South Australian Branch

The South Australian Branch got a jump start on their activities for 1999 by holding a planning day at Flinders University Library late in 1998. The result of this planning day was a Branch plan for 1999.

To facilitate communication with members the Branch newsletter, *InterAlia* was published ten times, and in June the Branch commenced publishing an online version on ALIAnet. At the same time distribution of the print issues throughout the state has been enhanced by the use of three different courier systems which interlink workplaces for nearly 200 members. The Branch's web presence is also continually being developed and enhanced.

The Branch's successful group mentoring program was established and it had on average seventeen participants. The group is self-funded and self-organised by committees of three to five group members. ALIA membership is a prereq-uisite for involvement in the group. Although networking and education are undoubted benefits, the overwhelming consensus is that the greatest feature of the mentoring scheme lies in the informal section of the meetings.

A State Education Committee met and discussed education and training issues with representatives of the library school at the University of South Australia and the technicians course at the Adelaide Institute of TAFE. Staff at both institutions have been very generous with their time in attending meetings of the Branch and the several state sections. A much better understanding of education and training issues and needs has resulted.

The major event for 1999 was the state conference, 'Internet intoxication: excess, access and the whole damn thing', held at Clare in one of South Australia's major wine regions. For a report on the conference see below. ∎

Internet intoxication in Clare

South Australian Branch state conference

In October, ALIA (SA Branch) went to the Clare Valley in the heart of South Australia's wine country for the biennial state conference. The theme 'Internet intoxication: excess, access and the whole damn thing' addressed issues relevant to the profession and its client groups.

Jennefer Nicholson's opening address on internet content regulation illuminated her experiences of the legislative agenda and many politicians' unrealistic expectations of using technology or content regulation to control access to what they define as 'objectionable'.

After morning tea, three panelists covered diverse topics from the global to the local in a presentation on 'Censorship — whose web is it anyway?' The perception was that while Australia is looking to tighten restrictions, China's growing market and technological advancements are fuelling information demand, and previous restrictions on access to global information are easing. Internet access policies for local public, joint-use (community/TAFE/school) and school libraries were described, as well as the technical and philosophical difficulties inherent in the proposed Australian legislation.

The afternoon forum on professional issues covered the reshaping of the delivery of library studies education to librarians and library technicians in South Australia. Two mentorees from the ALIA group mentoring program reported enthusiastically on the positive outcomes from participating and networking with their peers and profes-sional colleagues. Jennefer Nicholson's clear explanation of ALIA's new CPD program inspired the audience to gain recognition and credit for involvement in a range of professional development activities.

Valmai Hankel's wonderful, humorous and informative account of the State Library of South Australia's extensive wine literature collection dating back to 1834 led us into her guided wine tasting to round out day one. Valmai expertly introduced us to several Clare varietals and to the etiquette of tasting and judging.

The 'Clare? Where? Library service at a distance session' opened day two and brought us back to reality. Three University students demonstrated their astounding perseverance in coping with the frustrations — including getting onto the internet and using e-mail — for study at a distance. Although Clare is only two hours' drive from Adelaide, they might as well have been on the moon! Their major lifeline was the highly valued support of the librarians they discovered in their search for help.

In 'Get off the internet and get a life!' four librarians entertained us with tales of the potential for getting a life on and off the internet. Professor Larry Amey (University of South Australia) summarised the highly successful conference and many delegates stayed on for the barbecue generously provided by the Clare Apex Club.

The formal sessions sparked off energetic discussions among the audience of sixty delegates from a variety of libraries. Joy Williams' conducted tour of the historic Clare Library with its newly installed internet PCs was very much appreciated.

Eleanor Whelan, Fiona Thomson, Ann Luzeckyj and Wendy Rutten, University of South Australia Library staff

Dr Suess meets the Clare conference...

If a conference is what you're craving
And you're really into raving
Come to Clare

Internet was the topic
It was sexy, censored, snappy
And the guest speakers did their institutions proud

Lucky prizes, lunch and tea, guest speakers
Tours, drinking all for 'free'?
Kept the delegates rolling in the aisles

Acronyms abound ALIA, CPD, PLAIN, POP
FDS, URL, BBQ and ISP

Embrace technology let it run!
But are we listening to the distance students lack
of fun!

Quite often librarians save the day
Problems of time, drop-outs, costs and fights
When all is said and done Reality Bites!

Accommodation wide and varied
Some stories good, some scary
Heaven and Hell would be appropriate here too

When all is said and done and the tally has been
run
Well done to an extraordinary, outstanding, over-
the-top, millennium highlight
ALIA conference NUMBER ONE!!

Wendy Rutten (University of South Australia Library) inspired by Gene Ziegler http://www.gsm.cornell.edu/staff/Gene/DrSeuss.HTML