

Your voice

More time needed?

I was interested to read in the February issue of *inCite* about the strategic review of library co-ordination and representation. Like many Australian librarians, I have opinions and thoughts about the future of the Australian library industry and the manner in which our representative bodies propose to tackle the issues confronting libraries and the profession. My thoughts for what they are worth will be forwarded to the consultants by the close of business on 14 March and no doubt other individuals and interested groups will do the same.

I stress that I am totally in favour of a review of our representative bodies and their strategies to promote the library industry. The way in which they collaborate among themselves and with other strategic partners and their efforts to ensure that the importance of libraries and the contribution made by the profession to Australia's social and economic development are recognised, understood and progressed require a detailed and objective examination. What disturbs me about the review is its process and the manner in which it has been communicated.

A few in the profession have been arguing for many years that ACLIS and ALIA need to get their act together. Less than a year ago, ALIA's president commented that at this stage ALIA was not ready to 'take up a proposal to join with ACLIS and the National Library in a broad review of future needs of the profession.' (Frontline, *inCite*, April 1996).

There appears to have been a change of heart, not explained to ALIA members but even more surprising is the haste with which the review is to take place — the steering committee met on 17 January, the review publicly announced in *inCite* in February, public meetings in capital cities between 13 February and 6 March, and according to an announcement on ACLIS's web site the report will be made available to ACLIS, ALIA and the National Library of Australia

by the end of March 1997. The consultants are to be congratulated and no doubt will be working long hours.

Yes, the process is disturbing with insufficient time for considered input and a panel consisting totally of representatives from the organisations being 'reviewed'. Objectivity is presumably provided by the consultants. The review process contributes to the insular image which taints the profession. It is an opportunity compromised by sudden haste to meet a deadline which for many valid reasons some will not even notice has passed.

John Thawley,
Detroit USA

What's in it for me?

I refer to your leaflet so titled in the last but one issue of *inCite* which outlines what ALIA now purports to undertake on behalf of its members. There are many improvements here, especially in the area of industrial relations.

I am a retiree on a very small fixed income. Please tell how you can keep those like me, who would like to increase income, revive and expand old skills, and not feel completely put out to grass.

Please explain also why the membership fee for my group is pitched at \$73 when the tax refund on this is limited to \$42.

Judith Stapleton

It is with regret that I have to resign from the Australian Library and Information Association. I retired from the work force some time ago and I can no longer afford the fee of \$73.

I wish to propose to General Council that there should be a retirement subscription rate for those over sixty years-of-age, who have contributed up to the age of sixty. This rate should be about \$15 per year, a realistic amount for a retired person. It would not cover any publications (*inCite*, *Biblia*) or notices of meetings. Nor would any of the money go to a section. It

would allow retirees to retain a membership valuable to them, and to continue to use their letters after their name.

I have worked in a voluntary capacity for the Association, my highest position being president of the Library Association of Australia School Libraries Section. In 1981, I convened the section's conference in Christchurch, New Zealand and compiled the post-conference document for the event.

I started the West Australian young Readers' Book Award, which has been copied in parts other than West Australia. I have led a deputation to then West Australian premier, David Brand, in 1960, on 'Equal pay for equal work'. This contributed to equal pay for equal work being granted in Western Australia and benefited female librarians.

I wish the Association every success in its endeavours.

Leila Hoffman

Conference proceedings

I agree with Alan Bundy's comments on the biennial conference proceedings (*inCite*, December 1996).

It was my first ALIA conference since 1979 and I would have loved to have gone to most of the sessions. I did buy some tapes but as I paid for them personally I couldn't afford to buy the lot (employed part-time).

I look forward to seeing some of the papers in ALJ.

Nella Pickup

Your voice

Your letters on any issue of relevance to the library and information sector are welcomed.

All letters should be addressed to the *inCite* editor and may be e-mailed to incite@alia.org.au, or faxed to 06 282 2249, or posted to: Your voice, ALIA, PO Box E441, Kingston ACT 2604. Please include your name and postal address with your letter or e-mail.

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