



The race has ended for Maria

MARIA GEMENIS has run her race. She died in Prince Henry Hospital on Tuesday, 1st February 1983 after suffering a stroke on Christmas Day from which she never regained consciousness.

It was a quiet and premature end to a vibrant personality and a practical and energetic librarian.

Maria was born on 23rd November 1944. She entered librarianship via the Commonwealth Public Service as a librarian in training and graduated from the University of NSW with a Diploma of Librarianship in 1967. In September of that year she became Librarian of the Department of Works Library (now the Dept. of Transport and Construction). She later became Data Services Manager and lastly Information Services Manager in charge of the Library, Trade Information and Plan Records Sections.

Maria joined the Library Association of Australia in 1967. As an enthusiast for Special libraries she made a distinctive contribution to the Specials section. She joined the Committee in 1975, serving as Chairman from 1976-mid 1979 when she and her husband, John Cruikshank, moved to London. She rejoined the Committee on her return to Sydney in January 1980 and continued to work tirelessly for Specials. Most recently, she will be remembered for the series of lunchtime visits which she organised in libraries throughout the city and particularly for her 'Address to a brick wall' (which she wrote in 1977 to encourage member participation), and for the innovative seminars she began. She was greatly concerned about small special libraries and the isolation of their librarians and it was always her aim to decrease that isolation.

The committee found her a creative leader and a supportive member with a concern for seeing that no one carried too great a load and that she did more than her fair share. She had a great concern for people and at general meetings she actively sought the lonely or the new and encouraged them in their involvement. She was a thinking person who articulated what she thought without ever giving offence.

Maria did not restrict her activities to the Special Libraries section - she was too energetic, capable and creative for that and championed Specials in the much wider context of NSW Branch Council, AACOBs, ACCESS and TAFE. She served as Treasurer of Branch Council from 1977-1978 and did much to help Branch Council recognise that special librarians did have special needs which until then, in the wider LAA context, had largely gone unheeded.

As a long standing member of ACCESS, Maria became concerned about librarians in isolation, and she realised that the Special Libraries Section was not, at that time, catering to their needs. This is how her involvement with the Section began.

In AACOBs Maria is remembered for her pragmatic approach to problems and her concern for users of library services, while her concern for the quality of the profession led to her participation on the Library Practice Certificate Advisory Committee.

Maria loved life and although she devoted so much of her time to libraries she still had

time for many other activities. She was an active participant in marathon running and in 1982 won the Sydney to Blacktown marathon. She and her husband John loved skiing and skied not only in Australia but also in the U.S.

Maria will be remembered by all who knew her as a warm, lovable person, always delightful to talk to, always helping people, always looking attractive, elegant and beautifully dressed. A person whose lovely laugh and slight irreverence will be sorely missed.

You could see her at lunchtime, a lithe, attractive tan and white streak of vitality, bounding up Bent Street on her way to Rose Bay and back! It was a social jog with a smile here, a wave there and the camaraderie of the road. Maria enthused about the enjoyment and fellowship of life.

No one can say everything about Maria, but we will all have our own special memories.

Past and present members of the NSW Special Libraries Committee.

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