

Women in librarianship

Susan Fisher made several important points in her letter on women in librarianship (*In-Cite*, January 28, 1983).

Indeed, the whole question of women's status in librarianship and what action we as an association take is a political one. And whilst the establishment of a Standing Committee on the Status of Women is, I believe, vitally important, so also is the getting together of concerned LAA members at the grassroots level for concerted action around this question. Only in this way can we ensure that the Standing Committee is properly informed of the central concerns of members and can itself be guaranteed of action on the issue at the local level.

A group convened at the request of General Council to make recommendations on the need for further investigation of this issue, met in Melbourne this week. It was unanimously decided that support be given to the original Library Workforce Conference resolution that a Standing Committee be established — rather than a *short term* committee as the resolution was interpreted by General Council. Considerable evidence already indicates the need for action to improve the status of women in the profession, and while ongoing research is important, action needs to be, and can be taken now to be-

gin to redress the situation. There are complex issues involved and even considering these optimistically, the process of change is going to be a long one. Only a Standing Committee established with a view to ongoing research and action can hope adequately to tackle these issues.

Discussion at the meeting also centred around how the general membership might become involved in the issue and a petition has now been sent to General Council requesting that a Special Interest Group on the Status of Women in Librarianship be convened in Victoria — already several ideas for possible action have been raised. Furthermore, it is understood that similar petitions are being prepared in other states, an expression of the concern and interest of members in this crucial issue.

Let's hope that with the establishment of a Standing Committee and the growth of Special Interest Groups in each state, we as an association can really begin to tackle the complex issues confronting us and so act to improve the status of women in librarianship.

Rhonda Small

10 February 1983.

Publicity for libraries

During the 22nd Biennial LAA Conference in Adelaide our library made valiant attempts to get one of the several radio stations in Adelaide, including the ABC, to organise a broadcasting session from the library.

Commercial station 'A' replied 'due to prior commitments we are not doing any outside broadcasts for the remainder of the year'.

Commercial station 'B' answered 'because of our complicated format, we are unable to accept your offer. We try to keep outside broadcasts to a minimum'.

ABC replied 'we are unable to accept your invitation as we have already committed our staff and facilities to another location'. (I never heard an outside broadcast from ABC during the conference week.)

However two months later almost every commercial radio and TV station in Adelaide vied with each other broadcasting from the new Hilton Hotel for a whole day each. The national ABC was there, of course.

Public libraries, who have very little funds to publicise their activities, cannot compete with multi-nationals like the Hiltons. The amount of publicity these radio and TV stations gave to the Hilton would easily be worth several hundred thousands of dollars; Hilton's clever PR men apparently found little difficulty in getting this publicity by throwing a few crumbs ranging from black-tie breakfast to midnight supper to our hungry and thirsty (not of knowledge) media personalities. Public libraries provide free service to everyone in the community and some free publicity to them will not hurt any of these commercial stations and least of all the ABC who is supported by every Australian's tax money as are these libraries.

S.L. Pathi

Munno Para Public Library

February 2, 1983

E. Morris Miller

I am gathering material for a thesis on Morris Miller's contribution to Australian librarianship, and would be grateful for any of his correspondence or personal papers, as well as readers' recollections of Miller at any stage of his varied career. When necessary or if requested to do so, material will be photocopied by me and returned immediately.

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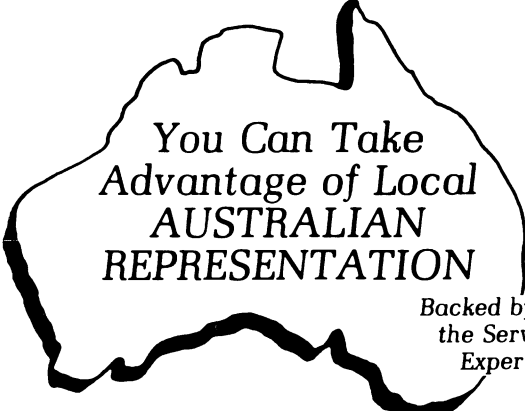
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