

IFLA — 1988

THE RECENT letters in *InCite* and *ALJ* reflect a concern held by some members about the decision of General Council to host the IFLA conference in conjunction with the LAA Biennial in Sydney in 1988. There will doubtless be further letters indicating members' thoughts, worries or concerns on this issue. It is likely that some will be positive in tone and will even support the decision of General Council. Continuing negative criticism appearing in the Association's journal is a worry as it will not assist the LAA's international image.

The decision to support IFLA begins as early as 1981 with a letter from the Western Australian Branch offering to host the IFLA conference. Since that time the membership of both General Council and the Executive has changed significantly so I don't believe the conspiracy theory of 'Council . . . being manipulated'. There, fortunately for the Association, is a corporate responsibility in both groups which is more conducive to the democratic process than the activity of 'knocking' the LAA. It appears that some members elect their officers but don't trust them to do the job for which they were elected. Similarly with this time frame, I find Mr Bower's surprise a little hard to understand.

The only concern with any validity relates to cost. It is hoped that some form of external funding might be forthcoming. However, the budgeting so far has excluded this. Funds from any source will be a bonus and will mean that delegates have to pay less. Despite some thoughts to the contrary, the Executive and Council are responsible bodies which would exert some brake to avoid any possibility of bankrupting the Association.

Allegations relating to running a 'second rate conference' are insulting to any member of the Association who has helped in the organisation of a biennial conference. In fact, the LAA has a proven track record in the organisation of large conferences — why should IFLA be any different? We probably underestimate the ability of Sydney and Australia to capture the interest of international visitors.

Barrie Mitcheson
Past President, LAA

Conference causes Council consternation

AN APPLICATION for time off to attend the LAA/NZLA conference in Brisbane in August made news in the Hervey Bay *Observer* recently.

Sandra Maynes, librarian for Hervey Bay City Council applied for permission to attend the conference, but the fact that it lasted for five days caused some consternation to the councillors, the *Observer* reports. 'That's longer than any other conference this council has been involved with before' said one councillor, and it was suggested that perhaps Ms Maynes could attend for only part of the conference, or perhaps it might include a weekend.

One councillor offered the suggestion that the length of the conference might be due to the fact that it would be attended primarily by

CHILDREN'S BOOK AWARD FINALISTS

BOOK OF THE YEAR

These are the finalists for the CBC Award for 1984:

The winners will be announced at the beginning of Children's Book Week which is from 21-28 July.

Max Dann: *Bernice Knows Best*. OUP.
Helen Frances: *The Devil's Stone*. Omnibus Books.

Lee Harding: *Waiting for the End of the World*. Hyland House.

Robin Klein: *Junk Castle*. OUP.
Robin Klein: *Penny Pollard's Diary*. OUP.
Robin Klein: *People Might Hear You*. Penguin.

Ivan Southall: *The Long Night Watch*. Methuen.

Frank Willmott: *Breaking Up*. Collins.
Patricia Wrightson: *A Little Fear*. Hutchinson.

PICTURE BOOK OF THE YEAR

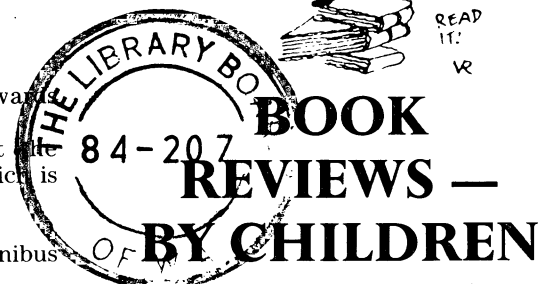
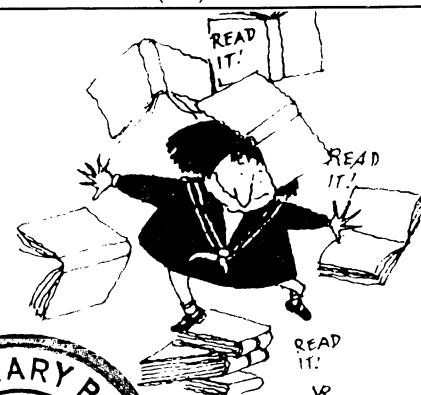
Pamela Allen: *Bertie and The Bear*. Nelson.
Judith Crabtree: *The Sparrow's Story At The King's Command*. OUP.

Ann Coleridge: *The Friends of Emily Culpepper*. Fivemile Press.

Mem Fox: *Possum Magic*. Omnibus books.
Christobel Mattingley: *The Magic Saddle*. Hodder & Stoughton.

Junko Morimoto: *The White Crane*. Collins.
Jill Morris: *The Boy Who Painted The Sun*. Penguin.

Percy Trezise & Dick Roughsey: *The Magic Firesticks*. Collins.



To mark Children's Book Week, this issue of *InCite* contains a section of reviews by children of a selection of books, generously donated by a number of publishers.

The children responded well and a selection of their reviews appears in the centre section.

Among the contributing publishers was the Women's Movement Children's Literature Co-operative Ltd., generally known by the easier-on-the-tongue name of Sugar and Snails.

They have produced a book list of non-sexist children's books, with a new edition to roll off the presses in September, and they examine their reasons for looking at the question of sexism in children's books, and why children's books are important.

A lot of really good articles have been written about the extent of sexism in children's fiction and text books. Here we are taking sexism in children's books — greater representation of male characters and more positive action for them, presentation of women as passive, limited to a few careers, and so on — for granted. The point can be proved: it's time to work out what we can do to change this state of affairs.

Feminist groups in England, America and Australia are writing their own children's books. (There's a special section on them in the list.) But even if you tracked them all down, a child could read them in a fortnight or so: that's part of the alternative, but not the whole. Then for parents and friends reading aloud, or for teachers with their classes there's the age old alternative of changing the pronouns — "And then the famous cowgirl lassoed the villain and . . ." — or criticizing the text — "Hands up those who think Alec D'Urbeville's a male chauvinist." A third possibility is to isolate out those books already written which present situations from a feminist perspective, whether their writers considered themselves to be feminist or not. And that's what this book list is doing.

There's a great deal more thought provoking, interesting material, and the list, which will be reviewed in its new edition, would be useful for anyone interested in children's literature. Sugar and Snails have plenty of stocks of the old edition available at \$1.00 per copy, plus postage, and the new edition will be \$4.00. From Sugar and Snails, PO Box 276, Hawthorn Vic 3122.