

Community Information Week 21–28 September, 1984

For the second year, NSW is having a Community Information Week, and various activities will take place in many parts of the State. The idea emanated from the students of the first short course for Community Information Officers held at Sydney Technical College under the direction of the School of Library Practice in November/December, 1982. Most of the participants were newcomers to the collection and organisation of information and were working in Community Information centres of various kinds.

When the students held a follow-up meeting in March 1983 all were concerned that when they had gone back to their agencies, and tried to put what they had learned into practice, restricted hours of work and pressures in their centres meant that they faced an impossible task.

Their common frustration at this resulted in a decision to run a Community Information Week, with two aims: to make the services they operated better known, and to draw to the attention of government at all levels the important role of information services in enabling citizens to obtain information they need.

This year CIW will be sponsored by the newly formed Community Information Development Association, which stemmed from co-operative experiences in organising last year's week. In 1983 centres, libraries and specialist information services combined to run successful programs in a number of areas, and a Sydney Seminar on 'The Right to Know'.

The first Community Information Service in Australia was set up in Adelaide in 1958, twenty years after the world's first centre was established in Britain where there were 900 centres by 1945.

Since 1975 there has been a good working relationship between community information centres and librarians, particularly those working in public libraries. Libraries and centres are seen as complementary and beneficial to both sides. The input of library skills is a very valuable resource for centres, either as part of the staff team or as a consultant. However in only a very few centres are librarians part of paid staff.

In CIW last year there were a number of joint programmes and the co-operation of all information workers helped to make an effective impact. One of the recommendations in the CIW Kit circulated in early July was for setting up a local or regional CIW Committee including as many of the community information workers in the area as possible.

We certainly hope for some special interest by Public Library staff, especially from Community Information Librarians, and from School Librarians who are in an excellent position to tell their students about information services which will be useful to them in the adult world.

CIDA is at 104 Bathurst Street, Sydney, PO Box A109 Sydney South, 2000. (02) 267 8022. Membership is open to non-profit community organisations and individuals with a responsibility for or an interest in these services.

Hope Clayton



Shorelink comes alive!



Lane Cove went live on August 13, the first of the five lower North Shore libraries on the Shorelink system to do so.

Manly follows on September 12, with Mosman and Stanton later in the month. Willoughby has not yet named the day.

The Shorelink bibliographic database is now approaching 250,000 records with 50,000 borrowers registered. Staff are predicting that the number of borrowers will double over the next few months.

Shorelink staff have entered all the records on to the system from shelf list and registra-

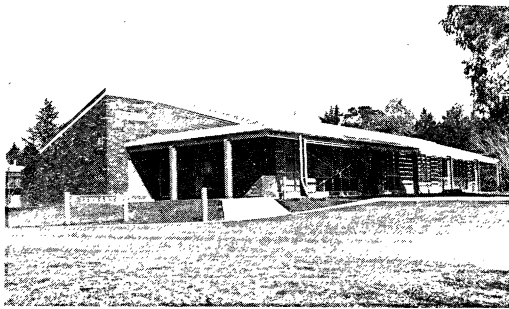
One of Lane Cove's youngest borrowers looks with interest at the Shorelink system.

tion cards.

The Shorelink logo is another example of the hard work and co-operation among librarians involved in the network. The idea was developed by reference librarians from the five libraries and given artistic form by Sylvia Swasbrick of Stanton Library.

As well as enabling users to borrow books from all the participating libraries, the NCR computer system used for Shorelink will also provide a wide range of community information.

CSIRO library in global system



The library at CSIRO's Chiswick research station was officially opened on July (27) by Mr Barry Jones, Federal Minister for Science and Technology.

In his opening speech Mr Jones predicted a global library system giving people access to information on virtually any subject. He said that the impact of such a system on society

would be profound and that the task confronting librarians was to devise systems that would enable the satellite-computer link to locate information rapidly and precisely.

Although there was a natural tendency to think in terms of some vast, centralised electronic library, Mr Jones said, assembling something of great value in a single location makes it vulnerable. He said that it was more likely that individual libraries would have areas of specialisation 'sign posted' by a master game. He pointed out that the new Armidale library was already a major reference library for veterinary science, pasture production and livestock parasitology and immunology.

The centralisation of knowledge and expertise was a major factor in the centralisation of human populations in large cities. People would decentralise when knowledge became decentralised — and such a trend was already evident today.

Librarians would play a major role in the information revolution that was replacing the printed word with the electronic word.