

Letters

List of cancellations

IT IS OFTEN difficult for libraries to make decisions about cancelling serial titles on the basis of published union lists, because such lists show as closed entries only those titles which are actually no longer being received in the contributing libraries.

If, for example, Deakin University considers whether to cancel a title, and decides to do so on the grounds that the relevant union list shows that it is held at the University of Melbourne. Melbourne may have already decided to cancel its subscription, but the union list will probably not show this for at least a year until issues have stopped coming and the catalogue entry has been closed.

Victorian libraries are co-operating to produce a *List of notified serial cancellations*, which is intended to supplement the union lists, so that a Victorian library intending to cancel a journal can see if another local library has already initiated action which will result in the cancellation of that title. In all cases the *List* is concerned only with the cancellation of a particular institution's last subscription to a title, not with a reduction in the number of its subscriptions to that title.

The list is compiled at Deakin University Library from a computer program devised by Craig Hicks, Serials Librarian. Participating libraries produce lists of the serials they intend to cancel, and these are cumulated into one alphabetical list showing which titles are being cancelled and when the cancellation is expected to take effect. The list is updated every three months. Titles will be removed from the list when a library has stopped receiving issues, and has closed its entry in the relevant union catalogue.

The first list, in March 1980, contained 724 titles almost all cancelled by the University of Melbourne, ranging from *Acta hepato-gas-*

troenterologica and *Zeitschrift fuer Naturforschung to History today* and *Punch*. The third (in August) contained 1006. Double cancellations are already beginning to show up, for example, *Annals of public and co-operative economy*, *Annales de zootechnie*, *Journal of crystal growth*, all cancelled by both La Trobe and Melbourne; *Problems of the science of science* cancelled by both La Trobe and Monash.

The list should be useful to inter-library loans and serials librarians. The most dramatic effect so far has been to persuade academic staff, who formerly appeared reluctant to believe that financial restraint and rising prices would really cause cancellation of significant serial titles, that a real crisis in resource availability is pending when the cancelled titles actually stop coming a year or so from now.

Margaret Cameron Deakin University

Sears — alive and well

I FEEL I must comment on John McKinlay's article in *Incite* (no13, 1 August) on LASH, with particular reference to the use of Sears.

The South Australian Education Department School Libraries Branch centralised cataloguing system, SAERIS (which services all South Australian government schools, and, through the larger ASCIS project, some interstate and private schools) has subject authorities based on Sears.

While I have found a high degree of compatibility between these authorities and LASH, I would like to point out that Sears is alive and well, particularly in the school environment.

I have sent John McKinlay a list of differences between SAERIS and LASH, and I would endorse John's plea that he be sent *any* comments on Australian subject headings.

Noel Carthew

School Libraries Branch
SA Education Department

Films for the deaf

I WOULD like to reply to the perhaps accurate but somewhat unfair comments made by John H. Houghton on the National Library of Australia's *Films for the deaf* list (*Incite*, no11, 4 July 1980).

On its first page the list claims to be none other than one selected on the technical basis of 'absent or disposable sound'. The preface in fact says: *Films for the deaf* is a selected list of films suitable for those who suffer from severe to total hearing impairment. The films are either silent, sometimes with musical accompaniment, or subtitled or they contain minimal verbal information only.

The Library is totally aware of the limitations of the list. Indeed it was realised from the start that the preliminary list could only be a second best effort based on films already held in a collection geared to the needs of hearing people. The aim of the list was thus to introduce hearing impaired borrowers to the resources of the National Film Lending Collection and to provide them with at least some films of use to them, something no other film library in Australia has yet done.

However, the list also marked a starting point in the Library's plan to cater further for this special audience. To this end it is currently forming a viewing committee in Canberra of people able to view and select documentary film titles from a number of titles specifically captioned for the deaf.

Again this will not be a perfect solution since the titles available for selection represent a somewhat restricted sample of the films currently available for hearing audiences. But it will be a second and indeed a big step in this country on the way to providing film services to deaf audiences.

We regret then that our preliminary list may have raised expectations that it could not hope to meet and look forward to providing a more apt list of films sometime in the future.

Sue Terry

Film Lending Librarian, NLA

DATA CENTRE TO LIBRAMATIC: CHANGING THE PACE OF AUSTRALIAN LIBRARY SERVICE

This article traces the development over a period of 16 years of the major contribution to automation in Australian libraries.

The article is available in *LASIE* vol10, no2, pp19-29.

Copies are also available gratis on request to



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