THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

This is the last column I will be writing for *InCite* as President. It has been a great pleasure to have been able to serve the Association in this office in the last year, and I have very much enjoyed meeting so many members at the LAA-NZLA Conference in Brisbane and elsewhere in Australia. The Association is dependent upon the heavy involvement of so many members at all levels in our activities, and I have been pleased to experience the enthusiasm and commitment which they bring to our work.

In some ways finishing a year as President of the LAA seems like the end of a marathon race. I have a sea of jumbled impressions and, like other Past Presidents to whom I have spoken recently, realise I have not achieved many of the things I wanted to. Nonetheless I am very pleased to have been involved in the establishment of the Corporate Plan and Review Committee, and look forward to working with many of you on this review in the next twelve months. I am also very pleased at the results of the Document Delivery Conference which the LAA hosted in Canberra last week. This is not only because there was overwhelming support for all the resolutions at the meeting, but because I believe it will lead to significant long-term improvements in document delivery in this country.

Like many others I am also delighted that General Council and AACOBS have both resolved to give a high priority to a long-term campaign towards achieving Australian Government involvement in public library funding. This will be extremely difficult to achieve, and will require the committed involvement of a significant number of our members if we are to be successful.

I remain concerned that we need to develop more effective mechanisms for involving members at all levels in policy development on behalf of the Association. Clearly this requires a level of expertise and knowledge which is, on occasion, restricted to members with suitable background experience but I believe that we can and should widen the opportunity for all members to involve themselves in our affairs. I also believe, no matter what else we do in the next few years, that we have to strengthen our institutional membership base. It is slightly ludicrous, for example, that Government Ministers in some States regularly receive deputations on public library matters from the LAA when the majority of public libraries do not consider membership financially worthwhile. The Association has taken some risks in the decision taken in August to remove restrictions on 'voucher only' membership, and we will be very dependent upon the commitment of present institutional members to remain with us in the next few years.

As President of the Association I am perhaps more aware than other members of how dependent we are upon the dedicated service of our staff. Jenny Adams took over the position of Executive Director at the beginning of the year, and is already very well known to many of our members. It continues to astonish me how much work she and all other LAA House staff are able to achieve, and we are very much in their debt. This year saw the resignation of Judith Hill, who had been our energetic Industrial Officer for some years, and of Merilyn Bryce. Merilyn was the first Continuing Education Officer, and General Council in deciding to further develop the continuing education programme under different arrangements was nonetheless very conscious of how much her work has helped clarify the potential of continuing education programmes.

As I said earlier, I have very much enjoyed the opportunity to work with so many of you in the Association this year. It has required considerable forbearance and understanding from my colleagues in the Library Council of Victoria, for which I am of course grateful. Ron Davis takes over the helm in 1985, and I am sure he will receive the same strong support from so many members for which I have been grateful.

W.M. Horton
President

Inserts in this issue

All issues of *InCite* should contain an insert from ACHPIRST and the 1979 Index to the *Australian Library Journal*. NSW issues will also contain the School Libraries Section Newsletter.

LAA SIGNS UP FOR ACIMAIL

The Library Association of Australia has become a member of the ACIMAIL service. LAA has been on-line for some months and has been using the service on a limited basis to communicate with members of the Executive Committee. Now that we are more conversant with its use, we are willing to communicate through ACIMAIL with any of our members and guarantee to look at our mailbox every day.

If usage of ACIMAIL is successful it may pave the way for the LAA to offer more services to its members via a computer terminal, e.g. on-line ordering of vouchers, publications, etc. would be amongst the first services to be considered.

For those members who do not have access to a computer terminal, don't worry, the LAA will still be dealing by mail and telephone!

Jenny Adams
Executive Director