

FEEDBACK

SA BRANCH

In mid-May a small delegation from the South Australian Branch met with the Minister of Local Government, Ms B Wiese MLC, who has responsibility for public libraries and the State Library. Although the meeting was in some ways untimely, being the day after the announcement of the mini-budget with its foreshadowed drastic cuts in funding to the states, a number of issues were explored satisfactorily.

Topics covered included specific aspects of the recent Review of Library Services in South Australia, problems concerning the funding and staffing of school community libraries and the State Information Policy.

The Minister agreed that implementation of PLAIN (Public Libraries Automated Information Network) was of the highest priority and stated that ways of sharing costs were being investigated to overcome the current freeze on new initiatives. In respect to the State Information Policy, the Minister took on notice the Branch's terms of reference and proposed membership of a state committee, while pointing out that a consultant in her Department is currently examining community information needs.

A further meeting is to be held in November when details of the State Budget and its implications for libraries in South Australia are known.

Anne M. Hazell
Vice-President

MEDICAL LIBRARIES SECTION

Conference update



Details have already been published in *InCite* of two overseas speakers, Dr Julie Virgo and Fiona Mackay Picken, coming to the 7th Biennial Medical Librarians' Conference to be held in Adelaide from 13-17 September 1987. They are heading an impressive list of local speakers, amongst them Dr Norman Swan (above). Dr Swan is well-known to Australians as the presenter of the popular ABC program, 'The Health Report'.

Dr Swan is a doctor of medicine with post-graduate qualifications in paediatrics, and still practises one day a week. However, five years ago he secured a job as a producer with the ABC Science Unit, working on documentaries with that unit. Two years ago he proposed the idea of 'The Health Report', and it has since become one of the most popular and respected programs on ABC radio. It is not so much a health education program, as a medical news program and a forum for discussion on new issues in medicine and debate on public health. Dr Swan says that it should inform people enough to allow them to think critically about health issues. It has often broken stories months before they are taken up by other media.

The scope of the material covered by 'The Health Report' and Dr Swan's experience as a doctor, as an interviewer and radio producer should make him a most interesting speaker. His paper will be entitled 'Communicating the frontiers of medicine to the public'.

The final program and registration forms for the Conference are now available, and many have been distributed. For further information or for a program and registration form, please contact Muriel Ellis, Conference Manager, PO Box 753, Norwood, S.A. 5067 (08) 332 4068. We look forward to seeing you in Adelaide in September.

Margaret Russon
Conference Steering Committee

VICTORIAN BRANCH

AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the Branch was held on 20 May. The major business for the evening was a discussion of the implications of the reports on the funding of municipal libraries in Victoria. It was resolved that the Branch reaffirm its policy of support for free public libraries.

At the conclusion of the business, Mary Ronnie, formerly New Zealand National Librarian and Dunedin City Librarian (now a lecturer at Monash University) spoke about her experiences in public libraries. She spoke glowingly of the quality of service and the strength of the collection at Dunedin in a library system totally funded by the municipality. When Mary first began working at Dunedin as a schoolgirl, the library already saw itself as an information service, and by the late 40s it was serving schools and hospitals!

The audience of about 50 enjoyed some delightful tales but they also listened to plenty of good advice. Two points of particular note were that a public library should house the very best material on its shelves and make no attempt to raise its loans deliberately by stocking popular junk, and that subscription libraries should be avoided at all cost — those who pay dictate on purchases and expect to have major influence on policy.

Coming soon

The Branch has become very conscious of library images and the need to develop planning skills and as a result a one day seminar on 'Changing perceptions and attitudes to libraries' is planned for July. Watch *InCite* for full details.

Ray Price

CHILDREN'S LIBRARIES SECTION (VICTORIA)

Hard Times Hard Decisions Seminar

The proposed \$2mil funding cut for public libraries by the Victorian State Government prompted the Children's Libraries Section to hold a seminar *Hard Times, Hard Decisions* on Saturday, 9 May 1987, at Northcote Library to review children's services in the state and set priorities and objectives. Needless to say, not all of this was achieved in one day, and it is proposed that a number of follow-up seminars be held.

The 35 participants were all Children's Librarians at a managerial level or chief librarians, and there was an emphasis on participation, workshops and brainstorming. To this end, a reading kit had been circulated some time before the seminar, which included articles such as 'What you want the future to be . . . children's services and library administrators' by F. William Summers (*SLJ* Oct. '77), or 'An administrator speaks of services to youth' by P. M. O'Brien (*Top of the News*, Spring '81): in all, some 11 articles laid the groundwork.

