



rules. Also a feedback presentation from the conference. Contact: Jay Douglas, ph 08 8302 6773, jay.douglas@unisa.edu.au

- **18/10–13/12 SA Library Technician section [SALT].** *Committee meeting* dates: 18/10, 13/12. Venue: All these meetings are held at the Fleet Street Café, 162 Pulteney Street, Adelaide, 6 for 6:30pm meeting. Contact: SALT secretary, Jackie Williams, ph 08 8226 2890, fx 08 8226 2199.

- **2/11 SA Branch.** AGM. Details: tba.

- **5/11 SA Acquisitions section.** *Beyond the basics: Acquisitions in the new millennium.* Sunnybrae Restaurant and Function Centre, Cheese Room, Tikalara Street, Regency Park, 8:45am–4:30pm. ALIA members \$60, students \$40, registration includes lunch and refreshments. For program details contact: Jenni Jeremy, ph 08 8302 0318, fx 08 83020280, jenni.jeremy@unisa.edu.au

- **10/11 SA UCLRS AGM.** *Learning in the real world of libraries.* Representatives of our past UCLRS prize winners recount their experiences in the workplace as trainees, interns and employees. How did the Library and Information Studies course prepare them for librarianship? Barr Smith Library, Ira Raymond Room, 5:30 for 6pm. Contact: Carol Dungey, ph 08 8302 3413, tx 08 8302 3382, carol.dungey@unisa.edu.au

- **15/11 SA Library Technician section [SALT].** AGM. Venue: tba. Contact: SALT secretary, Jackie Williams, ph 08 8226 2890, fx 08 8226 2199.

- **24/11 SA Information Science AGM.** Details: tba. Contact: Sarah Hayman, ph 08 8333 8443, fx 08 8331 9211, sarah@ncver.edu.au

- **26/11 SA Cataloguers section.** AGM, preceded by a tour of the Central Store facility and demonstration of materials processing for the Store. Uni of South Australia, Underdale campus, 4pm.

- **1/12 SA Special Libraries section.** AGM and cocktails. House of Chow, 82 Hutt Street (Corner Wakefield Street), Adelaide, AGM 5:30–6pm, cocktails 6–7:30pm. SA Special members \$20, non-members \$25. For more information contact: Heather Layton, heather.layton@dsto.defence.gov.au

- **7/12 SA Acquisitions and SA RAISS.** Combined AGM. Bob Hawke Prime Ministerial Library, Room 418, City West Library, 5:30 for 6pm. Contact: Jenni Jeremy, secretary SA Acquisitions, 08 8302 0318.

- **8/12 SA Health section.** AGM. Details: tba.

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Online services for people with disabilities

Dr Kirsty Williamson, Information and Telecommunication Needs Research (ITNR) group, and Mr Larry Stillman, Network Services, State Library of Victoria

The challenges of providing online services for people with disabilities were discussed recently at the AccessAbility conference held at Monash University. Mr Larry Stillman from VICNET undertook most of the organisation for the conference. Representatives from every Australian state and from the Australian Capital Territory — more than seventy people in total — attended the conference.

The ten papers presented all focussed on projects funded by the AccessAbility program (Networking the Nation, Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts). Professor Don Schauder gave a very stimulating keynote address. He spoke about the information management perspective in relation to the AccessAbility projects. He described the mission of information management as: 'to help the development of organisations, communities and individuals by improving information flows and recorded memory'.

In his conclusion, Don noted that: 'The very conception of the AccessAbility program is a huge step forward. This conference demonstrates how much the program is valued, and how willing participants are to share and collaborate'.

Online services for people with disabilities in Australian public libraries

Monash University's Information and Telecommunication Needs Research (ITNR) group reported on the project 'Online services for people with disabilities in Australian public libraries' which is being conducted with Network Services (State Library of Victoria), and the Charles Sturt University.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics' recent *Survey of disability, ageing and carers* (1998) estimates that more than nineteen per cent of the population have a disability. Until now Australian libraries have done little to adapt the internet for use by people with disabilities. This two-year project aims to change this. The key objectives of the project are to select a core set of adaptive equipment, suited to people with a range of different disabilities for use in public settings; to develop related training packages; and to develop standards and policies to achieve appropriate levels of online public access for disability groups. We aim to include the full range of disabilities in the project: sight, motor, intellectual, and hearing, and any combination of these.

The project is funded by a generous

AccessAbility grant, along with money for adaptive equipment from the State Library of Victoria (through MultiMedia Victoria) and sponsorship from AAPT. The AAPT sponsorship should be greatly applauded, given that the major telecommunications companies are now involved in fierce competition which strongly influences the placement of their sponsorship dollars. It is hoped that AAPT's generosity will set a precedent for further sponsorship of this kind of project.

To date the researchers have conducted trials of adaptive equipment — hired at a very reasonable rates from Regency Park Rehabilitation Engineering in South Australia — in four different public libraries in Victoria and has included forty-three participants. During the project six more libraries, including Wagga Wagga City Library in New South Wales, will be involved.

The key techniques used to gather information are interviews and observation. Participants try out the standard equipment provided in public libraries, as well as at least one piece of adaptive equipment. The findings indicate that standard equipment is quite difficult to use for many people with disabilities. The study has also found that the heavily text-based format of the internet disadvantages a large proportion of people with intellectual disabilities who have low, or non-existent literacy levels. A paper detailing the findings so far is available from the office of ITNR (phone 03 9903 2322 or 03 9903 1083) or on the web at <http://www.sims.monash.edu.au>.

The adaptive equipment tested to date includes: Intellikeys, a large keyboard which comes with a selection of overlays suited to different types and levels of disabilities; Enhanced Internet Access (EIA), consisting of a touch screen, simplified browser, and pop-up keyboard which is compatible with popular web browsing software and offers access to websites, search engines and e-mail; Big Keys Plus, a keyboard with large bright-coloured keys; three different types of trackball, not all of which are satisfactory; and Opera, a flexible web browser which provides enlarged and enhanced text for people with vision impairments. While no individual piece of equipment suits all the disabilities encountered, both Intellikeys and EIA have performed very well.

If you would like more information about the project, please contact ITNR at the phone numbers listed above. ■