

## Medical Librarians' Conference

Over 130 health librarians from all over Australia and New Zealand converged on the Hotel Adelaide from 13-17 September for the 7th Biennial Australian Medical Librarians' Conference — 'Health Science Librarians — the dynamic communicators'.



*Prof Warren Jones, Head of Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology, Flinders Medical Centre, opening the Conference.*

A different topic was explored each day with the role of librarians in relation to users being examined on the first day. Professor Warren Jones opened the conference with a thought-provoking address on the implications of the Freedom of Information Act on libraries and librarians. All of the overseas speakers, Julie Virgo, Margaret Gibson-Smith and Fiona Mackay Picken presented papers of a high standard.

Day 2 looked at librarians communicating with the public. This was highlighted even further, when several of the conference participants were interviewed on a local Adelaide radio station. It proved to be a very informative day. After hearing about the literature on aboriginal health, or the lack thereof, Peter Saunders gave a graphic illustration of the problems facing different cultures and their conflicting methods of health care. Dr Norman Swann gave an insight into the problems of communicating the frontiers of medicine through the media to the public. The rest of the day was devoted to touring around selected health libraries in Adelaide.

Day 3 focused on participants developing skills to communicate effectively with administrators. The whole day was devoted to a strategic planning workshop presented by Julie Virgo. All of the groups worked hard, especially with the threat of presenting their concept of a dream library to the rest of the group. Participants gained valuable experience in applying strategies to their own situations.

The conference dinner was an enjoyable affair with entertainment in the form of the South Australian Debating Society who debated the topic 'A little bit of knowledge is a dangerous thing'.

Day 4 was devoted to developing communication amongst librarians and examining services. It was interesting to hear about the various experiences libraries have had in using new technology, and in implementing new approaches to evaluating services.

Judging by the feedback from delegates, the conference was challenging. The fact that many librarians, while working under financial and administrative pressure, are providing a high level of service to users was reaffirmed. After the conference, delegates will be sure to



*The heavies! (left to right) Elizabeth Gatehouse, Chairman, Conference Steering Committee; the three overseas speakers, Margaret Gibson-Smith, Fiona Mackay Picken and Julie Virgo; and Jan Heath, President, Medical Libraries Section.*



*The monkey which brought good spirits to the Conference. Bags packed already for New Zealand in 1989.*

have returned to their libraries rejuvenated and recharged, looking forward to the next conference in Auckland in November 1989.

Limited copies of the proceedings are available for \$30 from Margie Russon, Library, SACAE Sturt Campus, Sturt Road, Bedford Park 5042. Cheques should be made out to LAA Medical Libraries Section. Cassettes of sessions are available for \$8. Enquiries should be directed to Margie Russon on (08) 275 5289.

*Julie Freund*

Secretary

SA Medical Libraries Section



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### Library ILLS — a cure?

When 90 members of WA's library community gathered to discuss whether there was a cure to ILL a few months ago many librarians wondered whether library ILLS were in fact unwell.

Discussions were given impetus by a variety of papers delivered during the day. Although the seminar was not a launch for the SAIL report, it had just been released and Andy Exon was able to provide a valuable summary of its findings.

Warren Horton's paper on 'The Role of the National Library in ILL' was read and the audience was given the opportunity to have Warren answer their questions via teleconference.

Geoff Allen's paper on 'Camels, Straws and Good Red Herring' (ILL costs and charges) and Bob Sharman's outline of AACOB's deliberations and decisions on charging provided food for lively discussion during the day. Papers on the use of libraries by outside borrowers, and on proposed and existing location networks were also given.

AACOBs (WA) intend to make the proceedings of this seminar available shortly and enquiries should be directed to Jenni Roche, Secretary, AACOBs (WA), State Library Service of WA, Alexander Library Building, James Street, Perth WA 6000, (09) 427 3411.

*Kerry Smith*

AACOBs (WA) Committee Member