

We and they, them and us; Point the finger, make a fuss; Pull apart and not together — Enough! Do you wonder whether We will even have a future

If our own we cannot nurture?

Okay, you may think it's doggerel. But the point is not trivial. Your peripatetic President is picking up negative attitudes towards the LAA as a whole and towards individual members. Current demands on our time and energy are quite enough without further dissipation into personal bickering.

Librarianship is a service profession. Our function is to meet the needs of those who fund us. And since we usually spend taxgenerated revenue to provide our services, we are publicly accountable for our actions.

How then can we impart to our customers the confidence to expect or request our assistance if we do not have confidence in our employers, our Association, our colleagues, or even ourselves?

We all like to be considered 'professional' indeed we've even constructed an objective test for determining which members meet the 'professional' criterion. Whilst such fine discrimination might have been necessary in the bad old days when we struggled for credibility and sought respectability through standards and qualifications, times have changed. Our customers now pronounce on our professionalism. And they judge us by our actions. If the service is good, it's professional; if it's bad, it's amateurish.

Amateurs snipe at their Association without bothering to understand its operational constraints. Amateurs take pot shots at their employers and at each other without acknowledging their inter-dependence. Amateurs are blind to the significance of the only activity which really counts — individual or collective service provision.

Try not to be an amateur. Don't tell me that your qualifications and experience are better than mine, or hers, or his. So what? I'm much more interested in what you do and how well you do it. Do you create goodwill or trauma with your customers? Do they keep coming back, and do they bring their friends? Do you rate as an ambassador or as an apologist for librarianship?

And what if you speak as an organisation rather than as an individual? Are you mindful of the objectives of the institution and attentive to the needs of your supporters? Are you prompt and efficient in disseminating and assimilating information? Is your own house in order — or do you find it easier to identify disorder in others?

Right now it's appropriate to consider the basics: managers manage; librarians serve; and Associations cater to the needs of all their members.

Doggerel?

Ian McCallum President

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DARWIN CONFERENCE

Continued

ual brasserie-style chic; the Take Away shop for meals in a minute.

The Darwin Performing Arts Centre is an in tegral part, architecturally at least, of the larger Darwin Centre which comprises the Beaufort Hotel, office block and convention centre. The Centre, with a 1070 seat play house and 250 seat open space theatre, will be home for most performing arts events in Darwin.

All keynote addresses will take place in the Performing Arts Centre, as well as several other large functions such as the James Ben nett lecture by Thomas Keneally. The large exhibition, which is shaping up to be excitin and futuristic, will span two floors of the Beaufort Centre.

Three other venues for the conference arspread within a one kilometre radius of th Beaufort Centre — the Sheraton Hotel, th Travelodge and the Hotel Darwin Conventio Centre. Most of the concurrent sessions an AGM's will be at these locations. All are within short walking distance of the tropical Centra Mall and shopping area, and are flanked by shady parkland and Darwin harbour views.

In future editions of *InCite* we will be high lighting a selection of the conference speaker and their papers, together with more information on the exciting exhibition. Meantime, note about the printing of our programme anregistration form. Unfortunately the price quoted for the Social Programme are differen on the grey coloured registration form fror the white coloured Programme Brochure Please use the prices quoted on the white Prc gramme Brochure in all cases.

Janet Marti Publicity and Public Relation

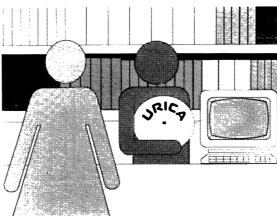
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