

New Zealand Law Librarians' Conference

The 1998 NZLLG Conference was held in February at the Carlton Hotel in Auckland. Entitled *Challenges to Tradition: Law and Knowledge for the New Millennium*, the conference attracted a distinguished array of local and international speakers.

A strong and dedicated conference committee, capably convened by Jane Treadwell, produced a conference of a truly international standard, with some 250 delegates and an excellent trade show. Strategic, thought provoking and some controversial presentations were interspersed with practical papers, making it a conference from which everyone could take something away. For me, there were some real highlights.

BOB BERRING – PROFESSOR OF LAW AND LAW LIBRARIAN, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA.

Our dear friend, and I think to many in the profession, a mentor, graciously says he fondly remembers speaking at our conference in Melbourne and making so many friends in 1985! As usual, Bob gave a wonderful presentation entitled *Librarians in the 21st Century: Gatekeepers or Blacksmiths?*

A master orator, Bob held his audience captivated as he talked of his concerns of telecommunications companies merging with publishers and content providers, often with little regard for the quality of the information supplied, and the marketing of products by these suppliers directly to the end user. The role of the librarian in his view is changing. "We must help nurture those sources which are deserving, to judge what is deserving. We have to save our patrons from themselves. We must fight the battle of information integrity. If we do not, no one will."

CLIVE GRAHAM – THE CENTRE FOR WORKING FUTURES, SYDNEY.

Challenges to Tradition: The Future Law Librarian certainly challenged the comfort zone of many of the delegates. A futurist, Clive believes that the values society holds in the Information Age are in sharp contrast to those that sustained us prior to the end of the Industrial Age in 1975.

For the legal profession, Graham says, "... change is manifested in the cry for more global concepts of law and justice, concern at the increasing cost of law; and the consequences of individual technological access ..." Providing a thick coating of doom and gloom, law librarians are at the edge of an abyss, he said, and that the profession should take control of itself and stop trying to justify our jobs for fear of losing them.

On a more positive tack, Graham also said, "I perceive two major functions for the law librarian of the future: digital navigator and entrepreneur ... To be a law librarian in the 21st century requires that we forget everything we know about law and libraries in the Industrial Age". His closing remark: "I urge you to seize your future and make it happen now ... oh yes, and to lead, follow or get the hell out of the way!"

PROFESSOR HARRY ARTHURS – UNIVERSITY PROFESSOR AND PRESIDENT EMERITUS OF YORK UNIVERSITY, TORONTO.

In an entertaining presentation entitled *The Information Explosion: Power, Knowledge, Law and Libraries*, Professor Arthurs looked at the ways in which the explosion of legal knowledge has helped to redefine the profession's monopoly; caused a redistribution of power and a crisis of governance within the profession; altered the fundamental nature of legal knowledge as well as its production and dissemination; and transformed the world of law librarianship.

I particularly enjoyed his comment about how lawyers are currently dealing with the problem of knowledge

overload. He said, "... they ration their scarce resources of time and energy. They do this according to one of three principles: they know what they want to know, what they need to know, and what they can afford to know."

There are many excellent papers in the proceedings and I strongly urge you to look at them if you can. The papers are available through the Knowledge Basket on the Internet (<http://www.knowledge-basket.co.nz/kete/database.html>), and in what I believe was a first, the presentations were also recorded and made available on the Internet within an hour.

I have attended the NZLLG Conference for a number of years now and always come away feeling challenged and re-energised. Our colleagues across the Tasman share many of the same issues that we do, and in some areas have solved the problems with which we are still grappling. They are a strong, cohesive group of professional law librarians who have a voice within the legal profession and have been active contributors to a number of major initiatives for the New Zealand judiciary and legal profession.

Yet for many years, and for various reasons, the Australian Law Librarians' Group has shown indifference to a joint conference of any sort. I personally believe that both the Australian and New Zealand Law Librarians' Groups would benefit enormously from a closer relationship and would certainly be able to organise an exceptional conference for law librarians. I strongly encourage the respective convenors to start talking about this possibility and trust that we can work together to deal with the "challenges to tradition".

Yvonne Butler

The Information Source

1998 Law Librarians' Symposium

The Victorian Division of the ALLG will be hosting the 2nd Law Librarians' Symposium later this year. The Symposium will start on the evening of Wednesday 30 September with Welcome Drinks in the Supreme Court Library.

The formal program will commence on Thursday 1 October and will be held in the Pharmacy College, Monash University. The focus of the Symposium is "How to" with the emphasis on a practical approach to problems. Some of the sessions already organised include:

- a judge of the Federal Court speaking on native title;
- the Corporate Law and Economic Reform Program (CLERP);
- setting up an intranet;
- nationalisation, centralisation and how it affects library services;
- a practical approach to business plans; and,
- a panel session, where a variety of library users talk about their needs and how they feel libraries are addressing them.

The Symposium dinner will be held on Thursday night.

The Victorian Division is organising library tours on the Wednesday afternoon and a Train the Trainer workshop on Saturday 3 October for those who wish to stay.

As with the Inaugural Symposium, costs will be kept to a minimum to ensure that those who want to will be able to attend.

We look forward to seeing a large number of attendees at this year's Symposium, and hope that you all have it marked in your diaries and budgets.

James Butler

Librarian, Supreme Court Library (Vic)

Legal Information Standards Council (LISC)

As was reported in the December 1997 issue of the *Australian Law Librarian*, the Law Foundation of NSW, in conjunction with the Law Society of NSW and with the support of the NSW Attorney-General's Department has launched the Legal Information Standards Council.

