ANU, Menzies Library, McDonald Room. Contact: George Miller, ph (06) 249 4448, geomil@info.anu.edu.au

• **30/4 Insearch/Knight-Ridder Information Seminars.** Introductory DIALOG. Canberra contact: ph (02) 9212 2867, krinfo.ans@uts.edu.au.

NSW

• **1/3 ALIA NSW Schools Section.** *Integrating the Internet.* Sydney Grammar School, 9-3.30pm. Cost: \$75 ALIA members, \$100 others. Contact: Anne Plowman, ph (02) 9747 1346.

continued next page...