

IN MEMORIAM: Mollie Thomson

MOLLIE THOMSON, Deputy Librarian of Macquarie University, died peacefully at home on 21 October 1980, after a long illness.

She had known that her illness was terminal and had been in hospital from time to time. Yet she had continued to come to work and as recently as the end of August she had attended the National Cataloguing Seminar in Melbourne, although she was too ill to take the active part that had earlier been arranged for her. She retained her involvement in and commitment to all aspects of librarianship to the end.

The citation for the distinction of Fellowship of the Library Association of Australia which had been awarded in recognition of her outstanding contributions to librarianship was read posthumously on 31 October at the Annual General Meeting of the Association and the award was handed to her husband, Mr Jim Falconer, privately, following the ceremony by the President, Denis Richardson.

Mollie Thomson made an outstanding contribution to the advancement of the practice and the profession of librarianship through her work in a number of library positions in Australia and North America.

After graduating from the University of Sydney with a Bachelor of Arts and Diploma of Education, Mollie was at first a high school teacher and then a teacher librarian before becoming a librarian at the State Library of New South Wales in 1951.

She trained primarily as a cataloguer to the highest standards of that library before becoming a cataloguer and reference librarian at Vancouver Public Library in 1954-58. She also worked as an indexer with the Canadian Library Association in Ottawa. She returned to Australia in 1958 and joined the staff of the National Library of Australia.

She returned to North America for ANL as New York Liaison Officer of the National Library of Australia 1960-63. While in New York she gained the degree of Master of Science in librarianship at Columbia University in 1963. Mollie Thomson became Head Cataloguer at the National Library in 1964.

After a brief period of service at Monash University, she was appointed to the newly established Macquarie University where she was successively Head Cataloguer 1966, Technical Services Librarian 1967 and following the death of the former University Librarian, Mr Barry Scott in January 1970, she was Acting Librarian. She was Deputy Librarian from 1971 until her death.

Mollie Thomson will be remembered with affection and admiration by all who knew her. Throughout her career in librarianship of over 30 years she was able to inspire library staff and administrators alike to believe that institutional, professional and national goals were achievable.

She was a librarian with technical skills and standards of the highest order in almost all aspects of librarianship. She was most generous in sharing her experience with others but



was modest and almost self-effacing about her own very great abilities. Those who were privileged to work with her will always treasure her wisdom, common-sense, and steadfastness and her helpfulness and care for the individual. These qualities were combined with vivacity and a zest for living, a sense of elegance and an appreciation of beauty and good design which exemplified her sense of proportion and her view of what was right.

Despite her wide-ranging library interests which included management staff development, audiovisual, school librarianship, reader education and reference work, Mollie Thomson's most abiding interest was cataloguing and more recently network development.

In 1977 she spent most of her study leave investigating network developments in North America and Britain. She spent several weeks at the Washington State Library, Olympia, studying the Washington Library Network system.

Her long experience as a cataloguer enabled her to recognise the importance of quality control function of authority files in networks at a time of changing cataloguing codes and integration of contributed entries from bibliographic agencies in a number of countries.

Mollie Thomson will always be remembered as a consummate cataloguer and as the epitome of the complete librarian. In the course of her career she had excelled in school, university, state and national libraries in Australia and in various professional capacities in North America where she will also be widely mourned. She has left it to others to continue to work for the attainment of a national bibliographic network, the vision of which she shared with so many of her colleagues who now mourn her loss.

Eoin Wilkinson

THE response rate to the questionnaire sent to library workers (see *Incite* no14, 15 August) has been encouraging with a return rate in excess of 60 percent. Analysis of this questionnaire using the SPSS software package and a Cyber 170-720 computer will shortly commence.

The second questionnaire, to employing authorities, has now been distributed. Work is proceeding on the third questionnaire which is to library schools. This questionnaire will be distributed in November. *Barrie Mitcheson*

THE staff at Christchurch Polytechnic Library Learning and Resource Centre invite all delegates from TAFE libraries who are attending the 1981 LAA/NZLA Conference to an informal get together at the Polytechnic Library on Monday, January 19 from 6-8 pm. This will give delegates a chance to meet before the UCLS seminar on the Friday. If you would like to attend the get together send a brief note to Marjorie Anderson, Librarian, Christchurch Polytechnic, PO Box 22-095, Christchurch, New Zealand.

People in The news

DR NEIL RADFORD has been appointed Librarian of the University of Sydney. Dr Radford was appointed Assistant Librarian (Reader Services) in 1973. In 1977 he was in addition appointed Deputy Librarian and has been Acting Librarian since July 1980.

HARRISON BRYAN, Director-General of the National Library of Australia has been elected a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia.

LESLEY SANGSTER has been appointed Information Services Librarian of the Barr Smith Library, University of Adelaide. Ms Sangster has had wide experience in Canadian research libraries and in work as a consultant. She replaces LILLEMOR ANDERSEN who retired at the end of 1979 after 42 years' service.

MARGARET CLINCH, Associate Head, Learning Resources Centre, Darwin Community College, has been seconded to the ANU North Australia Research Unit to prepare a comprehensive guide to NT research resources in NT collections.

The guide, to be published by the ANU, will be aimed at helping people in areas of NT research such as agriculture, economics, anthropology and geography as well as historical research.

'Before getting too far into preparing the guide, I want to contact as many people as possible who've been involved in library and archives related research into Territory matters', says Miss Clinch.

'I need to find out from them the practical difficulties involved in approaching research and their experience in locating and using resources which are either inside or outside the Territory,' she said.

Any wishing to help should contact Margaret Clinch, c/o PO Box 39448, Winnellie, NT 5789.

Small miscellaneous advertisements are accepted at the rate of \$2.50 per line, \$10 minimum.

FOR SALE *Arts and Humanities Citation Index*, 1977-1980 inclusive. Price negotiable. Contact in writing: Acquisitions Librarian, North Brisbane CAE, PO Box 117, Kedron, Qld 4031. Phone (07) 57 7077.

External Studies in Library and Information Science, Edited by Edward R. Reid-Smith. Papers from Australia, Scotland and South Africa. 136 pages. \$3.50 post paid from Office of Research in Librarianship, PO Box 744, Wagga Wagga, NSW 2650.

Freelance Library Services (Division of Muriel Mathers and Associates) provides a complete range of library staff for full-time, part-time, permanent and temporary jobs. Contact: Muriel Mathers, BA, DipEd, ALAA, 11 Harrison Cres., Hawthorn, Vic 3122. Phone (03) 861 8602.