



Yvonne Fraser, library technician, Katherine Library and Information Service

In response to everyone's messages asking for information on the flood damage to Katherine Library: the damage has not been as bad as we anticipated. We have probably lost about forty per cent of the book stock that was in the library and we estimate up to ninety per cent of what was out on loan. We lost all our desks, chairs, some wooden storage and shelving, most of our paper records including membership records, all our contact and other end-processing materials, and possibly our Raeco security system as well.

We were able to get into the library on the morning of 7 February and started removing what was salvageable into temporary accommodation (a covered basketball court with no walls). We have removed all of the damaged stock and furniture, all of the shelving, and ripped up all of the carpet — with the help of the Australian Army and the RAAF, who have been fabulous.

We then began the long and disagreeable process of scrubbing foul-smelling mud off shelves and transporting them and the useable book stock to a much smaller area in the Katherine Civic Centre. This area was actually the library until 1989 and may be the library again — although I do not know how we are going to fit all of the stock and staff into it.

We are all really tired — lugging great armfuls of books around in forty-degree heat is no joke. We have had assistance from Northern Territory Library staff who have been wonderful. The director, Lea Giles-Peters, was in the library with the rest of us wading through water and mud that smelt suspiciously of sewerage, trying to save as much as we could. Part of our local studies collection was damaged and has been taken to Darwin for conservation treatment.

All of our staff have been lucky in that their homes were undamaged or only slightly damaged. Overall, I think we have been very lucky as we could have lost all of our stock — and we did not have a disaster plan. We were intending to write one for a long time but we had not done so. It is a necessity, especially for libraries in the tropics that have high temperature and humidity every day of the year. By the way — we are still smiling!

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• **19/3 Vic One Person Australian Libraries.** Picnic in the park (BYO picnic). Queen Victoria Gardens, St Kilda Road (opposite the Victorian Arts Centre). 5.30pm. Contact: Shanti Nadaraja ph 03 9510 6299, fx 03 9530 2217, libanzca@anzca.edu.au

• **25/3 Geelong Branch.** Library tour with refreshments. Geelong Hospital Library. 5.30pm. Contact: Stephen Due ph 03 5226 7226, fx 03 5223 1946, due@gh.vic.gov.au

• **27/4 Australian Society of Indexers.** Abstracting and indexing for databases — workshop. ACER conference room, 19 Prospect Hill Road, Camberwell. 9am–4.30pm. Cost: \$100 (\$90 for ASI members). Contact: Max McMaster ph/fx 03 9571 6341 mindexer@interconnect.com.au

• **13/6 Vic Children's and Youth Services section.** Electronic information access — What skills do children's librarians need? Venue: TBA. Contact: Terry May ph 03 9743 1168

WA

• **6/3 WA Specials section.** Breakfast. All Seasons Freeway Hotel, 55 Mill Point Road, South Perth. 7.30pm. Cost: \$10.50 continental, \$14.50 full buffet. RSVP: by 2/3 Kylie Lavars ph 08 9348 4175, fx 08 9325 1684, kylie.lavars@woodside.com.au

• **26/3–22/8 National Special Libraries section.** Committee meetings. Location: Room G2, Alexander Library Building, Perth, WA at 5pm on 26/3, 23/4, 28/5, 25/6, 23/7, 27/8, 24/9 and 22/10 in 1998. New committee members and/or observers/visitors to Perth are welcome. Contact Joyce Steveni ph 08 9366 4746, fx 08 9366 4779, stevenij@eec.com.au

• **2/4 WA Branch.** Mentoring soiree/information evening. 5.30pm for 6.00pm. Rosie O'Grady's, upstairs, 205 James Street Northbridge. RSVP: Margaret Jones ph 9360 2513 mjones@portia.murdoch.edu.au

• **8/4 WA Specials section.** Library of the Month — Water Corporation Library Information Services. Venue: 629 Newcastle Street, Leederville. Time: 5.30pm for 6pm. RSVP: Janet Megarrity ph 9420 2865, library@watercorporation.com.au

• **22/4 WA Specials section.** Intranet Forum. 3 guest speakers. Venue: Tiwest Joint Venture, Technology Park, Bentley. Time: 5pm–7pm. Cost: \$15 Specials, \$20 other ALIA members (includes refreshments). RSVP: Ling Heang ph 0418 941 861, heangsl@bigfoot.com. Payment must be received by 3/4/98

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