



FEEDBACK

SCHOOL LIBRARIES SECTION SA GROUP

Piping Shrikes

This new publication produced by the School Libraries Section (SA Group) was launched by the 1987 President of the South Australian Branch, Patrick Condon, on 23 January at the Children's Literature Summer School organised by the Library Resource Development Unit. The 120 delegates heard Patrick refer to the youth of many of the authors and illustrations in the publication which certainly augurs well for the future of children's literature in South Australia.

Of note, too, is the influence of the South Australian CAE in the development of a large number of the subjects, particularly in the area of illustration.

Piping Shrikes, contains biographical information about 35 contemporary South Australian children's authors and illustrators. The information was obtained from the subjects themselves in response to a questionnaire drawn up by members of the Schools Section. Authors and illustrators comment on their past experiences and share with the readers their future plans and hopes. In addition, they indicate their willingness (or not) to talk to groups of children.

The Schools Section in South Australia would be delighted to share the formats for the questionnaires and other documentation

with any group interested in undertaking a similar project in other states. An Australia wide publication of this kind could be a worthy contribution to the Bicentennial celebrations.

Piping Shrikes costs \$4 for LAA members and \$5 for non-members (plus postage) and is available from LAA head office or *Piping Shrikes*, School Libraries Section (SA), PO Box 47, Rundle Mall, Adelaide 5000.

Anne Hazell

NSW BRANCH

Local studies courses — a lively response

Last year, the NSW Branch through *InCite* and letters to Public Libraries, invited comment on the need for increased provision of training in specialist knowledge and skills in the management of local history collections to handle new responsibilities and growing user demands. Suggestions were sought on topics and skills seen as essential for those caring for local collections, and for modes of continuing education units and formal course work.

Replies were not only carefully considered and constructive, but collectively reflected a professional concern for action. At its October meeting the Branch set up a Sub-Committee to consider the statements, identify existing training relevant to local history librarians and to consider proposals that might be put to institutions, associations and employer groups to develop further education opportunities. It is a timely move. The formation of the new LAA Local Studies Section, the NSW Bicentennial Projects in Conservation and Local Government Archives, and the Local History Co-ordination Project, School of History, UNSW all help to promote a professional and community awareness of a cultural investment for the future.

In brief, the following areas were seen as important for public libraries to service their local studies collections proficiently:

- General knowledge of Australian history, the history of local government in NSW, and the ability to recognise local history does not exist in a vacuum but in the wider context of state and national history.

- Skills in historical research including family history, and user aids; techniques of oral history.
- Guidelines for establishing and maintaining a local history collection; acquisition, indexing etc.
- Basics of conservation; guidelines for preservation, storage of materials including audio-visual primary resources and archival type material.
- An introduction to archives administration and record management (local government and business records)
- Legal requirements, eg copyright, public access
- Practical aspects — a knowledge of the essentials of microprocessing of records, sound and video recording photography, displays

Several replies suggested that some topics could be part of existing courses but expanded as many are included in current librarianship/archives courses. One recommendation was to develop a short course in archives administration for those with library qualifications. A number of local history librarians are enrolled in external courses in Local and Applied History at Armidale College of Advanced Education. There are also Local History options in some Masters courses.

Recommendations and preferences for type and duration of courses ranged from a year's course (full time, part-time and external), an optional strand in U/G and P/G library courses, short courses with block release, to workshops and seminars as part of a series. Any modules would need take into account distance problems of country librarians, the fact that many local history librarians are part-time and face funding difficulties, and that some public libraries have no designated local history librarians.

The immediate object is to explore the possibilities for 1987 short programs through associations like the LAA, the Training & Development Unit of the Local Government and Shires Associations, schools of librarianship and the Public Libraries Department, and to encourage funding support from local government and the State Library Council of NSW to enable librarians to attend.

The Branch Sub-Committee sees a role as a clearing house for information and as a monitor for developments. This is a provisional document. Your further comment would be welcomed.

Patricia Ward

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Who's where.

Don't forget to send details of staff changes, new appointments etc for listing in this column.

AUSTRALIAN SPECIAL LIBRARIES NEWS

ASLN now has a new editor, John Thawley. News items, articles and books for review in ASLN should be sent to John Thawley, Editor, ASLN, CSIRO, Information Resources Unit, 314 Albert Street, East Melbourne, Vic. 3002.

Advertising enquiries and bookings should go to Brenda Pittard, Wordworld, 415a King Street, Newtown, NSW 2042.