FRONT LINE

Judy Hunter – President, ASLA

I feel honoured, as President of the Australian School Library Association (ASLA), to have been asked to write a guest editorial for *InCite*. I think this is a first.

I have been involved with both ASLA and ALIA for many years, and am well aware of the similarities and the differences of the roles and operations of the two Associations in the Australian library and information scene.

One significant difference is the structural organisation of the two bodies: while ALIA is a central body with a Royal Charter and branches, sections and special interest groups across Australia, ASLA is a federation of State associations, each with its own constitution, objectives, membership conditions and fees. Each State association has its own name, and frequently its own acronym. The acronym of the School Library Association in my home State, Queensland — SLAQ — often causes raised eye-brows, but the association is definitely not 'slack'. The strength of school library associations in Australia resides with the local State associations, which operate in all States and Territories. ASLA is a coordinating body for more than 2000 teacher-librarians across the continent.

Since mid 1987, all members of the member associations have received *ACCESS*—the glossy quarterly national journal of school librarianship. In addition, most States have their own State and/or regional newsletters. *ACCESS* contains segments of news from around the States, which was previously distributed in a national newsletter, *School libraries in Australia*. At that stage, several States had their own State journals. The cooperation of the States in making *ACCESS* possible has certainly strengthened bonds between the State associations and promoted a national voice for school libraries.

The ASLA Council consists of four representative Councillors from the Associations in each State and Territory. From this Council are drawn an elected Executive, President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer, plus a Standing Committee that includes at least one member of any State not already represented.

Although the full ASLA Council meets only once a year, effective communication between ASLA's Councillors has been maintained since 1983 by teleconference meetings held about every 6 weeks. These meetings, which last up to an hour and a half, are made more effective by the circulation, in advance, of agendas and relevant papers.

We have found this a most effective mechanism for combating the 'tyranny of distance'. Despite all its possible faults — faulty equipment, poor reception, a feeling of being left out, and nerves at

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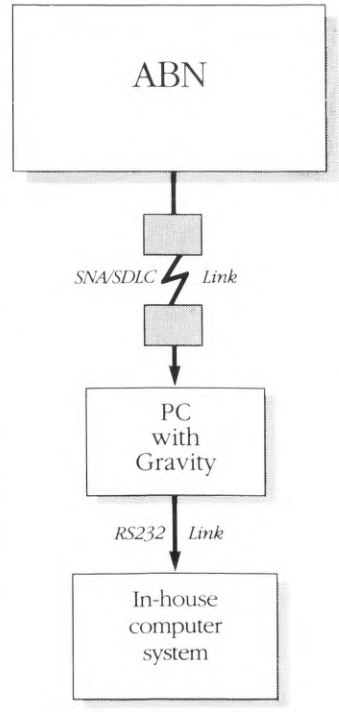

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IN THE NEWS

Copyright seminar

The Australian Copyright Council is conducting a seminar for librarians and teacher–librarians on Monday 25 September 1989 at the Alexander Library Theatrette in Perth. The first session (10 am–1 pm) is an introduction to copyright issues for librarians, including copying of print and audio-visual material, use of computers and databases, and the library's liability.

The second session is directed towards teacher–librarians and will deal principally with recent changes to the Copyright Act in relation to educational copying.

The cost will be $50 for a single session or $85 for both. For further information contact Anthea Warner (02) 957 2941.

Database Directory

The fastest way to find out about online databases is through an online database; and the most up-to-date information about online databases is now available, not surprisingly, through an online database.

The source of this information is the *Directory of Australian and New Zealand Databases*, compiled by the Australian Database Development Association.

The latest edition of the *Directory*, code-named ADDA, has just been released as one of the many databases distributed through AUSINET, the Australian Information Network, by ACI Computer Services.

The *Directory* lists 211 databases, all of which are available online and accessible to the public through a telecommunications network in Australia and New Zealand. It provides details on who produces the databases, what subjects they cover, from where they are available, and what they cost.

For further information, contact: ACI Computer Services, 310 Ferntree Gully Road, North Clayton, Vic. 3168; telephone (03) 541 5600.

Audio books

The union list of audio books available in community languages — or CLANG — was compiled by the Subject Specialisation Working Group of the Roundtable on Materials for Print-Handicapped Readers.

The list was compiled to ensure the widest possible access to the very limited resources available in Australia. In 1987 the first issue was released with the intention of making it available to interested libraries for 2 years, by which time it was hoped that the books would be included in the Australian Bibliographic Network (ABN) and that it would be possible to access them by language.

The Disability Services Section of the National Library of Australia is considering a project to enter the list in ABN. Until this happens, the only way a library can access these materials is through CLANG.

For further information, or to order a copy of CLANG ($15), please contact Brenda Thurogood, Technical Services Manager, Braille and Talking Book Library, 31–51 Commercial Road, South Yarra, Victoria 3141; telephone (03) 267 6022; facsimile (03) 820 1335.

Call for nominations — 1989 Williamson Award

The Robert D. Williamson Award, presented annually by the Victorian Association for Library Automation (VALA), commemorates Bob Williamson's contribution to the development of information science in Australia by recognising and encouraging similar contributions.

Nominations for the 1989 Award can be received until 30 September. If you know of a deserving candidate, or need further information, please contact Ian McCallum, Award Committee Chairman, on (062) 51 6577.

Can you assist?

The President of the Tonga Library Association, Mr Jeffrey Bender, has requested the following donations to resource the ill-funded Tonga Complex Library of the University of the South Pacific:

- Sears subject headings (recent editions)
- Library of Congress subject headings (recent editions)
- Dewey Decimal Classification (19th and 11th abridged editions)
- Subject heading lists and Dewey classification schemes prepared by the various State Departments of Education.

Australian libraries can forward their donations directly to The President, Tonga Library Association, c/o USP Tonga Complex, PO Box 278, Nuku'alofa, Tonga.

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talking to a telephone — teleconferencing is worth persevering with. This new technology has allowed school library associations across Australia to build and maintain interactive communication across States, Territories and remote areas at a cost much lower than that of actually moving people between venues.

While teleconferencing does not ever provide a perfect substitute for face-to-face interaction, I would urge ALIA, its State branches and regional groups to explore its potential as a means of achieving ALIA's goal of more involvement for its remote members. Since 1980, Queensland (via SLAQ, in conjunction with the Brisbane College of Advanced Education) has used teleconferencing (and, more recently, video-teleconferencing, or one-way video with two-way telephone interaction) as an important means of professional development for teacher–librarians and teachers. More recently, using the Q-Net satellite, Queensland has extended the network to include professional development for nurses, doctors and a wide range of other professionals.

ASLA is delighted with the newly developed cooperative working relationship with ALIA. The Joint Statement on Library and Information Services in Schools marks a milestone in cooperation between the two organisations. ASLA is hosting its Eleventh Biennial Conference in Canberra this year, from 29 September to 2 October. Our overseas guest speaker — the ASCIS orator — is Dr James Liesener (University of Maryland, USA), an authority on planning and evaluating library media programs. All interested members of the library and information profession are welcome to participate in the conference, or in its associated State-level workshops. (See separate articleon page 12 for details.)

Judy Hunter
President, ASLA