The seminar opened with papers given by Sophie Athan, Manager of Library and Information Services for the City of Northcote, and Carmen Hannaker, Regional Librarian at Moonee Valley Regional Library. Ms Athan stressed the importance of libraries being visible and relevant to their communities, meet-

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ing their informational and cultural needs, and also outlined some ways of supplementing funding through grants and submissions.

Ms Hannaker commented on the Sylvia Geddes Libraries Review Report on library funding, and its possible implications, and concluded with some challenging questions such as 'What is our role as public librarians?', 'Why should public libraries be free?' 'How do we *really* know that children who use public libraries today are the users of tomorrow?'

These rhetorical questions set brains working and the rest of the day was spent in workshop discussion. The first topic was 'The role of children's library services today and in the future', led by Margaret Aitken from the Consultancy and Public Libraries Service: much of the discussion centred around current services and whether these were also provided by others in the community. Following this, the topics were: 'Setting our priorities; knowing your community and goals, objectives and evaluation', after which Bronwyn Keane, from Peninsula Regional Library Service, and Dianne Bambra, from Lillydale Library Service, shared their experience of program budgeting.

A questionnaire is now being circulated to participants, which is intended to draw together some of the detailed information on library services discussed at the seminar, and to ascertain those subjects and issues which need further discussion. The latter will be taken up over the next 12 months and should affect children's library services in Victoria in the years to come.

Irene McGinnigle,
President

NSW BRANCH

Interlibrary lending seminar

In the second half of 1987 NSW Branch Council will hold a seminar on interlibrary lending. This seminar was postponed in November 1986 because the SAIL report results were not available. At this stage a definite date cannot be given but the seminar will be held as soon as practicable after the SAIL Report and its author, Andy Exon, are available. For further details please contact, Rosemary McLauchlan (02) 227 3769.

UCLS NSW BRANCH

UCLS' second meeting for '87 was held on a very challenging and thought-provoking issue 'Development of a Disaster Plan for Libraries'. It is only very recently and especially since the National Library fire, that librarians have been seriously prompted to constructively prepare for the many, very real hazards which could be faced.

Ann Pederson, Lecturer in Archives and Conservation, University of New South Wales identified the threats, hazards and vulnerabilities to be guarded against and provided examples of checklists which could be used for prevention, minimisation and recovery measures.

Janine Schmidt, from the State Library of NSW provided a practical case study report, outlining the progress of their Disaster Management Committee. A disaster plan manual has been compiled, covering disaster recognition and reaction guidelines and is available to interested librarians for \$10. The practical measures already taken were outlined, including the placing of disaster bins throughout the Library.

The first UCLS meeting was held on 6 April on the controversial topic of 'ILL costs and charges: implications for our users'. The speakers included Rob Brian who outlined the University of NSW rationale behind its recent increases, Helen Woodward gave the Public Libraries viewpoint and Kevin Stapleton provided the CLANN Libraries situation and outlined some advantages of reciprocal borrowing. The implications involved prompted a very lively and informative discussion time.

J. Sweeten
Committee Member

Please note – the article in *InCite* No 8 22 May page 11 about the Australian Red Cross Society's National Headquarters Information Centre, failed to mention that Ms Janet Kelly was Director of the Centre from August 1984 to August 1986 and was responsible for the planning and implementation of activities and supervision of staff during this time.

STATUS OF WOMEN SIG

1986 was a busy and productive year for the Status of Women Special Interest Group (SOWIL).

In June, SOWIL in conjunction with the Victorian Branch of the LAA and RMIT's Department of Information Services, sponsored a public meeting addressed by Patricia Glass Schuman, ALA treasurer, publisher and feminist. Patricia spoke about the work of feminist librarians in the US, the effects of technological change on librarianship and the activities of the ALA.

'Women and the images of librarianship: a feminist perspective' was the topic for the SOWIL session at the LAA Conference in Darwin in July. The session was well attended and the discussion spirited. SOWIL's Annual General Meeting was also held at the Conference.

Planning got underway during 1986 for an international women in libraries forum: 'To give or not to give – women and the power of managing information', to be held as a pre-conference seminar before the 1988 LAA/IFLA Conference in Sydney, in August 1988. Application was made for a special grant to organise the seminar and get a publicity flier and bookmark printed. There has been considerable interest internationally in the seminar and expressions of interest in giving papers and in attending have been flowing in at a steady rate. Planning will continue throughout 1987 and all augurs well for an exciting event in 1988.

