INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND IFLA — CHICAGO 1985

Spare a kind thought for the work of the Standing Committee of IFLA's Section on Information Technology. On a budget of around $1,000 they hold two short meetings each year to focus the cerebral capacity of 20 of the world's most productive librarians on many of the major issues facing librarianship.

The Standing Committee, meeting in Chicago this month, will consider the 1986–91 Medium Term Programme. And it could hardly be more practical and relevant to Australia:

- the development of network systems;
- co-ordination and planning in the inter-section of computing and telecommunications;
- barriers to world-wide availability of bibliographic and location data; and
- cost-effective implementation of optical disks, microcomputers, videotex/teletext, teletex and electronic publishing.

The theme of the 1985 IFLA Conference is 'Libraries and the Universal Availability of Information', and the Section has organised supporting sessions. Cynthia Durance, from the National Library of Canada, and Sally McCallum from LC will present papers on OSI — interlinking heterogeneous library systems and networks. Given the distribution of Australia's population centres, plus cost pressures for resource-sharing, the Open Systems Interconnection Model, an ISO standard since 1983, is as important for our networks as the unit card was for our catalogues.

Last year in Nairobi the Section arranged a session on a new portable, microcomputer library management package called IV + V. (Further developments just reported in *IFLA Journal*, vol.11 [1985], no.2) This year Stephen Flood from Aslib will cover software evaluation for minis and micros, and the ubiquitous Ken Dowlin from Pikes will deliver his sermon from the Peak on the electronic library.

Since ACI can find no urgent business to transact in Chicago this August, I won't be going to IFLA. But Marianne Broadbent will, and I look forward to her report in *InCite* to confirm my view that in the field of technology assessment for libraries, the Section is exceeding its objectives.

Ian McCallum
Vice-President
LAA Representative, IFLA Standing
Committee on Information Technology

NEW SERVICE TO MEMBERS DIAL 008-22 1481 FOR TOLL-FREE ACCESS TO HEAD OFFICE

We are pleased to announce that the LAA has now installed a toll-free phone service to allow members to contact Head Office for the cost of a local call.

The service is currently on a trial basis and will be available for a two hour period each day.

Local access times are:
Western Australia 9-11 am
All other areas (except Sydney metropolitan) 10 am-12 noon.
Sydney metropolitan area calls may be made by dialling 692 9233.

Inserts can go out with each issue of *InCite*, but book early! For more information phone Jenny Menzies on (02) 692 9233.

A FIRST FOR STATE LIBRARY (NSW)

The State Library of New South Wales has become the first library in Australia to purchase a Kurzweil Reading Machine. The Kurzweil, which cost $51,000, is the most advanced system in the world for reading ordinary print materials aloud to blind and print handicapped people.

The Premier of NSW, the Hon Mr Neville Wran QC, MP, officially introduced the Kurzweil Reading Machine on 23 July, 1985 in the Dixson Gallery of the State Library of New South Wales.
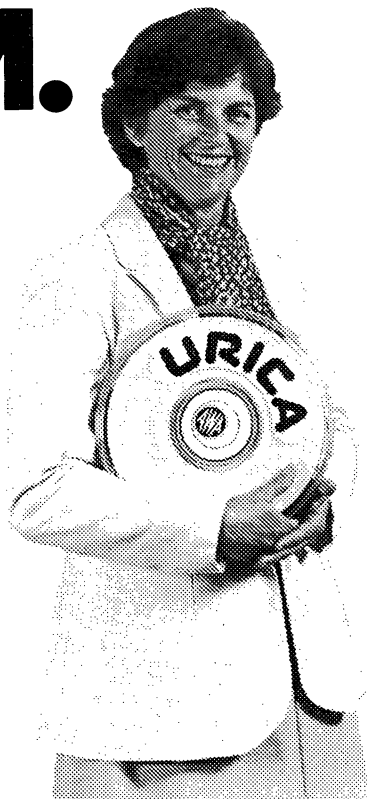
The Community Services Librarian, Valerie Moon, said that the Kurzweil was purchased as part of the continuing development of library services to people with disabilities, and that it will have great significance for blind and print handicapped people by opening up access to the wide range of print materials held in the State Library collections and through its availability to read print items from other sources. The Kurzweil Reading Machine has been acquired to form part of a Special Needs Centre planned for the new State Library building due to be completed in 1988.

Closing date extended for Study Grant applications.
The closing date for applications for LAA Study Grant Awards for 1986 has been extended to 30 September. For details of the awards see the notice accompanying this issue of *InCite*.