Libraries to play central role in 'Connecting Australia'

Libraries across the country are being invited to take part in a new initiative 'Connecting Australia'. This program of activities aims to focus the attention of local leaders on the value and potential of online communications to their community. The first stage — a nationwide satellite hook-up into local areas — is proposed as part of 'Online Australia' on 27 November.

'Connecting Australia' is an initiative of L.O.E/Wells Presentations. John Wells has worked closely with leading peak organisations such as the Australian Council of Social Service (ACOSS) and the Australian Local Government Association (ALGA).

'Connecting Australia' is setting out to demonstrate the benefits and the potential of the internet and other communication technologies by bringing together leaders and policy-makers from within a community to take part locally in a two-hour nationwide interactive seminar narrowcast to a familiar neighbourhood setting — a club or other Sky Channel venue.

The first session of this event will involve a national satellite link-up from Canberra featuring speakers from peak national organisations representing community services, local government, libraries, Chambers of Commerce, small business, rural interests, service clubs and others. They will be joined by leaders in the communications technology field to share and explore their diverse visions of the influence of online communication on Australian community life.

The second part of this important local seminar will call on community leaders at each venue to discuss among themselves local issues. Each location can report to the national forum, with online feedback during the 'live' event as well as following the seminar.

Some issues to be covered include: Access versus content — which comes first?; Regional communications issues; Communicating for community development; Libraries as a local information hub; Strengths and weakness of the internet; and Y2K Millennium Bug and its impact on communities.

It is anticipated that most seminars will include one organisation which will provide a computer and internet connection via the phone line in the club's meeting room. Through this participants will be able to showcase local websites as well as viewing the 'Online Australia' portal site launched on the day. Venues with internet connection will also facilitate 'live' feedback to the central national forum in Canberra.

Each local community event will be hosted in a Sky Channel venue with meeting facilities. All local councils across Australia have received invitations to host these local seminars and to invite local participants. Other peak bodies are also sending out invitations through their networks. Libraries have a unique role to play in making sure their local community is fully participating. We urge you to speak to your local council and, where possible, to consider arranging local internet access in the venue on the day.

A website is being setup to provide more information on 'Connecting Australia'. To find out more on how you or your library can take part go to http://www.loe-wells.net/connectaust You can also reach John Wells via e-mail at jwells@loe-wells.net or fax on 02 6230 6493. ∎

dme.nt.gov.au

- **12/11–26/11 NT Branch Council meetings.** 4:30pm, Central Library, Health, 12/11; 26/11 — AGM dinner, 7pm (details TBA). Contact: Rennison Taaffe, ph 08 8946 7026.

- **1/12 Central Australian Regional group.** *Christmas function.* Venue: TBA. Contact: Carmel Leonard, ph 08 8951 5685, carmel.leonard@dme.nt.gov.au

Qld

- **10/11 Qld Library Technician section.** *AGM.* Guest speaker — Sven Roehrs (Occupational Therapist — Focus Rehabilitation). Metway Theatrette, State Library of Queensland. 5 for 5:30pm. 1999 committee positions available: president, secretary, treasurer, committee members & student representative. Contact: Peta Shine, ph 07 3244 5980, fx 07 3244 5986, pmshine@uq.net.au *RSVP by 6/11 — for catering purposes.*

12/11 Internet Destinations for Business. *Hands-on Training. Sylvia Edwards.* Great sites for business. Tips to make search engine results more relevant. 8:45–12pm. Venue: QUT, Faculty of Information Technology. Presented by BRISQ and QUT. Ph 07 3840 7794.

16–18/11 & 9–11/12 Train the internet trainer. *Nationally recognised short course from the Internet Training Institute.* Brisbane contact: Else Paeglis, ph 1800 039 098, info@iti.com.au URL http://www.iti.com.au/TTT/

18/11/98 The internet as a Global marketplace. *Presented by Sylvia Edwards from QUT.* Hosted by BRISQ and sponsored by Business Queensland. Venue: State Library of Queensland Theatrette. 9–11:15am, $30. Contact: ph 07 3840 7971.

- **23/11ACLIS/ALIA Queensland State Council Meeting and AGM.** Public Libraries Division of State Library, 299 Montague Road South Brisbane. 2-5pm. Contact: Beth Mayo, ph 07 3228 9386

- **2/12 Qld Specials Annual General Meeting.** Contact: Maree Pickering, ph 07 3224 4688, fx 07 3224 4353, maree.pickering@premiers.qld.gov.au

SA

- **2/11 & 9/11 SA Library Technician section.** *Internet workshops, beginners and advanced session for Library Technicians and techs-in- training. Places are limited.* Contact: Kathy Sharrad, ph 08 8207 8652, fx 08 8207 8434, kathysha @tafe.sa.edu.au

- **16/11 SA Library Technician section AGM.** *Guest speaker: Christine Cother on her recent trip to Africa.* Gekko's Restaurant Bar Landing, War Memorial Drive, North Adelaide. Time: 6:30pm.