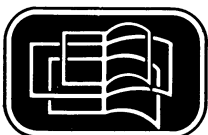
Our last function for 1986 was a discussion evening held in October on the topic of: Women, Information and Databases. The speakers were Susan Feldman from WIRE (Women's Information and Referral Exchange), Leah Giles-Peters, Westdoc Librarian at Footscray Institute of Technology and Deborah Withear from the Institute of Family Studies. Areas for discussion included women's information needs, the development of databases such as Westdoc and Family, and the present and future implications of networking. People interested in joining the group in 1987 should send \$5 and a covering note to LAA Head office.

Ronda Small

Feedback continued on page 14

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FEEDBACK Cont'd

TAFE SECTION

TAFE Conference Update — Library Tours

Mount Gravatt College of TAFE will be the starting point on Friday 10 July. This is a large college approximately 12 km south of the city, with 1,450,000 student contact hours per year. The college has been operating since 1979, in a 21 hectare bushland setting. Major teaching areas include fashion and design; catering and hospitality services; business and general studies; management; and all the mechanical engineering trades including computer-aided engineering, diesel and heavy earthmoving and automotive mechanics. Associate diploma courses are offered in fashion and design, building and construction, and management.

A temporary library was established in 1980. The present large library was opened in

1983 and built with Commonwealth funds. The library has seminar rooms, a dark room and plenty of staff area. It has a staff of one full-time and a part-time librarian and three casual part-time staff. Their holdings are approximately 11,000 catalogued items.

The second library on the tour is at South Brisbane College of TAFE which is located across the Brisbane River from the commercial centre of Brisbane in close proximity to the Expo site. This campus is spread over many city blocks with 40 different venues and has 1,135,000 student contact hours. Major teaching areas include aircraft mechanics; electronics and communications; fitting instrumentation; marine studies; plastics technology; media studies; migrant education; business and general studies; with Associate Diplomas in engineering and business fields.

The original library commenced in 1979. The present very attractive college library was built with Commonwealth funds and was completed in April 1986. The pink theme library has a fully enclosed work area, office and large seminar room. The library is normally staffed by two librarians and a temporary part-time library assistant. Their collection has around 11,000 catalogued items.

After morning tea, the visit to the library

at Ithaca College of TAFE will show how facilities can be modified to suit a very rapidly growing college. The college which is located 3km. to the northwest of the city centre, has 1,400,000 student contact hours. The college offers courses mainly in the areas of automotive body and boat building; building and furnishing; special school courses; horticulture; and rural and applied science. Associate Diplomas are offered in the business studies and applied science studies.

Built in the early 1970s the library, was confined to a small room the size of two classrooms upstairs in the administration building. As the college grew, the library grew by knocking down the walls and taking over all the classrooms on that floor. The library is staffed by two librarians and two part-time casual assistants, however the librarians also have to oversee a second college library at Grovely TAFE Centre. The collection has approximately 8,000 catalogued items.

For further details of the Conference program, contact Bernice Burgess on (02) 707 8566, or Cathy Hall on (02) 689 5739.

ACQUISITIONS SECTION (VICTORIAN GROUP)

Acquisition overview

The insight and understanding of the acquisitions process is the theme for a one-day seminar to be held in conjunction with the Public Libraries Section (Victorian Group) on 30 June.

An extensive program has been designed to provide an overview of the acquisition process in respect of small-to-medium-sized libraries. It is hoped that people new or inexperienced in the area of acquisitions will attend. The cost is \$35 for LAA members or \$50 for non-members.

Areas such as library supplier evaluation and selection, collection development and the acquisition of reference material are to be addressed, however a full program is available from either Sarah Gauci on (03) 418 7246 or Nikos Thomacos on (03) 596 4532.

Nikos Thomacos

ONLINE USERS GROUP ACT

1987 MIDAS Lunch

The MIDAS Lunch, which this year was held to celebrate its 8th birthday, unwittingly became its wake as well. Brian Callaghan, the Group Marketing Manager of OTC, was the guest speaker and he gave an interesting, if somewhat startling, talk which briefly traced the history of OTC data communications from the birth of MIDAS in 1979, through the developments which led to MINERVA and then on to the, soon to be announced, demise of MIDAS as we know it — just when it had reached maturity!

As a result of a corporate restructure, OTC now plans to place more emphasis on information services and MIDAS will become known as OTC — DATA ACCESS.

The new system will be more 'user-friendly' and new shorter log-on procedures will be introduced. Applications seminars will be re-introduced and will include both initial training and refresher courses. All existing users will be contacted by OTC.

Maureen Swords
Convener

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