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investment that one should assess any encyclopaedia.

I'm unlucky enough not to have a personal copy of the first edition of the *Australian encyclopaedia* although I do keep an eye out for it at fetes. Like many thousands, I prize my set of the Chisholm edition, of which the young Dick Smith was vouchsafed only four volumes — including the one which must have tickled its editor's whimsy: 'Marsupials to Parliament' — and use it frequently.

The fifth edition too has the marks of a great edition: I have referred to the highly competent editing process, with its remarkable freedom from typos. In the course of a lengthy browse I noticed only three infelicities: some words which should have been in italics, a missing comma and a truant running head — not bad for a work of this complexity and magnitude. There is also the quality of the contributors: Ray Whitrod on the police, Richard Walsh on periodicals, Jill Sykes on dance, Ronald Strahan on mammals, Peter Spearritt on Sydney, popular culture, tramways and his specialty, the Sydney Harbour Bridge, Gavin Souter on New Australia, Maurice Saxby on children's books, — the list goes on and on — including Harry Bryan on libraries. To repeat a minor criticism of the previous edition: to my tidy mind it would seem helpful to have some indication of which contributors are deceased.

A new feature, which I did like, was the series of introductory essays, headed 'Australia and the World', in which distinguished and polished writers like Russel Ward, Donald Horne, Elaine Thompson and Mary White provide broad perspectives of the country in which we live. These essays range widely over topics such as the geological formation of the continent, the migration of peoples (Aboriginal, European and others), politics, wars, sport, economics, science and technology, all setting Australia within the context of movements in the world as a whole.

Illustration is a great strength of many encyclopaedias, and this one is no exception. Good use is made of the increased number of colour illustrations, and the increased flexibility in their placement. There is an excellent variety of forms of illustration. There are plenty of historical and contemporary photographs, but also maps, charts, diagrams, cartoons and reproductions of advertisements. There is in fact something graphic to complement or at least leaven the text at every page opening. Even the endpapers have received attention, with a lively Australian alphabet design by Robert Ingpen.

The fifth edition of the *Australian encyclopaedia* is the outstanding reference work of 1988, a year which has seen a greater than usual number of excellent and useful works produced. It is certainly a must for all Australian reference collections, and deserves wide sales in schools and the general market-place, where it has no real competition in the form of multi-volume Australian encyclopaedias. All of those responsible, publisher, editorial staff, contributors, designers, typesetters and printers, are to be congratulated on a first-rate publication.

The sturdily-bound standard edition — there are 10,000 sets of this — represents exceptionally good value for money at \$595. No doubt the 500 'deluxe' sets, signed personally [sic] by the editor-in-Chief, 'attractively finished with deeply-embossed leather-look spines' and costing \$795 will sell well too. The *Australian Encyclopaedia* is available direct from Australian Geographic, PO Box 321, Terrey Hills, NSW 2084, and delivery and insurance is \$15.

David J. Jones

LAA Publications Board Meeting Report

A meeting of the Publications Board was held at LAA House on 10 November 1988. The meeting commenced by congratulating two members of the Board, Judith Baskin and Patricia Ward, on being awarded LAA Fellowships.

The main item of business was the report by Sandra Forbes on the LAA's publications program. Sandra had been asked in July 1988 to advise the Association on how its publications program could be continued and possibly expanded but at the same time be rendered more streamlined and cost-effective. The emphasis was to be on monograph publishing but LAA periodicals would also be taken into account.

The report was presented from a hard commercial perspective but with no cognizance of the people involved or the location of the LAA and carefully noted the dichotomy between the service and the commercial operation aspects of the LAA. Attention was paid to a costing of related overheads which revealed that, instead of returning a profit, the program had made a loss over past years.

It was noted that the philosophical basis of the Association is service provision not profit making, and it was important to analyse the loss, and, in particular, the loss associated with the publication of the LAA *Handbook* and biennial conference proceedings. These are costed to the Publications Division rather than the Membership Division.

There was considerable discussion on a philosophical framework to enable publication decisions to be consistent and it was strongly suggested that this be associated with a marketing strategy. After lengthy discussion it was clear that the magnitude of the report would prevent the Board from making a simple list of recommendations to General Council at this stage, and it was decided that a paper be prepared for General Council together with a summary of Sandra Forbes' report. The report will be considered further at the February meeting of the Publications Board.

In anticipation of the forthcoming name change of the Association, ALIA Press has been registered as a business name in NSW.

There was considerable discussion on the topic of the provision of permanent paper in light of the difficulties experienced in accessing paper for the LAA's encyclopaedia, *ALIAS*. It was suggested that the widest publicity be given to this problem with information being sent to paper suppliers and manufacturers, and to appropriate sections of the media such as the ABC Science Unit. It was agreed that General Council be alerted to the importance of using permanent paper for LAA publications.

It was reported that *ALIAS* Volume I is due for release in December and discussions were held on the appropriate venue for its launch.

The LAA President had raised the matter of the quality of LAA divisional newsletters and had suggested that the Board produce guidelines for the production of LAA newsletters. Frank Thompson offered to provide a copy of AGPS *Guidelines for Desktop Publishing* to the Board when they have been finalised.

Kerry Webb

LAA Publications Board

The North Queensland Libraries: A Directory (2nd edition), published by the North Queensland Regional Group, is now available from LAA Head Office. Cost: \$9.00 LAA members; \$13.50 non-members, (\$2.00 p&p).

Queensland members may purchase a copy directly from the North Queensland Regional Group (fee for postage not required). Contact: Secretary, North Queensland Regional Group, c/- University Library, James Cook University, Townsville Qld 4811.

Ask DAD! *Directory of Australian Directories* provides the answers - who/what/where, in any subject area.

Resource Based Learning Conferences Publication

The papers produced for, and as a result of, the above conferences are now packaged together in the document entitled: *Resource based learning conferences*. If you would like to purchase a copy, send a cheque for \$11.00 to: Judy Woods, 26 Eucalypt Parade, St Agnes 5097.

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