The Council was set up to act as a communication forum for organisations publishing primary and secondary legal information, and has objectives including:

- to discuss and make recommendations for the co-ordination and provision of electronic legal information in New South Wales;
- to ensure that resources used in the delivery of online legal information are expended efficiently and effectively, to the best advantage of the providers of the information, and of the community who use it;
- to develop technical and publishing standards for electronic legal information delivery in NSW;
- to provide a forum for communication and collaboration amongst key NSW-based online legal publishers; and,
- to convene sub-committees within the Council for specific project responsibilities

MEMBERS OF LISC

To ensure maximum participation from players in the legal publishing market, the Council currently includes all primary legal publishers, and other parties interested in primary materials including Aunty Abha's, Australian Law Librarians' Group, Council for Law Reporting, Judicial Commission of NSW, Law Council of Australia and Parliament of NSW. In addition, organisations with a particular focus on secondary legal information and services include the Department of Fair Trading, the Legal Aid Commission of NSW, the Legal Information Access Centre, NSW Attorney-General's Department, National Association of Community Legal Centres and Redfern Legal Centre Publishing.

Librarians and the ALLG are represented through **Lisa Allen** from the Bar Association of NSW. Lisa can be contacted via email at lallen@fl.asn.au

COUNCIL WORKING PAPERS

Initial discussions identified various areas that could be addressed by the Council. As a result, the Council created two major streams: technical and community.

Within the technical stream two working parties have been established: Uniform Citation, and Format Standards.

These working parties are currently assisting the Council of Chief Justices Electronic Appeals Project by commenting on its draft recommendations report and ensuring the Project receives feedback from industry. The official report is due in March of this year with the recommendations being delivered at the AIIA Access to Technology conference. For more information on the CCJ Project, contact **Jo Sherman** at Queensland Law Foundation Technology Services on (07) 3835 1710 or via email to jsherman@themis.com.au.

The Uniform Citation working party is convening its first meeting to discuss the recent adoption of a medium neutral citation mechanism by the High Court of Australia. This new system includes paragraph numbering of all High Court judgments from 1 January 1998. For more information on the Uniform Citation group, please email **Philippa Seagrave** at LBC, Philippa.Seagrave@lbc.com.au. For more information on the High Court's new citation system, please see <http://www.hcourt.gov.au> or email **Tony de la Fosse** at tonyd@hcourt.gov.au.

The community stream has met twice to discuss issues of concern including accessibility implications for the disabled, the potential of communications technology for legal information and services distribution, and problems associated with identifying who the Australian Internet community market really is. The group has agreed that much more market and demographic research into the use of the Internet by the Australian community is required if Internet based legal information services are to be adequately targeted and delivered.

For more information on the community stream, contact **Simon Rice** at the Law Foundation on (02) 9299 5621 or email at srice@fl.asn.au.

A Web site for LISC is currently being developed. The address will be: <http://lisc.fl.asn.au>

Sandra Davey
Manager, Foundation Law

Proposed Merger Cancelled

On Tuesday 10 March 1998 it was announced that the proposed merger of Reed Elsevier, parent company of Butterworths and Wolters Kluwer, parent company of CCH had been cancelled.

The ALLG was invited to make a submission on the proposed merger and its affects on CCH and Butterworths. A report was submitted by the National President after input from many ALLG members around Australia. If anyone has any questions with regard to this submission they can contact **Cathryn Crowe** on (07) 3361 0330. Copies of the submission can be obtained from State Presidents.

Public Service Medal for Lorraine Weinman

Lorraine Weinman was honoured with the Public Service Medal (PSM) in the 1998 Australia Day Honour Awards. The medal was awarded for outstanding public service in establishing the Lionel Murphy Library in the Attorney-General's Department and for providing professional assistance to law libraries across the South Pacific. The citation for the award states:

Lorraine Weinman has been the key player in establishing the Lionel Murphy Library in the Attorney-General's Department as a resource that is recognised as one of the best law collections in Australia. Mrs Weinman has further distinguished herself by facilitating the establishment of libraries for other agencies within the Attorney-General's portfolio and her role in exporting Australian expertise

through the "twinned libraries" project, which has provided professional help to over twenty law libraries across the Pacific. Mrs Weinman has actively promoted the work of professional librarians in Government departments and agencies by contributing to the setting up of a classification structure for librarians and by maintaining networks between libraries across the Australian Public Service.

Congratulations Lorraine!

Do you need someone in Canberra who can supply answers?

Capital Monitor provides law librarians with information and document services tailored to their needs – policy statements, legislation, Hansards, speeches, publications and a highly experienced team to answer (or find out the answers to) those really tricky questions that partners ask.

Capital Monitor covers all the levels of information that makes the national capital tick – Federal, Commonwealth, State and ACT local government. Call Richard Griffiths on (02) 6273 4899 to discuss your needs. Before you do that, perhaps you should talk to some of your colleagues and other special librarians to get their assessment of the value of our services and our responsiveness.

Capital Monitor aims to provide whatever service law librarians need from Canberra. **Let's talk.**

CAPITAL MONITOR

Capital Monitor Pty Limited ACN 008 656 666

Press Gallery Parliament House Canberra

GPO Box 2891 Canberra

City ACT 2601

Telephone (02) 6273 4899 Fax (02) 6273 4905